BULLETIN OF THE

TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 37, No. 2 July 2004 Pages 17–38

TEXAS BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2003

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The Texas Bird Records Committee (hereafter "TBRC" or "committee") of the Texas Ornithological Society requests and reviews documentation on any record of a TBRC Review List species (see Lockwood 2003 or TBRC web page at http://texasbirds.org/tbrc/). Annual reports of the committee's activities have

Figure 1. This adult Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche chlororhynchos*) found off South Padre Island, Cameron Co., on 26 Sept. provided the fourth record for the state (TBRC 2003-74). Photo by Brad McKinney.

appeared in the Bulletin of the Texas Ornithological Society since 1984. For more information about the Texas Ornithological Society or the TBRC, please visit www.texasbirds.org. The committee reached a final decision on 158 records during 2003: 121 records of 57 species were accepted and 37 records of 29 species were not accepted, an acceptance rate of 76.6% for this report. There were 176 observers who submitted documentation (to the TBRC or to other entities) that was reviewed by the committee during 2003.

In 2003 the TBRC accepted the first state record of Gyrfalcon bringing the official Texas State List to 623 species in good standing. This total does not include the five species listed on the Presumptive Species List.

In addition to the review of previously undocumented species, any committee member may request that a record of any species be reviewed. The number of accepted records are also listed for Red-throated Loon, Broad-billed Hummingbird, and Lewis's Woodpecker, which were recently removed from the Review List. The committee requests written descriptions as well as photographs, video, and audio recordings if available. Information concerning a Review List species may be submitted to the committee secretary, Mark Lockwood, 402 E. Harriet Ave., Alpine, Texas 79830 (email: mark.lockwood@tpwd.state.tx.us). Guidelines for preparing rare bird documentation can be found in Dittmann and Lasley (1992) or at http://www.greglasley.net/document.html.

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The records in this report are arranged taxonomically following the AOU Check-list of North American Birds (AOU 1998) through the 44th supplement (Banks et al. 2003). A number in parentheses after the species name represents the total number of accepted records in Texas for that species at the end of 2003. All observers who submitted written documentation or photographs of accepted records are acknowledged by initials. If known, the initials of those who discovered a particular bird are in boldface but only if the discoverers submitted supporting documentation. The TBRC file number of each accepted record will follow the observers' initials. If photographs or video recordings are on file with the TBRC, the Texas Photo Record File (TPRF) (Texas A&M University) number is also given. If an audio recording of the bird is on file with the TBRC, the Texas Bird Sounds Library (TBSL) (Sam Houston State University) number is also given. Specimen records are denoted with an asterisk (*) followed by the institution where the specimen is housed and the catalog number. The information in each account is usually based on the information provided in the original submitted documentation; however, in some cases this information has been supplemented with a full range of dates the bird was present if that information was made available to the TBRC later. All locations in italics are counties.

TBRC Membership—Members of the TBRC during 2003 who participated in decisions listed in this report were: John Arvin, Chair, Keith Arnold, Academician, Mark Lockwood, Secretary, Kelly Bryan, Mel Cooksey, Brush Freeman, Petra Hockey, Brad McKinney, Jim Paton, and Randy Pinkston. During 2003, Freeman retired from the committee, McKinney was elected, and the Academician and Secretary were re-elected.

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Acknowledgments — The TBRC is very grateful to the many contributors listed above, without whom this report would not be possible. The committee would also like to thank Ned Brinkley, Paul Buckley, Kimball Garrett, Joe Morlan, Brian Patteson, Martin Reid, and Don Roberson for providing the TBRC with expert opinion concerning records reviewed during 2003. The author thanks Petra Hockey and Brush Freeman for reviewing previous drafts of this report.

Additional Abbreviations — AOU = American Ornithologists' Union; CCMS = Corpus Christi Museum of Science; NP = National Park; NWR = National Wildlife Refuge; SNA = State Natural Area; SP = State Park; TCWC = Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection (Texas A&M University); WMA = Wildlife Management Area.

ACCEPTED RECORDS

Brant (*Branta bernicla*) (21). One "Black" Brant at Lubbock, *Lubbock*, from 13–14 January 2003 (BB, AF; 2003–10).

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) (4). An imm. bird at Brazoria NWR, *Brazoria*, from 2 January-3 March 2002 (PHo, BFr, ML, PB; 2002–7; TPRF 1978).

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) (35). A male at Shipp Lake, *Bastrop*, on 17 February 2002 (**BFr**; 2002–37). A male at Twin Buttes Reservoir, *Tom Green*, from 21–31 March 2002 (**TMa**, NBl, TKe; 2002–35; TPRF 2081). A male at Tornillo Reservoir, *El Paso*, from 7–23 January 2003 (**BZ**, EC, MAd, JZ; 2003–7; TPRF 2082).

Barrow's Goldeneye (*Bucephala islandica*) (8). A male and female at Loy Lake, *Grayson*, from 5 January-22 February 2002 (**WM**, EC, CEa, RP, ML; 2002–12; TPRF 1981). A male near Lake Murvaul, *Panola*, on 4 January 2003 (**GLu**; 2003–8).

Masked Duck (*Nomonyx dominicus*) (63). A male below Falcon Dam, *Starr*, on 15 April 2000 (**TG**; 2000–25).

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*) (48). One at Greenbelt Lake, *Donley*, on 29 April 2002 (**KS**, BP; 2002–57; TPRF 2076).

Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche chlororhynchos*) (4). One adult off South Padre Island, *Cameron*, on 26 September 2003 (**PHo**, **EC**, **JA**, **BMc**, **MO**; 2003–74; TPRF 2119).

Greater Shearwater (*Puffinus gravis*) (11). One on St. Charles Bay, *Aransas*, on 11 December 2000 (**JI**; 2002–45; TPRF 2077). One off Port Aransas, *Aransas*, on 6 October 2002 (**PHo, MCo, JOB**; 2002–108; TPRF 2078).

Leach's Storm-Petrel (*Oceanodroma leucorhoa*) (22). One off Port Isabel, *Cameron*, on 24 July 2002 (**EC, BMc**; 2002–96).

Great Blue (White) Heron (*Ardea herodias occidentalis*) (2). One at Galveston*, Galveston*, on 7 February 1972 (JT; TPRF 21). One at Port Aransas, *Nueces*, from 5–6 March 2002 (**MI**, BFr; 2002–59; TPRF 2079).

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) (17). An adult in *Randall* on 27 January 2002 (**T&PF**; 2002–39). An imm. at Castolon, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 14 February 2003 (**KB**; 2003–14; TPRF 2120).

Short-tailed Hawk (*Buteo brachyurus*) (17). One dark morph at Honey Creek State Natural Area, *Comal*, on 26 March 2002 (**ML**; 2002–36). One light morph adult in the Chisos Mountains, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 28 April 2002 (**CBe**; 2002–65). One light-morph adult at Sabal Palm Sanctuary, *Cameron*, on 12 April 2003 (**CSha**; 2003–45). One light-morph adult at Santa Ana NWR, *Hidalgo*, from 20 June-20 July 2003 (**BC**, TR, EC; 2003–52; TPRF 2021).

Swainson's Hawk (*Buteo swainsoni*). One near Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park, *Hidalgo*, on 29 December 2001 (**BMc**; 2002–13). Swainson's Hawk is not a *Review Species*, but details of mid-winter reports were requested by the TBRC until research showed this species to be a rare, but regular, winter resident along the coast and in South Texas.

Gyrfalcon (*Falco rusticolus*) (1). An imm. gray-morph was at Lubbock, *Lubbock*, from 21 January-7 April 2002 (**AF**, MCo, EC, RP, JMc, B&JR, MAu, ML, FB, BP, MSc, JZ; 2002–16; TPRF 1982). This individual is the first Gyrfalcon to be reported (and documented) in Texas.

Northern Jacana (*Jacana spinosa*) (30). Two at Falcon Dam, *Starr*, on 19 March 1983 (**BeF**; 2002–92).

Purple Sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*) (15). One at Freeport, *Brazoria*, from 29 November 2002–3 May 2003 (**BLi**, MAu, BFr, PSu, CHa, RP, EC, TFe, FB, TKi, BP, GL, FJ, HB; 2002–119; TPRF 2080).

Figure 2. Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) at George West, Live Oak Co. (TBRC 2003-22). Photo by Scott Holt.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) (9). An adult at Port Aransas, *Nueces*, from 21–27 August 2002 (MCo, MT, BP, RP, CHo, ME, F&JD, JI, CShe; 2002–97; TPRF 2083).

Red Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) (29). One at Cactus Lake, *Moore*, on 8 November 2003 (**BP**; 2003–86; TPRF 2122).

