



Part of a multi-regional influx was the White-winged Crossbill at Bartlesville, Washington County, Oklahoma 17 April 2002. Photograph by H. Gleaton.

Warbler is shorter, with singles in *Johnson*, KS 3 May, *Sedgwick*, KS 9 May, Omaha, NE 10 May (CHy), and far w. in *Cimarron*, OK 28 May (BH, JM, et al.). The very rare Connecticut Warbler was seen 16 May in *Cherokee*, KS (DH), the only record.

Among se. warblers edging into the Region was a Pine Warbler that visited a feeder in *Sarpy*, NE during cold spells 3, 14 & 25 Mar (BP, LP). A Cerulean Warbler passed through *Dixon*, NE 15 May (JI). A male Prothonotary Warbler in *Sarpy*, NE 17 Apr (BP, LP) was the next-earliest recorded for Nebraska. A Louisiana Waterthrush in *Knox*, NE 9 May (MB) provided a first county record (*vide* WRS). Records of Hooded Warblers extended w. in the Region to *Sedgwick*, KS 27 Apr (CG) & 20 May (JB) and Tulsa 20 Apr (JWA) to 11 May (GK, MK).

An Eastern Towhee in *Otoe*, NE 13 Mar (LE) may have wintered. A Black-throated Sparrow 8 Mar in *Cimarron*, OK (BH, JM, et al.) was either exceptionally early or also wintered. Henslow's Sparrows are reported in se. Nebraska each year; this spring, singles were in *Seward* 29 May (JG) and *Pawnee* 30 May (BP, LP). The only report for Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow was of one found in *Stanton*, NE 18 May (LR, RH). In surveying *Comanche*, KS, 24 Rufous-crowned Sparrows were located 18-19 May, extending the presumed breeding range into Kansas (m. ob.). A Lincoln's Sparrow in Lincoln, NE 16 Mar (LE) probably beat the odds of not surviving a Nebraska winter.

Westerly were male Rose-breasted Grosbeaks in *Scotts Bluff*, NE 14 May (HW, SW) and *Cimarron*, OK 29 May (BH, JM et al.). Odd Lazuli Buntings reported from e. reaches of the Region in all three states have become part of a general annual pattern. Red Crossbill flocks were detected within their summer range in nw. Nebraska. Away from breeding areas were reports for Nebraska, and one for Oklahoma—up to 6 in Oklahoma City 11-31 May (BHo).

More newsworthy were White-winged Crossbills. Following a rough tally of 75 birds reported during the winter period in Nebraska, about 30 were noted for the spring season (*vide* WRS). The peak count was the 7 (one ad., one imm. male, 5 females) in Omaha 24 Mar (NR). Five were still present in Omaha 25 May (CH), with 3 in *Madison*, NE 26 May and 2 in *Otoe*, NE 1-12 May (LF, CF). Single White-wingeds were noted s. to *Finney*, KS 16 Apr (TS, SSH), *Washington*, OK 17 Apr (HG), and Lawton, OK in late May (*vide* DB). Among the wandering fringillids was a Lesser Goldfinch n. to *Finney*, KS 10 May (TS, SSH).

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# Texas



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**D**rought continued to be a universal theme across the state. One report from Texas Parks and Wildlife in the Panhandle mentioned that less than 5% of the Texas playa lakes have been holding water, while the rest are dry. The first week of March was one of the coldest on record for many parts of Texas. During the first few days of this season, some areas received their coldest blasts of air for the entire winter. The months of March and April, for the most part, were cooler than normal, but May was quite the opposite, as summer-like heat waves moved in quickly.

Birding at migrant traps this spring, especially along the coast, was one of the least fulfilling in years. The main reason seemed to be strong and persistent south winds that howled and pushed migrants northward; this made for some very frustrating birding. Species counts were low, as were counts of individuals, except for three fallouts on the Upper Texas Coast noted by Ron Weeks on 8 April, 13 May, and 17 May. One surprise was larger-than-average numbers of Blackpoll Warblers into coastal stopover sites in April, numbers that would be more expected from east of the Mississippi River.

New this season—and the most heavily chased rarity—was the Snowy Owl just west of Abilene. Found by the landowner and seen by hordes of birders, this represented only the fourth documented record in Texas in almost 50 years. Second place went to a real mindblower, a Common Redpoll in deep South Texas, at the tail end of the season. Not only was this Arctic species far south of its normal wandering haunts, but the calendar year was nearly half over!

