

Texas



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The most common adjective applied to the fall of 2003 was "uneventful." Weather conditions were generally favorable for migrating birds, making for low species counts at migrant traps throughout the state. With the exception of the northern Trans-Pecos and most of northwestern Texas, the state enjoyed normal to above-normal precipitation. The highlight of the season, and certainly for the year as well, was an adult Yellow-nosed Albatross studied at length off South Padre Island on 26 September.

Abbreviations: 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, and wildlife refuges, etc.: Anahuac, Bentsen, Big Bend, Big Bend Ranch, Brazos Bend, Buffalo Lake, San Bernard, and Santa Ana.

LOONS THROUGH STORKS

Single Pacific Loons were reported from L. Meredith, *Hutchinson* 29 Nov (BPi) and Imperial L., *Pecos* 22-24 Nov (EC). A pair of Least Grebes at Brazos Bend, *Fort Bend* was observed 20 Aug with 2 new chicks along with a juv. from the previous nesting (DHe). A Least Grebe in nw. *Guadalupe* 10-19 Aug (NB) provided a rare Hill Country record. An Eared Grebe in Midland 23-24 Aug (A&DK) was early for the Permian Basin. A Horned Grebe at Magnolia Beach, *Calhoun* 15 Nov (BFR) provided a rare Central Coast record. In n.-cen. Texas, Western Grebes made

news, with one discovered at White Rock L., *Dallas* 9 Nov (MW et al.) joined by 2 others 16-20 Nov (m. ob.).

Undoubtedly the bird of the season was the ad. *Yellow-nosed Albatross* found off South Padre I., *Cameron* 26 Sep (†BMc, JAr, m. ob.), providing the 4th state record. Also seen on this boat trip were 29 *Cory's Shearwaters*, 6 *Band-rumped Storm-Petrels*, and 6 *Masked Boobies*. Inland wandering *Brown Pelicans* made appearances at L. Waco, *McLennan* 10 Jul-2 Oct (RH et al.), *Stillhouse Hollow L.*, *Bell* 18 Oct-3 Nov (RPi, RK), and L. *Sam Rayburn*, *Nacogdoches* 2-11 Nov (KE et al.). The *Brown Pelican* present at *McNary Res.*, *Hudspeth* during the summer remained until 6 Sep (JPa, BZ). *American White Pelicans* have steadily increased in numbers in far w. Texas over the past several years: this season, a group of 23 was at *McNary Res.* 30 Sep, and 39 were present there 8 Oct (BZ). An especially unusual sight was 4 *American White Pelicans* at *Big Bend's Rio Grande Village Nature Trail* 28 Nov (JBI); perhaps the same birds were those reported the following day at *Lajitas*, *Brewster* (LCo). A *Neotropic Cormorant* at *Lubbock* remained for a lengthy stay of 8 Aug-15 Nov (PK, m. ob.).

Very early *American Bitterns* were at *Stillhouse Hollow L.*, *Bell* 13 Aug (RPi) and *Greenbelt L.*, *Donley* 19 Aug-2 Sep (H&IO); also of interest was one in *Midland* 25 Oct (JHe). A rarity in the Panhandle was a *Least Bittern* at *Amarillo*, *Randall* 23 Aug (KS); one was still at *San Bernard N.W.R.*, *Brazoria* on the late date of 12 Nov (JWi). Two *Snowy Egrets* at L. *Worth*, *Tarrant* 29 Nov (MR) were extraordinarily late. At L. *Sam Rayburn*, *San Augustine*, a *Little Blue Heron* 16 Nov (DWo, JF) and a *Tricolored Heron* 18-19 Nov (GG, DWo) were late in departing. Farther w., single *Tricolored Herons* were at *Balmorhea L.*, *Reeves* 30 Aug (ML) and in s. *Midland* 1 Sep (RMS, SSC). The *Stillhouse Hollow L. Reddish Egret* reported during the summer remained until 4 Aug. An imm. dark-morph *Reddish Egret* discovered in *Lubbock*, *Lubbock* 6 Aug-2 Nov (PK, m. ob.) provided a first record for the South Plains. Another at *McNary Res.* 16 Aug (JPa) furnished just the 2nd *Hudspeth* record. Always rare in the Trans-Pecos, 2 *Yellow-crowned Night-Herons* were at *Balmorhea L.* 3 Aug (JPa).

