

**.North American Birds
Spring 2021
South Texas**

Overall, spring migration was dull with only one semi-grounding event along the coast, which was not that exciting. Birders hoping for a big fallout along the coast this year were disappointed which was good for the migrants. There was a scattering of rarities this spring.

Notable Observations:

Muscovy Duck – A scarce wild Muscovy Duck was reported from the species usual Rio Grande haunts at Salineno, Starr Co 13 Apr – 28 May (ph. Tom Hince, Jeff Stacey et al).

Garganey – A male Garganey found at Sabal Palm Sanctuary, Cameron Co 3 Apr (ph. Emily Reasor, Chan Dolan) provided a first for the LRGV. Unfortunately, it was a one-day wonder.

Black Scoter – A male Black Scoter was spotted at Carancahua Bay, Jackson Co 3 Mar (Brent Ortego, Dora Ann Ortego).

Eastern Whip-poor-will – An Eastern Whip-poor-will spotted in a Hidalgo Co yard 8 May (William Supulski) was late while a bird reported from Goose Island State Park, Aransas Co 9 Mar (Roberto San Antonio) was on the early side.

Sandhill Crane – A Sandhill Crane present near Esseville, Atascosa Co 3 & 10 May (Christine Turnbull; ph. Christian Fernandez) was very late.

American Golden-Plover – A count of 1034 American Golden-Plovers made in Victoria Co 5 Apr (Meagan Lesak, Shannon Grubbs, Trey Barron) was noteworthy.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper – A peak count of 541 Buff-breasted Sandpipers was made 28 Apr at a Matagorda Co turf farm (Brent Ortego, Dora Ann Ortego).

Red-necked Phalarope – A handsome breeding plumage female Red-necked Phalarope seen in a flooded field in Kleberg Co 22-23 May (ph. Glenn Perrigo) provided for a rare spring record.

Pomarine Jaeger – A Pomarine Jaeger reported from the beach north of the Padre Island National Seashore, Kleberg Co 26 Mar (ph. Justin LeClaire), from Whitecap Beach, Nueces Co 28 Mar (ph. Emma Mathis) and from Padre Island National Seashore, Kleberg Co 11 Apr (ph. Willie Sekula; Kim Garwood) was very likely the same bird. A nice adult bird with a fully spooned tail was seen offshore in Kenedy Co waters 6 Apr (ph. Ron Weeks) along with another adult in Matagorda offshore waters on the same date (ph. Ron Weeks).

Bonaparte's Gull – A Bonaparte's Gull seen in Matagorda Co 15 Apr (Maggie Carpenter, Eric Carpenter) was on the late side.

Iceland Gull – A 1st cycle Iceland Gull was found on the beach at Boca Chica, Cameron Co 4 Apr (ph. Willie Sekula; Kim Garwood). It was seen again at the mouth of the Rio Grande River 27 Apr (Andrew Spencer, Nathan Pieplow).

Pacific Loon – A Pacific Loon was picked out amongst Common Loons in Espiritu Santo Bay, Calhoun Co 23 Mar (Petra Hockey).

Masked Booby – In Cameron Co an adult Masked Booby was spotted from Boca Chica beach 10 Apr (ph. Alex Lamoreaux; Josh Lefever) while a dead bird was found on the beach on South Padre Island 11 May (ph. William Hicks).

Brown Booby – Six Brown Boobys seen heading out to sea following a ship in the Port Aransas Ship Channel, Nueces Co 26 May (Warren Pulich Jr.) was encouraging considering the beating the species received from the severe arctic storm in Feb.

Northern Gannet – An adult Northern Gannet was found perched on some driftwood on a South Padre Island, Cameron Co beach 20 May (ph. William Hicks).

American Bittern – Three American Bitterns reported from Matagorda Co 28 May (Paul Randall) were quite late.

Bald Eagle – An immature Bald Eagle seen at Resaca de la Palma State Park, Cameron Co 19 Mar (ph. David Jeffrey Ringer) provided for probably the southernmost record for the state.

Burrowing Owl – A late lingering Burrowing Owl was near El Campo, Wharton Co until 4 Apr (ph. Ken Hartman).

