

Texas



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Following a very wet fall season in the eastern half of the state, the winter season had good continued moisture. In the Trans-Pecos, the winter was exceptionally warm, and there was above-average rainfall in many areas. The winter was relatively mild in north-central Texas. Across most of that region, temperatures were about average for the season, with precipitation just below normal. This was the best "invasion" year for northern cyclical flock species in several years, including Golden-crowned Kinglets, American Robins, and Cedar Waxwings, along with record numbers of Yellow-rumped and Pine Warblers. Waterfowl numbers were generally reported as low in all but far West Texas.

Abbreviations: T.B.R.C. (Texas Bird Records Committee); U.T.C. (Upper Texas Coast); N.S. (National Seashore); V.C. D. B. (Village Creek Drying Beds). The following are shortened names for the respective local, county, state, or national parks, wildlife refuges, etc.: Anahuac, Bentsen, Big Bend, Big Bend Ranch, Brazoria, Buescher, Buffalo Lake, Caprock Canyons, San Bernard, Santa Ana, Sea Rim, and Trinity River.

LOONS THROUGH STORKS

Brief details were provided for a Red-throated Loon at L. Meredith, *Moore/Hutchinson* 9-23 Feb (m. ob.). Another Red-throated Loon was at Balmorhea L., *Reeves* 28 Feb+ (JG, CE). Single Pacific Loons were noted at Balmorhea L. 24 Dec (WRu), Lake O.H. Ivie, *Coleman* 4 Feb (PH, EC), and Texas City Dike, *Galveston* 20 Jan (*vide* PKE). A probable Pacific Loon was reported from L. Bob Sandlin, *Camp* 12 Jan (DB). More unusual was a concentration of 4 Pacific Loons at L. Tawakoni, *Rains/Van Zandt* 28 Dec (RR). At least one ad. and 2 juv. Least Grebes from the fall nest-

ing on Galveston I., *Galveston* were present through the end of Jan (JSt et al.). Strangely, a Least Grebe was found in saltwater habitat near Indianola, *Calhoun* 5 Dec (BFr, PH). Peak winter counts of Western (91) and Clark's (136) Grebes were made at McNary Res, *Huspeh* 22 Dec (BZ). Western Grebes were more common in the e. half of the state than normal. Particularly noteworthy were 11+ at L. Buchanan, *Llano/Burnet* 15 Feb+ (SA) and up to 4 at L. Bob Sandlin 22 Dec—21 Jan (DB). Two Double-crested Cormorants at L. Meredith, *Hutchinson* 5 Jan (BPi) and 12 Feb (KS) provided a rare winter Panhandle record. Accidental in any season in El Paso, an American Bittern was at Feather L. 15-18 Feb (JSp, JZ, MS, BZ). Another American Bittern spent the winter in ne. San Antonio, *Bexar* (GSc et al.). Least Bittern is a very rare winter resident along the coastal prairies; this season, one was at San Bernard, *Brazoria* 1 Dec (DVe), 2 were at Brazoria 15 Dec (KR et al.), and another was on the Bolivar Peninsula, *Galveston* 22 Dec. Scarce in winter, a White-faced Ibis was in El Paso 7-28 Jan (BZ, JSp), and 2 were at Feather L., El Paso 18 Feb (BZ, JZ, MS). An imm. Wood Stork was at Anahuac late Jan+ (*vide* DSA). A single Turkey Vulture flying over Paton's El Paso yard on 9 Feb was early by three weeks. Black and Turkey Vultures were noted in higher-than-usual numbers throughout the season in n.-cen. Texas, with record highs noted on several Christmas counts.

WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

A record-high total of 200+ Fulvous Whistling-Ducks was counted at Kingsville, *Kleberg* 16 Dec (*vide* TL). Farther up the coast, over 20 Fulvous spent the winter at San Bernard, *Brazoria* (RW et al.), providing the first documented overwintering record for the U.T.C. Two banded Trumpeter Swans in a Lubbock city park 1 Dec—22 Feb (JJ, BB, m. ob.) were captive-reared siblings from the Iowa reintroduction program. Four more Trumpeters from this same program were spotted 27 Feb+ near Wichita Falls, *Wichita* (GM, TK et al.). An unmarked Trumpeter was reported from a private ranch in *Hutchinson* on 9 Dec (†BPi); details will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C. The only Tundra Swan reported this season was at Red Bluff Reservoir, *Reeves* 22 Feb (EC, ph.). Up to 3 Greater White-fronted Geese were at Midland, *Midland* 27 Dec—3 Jan (m. ob.), providing a rare local record. An impressive count of 241 Ross's Geese was made at McNary Res. 17 Jan (BZ). A lone Ross's Goose at Terlingua Cr. in Big Bend on 16 Dec was a very rare find in the national park (CL). An Atlantic Brant was documented in Lubbock 13-14 Jan (GJ, †AF, †BB et al.), representing the 21st record for Texas. Six Wood Ducks in Midland on 6 Dec were

noteworthy, but a group of 9 at a separate location 9 Jan was the largest number ever reported for Midland (SSC). A drake Eurasian Wigeon was at Tornillo Res., *Hudspeth* 7-23 Jan (ph., †BZ et al.). A male Cinnamon Teal was at V.C.D.B., *Tarrant* 28 Dec (MR, AK), and a female was at Cement Cr. Pond, *Tarrant* 29 Dec—1 Jan (MR et al.). The only Long-tailed Ducks reported this season were one at Wichita Falls, *Wichita* 14 Dec (JM, DMc, TeM, JHo, EAn) and 2 at Offat's Bayou, *Galveston* 17 Dec (JSt). Inland Surf Scoters included an ad. male at Choke Canyon Res., *McMullen* 21 Dec (CM) and a female near Melrose, *Nacogdoches* 26-27 Dec (DWo, RT). The Surf Scoter present at Balmorhea L. during the fall was last noted on 28 Dec (ML). Two White-winged Scoters discovered in the fall at Balmorhea L. continued to 5 Jan (m. ob.) and amazingly reappeared 28 Feb—2 Mar (JG, CEd). A male **Barrow's Goldeneye** was carefully described from a pond near L. Murvaul, *Panola* 4 Jan (†GLu), providing the 8th state record. An astounding count of 1230 Common Mergansers was made at Tornillo Res. 24 Jan (BZ). An Osprey wintered at McNary Res., providing a rare Trans-Pecos winter record (BZ). An imm. Northern Goshawk was at Castalon in Big Bend, *Brewster* 14 Feb (†KBr, ph.). Harris's Hawk is a rare find in the Panhandle and n. Rolling Plains; this season, singles were near Tulia, *Swisher* 7 Jan (BPi), near Pampa, *Gray* 8-9 Feb (BH, L&GS et al.), with 2 near L. Arrowhead, *Clay* 13-17

SA Careful studies of hawks attracted to sugar cane burns in the Rio Grande Valley during Jan provided an informative glimpse of the local raptor populations, including Swainson's Hawks. Swainson's are quite rare in winter in Texas and have only been well documented a few times. On 1 Jan, Bill Clark captured and banded a Basic I light-morph Swainson's in s. *Hidalgo* and located 4 others 16-17 Jan near Delta L., *Hidalgo*. On 20 Jan, Arvin discovered 2 more in sw. *Cameron*. Others included a subad. in s. *Hidalgo* 16 Dec (StW) and an ad. near Anzalduas 30 Jan (KC). With this information, along with the benefit of Clark's surveys farther up the Coastal Prairies over the past few years, it would appear that a reevaluation of the species' winter range in Texas is in order.

Jan (EAn). An ad. Broad-winged Hawk was studied soaring over the edges of Nueces Bay, *San Patricio* 14 Dec, as if on a very late migration path (MC). A very early migrant Broad-winged Hawk was reported 23 Feb from w. Galveston I., *Galveston* (JSt).

