

## Central Texas Spring 2007

It was a fairly typical spring migration this year with some observers commenting on the dullness of the season. Weather was generally on the cool and wet side. It was a nice change from the previous year. Some birders thought that some migrants appeared a bit late this year. It was a banner season for shorebirds in the Temple area which was most likely due to the wet weather this spring. Lake Buchanan was at least 10 feet low at the beginning of the season but ended up being full at the end due to abundant rainfall in April and May. Granger Lake was full the entire season leading to a scarcity of shorebirds for the area.

Bill Lupardus wrote the following on the Midland area: "The southern tip of high plains has experience a cool and wet spring. Timely rains and snow has the rangeland knee high in grass and wildflowers. Area playas and drainage basins are being recharged. Soda Lake a large playa southeast of Midland along Monahans Draw is filling; the last time it filled was in the late 1980's. Late snows and lower than normal temperatures may have steered some of our normal migrants away from the southern llano. Shorebird migration was hampered due to inundated shorelines along with heavy vegetation".

### Notable Observations:

#### Surf Scoter

A striking male and a drab female were present on the evaporation ponds in Midland 11-12 Apr (Rose Marie Stortz) photos were taken, along with many observers seeing the birds. Surf Scoters are considered an accidental species in *Midland*. This is the first spring record of this species in the county since 1979. Heidi Trudell reports that a Surf Scoter was brought to the Abilene Zoo on 3 May when it was found "just outside of town".

#### Red-breasted Merganser

An adult alternate plumaged male on Lake Buchanan *Llano* on 3 May was late (Tim Fennell).

#### Common Merganser

A female Common Merganser was seen on Kirby Lake, Abilene 3 Mar (Lorie Black).

#### Northern Bobwhite

Encouraging for this rapidly declining species was the sighting of 7 Northern Bobwhites *Mason* on 13 Mar (Dixie Fueurbacher and Bobby Frazier).

#### Common Loon

Seven Common Loons (2 alt. & 5 basic) were on Lake Buchanan *Llano* on the late date of 3 May (Tim Fennell).

#### Western Grebe

Five birds on Lake Buchanan *Llano* 3 May were late (Tim Fennell).

#### Brown Pelican

A Brown Pelican was seen flying over horse collar bluff about one mile south of the rest area above the HEB Camp on US Hwy 83 in *Real* on 9 May (Alan Blankenship).

### Green Heron

An early Green Heron was in Midland on 12 March (Don & Joann Merritt).

### Tricolored Heron

An adult Tricolored Heron was recorded from Midkiff *Midland* on 14 Apr (Bill Lupardus, Midnats).

### White-faced Ibis

An alternate plumaged bird on Lake Buchanan *Llano* 3 May was of note (Tim Fennell).

### Glossy Ibis

An adult Glossy Ibis was observed at Temple *Bell* on 25 Apr (Randy Pinkston).

### Swallow-tailed Kite

A Swallow-tailed Kite visited Mitchell Lake in San Antonio *Bexar* on 24 Mar (*vide* Sheridan Coffey) while another was reported from s.e. San Antonio on 21 Apr (Brad Wier). Also one was seen just s. of Falls City *Karnes* on 29 Apr (Robert Benson). Even better yet a Swallow-tailed Kite was seen flying over Neal's Lodge in Concan *Uvalde* on 22 Apr (Charmaine & Collins Ganson *et al*)!!

### Harris's Hawk

A Harris's Hawk was seen along I-35 (exit 245) *Travis* on 16 Apr (Tim Fennell).

### Broad-winged Hawk

An early Broad-winged Hawk was reported on 4 Mar by Rose Marie Stortz in Midland. Sheridan Coffey and Martin Reid tallied **50,000** at Calaveras Lake *Bexar* on 13 Apr.

### Short-tailed Hawk

Probably the best bird of the Spring TOS Meeting was a Short-tailed Hawk that was seen at Crownridge Canyon Park in n.w. San Antonio on 14 Apr (Sheridan Coffey *et al*).