Little Gull (*Larus minutus*) (37). A first-winter bird at Beaumont, *Jefferson*, from 27–29 April 2003 (**PeH**, MO; 2003–48; TPRF 2123).

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*) (25). An adult at El Paso, *El Paso*, on 20 December 2001 (**BZ**; 2002–32). One adult at Fort Worth, *Tarrant*, from 25 November-27 December 2002 (**MR**, CC; 2003–24; TPRF 2084). One second-year bird at Fort Worth, *Tarrant*, on 16 February 2003 (**MR**; 2003–25; TPRF 2085).

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*) (54). An adult at Corpus Christi, Nueces, on 24 February 2001 (**B&JR**; 2001–52; TPRF 2086). A first-winter bird at San Angelo SP, *Tom Green*, on 19 January 2002 (**TMa**; 2002–14). One first-year at Galveston, *Galveston*, on 25 January 2003 (**DwP**; 2003–12).

Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) (35). One third-winter bird at Port O'Connor, *Calhoun*, from 2–24 December 2001 and Rockport, *Aransas*, from 1 January-2 March 2002 (**PHo**, BFr, MI, BP; 2001–140; TPRF 2987). A first-year bird at Port O'Connor, *Calhoun*, on 23 April 2002 (**MH**, **CN**; 2002–53; TPRF 2088). One first-winter bird at Boca Chica, *Cameron*, from 6 January-16 April 2003 (**JA**, EC; 2003–11; TPRF 2124).

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) (5). One at Lake Worth, *Tarrant*, on 18 October 2001 (**MR**; 2002–17; TPRF 2060). One at Fort Bliss Sewage Ponds, *El Paso*, on 27 May 2002 (**JPa**; 2002–64).

Mangrove Cuckoo (*Coccyzus minor*) (9). One on Matagorda Peninsula, *Matagorda*, on 25 August 2002 (**PHo**; 2002–100).

Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*) (5). One found dead seven miles southwest of Dalhart, *Dallam*, on 28 January 2002 (SD; 2003–80; TPRF 2125). One at Tye, *Taylor*, from 22 March-2 April 2002 (**AB**, JaP, LP, JMc, JF, BFr, TFe, ML, BP, FB, RP; 2002–34; TPRF 1990).

Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) (41). One at Hebbronville, *Jim Hogg*, from 15–25 May 2002 (**CMo**; 2003–21; TPRF 2089). Two near Johnson City, *Blanco*, from 19 May-22 July 2003 (EC, CEa, TG, DL, BTo, ChM, TFe, BLin, JI, PC, JK; 2003–51; TPRF 2126). Two near Garner SP, *Uvalde*, from 20 June-5 August 2003 (CSl, ML, DT; 2003–63; TPRF 2127). One in the Davis Mountains Resort, *Jeff Davis*, from 1–8 July 2003 (KB, ML, EC; 2003–58; TPRF 2112; TBSL 238).

Green-breasted Mango (*Anthracothorax prevostii*) (12). A male at McAllen, *Hidalgo*, from 23 November

Figure 3. This Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*) was one of two present at Johnson City, Blanco Co., during the spring and summer of 2003 (TBRC 2003–51), the first time two violet-ears have been documented at the same location in the state. Photo by John Ingram.

2001–12 February 2002 (JA, GR, BH; 2001–139; TPRF 2090). The same male returned to McAllen, *Hidalgo*, from 9 September- 23 October 2002 (MAu, TFr; 2002–103).

Broad-billed Hummingbird (*Cynanthus latirostris*) (54). A male at El Paso, *El Paso*, from 20 October 2001–17 March 2002 (BZ, JZ, MSc; 2001–132). Am imm. male at El Paso, *El Paso*, from 16 October-2 November 2002 (**BZ**; 2003–3; TPRF 2091). A male at Fort Davis, *Jeff Davis*, from 24 April-3 June 2003 (**KB**, ML, DL; 2003–35; TPRF 2106). A male at El Paso, *El Paso*, on 12 April 2003 (**BZ**; 2003–41). Broad-billed Hummingbird was removed from the Review List at the TBRC annual meeting on 2 August 2003. All records submitted before that date will be reviewed.

White-eared Hummingbird (*Hylocharis leucotis*) (14). An imm. bird at Franklin Mountains SP, *El Paso*, on 30 June 2002 (**RB**; 2002–82). A female in the Davis Mountains Resort, *Jeff Davis*, sporadically from 26 June-1 September 2003 (**M&ME**; 2003–68; TPRF 2128). Two (adult male and female) in Boot Canyon, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, from 30 June-31 August 2003 (**CEd**, RDe, MAu, TFe, EC, RDa; 2003–57; TPRF 2129).

Violet-crowned Hummingbird (*Amazilia violiceps*) (7). One at El Paso, *El Paso*, from 6 November 2001–16 February 2002 (**BZ**, JZ, MSc, MAd, ML, PR; 2001–135; TPRF 1996). One on a private ranch in northern *Presidio* from 24 May-6 June 2002 (KBr; 2002–88; TPRF 2092).

Costa's Hummingbird (*Calypte costae*) (12). A male at Green Gulch, Big Bend NP, Brewster, on 19 May 2000 (**B&JR**; 2000–63). A male at Matagorda, *Matagorda*, from 17–21 December 2001 (CBr, MG; 2002–15; TPRF 2093). A female at El Paso, *El Paso*, from 24 December 2001–21 January 2002 (**SWo**, MSc; 2002–105; TPRF 2094).

Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*) (32). An adult male[1] at Houston, *Harris*, from 18 December 2001–17 February 2002 (JHi, MG; 2002–95; TPRF 2095). An imm. male (banded) at Sweeny, *Brazoria*, from 18–22 October 2002 (CBr; 2002–114; *TCWC 13910). An adult female banded at Sargent, *Matagorda*, on 20 December 2002 (CBr; 2002–125; *TCWC 13973). An adult male (banded) at West Columbia, *Brazoria*, from 28 December 2002–14 February 2003 (CBr, EC; 2003–20; *TCWC 13972). An adult male[1] at Port Aransas, *Nueces*, on 9 February 2003 (**S&JH**; 2003–13; TPRF 2130). An adult male banded at Kingsville, *Kleberg*, on 28 February 2003 (GS; 2003–15; *TCWC 13971). A hatch-year male banded near Victoria, *Victoria*, on 31 August 2003 (**BO**; 2003–70; TPRF 2131). An adult male banded at Matagorda, *Matagorda*, on 16 September 2003 (**CBr**; 2003–78; TPRF 2132; *TCWC 14033). A hatch-year male banded near Victoria, *Victoria*, on 26–30 September 2003 (**BO**; 2003–77; TPRF 2133). The specimens housed at

the TCWC consist of tail feathers removed from captured individuals. [1]Identification based on photographs, diagnostic tail measurements not available.

Greater Pewee (*Contopus pertinax*) (13). Up to three at the Davis Mountains Preserve, *Jeff Davis*, from 13 June-1 August 2002 (**BFr**, **PHo**, **EC**, KBr, CEa, FB, JaP; 2002–76; TPRF 2096). One at Anzalduas County Park, *Hidalgo*, from 12 December 2002–19 March 2003 (**JA**, MCo, DaP, EC, BTo, PSu, BP; 2002–123; TPRF 2097). One at Guadalupe Mountains NP, *Culberson*, on 21 May 2003 (**DL**; 2003–44; TBSL 239).

Buff-breasted Flycatcher (*Empidonax fulvifrons*) (5). Up to seven (three adults and four fledglings) at the Davis Mountains Preserve, *Jeff Davis*, from 2 May-28 September 2003 (**KB**, **EC**, ML, PHo, DL; 2003–49; TPRF 2134; TBSL 238).

Dusky-capped Flycatcher (*Myiarchus tuberculifer*) (22). Up to four (two adults and two juveniles) at Boot Spring, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, from 18 April-20 July 2003 (EC, ML, MF; 2003–32; TPRF 2135; TBSL 237). Up to four (two adults and two fledglings) at the Davis Mountains Preserve, *Jeff Davis*, from 17 June-12 July 2003 (**PHo**, BFr, ML; 2003–53; TPRF 2136; TBSL 237).

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*) (13). One at Corpus Christi, *Nueces*, from 30 April-2 May 2003 (**LA**, MCo, TS, ShC; 2003–38; TPRF 2098).

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) (5). One at South Padre Island, *Cameron*, on 18 May 2002 (**BC**, **MaC**; 2002–61).

