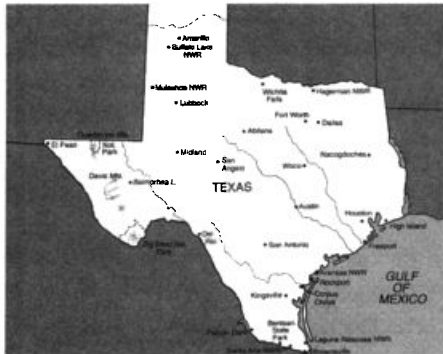
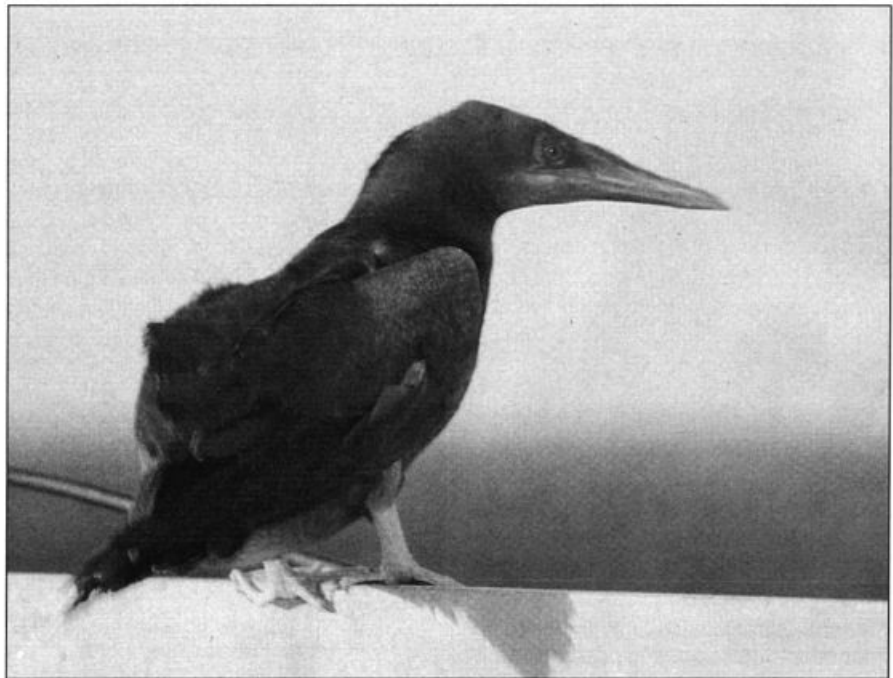


# texas



**SA** Hurricane *Bret* developed quickly in the southern Gulf of Mexico 19–20 Aug, reaching Category 4 status by the time it made landfall on Sunday, 22 Aug, in a sparsely populated area of the lower Texas coast near Baffin Bay. From 22–24 Aug, much of the brush country se. of Del Rio received substantial downpours, especially in coastal *Kleberg* and *Kenedy*. By 26 Aug *Bret* had spent itself as it crashed into the rugged mountains of northern Nuevo Leon and Coahuila, Mexico. Ornithologically, *Bret* barely caused a blip in the migration. Beach searches on Mustang and N. Padre Is. 23–24 Aug by three separate teams of observers tallied several hundred casualties (probably suggesting thousands storm-killed) of at least 40 species, with swallows appearing hardest hit. There were some storm-killed pelagics on the beach (a dozen Cory’s Shearwaters and two unidentified storm-petrels). Two sulids (early gannets?) blew past Hebbbronville in *Duval* on the 23rd (JiH) and a couple of Magnificent Frigatebirds were blown slightly inland to Choke Canyon Reservoir (J&BRi et al.). Hazel Bazemore observers tallied an out-of-range Zone-tailed Hawk 24 Aug, but its relationship to the passage of *Bret* is unclear. It might be a stretch, but El Paso’s Roseate Spoonbill may have been hurricane-related.



**An immature Brown Booby on an oil platform off Kenedy, Texas, 30 Oct 1999. Photograph/Alan Wormington**

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**T**he mild summer sank quickly into an extended and severe drought over most of Texas as fall wore on. In late August, Hurricane *Bret* brought rainfall relief to deep south Texas but caused barely a ripple in the migration; *Bret* was generally a disappointment for storm-blown bird chasers. We received fascinating reports from oil rig sitters participating in the “Migration Over the Gulf Project” sponsored by Louisiana State University’s Museum of Natural Science. Several observers (CCo, BGi, WL, BR, AW) shared duties on watch on three rigs offshore of High Island, Matagorda Island, and N. Padre Island (records for these sites will be arbitrarily assigned to *Brazoria*, *Calhoun*, and *Kenedy*, respectively). On their long list of intriguing and “out-

of-habitat” birds were Broad-winged Hawk, Inca Dove, five spp. of owls, Red-headed Woodpecker, Winter Wren, Sage and Long-billed Thrasher, Green-tailed Towhee, Cassin’s Sparrow, Gray-headed Junco, Chestnut-collared Longspur, and Pyrrhuloxia. We highlight other sightings from this project below. The hawkwatchers at Smith Point on the east side of Galveston Bay and at Hazel Bazemore County Park near Corpus Christi again racked up impressive—and occasionally controversial—results. There were early irruptions of Red-breasted Nuthatches and Golden-crowned Kinglets; western species such as Say’s Phoebe, Verdin, Green-tailed Towhee, and Pyrrhuloxia showed up eastward a bit more than usual, but there were no other winter invasions.