Short-eared Owl – A Short-eared Owl lingered to 18 Apr at Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR, Colorado Co (ph. Jason Hunt).

Elegant Trogon – The female Elegant Trogon continued to delight birders at Estero Llano Grande State Park, Hidalgo Co to 5 May (ph. Peter Vakay).

Downy Woodpecker – A male Downy Woodpecker present at Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, Nueces Co 22 Apr (Matt Heindel et al) was very likely a migrating bird.

Rose-throated Becard – All in Hidalgo Co the male Rose-throated Becard present in winter at Quinta Mazatlan was reported to 9 Mar, another male was present at Santa Ana NWR 24 & 26 Mar (ph. Stuart Tower; Josh Lefever), and a female was seen at Americana The Birding Center RV Resort 22 May (ph. Peggy Rudman).

Dusky-capped Flycatcher – In Hidalgo Co a Dusky-capped Flycatcher lingered at Quinta Mazatlan to 16 Mar (Karen Eagle) while another bird was reported from Bentsen State Park to 6 Mar (Ryan Rodriguez), and heard only single birds were reported from Old Hidalgo Pumphouse 7 Mar (Jon McIntyre) and Santa Ana NWR 7 Mar (Tiffany Kersten, Simon Kiacz). Elsewhere, a

Dusky-capped Flycatcher lingered at Resaca de la Palma State Park, Cameron Co to 16 Mar (Bill Eisele) and a heard only bird was reported from Salineno, Starr Co 11 Mar (Nancy Leonard).

Gray Kingbird – A Gray Kingbird was present at South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, Cameron Co 20-23 May (Molly Smith; ph. Javi Gonzalez et al).

Acadian Flycatcher – An Acadian Flycatcher reported from Welder Wildlife Foundation, San Patricio Co 30 May (Mike Hudson) was quite late.

Black-capped Vireo – Black-capped Vireo occasionally strays from the species preferred Hill Country habitat but this spring single birds observed at Estero Llano Grande State Park, Hidalgo Co 26 Mar (Brian Platt, ph. John Yochum et al), Goose Island State Park, Aransas Co 9 Apr (ph. Rheinhard Beatty et al), South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, Cameron Co 19 Apr (ph. Gavin Emmons; Alacia Welch) and Laguna Vista Nature Trail, Cameron Co 24 Apr (ph. Gustavo Valero et al) were quite noteworthy.

Philadelphia Vireo – A Philadelphia Vireo present in Laredo, Webb Co 15-16 May (ph. Daniel Mitev) was well west of the species usual more easterly migration route.

Yellow-green Vireo – In Cameron Co two vocalizing Yellow-green Vireos were found along Cannon Road 26 Apr (ph. Mike Stewart, Yvette Stewart) and another two birds were reported from Sabal Palm Sanctuary 2 May (Dan Edge) while a lone bird visited South Padre Island Convention Center 3-10 May (ph. Kristy Baker; m.obs.). A singing Yellow-green Vireo was recorded and seen briefly at Santa Ana NWR, Hidalgo Co 11 May (Mike Stewart, Kelsey Biles).

Black-whiskered Vireo – A Black-whiskered Vireo made a rare stop at South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, Cameron Co 5-7 May (ph. Isidro Montemayor et al).

Tamaulipas Crow – Tamaulipas Crow returned to the Brownsville Landfill, Cameron Co 12 Apr when four birds were spotted (ph. Bruce Berman). Up to nine birds were reported 21 Apr (ph. Tricia Gardner, Christina Parks). At least two birds stayed to 29 May (ph. Matthew Voelker).

Mountain Bluebird – Two Mountain Bluebirds seen at the Progresso Sod Farm, Hidalgo Co 2 & 4 Mar (Cindy & Mike Venus, ph. Huck Hutchens) were leftover from the winter invasion of the species into the state.

Sage Thrasher – A Sage Thrasher lingered at Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, Nueces Co until 22 Apr (m.obs.).

Cedar Waxwing – Unusual was Cedar Waxwings lingering into late May in deep South Texas this spring with a lone bird reported from El Rio RV Park, Starr Co 28 May (Johnny Slack) and three birds seen at Estero Llano Grande State Park, Hidalgo Co 29 May (ph. Caley Thomas).