**Abbreviations:** S.N.A. (State Natural Area); T.B.R.C. (Texas Bird Records Committee); U.T.C. (Upper Texas Coast). The following are shortened names for the respective local, county, state, or national parks, wildlife refuges, etc.: Alazan Bayou, Anahuac, Balcones Canyonlands, Big Bend, Big Bend Ranch, Brazoria, Buescher, Buffalo L., Matagorda Island, Packery Channel, Palo Duro Canyon, Quintana, Sabine Woods, San Bernard, Santa Ana, Sea Rim, Trinity River.

### LOONS THROUGH STORKS

A Red-throated Loon on Greenbelt L., *Donley* 29 Apr (†, ph. KS, BP, RSc) provided the 2nd Panhandle record. The Pacific Loon reported in the winter in *Coleman* was last seen 23 Mar (BFR, EC). Other Pacifics were at L. Conroe, *Montgomery* 8 Apr (ChB), Balmorhea L. 7 May (BS), and Galveston on 13 May (DPe et al). An Eared Grebe lingered until 20 May at Round Rock, *Williamson* (TFe). Three Western Grebes



This Snowy Owl found just west of Abilene was just the fourth ever documented in Texas. It was discovered on the moderately late date of 22 March (here 23 March) and remained into early April.

Photograph by Jimmy McHaney.

in Midland, *Midland* 28 Apr provided the first record in more than a decade (*vide* RMS). A Clark's Grebe at O. H. Ivie, *Coleman* 24 Mar (JaP) provided a first county record. Paton continued to monitor breeding activity of *Aechmophorus* grebes at McNary Res., *Hudspeth* and found the following young on 25 May: 14 Western Grebes, 23 Clark's, and 10 that were unidentified. An Audubon's Shearwater seen from the Port Aransas jetty, *Nueces* 19 Apr (MO, WRu) provided a rare near-shore sighting. Becoming increasingly regular inland, Brown Pelicans wandered to Granger L., *Williamson* 2 May (TFe), L. Belton 8-18 May (GC), El Paso 24 May (JSp) and Lubbock 28 May (J&DH). An Anhinga at Buffalo L., *Randall* 23 Apr (LN), was only the 4th reported from the Panhandle. Unexpected was a Magnificent Frigatebird inland at L. Braunig, *Bexar* 24 May (UG, BFi).

American Bitterns are rare migrants through the Trans-Pecos; this spring, singles were at Balmorhea S.P., *Reeves* 2 & 28 Mar (JMue, TJ). Providing only the 4th documented record for the state, a **Great White Heron** was at Port Aransas, *Aransas* 5-6 Mar (†, ph. MJI, KE, BFR, PHo). Inland Tricolored Herons included 4 at *Bastrop* 9 Apr (BFR), one in Big Bend 2 May (J&LW), and one in *Freestone* 5 May (PB). The Reddish Egret reported in *Jones* during the winter season remained through the period. A pair of Black-crowned Night-Herons along with 2 juvs. discovered at Rio Grande Village, *Brewster* 25 May (MF) were noteworthy, as there are no breeding records from Big Bend. A Glossy Ibis in *Freestone* 16 May (CBec) provided a new county record. Unexpected inland during the spring,

Roseate Spoonbills were reported from five scattered locations across the e. half of the state as far n. as *McLennan*. Totally unexpected were 4 very early Wood Storks reported from High Island, *Galveston* 28 Apr (†JBu).

### WATERFOWL THROUGH QUAIL

Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks wandered to the High Plains, with singles in *Hockley* 18 Apr (LeS) and Lubbock 6-18 May (m. ob.). Less unexpected were 10 at Cedar Creek L., *Henderson* 18 Mar (CSL), 4 elsewhere in *Henderson* 2 Apr (PB), 2 at L. Livingston, *Polk* 21 May (MSo), and 2 in *Upshur* 25 May (D&LB). Fulvous Whistling-Ducks were inland with one at Temple, *Bell* 20 Mar (RPi), 6 at Mitchell L., *Bexar* 27 May (SGr), and 2 at Smithville, *Bastrop* 29 May (BFR). The wintering **Trumpeter Swan**

**SA** Broad-winged Hawks were pushed west of their normal migration path this spring, producing an unprecedented passage over central Texas. On 7 April, Gallucci noted up to 75,000 individuals in the Hill Country just west of New Braunfels, *Comal*. These birds passed over the eastern Hill Country northward through Travis and Williamson Counties. Large numbers of these hawks roosted in Austin and vicinity and during the morning of 8 April estimates of up to 150,000 individuals were reported as they moved off to the northeast. Mixed in with the Broad-wingeds were at least 5 Swallow-tailed Kites and large numbers of Swainson's Hawks and Franklin's Gulls.