### Ferruginous Hawk

Three Ferruginous Hawks were found on the Midland Big Day Count 5 May.

### Golden Eagle

A Golden Eagle was reported from Warbler Woods *Guadalupe* on 5 Mar (Susan Schaezler).

### Piping Plover

A Piping Plover seen in Temple on 13 Apr was banded along the Missouri River in South Dakota in 2005 (Randy Pinkston). A Piping Plover at Black Rock Park, Lake Buchanan on 3 May represented a new county record for *Llano* and a first for the Edwards Plateau (Tim Fennell).

### Long-billed Curlew

An out of season lingering Long-billed Curlew was seen at an Utley *Bastrop* turf farm 8-18 May (Brush Freeman).

### Hudsonian Godwit

Multiple Hudsonian Godwits in Temple 30 Apr & 9 May was a good showing for this handsome shorebird species (Randy Pinkston). A Hudsonian Godwit was found at Pecks Lake *Midland* on 28 May by Rose Marie Stortz.

### Baird's Sandpiper

Phenomenal numbers of Baird's Sandpipers were observed in Temple this spring with a peak of 200+ birds seen on 11 Apr (Randy Pinkston). Likewise over 200+ birds were seen on the upper reaches of Lake Buchanan *Llano* on 3 May (Tim Fennell).

### Wilson's Phalarope

Wilson's Phalaropes showed up in numbers this spring in the Temple area (Randy Pinkston). The wet weather was probably responsible for their showing.

### Red-necked Phalarope

Especially sweet for the season was a female Red-necked Phalarope in Temple on 19 May. It was the first spring record for *Bell* and only the second ever (Randy Pinkston).

### Franklin's Gull

A lone Franklin's Gull at Fort Clark Springs, Brackettville *Kinney* on 22 Apr was a good find for this inland location (Mitch Heindel).

### Black-billed Cuckoo

A Black-billed Cuckoo in n.e. San Antonio Bexar on 25 Apr (Lee Clausen) and another in Temple on 19 May (Randy Pinkston) were good inland finds.

### Long-eared Owl

A Long-eared Owl was recorded from Midkiff *Midland* on the 3 Mar on the Mid-Nat field trip.

### Short-eared Owl

A very late Short-eared Owl was seen hunting in the grass on either side of Granger Dam *Williamson* on 14 Mar (Tim Fennell).

### Ruby-throated Hummingbird

A rare for spring adult male in Midland Ruby-throated Hummingbird was at Don & Joann Merritt's residence.

### Calliope Hummingbird

A Calliope Hummingbird in Junction *Kimble* visited a feeder at an RV Park on 14 Apr (*fide* Rhandy Helton).

### Broad-tailed Hummingbird

The overwintering male present near Utopia *Uvalde* 8 stayed till 3 Mar. A spring migrant adult male was at the same location 31 Mar – 2 Apr (Mitch Heindel). One visited a feeder at Warbler Woods *Guadalupe* on 16 Apr (Susan Schaezler).

### Rufous Hummingbird

An apparently migratory female Rufous Hummingbird made a one day pit stop at Mitch Heindel's feeders near Utopia *Uvalde* on 31 Mar.

#### Say's Phoebe

A rare-for-season Say's Phoebe was seen at the Flying X Ranch in Balcones Canyonlands NWR *Burnet* on 25 Apr (Byron Stone).

#### Cassin's Kingbird

An easterly Cassin's Kingbird was a nice find for Lost Maples SNA on 5 May (Mitch Heindel).

#### Black-capped Vireo

Two adult Black-capped Vireos were present at a nest with nestlings and two cowbird eggs 16-19 May at Cedar Hollow, Lake Georgetown *Williamson* (Tim Fennell). This is the same area where a singing male was seen and heard last year. A subsequent visit on 27 May showed an empty nest which may have been predated since the nestlings were only 2-3 days old on 16 May.

