

Central Texas – Summer 2021 (1 June 2021 – 31 July 2021)
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:

Red-breasted Merganser - Quite unseasonal was a Red-breasted Merganser that lingered at Walter E. Long Lake, Travis Co 22-28 Jun (ph. Jeff Osborne, Janet Davis).

Mexican Violetear - Mexican Violetears put in appearances northwest of Leakey, Real Co 17-18 Jun (ph. Mike Woods, Pam Woods) and at Boerne, Kendall Co 24-25 Jun (ph. Dick Park).

Calliope Hummingbird - A male Calliope Hummingbird in Midland, Midland Co 22-24 Jul (ph. Greg Palko) was an early migrant.

Rufous Hummingbird - A male Rufous Hummingbird in northwest Austin, Travis Co 7 Jul (Jane Tillman) was a bit early.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird - The Buff-bellied Hummingbird in New Braunfels, Comal Co in mid-May remained until at least 3 Jun (Rebekah Rylander).

American Golden-Plover - A tardy American Golden-Plover at Twin Buttes Reservoir, Tom Green Co 6 Jun (ph. Randy Hesford) only had one leg.

Piping Plover - A lone Piping Plover stopped at Hornsby Bend, Travis Co 20 Jul (ph. Jeff Osborne, Janet Davis).

Sanderling - A Sanderling at O. C. Fisher Lake, Tom Green Co 2-3 Jun (ph. Christopher Daniels) was a late northbound migrant while another at Hornsby Bend, Travis Co 21-22 Jul (ph. Richard Kaskan) was rather early for a returning bird.

Baird's Sandpiper - Odd for mid-summer was a lone Baird's Sandpiper at Hornsby Bend, Travis Co 22-23 Jun (ph. Jane Tillman).

Pectoral Sandpiper - Likewise, a Pectoral Sandpiper at Hornsby Bend, Travis Co 23 Jun (ph. Jeff Osborne, Jeff Davis) was likely a lost non-breeder.

Willet - A lone Willet at Hornsby Bend, Travis Co 22 Jun (ph. Jane Tillman) was unexpected; 3 there 30 Jun - 2 Jul (ph. Jeff Osborne, Janet Davis, Andy Filtness et al.) were also strange for mid-summer though perhaps returning non-breeders.

Common Loon - The lingering Common Loon on Lake Travis, Travis Co through 6 Jun likely over-summered as one was found again there 4-5 Jul (ph. Vincent O'Brien).

Brown Booby - It is still difficult to get used to the idea of inland Brown Boobies, but they continue to show up. Central Texas had four this season with an adult on a small pond between Grapetown and Luckenbach, Gillespie Co 9-20 Jun (ph. Matthew Underwood, Justin Bosler), a pair of adults detected as they briefly flew around the ponds at Hornsby Bend, Travis Co 26 Jun (Eric Stager, ph. Matthew Law et al.), and an immature at the Canyon Lake Dam, Comal Co 18 Jun - 6 Jul (ph. Greg Steeves, m.ob.).

Mississippi Kite - Mississippi Kites have likely been breeding in Travis Co since 2015 though few actual nests have been located. While confirming an active nest with 2 fledglings just west of downtown Austin 14-17 Jul, as many as 18 individuals including several adult and one year old birds were seen in the area (ph. Bret Whitney).

Northern Flicker - Unusual for mid-summer was a Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker in Snyder, Scurry Co 24 Jun (ph. Scotty Lofland).

Peregrine Falcon - A Peregrine Falcon in Kerrville, Kerr Co 16 Jul (ph. Steve Peters) was another sign that species is over-summering and/or breeding in more parts of central Texas.

Couch's Kingbird - A Couch's Kingbird between Twin Buttes Reservoir and O. C. Fisher Lake, Tom Green Co 8-14 Jun (ph. Christopher Daniels) may be a pioneering bird looking to expand the species' range; one was seen nearby in early May as well.

White-breasted Nuthatch - A White-breasted Nuthatch was present at one of the few semi-reliable spots for it in central Texas along the Little River east of Holland, Bell Co 24-26 Jul (ph. Sheridan Coffey, ph. Martin Reid); additional individuals farther down river east of Val Verde, Milam Co 23 Jul (Jeremy Webster) and in Temple, Bell Co 31 Jul (Jeremy Webster) hint that there might be a small population in the area.

Cedar Waxwing - Cedar Waxwings staying into early Jun is not unusual but noteworthy were two in late Jun with one at Kickapoo Caverns SP, Kinney Co 18 Jun (Bonnie de Grood, Michelle Rometry) and another on Fort Hood, Coryell 22 Jun (Charlie Plimpton, Chelsea Plimpton).

Olive Sparrow - The Olive Sparrow that wandered north to Lockhart SP, Caldwell in late May apparently lingered during the summer with additional sightings there 24-28 Jun (audio Tim Brush, audio Shelia Hargis).

Cassin's Sparrow - A recent fledged Cassin's Sparrow at Fort Hood, Bell Co 19 Jun (ph. Randy Pinkston) was nice confirmation of irregular and irruptive local breeding.

Savannah Sparrow - A Savannah Sparrow along the Barton Creek Greenbelt in southwest Austin, Travis Co 11 Jun - 2 Jul (ph. Caleb Helsel) likely was unhealthy as it seemed to have some difficulties while flying.

Ovenbird - Late was an Ovenbird at Hornsby Bend, Travis Co 5 Jun (ph. River Corcoran).

Louisiana Waterthrush - A bit west of the species' range and also a bit early and westerly for a migrant, a Louisiana Waterthrush at Spring Creek Park in San Angelo, Tom Green Co 12-13 Jul (ph. Christopher Daniels) was a noteworthy find.

American Redstart - An American Redstart along Walnut Creek in north Austin, Travis Co 8 Jun (Kenneth Bader) was tardy.

Magnolia Warbler - Also running rather late was a Magnolia Warbler on Fort Hood, Bell Co 16 Jun (audio Charlie Plimpton).

Yellow-throated Warbler - A Yellow-throated Warbler along Spring Creek in Mertzon, Irion Co 5 Jun (ph. Jane Tillman) was an outlier away from known breeding areas.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak - Another tardy migrant, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak was a nice find near Brackenridge Park in San Antonio, Bexar Co 11 Jun (ph. Elizabeth Walker).

Cited observers and contributors:

Kenneth Bader, Justin Bosler, Tim Brush, Sheridan Coffey, River Corcoran, Christopher Daniels, Janet Davis, Jeff Davis, Bonnie de Grood, Andy Filtness, Shelia Hargis, Caleb Helsel, Randy Hesford, Richard Kaskan, Matthew Law, Scotty Lofland, Vincent O'Brien, Jeff Osborne, Greg Palko, Dick Park, Charlie Plimpton, Chelsea Plimpton, Martin Reid, Michelle Rometry, Rebekah Rylander, Eric Stager, Greg Steeves, Jane Tillman, Matthew Underwood, Elizabeth Walker, Jeremy Webster, Bret Whitney, Mike Woods, Pam Woods