

NORTHWEST TEXAS BIRD REPORT
WINTER 2021-2022
Prepared by Anthony Hewetson

TBRC review species are in **bold**. All cited observers are listed, alphabetically, at the end of the report.

SNOW GOOSE: 3500 Snow Geese were found near Panhandle, Potter Co 25 Dec (Rod Goodwin), 4600 Snow Geese were at City Farms, Lubbock Co 29 Jan (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson), 14275 Snow Geese were found near Shallowater, Lubbock Co 29 Jan (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson), 2006 Snow Geese were seen at McAlister Park, Lubbock Co 10 Feb (Jim Crites), and 2489 Snow Geese were seen near Littlefield, Lamb Co 22 Feb (Sheri Anderson) – these numbers were stunningly above normal numbers for the region in winter!

ROSS'S GOOSE: 420 Ross's Geese were near Shallowater, Lubbock Co 29 Jan (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson) – another example of startlingly high goose numbers in the region during the season

GREATER WHITE-FRONTED GOOSE: 425 Greater White-fronted Geese were seen near Lorenzo, Crosby Co 19 Dec (Mark Lockwood), 444 Greater White-fronted Geese were found near Benjamin, Knox Co 25 Jan (Bobby Schat), and 220 Greater White-fronted Geese were seen near McAdoo, Dickens Co 13 Feb (Mark Lockwood) – more examples of startlingly high goose numbers in the region during the season.

BRANT: One Brant persisted at Travis Trussell Park, Hale Co through 8 Dec (Niler Pyeatt, multiple observers, photographs), a much darker and less patterned Brant was seen near Roosevelt, Lubbock Co 27 Dec (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs), a different Brant persisted at Travis Trussell Park, Hale Co 11 Jan-3 Feb (Niler Pyeatt, Mark Lockwood, multiple observers, photographs), and yet another Brant was at various parks in Lubbock, Lubbock Co 21 Jan-9 Feb (Jim Crites, Anthony Hewetson, multiple observers, photographs) – folk who reviewed available photographs felt that at least four birds were found during the season - though considered accidental to the region, area hunters report them close to annually.

TUNDRA SWAN: one Tundra Swan was found at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co 29 Dec (Rod Goodwin, photographs) – formerly a bit more regular in the region; now closing in on accidental.

MEXICAN DUCK: One Mexican Duck was at Leroy Elmore Park, Lubbock Co 1 Dec-28 Feb (Peter Keyel, multiple observers, photographs) – this bird cleared eBird reviewer's scrutiny; all others reported in the region appeared, to at least some reviewers, to be of mixed ancestry.

GREATER SCAUP: One Greater Scaup was at City Farms, Lubbock Co 18 Dec (Anthony Hewetson), one Greater Scaup was at Whisperwood Pond, Lubbock Co 22 Dec

(Jim Crites, photographs), one Greater Scaup was at McAlister Park, Lubbock Co 26 Jan (Sheri Anderson, photographs), one Greater Scaup was at White River Lake, Crosby Co 9 Feb (Mark Lockwood, photographs), and 1-2 Greater Scaup were at Whisperwood Pond, Lubbock Co 19-22 Feb (Joe Girgente, Hannah Wojo, multiple observers, photographs) – either very rare or somewhat under-reported in the region; this was a very good showing for a single season in the region.

COMMON GOLDENEYE: 3 Common Goldeneyes were at Thompson Park, Potter Co 8-22 Jan (Phil Thorpe, multiple observers, photographs), 4-7 Common Goldeneyes were at Southeast Park, Randall Co 30 Jan-28 Feb (James Hamous, multiple observers, photographs), one Common Goldeneye was at Upper Know Tank, Garza Co 13 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson), and 2 Common Goldeneyes were at the Springlake School Playa, Lamb Co 27 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – very good numbers and incredibly good scatter for the region.

COMMON MERGANSER: 31 Common Mergansers at MacKenzie Reservoir, Briscoe Co 23 Jan (Ari Rice), 32-50 Common Mergansers were at Ransom Lake, Lubbock Co 7 Jan-6 Feb (Tucker Dangremond, multiple observers, photographs), 24-45 Common Mergansers were at Southeast Park, Randall Co 30 Jan-28 Feb (James Hamous, multiple observers, photographs), 154-242 Common Mergansers were at White River Lake, Crosby Co 9-27 Feb (Mark Lockwood, Angelina Zappia, multiple observers, photographs), and one Common Merganser was at Springlake School Playa, Lamb Co 27 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – incredibly good numbers and good scatter for the region; the Lamb County bird was probably a first county record.