Glossy Ibis continued to be found with increasing frequency in the e. half of Texas; this season, 7 were found inland to *Tarrant*. A single bird at *Red Bluff L.*, *Loving* 13 Sep (EC, ph.) was more unexpected. *Roseate Spoonbill* reports of note included 12 at L. *Fort Phantom*, *Jones* 2

Aug (LB, JHo), at least one at McNary Res. and nearby Tornillo Res., *El Paso* 16 Aug–24 Sep (JPa, BZ), and 4 at L. Nasworthy, *Tom Green* 5 Oct (MaA). A group of 5 Wood Storks was at Village Creek Drying Beds, *Tarrant* 23 Oct (DSa et al.); other lingering storks included 18 at Brazos Bend S.P., *Fort Bend* 23 Oct (JSt), 3 near Rio Hondo, *Cameron* 5 Nov (DMu et al.), and one at Mitchell L., *Bexar* 9 Nov (HRe).

WATERFOWL THROUGH FALCONS

A gathering of 300+ Greater White-fronted Geese on Cactus L., *Moore* 8 Nov (BPi) was the largest ever reported in the Panhandle. Incredibly early was a flock of 100 Snow Geese at Fort Hood, *Coryell* 15 Sep (SSu). Other early geese sightings included a Snow on w. Galveston I. 6 Oct (JSt) and 6 Ross's at Cactus L., *Moore* 23 Oct (KS). An unbanded imm. Trumpeter Swan was discovered in Lubbock 15 Nov (†AF). An apparent Common Pochard of unknown provenance was with a group of Redheads on L. Worth, *Tarrant* 5–6 Nov (†MR et al.). This was a banner season for Surf Scoters at inland locations: a remarkable 9 birds at Balmorhea L. 23 Nov (EC) was perhaps the most outstanding of the many reports. A White-winged Scoter was found in Greenville, *Hunt* 6 Nov (MW). A first-winter female Long-tailed Duck made an appearance in Amarillo, *Potter* 28–30 Nov (ph. BPi). Zimmer noted that this was the best fall ever for Red-breasted Mergansers in far w. Texas, with 20 birds at three reservoirs in *El Paso* and *Hudspeth* 20 Nov.

This season produced two reports of Hook-billed Kites from along the coastal prairies: one at Corpus Christi 26 Sep (†GS) and the other at Smith Pt., *Chambers* 18 Oct (p. a., †DE, DRu, WN, DWa). The Smith Pt. Hawkwatch had a new single-day high of 29 Swallow-tailed Kites 15 Aug. A great rarity in the Trans-Pecos, a Swallow-tailed Kite was seen near Alpine on 4 Sep (EH), and apparently the same individual was still present 10–22 Sep (JBe, GY et al.). Two White-tailed Kites wandered in to the Pineywoods at Alazan Bayou W.M.A., *Nacogdoches* 30 Sep (DWO, JF). Freeman counted 550 Mississippi Kites near Utey, *Bastrop* 3 Sep, and a lingering individual was seen at Smith Pt. 1 Nov (SP). An imm. Northern Goshawk was observed flying over Fort Worth, *Tarrant* 4 Oct (†MR et al.). Gray Hawks lingered to record-late dates at Big Bend's Cottonwood Campground, with one remaining until 24 Nov (EC). Unexpected were 2 Red-shouldered Hawks near Sweetwater

L., *Nolan* 9 Oct (BFR). Broad-winged Hawks noted w. of their normal haunts included 2 at El Paso on 27 Aug (JPa), one at Lubbock 28 Sep (AF) and 2 more there 2 Oct (AF), a single bird at Canyon, *Randall* 5 Oct (BPi, RSc), and 5 in *Nolan* 6 Oct (BFR).