Rose-throated Becard (*Pachyramphus aglaiae*) (30). A female at McAllen, *Hidalgo*, from 20–22 January 2002 (**AS**, CK; 2002–19). A female at Santa Ana NWR, *Hidalgo*, from 9 March-28 June 2003 (EC, ShC, PSe, MRe, RWy, LS, JHa, BTh; 2003–30: TPRF 2111).

Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*) (38). One on western Galveston Is., *Galveston*, on 8 May 2001 (**JSt**; 2001–94; TPRF 2137). One at North Padre Island, *Nueces*, on 1 June 2002 (**WS**; 2002–70). One at Sabal Palm Sanctuary, *Cameron*, from 4–15 June 2002 (**PHo**; 2002–72). One at Santa Ana NWR, *Hidalgo*, from 20–27 June 2002 (MH; 2002–84). One at Weslaco, *Hidalgo*, on 5 July 2002 (**JA**; 2002–83). One at Quintana, *Brazoria*, on 12 May 2003 (**TC**; 2003–50). One at Santa Ana NWR, *Hidalgo*, from 29 June-29 August 2003 (**EC**, DJ; 2003–56).

Black-whiskered Vireo (*Vireo altiloquus*) (19). One at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson*, on 23 May 2003 (**DV**; 2003–47).

Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*) (21). Up to 25 on the Davis Mountains Preserve, *Jeff Davis*, from 13 December 2002–19 June 2003 (**DPo**, PR, ML, EC, MAd, PHo, KB; 2002–127; TPRF 2138; TBSL 238).

Varied Thrush (*Ixoreus naevius*) (25). One at El Paso, *El Paso*, on 24 November 2002 (**JPa**; 2002–120; TPRF 2099). One 8 miles south of Alpine, *Brewster*, on 2 December 2002 (**CEd**, **JG**; 2002–121). One at El Paso, *El Paso*, from 6 December 2002–24 January 2003 (BZ, EC; 2003–5; TPRF 2100). One at Guadalupe Mountains NP, *Culberson*, from 21 December 2002–4 January 2003 (**EA**; 2002–129).

Blue Mockingbird (*Melanotis caerulescens*) (2). One at Pharr, *Hidalgo*, from 28 September 2002–26 May 2003 (JA, DaP, AH, EC, FG, BP, BTo, LD, JB; 2002–110; TPRF 2117).

Bohemian Waxwing (*Bombycilla garrulus*) (11). One at River Legacy Park, *Tarrant*, on 21 March 2000 (**LBl**; 2000–46).

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*) (8). One at Quintana, *Brazoria*, on 6 May 2000 (**JL**; 2000–29).

Red-faced Warbler (*Cardellina rubrifrons*) (28). A group of three in the Chisos Mountains, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 21 August 2002 (**DHi** 2002–98). One at Guadalupe Mountains NP, *Culberson*, on 10 June 2003 (**KB**; 2003–59; TPRF 2107). Up to two at Boot Spring, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, from 6–14 August 2003 (EC, TFe, PHo; 2003–67; TPRF 2139). One in El Paso, *El Paso*, from 12–15 August 2003 (**J&KK**; 2003–71; TPRF 2140).

Slate-throated Redstart (*Myioborus miniatus*) (6). Two at Corpus Christi, *Nueces*, on 10 April 2002 (MCo, JSi; 2002–49; TPRF 2032). One at Pharr, *Hidalgo*, from 12–13 March 2003 (JA, EC, PSu, FG, LS, LD; 2003–17; TPRF 2118).

Golden-crowned Warbler (*Basileuterus culicivorus*) (16). One at Harlingen, *Cameron*, on 5 September 1943 (**LID**; 2002–104; Davis 1945). One at Edinburg, *Hidalgo*, from 2 November 2002–6 April 2003 (**TB**, FB, T&PF, DaP, MCo, NBa, EC, BTo, FG, RP, JB, BMc; 2002–118; TPRF 2101).

Rufous-capped Warbler (*Basileuterus rufifrons*) (20). One at the Sam Nail Ranchsite, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 9 May 2001 (**J&WR**; 2001–84).

Flame-colored Tanager (*Piranga bidentata*) (5). A female at South Padre Island, *Cameron*, from 11–14 April 2002 (**MSt**, **BS**, SCo, CMe; 2002–50; TPRF 2028). A male at Boot Canyon, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, from 26–27 April 2002 (**JD**, MV, KC, BLa; 2002–55; TPRF 2029).

Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivacea*) (2). A male at Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, *Hidalgo*, 11–29 June 2002 (**KN**, **RDo**, ML, PHo, FB, SG, MCo, BMc, KHa; 2002–75; TPRF 2031).

Baird's Sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*) (42). Two old records were accepted after "discovery" of museum specimens: one was collected 15 mi. SW of Marathon, *Brewster*, on 29 April 1933 (*Carnegie MNH 113775) and another in *Brewster* on 14 May 1935 (*Carnegie MNH 117392). One at Tornillo Reservoir, *El Paso*, on 30 August 2003 (**JPa**; 2003–69; TPRF 2141).

Golden-crowned Sparrow (*Zonotrichia atricapilla*) (28). One in Pinto Canyon, *Presidio*, on 21 April 2002 (**DPo**; 2002–52). One at Balmorhea SP, *Reeves*, on 24 October 2002 (**TMu**; 2002–115). An adult at George West, *Live* Oak, from 8 December 2002–20 April 2003 (**S&JH**; 2003–22; TPRF 2102). One at Stonewall Jackson Park, *Archer*, from 26 March-9 April 2003 (**DHo**; 2003–28; TPRF 2105).

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco (*Junco hyemalis aikeni*) (5). One at Caprock Canyons SP, *Briscoe*, on 24 January 2001 (**KC**; 2003–4).

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) (9). One near San Marcos, *Hays*, on 1 March 2002 (**DaP**; 2003–16).

White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*) (7). A male at Amarillo, *Randall*, from 30 December 2001–21 January 2002 (**B&PN**, LS; 2002–20; TPRF 2027). A male at Amarillo, *Randall*, on 23 January 2002 (**GH**; 2002–21). An immature male at Lake Tanglewood, *Randall*, from 27 January-6 February 2002 (RSc, RDa; 2002–31; TPRF 2104).

Common Redpoll (*Carduelis flammea*) (7). One at Laguna Vista, *Cameron*, from 28–31 May 2002 (PHo, MCo, JA, SCo; 2002–66; TPRF 2023). One at Galveston, *Galveston*, from 18–19 June 2002 (**I&DB**; RWe; 2002–90; TPRF 2044).

NOT ACCEPTED

A number of factors may contribute to a record being denied acceptance. It is quite uncommon for a record to not be accepted because the bird was obviously misidentified. More commonly, a record is not accepted because the material submitted was incomplete, insufficient, superficial, or just too vague to properly document the reported occurrence while eliminating *all* other similar species. Also, written documentation or descriptions prepared *entirely from memory* weeks, months, or years after a sighting are seldom voted on favorably. It is important that the simple act of not accepting a particular record should by no means indicate that the TBRC or any of its members feel the record did not occur as reported. The non-acceptance of any record simply reflects the opinion of the TBRC that the documentation, as submitted, did not meet the rigorous standards appropriate for adding data to the formal historical record. The TBRC makes every effort to be as fair and objective as possible regarding each record. If the committee is unsure about any particular record, it prefers to err on the conservative side and not accept a good record rather than validate a bad one. All records, whether accepted or not, remain on file and can be re-submitted to the committee if additional substantive material is presented.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*). *Hutchinson* on 9 December 2002 (2002–124).

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*). Hagerman NWR, *Grayson*, from 29–31 October 2002 (2002–116).

Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*). Lake Worth, *Tarrant*, on 23 November 2001 (2002–18).

Red-throated Loon (*Gavia stellata*). Lake Amistad, *Val Verde*, on 26 December 1999 (2000–3).

Blue-footed Booby (*Sula nebouxii*). South Padre Island, *Cameron*, on 5 October 1976 (2002–25). Reexamination of the photo (TPRF 136) of this bird strongly suggested that it was an immature Masked Booby (*S. dactylatra*).

Red-footed Booby (*Sula sula*). Galveston, *Galveston*, in June 1983 (2002–22).

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*). Rockport, *Aransas*, from 13 December 2002–5 January 2003 (TBRC 2002–126).

Collared Forest-Falcon (*Micrastur semitorquatus*). Santa Ana NWR, *Hidalgo*, on 30 April 2001 (2001–77). Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley SP, *Hidalgo*, from 17–21 January 2002 (2002–33).

Mew Gull (*Larus canus*). Galveston, *Galveston*, on 8 January 2001 (2001–42). Bolivar Flats, *Galveston*, on 14 December 2002 (2002–122).