This column is dedicated to the memory of two of our long-time birding friends, Linda Snyder and Dave Stuart.

**Abbreviations:** M.O.G. (*Migration Over the Gulf Project, L.S.U.*); S.S.W.T.P. (*Southside Water Treatment Plant, Dallas Co.*); T.B.R.C. (*Texas Bird Records Committee, Texas Ornithological Society*); T.P.W.D. (*Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.*); F.W.S. (*U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service*); U.T.C. (*Upper Texas Coast*). The following are shortened names for the respective county, state, or national parks, wildlife refuges, etc.: Anahuac, Aransas, Attwater, Balcones Canyonlands, Bentsen, Big Bend, Buffalo Lake, Hagerman, Laguna Atascosa, and Santa Ana.

Table I. Texas Hawkwatch Results, Fall 1999

Species	Smith Point	Hazel Bazemore
Black Vulture	341	1,398
Turkey Vulture	1,295	30,029
Osprey	54	180
Swallow-tailed Kite	52	31
White-tailed Kite	18	6
Mississippi Kite	2,975	5,513
Bald Eagle	2	4
Northern Harrier	537	331
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3,896	1,349
Cooper's Hawk	1,197	1,090
Northern Goshawk		1
Harris's Hawk		27
Red-shouldered Hawk	34	77
Broad-winged Hawk	34,242	640,258
Short-tailed Hawk		2
Swainson's Hawk	129	1,232
White-tailed Hawk	2	13
Zone-tailed Hawk		6
Red-tailed Hawk	204	281
Ferruginous Hawk	2	14
Rough-legged Hawk	2	4
Golden Eagle	1	4
Crested Caracara	4	18
American Kestrel	1,939	460
Merlin	48	57
Aplomado Falcon		1
Prairie Falcon		33
Peregrine Falcon	85	241
Unidentified Raptors	269	4,336
Season Totals	47,328	687,003*

\*Three nearby sites tallied an additional 240,806 raptors on four watch dates.

**LOONS THROUGH IBISES**

The obligatory Red-throated Loon for n.-cen. Texas showed up 17–20 Nov at L. Benbrook, providing a first *Tarrant* record (PH et al.). A group of six Pacific Loons at L. Tawakoni, *Rains*, 25 Oct was probably the biggest group ever seen together in Texas (MWh); single Pacifics were seen there periodically afterward. The only coastal report was one 15–26 Nov at Port O'Connor (PH, BF). Symptomatic of the loon density in ne. Texas was a count of 71 Com. Loons at L. Tawakoni in early Nov. We received a belated report of a pair of Least Grebes which successfully nested in *Austin* in June (RO). Almost annual in recent years, a Red-necked Grebe was at L. Tawakoni 6 Nov (†MWh). Sixty-one occupied nests of Eared Grebes was an amazing concentration at a playa in *Randall* 19 Aug (KS). Two gadfly petrels seen at a distance from the *Kenedy* oil rig 28 Oct appeared *not* to be Black-capped, but their specific identity, suggested to be Heralds, will remain a mystery (AW). The M.O.G. Project documented the movement of Cory's Shearwaters stretching from 13 Aug–16 Nov, with birds seen on 50 dates during that period and the highest daily tally of 26 birds. From the *Kenedy* rig, Wormington reported four

Sooty Shearwaters on 5 Nov (†to T.B.R.C.). He also photographed a Brown Booby 30 Oct. There were a few inland Brown Pelicans of note: singles were at L. Mexia, *Limestone*, 6 Sep (AF, MCA), and at Hagerman 12–18 Nov (third refuge record; KH). Two nests of Double-crested Cormorants in Aug were a first for Buffalo L. and only a second nesting site for the Panhandle (PT, m.ob.). Two Neotropic Cormorants in *Harrison* in ne. Texas 30 Aug were rare for the area (GLU, EdR). Twenty-four Least Bitterns were flushed by a combine in a rice field 5 Sep in *Calhoun* (PH). Only a third record for the Panhandle, a Tricolored Heron was photographed in Amarillo, *Potter*, 1 Oct (CBru). Good records of Reddish Egret included birds at Martin Creek L., *Panola*, 9 Aug (second ne. Texas record; MD) and another photographed at Stillhouse Hollow Res., *Bell*, 6 Nov (DRo, RPi). Particularly unusual for e. Texas was a large number of White Ibises present through Nov in *Harrison*, *Freestone*, *Brazos*, *Washington*, and *Grimes* (m.ob.). Attwater hosted an amazing group of 3,000 *Plegadis* ibis 3 Oct (JO, DS, JeM). Far-flung Roseate Spoonbills included a few in *Harrison* and *Henderson* in Sep/Oct (m.ob.). The farthest flung was one 25 Aug–10 Sep at McNary

Res., *Hudspeth*, providing a first El Paso area record (ph. BZ et al.).