HORNED GREBE: 1-2 Horned Grebes were at Buffalo Springs Lake, Lubbock Co 11 Jan-17 Feb (Sheri Anderson, multiple observers, photographs) – formerly regular in the region; records are now very sparse.

CLARK'S GREBE: One Clark's Grebe was found at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co 31 Jan (James Hamous) – a very rare winter visitor to the region.

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD: One Broad-tailed Hummingbird persisted in a Lubbock yard, Lubbock Co 5-13 Dec (Kathy Teague, photographs) – accidental to the region this late in the season but this is the second year in a row with a bird persisting well into December.

WHOOPIING CRANE: One Whooping Crane was found in a large group of Sandhill Cranes near Brownfield, Terry Co 20 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – formerly accidental to the region; now closing on annual.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: One Spotted Sandpiper was found at Muleshoe National Wildlife Refuge, Bailey Co 7 Jan (Icarus Haradon) – very rare in the region during winter away from in-town playas of Lubbock

GREATER YELLOWLEGS: 13 Greater Yellowlegs were at the CR 104 x Highway 70 Playa, Lamb Co 27 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – while small numbers of this species are in the region during most winters, this is an exceptionally high number for a winter sighting.

BONAPARTE'S GULL: 13 Bonaparte's Gulls were found at McAlister Park, Lubbock Co 17 Dec (Jennifer Miller) – while small numbers of this species are in the region during most winters, this is an exceptionally high number for a single sighting.

CALIFORNIA GULL: One first cycle California Gull was reported from various Lubbock parks, Lubbock Co 3 Dec-28 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Joe Girgente, multiple observers, photographs) - accidental to the region; this bird went through the process of losing one leg during the period but, save for one week, seemed to be in good health and was flying well by the end of the period.

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL: 1-2 Lesser Black-backed Gulls were at Lake McDonald, Randall Co 30 Dec-24 Feb (Vicki Wilmarth, multiple observers, photographs), one Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Lake Palo Duro, Hansford Co 23 Jan (Fred Collins, Bob Friedrichs, photographs), one Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Southeast Park, Randall Co 9 Feb (Vicki Wilmarth), and one Lesser Black-backed Gull was at Lake Meredith, Hutchinson Co 19-22 Feb (Vicki Wilmarth, James Hamous) – the second winter in a row with a surprisingly large number of records for the region.

GLAUCOUS GULL: One Glaucous Gull was at Southeast Park, Randall Co 10 Feb (Doug Smith, Sue Smith, photographs) – accidental to the region; reported about once a decade.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: 210-219 Double-crested Cormorants were at McAlister Park, Lubbock Co 7-20 Dec (Joe Cochran, Jim Crites) – an exceptionally large group for any one site in the region.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: 26 American White Pelicans were found at McAlister Park, Lubbock Co 17 Dec (Jennifer Miller, Jim Crites, multiple observers, photographs) and 136 American White Pelicans were seen near Clarendon, Donley Co 31 Dec (Gayle Bachert) – high and exceptionally high numbers for any particular site in the region.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON: One Yellow-crowned Night Heron was seen at Childress Fair Park, Childress Co 9 Dec (Betty Dunn) – this is a very late sighting for this far north in the region.

BALD EAGLE: One Bald Eagle was found at Silver Falls Rest Area, Crosby Co 4 Dec (Mark Lockwood, photographs), 1-2 Bald Eagles were at White River Lake, Crosby Co 8 Dec-23 Jan (Mark Lockwood, Rich Kostecke, multiple observers, photographs), one Bald Eagle was at the Himmel Farm, Crosby Co 9-11 Dec (Kelly Himmel), 1-3 Bald Eagles were in the vicinity of City Farms, Lubbock Co 14 Dec-25 Feb (Jesse Huth, multiple observers, photographs), 16 Bald Eagles were found near Panhandle, Carson Co 25 Dec