Details of a Short-tailed Hawk reported near San Marcos, *Hays* 20 Nov (†BA) will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C. A high count of 1608 Swainson's Hawks was made in *Nolan* 6 Oct (BFR). Well n. of its normal range was a White-tailed Hawk near New Braunfels, *Guadalupe* 10–18 Oct (BN, GSc et al.). A Zone-tailed Hawk lingered through the season in sw. *Bandera* (MiH), where the species is very rare after Sep. Single Ferruginous Hawks were reported on 5 & 18 Oct at Smith Pt., *Chambers* (Smith Pt. Hawkwatch staff). A Crested Caracara at Lake O' the Pines, *Marion* 27 Sep (BMe) is the first reported from the Pineywoods. An early American Kestrel



Common Ground-Dove is a very rare visitor to the northern third of Texas. This immature bird, discovered in eastern Parker County 23 October 2003, provided one of the very few well-documented records from the area (and a county first).

Photograph by Martin Reid.

was at Smith Pt., *Chambers* 15 Aug, tying the U.T.C. early date. A rather early Peregrine Falcon was near Temple, *Bell* 4–5 Aug (RPi). A Prairie Falcon near Pawnee, *Bee* 16 Nov provided a rare South Texas record (WS).

QUAIL THROUGH TERNS

A Scaled Quail found near Mathis, *San Patricio* 8 Aug (RB) was a great find for this location, if of wild origin. A Yellow Rail was at Lubbock 18 Oct (AF). A King Rail in *Donley* 10 Aug (BPi) provided a first county record. Two ad. Purple Gallinules lingered at Kurth L., *Angelina*

to 10 Oct (GGu), providing a late record for the Pineywoods. Single Purple Gallinules were also present near Austin, *Travis* from late Oct through 27 Nov (SE et al.) and Katy, *Harris* 12 Nov (JoB). Three Sandhill Cranes were reported near Sealy, *Austin* on the very early date of 27 Aug (JMu).

A Black-bellied Plover, rare for the area, was in *Midland* 15 Aug (DHu). In the w. half of the state, American Golden-Plover reports included 4 in *Harley* 18 Oct (BPi, RSc et al.) and singles at Red Bluff L., *Loving* 31 Oct (EC), *Midland* 11 Nov (MSt, RMS), and *Imperial* L., *Pecos* 22–24 Nov (EC). A high count of 125 Piping Plovers was made along 27 km of Mustang I. beach, *Nueces* 10 Nov (BFR, PH). Mountain Plovers were first noted near Granger L., *Williamson* 19 Oct (TFe) and were also present near the New Braunfels Airport, *Guadalupe*, with 22 located 18 Nov (BD). A lingering Black-necked Stilt stayed in *Midland* until 8 Nov (JAd, RMS). Late-staying American Avocets in nw. Texas included 26 in *Randall* 11 Nov (KS) and one in *Lubbock* 15 Nov (AF). An unusually large number of Willets, 16, was at Balmorhea L. 30 Aug (ML). What had to be a breathtaking sight were an estimated 500 Upland Sandpipers in an alfalfa field near Ashtola, *Donley* 25 Aug (BPi). A concentration of 500 Long-billed Curlews near Littlefield, *Lamb* 27 Nov (JST) was a high number so late in the season. A Red Knot near Idalou, *Lubbock* 24 Aug (TS) was a good find. An early Sanderling made an appearance in Amarillo, *Potter* 30 Aug (EK, BiM, RSc). Sanderlings were noted in four Trans-Pecos locations, including one (or 2) at *Presidio*, *Presidio* 16 Sep and 2 Oct (ML), for a county first.