Pine Siskin – Three Pine Siskins observed at Choke Canyon State Park, Calliham Unit, McMullen Co 21 May (ph. Greg Steeves; Lynn Thompson) were late.

Chestnut-collared Longspur – A flock of 14 Chestnut-collared Longspurs observed coming in to drink water 9 Apr (ph. Daniel Mitev) at a pond in Laredo provided for a rare Webb Co record.

Brewer's Sparrow – A Brewer's Sparrow present at South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, Cameron Co 24-25 Apr (Agnieszka Skuza, Bruce Neville & Christopher Rustay) was a late & out-of-place migrant.

Dark-eyed Junco – A Dark-eyed Junco present at South Padre Island Convention Center, Cameron Co 19-23 Apr (Dan Hoobler et al) was quite late and far south. Another bird reported from San Patricio Co 20 Apr (Skip Cantrell) was notable also.

Green-tailed Towhee – Two Green-tailed Towhees seen at the San Antonio Viejo Ranch, Jim Hogg Co 3 May (Jenna Hatfield) and another bird seen at Harlingen's Hugh Ramsey Park, Cameron Co 2 May (Kristy Baker) were late.

Bobolink – Bobolink jazzed up spring migration with single males present at Charlie's Pasture 17-26 Apr (ph. Tricia Gardner; m.obs.) & Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center 22 Apr (Samuel Ares) Nueces Co, Guadalupe Delta WMA, Calhoun Co 21 Apr (Dora Ann Ortego, Brent Ortego), South Padre Island, Cameron Co 22-27 Apr (Jason Massey et al), and Attwatter Prairie Chicken NWR, Colorado Co 4 May (John Berner).

Scott's Oriole – A Scott's Oriole seen near Port Lavaca, Calhoun Co 21 Apr (ph. Christopher Wilson) was quite rare for the Coastal Bend.

Golden-winged x Blue-winged Warbler – A stunning male Golden-winged x Blue-winged (Lawrence's) Warbler visited Goose Island State Park, Aransas Co 18-20 Apr (ph. John & Kathy Keagle et al).

Kentucky Warbler – A Kentucky Warbler seen at Greenhill Cemetery, Jim Hogg Co 24-25 Apr (Angela Bailey, Chris Bailey; ph. Teresa Keck) was a nice inland find.

Cape May Warbler – A veritable flood of Cape May Warblers occurred this spring in South Texas. Up to four birds were present at Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, Nueces Co 4-5 May (Christine Turnbull, ph. Kevin Cochran) and the Convention Center on South Padre Island, Cameron Co 6-7 May (ph. Bob Hargis; m.obs.). A male was present at Quinta Mazatlan, Hidalgo Co 8-11 May (ph. Damian Martinez, Nancy Martinez).

Cerulean Warbler – A male Cerulean Warbler spotted in a mesquite tree on a private ranch in Jim Hogg Co 22 Apr (ph. Greyson Poutas; Ari Rice et al) provided a rare record for the very under birded South Texas Brush Country.

Chestnut-sided Warbler – A Chestnut-sided Warbler observed in Laredo, Webb Co 13 May (ph. Daniel Mitev) well west of the species' typical migration corridor.

Black-throated Blue Warbler – The only Black-throated Blue Warbler reported in South Texas this spring was a female present at South Padre Island Convention Center, Cameron Co 11-12 Apr (Louis & Christine Warren et al).

Townsend's Warbler – In Nueces Co Single Townsend's Warblers were seen at Packery Channel 16 Apr (ph. Kevin Cochran; m.obs) and 30 Apr (Keith Bartels, Matt Heindel) and at Blucher Park 25 Apr (ph. Keith Bartels, Matt Heindel). A female Townsend's Warbler was present at the South Padre Island Convention Center, Cameron Co 28 Apr (ph. Peggy Rudman; m.obs.).

Rufous-capped Warbler – Two Rufous-capped Warblers found in a black willow tree in San Ygnacio, Starr Co 29 May (ph. Elsa Hull) were likely a pair.

Golden-crowned Warbler – The Golden-crowned Warbler present at Brownsville's Gladys Porter Zoo, Cameron Co all winter stayed until 17 Mar (m.obs.).

