

## Upper Texas Coast Sub-regional Report, Fall 2019

Covering: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Jefferson, Montgomery, Liberty, Orange and Waller

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**The Weather:** The weather event of the period was mid-September's Tropical Storm Imelda which dumped 42" (106.7 cm) of rain near Winnie, *Chambers* causing widespread flooding. Although the 24.39 inches (62.0 cm) of rain for the period was 6.37 inches (16.2 cm) above average, the period ended with water levels only slightly above average. The average daily temperature was 75.8 degrees F (24.3 C) or 1.3 degrees F (0.7 C) above normal. Once again, mild temperatures led to the spectacular fallouts of tardy passerine migrants in early November.

### The Birds:

#### Surf Scoter:

Two Surf Scoters at San Bernard NWR, *Brazoria* 14 Oct were a new early for the U.T.C. (ph. Dennis Shepler).

#### White-crowned Pigeon:

A White-crowned Pigeon found on West Galveston Island, *Galveston* 4 Sep was just the 4<sup>th</sup> record for the state and the 2<sup>nd</sup> for the U.T.C. (ph. Kyle O'Haver, ph. Dennis Shepler, Duke Liebler, Brad Lirette).

#### Yellow-billed Cuckoo:

It was an exceptional fall for late Yellow-billed Cuckoos with single birds 23 Nov at San Bernard NWR, *Brazoria* (ph. Wendy McCrady, ph. Vicki & Larry Kirby) and 19 Nov at JJ Wildlife Trace, *Chambers* (ph. Paul Fagala, Mickey Redus) being the latest.

#### Black-billed Cuckoo:

Late Black-billed Cuckoos were at Brazoria NWR, *Brazoria* 2 Nov (Brian Berry), San Bernard NWR, *Brazoria* 2 Nov (ph. Wendy McCrady), and Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 4 Nov (Glenn Olsen).

#### Allen's Hummingbird:

An Allen's Hummingbird was banded at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in Lake Jackson, *Brazoria* 21 Sep (Martin Hagne, Denise Stephens).

#### Calliope Hummingbird:

A young male Calliope Hummingbird was photographed in Fulshear, *Fort Bend* 24-27 Nov (ph. Joanna & Hannah Willars).

#### Broad-billed Hummingbird:

A male Broad-billed Hummingbird was present at a feeder in Groves, *Jefferson* 28 Oct-24 Nov (Sherrie Roden, ph. Steve Mayes, ph. Michael B. Cooper, ph. Harlan Stewart, et al.).

**Wilson’s Plover:**

A count of 16 Wilson’s Plover on the Texas City Dike, *Galveston* 30 Nov was notable for the late date (ph. John Faber).

**Sabine’s Gull:**

An immature Sabine’s Gull was photographed from the Bolivar Ferry, *Galveston* 2 Nov was notable (ph. Michael McCloy, ph. Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly).

**California Gull:**

Adult California Gulls at the Texas City Dike, *Galveston* 28 Oct (Susan Heath), at East Beach, *Galveston* 6-8 Nov (ph. James Rieman, et al.), and East Beach, *Galveston* 26 Nov (ph. Arman Moreno) may have involved more than one bird based on the head streaking in the photographs.

**Iceland Gull:**

A first cycle Iceland Gull was at the Texas City Dike, *Galveston* 12-15 Nov (Duke Liebler, ph. Kris Cannon, Dennis Cooke).

**Brown Booby:**

The most notable Brown Booby was an adult well inland at John Paul Landing Park, *Harris* 29 Sep (ph. Mike & Sarah Kuzio, et al.). As many as 3 were seen on channel markers in West Galveston Bay, *Galveston* tp - continuing from summer season (ph. Dean Silvers, et al.). As many as 3 were at the historic Baytown Nature Center location, *Harris* 8 Nov tp (Nicholas DeMaio, Stuart Nelson, et al.). And an am immature was seen at the Texas City Dike, *Galveston* 13 Nov tp (ph. James Rieman, et al.). The number at the historic Pleasure Island, *Jefferson* location varied from 3 to 6 from 12-20 Nov (Sheila Hebert, Steve Mayes, et al.).