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*). Rollover Pass, *Galveston*, on 17 April 2000 (2000–7). Lake O'The Pines, *Marion*, 29 December 2001 (2002–46).

Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*). San Luis Pass, *Galveston*, on 5 April 2002 (2002–42).

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*). Texas City Dike, *Galveston*, on 18 December 2001 (2002–26).

Northern Saw-whet Owl (*Aegolius acadicus*). Canutillo, *El Paso*, on 22 February 2002 (2002–106).

Green Violet-ear (*Colibri thalassinus*). Lost Maples SNA, *Bandera*, from 21 August-3 September 2000 (2000–74).

Berylline Hummingbird (*Amazilia beryllina*). Chisos Mountains, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 14 September 2003 (2003–72).

Costa's Hummingbird (*Calypte costae*). Christmas Mountains, *Brewster*, from 4–15 September 2002 (2002–109).

Allen's Hummingbird (*Selasphorus sasin*). Lubbock, *Lubbock*, from 21–27 September 2002 (2002–113).

Elegant Trogon (*Trogon elegans*). Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, from 24–26 June 2003 (2003–65).

Ivory-billed Woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*). LaGrange, *Fayette*, from 15 May-16 June 2002 (2002–80).

Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher (*Myiodynastes luteiventris*). Rio Grande Village, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 21 April 2002 (2002–51).

Thick-billed Kingbird (*Tyrannus crassirostris*). near Buffalo Lake NWR, *Randall*, on 19 August 2001 (2001–110).

Yellow-green Vireo (*Vireo flavoviridis*). near Rockport, *Aransas*, from 1–4 January 2000 (2000–11). Cibolo, *Guadalupe*, on 17 May 2002 (2002–87). Anahuac NWR, *Chambers*, on 18 May 2002 (2002–81).

Clark's Nutcracker (*Nucifraga columbiana*). Palo Duro Canyon SP, *Randall*, on 19 October 2002 (2002–112).

Olive Warbler (*Peucedramus taeniatus*). Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 4 August 2001 (2003–19).

Bachman's Warbler (*Vermivora bachmanii*). Burkeville, *Newton*, in June 1999, August 2000, and April 2001 (2002–43).

Connecticut Warbler (*Oporornis agilis*). Austin, *Travis*, on 6 May 2000 (2000–55).

Yellow-faced Grassquit (*Tiaris olivacea*). Laguna Atascosa NWR, *Cameron*, on 2 April 2002 (2002–44).

Baird's Sparrow (*Ammodramus bairdii*). Kalgary, *Crosby*, on 30 December 2001 (2002–5). Davis Mtns, *Jeff Davis*, on 23 October 2002 (2002–111). Lake Amistad, *Val Verde*, on 25 December 2002 (2003–6).

Dark-eyed (White-winged) Junco (*Junco hyemalis aikeni*). Caprock Canyons SP, *Briscoe*, on 9 February 2003 (2003–73).

Yellow Grosbeak (*Pheucticus chrysopeplus*). Rio Grande Village, Big Bend NP, *Brewster*, on 14 June 2003 (2003–64).

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GOLDEN-FRONTED WOODPECKER CONSUMES NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD NESTLING

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On 16 May 2002, during a study monitoring songbird nests at Fort Clark Springs in Kinney Co., TX (29°18′N, 100°43′W), we observed a Golden-fronted Woodpecker (*Melanerpes aurifrons*) on the ground rapidly pecking at a nestling Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). The woodpecker was being harassed by an adult mockingbird. For about one minute, the woodpecker reacted to attacks from the mockingbird with bill-thrusts or wing-flapping at each attack. Between bouts of self-defense, the woodpecker pecked at the nestling 10–20 times. A second adult mockingbird joined the attack for approximately 30 s. The woodpecker flew 25–30 m with the nestling in its bill, but dropped it on a road and again pecked and grasped it. The woodpecker then flew to a perch 10 m away in a Texas live oak (*Quercus virginiana*), where it pecked the nestling and consumed it.

The nestling was approximately six days old, the same age and size as those present in a mockingbird nest 4–5 m from the location we originally observed the woodpecker. The nest was in the only tree within 40 m, situated in an exposed lawn at the intersection of two roads. This nest was monitored daily by other researchers at the site and contained one fewer nestling, two instead of three, than observed the previous day.

We reviewed the literature to determine the relative frequency of nest predation by North American woodpeckers (Table 1). Often, only observations involving prey from open-cup nesting species clearly represent acts of nest predation.

By contrast, interactions with cavity-nesting species may represent behavior motivated primarily by competition (for cavities or food) rather than predation (Jackson 1977, Feiro 1980, Mumme et al. 1983, Nichols and Jackson 1987, Ingold 1989). For example, in England, Great Spotted Woodpeckers (*Dendrocopos major*) have frequently drilled into nestboxes and destroyed empty nests or damaged contents without consuming them (Hickling and Ferguson-Lees 1959, Glue 1975). Woodpeckers did not nest in the boxes (Glue 1975), but eviction and harassment of potential competitors (for food or cavities) by woodpeckers is common (Bent 1939, Twomey 1945, Ingold 1989, Shackelford et al. 2000, Smith et al. 2000). However, predation of open-cup nests has been observed relatively frequently (five of fourteen species observed as preyed upon) (Hickling and Ferguson-Lees 1959, Glue 1975). Furthermore, Great Spotted Woodpeckers have been observed carrying nestlings (Schnurre 1936), feeding them to their young (Hodgetts 1943), and with nestlings in stomach contents. Thus, Great Spotted Woodpeckers not only evict cavity-nest contents, but act as nest predators.

Six North American woodpecker species have been observed consuming or removing eggs from nests and four are known to kill nestlings and fledglings (Table 1). Only Melanerpine woodpeckers were reported as nest predators. This conformed to the characterization of Melanerpine woodpeckers as particularly pugnacious (Shackelford et al. 2000, Smith et al. 2000). Woodpeckers have been reported damaging nest contents of 19 species (11 open-cup, eight cavity nesting species). Slightly more reports involved eggs (17) versus young (14).

In addition to avian eggs and young, woodpeckers also consume fish (Nero 1959, Southern 1966, Short 1982), tree frogs (Hylidae) (Bent 1939), lizards (Short 1982, Smith and Jackson 1994, Husak and Maxwell 1998), and mice (Styrsky and Styrsky 2003). Thus, woodpeckers consume more vertebrate prey than commonly assumed. Indeed, woodpeckers can seriously impact nesting success by damaging and depredating nests in nest boxes (up to 40% of nests) (Glue 1975) or colonies (100% of nests in Cliff Swallow colonies) (Beal 1911, Fajer et al. 1987).

Our observation adds to a growing list of instances of woodpeckers depredating bird nests. In this instance, the Golden-fronted Woodpecker (approx. 85g) persisted despite vigorous attacks by mockingbirds, which are relatively large (49g) (Dunning 1993), pugnacious, even deadly, defenders of nests (Derrickson and

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Breitwisch 1992) and food sources (Hedrick and Woody 1983). Indeed, mockingbirds normally dominate Red-bellied Woodpeckers (*M. carolinus*) in trees the woodpeckers had excluded other, smaller species from (Breitwisch 1977, Shackelford et al. 2000). Therefore, we suggest nest predation by woodpeckers, while often opportunistic, can occur upon actively defended nestlings as well.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We are grateful to the residents of Ft. Clark Springs for granting research access and their hospitality. H. McGaha and S. Cyr provided nest content data. The manuscript benefited from comments and information provided by K. Purcell, K. Hazler, S. Sealy, and particularly T. Underwood who also assisted the literature review.

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TABLE 1: Avian prey items taken by North American woodpecker species. Records from Bent (1939) unless noted otherwise.

Acorn Woodpecker *Melanerpes formicivorus*-
Eggs: Western Wood Peewee (*Contopus sordidulus*)(Bryant 1921), Cliff Swallow (Fajer et al. 1987), House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) in California Towhee (*Pipilo crissalis*) nest (Purcell and Verner 1999).
Young: Red-breasted Sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus ruber*), (Shuford 1985), unknown species.

Gila Woodpecker *M. uropygialis*-
Eggs: Chicken, Bell's Vireo (*Vireo bellii*), Lucy's Warbler (*Vermivora luciae*), Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica petechia*), Summer Tanager (*Piranga rubra*), Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*), Spotted Towhee (*Pipilo maculates*).