from Brazoria N.W.R. was last reported on 18 Mar, while the 2 Tundras at Katy, *Waller* remained until 22 Mar. Four Mottled Ducks were at Granger L., *Williamson* 24 Mar—26 May (TFe). Cinnamon x Blue-winged Teal hybrids were reported from *Bell*, *Harrison*, and *Nueces* this spring. Two very late Green-winged Teal were at Richland Creek W.M.A., *Freestone* 26 May (PB, DDC). A Surf Scoter was at an odd location floating on the Rio Grande in Mariscal Canyon, *Brewster* 17 Apr (DBu). A female-plumaged Masked Duck was at Sabal Palm Sanctuary, *Cameron* 4 May+ (†m. ob.). A pair of Osprey returned to a nest site first used last year at L. Livingston, *San Jacinto* (GR). A White-tailed Kite at White River L., *Crosby* 18 May (RK et al.) provided the 2nd record for the South Plains. This season, 85 young Bald Eagles were produced from 64 active nests in East Texas (CG); productivity has doubled in Texas during the last five years. A Bald Eagle nest was discovered in *Bosque* this spring, which is w. of the primary breeding range of this species. Gray Hawks returned to *Jeff Davis* this spring, with 2 present along *Limpia Cr.* (LH, JK) and another in *Madera Canyon* on 13-18 May (GL, KB). A pair of Gray Hawks nested at Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend, for the 2nd consecutive year (MF). Common Black-Hawks nested, again unsuccessfully, at Rio Grande Village for the 7th consecutive year (MF). During this period, this pair has managed to raise only one chick; birders should take care to stay well away from the nest. A Harris's Hawk was in *Bastrop* 6 May (BFR), providing only the 2nd county record. Out west, single Broad-winged Hawks were at Midland on 11&16 Apr (SSt) and Rio Grande Village in Big Bend on 27 Apr (JDu).

Two Short-tailed Hawks were documented this spring; a dark-morph bird at Hoñey Cr., *Comal* 26 Mar (†ML) and a light morph at Boot Spring, *Brewster* 27 Apr (†CBen)—the latter a first Trans-Pecos record and the 13th record for the state. The imm. gray-morph *Gyr Falcon* from the winter season remained in Lubbock until 7 Apr (m. ob.). Prairie Falcons lingered on the South Plains into May, with singles at *Lubbock/Crosby* line 5 May (RK, AF) and *Tahoka*, *Lynn* 20 May (BR). A pair of Gambel's Quail surprised observers at Big Bend's Panther Junction on 26 Apr (KC, m. ob.); the species is hardly known from the area. Northern Bobwhite was reported in greater numbers in the Central Brazos Valley this spring than in recent years, some of them from urban environs.

## CRANES THROUGH TERNS

Two reports of very late Sandhill Cranes included 5 in *Hockley* 11 May (RK, BBe) and one at Buffalo L., *Randall* 22 May (KS). Two Black-bel-