**WATERFOWL**

Fulvous Whistling-Ducks at Rockport had young on the late date of 30 Sep (MM), perhaps in response to rains from Hurricane *Bret*. An immature swan, initially reported as a Trumpeter, was at Hagerman 29 Nov+ (†to T.B.R.C.; GCo et al.); this is a tough identification problem. Among the unexpected M.O.G. sightings was a pair of Ross's Geese among 7 Snows 2 Nov off of *Calhoun* (BGi). Fifteen Muscovy Ducks on the Rio Grande at Salineño 6 Sep was a notable number (TB). Up to six Wood Ducks were seen during 29 Sep–23 Oct in Midland (FW et al.). An early (for the U.T.C.) female Cinnamon Teal was banded at Anahuac 5 Aug (JN). A female N. Shoveler with seven young was in *Randall* on 19 Aug, a rare Panhandle nest record (KS). Single Long-tailed Ducks were at L. Tawakoni 10–17 Nov (JMax et al.) and in *Kleberg* 24 Nov (M & AC). There were six widely scattered reports of Surf Scoters, the most interesting ones at Mason in the Texas Hill Country 19 Oct (DF, BoF) and a gorgeous ad. male at L. Balmorhea 12 Nov+ (GW, MP). A female Black Scoter was photographed at Tornillo Res. 23 Nov for a first *El Paso* record (ph. BZ). Lubbock hosted a very early Hooded Merganser 20 Aug (CSt). An ad. Ruddy Duck with five young provided uncommon nesting evidence in Littlefield, *Lamb*, 12 Aug (CSt).

**RAPTORS**

An early Osprey was in Lubbock 14 Aug (CSt). Seven Hook-billed Kites soaring together were an unusual find over Santa Ana 12 Nov (JK); one on a private ranch in ne. *Starr* 22 Sep (SB) was about 30 mi n. of the Rio Grande (as the kite flies). Two different Swallow-tailed Kites were in *Brazos* 13 Aug (JD, FC); another was in *Washington* 22 Aug (DV) for rare Central Brazos Valley records. A record number of Swallow-taileds (52) were tallied at the Smith Point hawkwatch. A White-tailed Kite was in wooded e. Texas at Alazan M.A. in *Nacogdoches* 31 Oct (DWA). Some remarkable sightings at the Hazel Bazemore hawkwatch, such as N. Goshawk and Short-tailed Hawk, will be circulated to the T.B.R.C. and other seasonal totals were eye-opening (Table 1) Two concentrations of Mississippi Kites were noted in the Panhandle, 100 over Lubbock 5 Sep and 50+ over Canyon 11 Sep (m.ob.). A N. Harrier 13 Aug in *Angelina* was early and another seen from the oil rig off *Calhoun* 2 Nov was certainly out of habitat (BGi). Flippo encountered an imm. N

Goshawk at Big Bend's Sam Nail Ranch 9 Sep (†to T.B.R.C.). A rice-combine operation in *Calhoun* 15 Nov attracted a concentration of 38 White-tailed Hawks (PH). Two early Ferruginous Hawks were at Smith Pt. 27–28 Aug (WBU et al.). One over the Texas A&M campus 22 Nov (JWi) was the first area record in a decade. The most interesting Golden Eagle report was one at Laguna Atascosa 26 Sep (BL). Two Crested Caracaras in *Hopkins* 7 Oct were a rare find but may be part of a small local population (MWh); a count of 14 at Brazos Bend 6 Nov was exceptional that far east (NBI). A total of 115 Aplomado Falcons were released in 1999 at seven locations on the central and lower Texas coast; 466 have been released in the state since 1985 (Peregrine Fund, F.W.S., T.P.W.D.). Biologists monitored 19 active nests this year, up from five the previous year. The 33 Prairie Falcons reported at Hazel Bazemore was perhaps the most striking of their seasonal totals.

#### GALLINULES THROUGH SHOREBIRDS

A Purple Gallinule at Gus Engeling W.M.A. 18 Sep was a first fall record for that site (F.W.A.S.). As the Whooping Crane flock began to arrive and build to record size, a few stragglers showed up in unanticipated locations; easternmost was a single ad. near the *Jefferson/Liberty* line 6 Nov (Ja&LW). A report of 33 migrating in *Burleson* 11 Nov may have been one of the largest groups ever spotted en route to Aransas (BE). The larger plovers are uncommon in the Panhandle. This season Black-bellieds were in *Randall* 22 Sep (two; KS) and two to five Am. Golden-Plovers were at the same location 24 Sep–30 Oct (m.ob.). Rare as well in n and e. Texas at this season, ten Am. Golden were at Cooper L. 12 Oct (MWh) and two more remained in *Harrison* 8 Oct–15 Nov (GLu, EdR). Petra Hockey had three on the late date of 12 Nov in *Calhoun* and Sproul had the latest ever in the El Paso area 7 Nov. A rare Piping Plover was at Cooper L. 24 Aug (MWh). Two Mountain Plovers 2 Aug in *Lubbock* seemed a bit early even at that latitude. Observers watching the Granger L. area fairly closely discovered their first 11 Mountain Plovers 17 Oct (BF); up to 146 were there later in Oct (m.ob.). Ten near the Rio Grande in n. *Maverick* 20 Nov may be at a regular location, but few observers search that area (SS). A Whimbrel and a Red Knot were at Hagerman 7–12 Sep, where more records have been accumulated of these particular species than anywhere else in n.-cen. Texas (LL). Up to seven Marbled Godwits