**Smith Point Hawk Watch Totals (1 Aug - 1 Dec Count Period)**

Totals courtesy of the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

Species	2019 Total	Comment
Black Vulture	178	
Turkey Vulture	5055	Record high count (previous 4261)
Osprey	41	
Bald Eagle	41	Record high count (previous 39)
Northern Harrier	426	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1989	
Cooper’s Hawk	969	
Red-shouldered Hawk	29	
Broad-winged Hawk	13843	Record low count (previous 16,137)
Red-tailed Hawk	300	
Swainson’s Hawk	206	
White-tailed Hawk	10	
Ferruginous Hawk	1	
Golden Eagle	2	
American Kestrel	399	

Merlin	89	Record high count (previous 88)
Peregrine Falcon	56	
Crested Caracara	0	Record low count (previous 1)
Mississippi Kite	3008	
Swallow-tailed Kite	111	
White-tailed Kite	9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>26764</b>	Includes unidentified raptors

**Mississippi Kite:**

The last Mississippi Kite recorded at the Smith Point Hawk Watch, *Chambers* 8 Nov continuing the trend of later migrants in recent years (SPHW staff).

**Golden Eagle:**

Two Golden Eagles were spotted at the Smith Point Hawk Watch, *Chambers* 27 Nov (SPHW staff).

**Ferruginous Hawk:**

The only Ferruginous Hawk report was at the Smith Point Hawk, *Chambers* 15 Nov (SPHW staff).

**Long-eared Owl:**

A Long-eared Owl was flushed from a tree at Bear Creek Park, *Harris* 26 Oct (ph. Dale Wolck, Jim Hinson, Janey Woodley, Stuart Nelson) is thought to be the first for the county since 1999.

**Ringed Kingfisher:**

A female Ringed Kingfisher found at Lake Olympia in Missouri City, *Fort Bend* 7 Oct (ph. Bruce Bodson, Janey Woodley) was east of its normal range. NOTE: This bird was not seen for a while after this date but ended up wintering at this location.

**Eastern Wood Pewee:**

Tardy Eastern Wood Pewees were singles heard at Armand Bayou Nature Center, *Harris* 21 Nov (John Scaramucci, Sydney Fitzpatrick) and one seen at Lafitte's Cove, *Galveston* 23 Nov (Jamie Schubert).

**Acadian Flycatcher:**

There were many late Acadian Flycatchers this fall but no one later than one photographed 2 Nov at San Bernard NWR, *Brazoria* (ph. John Hale). An estimated 3 birds at Quintana, *Brazoria* 26 Oct were also late (ph. Cynthia Gonzales).

**Great Crested Flycatcher:**

A Great Crested Flycatcher at the Baytown Nature Center, *Harris* 16 Nov was on the late side (Shelli Ellerbe, Paul Fagala, Barbara Tilton, Margaret Kirby Taylor, Marvin Masters).

**Philadelphia Vireo:**

A Philadelphia Vireo at Anahuac NWR, *Chambers* 9 Nov was late (Elisabeth & Elisha Hehir, Farokh Jamalyaria).

**Chihuahuan Raven:**

An interesting corvid believed to be a Chihuahuan Raven was reported from along the Gulf Freeway in Dickinson, *Galveston* 17-18 & 28 Nov (Tony Frank, Duke Liebler, Dennis Cooke, ph. Kris Cannon, Greg Hall).

**Purple Martin:**

Two Purple Martins at Seabourne Creek Nature Park in Rosenberg, *Fort Bend* 6 Nov was late (Margo Johnson, Karrie Washenfelder, Garrett Engelhardt, Gary Klimpel, Rebecca Waldo, Michael Shoaff, Carol Schwartz, Robert Schwartz).

**Tree Swallow:**

A count of 5000 Tree Swallows at Anahuac NWR, *Chambers* 2 Nov was impressive (Michael McCloy, Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly, Edward Landi).

**Gray-cheeked Thrush:**

A Gray-cheeked Thrush at a feeder in Houston, *Harris* 27 Oct-2 Nov represents a rare fall sighting for the state (ph. Sue Orwig, et al.).

**Red Crossbill:**

Interesting in its timing was the report of 3 calling flyover Red Crossbills just west of Lake Conroe, *Montgomery* 31 Aug (Andrew Eberly).

**Pine Siskin:**

One heard flying over the Rice University campus in Houston, *Harris* 20 Oct was early (Cin-Ty Lee).