lied Plovers were in *Terry* 28 Apr (AA), and 2 others in *Randall* 3 May (KS) were noteworthy. An American Golden-Plover at Fort Bliss 4-11 May (JPa, et al.) provided *El Paso* with a rare spring record. Mountain Plovers remained in the Granger area, *Williamson* to 21 Mar (*fide* TFe). Unusual in spring in the Pineywoods, 3 American Avocets were at Texas Eastman, *Harrison* 26 Apr and 3 others there 13 May (GLu). Willets were unusually plentiful in the Panhandle and South Plains, with one to 12 reported from *Garza*, *Randall*, and *Terry*. Whimbrels are quite rare on the High Plains, but this season found up to 4 in *Randall* 23-28 Apr (BP, RSc, et al.) and 10 in *Lubbock* on 18 May (EM). A Whimbrel in w. *Travis* on 12 Apr (BFR) was a first for the Edwards Plateau. Noteworthy were 2 Whimbrel at Texas Eastman, *Harrison* 13 May and 52 Hudsonian Godwits there 10 May (GLu, ERA). A Hudsonian Godwit was well w. of its normal migration path in *Jones* on the late date of 26 May (JPa). A Ruddy Turnstone at L. Belton, *Bell* 28-29 May (GC, RPi) provided a 2nd county record. Sanderlings made news in the Pineywoods with 4 at Texas Eastman 13 May (GLu) and 7 at Sam Rayburn Res., *San Augustine* 17 May (JF, DWo). A Purple Sandpiper was at *Fulton*, *Aransas* 4-28 Apr (†, ph. m. ob.). Good finds for the High Plains were 3 Dunlin at Buffalo L. 26 Apr (BP, RSc) and 2 in *Lubbock* 12 May (AF). A late Buff-breasted Sandpiper was at *Mitchell L.* 27 May (WSe). A Reeve was documented at *Anahuac N.W.R.* 17 Apr (†SSo). Always rare in spring, 2 Red-necked Phalaropes were in *Lubbock* 13 May (AF, RK). An alternate-plumaged Red Phalarope was photographed at *South Padre I.*, *Cameron* 20 May (†SM). Laughing Gulls were found at *Lubbock* on 22-26 Apr (PK, RK) and *McNary*, *Hudspeth* 25 May (JPa). The Great Black-backed Gull reported in the winter at *Fulton Beach*, *Aransas* remained until 12 Mar (MJI, KE). A first-summer Great Black-backed was at *Port O'Connor* on 23 April (†, ph. MH et al.). A Common Tern at *Abilene*, *Taylor* 22 May (JaP) was unexpected. An ad. **Arctic Tern** was well described from *Fort Bliss*, *El Paso* 27 May (†JPa). Extremely early terns included a *Forster's* in *Lubbock* 18 Mar (AF) and a *Black* at *North Padre I.*, *Nueces* 31 Mar (MCo).

## DOVES THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Eurasian Collared-Doves have now been reported from 188 (74% of) Texas counties. An astounding count of 2000 White-winged Doves were observed heading w. along w. Galveston I. on 4 May (JSt). A White-tipped Dove was noted at *Quemado*, *Maverick* 3 May (TBr). More notable was another White-tipped Dove near *Barksdale*, *Real* 17 May (RWe), only the 2nd reported for the Hill Country away from *Val*

*Verde*. A Groove-billed Ani was at *Quintana*, *Brazoria* 24 Mar (C&JW, R&KL), and another was at *Sabine Woods*, *Jefferson* 15 Apr (AM) Mind-blowing was a **Snowy Owl** at *Tye*, *Taylor* 22 Mar—2 Apr (†, ph. AB, m. ob.) providing the 4th record for Texas and the first to be documented since 1955. An Elf Owl was found at *Guadalupe Mountains N.P.* 21 May (EA) Elf Owls were confirmed to breed in *Irion* this spring (*fide* TM). After several years of isolated sightings, this adds another species to the list of breeders in the Concho Valley. An early and westerly Chuck-will's-widow was at *Lubbock* 13 Apr (AF). A little early was a Whip-poor-will in *Brazos* on 15 Mar (MM et al.). A White-throated Swift was observed at *Buffalo L.* in a flock of Barn Swallows 6 Apr (KS), providing the first Panhandle record in 12 years. A Green Violet-ear feeding on *Erythrina* blossoms at *Packery Channel*, *Nueces* 2-3 Apr (†, ph., BZ, MJI, MCo) afforded the earliest spring record for the state. A male Broad-billed Hummingbird was in *Fort Davis* *Jeff Davis*, 25 Apr—27 May (KB, †, ph. ML, GL). A **Violet-crowned Hummingbird** was in *Presidio* near *Valentine* 27 May+ (C&JM, †, ph. KB) for the 6th state record. An overwintering *Archilochus* at *Midland* was revealed to be a Ruby-throated Hummingbird as its gorget developed (C&NH). A Calliope Hummingbird was in *Rockport*, *Aransas* 6 Apr (A&MCo), and one that overwintered in *Austin* was last seen 24 Mar. A pair of Ringed Kingfishers was along the *Colorado R.* in *Austin*, *Travis* 28 Mar—11 Apr (m. ob.). Green Kingfishers nested along the *San Gabriel R.* near *Georgetown*, *Williamson*, for a rare documented record (TFe). A Red-headed Woodpecker at *Rio Grande Village* on 9 May provided the first spring record for the park (*fide* MF). A Ladder-backed Woodpecker was far up the coast at *Brazoria N.W.R.* on 7 May (†JSt).