spent several weeks at L. Balmorhea from late Aug onward (MAd et al.); another was at Ft. Hancock 28 Aug (BZ). A good find was a Sanderling in *Randall* 2 Oct (EK et al.). The discovery of two late Semipalmated Sandpipers in Gibbons Creek Res., *Grimes*, 14 Nov was a treat (ERa, MSh). In the Panhandle, three Dunlins in *Randall* 26 Oct (BiMc, RSc) and another at Taylor Lakes W.M.A., *Donley*, 12 Nov (KS) were rare finds. Two Buff-breasted Sandpipers at Lubbock 11 Sep represented only the third record for the South Plains (AF). A good concentration of 117 was in w. *Bastrop* 9 Aug (BF). Although the species is more numerous in w. Texas in the fall, concentrations of Wilson's Phalaropes to the e. are less expected. A flock of 510 in *Brazoria* 21 Aug was thus a nice find (RWe). In widely scattered e. Texas locations, a few Wilson's lingered into early and mid-Nov. Two Red-necked Phalaropes were reported, at S.S.W.T.P. 12 Sep (CE) and Freeport 15–27 Sep (RWe et al.).

#### JAEGERS THROUGH TERNS

The oil-rig sitters saw good numbers of jaegers. For example, Pomarines were noted on 13 dates from 26 Sep–17 Nov from the platform off High Island; the latter date had the peak count of 33 birds and 20 were tallied there 14 Nov. Large numbers of unidentified jaegers were passing in mid-Nov, including an amazing estimate of 100 on 16 Nov (CCo). Many fewer Parasitics were reported from the rigs during the same period (CCo, BGi). Onshore, the earliest jaeger was a Pomarine reported by hawkwatchers 6 Sep at Hazel Bazemore (JSi). Two Parasitics were at San Antonio's Calaveras L. 17 Oct (BDo) and two more (dark-morph imm.) provided a first *Van Zandt* and second L. Tawakoni record 14–16 Nov (MWh, PBa). Rasmussen discovered a jaeger (thought to be a Parasitic) in w. Texas at Imperial Res. 26 Nov. A super find was a Laughing Gull on the outskirts of Amarillo, *Randall*, 13–14 Sep (KS et al.), providing the first area record since 1963. A juv.-plumaged (or early first-winter) Little Gull was at L. Benbrook, *Tarrant*, 14–19 Nov (ph. †MR, m.ob.; first co. record). For the fifth year in a row a Black-headed Gull showed up at Cooper L. 26 Nov+ (ph. †MWh). Right as Hurricane *Bret* was hitting the coast an early Bonaparte's Gull was seen at Santa Ana (KK). Two California Gulls were reported in the Galveston/Bolivar Pen. area 21 Nov (MR). Three first-winter Herring Gulls at Boca Chica, *Cameron*, seemed early 3 Sep (BMc). A first-winter Thayer's Gull was at

Rockport 17–20 Nov (ph. MI et al.). A second-basic Lesser Black-backed Gull made a surprisingly early appearance at Follett's I, *Brazoria*, 18 Aug (JSt). An imm. Black-legged Kittiwake was at Imperial Res. from 26 Nov+ (RR, ph. GL), the first ever photographed in the Trans-Pecos. The offshore observers noted single Sabine's Gulls 7 and 16 Sep (AW, BGi). The only inland report was an ad. 24 Aug at Cooper's L. (†MWh). Rare inland Caspian Terns were at Feather L (El Paso) 28 Aug (JS), Granger L. 29 Sep (TF), and Calaveras L. 6 Nov (BDo). A scarce find in wooded e. Texas was a Com Tern in *Angelina* 21 Sep (NBI, JWin). Four Bridled Terns were reported from the High I. oil rig 19 Aug–7 Sep (CCo); during the same time period Cox also had ten Sooties

