

FINAL
North American Birds Regional Report

North Central Texas Fall 2021

Compiled and Edited by Ross Rasmussen

Regional Highlights: Curlew Sandpiper, Pomarine Jaeger, Rough-legged Hawk, Northern Saw-wet Owl, Northern Shrike, Worm-eating Warbler

Potentially Noteworthy Sightings

Common Ground Dove – A Common Ground Dove found along County Rd 3220 Hill Co 13 Nov (Jason Newton ph) was a rare find and the only sighting this fall.

Eastern Whip-poor-will - Never easy to locate and rare in fall was a migrant Eastern Whip-poor-Will perched along Gammon Rd adjacent to Lake Lewisville, Denton Co 22 Sep (Carrie Steingruber m.ob. ph).

Whooping Crane – Eleven migrating Whooping Cranes were reported over Joshua Johnson Co 8 and 11 Nov (Ty Allen, ph) and four were over Paradise Wise Co 12 Nov (Michelle Summers, ph).

Marbled Godwit – Rare this fall season was only a single report of Marbled Godwit at L. Lewisville Park, Denton Co. 21 Aug (Jane Strauss). This species is normally a regularly occurring uncommon migrant.

Curlew Sandpiper – The shorebird extreme rarity of the season was a of slightly molted adult Curlew Sandpiper at Hagerman NWR, Grayson Co, 22 Aug (Chris Pierce, m.ob., ph), the 13th sighting for Texas.

Sanderling – It was a record fall in n-cent Texas for normally uncommon Sanderlings with reports totaling at least 43 individuals. A flock of 23 juvenile Sanderlings at Hagerman NWR Grayson Co 21 Sept (Jack Chiles, ph) was an amazing sighting and a record day high count for n-central Texas.

Red-necked Phalarope – Rare but normally regular seasonally were Red-necked Phalaropes at the Dallas Wastewater Treatment Plant (restricted access), Seagoville Dallas Co 2 Aug (Matt DuRoss, ph), at Hagerman NWR Grayson Co 11 Oct (Kalder Korte, Neva Damron, ph), and at Dallas Wastewater Treatment Plant Seagoville, Dallas Co. 14 Oct (Roland Castenada ph).

Pomarine Jaeger – A great accidental fall find for the n-central Texas region was a **Pomarine Jaeger** at Bois D'Arc Reservoir Fannin Co 6-7 Nov (Blaine Carnes, Greg Cook, Mike Cameron, ph, Dean Turk).

Common Tern – Rare but regularly reported in the fall season, was a single Common Tern at Lake Grapevine, Oak Grove Park Tarrant Co 14-15 Oct (Todd Fitzgerald ph).

Brown Booby - The only Brown Booby reported this fall was one adult at Lake Whitney Hill/Bosque Co 21-23 Oct (Brittany Meager, Bryan Cotter, Lisa Silas ph).

Brown Pelican – A juvenile Brown Pelican at Lake Arrowhead Clay 15 Aug (Scotty Lofland ph) was at best casual in the northwest sector of n-cent Texas and the only report of the season.

Least Bittern – Two Least Bitterns at Village Creek Drying Beds Arlington, Tarrant Co 9 Aug (Paula Channel) and another single at Cement Creek Lake Tarrant Co 2 Oct (Todd Fitzgerald) provided the only seasonal sightings for this now rarely reported species in n-cent Texas.

Swallow-tailed Kite – Rare but a recently regular migrant in the region was a Swallow-tailed Kite at L. Benbrook Tarrant Co 16-22 Aug (ph. Claire Jordan, ph. John Allendorf).

Harris's Hawk – Numbers of Harris's Hawk have been on the decline after recent invasion years. This fall was one was observed at Buffalo Creek Reservoir, Wichita Co 22 Oct (Scotty Lofland ph) and another was found in Lucas, Collin Co 5 Nov (Brighid Brown ph).

Rough-legged Hawk – Rare south of normal winter regional range was a dark morph Rough-legged Hawk found flying in the vicinity of Winscott-Plover Rd. (Johnson Co/Tarrant Co 27-30+ Nov (John Allendorf, Ed Wetzel ph).