## FLYCATCHERS THROUGH JAYS

A very early Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was at *Quintana*, *Brazoria* 8 Apr (†CBr). An amazing concentration of 40+ Yellow-bellieds was at *Corpus Christi*, *Nueces* 18 May (A&MCo). A nesting pair of Black Phoebes at *Guadalupe Mountains N.P.* in mid-May provided a first nesting record for the park (EA). Nesting Eastern Phoebes were found this season at two locations in *Brazos*, where the species is a rare breeder. Vermilion Flycatchers wandered in the e. half of the state, with the northernmost in *Harrison* on 26-27 Mar (ERa). Vermilions were also noted in *Lubbock* 21 Mar (AA), *Kent* 26 Mar (MCA), and a pair was seen at *L. Allen Henry*, *Garza* 20-21 Apr (SKa). A pair of Dusky-capped Flycatchers was again at *Boot Spring*, *Big Bend* 26 Apr+ (JDu, m. ob., †GL). Ash-throated Flycatchers wandered up the coast to *San*

Bernard, *Brazoria* 3-22 Apr (R&KL). Great Crested Flycatchers were noted w. of normal range in Lubbock 15 Apr (DSt), *Dickens* 27 Apr (RK et al.), and Palo Duro Canyon, *Randall* 10 May+ (m. ob.). Brown-crested Flycatchers were noted at two Big Bend locations, with singles at Rio Grande Village 11 Apr (MF) and Cottonwood Campground 11 May (J&WR). On the other end of the state, a Brown-crested was at Quintana 13 May (BG, CBr). The Great Kiskadees in Baytown, *Harris* that had been present for over a year remained through the period, nested, and successfully fledged 3 young (DD). Other wandering Great Kiskadees were at Mountain City, *Hays* 10 Apr (TW) and Smith Point, *Jefferson* 24 Apr (fide WB). Sulphur-bellied Flycatchers were documented at Rio Grande Village, *Brewster* 21 Apr (†JSm) and Aransas N.W.R., *Aransas* 2 May (†JPr). Tropical Kingbirds again returned to Big Bend's Cottonwood Campground 27 Apr+ (m. ob.), and another was at Rio Grande Village 23-26 May (MF et al.). A vocalizing Couch's Kingbird was at Rio Grande Village 25 Apr (MF). A pair of Couch's was at Webberville Park, *Travis* 28 Apr (BSt, ASn); subsequent observers discovered nest building, and on 29 May the pair was feeding fledglings. This is the northernmost breeding record for the state. A well-described **Gray Kingbird** was at South Padre I. 18 May (†BC, MaC). A female Rose-throated Becard was noted building a nest at Santa Ana, *Hidalgo* 25 May+ (DBe, JHo, †m.ob.); unfortunately no male was present.

Westward wandering White-eyed Vireos were at Palo Duro Canyon 10-16 Apr (KS), Lubbock 14 & 28 Apr (PK, AF), and the westernmost was at Big Bend Ranch S.P., *Presidio* 17 Apr (KB, TG). Bell's Vireos were noted in *Henderson* 28 Apr (GLu) and in *Brazos* 29 Apr (JDz), where this species is a rare summer resident. A singing Black-capped Vireo was along Terneros Cr., Big Bend Ranch S.P. 5 Apr (KB), providing the first record for *Presidio*. A colony of 6 Black-cappeds was found 20 Apr on private property in *Erath*, providing the 2nd county record (RR), and others were in w. *Coke* on 25 May (JaP). Yellow-throated Vireos were observed at two Trans-Pecos locations: one in El Paso 7 May (JPa) and another at Big Bend's Dugout Wells 28-29 Apr (BAn, ERu). A singing Cassin's Vireo was studied at length near Government Canyon, *Bexar* 16 Apr (†ML). The Hutton's Vireos found last season in *Bexar* remained into Mar. Hutton's continue to be found with increasing frequency in the Hill Country. This spring included records from the Devil's Sinkhole S.N.A., *Edwards* 14 Mar (KB), *Leakey*, *Real* 18-19 Apr (†JRo, GL), Fort Lancaster, *Crockett* 21 Apr (EC), and in *Medina* 17 May (BAr). Nesting

Warbling Vireos were noted at Webberville Park, *Travis* 19 May and Waco, *McLennan* 27 May (DSh), both providing very rare nesting records for Central Texas. Philadelphia Vireos were recorded this spring at three High Plains locations, two in *Randall*, and another in *Lubbock* (fide KS). A Yellow-green Vireo was described from Anahuac N.W.R., *Chambers* 18 May (†DSa). A Black-whiskered Vireo was documented at High I., *Galveston* 30 Apr (†, ph., RPa, BAb). Last winter's *El Paso* Blue Jay remained until 17 Mar (JPa). Up to 6 Tamaulipas Crows returned to Brownsville, *Cameron* 13 Mar and remained through the season (†JA, m. ob.). This is the only known group of this species in the United States.