#### DOVES THROUGH NIGHTJARS

A Band-tailed Pigeon found freshly dead near Concan, *Uvalde*, 5 Nov (JGr; ph. SSL, JOs) provided only the fourth Hill Country record. The species is resident in mountain ranges of n. Coahuila, Mexico, about 90 miles southwest. At least three Eurasian Collared-Doves were in Nacogdoches, where a territorial pair was seen in summer (DW, MW). Most remarkable was its explosion in the Trans-Pecos, High Plains, and Panhandle: Lasley photographed a concentration of 31 in Balmorhea 28 Nov, where only a handful had been present earlier in the year. Five new counties were added in the Panhandle, *Dallam*, *Hansford*, *Lubbock*, *Oldham*, and *Sherman*. Inca Doves were noteworthy finds in *Smith* 24–28 Aug (RGU, PBa) and in Gruver, *Hansford*, 19 Sep (MT). Three White-tipped Doves were at Indianola, *Calhoun*, in Sep (BF, PH) where a single bird had been found in Mar. One was also reported from Santa Elena Cyn. in Big Bend 10 Sep (DarW), where it has yet to be well documented. The only coastal Black-billed Cuckoos were at Rockport 13 Sep (MM) and the *Calhoun* oil rig 21 Oct (BGi), more remarkable was another at Muleshoe 5 Sep (RSm). Groove-billed Anis put on a good show on the U.T.C., with the first showing up at Quintana, *Brazoria*, 19 Sep (JL, m.ob.). The oil rigs produced some interesting owl records. Most notably, a Flammulated was photographed on the *Calhoun* rig 10 Oct. Additionally, there were two Burrowing Owls at that rig in mid-Oct, three Long-eareds at two rigs late Oct–early Nov, and a Short-eared at the *Calhoun* rig 18 Oct (AW, BGi). *Brazoria* got its first Long-eared Owl, at Quintana 3 Nov (C & OB, JB)

#### SWIFTS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A good find at the e edge of the Texas Hill

Country was a flock of eight to ten White-throated Swifts that raced by diners at the Tower of the Americas restaurant high over San Antonio 25 Oct (B & JH). We had reports of three Broad-billed Hummingbirds in w. Texas and one in deep s. Texas. A male was at Alpine 17 Aug–22 Sep (ph. DO et al.); one was at Ft. Davis 6 Sep (†M & ME) and a late male showed up in El Paso in mid-Nov+ (ph. JZ, MSc). The s. Texas bird was at Los Fresnos 28–29 Aug (†N & PA). An ad. male **Berylline Hummingbird** was photographed 3 Aug and (probably the same bird) 8 Aug (ph. M & ME, CSh); this spot was precisely the same one where the species was confirmed for Texas two years earlier. There were first county records of Buff-bellied Hummingbirds in *Brazos* early Sep–20 Oct (MWi) and in *Milam* 2 Nov (FBur). One of the *Washington* Buff-bellieds from summer lingered to 9 Sep (MEf). Freeman had another in *Bastrop* 5 Aug and it made an early and above-average push into the e. portion of the U.T.C. by Sep (m.ob.). A male Blue-throated Hummingbird made an appearance at Helotes, *Bexar*, 11 Nov (RH). Apparently two separate male Lucifers showed up at feeders in San Antonio 27 Sep and 21 Oct (LEm, CCu); it is rare away from the Trans-Pecos. Anna's Hummingbirds were more common than normal in the Trans-Pecos and we had reports of five elsewhere in Texas. The best of the latter was a male in Longview 22–24 Sep (ph. GLu, MiL) for a first *Gregg* record. Calliopes made an appearance on the U.T.C., with a female at West Columbia 11–12 Sep (C & OB) and a male in w. Houston 12–14 Nov (ph. SO). Four late-lingering Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were in El Paso 19 Nov–1 Dec. (BZ). Single Ringed Kingfishers were in *Victoria* 10 Nov (NH) and at *Kingsville* 17–21 Nov (GP); with recent movements of this bird we hesitate to even call these records "extralimital." Red-naped Sapsuckers were reported at Bentsen (no date) and in Corpus Christi 26 Nov (WS).

**FLYCATCHERS THROUGH VIREOS**

A wood-pewee reported as Western was photographed on the *Calhoun* rig 24 Sep (BGi). Most amazing, a pewee photographed on the oil rig off N. Padre I., *Kenedy*, 9 Oct (BR) shows characteristics of Cuban Pewee *Contopus caribeus*. This record will be researched and reviewed by the T.B.R.C. A good find was 14 Alder Flycatchers calling 15 Aug in the Guadalupe R. delta, *Refugio* (A&MC). Surprisingly early for the U.T.C. was an E. Phoebe at Sabine