Adding to a lengthy list of winter records from *Bastrop*, a Zone-tailed Hawk was near Elgin 14-17 Feb (BFr). The Swainson's Hawk x Rough-legged Hawk hybrid discovered in the fall in *Tarrant* remained until 10 Jan (MR). Ferruginous and Rough-legged Hawks were much more frequently encountered across n.-cen. Texas this winter than normal, with the former bordering on common in the w. half of the area. Golden Eagles wandered well e. of their normal haunts, with 3 noted in East Texas: singles at Caddo L., *Marion* 7 Dec (DWe), *Fannin* 24 Dec (RT), and *Nacogdoches* 18 Jan (CW). Crested Caracaras made their way up the Rio Grande, with one at Big Bend, *Brewster* 18 Dec (KBo) and 2 at Comstock, *Val Verde* 28 Dec (GSc). Prairie Falcons were noted in higher-than-normal numbers in n.-cen.

Texas during the period, and one near *Bastrop*, *Bastrop* 10 Dec—21 Jan (BFr) was certainly unexpected.

RAILS THROUGH TERNS

Two American Oystercatcher nests were discovered near Port O'Connor, *Calhoun* 22 Jan, providing a very early nesting date (BFr, PH). A flock of 240+ Mountain Plovers was found 19 Jan on the King Ranch, *Kleberg* (TL). In the Trans-Pecos, where the species was not known to winter, four groups of Mountain Plovers totaling 209 individuals were at Dell City 3 Dec (KBr). The next day, 60 birds were found in the same area, and although searches were conducted in Jan and Feb, none could be located. The high count of Mountain Plovers in the Granger L. area, *Williamson* this winter was 71 birds on 25 Jan (TFe). Black-necked Stilts are slowly increasing in numbers every winter in the El Paso area; this season, 13 were at two sites 1 Jan (JPa, JZ, MS). Up to 5 Black-necked Stilts and at least 2 American Avocets were present at an El Paso sewage plant until the



Mountain Plovers were not known to occur in the Trans-Pecos during the winter prior to the discovery of 209 at Dell City on 3 December 2002. The birds could not be found during January or February, suggesting they may have been moving through the Region to wintering areas farther south. Photograph by Kelly Bryan.

SA One of the highlights of the season was the discovery of an astounding 200+ wintering Wilson's Phalaropes at La Sal Del Rey, *Hidalgo*. Single Wilson's were noted at other Lower Rio Grande Valley locations during the season as well. Very small numbers of Wilson's Phalaropes have been found wintering at scattered locations in the extreme southern U.S. a few times. However, for several hundred to winter at a single location is unprecedented for a species that typically winters in South America. Close scrutiny of the flock on 31 Dec+ revealed up to 6 Red-necked Phalaropes as well (DSt et al.). Winter records of this species in Texas are also virtually nonexistent, and indeed the chief Atlantic wintering grounds of Red-necked Phalarope are not well known.

wetland's water supply was cut off in late Jan (JSp et al.). An unusually high concentration of 1000 Long-billed Curlews was encountered in *Swisher* 21 Dec (RC). Also unexpected were 12+ Long-billed Curlews near Mumford, *Robertson* 1 Jan (B&CN). A Solitary Sandpiper at L. Worth, *Tarrant* 29 Dec (MR, AK) provided the first local Dec record. The Purple Sandpiper that was discovered on the Quintana Jetty, *Brazoria* in the fall remained through the winter (†m. ob.). Six Dunlin at L. Meredith, *Moore* 22 Feb were totally unexpected for the Panhandle (EK, RSc, BPi, et al.). American Woodcocks were detected in above-average numbers on the U.T.C. (*vide* RW).