**SWALLOWS THROUGH WARBLERS**

Pairs of Tree Swallows were noted at several water impoundments in Northeast Texas, where the species is known to breed. Well to the s., up to 3 Tree Swallows were investigating cavities at Granger L., *Williamson* during the season, but actual nesting could not be confirmed (TFe). A group of 16 nesting Cave Swallows was discovered at L. Alan Henry, *Garza* 9 Mar (AF), providing a first county nesting record and the first for the South Plains region. A Red-breasted Nuthatch in the Chisos Mtns, *Brewster* 3 May (JG) was a late lingerer, as was one in *Washington* on the same date (DVo). Carolina Wrens have been reported almost continuously along the Rio Grande in Big Bend, as was the case this spring.

Farther w., a Carolina continued along Terneros Cr., *Presidio*, where it has been since Mar 2001 (KB). A late Winter Wren was at Honey Cr., *Comal* through 9 Apr (ML). A Sedge Wren was a good find in *Garza* on 30 Apr (AF).

Exceptional for the High Plains were Verries in Lubbock 2-4 May (RK) and *Bailey* on 4 May (RS). A Wood Thrush was mist-netted at Davis Mts. 11 Apr (DO et al.), providing a first county record. This individual, or possibly another, was observed in the same area on 16 Apr, and amazingly, yet another was netted on 14 May (KB). Clay-colored Robins were reported in unprecedented numbers in the Lower Valley this spring, with more than 20 different individuals scattered along the Rio Grande. Equally noteworthy was a pair that nested at Laredo, *Webb* 2 May+ (†RL et al.). Gray Catbirds made news in the Trans-Pecos, with one along Terneros Cr. 3 May and 2 in Big Bend 10 May (J&WR, GL). Two territorial Long-billed Thrashers were noted along the ne. edge of their range at Government Canyon, *Bexar* 25 Mar+ (ML), and 2 were in sw *Guadalupe* 25 May (SSc).

Sprague's Pipits seemed to linger in the state, with the latest on 23 Apr in Yorktown, *DeWitt* (DM). An unusual spring record of Phainopepla was turned in from Lubbock 21 Apr (CTh). As is often the case during the spring, a good number of e. warblers made their way to the w. half of the state (Table 1). An Orange-crowned Warbler was at the McDonald Observatory, *Jeff Davis* on the late date of 23 May (MA). This

Table 1. Eastern warblers found in the western half of Texas during spring 2002.

Blue-winged	26 May	Big Bend N.P. (CJG)
Golden-winged	18 May	White River L., <i>Crosby</i> (RK, BBe)
Tennessee	14 & 21 Apr	Lubbock (AF)
	16 May	Big Bend Ranch, <i>Presidio</i> (KB)
Northern Parula	23 Apr	Amarillo, <i>Randall</i> (RSc et al)
	27 Apr	Amarillo, <i>Randall</i> (BP)
	27 Apr	Davis Mtns S.P., <i>Jeff Davis</i> (JDu)
	4 May	Buffalo Lake, <i>Randall</i> (KS)
Black-throated Blue	25 May	Big Bend N.P. (SH)
Blackburnian	30 Apr	Big Bend N.P. (fide MF)
	2 May	Lubbock (GJ)
Pine	28-29 Apr	Terlingua Ranch, <i>Brewster</i> (†COK)
Palm	14 Apr	Lubbock (AF, RK)
Blackpoll	3 May	Lubbock (AF)
	18 May	Reese, <i>Lubbock</i> (TS)
Prothonotary	25 May	Buffalo Lake, <i>Randall</i> (BP et al)
Worm-eating	23 Apr	Big Bend N.P. (fide MF)
	5 May	Big Bend N.P. (SB)
Louisiana Waterthrush (2)	7 Apr	Lubbock (AF)
Kentucky	26 Apr	Davis Mtns S.P., <i>Jeff Davis</i> (BL)
Hooded	11-13 Apr	Lubbock (RK, AF et al)
	14 Apr	Muleshoe N.W.R., <i>Bailey</i> (JBr)
	1-2 May	<i>Dickens</i> (RK, AF)
	4 May	Buffalo Lake, <i>Randall</i> (EK, PT)
	23 May	Guadalupe Mtns N.P. (EA)
	26 May	Fort Bliss, <i>El Paso</i> (JPa)