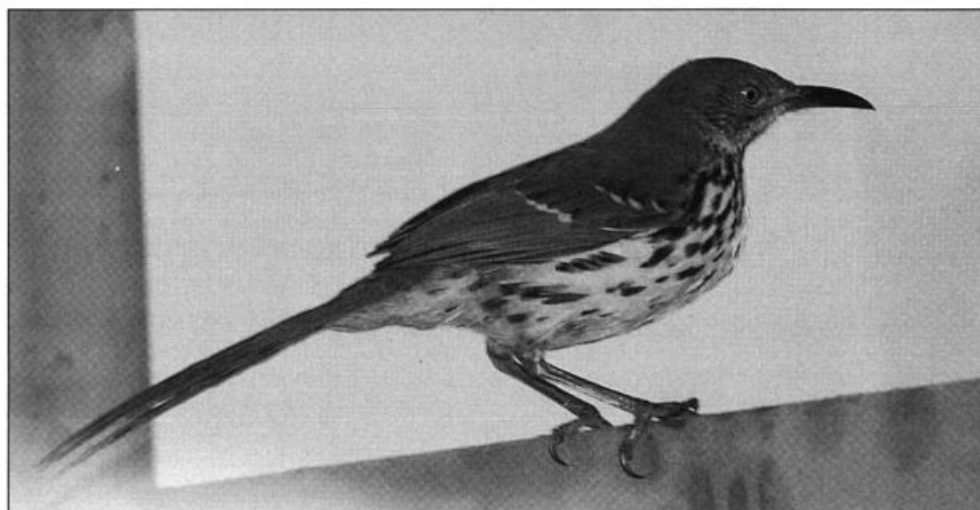
Woods 15 Aug (KSz); they were unusually common in the Midland area, with eight reports this fall (FW). Single Say's Phoebes were out of place on Galveston I. 23 Sep (KH, MSt), on the *Calhoun* rig 31 Oct (BGi), and in *Wichita* in Nov (DMc) and *Tarrant* (MR). A Vermilion Flycatcher in *Harrison* 10 Oct was a rare find for ne. Texas (DWe). Wandering Great Kiskadees made news in two areas of the state, with singles at Hagerman 14 Nov (KH et al.), a first for *Grayson*, two at Port O'Connor, *Calhoun*, 26 Oct (PH), and one at Guadalupe Delta WMA 14 Nov (PH). Tropical Kingbirds continue to be observed more frequently in s. Texas; one in *Starr* 6 Sep (TB) was the farthest w. this season. Non-vocalizing Couch's/Tropicals were likewise widely reported, including one in *Brazoria* 13 Aug and eight in *Victoria* 11 Nov. The Rose-throated Becards at Anzalduas from the summer report were seen sporadically until at least 14 Nov (†FB). The only N. Shrike was an imm. at Buffalo L. 27 Nov (KS). Single Cassin's Vireos were reported at High I. 25 Sep (MA) and at Corpus Christi 16 Nov (MC). Unexpected was a Plumbeous Vireo in Corpus Christi 16 Nov+ (MC et al.). A good Lubbock record was provided by a Philadelphia Vireo 26 Sep–10 Oct (AF, KD).

**JAYS THROUGH WARBLERS**

A well-described W. Scrub-Jay was totally out of range and habitat at Laredo 5 Sep (LE). Unexpected was a Com. Raven just off the caprock in *Crosby* 27 Nov (ML). A Purple Martin at McNary 25 Aug (ph. BZ) provided a rare Trans-Pecos record. A flock of 250,000 Barn Swallows going to roost in a

sugar cane field in *Hidalgo* 14 Oct was a spectacle (MI, BGi). The most notable Red-breasted Nuthatch of the fall incursion was at Anzalduas 14 Oct (MI, BGi). A stray White-breasted Nuthatch was in *Bexar* 7 Nov (BDo). Palo Duro Cyn., *Randall*, got its first Cactus Wren 8 Nov+ (Rsc et al.). A Rock Wren moved e. to L. Tawakoni 10-17 Nov, where it is a rare vagrant (JMax, ph. MWh). An early flock of W. Bluebirds showed at Midland 24 Oct–6 Nov (DK, m.ob.). Mountain Bluebirds were scarce in their regular w. Texas winter range, but two showed up well to the s. on the King Ranch, *Kleberg* (ph. GP, TLa). Rare in the w. half of Texas in fall, Gray-cheeked Thrushes were in San Antonio 11 Oct (CCu) and in Lubbock 23 Oct (AF, MCa). Clay-colored Robins made a late nesting attempt at Anzalduas in early Aug (TB). A brief description of a possible Rufous-backed Robin netted by a team of mammologists 30 Oct along the Rio Grande in Big Bend, will be circulated by the T.B.R.C. The Blue Mockingbird reported at Weslaco in the spring apparently remained through at least the end of Oct (m.ob.) but was difficult to observe. Early was a Cedar Waxwing at Quintana 9 Oct (RWe). Single wandering Phainopeplas were noted at Midland 28 Aug (m.ob.) and Canyon, *Randall*, 4 Sep (ID, WD).

It was an exceptional fall for warblers in the Panhandle and High Plains, especially for Lubbock observers (Table 2). There were enough stray records of Prothonotary Warbler to suggest a substantial westward "slippage." In addition to records in Table 2 were five coastal and seven widely scattered interior Black-throated Blues 18 Sep–6 Nov, well above a normal showing. Away from



Generally thought to be a sedentary species, this Long-billed Thrasher was a shocking find on an oil platform off Kenedy, Texas, 14 Nov 1999. Photograph/Alan Wormington