Long-eared Owl – Always a great find because of its secretive nature was a Long-eared Owl at Village Creek Drying Beds, Arlington, Tarrant Co 22-30+ Nov (John Maresch. mob ph)

Northern Saw-whet Owl – Accidental in the region were two Northern Saw-whet Owls. The first was found injured in Frisco Collin Co on 28 Nov and taken to the Collin Co and taken to the Collin Co Animal Shelter The second was found dead about two miles from the first near Frisco 28-29 Nov. (fide Bill Sain, Collin Co Animal Shelter).

Golden Eagle – A migrating Golden Eagle over the Fort Worth Nature Center Tarrant Co 11 Nov (Brenda Clark, ph) was south of normal regional range.

Northern Shrike – Exceptional was an accidental sighting of a juvenile Northern Shrike at Breckenridge Park, Richardson Collin Co 30 Oct (ph. Stacy Smith, ph. Nick DiGennaro). Stunning was another Northern Shrike at Village Creek Drying Beds Arlington, Tarrant Co 6 Nov+ (ph. Brian Driscoll, Louis Curtis, m.ob.). Prior to this year this species was sighted in region in 1989 and 2007.

Philadelphia Vireo – Rare but regular regionally were single Philadelphia Vireos found in Joshua Johnson Co 10 Sep (Cyrus Allen), at the Dallas Wastewater Treatment Plant 3 Oct (Matt DuRoss, ph), and at Lake Waxahachie Ellis Co 9 Oct (Ted Drozdowski).

Rock Wren – Casual east of normal regional range was a Rock Wren at the rocky boat ramp at Lake Lewisville Park, Denton Co 18 Oct-30+ Nov (Lamont Brown, Suzanne Schroeder ph m.ob.). Two Rock Wrens were also found at the Lake Bardwell Dam, Ellis Co 23-24 Nov (Ross Barnes-Rickett, Ty Allen, Ted Drozdowski, ph) where they are rare east of normal range.

Wood Thrush – Exceptionally rare was out of range westerly Wood Thrush at a residence in Wichita Falls, Wichita Co 29 Sep (Tommye Wright ph).

Ovenbird – Single Ovenbird were sighted at Meadowmere Park, L. Grapevine Denton Co 6 Sep (Todd Fitzgerald ph) and another at Prairie Creek Park Plano Collin Co 27 Oct (Chris O'Rear ph) were rare sightings.

Golden-winged Warbler – Always a rare find in fall was a Golden-winged Warbler at Bob Woodruff Park, Plano Collin Co 23 Sep (Jean Suplick, ph).

Worm-eating Warbler – Casual at best with only a few known fall records was a Worm-eating Warbler at Prairie Creek Park, Dallas Co (Joanne Chug ph).

Louisiana Waterthrush – Normally uncommon but rare this fall with only a single report for the species was a Louisiana Waterthrush at the old White Rock Fish Hatchery Dallas Co 19 Aug (Dana Sudborough).

Magnolia Warbler – Casual in fall, sometimes with years between a sighting, was a westerly out of range Magnolia Warbler in Doan's Crossing, Wilbarger Co. 25 Sep (Greg Cook), another at Frisco Commons Park Collin Co 1 Oct (Matt O'Sullivan), and another in Joshua Johnson Co (Cyrus Allen).

Blackburnian Warbler – Rare finds in fall were single Blackburnian Warblers at Sparger Park, Colleyville Tarrant Co. 17 Sep (Colby Ayers, ph) and in Joshua, Johnson Co (Cyrus Allen. ph).

Chestnut-sided Warbler – Casual at best in fall was a single Chestnut-sided Warbler at Colleyville Nature Center, Tarrant Co 10-11 Sep (Colby Ayers, ph) and another at Carpenter Park Plano Collin Co 9 Oct (Patti Goodman).