Perhaps the most unpredictable occurrence of the spring was this Common Redpoll in the Lower Rio Grande Valley at Laguna Vista, Cameron County. Not only was the location unexpected, but it was present 28 (here) to 30 May 2002! Photograph by Scarlet Colley.

warbler nests at higher altitudes in the Davis Mts. For the 4th consecutive year, a Colima Warbler was found in the Davis Mts. Preserve, *Jeff Davis*. This spring, a singing male was noted 18 May (KB). Following last year's unsuccessful nesting attempt, a female Tropical Parula returned to Davis Mts. SP., *Jeff Davis*, seen 27 Apr—12 May (JDu et al.). Tropical Parulas continue to be present along the Devils River, *Val Verde*, and this spring saw reports of up to 5 territorial males. Nesting has yet to be documented but is almost certainly taking place. A male Black-throated Gray Warbler surprised observers at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 22-26 Apr (JRos, AH, DVe). Golden-cheeked Warblers returned to *Dallas* for the 2nd consecutive year; 3 territorial males were present (DHu). Golden-cheekeds were noted for the first time in *Erath*, where single males were noted on three private ranches 17-19 Apr (RR). Painted Redstarts were noted in two *El Paso* locations this spring, one in Zimmer's yard 25 Mar and one in Canutillo 9 Apr (JZ, MSc). More astounding was a Painted Redstart at Santa Margarita Ranch, *Starr* 8 Apr (†BZ, MJI). Almost unfathomable were 2 **Slate-throated Redstarts** at Hans Blucher Park in Corpus Christi, *Nueces* 10 Apr (†, ph. MCo, m. ob.). These represent the 5th state record and the first away from the Trans-Pecos. A Golden-crowned Warbler was well documented from Santa Ana, *Hidalgo* 29 Mar (†, ph. CMi).

### TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Rare in the Trans-Pecos, a female Scarlet Tanager was at Cottonwood Campground 2 May (JG). This spring brought two records of **Flame-colored Tanager**, the 4th and 5th for the state: a female at South Padre I., *Cameron* 11-14 Apr (†, ph. MSt, BSc, SCo) and a male at Boot Spring, *Brewster* 26-27 Apr (JDu, †, ph. MV, KC). A White-collared Seedeater was well up the

Rio Grande from known locations at Quemado, *Maverick* 4 May (TBr). Another seedeater made an unexpected appearance at Bentsen, *Hidalgo* 3 Apr (*fide* Brad McKinney). A Cassin's Sparrow in *Fannin* on 7 May provided a first county record (MWh, RT). Providing an exceptionally early nesting record was an ad. Field Sparrow with 2 fledglings at Government Canyon, *Bexar* 3 Apr (ML). A Sage Sparrow at Big Bend's Dugout Wells 16 Apr (*fide* MF) was a late lingerer. A Baird's Sparrow was well documented at Cottonwood Campground on 12 May (†, ph. KB); the species has been noted in sparrow flocks on the mown lawns here at this time in several years past. A Fox Sparrow on w. Galveston Is. on 5 Apr (JSt) provided a rare late spring record for the coast. A Golden-crowned Sparrow was well described from Pinto Canyon, *Presidio* 21 Apr (†DPo). Unexpected was a Pink-sided Junco in *Nacogdoches* 17 Mar (DWO et al.). A very early Rose-breasted Grosbeak was in *Rusk* 21 Mar (PHa), and there were singles at four scattered locations in the s. Trans-Pecos 7-17 May. The overwintering Black-headed Grosbeak in *Nacogdoches* remained until 10 Mar. The 2 Blue Buntings found during the winter in *Hidalgo* remained into the spring, with the one at Bentsen departing 31 Mar and the one at a private residence nearby last seen on 14 Apr (JA). A Lazuli Bunting at Richland Cr. W.M.A., *Freestone* 21 Apr (DDC, PB et al.) provided a first county record. An early Painted Bunting was in *Travis* 12 Apr (PSu), where they are not expected until the 20th. Two male Bobolinks were in *Burleson* 10 May (CL), where this species is a casual migrant. A Yellow-headed Blackbird at Alazan Bayou W.M.A., *Nacogdoches* 22 Apr (JF et al.) was the first for the area in almost a decade. A lone Rusty Blackbird was at Hornsby Bend 20 Mar (EC). A Bronzed Cowbird in *Nacogdoches* on 12-13 May (JF, ph.) provided

