

DRAFT
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North Central Texas Bird Report
Spring-2019

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Regional Highlights: Black-billed Cuckoo, Wilson's Plover, MacGillivray's Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Cape May Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler

Highlights

WARBLERS! Wow it was an excellent spring migration for casual, rare, and uncommon warbler species. The stormy very wet May weather pattern certainly played a major role in the occurrence of these warblers. Up to 16 species reported May 11-12. Most were seen at two hotspots the ecotone vagrant trap at Pecan Valley Park north of Lake Benbrook where the trees stop and prairie starts and at Prairie Creek Park where the pecans where the in very good health this year.

Overview

Ducks

The early duck migration was about normal with strong numbers of Blue-winged teal through early May.

Shorebirds

Shorebirds diversity was average: abundance varied by species with some in lower than average numbers and others being recorded in above average numbers. Shorebirds arrived and left quickly this season.

Raptors

The raptor migration was poor as migrants went undetected. No Broad-winged Hawks kettles were reported, the largest Swainson's Hawk kettle was a mere 28, and no Mississippi kite kettles were reported this spring.

Swallows

Swallow reports were mixed but in general seemed lower overall in number than previous years. Colony size continues to decline at some locales.

Passerines

The passerine migration varied from poor in April with many very slow days to excellent in May, but only at a few days/locations. The May stormy wet weather contributed by downing warblers

L. Tawakoni, normally one of the best spots in the region, had a very poor year, maybe the worst in 10+ years. Bob Woodruff Park in Plano was also below average on many days while Prairie Creek Park, Collin and Pecan Valley Park, Tarrant had more great days than bad days. Some passerine species were uncharacteristically in low numbers this spring and very difficult to find.

Flycatchers

Eastern Kingbird numbers were record low in the east but strong in the center of the region. Alder/Willow/Yellow-bellied flycatcher reports were very low though out the region.

Vireos

Warbling Vireo numbers were well below average while Blue-headed vireos were below average.

Thrushes

Thrush numbers reported were well below average. Wood thrush continues to be very scarce with only one report this season.

Warblers

Rare to uncommon warblers were in above average numbers: Golden-winged (8), Blue-winged (6), Palm (5), Hooded (3). In stark contrast to the great casually occurring warbler finds this spring, was the below average number of some common warbler species. Yellow warbler numbers were record low in the east and below average in the central section of the region. Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Ovenbird, and Canada numbers were lower than average in many locales.

Sparrows

Both Chipping and Lincoln's sparrows were in near record low numbers.

Tanagers

Summer tanagers were in above average number while Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and Blue Grosbeaks were in below average number.

Potentially Noteworthy

Black-billed Cuckoo – Casual at best now because of a severe population decline was a Black-billed Cuckoo at Pecan Valley Park, L. Benbrook, *Tarrant* 3 May (John Allendorf, ph.)

Wilson's Plover –An unexpected out of range first spring Wilson's Plover at Lake Lavon, *Collin* 7 Apr (Don Stanley, Michael James, ph) was a first for n-central Texas.

Laughing Gull – A Laughing Gull at North Holiday Park, L. Benbrook, *Tarrant* 22 Apr (Earl Lyons, ph.) was a rare find.

Brown Pelican – A Brown Pelican wandered to L. Stephenville, *Erath* 7 May (Cathy Knoll) proving a first record for the county.

Glossy Ibis – Rare but a regular spring migrant in n-central Texas was a Glossy Ibis at Village Creek Drying Beds, Arlington, *Tarrant* 25-26 April (Colby Ayers, ph).

Common Raven – A first for the county was a pair of Common Ravens at L. Stamford, Park, *Haskell* 19 Apr (Greg Cook) and further evidence that the species is expanding into western n-central Texas.

Worm-eating Warbler – Unexpected west of normal range was a Worm-eating Warbler at Colleyville Nature Center, *Tarrant* 12 May (Suzanne Odum).

MacGillivray's Warbler – East of normal and casual in n-central Texas was a male MacGillivray's Warbler at Pecan Valley Park, *Tarrant* 3 May (John Allendorf, ph., Steve Glover).

Cape May Warbler – A stellar find was a female Cape May Warbler at Prairie Creek Park, *Collin* 12 May (Matt O'Sullivan, Chuck Carlson, Martha Vanoy, ph., m.ob.), the first documented spring record for n-central Texas.

Cerulean Warbler –West of normal range and casual in n-central Texas was a female Cerulean Warbler at Pecan Valley Park, Benbrook *Tarrant* 4 May (John Allendorf, Cody Norris, et al., ph).

Black-throated Blue Warbler –Casual at best in n-central Texas was a well described male Black-throated Blue Warbler at the Old Fish Hatchery, White Rock Lake, *Dallas* 27 Apr (Brenda Shelton et al.) and one at Pecan Valley Park, Benbrook, 14 May (John Allendorf, ph. Paula Channell).

Black-headed Grosbeak – Rare but increasingly regular as a migrant in n-central Texas were two Black-headed Grosbeaks along the Chat Trail, L, Wichita Park, *Wichita* 3 May (Scotty Lofland).

Departure Dates of Species reported in the Winter Report

Surf Scoter – The two Surf Scoters at Lake Bridgeport, Runaway Bay, *Wise* this winter lingered until 23 Mar (Michelle Summers, ph.).

Long-tailed Duck – The wintering Long-tailed Duck at Southside Water Treatment, *Dallas* lingered until 14 Mar (Ed Wetzel, m.ob., ph.).

Common Merganser – The Common Merganser reported from White Rock Lake, *Dallas* lingered until 23 Mar (Mike Cameron, m.ob., ph.).

Little Gull –One of the Little Gulls documented at White Rock Lake, *Dallas* this past winter was last reported 24 Mar (Chris Runk, m.ob.).

Western Gull –The 1st cycle **Western Gull** at the White Rock Lake spillway lingered irregularly until 9 Mar (Mike Cameron, Chris Runk, ph., m.ob.)

Iceland Gull – The irregularly seen 1st cycle Iceland (Thayer's) Gull at the White Rock Lake spillway, *Dallas* this winter lingered until 19 Mar (Chris Runk, ph).

Weather

An average March was followed by a very wet spring. Regionally rainfall ranged from normal to well above normal. Rainfall 15+ inches above normal in the east and 10+ inches above normal in the central section of the region. Flooding was common in low areas and both rivers and lakes are at or above flood stage this season.

Observers

John Allendorf
Colby Ayers
Mike Cameron
Chuck Carlson
Paula Channel
Greg Cook
Steve Glover
Michael James
Cathy Knoll
Scotty Lofland
Earl Lyons
Cody Norris
Suzanne Odum
Matt O'Sullivan
Chris Runk
Brenda Shelton
Don Stanley
Michelle Summers
Martha Vanoy
Ed Wetzel