Golden-fronted Woodpecker *M. aurifrons*-
Eggs: Chicken (*Gallus domesticus*) (Hernandez et al. 1998)

Lewis' Woodpecker *M. lewis*
Eggs: unknown species
Red-bellied Woodpecker *M. carolinus*-
Eggs: Acadian Flycatcher (*Empidonax virescens*)(K. Hazler pers. com.)
Young: Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides villosus*) (Grimes 1947); American Redstart (*Setophaga ruticilla*)(Watt 1980); Mourning Dove (*Zenaida macroura*) (Short 1982); House Wren (*Troglodytes aedon*) (Neill and Harper 1990); Carolina Chickadee (*Poecile carolinensis*) (Conner 1974)

Red-headed Woodpecker *M. erythrocephalus*-
Nests: Great-crested Flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*) (Twomey 1945), Red-bellied Woodpecker (Ingold 1989), Eastern Kingbird (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) (Bent 1939, Bancroft 1984)
Eggs: *Sialia* spp., *Columba* spp., Purple Martin (*Progne subis*) (Beal 1911); Wood Duck (*Aix sponsa*) (Graber et al. 1977); Hooded Merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*) (Kennmaer et al. 1988); Chicken (Rodgers 1990); Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), Cliff Swallow (*Hirundo pyrrhonota*), *Sitta* spp., *Poecile* spp.
Young: Northern Flicker, Eastern Phoebe (*Sayornis phoebe*), Northern Oriole (*Icterus galbula*), American Robin (*Turdus migratorius*), Tree Swallow (*Baeolophus bicolor*), Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), *Sialia* spp., *Sitta* spp., *Poecile* spp.

THE GALVESTON BAY EPIZOOTIC OF 1845

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What may have been the first avian epizootic reported in the United States occurred at Galveston Bay during the first week in November 1845. The die-off was preceded by a severe storm, accompanied by lightening, that passed over the bay during the night. On the following day, thousands of "dead ducks, brant and other wild fowl" were found littering the northern and western shores of the bay. It was first assumed that the birds had been killed by lightening but it was later determined that the destruction was too extensive to be explained in this manner. Others believed that death occurred because of poisoning but this was also ruled out since the birds had been feeding in the bay for several weeks and were apparently healthy until the night of the thunderstorm.

The extent of the mortality was enormous. Carcasses were "heaped together in great quantities" in some of the smaller coves and, as they began to putrefy, the stench became "intolerable." The majority of the dead birds were apparently ducks and brant that had been feeding in the bay. The term "brant" was loosely used in early Texas, and may refer to any of the smaller species or subspecies of geese. However, it was noted that "very few wild geese" [Canada geese?] died and that no dead swans were found. The "other wild fowl" that died were not specifically identified.

The inhabitants of Galveston were astonished at the massive die-off and none could remember such an event having occurred before. However, taking advantage of the situation, many people immediately set about gathering the dead birds to obtain their feathers for stuffing pillows and mattresses, as well as for sale at the market in New Orleans.

The epizootic was reported in the Houston *Morning Star* on 8 November 1845 and later reprinted in the November 12th issue of the Houston *Telegraph and Texas Register*. Although the author is unidentified, Francis Moore, Jr., editor of both the *Morning Star* and *Telegraph,* undoubtedly wrote the article. The credibility of this obscure account rests on the reputation of Moore as a person with medical training, experience as an amateur geologist, and as the author of a series of articles on the natural resources of Texas (Benham 1996).

Botulism and cholera are possible causes for the die-off of 1845. Outbreaks of avian botulism have been reported in North America since the beginning of the 20th century (Friend et al. 2001) whereas avian cholera was not reported in migratory waterfowl until the 1940s when outbreaks occurred in the Texas Panhandle and the San Francisco Bay area of California (Botzler 1991, Brand 1984). Botulism most often occurs in the presence of high air temperatures (Friend et al. 2001) whereas cholera epizootics most frequently occur when birds are concentrated on their wintering grounds or during spring migration (Samuel 1996). During an outbreak of botulism healthy birds, sick birds, and dead birds are commonly found in the same area (Anon. 2001). Mortality in cholera outbreaks may occur in less than 24 hours following infection and, thus, few sick birds are observed, and dead birds appear to be in good condition (Samuel 1996). Both botulism and cholera affect a wide variety of birds (Botzler 1991, Friend et al. 2001).

The parameters of the die-off of 1845 are clearly stated or implied in the original report: (l) the outbreak occurred in November when air temperatures were cool, (2) the birds were concentrated on their wintering grounds, (3) mortality occurred suddenly, (4) few, if any, sick birds were observed, and (5) the dead birds were apparently in good condition. Although a definitive diagnosis is impossible, these characteristics suggest that the epizootic of 1845 was due to infection by *Pasturella multocida*, the bacterium that is the causative agent of avian cholera.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Horace Burke and Marcus Peterson for their assistance during my research on avian epizootics. Issues of the Houston *Morning Star* and *Telegraph and Texas Register* cited in the text are located in The Center For American History, University of Texas at Austin.

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NEST USURPATION WITH PROBABLE NEST PREDATION BY RED-HEADED WOODPECKERS (*MELANERPES ERYTHROCEPHALUS*) ON LADDER-BACKED WOODPECKERS (*PICOIDES SCALARIS*) IN THE TEXAS PANHANDLE.

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The Red-headed Woodpecker *Melanerpes erythrocephalus* is known to usurp active cavities of other species of woodpeckers, including Downy Woodpecker *Picoides pubescens*, Red-cockaded Woodpecker *P. borealis* and Red-bellied Woodpecker *Melanerpes carolinus* (Schwab and Monnie 1959, LaBranche and Walters 1994, Ingold 1989, 1994). However, usurping of active nests of the Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris* apparently has not yet been reported (Lowther 2001). In this note, I report two instances of nest usurpation with probable nest predation by Red-headed Woodpeckers on Ladder-backed Woodpeckers, and offer an explanation on why some Ladder-backed Woodpecker nest holes are more vulnerable to attack than others.

The Red-headed Woodpecker and Ladder-backed Woodpecker are among the most common and widely distributed woodpeckers in the Texas Panhandle including Canadian River Valley (Benson and Arnold 2001, Seyffert 2001). Red-headed Woodpeckers inhabit cottonwood savannas and open grassland/semi-desert areas

This active Ladder-backed Woodpecker's nest (on the left) was attacked, and later usurped by a pair of Red-headed Woodpeckers (shown looking into the nest cavity, on the right). Texas Panhandle, May 2003. Photo by Michael Patrikeev.

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with few standing snags. Nests are almost invariably in cottonwood (*Populus deltoides* subsp. *monilifera*) snags, 3.5–12 m above the ground (average 6.6 m, n=10). Ladder-backed woodpeckers are resident of mesquite savanna, but are also found in cottonwood savanna and soapberry patches. Nests are excavated in living honey mesquite (*Prosopis grandulosa*) 1.2–1.5 m above the ground (n=2), and side limbs of living or dead cottonwoods, 2.5–4 m above the ground (n=2) (pers. obs.).

In 2003, I observed interactions between the two species of woodpeckers in Lake Meredith National Recreation Area (Hutchinson County) and Alibates Flint Quarries National Monument (Potter County). On two separate occasions (28th and 30th of May), pairs of Red-headed Woodpeckers usurped the nests of the other species and appeared to depredate the young on one occasion. I observed The larger species looking into the nest hole apparently attempting to ambush and snatch the young. In one nest, small or medium-size young were certainly killed (and possibly eaten), but in the second case, at least one young fledged successfully before the attack. Attempts by one female Ladder-backed Woodpecker to repel intruders proved ineffective. In their turn, Red-headed Woodpeckers tried to chase the female Ladder-backed away from the nest.

The Red-headed Woodpecker has been described as the "most pugnacious of North America woodpeckers" (Smith et al. 2000) and is known to take bird eggs, nestlings, and occasionally adult birds of several species (Smith et al. 2000; Winkler and Christie 2002). In addition to eating eggs and young, it also has been reported to puncture eggs of other species and throw young out of the nest (Smith et al. 2000), gaining access to the eggs and young by enlarging the hole-entrance (Winkler and Christie 2002).

In both cases I observed, this occurred with nest holes that the Ladder-backed Woodpecker had excavated in thick cottonwood limbs. The attackers later enlarged entrance holes and thereafter used the nests. The Ladder-backed woodpecker is an early nester in the Texas panhandle, excavating cavities as early as March, and laying and incubating from April onwards. Adults bringing food to young have been observed from early May (Seyffert 2001, pers. obs.). Red-headed Woodpeckers arrive in Lake Meredith NRA-Alibates Flint Quarries NM in late April-early May when the majority of ladder-backed woodpeckers already have nests with eggs or small young (Seyffert 2000, pers. obs.). It is possible that the larger and more aggressive Red-headed Woodpecker excludes the smaller species from all habitats with large snags and trees (i.e., from cottonwood savanna and semi-desert with standing snags), usurping nests of the latter whenever located. Thus, nests of Ladder-backed Woodpeckers excavated in heavier-limbed trees are likely targets for Red-headed Woodpecker attacks, while their nests in smaller honey mesquite trees are probably secure.