Franklin's Gulls are rarely reported from the High Plains during the winter, but on 9 Dec, 5 were over Lubbock (AF). A Mew Gull believed to be of the European subspecies *canus* (Common Gull) was reported from Bolivar Flats, *Galveston* 14 Dec (†MAu); details will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C. The Mew Gull at Linkcrest Landfill, *Tarrant* in the fall was rediscovered at L. Worth, *Tarrant* 1 & 27 Dec (†MR), and another individual was at V.C.D.B., *Tarrant* 16 Feb (†MR). California Gulls continue to be found with increasing frequency in the El Paso area: this season, up to 8 were on the reservoirs in *Hudspeth* and *El Paso*. The same seems to be true in n.-cen. Texas, where 4 were present. Elsewhere, single California Gulls were noted at San Luis Pass, *Galveston* 26 Jan and East Beach 30 Jan and 20 Feb (JSt), and 2 were found in Austin 22 Dec (BFR). A first-winter Thayer's Gull was reported in Galveston 25 Jan (†DwP). The only inland Lesser Black-backed Gulls reported were singles at Austin 22 Dec (BFR) and L. Lewisville, *Denton* on the same date (RR). A first-winter Glaucous Gull frequented the East Beach/Bolivar zone, *Galveston*, from late Nov onwards (MAu, Daj et al.), and another first-winter bird was at Rollover Pass, *Galveston* 16 Feb (MAu). More unexpected was a first-winter Glaucous Gull at L. Texoma, *Grayson* 5-13 Jan (RR, EC). First-winter Great Black-backed Gulls were documented at Sargent, *Matagorda* 20 Dec (†MAu) and Boca Chica, *Cameron* 6 Jan+ (ph., †JA, m. ob.). An ad. Black-legged Kittiwake was seen at Red Bluff Lake, *Reeves* 19 Feb (MO).

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Ten Eastern Screech-Owls at White River L., *Crosby* 4 Jan (BB, RKO, AF) was an unusually high count for the South Plains area. The 2 Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls discovered at Bentsen, *Hidalgo* in the fall remained through the winter. A roost of 8-9 Long-eared Owls was discovered in Plano, *Collin* during Dec (MMo). Lingering Common Nighthawks were discovered at College Station, *Brazos* 14 Dec (BV), Longview, *Gregg* 28 Dec (DMe, DJo), and *Medina* 20 Jan (BA), all providing first local Dec and Jan records. Perhaps the best find of the season in the Panhandle was a torpid Common Poorwill in Amarillo, *Randall* 14 Jan (EK). Although there are two Nov sightings of this species from the Panhandle, this is the first evidence of possible overwintering. A lingering Chuck-will's-widow was reported from Camp Karankawa, *Brazoria* 6 Jan (HM), and a Whip-poor-will was photographed in nw. *Brazoria* on the same date (GC, CHI et al.). A *Chaetura* swift was seen in amongst Cave Swallows at Calaveras L., *Bexar* 9 Dec (D&LE). The late date suggests the possibility that it is a Vaux's, which has not yet been documented in the state. Further evidence of wintering White-throated Swifts in the Palo Duro Canyon system was 2 at Caprock Canyons, *Briscoe* 27 Jan (JR, FS).

Buff-bellied Hummingbirds wintered in the Central Brazos Valley for the first time; one throughout the season at Chappell Hill, *Washington* (MEF et al.) and another at Brenham, *Washington* 27 Dec+ (G&DS et al.). Another Buff-bellied Hummingbird made a brief appearance near Utey, *Bastrop* on 2 Feb (BFR). An imm. male Ruby-throated Hummingbird in Fort Davis 8-17 Dec (KBr) provided the first Trans-Pecos winter record. A Black-chinned Hummingbird at Panther Junction in Big Bend on 14 Feb (MF) was well ahead of schedule. A male Calliope Hummingbird was in Corpus Christi, *Nueces* 7-9 Feb and was joined by a female 8 Feb (GSw, JSw, m. ob.). On the U.T.C., an imm. male Calliope Hummingbird was at Russ Pitman Park, *Harris* 8 Feb+ (DVe), and another young male was in Houston, *Harris* 20 Jan+ (J&WR). Good finds were a male Rufous Hummingbird in Lubbock 11 Dec and a Broad-tailed at the same location on 13