Scarlet Tanager – A Scarlet Tanager seen near Normanna, Bee Co 27 May (Linda Vegh) was late.

Flame-colored Tanager – A Flame-colored Tanager present at South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, Cameron Co 2-8 May (ph.; m.obs.) added some much needed spice to spring migration.

Crimson-collared Grosbeak - Crimson-collared Grosbeaks continued to excite birders into spring with a female staying at Estero Llano Grande State Park, Hidalgo Co to 25 Mar (Tiffany Kersten), a heard only bird reported from Quinta Mazatlan, Hidalgo Co 30 Apr (Ryan Rodriguez), a continuing female staying at Santa Ana NWR, Hidalgo Co to 12 Apr (m.obs.), a male reported at Santa Ana NWR 5 Mar (Scott Harris), a female continuing at Resaca de la Palma State Park, Cameron Co to 19 Mar.

Black-headed Grosbeak –Black-headed Grosbeak showed well in South Texas this spring with birds scattered from Cameron Co to San Patricio Co (m.obs.).

Blue Bunting – Blue Bunting continued to dazzle birders in the LRGV this spring. A male Blue Bunting lingered from winter at Resaca de la Palma State Park, Cameron Co until 18 Mar (m.obs.) while another male was found along one of the trails there 18 Apr (Raul Garza). Further east, a female visited Laguna Vista Nature Trail, Cameron Co 30 Apr (ph. Susan Wheeler). In Hidalgo Co a male was observed at Estero Llano Grande State Park 31 Mar (Ryan Rodriguez) and another male was present at Frontera Audubon Center 4 & 6 Apr (Tiffany Kersten et al). And finally a stunning male was spotted at feeders on a private ranch in Starr Co 27 Mar (ph. Maureen Breakiron-Evans, David Price).

Lazuli Bunting – It was a season for Lazuli Bunting with at least 18 birds spotted at various South Texas locations.

Yellow-faced Grassquit – A furtive Yellow-faced Grassquit visited at Estero Llano Grande State Park, Hidalgo Co 8 & 29 Mar (m.obs.; ph. Cindy Haugen).

Cited Observers

Samuel Ares
Angela Bailey
Chris Bailey
Kristy Baker
Trey Barron
Keith Bartels
Rheinhard Beatty
Bruce Berman
John Berner
Kelsey Biles
Maureen Breakiron-Evans
Skip Cantrell
Maggie Carpenter
Kevin Cochran
Chan Dolan
Karen Eagle
Dan Edge
Bill Eisele
Gavin Emmons
Christian Fernandez
Tricia Gardner
Kim Garwood
Raul Garza
Javi Gonzalez
Shannon Grubbs
Bob Hargis
Scott Harris
Ken Hartman
Jenna Hatfield
Cindy Haugen
Matt Heindel
William Hicks
Tom Hince
Petra Hockey
Dan Hoobler
Mike Hudson
Elsa Hull
Jason Hunt
John & Kathy Keagle
Teresa C. Keck
Tiffany Kersten
Simon Kiacz
Alex Lamoreaux
Justin LeClaire

Josh Lefever
Nancy Leonard
Megan Lesak
Damian Martinez
Nancy Martinez
Jason Massey
Emma Mathis
Jon McIntyre
Daniel Mitev
Isidro Montemayor
Bruce Neville
Brent Ortego
Dora Ann Ortego
Christina Parks
Glenn Perrigo
Ray Pescatore
Nathan Pieplow
Brian Platt
Greyson Poutas
David Price
Warren Pulich Jr.
Paul Randall
Emily Reasor
Ari Rice
David Jeffrey Ringer
Ryan Rodriguez
Peggy Rudman
Christopher Rustay
Roberto San Antonio
Agnieszka Skuza
Johnny Slack
Molly Smith
Andrew Spencer
Jeff Stacey
Greg Steves
Mike Stewart
Yvette Stewart
William Supulski
Caley Thomas
Lynn Thompson
Stuart Tower
Christine Turnbull
Peter Vakay
Linda Vegh
Cindy & Mike Venus
Matthew Voelker

Louis & Christine Warren
Ron Weeks
Alacia Welch
Susan Wheeler
Christopher Wilson
John Yochum