I am grateful to Dr. Richard Knapton of Edmonton, Alberta, to Jack C. Eitniear of San Antonio, Texas and to John P. Karges from Fort Davis, Texas for useful comments about this manuscript.

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NORTHERN FLICKER (*COLAPTES AURATUS*) WINTER ROOSTING AND FORAGING IN A RURAL GARAGE

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Although some species of North American woodpeckers, such as the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*), have experienced extensive habitat loss and population declines as a result of human development (Jackson 1994), others have behaviorally adapted to occupying disturbed habitats (Winkler et al. 1995). Many species have learned to use not only the modified habitats, but also the structures that humans have created within them. Some to such an extent that they have come to be considered pests due to the damage they can inflict upon utility poles, fence posts (Dennis 1964), log cabins, wooden houses, and shutters (Winkler et al. 1995).

Northern Flickers (*Colaptes auratus*) have very successfully exploited human structures (Moore 1995), often in non-damaging ways. They have been reported to nest in utility poles, fence posts, wagon hubs, barrels, chimneys, haystacks, the sides of houses, a plank shaft surrounding a water tower pipe (Bent 1939, Dennis 1969), and barns (Farley 1901). Reported roost sites include external building surfaces, chimneys, the underside of bridges, and beneath the eaves of buildings (Bent 1939, Royall and Bray 1980). Here we report on the periodic roosting and foraging of a male Northern Flicker inside a garage at a rural home located about 5 km southeast of Starkville, Mississippi between November 1998 and January 1999. The garage, constructed entirely of wood, measures 6.3 m wide by 6.3 m deep. It is completely enclosed with the exception of the south face, which is missing a door. This garage is regularly used for the night storage of two cars, but only one was present during roosting observations, and no cars were present during foraging observations.

On 9 and 11 December 1998, a male Northern Flicker was observed roosting in the rafters of the garage roughly 45 minutes before sunrise. On both occasions the individual was seen perched passerine style on a board laid across rafters near the center of the garage. The individual was positioned about 1 m from a light bulb that had been left on the entire night. Both mornings the individual was approached, at which time it opened its eyes and flew directly out of the garage and out of sight. More early morning searches were made of the garage between and after these two dates, but no birds were present.

On 28 November 1998, 01 December 1998, and 04 January 1999 we observed a male Northern Flicker foraging on the walls of this same garage. On each day the individual was observed between 0930 and 1000 searching and gleaning among scattered spider webs and abandoned wasp nests along horizontal 2 x 4 wall supports about 1.5 m above the ground. We searched the immediate area for potential prey items after the bird flew away, but found none. Unidentified ants and moths were found along adjacent walls.

We do not know if the same male was observed foraging each time, or if this was the same male that we observed roosting in the garage. It should also be noted that we made our observations during a relatively mild winter, but on both mornings we observed the male roosting, the ambient temperature was between 6° and -1°C. The interior of the garage, especially near the light, was considerably warmer and without wind, perhaps providing a more favorable roosting site. All foraging events were observed on cloudy and windy days with high temperatures around 13°C. Again, temperatures inside the garage were warmer and all wind was blocked. This may have increased activity of insects inside the garage compared to those outside.

Bent (1939) reported the only other accounts of internal building use we are aware of. The first was the use of a barn as a winter roost site, and the second account was the finding of a dead Northern Flicker in a garage that had remained closed all winter. This individual apparently found its way in but was unable to find its way back out (Bent 1939). Thus, winter reports of building use are not completely absent for this species, but they are rare and observations of such behavior warrant additional documentation. While we cannot make conclusive statements about reasons for the use of a garage by Northern Flickers in this case, we feel the observations add to the accumulated knowledge of this species behavioral plasticity and potentially reflect an unusual learned behavior.

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Figure 6. Northern Flicker (*Colaptes auratus*). Photo by Brian K. Wheeler/VIREO.

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Figure 7. Nesting Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) photographed in Llano County by Jess Thompson.

TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY UVALDE MEETING SCIENTIFIC PAPERS, HOLIDAY INN, 23 October 2003

BALD EAGLE NESTING STATUS IN TEXAS

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Abstract: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has been tracking recovery of the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) since it was placed on the endangered species list. The number of Bald Eagles nesting in Texas has been rapidly increasing since 1987, with twenty (20) active nests documented at that time. The number of active nests increased to 37 in 1992, 54 in 1997, and 110 in 2002. Nineteen (19) new Bald Eagle nesting territories were located, and 117 of 159 nest territories observed were occupied in 2003. One hundred and forty-four (144) young were fledged from 92 of the 117 occupied nests. Density and distribution of nesting associated with habitats will be discussed.

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BIRD BANDING AT MITCHELL LAKE

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Abstract: Bird banding at Mitchell Lake in San Antonio started in October, 1994. This was part of a larger program to identify types of plants and animals on the property. The slides show the banding process and some of the birds banded.

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DISEASE PROBLEMS AND BILL DEFORMITIES IN BIRDS

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Abstract: Bill deformities in wild birds are rare with a frequency estimated to be less than 0.5%. Two groups, Icterids (blackbirds) and Mimids (catbird, mockingbird and thrashers), seem to have a higher rate of deformed bills than other families. It is interisting that, in my banding experience, these two groups also exhibit more tumors and lesions as well.

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ASSESSMENT OF AFLATOXIN TOXICITY IN BOBWHITES AND CARDINALS

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Abstract: Aflatoxin is a widely occurring and dangerous mycotoxin that grows on grain. Wildlife can be exposed by ingesting aflatoxin-contaminated grain supplied though supplemental feeding and baiting. Even though considered harmful, little information has been published on the specific impact of aflatoxin on birds. Therefore, our objectives were to determine the level of aflatoxin that negatively affects normal physiological responses and induces acute morbidity and mortality in northern bobwhites and northern cardinals.

One hundred wild-caught, adult Northern Bobwhites (*Colinus virginianus*)and Northern Cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) from southern Texas were maintained at the Texas A&M University-Kingsville aviary, randomly assigned to a treatment group, and given various levels of aflatoxin (bobwhites: 0, 100, 500, 1,000, and 2,000 ppb; cardinals: 0, 25, 50, 75, 100, 500, 1,000, and 2,000 ppb). Additionally, the possible influence of low fat (2.5%; $n = 50$) versus high fat (4%; $n = 50$) diets on aflatoxin toxicity was examined in bobwhites.

- Overall, mortality due to aflatoxin was $< 20\%$ in bobwhites and $<20\%$ in cardinals that received <100 ppb aflatoxin, but $>47\%$ in cardinals that received >100 ppb aflatoxin.
- Aflatoxin negatively affected blood plasma parameters associated with liver, kidney, and immune system function in both species.
- A high fat diet did not reduce the harmful effects of aflatoxin in bobwhites.
- Aflatoxin levels as low as 25 ppb reduced immune system function by $>10\%$ in cardinals.
- Findings indicate that short-term, acute doses of aflatoxin are harmful to bobwhites and cardinals and can cause death in immunologically challenged birds.

Cooperative funding provided by Ben F. Vaughan, III, and George C. "Tim" Hixon.

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IMPACT OF CHOLINESTERASE-INHIBITING PESTICIDES ON WHITE-WINGED DOVES IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY OF TEXAS

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Abstract: The White-winged Dove (*Zenaida asiatica*, WWDO) is considered one of the most important game birds of the southeastern United States. It generates important income in the Lower Rio Grande Valley (LRGV) of Texas. This region is the historical natural breeding habitat of the species; however, since the 1920s, populations of WWDO have been declining. Reduction of WWDO density has been attributed to the loss of nearly 95% of the natural breeding habitat due to human disturbances, such as agricultural, industrial, and urban development. Nevertheless, some studies point out that native nesting habitat suitable for breeding is being underused, which suggests that processes other than habitat loss might be involved. For example, pesticide use in LRGV could be one of the factors implicated in the WWDO population declines. There is evidence that WWDO have been exposed to pesticides used in agricultural fields; and moreover, it has been hypothesized that WWDO are exposed to anticholinesterase compounds (organophosphates =OPs; carbamates =CAs) by ingesting contaminated water from irrigated cotton fields. Animals with sublethal cholinesterase depression show physiological and behavioral disorders that may decrease notably their potential for survival and reproduction. Currently there is no information about the amount of OPs or CAs dissolved in water from irrigated crops, or about the level of exposure that results from drinking contaminated water.