Table 2. Interesting Fall Warblers in Texas, Fall 1999

Species	Date	Location	Observer(s)
Blue-winged	9 Sep	Bastrop	BF
Golden-winged	9 Nov	Lubbock	PK, JF
Tennessee	10 Sep, 3 Oct	Lubbock	AF
Tennessee	2 Oct	Crosby	ML
Tennessee	12 Oct	Amarillo	RSc
Northern Parula	2–3 Aug	Davis Mts.	CSh et al.
Northern Parula	22 Sep	Lubbock	AF
Northern Parula	26 Nov	El Paso	BZ
Chestnut-sided	26 Nov	El Paso	BZ
Magnolia	14 Sep	Ft. Bliss	BZ
Cape May	3 Nov	off Kennedy	AW
Black-throated Blue (3)	18 Sep–6 Nov	Austin	m.ob.
Black-throated Blue	3 Oct	Lubbock	AF
Black-throated Blue	18 Oct	Ft. Worth	TxB
Black-throated Blue	19 Oct	Del Rio	DLar et al.
Black-throated Blue	22 Oct	Irving	SCof
Townsend's	16 Sep	Canyon	CFo, LS
Townsend's	10 Oct	Bastrop	BF
Black-throated Green	22 & 27 Aug	Lubbock	m.ob.
Black-throated Green (3)	11 Sep	Lubbock	KD, AF
Black-throated Green	24 Sep	Buffalo L.	KS
Blackburnian	24 Oct	Lubbock	KD
Pine	26 Sep	Lubbock	AF
Prairie	10 Sep	Dallas	KC
Prairie	18 Sep	Bell	BF
Bay-breasted	26 Sep	Lubbock	AF
Blackpoll	18 Sep	Canyon	GC, MCr, PI
Prothonotary (2)	28 Aug–19 Sep	Lubbock	AF, m.ob.
Prothonotary (5)	12 Sep–5 Oct	Trans-Pecos	m.ob.
Prothonotary	20 Sep	Uvalde	LyB
Worm-eating	12 Nov	Victoria	NH
Swainson's	19 Sep	Lubbock	AF, JF
Louisiana Waterthrush	28 Aug	Lubbock	CF, JF
Louisiana Waterthrush	10 Sep	Lubbock	AF
Kentucky	26 Sep	Lubbock	AF
MacGillivray's	12 Sep	Brazoria	DVe
Hooded	17 Nov+	Corpus Christi	A&MC et al.

expected winter haunts along the Rio Grande were at least six additional Black-throated Grays in c. and e. Texas and smaller numbers of stray Townsend's. A rather well-described male Golden-cheeked Warbler was studied by two parties at Santa Ana on the unheard of date of 14 Nov (†JJ, JuW). Prompting some confusion and careful study was an apparent female hybrid Hooded ~ Kentucky Warbler on the Kenedy oil rig 18–19 Oct (†AW). One of Texas' rarest migrants, now averaging about one record per year, a Red-faced Warbler in Big Bend's Boot Canyon 14 Aug was right on schedule (†EC).

**SEEDEATER THROUGH FINCHES**

Engles located a small population of White-collared Seedeaters in Laredo, Webb, 24 Oct+; Texas reports have grown considerably in recent years. Unexpected and a good find was a pair of E. Towhees at Amarillo, Randall, 14 Oct (KS). The oil rigs in the Gulf turned up some interesting early sparrow records: the High I. rig had a Clay-colored

29 Aug (CCo) and Calhoun had a Chipping 9 Sep, a Clay-colored 16 Sep, and a Cassin's 21 Sep (BGi). Clay-colored were at Rusk 18 Oct (Pha) and Caddo L., Harrison, 3 Nov (Ero), adding to a handful of fall records for that area. An early Vesper Sparrow was on Galveston I. 24 Sep (KeH, MSt) and an early Savannah Sparrow was near Granger, Williamson, 18 Sep (BF). Adding to the short list of inland Texas records of Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow were two in Harrison 24 Oct (†GLu, EdR). Providing the first Aug record for Big Bend was a Lincoln's Sparrow on the 14th (RLo). A Harris's Sparrow at Cooper L. 23 Oct was early (MWh). Early Smith's Longspurs included singles in Tarrant in late Oct, (SCof), at Cooper L. 26 Oct (MWh), and unexpectedly in Calhoun 23 Oct (PH, BF). Pyrrhuloxias at Canyon 25 Oct (JiR) and in Washington 13 Nov (DV) were wanderers. Indigo Buntings moved through e. Texas in "amazing numbers" (fide BeF). Interesting Lazuli Bunting records were in Crosby 2 Oct (ML) and on the Matagorda Pen., Calhoun, 7 Oct (PH). More

Dickcissels than usual hung around into Nov, including a late inland record at Balcones Canyonlands 6 Nov (CS). Polk got its first Bobolink, a rare fall migrant 11 Sep (JO). At the n. edge of its range was an Audubon's Oriole in Castroville, Medina, 30 Oct (KBa). Concern continues to mount about long-term declines in Purple Finches wintering in Texas; single reports bring notice even in their former stronghold of e. Texas. A first Marion record of Red Crossbill was provided by a flock of 30 at Lake O' the Pines 10 Nov (EM).

**CORRIGENDUM**

The Roseate Spoonbills in Donley in July were seen by Harvey Oatman and Kevin Moxon.