the first record for the Pineywoods. Bronzed Cowbirds virtually invaded the South Plains this spring, with up to 10 in *Crosby* and *Lubbock* (m. ob.). Freeman was astonished by the large number of Hooded Orioles present on a private ranch during late Apr and early May in e. *Kenedy*, where he encountered literally hundreds. In Big Bend, Hooded Orioles have become increasingly rare in recent years; however, this spring saw reports of several pairs at Cottonwood Campground, Hot Springs, and Rio Grande Village. A male Baltimore Oriole was a nice find in s. *Brewster* 25 Apr (KC). Pine Siskins lingered until 21 May in *Nacogdoches* (RH). Perhaps the most astounding sighting of the season was an ad. **Common Redpoll** at Laguna Vista, *Cameron* 28-30 May (†, ph. SCo et al.). This bird obviously provided the southernmost record ever for North America and the world.

### UNDOCUMENTED RARITIES

The following T.B.R.C. Review Species were reported without documentation. Short-tailed Hawks in *El Paso* 16 Apr and *Hidalgo* 16-22 Apr, Arctic Tern 10 May in *Reeves*, Broad-billed Hummingbirds in *Brewster* 17 May and *Jeff Davis* 18 May, Thick-billed Kingbird 12 Mar in *Brewster*, Yellow-green Vireo in *Travis* 3 May, Black-whiskered Vireos 5 & 10-14 Apr at High L., *Galveston*, Varied Thrush 3 Mar in *Dallas*, Slate-throated Redstart in *Brewster* 25-27 Apr, and Baird's Sparrow 29 Apr in *Brewster*.

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# Idaho-Western Montana



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**E**arly spring was unusually frigid; in fact, it was the fifth coolest March ever recorded in Montana. Wintry weather may have delayed waterfowl and early passerine migration for up to two weeks in some locations. April and May temperatures were fairly seasonal in most of Idaho but remained cooler than normal in Montana and north Idaho. Like last year, late spring precipitation was unsatisfactory in most of the Region. A series of snow and rain showers

in May added some relief but did not make up for the prevailing moisture deficit set in motion by the “La Niña” winter weather pattern.

The weather and avian event of the season was a severe storm in late May that was centered over the Great Plains and accompanied by strong easterly winds. The storm forced unprecedented numbers of rare Tennessee and Blackpoll Warblers as far west as west-central Montana, where they were grounded by heavy snow and rain. In addition to this dramatic event, the season will likely be best remembered for the many exciting rarities found, including the Region’s first Slaty-backed Gull.

**Abbreviations:** Camas (Camas N.W.R., *Jefferson*, ID); L.M. (Lee Metcalf N.W.R., *Ravalli*, MT).

## PELICANS THROUGH OWLS

An impressive and record-early flock of about 100 American White Pelicans was in *Gallatin*, MT 6 Apr (JR). Four others visited Missoula, MT 4 Apr (JH), and one was in Ennis, MT 14 Apr (RI), where they are unusual. Single Great Egrets were out of range in Moscow, ID 27 Apr—6 May (ASn) and Lolo, MT 30 May (AH). Cattle Egrets also strayed n. in Idaho, with singles in Challis 23 May (D&EF) and Moscow 28 May (JW). The wader of the season was a Green Heron near Hamilton, MT 23-31+ May (SR); they are less than annual. Single White-faced Ibis wandered to *Missoula*, MT 3 May (CP, TT), L.M. 18 May (WT), and *Lake*, MT 22 May (RW). A rare occurrence in the Region’s n. reaches were 3 Trumpeter Swans in Somers, MT 7 Mar—19 May (DC, BR) and one in *Kootenai*, ID 24 Mar (LH). An outstanding count of >5000 Northern Pintails was made near Frenchtown, MT 23 Mar (JM). A tally of 12 Eurasian Wigeons in Idaho and 18 in Montana was unusually high—and identical to last year’s count. Long-tailed Ducks are especially rare in spring, so singles in *Kootenai*, ID 20 Apr (LH) and *Lake*, MT 23 Apr (CE) were noteworthy.

Now annual in Idaho, a Red-shouldered Hawk was found in *Payette* 23 Apr (AS). Incredible finds were single Broad-winged Hawks at Camas 11 May (DM, KS) and near Livingston, MT 27 May (RW). The wintering Ferruginous Hawk in *Lake*, MT was last reported 10 Mar (WT). The spring Golden Eagle migration count at Rogers Pass, MT posted declining totals for the 5th consecutive year; mild winters may have precluded eagle migration, resulting in reduced counts (FT). Gyrfalcons made a good showing, with