Dec (RE), the latter a first Dec record for the South Plains. Allen's Hummingbirds continue to be documented by Brower on the U.T.C. and by Swartz in the Corpus Christi area. This winter, an ad. female was at Sargent, *Matagorda* 20 Dec (†CB), a second-year male was West Columbia, *Brazoria* 28 Dec—14 Feb (†CB), and a first-year male was at Kingsville, *Kleberg* 28 Feb (†GSw, JSi). An imm. male Allen's Hummingbird appeared in sw. *Comal* on 2 Nov and molted into ad. plumage before it departed 11 Feb (†MH). An other apparent ad. male Allen's Hummingbird was at Port Aransas, *Nueces* 9 Feb (†J&SH, ph.). Three Green Kingfishers were at Rio Grande Village, *Brewster* throughout Dec (m. ob.).

The Lewis's Woodpecker reported at Hartley, *Hartley* in the fall was relocated 10 Feb (JW), and the one in Fort Davis continued through at least 13 Jan (ML et al.). Red-headed Woodpecker is rare at best in the Panhandle during winter, but 3 were noted in *Wheeler* 21 Jan (BPi). A single male Williamson's Sapsucker was a nice find in the Chisos Mts. of Big Bend 28 Feb (JG, BCo). Single Red-naped Sapsuckers were noted in *San Patricio* 11 Jan. and Rose Hill Cemetery in Corpus Christi 15 Jan (AC, MC). Four Ladder-backed Woodpeckers were found near Damon, *Brazoria* 23 Feb (RW, CB), and 2 were still present on 8 Mar. This species is not known to nest on the U.T.C. away from *Waller*. Two Downy Woodpeckers in Junction, *Kimble* 11 Feb were unexpected in the cen. Hill Country (SWe).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH JAYS

A Greater Pewee was discovered at Anzaldus County Park, *Hidalgo* 12 Dec and remained through the season (†JA, m. ob.). This represents the first record of the species for South Texas and the first wintering record for Texas. A Hammond's Flycatcher was at the Las Palomas W.M.A., *Cameron* 19 Jan—8 Feb (JA) and appears to be only confirmed sighting of the species for the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The Gray Flycatcher reported from *Karnes* during the fall remained through the winter (DMu). Following the discovery of a "Western" Flycatcher at McKinney Roughs, *Bastrop* in late Nov, Freeman found 2 there 1 Dec. A female Vermilion Flycatcher was present at the Waco sewage ponds 18 Jan—13 Feb (FB). Ash-throated Flycatchers wandered e. into the Central Brazos Valley, with one near Keith, *Grimes* 19 Dec (BeF, AD) the most noteworthy. On the U.T.C., Ash-throated Flycatchers were more common than usual, with an impressive 6 found on the San Bernard N.W.R. C.B.C., *Brazoria* 20 Dec, and an amazing 26 from the nearby Mad I. count in *Matagorda*. A Great Kiskadee on

North Padre I., *Nueces* 28 Jan was the 2nd record for the island (MC). One found during the fall in Ropseville, *Hockley* was last seen 31 Dec (LR), while another in Bastrop, *Bastrop* 23 Dec (BFR) was a county first. A Couch's Kingbird in *Nacogdoches* 2 Nov—21 Dec (JF et al.) provided a first documented record for Pineywoods.

Two Northern Shrikes were seen at White River L., *Crosby* 4 Jan (AF, PKi, TMc, TS), with others in the Panhandle at L. Meredith 29 Jan (RSc, BM) and *Briscoe* 8 Feb (PH, JR et al.), an imm. that was joined by an ad. the following day (m. ob.). Gray Vireo is a rare winter resident in the s. Trans-Pecos, so singles in Pinto Canyon, *Presidio* 23 Feb (JG, CEd) and Big Bend Ranch, *Presidio* 17 Jan (KBr, JO) were surprising. Two Blue-headed Vireos were w. of the normal winter range in Big Bend's Cottonwood Campground 9 Feb (MF). Wandering Hutton's Vireos found their way to El Paso 8-9 Jan (BZ) and the Chinati Mts., *Presidio* 14 Feb (ML). A Hutton's Vireo at Freidrich Park, *Bexar* 28 Jan (DE) adds to the well-established pattern of occurrences of this species in the Hill Country over the past five years.