**Cassin's Sparrow:**

A Cassin's Sparrow that was oddly out of place on a dike at Brazos Bend SP 5 Oct was a modern day first for *Fort Bend* (ph. Bill Schneider, Julie Schneider, Suzanne Mottin).

**Spotted Towhee:**

A Spotted Towhee at Hebert Road, *Waller* 28 Nov was east of normal (Jim Hinson, Howard Smith).

**Bullock's Oriole:**

A female Bullock's Oriole at Houston's Bear Creek Park, *Harris* 7 Oct was notable (ph. Letha Slagle).

**Scott's Oriole:**

A female Scott's Oriole at San Bernard NWR, *Brazoria* 17 Oct was just the 6<sup>th</sup> record for U.T.C. (ph. Wendy McCrady).

**Prothonotary Warbler:**

A Prothonotary Warbler in Lake Jackson *Brazoria* 28 Nov was extremely late (ph. Greg Cook).

**Cape May Warbler:**

There was a bumper crop of Cape May Warblers by modern day standards with one at Quintana, *Brazoria* 11 Oct (ph. Jim Highberger), another 20-25 Oct in Houston, *Harris* (ph. Sue Orwig), one to 2 at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 18-28 Oct (John Whittle, ph. Steve Mayes, et al.), and another at the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center, *Harris* 10 Nov (ph. Zhen Li).

**Yellow Warbler:**

A late Yellow Warbler was at El Franco Lee Park, *Harris* 26 Nov (ph. Daniel Kraushaar).

**Black-throated Gray Warbler:**

The most notable Black-throated Gray Warbler was at Stephen F. Austin SP, *Austin* 11 Oct (ph. John Hale, Mark McDermott).

**Wilson's Warbler:**

An early male Wilson's Warbler was at Cullinan Park in Sugar Land, *Fort Bend* 17 Aug (Albert Ribes, Henry Jerng).

**Rose-breasted Grosbeak:**

A late Rose-breasted Grosbeak was at the San Jacinto Battleground, *Harris* 23 Nov (Cin-Ty Lee, Stuart Nelson, Tim Perkins).

**Black-headed Grosbeak:**

A Black-headed Grosbeak at Houston's Bear Creek Park, *Harris* 28 Sep was early (ph. Greg Page).

**Observers:**

Brian Berry  
Lucas Bobay  
Bruce Bodson  
Justin Bosler  
Kris Cannon  
Greg Cook  
Dennis Cooke  
Michael B. Cooper  
Nicolas DeMaio  
Andrew Eberly  
Garrett Engelhardt  
John Faber  
Paul Fagala  
Sydney Fitzpatrick  
Tony Frank  
Martin Hagne  
John Hale  
Greg Hall  
Susan Heath  
Sheila Hebert  
Elisabeth Hehir  
Elisha Hehir  
Jim Highberger  
Jim Hinson  
Farokh Jamalyaria  
Henry Jerng  
Margo Johnson  
Sam Jolly  
Larry Kirby

Vicki Kirby  
Gary Klimpel  
Daniel Kraushaar  
Mike Kuzio  
Sarah Kuzio  
Duke Liebler  
Brad Lirette  
Cin-Ty Lee  
Zhen Li  
Steve Mayes  
Wendy McCrady  
Michael McCloy  
Mark McDermott  
Suzanne Mottin  
Arman Moreno  
Stuart Nelson  
Glenn Olsen  
Kyle O'Haver  
Sue Orwig  
Greg Page  
Tim Perkins  
Mickey Redus  
Albert Ribes  
James Rieman  
Sherrie Roden  
John Scaramucci  
Bill Schneider  
Julie Schneider  
Jamie Schubert  
Carol Schwartz  
Robert Schwartz  
Dennis Shepler  
Michael Shoaff  
Dean Silvers  
Letha Slagle  
Howard Smith  
Denise Stephens  
Harlan Stewart  
Rebecca Waldo  
Karrie Washenfelder  
John Whittle  
Joanna Willars  
Hannah Willars  
Dale Wolck  
Janey Woodley

SPHW Staff

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Winnie Burkett  
Tad Finnell  
David Hanson  
Sara Harrison  
Joe Kennedy  
Marvin Masters  
Nina Sitra  
Mark Swanson  
Regina Tippet  
Susan Whitmer  
John & Lynn Wright