Palm Warbler – Two Palm Warblers were reported this fall; the first at Hagerman NWR Grayson Co (28 Sept (Jack Chiles ph) and the second at Village Creek Drying Beds, Arlington Tarrant Co 16-25 Oct (Colby Ayers ph, m.ob).

Prairie Warbler – Unexpected and casual at best west of normal range was a Prairie Warbler found in Paradise, Wise Co (Michelle Summers, ph).

Scarlet Tanager – Always a rare observation in fall was a Scarlet Tanager found at Colleyville Nature Center Tarrant (Colby Ayers ph).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak – Rose-breasted Grosbeak, normally uncommon seasonally, were scarce with only two reports: McKinney Collin Co 25 Sep (Steve Barr. ph) and at White Rock Lake Fish Hatchery 25 Oct (Chris Runk, ph).

Black-headed Grosbeak – Rare this fall was the only one report of Black-headed Grosbeak from Paradise, Wise Co 27 Sep – 1 Oct (Michelle Summers ph).

Family Overview

Waders and Shorebirds

As water levels began to recede in early August herons and egrets congregated at small exposed shallow habitats in good numbers. Hagerman NWR had up to 500 herons and egrets on 1 August. By mid-September some areas like Hagerman NWR had very good habitat for waders and shorebirds. However, many of the larger lakes still had unfavorable shorebird habitat.

The largest waders, Roseate Spoonbill and Wood Stork, that irrupt north to the region were in average numbers when compared to recent falls. The number of both have been in decline compared to 10+ years ago. Dark Ibis numbers were better than average at several locations.

When the entire region is considered, shorebird migration was below average for many species in diversity and abundance no doubt because of the high-water levels at many locations until September. Hagerman NWR, with its management of water levels, provided increasing average diversity and near average abundance of shorebirds by late August and early September. Southside Water Treatment Plant was the only other consistent location for shorebirds. Small numbers were reported from a few widely scattered sod farms

Piping Plover and Snowy Plover number reports (five and four respectively) were slightly below normal. The biggest surprises were the record fall numbers of Sanderlings (mostly juveniles) and well above average numbers of Short-billed Dowitchers (also mostly juveniles). Perhaps these species had a good nesting season this year. In contrast, were record low numbers of Marbled Godwits and near record low numbers of American Avocets.

Raptors

The raptor migration was unremarkable with only a few kettles reported this fall. Early and above normal were six sightings of Rough-legged Hawks in the region's northern boundary counties.

Passerines

Very low numbers of Eastern Phoebe's and Eastern Bluebirds were present west of Fort Worth. Vermillion Flycatchers normally uncommon in the west half of the region were also in record low numbers. These species may have been eliminated by the winter 2021 big freeze.

Many observers noted that passerine migration was excruciating slow many days during August and September; very low numbers were reported this fall. However, a higher number of warbler rarities were reported than in past falls. Fairly common migrants like Nashville Warbler were uncommon and in very low numbers in most locations. Other uncommon migrants like Louisiana Waterthrush and Wilson's Warbler were also noted as scarce this fall.

Weather

Temperatures ranged from near average too much warmer than normal as the season progressed from August through November. Rainfall was irregular with some localities near normal early in the season. After September rainfall was generally below normal in the region: a typical dry La Nina pattern.

Observers

Cyrus Allen
Ty Allen
John Allendorf
Coby Ayers
Ross Barnes-Pickett
Lamont Brown
Mike Cameron
Blaine Carnes
Roland Castenada
Paula Channel
Jack Chiles
Joanne Chug
Brenda Clark
Greg Cook
Bryan Cotter
Lewis Curtis
Neva Damron
Nick Digennaro
Ted Drozdowski
Matt DuRoss
Todd Fitzgerald
Patti Goodman
John Maresch
Brittany Meager
Jason Newman
Chris O'Rear
Matt O'Sullivan
Chris Pierce
Chris Runk
Bill Sain
Suzanne Schroeder
Lisa Silas
Jim Siporia
Carrie Steingruber
Jane Strauss
Dana Sudborough
Jean Suplick
Michelle Summers
Dean Turk
Tommye Wright