

Central Texas – Winter 2019-2020 (1 Dec 2019 – 29 Feb 2020)
Noteworthy Bird Sightings

Compiled by Eric Carpenter

Counties Covered: Andrews, Bandera, Bell, Bexar, Blanco, Borden, Brown, Burnet, Caldwell, Callahan, Coke, Coleman, Comal, Comanche, Concho, Coryell, Crockett, Dawson, De Witt, Eastland, Ector, Edwards, Erath, Fisher, Gaines, Gillespie, Glasscock, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Hamilton, Hays, Howard, Irion, Jones, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Kimble, Kinney, Lampasas, Lavaca, Llano, Martin, Mason, McCulloch, Medina, Menard, Midland, Mills, Mitchell, Nolan, Reagan, Real, Runnels, San Saba, Schleicher, Scurry, Shackelford, Sterling, Sutton, Taylor, Tom Green, Travis, Upton, Uvalde, Williamson, Wilson

Notable Species observed during the period:

Eurasian Wigeon - A male Eurasian Wigeon was an excellent discovery on a small pond 5 miles north-northwest of Cross Plains, *Callahan* 5 Jan (ph. Steve Glover).

Surf Scoter - A impressive inland count of 6 Surf Scoters spent the late winter at Belton Lake, *Bell* 7 Feb - 5 Mar (ph. Gil Eckrich, m.ob.).

White-winged Scoter - There are only a couple records of White-winged Scoter along the eastern edge of the Edwards Plateau so one on the Guadalupe River in s. Kerrville, *Kerr* 28 Dec (ph. Paul Sellin) was quite notable.

Long-tailed Duck - A Long-tailed Duck on a small playa 20 miles south of Lamesa, *Martin* 26 Jan (ph. James Court, Drew Harvey) was unexpected.

Clark's Grebe - Clark's Grebe are making in-roads along the eastern edge of their range with single birds at E.V. Spence Reservoir, *Coke* 21 Dec - 22 Feb (Emily Stoudt, ph. Jayton Carroll), at Lake Buchanan, *Llano* 25 Dec - 9 Feb (ph. Greg Cook), and at Champion Creek Reservoir, *Mitchell* 23 Feb (Greg Cook, Blaine Carnes).

Chaetura sp. - A unidentified Chaetura swift in Austin, *Travis* 3 Feb (Doug Booher, Amy Bishop) was intriguing; Vaux's is the most likely species in winter though Texas still lacks documented sightings of this species.

Anna's Hummingbird - Still not expected in central Texas, single Anna's Hummingbirds included a female 6 miles west-southwest of Dripping Springs, *Hays* 2 Dec (ph. Debra Hendricks) and a stunning male on the south side of Canyon Lake, *Comal* 26 Dec (ph. Ed Hickl).

Dunlin - Unusual was an inland wintering Dunlin 15 miles west-northwest of Brackettville, *Kinney* 25 Jan - 8 Feb (ph. Troy Hibbitts).

Wilson's Phalarope - Two Wilson's Phalaropes on a small playa 20 miles south of Lamesa, *Martin* 26 Jan (ph. James Court, Drew Harvey) were quite unseasonal, exceptionally so for such a northerly location.

Iceland Gull - Still hard to find in central Texas, an Iceland (Thayer's) Gull at Lake Buchanan, *Llano* 1 Jan (ph. Vincent O'Brien) was a surprising one-day wonder.

Lesser Black-backed Gull - Lesser Black-backed Gulls in the region included 2 at Mitchell Lake, *Bexar* 15 Dec (ph. Martin Reid, Sheridan Coffey), one southwest of Temple, *Bell* 22 Dec (ph. Randy Pinkston) and another at Twin Buttes Reservoir, *Tom Green* 13 Jan+ (ph. Lawrence Haller, m.ob.).

Glaucous Gull - Still only an infrequent visitor to the region, a first-cycle Glaucous Gull southwest of Temple, *Bell* 1 Jan (ph. Randy Pinkston) was a great way to start the year off.

Red-throated Loon - Two Red-throated Loons on Lake J.B. Thomas, *Scurry/Borden* 12 Jan (ph. Greg Cook, ph. Steve Glover, Blaine Carnes) was a good find.

Wood Stork - A wandering Wood Stork in south San Antonio, *Bexar* 14 Dec (ph. Patty Pasztor, m.ob.) was well north for so late in the fall/early winter.

White-tailed Hawk - White-tailed Hawks continue to creep northward in central Texas; the northern-most sighting this season was one northwest of Holland, *Bell* 15 Jan (ph. Randy Pinkston).

Zone-tailed Hawk - Out of range was a Zone-tailed Hawk west-southwest of Stockdale, *Wilson* 11 Jan (ph. Willie Sekula).