#### Northern Rough-winged Swallow

Three birds were seen at Lake Georgetown Dam *Williamson* on 15 Mar. One of the birds was examining potential nest site in a round holes in the dam concrete wall on the north side of the spillway (Tim Fennell).

#### Rock Wren

Four birds were seen at Lake Georgetown Dam *Williamson* on 15 Mar. They appeared to be paired up and examining potential nest sites at the dam and spillway (Tim Fennell).

#### Wood Thrush

A persistently singing Wood Thrush was heard in n. *Travis* on 20 May (Byron Stone). A singing bird in Temple 21-31+ May (Randy Pinkston) was most likely an bird on territory. This species is a low-density breeder as per the Austin area checklist.

#### Brown Thrasher

A Brown was seen at Boone Ranch *Midland* on 10 Mar (Midnats).

#### Crissal Thrasher

The Midland Crissal Thrashers continue to be seen. Single birds at different locations were seen on 2 Mar (Rose Marie Stortz & Midnats).

#### Tropical Parula

A singing male Tropical Parula was present at Fort Clark Springs, Brackettville *Kinney* on 25 Apr (Mark Lockwood). One was on territory along Rebecca Creek *Comal* 19 Apr-7 May (Brush Freeman).

#### Chestnut-sided Warbler

A Chestnut-sided Warbler visited Junction *Kimble* on 15 May. This warbler is "pretty much rare" for the area (Rhandy Helton).

#### Yellow-throated Warbler

A singing male Yellow-throated Warbler was seen in Temple on 5 May (Randy Pinkston).

### Cerulean Warbler

Two male Cerulean Warblers were seen in the Salado *Bell* area on 28 Apr, another male in Temple on 1 May (Randy Pinkston), and one in n.w. San Antonio on 6 May (Helen Rejzek) were pretty exciting considering the how scarce or rare this stunning *dendroica* has become.

### Swainson's Warbler

A good find for San Antonio was a Swainson's Warbler seen and heard along Avenue A on 6 May (Sheridan Coffey). This riparian corridor in central San Antonio continues to produce good birds.

### Common Yellowthroat

Freeman reports "breeding confirmed" for Common Yellowthroat at Crystal Lake, *Bastrop* on 20 May. He reports five birds.

### Hooded Warbler

A singing male Hooded Warbler graced Temple on 9 May (Randy Pinkston). A Hooded Warbler was in Midland on 7 May (Don & Joann Merritt).

### Summer Tanager

A Summer Tanager on 30 Mar in *Mason* was the earliest ever (Dixie Fueurbacher and Bobby Frazier) for the county.

### Western Tanager

An adult male Western Tanager was seen at Fort Clark Springs in Brackettville *Kinney* on 22 April (Mitch Heindel).

### Cassin's Sparrow

The wet spring was a boon for Cassin's Sparrows. They seemed to be skylarking everywhere. Three birds in *Mason* on 13 Mar were a welcome sight after several years of being scarce (Dixie Fueurbacher and Bobby Frazier).

### Le Conte's Sparrow

Three late Le Conte's Sparrows were seen at the Granger Dam spillway *Williamson* on 5 May (Tim Fennell).

### Harris's Sparrow

A late Harris's Sparrow was reported near Granger Lake *Williamson* on 12 May (Jason Leifester & Kelly Holligan).

### Cited Observers

Robert Benson  
Alan Blankenship  
Lorie Black  
Lee Clausen  
Sheridan Coffey  
Tim Fennell

Bobbye Frazier  
Dixie Feuerbacher  
Brush Freeman  
Charmaine & Collins Ganson  
Mitch Heindel  
Rhandy Helton  
Kelly Holligan  
Jason Leifester  
Mark Lockwood  
Don & Joann Merritt  
Randy Pinkston  
Martin Reid  
Helen Rejzek  
Susan Schaezler  
Byron Stone  
Mary Stortz  
Rose Marie Stortz  
Brad Wier