(Rod Goodwin), 13 Bald Eagles were seen along Count Road, G, Carson Co 28 Dec (Rod Goodwin, photographs), one Bald Eagle was over the TTU HSC Campus, Lubbock Co 4 Jan (Anthony Hewetson), one Bald Eagle was found near Slaton, Lubbock Co 11 Jan (Nathan Harvey), 13 Bald Eagles were seen at McGee Lake, Potter Co 16 Jan (James Hamous), one Bald Eagle was at Clapp Park, Lubbock Co 21 Jan (Justin Bosler), a different Bald Eagle was at Clapp Park, Lubbock Co 4 Feb (Jim Crites), and one Bald Eagle was at the CR 110 x FM 378 Playa, Floyd Co 6 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – this was an incredibly good season for the species in the region with exceptionally high numbers to the north and exceptionally good scatter to the south.

HARRIS'S HAWK: One Harris's Hawk was at Travis Trussell Park, Hale Co 10 Dec (Christian Walker, photographs), one Harris's Hawk was seen near Gruver, Hansford Co 21 Jan (Owen Hitchens, photographs), and 3 Harris's Hawks were found near Wellman, Terry Co 20 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – an intermittent visitor and even more intermittent breeder in southern portions of the region; good numbers for winter.

BARRED OWL: One Barred Owl was seen and heard at Lake Palo Duro, Hansford Co 23 Jan (Fred Collins, Bob Friedrichs, photographs) – accidental to the region.

SNOWY OWL: One Snowy Owl was found near Spearman, Hansford Co 11 Dec (Bryan Box, Aaron Short, photograph) – accidental to the region and, in fact, to the state.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER: One Red-bellied Woodpecker was seen near Kalgary, Crosby Co 2 Jan (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson) – well west of the normal haunts of this species in the region.

HAIRY WOODPECKER: One Hairy Woodpecker was located at Swenson Park, Spur, Dickens Co 7 Feb (Mark Lockwood, photographs) – accidental to the southern high plains portion of the region.

HAMMOND'S FLYCATCHER: One Hammond's Flycatcher was located along Red Mud Road, Dickens Co 13 Jan (Mark Lockwood, photographs) – accidental in the region during the winter.

NORTHERN SHRIKE: A continuing Northern Shrike persisted in the area below Lake Six, Lubbock Co through 28 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Brad Shine, multiple observers, photographs) – casual, at best, this far south in the region.

BUSHTIT: 14 Bushtits were located in the Gray Mule area, Floyd Co 6 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson) – formerly regular in the region, now casual and restricted to the eastern portion of the region.

TREE SWALLOW: One Tree Swallow was located at Lake Two, Lubbock Co 25-26 Feb (Joe Cochran, multiple observers, photographs) – formerly unrecorded in the region this

early; this is the second year in a row we have had first reports fall during the winter season.

GRAY CATBIRD: One Gray Catbird was found in a Lubbock yard, Lubbock Co 1-31 Dec (Ken Dixon) and one Gray Catbird was found at Palo Duro Canyon State Park, Randall Co 1 Dec-19 Feb (Doug Smith, multiple observers, photographs) – formerly casual, at best, in the region during winter; we now expect a few reports each winter.

WESTERN BLUEBIRD: 3 Western Bluebirds were found at White River Lake, Crosby Co 9 Feb (Mark Lockwood, photographs) – a very poor year for the species; surprising to have the sole report for the season come from so far southeast in the region.

SPRAGUE’S PIPIT: One Sprague’s Pipit was seen and heard near Becton, Lubbock Co 12 Feb (Jeff Sexton, multiple observers) – accidental to the region in winter.

AMERICAN PIPIT: 50-150 American Pipits were present at City Farms, Lubbock Co 14 Dec-30 Jan (Joe Girgente, Ari Rice, multiple observers) – unusually large numbers for the region

LESSER GOLDFINCH: 3 Lesser Goldfinches were in Canyon, Randall Co 2 Jan (Peggy Trospen), 2 Lesser Goldfinches were found near Quanah, Hardeman Co 19 Feb (Bryan Box, Scotty Lofland, photographs), and 4 Lesser Goldfinches were found at Yoakum County Park, Yoakum Co 20 Feb (Carlos Fernando Ramirez Torres) – lingering through winter further north and west with each passing year.