The Steller's Jays noted last fall in the Amarillo and Canyon areas continued to be seen until at least mid-Feb (m. ob.), while a single bird was in Lubbock 1-12 Jan (AF, MLe). Steller's Jays continued to be present at El Paso through the period, with a record 87 on the C.B.C. (*fide* JZ). The Blue Jays wintering in Pecos remained through the end of the period (GW). The Western Scrub-Jay invasion of El Paso noted in the fall continued with a record-high 32 reported on the C.B.C. (*fide* JZ). Pinyon Jays continued to roam the Davis Mts. through the winter, with flocks of up to 200 noted at two locations (D&LH, V&NR, CF). A Pinyon Jay in El Paso 1 Jan was a first for the local C.B.C. (MS). Clark's Nutcrackers moved into the high elevations of the Davis Mts., with a single individual found 13 Dec (†DPo) and up to 6 on 28 Dec (†PR). An astounding 25 were seen 5 Jan (CEd, †MA, †ML, †EC et al.), easily the largest flock reported in Texas in over 30 years. A rare find in Midland, 2 American Crows were in town 8 Feb (DK). Unexpected except as migrants, 2 Chihuahuan Ravens were in the Chisos Mts. 28 Dec (MA, LL, M&ME). Chihuahuan Ravens near Kingsville, *Kleberg* 24 Jan (JS) and Beeville, *Bee* 3 Dec (StW) were well e. of their normal haunts.

SWALLOWS THROUGH WARBLERS

Record-early Purple Martins included 2 females at Pasadena, *Harris* 28 Dec (AH) and one near Lorenzo, *Crosby* 1 Feb (BPh, AF). Single Tree Swallows, rare winter visitors to far w. Texas, were at McNary Res. 22 Dec (BZ), Balmorhea L. 28 Dec (ML), and El

Paso 7 Jan (BZ). A late Cliff Swallow at Brazoria N.W.R. 7 Dec was a new late record for the U.T.C. (JSt). Cave Swallows were present in El Paso for virtually the entire winter for the 2nd year in a row (JSp). Fifteen Cave Swallows at McNary Res. 22 Dec (BZ) provided a 2nd winter record for *Hudspeth*. Midwinter Cave Swallows were also noted at Round Rock 8 Feb (TFe). Two to 5 Barn Swallows in El Paso 5-7 Dec provided the latest El Paso area records (JSp). White-breasted Nuthatches were noted at three Midland locations this season between 20 Dec and 2 Feb (SSC, RMS). A single Red-breasted Nuthatch discovered at McNary Res. 22 Dec was the 2nd ever for *Hudspeth* (JZ, MS). Red-breasted Nuthatches were very scarce throughout the e. half of the state, with only one reported from the Pineywoods during the period. Golden-crowned Kinglets arrived early in the fall and stayed in unusually large numbers in virtually all areas of the state.

A Rock Wren at L. Lewisville, *Denton* 22 Dec (BG, RR) was e. of the normal range. A Sedge Wren in *Lubbock* 14 Dec (AF) was a nice find.