We present the current status of a model that simulates natural scenarios to estimate the effect of OPs and CAs (the most common insecticides applied in the region) on cholinesterase activity in White-winged Doves that drink contaminated water from flooded fields.

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IMPACTS OF INVASIVE EXOTIC GRASSES ON AVIAN COMMUNITIES DURING THE BREEDING SEASON IN SOUTH TEXAS

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Abstract: The adverse impacts of exotic vegetation on native flora and fauna are well documented in many ecosystems. However, there is little data on the effects of exotic vegetation on native wildlife in the South Texas Plains. The objective of this study was to determine if the abundance and diversity of breeding birds and native flora differed between areas dominated by native grasses and areas dominated by the exotic grasses Lehmann lovegrass (*Eragrostis lehmanniana*) and bufflegrass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*). Three native and 3 exotic grass dominated sites were selected for study on the Chaparral Wildlife Management Area and Piloncillo Ranch. Point counts were used to sample bird communities during spring 2001 and 2002. Line intercept, Daubenmire frame, and profile board methods were used to characterize shrub cover, herbaceous ground cover, and vertical structure, respectively. Native grass areas had higher forb and grass species richness and

diversity. Percent forb canopy cover was greater on native grass sites. Important grasses including bristlegrasses (*Setaria* spp.) and fall witchgrass (*Digitaria cognata*) and beneficial forbs such as slender evolvulus (*Evolvulus alsinoides*), shaggy portulaca (*Portulaca pilosa*), and scarlet pea (*Indigofera miniata*) had greater cover on native grass areas. Bird density and diversity were greater in native grass rangelands. Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), Black-throated Sparrow (*Amphispiza bilineata*), Northern Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), and Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*) consistently had higher densities in native grass areas. Bird species on our study sites appear to prefer native grass areas and may be exhibiting optimal foraging by selecting patches with a higher abundance and diversity of native vegetative resources. Additionally, exotic grasses may have a negative impact on the abundance and diversity of arthropods, which are a critical resource for birds during the breeding season. Future research should address this in addition to the impacts of exotic grass invasions on wintering birds and avian reproductive success.

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HUMMINGBIRD FEEDER NUMBER EFFECT ON WINTERING SPECIES

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Abstract: Hummingbird density and diversity were studied in relation to the number of feeders available for 8 winters (1 November to 28 February) for the years 1995 thru 2003. The study area was a rural subdivision consisting of about 50 2-acre lots bordering a creek about 30 miles inland from the central Texas Coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Hummingbirds were captured by traps or nets, banded and released as they were observed from 1995 thru 1999, and by bi-weekly mist netting in subsequent winters.

Twelve 8-oz feeders were initially offered at 5–10 yard intervals scattered in shrubbery to hummingbirds in the vicinity of a home in a typical landscaped yard that was surrounded by 12 acres of vacant lots for 4 winters from 1995–1999. These feeders were used by an average of 14 individuals of 4 species. Feeders were dispersed in the same manner in subsequent years and the size of area with feeders expanded with the number of feeders and the expanded area included a vacant lot of dense shrubs and vines. During the winter of 1999–2000, 30 3-oz feeders were offered to hummingbirds and 29 individuals of 5 species used those feeders. Fifty 8-oz feeders were offered at the same location and were used by 62 individuals of 7 species during the winter of 2000–2001. Finally, during the two winters from 2001–2003, 70 8-oz feeders were offered. An average of 97 hummingbirds from 7 species used the feeders.

A total of 144 Buff-bellied Hummingbird (*Amazilia yucatanensis*)winters (sum of total individuals for a species, for each of 8 winters) and 84 recaptures (total number of individuals recaptured from previous seasons, summed each winter) were recorded. Rufous Hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*) was the second in abundance with 121 winters and 18 recaptures, and Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilochus alexandri*) had 32 winters and 10 recaptures. Ruby-throated Hummingbird (*Archilochus colibris*) was mostly a late migrant with a few individuals lingering to December and none known to have survived the winter with 18 being captured during the study. Broad-tailed (*Selasphorus platycerus*) and Anna's Hummingbirds (*Calypte anna*) were sporadic in occurrence, with 17 and 6 individuals banded, respectively. The Allen's (*Selasphorus sasin*) and Calliope Hummingbirds (*Stellula calliope*) did not start using the study site with regularity until 2000. Recorded were 11 Allen's winters with 1 recapture, and 7 Calliope winters with no recaptures.

There is an obvious relationship between number of feeders and the number of hummingbirds wintering in the study area. Uncontrollable variables that may have also influenced numbers of hummingbirds captured, included feeders maintained outside the study area by others, and survival and return rates. There was a progressive increase in birds just from survivors returning in following winters, but newcomers also increased in proportion to larger number of feeders. The last variable was a range expansion of the Buff-bellied Hummingbird during the 8-year study. The species only averaged two over-wintering prior to 1999, increased to a high of 51 during 2002–2003.

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ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

EARLY SOUTHWEST ORNITHOLOGISTS, 1528–1900. By Dan L. Fischer. University of Arizona Press, Tucson. 2001. 271 pages, 20 figures, 4 maps. $45.00 (cloth)

This book portrays a variety of people (not just ornithologists) and the birds they discovered in the Southwestern United States and adjacent Northern Mexico. The author, Dan Fischer, lives in Arizona and has studied and photographed birds of the Southwest for over 50 years. He belongs to several bird organizations, including the Texas Ornithological Society. Fischer has dedicated his book to "all naturalists—past, present, and future."

The seven chapters of the book cover specific periods in the exploration and development of the Southwest. Individual chapters deal with the explorers, naturalists and artists of a particular era, and the birds they observed, collected, and described. Four maps trace the routes taken by various expeditions and naturalists. The illustrations feature studio portraits, reproductions of bird paintings, as well as photographs of collectors working under field conditions. The bibliography consists of almost 500 entries, most of which are scientific papers, government reports, and biographical memoirs. An appendix of 33 pages lists the birds occurring in the Southwest along with the name of the first person to observe, collect, and describe each species.

The index contains the names of about 40 individuals who made contributions to the study of Texas birds. Only a few of the major pre-1900 workers are omitted, the most important ones being Patrick Duffy, Edwin C. Davis, Henry Nehrling and John Allen Singley. Accounts of the naturalists who worked in Texas are generally short and note only the most important contributions of each. Examples include John Porter McCown's addition of seven species new to the fauna of the United States and his discovery of the Olive Sparrow, Ash-throated Flycatcher and the longspur named in his honor. Samuel Washington Woodhouse collected the first Cassin's Sparrow and Black-capped Vireo. Henry Eeles Dresser added the Golden-cheeked Warbler to the fauna of the United States and provided observations on 272 species from southern Texas. The work of George Sennett at Corpus Christi and along the Lower Rio Grande is described in some detail and it is noted that he died (in 1900) before his anticipated work was completed. It is perhaps worth mentioning that Sennett's "anticipated work" was a monograph on the birds of Texas.

The adventures of the naturalists are entertaining and provide an appreciation of the difficulty of collecting in earlier times. Charles Wright was forced by the military with whom he was traveling to walk the entire 673 miles from San Antonio to El Paso! Emil Bendire descended a 40-foot cottonwood tree carrying the egg of a Zone-tailed Hawk in his mouth while being closely watched by hostile Apaches. The cold nights, blistering hot days, sandstorms, and alkali water in Arizona were a way of life for Elliott Coues, whereas in Texas George Sennett had to contend with ticks, fleas, and chiggers. A photograph (p. 196) of Francis Willard balanced on a tiny branch high above the ground graphically illustrates the inherent danger of collecting eggs from nests in tall trees.

There are a few incorrect dates and oversights, e.g., Louis Agassiz Fuertes, born 1874, worked in Texas during 1901, not 1900, and he did not do artwork for Elliott Coues' *Key to North American Birds* published in 1872. The 33 pages of the appendix are not numbered thus making it difficult to find items cited in the index. The appendix names all of those individuals who described species of southwestern birds (e.g., Bechstein 1783 described the Black Vulture) but the bibliography does not always contain the entries necessary to determine the journal or book in which the description was published.

Mention is made of several illustrators who worked in Mexico. Artists of the Royal Scientific (Botanical) Expedition to Mexico (1787–1803) were the first to illustrate the California Quail, Blue-throated Hummingbird, Greater Roadrunner, and Yellow-headed Blackbird. From 1853 until 1869, Andrew Jackson Grayson illustrated a large series of birds from California and western Mexico. Grayson's paintings, most of which were unpublished at the time of his death, are now highly acclaimed and have earned for him the posthumous title "Audubon of the Pacific." Grayson's exquisite painting of a pair of Gambel's Quail and their chicks is reproduced in the book.