SMITH’S LONGSPUR: One Smith’s Longspur was seen at Muleshoe NWR, Bailey Co 19 Dec (Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – well out of range though not unprecedented for the region.

LARK SPARROW: One Lark Sparrow was found near Polar, Kent Co 13 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson) – casual in the region during winter; most likely in the southeastern portion of the region and this record falls into that pattern.

GRASSHOPPER SPARROW: One Grasshopper Sparrow was seen along Red Mud Road, Dickens Co 2 Jan (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson) and one Grasshopper Sparrow was seen at McAlister Park, Lubbock Co 5-17 Jan (Jim Crites, multiple observers, photographs) – formerly casual, at best, in the region during winter but now seems to be verging on annual.

CHIPPING SPARROW: 5 Chipping Sparrows were found at Palo Duro Canyon State Park, Randall Co 4 Dec (Ari Rice) – good numbers for this far north in the region during winter.

AMERICAN TREE SPARROW: One American Tree Sparrow was at McAlister Park, Lubbock Co 5-28 Feb (Joe Cochran, multiple observers, photographs) – formerly annual

in the southern portion of the region during winter; now casual at best with reports coming in every two-five years.

HARRIS'S SPARROW: One Lark Sparrow at Lake Six, Lubbock Co 11 Dec (Phillip Kite), one Lark Sparrow at Mae Simmons Park, Lubbock Co 11 Dec (Phillip Kite), one Harris's Sparrow at White River Lake, Crosby Co 2 Jan (Brandon Best, Rich Kostecke), 2 Harris's Sparrows were found near Red Mud, Dickens Co 2 Jan (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson), one Harris's Sparrow was found at White River Lake, Crosby Co 10 Jan (Mark Lockwood), and one Harris's Sparrow was seen near Plains Baptist Assemble, Floyd Co 6 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson, photographs) – formerly regular even in the southern portions of the region; this now represents an exceptionally good winter for that portion of the region.

LECONTE'S SPARROW: One LeConte's Sparrow was found at Lake Alan Henry, Kent Co 13 Feb (Sheri Anderson, Anthony Hewetson) – casual to the region in winter; generally in grasslands near our largest reservoirs.

GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE: One Green-tailed Towhee was found at Lake Alan Henry, Garza Co 21 Dec (Stephen Kasper, Mark Lockwood) – very rare in the region during winter.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: Though individual reports were not particularly stunning the fact that we had close to three dozen reports of 1-7 birds spread across twelve sites in Lubbock Co and one site in Randall Co during the period (multiple observers, photographs) made for the best showing for the species in the region during winter for at least two decades.

BRONZED COWBIRD: One male Bronzed Cowbird was located at the Target grackle roost, Lubbock Co 8 Dec (Ari Rice) – this species is close to becoming a permanent, low density resident in the region with this being the second winter in a row that individuals legitimately wintered.

RUSTY BLACKBIRD: One Rusty Blackbird was seen at Caprock Canyons State Park, Briscoe Co 3 Jan (Gary Yoder, photographs) and one Rusty Blackbird was found at City Farms, Lubbock Co 15 Jan (Joe Girgente, photographs) – formerly considered casual, at best, in the region, the species is now considered a regular, albeit low-density, winter visitor.

Cited observers: Sheri Anderson, Gayle Bachert, Brandon Best, Justin Bosler, Bryan Box, Joe Cochran, Fred Collins, Jim Crites, Tucker Dangremond, Ken Dixon, Betty Dunn, Bob Friedrichs, Joe Girgente, Rod Goodwin, James Hamous, Icarus Haradon, Nathan Harvey, Anthony Hewetson, Owen Hilchey, Kelly Himmel, Jesse Huth, Stephen Kasper, Peter Keyel, Phillip Kite, Rich Kostecke, Scotty Lofland, Mark Lockwood, Jennifer Miller, Niler Pyeatt, Ari Rice, Bobby Schat, Jeff Sexton, Brad Shine, Aaron Short, Doug Smith, Sue Smith, Kathy Teague, Phil Thorpe, Carlos Fernando Ramirez

Torres, Peggy Troster, Christian Walker, Vicki Wilmarth, Hannah Wojo, Gary Yoder,
Angelina Zappia.