A White-rumped Sandpiper at Danbury, *Brazoria* 4 Nov (JSt) represents one of few fall records for the U.T.C. and the state. A Ruff was foraging at sod fields in *Calhoun* 9–10 Aug (†BFR). Short-billed Dowitchers of note included one at North Fork Buffalo Res., *Wichita* 5 Sep (TK), one at Red Bluff L., *Loving* 7 Sep (EC), and a first county record for *Bell* at L. Belton 6 Sep (RPi). Three late migrant Wilson's Phalaropes were at *Imperial* Res., *Pecos* 22 Nov; only one remained on 27 Nov (EC). Three late Red-necked Phalaropes at *Lubbock* 15 Nov (AF) provided a first Nov record for the South Plains. Red-necked Phalaropes returned to inland salt lakes in *Cameron* 5 Nov, with 11 on the East L. tract of the Lower Rio Grande Valley N.W.R. (DSt). The bird of the season in the Panhandle was a Red Phalarope at Cactus L., *Moore* 8

Nov (ph., †BPI).

With just one previous Trans-Pecos record, an ad. Parasitic Jaeger at McNary Res. 23–30 Sep was an outstanding find (†BZ, JZ). A very early Franklin's Gull was at L. Benbrook, *Tarrant* 4 Sep (MR), and 20+ were at Richland Creek W.M.A., *Navarro* 8 Sep (PB et al.). A first-winter Mew Gull was discovered at McNary Res. 26 Nov (†EC). A California Gull reported from East Beach, *Galveston* 27 Oct (MAu) provided the 2nd earliest U.T.C. record. This fall was an excellent one for Thayer's Gulls, with no fewer than 4 documented in the state: a first-winter bird at L. Belton 28 Oct–2 Nov (†RPI, RK, EC), a third-winter bird at Pointe San Luis, *Galveston* 8–15 Nov (†MAu et al.), a first-winter at Bolivar Flats and East Beach, *Galveston* 13–24 Nov (†MAu, NBL et al.), and a first-winter bird at El Paso 29–30 Nov (†JPa). A juv. Lesser Black-backed Gull was at L. Tawakoni, *Hunt/Rains* 7 Oct (CL). Six Sabine's Gulls were reported during this season: singles at Canyon L., *Comal* 20 Sep (DPu, GSc, CRo), L. Waco, *McLennan* 5 Oct (FBu, JoM), McNary Res. 10–14 Sep (BZ, EC) and 4 & 19 Oct (JPa), and one at Red Bluff L. 15 Sep (EC).

Always a nice find in the Trans-Pecos, single Caspian Terns were at Balmorhea L. 3–12 Aug (JPa, RR) and McNary Res. 14–23 Sep (EC, BZ). Zimmer noted a good fall showing of Common Terns in far w. Texas, with singles at McNary Res. 10 & 23 Sep, 2 there 30 Sep, and a surprising 8 at the same location 8 Oct. Three Common Terns were at Red Bluff L. 15 Sep, and 2 were present there 20 Sep (EC). Six Bridled Terns were tallied on the 26 Sep pelagic trip (BMc, JAr), and 2 were also found out of Port Aransas, *Nueces* 11 Oct (LJ).

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

An unexpected Common Ground-Dove in *Parker* 23 Oct (MR) provided a first county record. Always a nice find in the fall, a Black-billed Cuckoo was at Pollywog Pond, Corpus Christi, *Nueces* 6 Oct (LJ, WS). Unusual for the number was 5 Banded Owls in *Donley* 6 Sep (BPI). Two Common Paurques continued in w. *Guadalupe* throughout the season (SSc). A Chuck-will's-widow was still present near Afton, *Dickens* 31 Aug (BBE, AF, BRa). Also of note was a Chuck-will's-widow heard in *Midland* 20 Sep (D&JM). Early migrating Whip-poor-wills were detected at Bryan, *Brazos* 13 Aug (JuW) and Utey, *Bastrop* 21 Aug (BFR).

A female Broad-billed Hummingbird was spotted near Boot Spring, *Brewster* 2 Aug (PH), and males were reported near

Valentine, *Jeff Davis* 10 Aug (CEa) and in Alpine, *Brewster* 25 Oct (JK). The White-eared Hummingbirds found in the Chisos Mts. remained until 31 Aug (m. ob.). The female White-eared Hummingbird in the Davis Mts. was last seen 1 Sep (M&ME). Two Buff-bellied Hummingbirds finally departed Chappell Hill, *Washington* 11 Oct (MEI), after having been present there since spring 2002. An apparent female Lucifer Hummingbird was videotaped at Kingsland, *Llano* 5 Sep (DB).