Eastern Bluebirds were unusually common in the Trans-Pecos this winter, with reports of multiple birds coming from observers across that region. A female Mountain Bluebird wandered e. to L. Tawakoni, *Van Zandt* 1-22 Feb (RR, RKi), a county first. Wood Thrushes, very rare winter visitors in the state, were found at San Bernard, *Brazoria* 20 Dec (DPe), Aransas N.W.R., *Aransas* 4 Jan (WS), and Washington-on-the-Brazos, *Washington* 18 Jan (DVo, ER et al.). Observers from virtually all areas of the state commented that American Robins were especially abundant this winter. Three separate Varied Thrushes were documented in the Trans-Pecos, with singles near Alpine, *Brewster* 2 Dec (†JG, CEd), El Paso 6 Dec—24 Jan (HJ, †BZ, m. ob.), and at Guadalupe Mountains N.P., *Culberson* 21 Dec (†ErA). A surprising number of Gray Catbirds was reported from the Trans-Pecos this winter,

with 10 separate individuals reported in the w. half of the region. Another Gray Catbird of note was at White River L., *Crosby* 4 Jan (CSt et al.). The Blue Mockingbird present at Pharr, *Hidalgo* last fall continued through the season (†m. ob.). Two Sprague's Pipits were found in alfalfa fields near Fort Hancock, *Hudspeth* 22 Dec. Over the last several years, this species has proven to be a regular wintering bird in far w. Texas.

Orange-crowned Warblers rarely wander n. to the Panhandle during winter, but this year singles were in Amarillo, *Potter* 31 Dec—28 Jan (KS) and 11 Jan (KS) and at Caprock Canyons, *Briscoe* 4 Jan (BPi). A lingering Northern Parula and a Tropical Parula were both present at Goliad S.P., *Goliad* 4 Dec (DMu, WS). Another Tropical Parula was at Blucher Nature Center in Corpus Christi 18-27 Jan (WS et al.). A well-described Magnolia Warbler was found at Sabal Palms, *Cameron* 27 Jan (†AS). Sekula



A Greater Pewee frequented Anzalduas County Park, Hidalgo County, Texas for much of the season (here 15 December 2002), a first record for this species for South Texas as well as a first overwintering record for the state. Photograph by Brad McKinney.

and Muschalek saw a stunning male Black-throated Gray Warbler at Goliad S. P. 4 Dec, and another male was near Three Rivers, *Live Oak* 21 Dec (WRu et al.). An amazing concentration of 42 Pine Warblers was noted at Guadalupe Delta W.M.A., *Aransas* 4 Jan (WS). Good warbler finds on the South Plains included single Pines in Lubbock 14 Dec (AF) and at White River L. 4 Jan (PKi, TS) and a Palm in Lubbock 14 Dec (AF). A Palm Warbler at El Paso 7 Dec was also notable (JSp). An American Redstart was in Corpus

Christi 4 Jan+ (MC, LJ, WS, m. ob.), and one was in Edinburg, *Hidalgo* 27 Jan (TB). Even more unusual was an American Redstart in Houston, *Harris* 2 Dec—6 Jan (DVe). A Louisiana Waterthrush wintered near Chapell Hill, *Washington*, providing a first such record for the area (DVo); another in Rusk 15 Jan—3 Feb (GLu) was equally noteworthy. A Louisiana Waterthrush, presumably a very early migrant, was at Brazos Bend, *Fort Bend* 4 Feb (RW). The MacGillivray's Warbler detected on w. Galveston I. in the fall remained through the winter (DwP, DPe). A

Hooded Warbler on w. Galveston I. 16 Jan (DPe) provided only the 2nd U.T.C. winter record. A stunning Painted Redstart was present in Richmond, *Fort Bend* 23 Dec+ (WH-E), a first wintering record for the U.T.C. and just the 5th record overall. The Golden-crowned Warbler found in Edinburg during the fall was seen daily through the season (DHo, m. ob.). Very unexpected was a Yellow-breasted Chat in Georgetown, *Williamson* 31 Dec (TFe).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