Fischer's book achieves its goal of describing people and birds, and the events that brought them together in the Southwest. For a vicarious journey into the past and a wealth of little known detail, I recommend *Early Southwest Ornithologists* to everyone interested in the history of ornithology.

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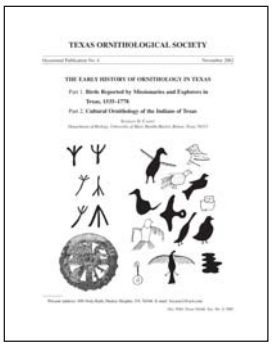

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Manuscripts, including tables, should be typed and double-spaced on one side of 8.5 x 11 inch (22 x 28 cm) white paper. Allow 3 cm margins on all sides. Manuscripts may be printed using a high resolution dot-matrix or letter-quality printer. The last name of the first author must be at the top of each page of the manuscript and on the back of every figure. Submitted articles should follow the format observed in this issue of the *Bulletin of the Texas Ornithological Society*. Feature articles should include an abstract and a "Literature Cited" section. Short Communications do not need an abstract.

Scientific and common names of North American birds must follow the 1998 A.O.U. Check-list and supplements. The 24-hour clock (0730), the continental dating convention (3 January 1989), and the metric system should be used.

Submit an original and two complete copies of the manuscript. Each manuscript will be subject to editing and will normally be reviewed by at least two persons who are knowledgeable in the subject. The reviewers will provide the editor with advice on the article's acceptability and accuracy. If the article passes review and is correct in form, it will be scheduled for publication. A voluntary page charge of $35 per printed page will be assessed. **Payment of complete page charges will normally result in earlier publication.** Accepted articles will be published on a "space available" basis if the page charges are not paid. Authors will be sent proofs of their articles prior to the final printing.

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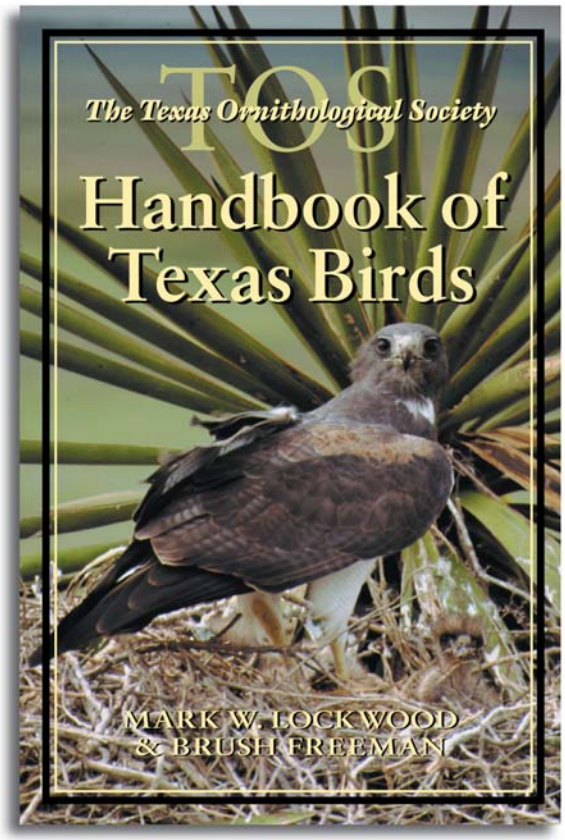

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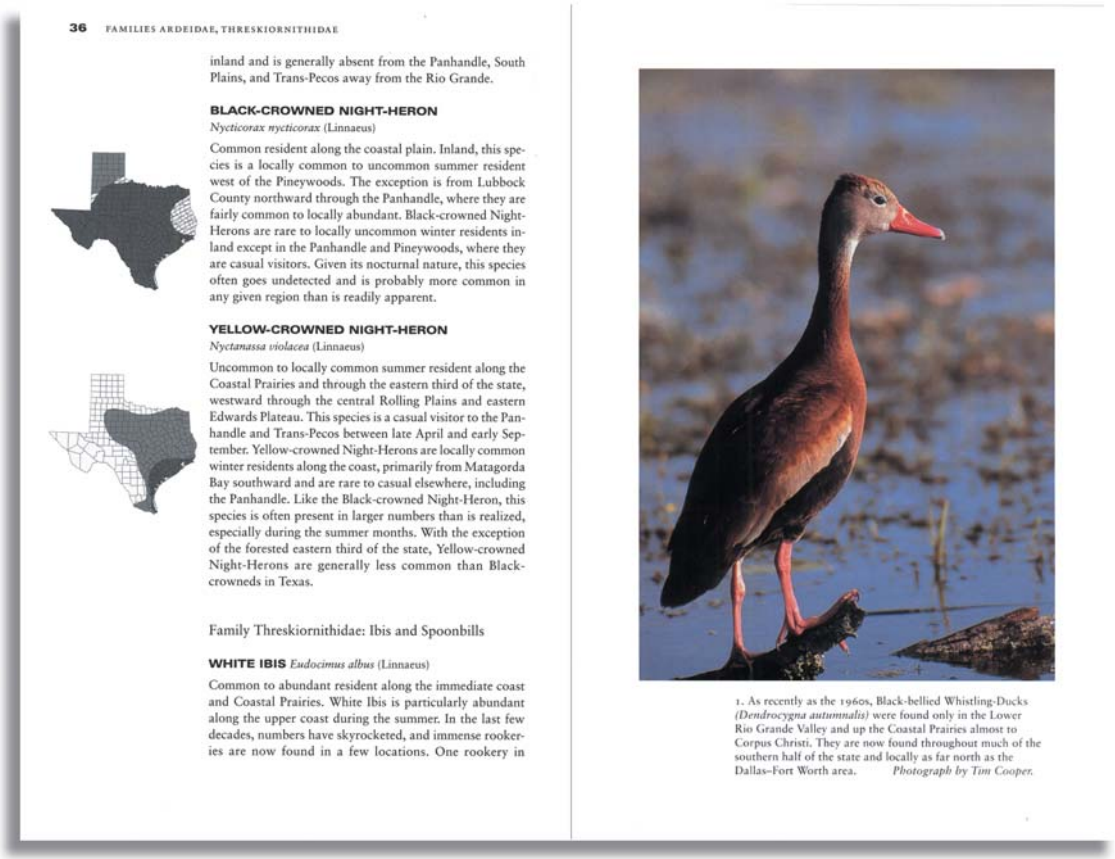

36 FAMILIES ARDEIDAE, THRESKIORNITHIDAE

inland and is generally absent from the Panhandle, South Plains, and Trans-Pecos away from the Rio Grande.

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON
Nycticorax nycticorax (Linnaeus)

Common resident along the coastal plain. Inland, this species is a locally common to uncommon summer resident west of the Pineywoods. The exception is from Lubbock County northward through the Panhandle, where they are fairly common to locally abundant. Black-crowned Night-Herons are rare to locally uncommon winter residents inland except in the Panhandle and Pineywoods, where they are casual visitors. Given its nocturnal nature, this species often goes undetected and is probably more common in any given region than is readily apparent.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON
Nyctanassa violacea (Linnaeus)

Uncommon to locally common summer resident along the Coastal Prairies and through the eastern third of the state, westward through the central Rolling Plains and eastern Edwards Plateau. This species is a casual visitor to the Panhandle and Trans-Pecos between late April and early September. Yellow-crowned Night-Herons are locally common winter residents along the coast, primarily from Matagorda Bay southward and are rare to casual elsewhere, including the Panhandle. Like the Black-crowned Night-Heron, this species is often present in larger numbers than is realized, especially during the summer months. With the exception of the forested eastern third of the state, Yellow-crowned Night-Herons are generally less common than Black-crowneds in Texas.

Family Threskiornithidae: Ibis and Spoonbills

WHITE IBIS *Eudocimus albus* (Linnaeus)

Common to abundant resident along the immediate coast and Coastal Prairies. White Ibis is particularly abundant along the upper coast during the summer. In the last few decades, numbers have skyrocketed, and immense rookeries are now found in a few locations. One rookery in

1. As recently as the 1960s, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks *(Dendrocygna autumnalis)* were found only in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and up the Coastal Prairies almost to Corpus Christi. They are now found throughout much of the southern half of the state and locally as far north as the Dallas–Fort Worth area. *Photograph by Tim Cooper.*

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