**UNDOCUMENTED RARITIES**

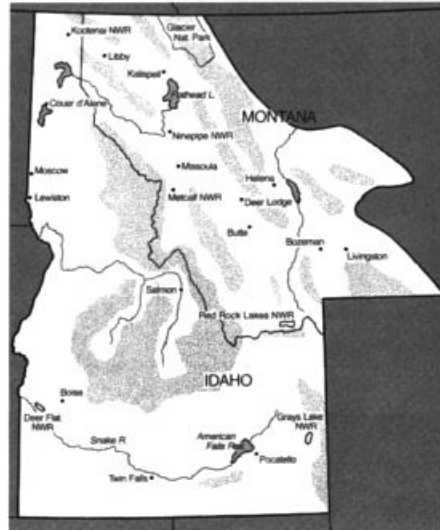
The following Texas rarities were reported with little or no documentation to support their occurrence: Black Swift offshore 8 Oct, two Allen's Hummingbirds, L. Jackson 10–14 Aug, and Golden-crowned Sparrow on Galveston I. 3 Nov.

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# idaho-western montana



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**T**he Region experienced mild fall weather for the third consecutive year. It was unusually warm and dry most of the season, with record high temperatures in November. The extended open water season allowed waterfowl and shorebirds to linger to record late dates. Few concentrations of migrating passerines were mentioned, directly attributed to a lack of fall storms. Even so, birders found good numbers of Eastern warblers and rare gulls, making the season enjoyable and memorable.

**Abbreviations:** A.F.R. (*American Falls Res., by American Falls, Idaho*); B.R. (*Bridger Ridge Hawk Watch, Gallatin Co., MT*); C.J.S.R. (*C.J. Strike Res., Owyhee Co., ID*); C.N.W.R. (*Camas N.W.R., Jefferson Co., ID*); D.F.N.W.R. (*Deer Flat N.W.R., Canyon Co., ID*); I.B.O. (*Idaho Bird Observatory at Lucky Peak, near Boise, Idaho*); L.M.N.W.R. (*Lee Metcalf N.W.R., Ravalli Co., MT*); M.L.W.M.A. (*Market Lake Wildlife Management Area, Jefferson Co., ID*).

## LOONS THROUGH CRANES

A rare Red-throated Loon visited C.J.S.R. 13 Nov (JG). Record numbers of Pacific Loons were reported in Idaho, with high counts of *eight* at Cascade Res., *Valley*, 4 Oct (MC, FK), *seven* at A.F.R. 31 Oct (CT), and *12* at

C.J.S.R. 13 Nov (JG). Two Montana Pacifics in *Lake* 17 Oct (DC) were noteworthy. Com. Loons also staged impressively in Idaho, with over *100* at Cascade Res. 4 Oct (MC, FK) and *35–60+* at Coeur d'Alene L., *Kootenai*, 9 Oct–13 Nov (m.ob.). Rare in sw. Idaho, two Red-necked Grebes stopped near Boise 20–25 Oct (MC, FK). Am. White Pelicans lingered in Idaho, with two in *Blaine*, 21 Nov (DR) and three in *Lemhi* in late Nov (HR). As usual, there were several reports of wandering egrets in Idaho, but the Great Egret at Ninepipes N.W.R., *Lake*, MT, 17 Aug and 12 Sep (JB, DHo) was newsworthy. Cattle Egrets also strayed to Idaho: four were in Twin Falls 3 Aug (KF), one–four were near Boise 18–20 Aug (MC, FK), and three to 16 were in Owyhee 5–6 Nov (JD, DH). Both unusual and early were two Gr. White-fronted Geese and a Snow Goose in *Broadwater*, MT, 5 Sep (C&RF). Another White-fronted strayed to L.M.N.W.R. 26–30 Sep (WT). A Cinnamon Teal at L.M.N.W.R. 20 Nov (WT) was late. For Idaho, three Eur. Wigeon sightings were about average for fall, but a total of five Long-tailed Ducks was unusually high. Idaho's *fifth Black Scoter* was near A.F.R. dam 5–11 Nov (m.ob.), the *fifth* consecutive year this species has occurred there. Good numbers of Surf and White-winged Scoters were reported this season. High counts included three Surf Scoters at Minidoka N.W.R., *Blaine*, ID, 10 Nov (SB) and an unprecedented *eight* White-winged Scoters at A.F.R. 6 Nov (MCR). Mergansers staged in impressive numbers. Estimates were *200* Hooded Mergansers at Harrison WMA, *Kootenai*, ID, 27 Nov (LA), *400* Com. Mergansers at Black L., *Kootenai*, ID, 25 Nov (LH), *500* Com. Mergansers at Helena Valley Res., *Lewis and Clark*, MT, 25–27 Nov (DS), and *500* Red-breasted Mergansers at A.F.R. 27 Oct (MCR).

Idaho's fourth **Red-shouldered Hawk** was captured at I.B.O. 11 Sep (GK). A total of 17 Broad-winged Hawks were observed over I.B.O. 14 Sep–4 Oct (GK) and 13 were tallied at B.R. (GL, MN). A near-record count of 1,860 Golden Eagles and record counts of 77 Rough-legged Hawks, 18 Peregrine Falcons, and 20 Prairie Falcons