At least one Summer Tanager spent the entire period at Corpus Christi (MC), and singles were also noted at San Antonio 2 Jan (HR, MCr) and San Bernard N.W.R., *Brazoria* 5 Jan (R&KL). A male Western Tanager was present near Nacogdoches 4-19 Jan (R&FM et al.). Other Western Tanager sightings of note included one at Chappell Hill, *Washington* 3 Nov—25 Jan (DVo) and Milam, *Milam* 4 Feb+ (AlC). Winter sightings of Eastern Towhee continue to increase in the Panhandle/South Plains region. This season, 4 were found, the westernmost being at Muleshoe N.W.R., *Bailey* 15 Dec (BB, AF). Three Clay-colored Sparrows at Muleshoe N.W.R. 15 Dec (BB, AF et al.) provided a very rare winter record for the South Plains, and one near Henderson, *Rusk* 2 Feb (GLu) was also unexpected. Brewer's Sparrows were unusually common in the s. half of the Trans-Pecos and were downright abundant in many locations. A good find the Panhandle was a Lark Sparrow at Caprock Canyons 4 Jan (BPI). A Grasshopper Sparrow was an excellent find in Dallas 21 Dec (KC), as were 4 in Big Bend 13 Feb (KBr). A Baird's Sparrow was reported from L. Amistad, *Val Verde* on Christmas Day (†AF); details will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C. Four Harris's Sparrows at Freeport, *Brazoria* were notable, as this species rarely makes it all the way to the coast. An ad. Golden-crowned Sparrow was documented in *Live Oak* 8 Dec—2 Feb (†J&SH); this individual has apparently wintered at this location for four consecutive years. Black-headed Grosbeaks are casual in winter in the e. half of Texas away from the coast, so one at Liberty, *Liberty* 27 Dec—3 Jan (CeS) and another at Chappell Hill, *Washington* 23 Dec—11 Jan (DVo et al.) were unexpected.

Amazingly, Dickcissels overwintered in n.-cen. Texas at two separate locations in *Dallas* (BS, BG), and another near White Rock L., *Dallas* (MMi et al.). Yellow-headed Blackbird sightings of note included one in *Bastrop* 31 Jan (BFR) and a male in Lake Jackson, *Brazoria* 1 Feb (RW). Rusty Blackbirds wandered to nw. Texas this winter, with 2 in Lubbock 14 Dec (BB, JHa). An extraordinary find was

a female Rusty Blackbird on a sandbar in the Rio Grande at El Paso 1 Jan (MS). Rusty Blackbirds were more widespread and abundant in East and Central Texas this winter than in the past several. Common Grackles staged a small "invasion" on the cen. coast, with flocks seen farther south than usual, including to Riviera, *Kenedy* (AC, MC). A Great-tailed Grackle in Nacogdoches 20 Dec (JF) provided a first county record, while a Bronzed Cowbird there 24 Dec (DoH) was only the 2nd for the Pineywoods. An imm. male Bullock's Oriole in Zimmer's El Paso yard during Jan was a surprising winter find. A highlight of the season in n.-cen. Texas was a male Scott's Oriole that visited a yard in s. *Tarrant* 26 Jan and 16 Feb (EW). A male Scott's Oriole near Comfort, *Kendall* 14 Feb (SWi) was a nice Valentine's Day gift. Four Purple Finches were an excellent find at Panther Junction, Big Bend N.P. 9 Dec (MF). Although Cassin's Finches were fairly common in the Davis Mts. throughout the winter period (m. ob.), this species was virtually unreported elsewhere in the Trans-Pecos. The only report of Red Crossbills this season was of 9 in El Paso 9 Feb (JZ et al.). An imm. male Lesser Goldfinch in Nacogdoches 5 Jan (CEL) provided a first Pineywoods record. A small number of Evening Grosbeaks was reported at L. Tanglewood, *Randall* during Jan and Feb (S&TJ et al.).

UNDOCUMENTED RARITIES

The following Texas Bird Records Review Species were reported without documentation: Masked Duck on the King Ranch, *Kleberg* 19 Jan+; Little Gull at L. Wright Patman, *Cass/Bowie* 28 Dec; Black-headed Gull at L. Wright Patman 15 & 28 Dec; Costa's Hummingbird in the Christmas Mts., *Brewster* 2 Jan; and White-winged Crossbill at Lubbock 18 Feb.

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