Long-eared Owl - Never predictable where they'll be found in the state, a roost of up to 7 Long-eared Owl was a nice discovery west of Ballinger, *Runnels* 26 Jan - 6 Mar (ph. Jay Packer, m.ob.).

Red-headed Woodpecker - A Red-headed Woodpecker was along the extreme eastern edge of where they might be looked for south of Buffalo Gap, *Taylor* 16 Dec - 26 Jan. (ph. Jay Packer).

Ash-throated Flycatcher - Single Ash-throated Flycatchers near Lake Buchanan, *Llano* 25 Dec (ph. Greg Cook) and southeast of Thrall, *Williamson* 1 Feb (ph. Jason Leifester) were unusual for late winter/early fall sightings so far inland.

Cassin's Vireo - A great find for central Texas was a Cassin's Vireo in San Antonio, *Bexar* 24 Jan - 5 Mar (ph. Martin Reid, m.ob.).

Barn Swallow - A Barn Swallow at Lake Pflugerville, *Travis* 25 Jan (Richard Kaskan) was perhaps a sign of the mildness of the winter season.

Townsend's Solitaire - The most easterly Townsend's Solitaire reported was one just nw. of Boerne, *Kendall* 21-24 Jan (ph. Mike Crownover).

Rufous-backed Robin - A Rufous-backed Robin along the Nueces River west of Uvalde, *Uvalde* 4 Jan (ph. Tripp Davenport) was certainly last winter's returning bird but this year's bird was only a one-day wonder.

White Wagtail - Texas's first White Wagtail (*ocularis* subspecies) was certainly the seasonal highlight. Discovered below Longhorn Dam in east Austin, *Travis* 8 Feb (ph. Jeff Osborne, Janet Davis), it was enjoyed by at least 100 birders the following day (ph., m.ob.). It remained elusive the rest of the period until it was rediscovered at the same location 28 Feb and remained well into the spring.

Bullock's Oriole - Wintering sightings of Bullock's Orioles are not expected so single birds in east Austin, *Travis* 25-31 Dec (ph. Tyler Miloy) and in Cedar Park, *Williamson* 20 Feb (ph. Rich Kostecke) were notable.

Audubon's Oriole - The small Audubon's Oriole northward incursion continued with up to 4 bird south of Belmont, *Gonzales* thru 6 Jan (ph. Florence King), 3 at Lake Wood, *Gonzales* 24 Jan (ph. Bob Friedrichs), and up to 4 near Seguin, *Guadalupe* 13-25 Feb (ph. Sam Fruehling).

Rusty Blackbird - Rusty Blackbirds wandered west with one at Fort Clark Springs, *Kinney* 11 Dec (ph. Bryan Calk), up to 9 at Abilene State Park, *Taylor* 15-28 Dec (ph. Jay Packer) and one at Utopia, *Uvalde* 15 Feb (Mitch Heindel).

Louisiana Waterthrush - Unseasonal was a Louisiana Waterthrush just outside Lost Maples S.N.A., *Bandera* 18 Dec (ph. Christian Fernandez).

Cape May Warbler - Always a great find in the winter, a Cape May Warbler was seen by several birders while it wintered at Aquarena Springs, *Hays* 7 Jan - 15 Feb (ph. Aaron White, m.ob.).

Prairie Warbler - An exceptional late-winter find was a Prairie Warbler at Proctor Lake, *Comanche* 31 Jan (ph. Kerri Sloan).

Summer Tanager - A male Summer Tanager wintered in Kerrville, *Kerr* 15 Dec - 7 Feb (ph. Ruth King).

Western Tanager - Also nice for mid-winter was a Western Tanager just southwest of Boerne, *Kendall* 2 Jan (ph. Betty Dunn).

Morelet's Seedeater - Unexpected so far north and away from the Rio Grande corridor, a Morelet's Seedeater at Cook's Slough, Uvalde, *Uvalde* 31 Dec - 3 Jan (ph. Fyn Kynd) was certainly out of place.

Cited observers and contributors:

Amy Bishop, Doug Booher, Bryan Calk, Blaine Carnes, Jayton Carroll, Sheridan Coffey, Greg Cook, James Court, Mike Crownover, Tripp Davenport, Janet Davis, Betty Dunn, Gil Eckrich, Christian Fernandez, Bob Friedrichs, Sam Fruehling, Steve Glover, Lawrence Haller, Drew Harvey, Mitch Heindel, Debra Hendricks, Troy Hibbitts, Ed Hickl, Richard Kaskan, Florence King, Ruth King, Rich Kostecke, Fyn Kynd, Jason Leifester, Tyler Miloy, Vicent O'Brien, Jeff Osborne, Jay Packer, Patty Pasztor, Randy Pinkston, Martin Reid, Willie Sekula, Paul Sellin, Kerri Sloan, Emily Stoudt, Aaron White