Lewis's Woodpeckers are regular winter wanderers to western Texas in the fall and winter. This individual made its way eastward to Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge, Travis County 25 (here 28) November 2003. Photograph by Greg W. Lasley.

Three Lucifers lingered at Big Bend's Panther Junction until 22 Oct (MF). Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were noted in the cen. Trans-Pecos in good numbers this season, with at least 8 between 13 Aug and 30 Oct. A female-type Black-chinned Hummingbird was reported from near Richards, *Montgomery* 3 Oct (JWa et al.), and a lingering Black-chinned was at Muleshoe N.W.R., *Bailey* 1 Nov (BBE), providing a rare Nov record for the High Plains. An Anna's Hummingbird made a brief appearance at Port O'Connor, *Calhoun* 14 Nov (BFR, PH). A great bird to see anywhere in Texas, a female Costa's Hummingbird was photographed in El Paso 24 Oct (†BZ). A female Calliope Hummingbird was discovered at L. Belton, *Bell* 31 Aug (J&MV, RK). Broad-tailed Hummingbirds were documented in n.-cen. Texas for the first time this fall when an imm. or female was found in Carrollton, *Denton* 23–25 Aug (ph., †KSa), followed by a male in Archer City, *Archer* 27–28 Aug (NM), an imm in *Tarrant* 31

Aug (DPi), and a single bird at the Heard Museum, *Collin* 25 Nov (KSt). These were part of an amazing movement of *Selasphorus* hummingbirds through the Region, with four times as many sightings as normal. A female Broad-tailed Hummingbird in Bryan, *Brazos* 17 Oct (SD) provided a first record for the Central Brazos Valley area. In recent years, it has become clear that Allen's Hummingbird is a regular migrant in Texas; documented this season were singles banded near Victoria, *Victoria* on 31 Aug and 28 Sep (†BO), one banded at Matagorda, *Matagorda* on 16 Sep (†CBr), and an ad. male in the Davis Mts. 2 Aug–6 Nov (M&ME, †ML, ph.).

A Belted Kingfisher was an unexpected sight in *Dewitt* 30 Jul (DMu). A Green Kingfisher along the San Marcos R. near Luling, *Caldwell/Guadalupe* 26 Aug (BFR, GL, TG) provided first records for both counties. Lewis's Woodpeckers were discovered at three locations this season: an ad. at Dog Canyon in the Guadalupe Mts., *Culberson* 18 Oct (FL), an imm. at Palo Duro Canyon SP, *Randall* 29 Oct (†KS), and an ad. at Balcones Canyonlands N.W.R., *Travis* 25 Nov+ (JC, BRe, m. ob.). Rare for El Paso, an Acorn Woodpecker was found on the w. side of the city 26 Nov (JPa). A Red-bellied Woodpecker strayed w. to Lubbock 16 Nov (B&SRa). A Williamson's Sapsucker made a very early arrival in El Paso 6–16 Sep (JPa). A Downy Woodpecker was a nice find at the confluence of the Frio R. and Atascosa R. in *Live Oak* 16 Nov (WS).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH JAYS

An early Olive-sided Flycatcher was at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 10 Aug (DVe). An Eastern Wood-Pewee was noted at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village 5 Sep (MF). An amazing 11 Acadian Flycatchers were found in Corpus Christi 22 Sep (WS); this species is considered a rare fall migrant here. Another Acadian Flycatcher of interest was at Riverbend Nature Center, *Tarrant* 21 Sep (DPi). A Pacific-slope/Cordilleran Flycatcher turned up at Bastrop, *Bastrop* 1 Nov (BFR). Two of the Buff-breasted Flycatchers present during the summer on the Davis Mts. Preserve were last seen 28 Sep (JG, CED). A rather early Say's Phoebe was near the Midland airport 22 Aug (DHu), and singles were found on the Fennessey Ranch, *Refugio* 13 Sep (DMu) and at Packery Channel, *Nueces* 6 Oct (WS). A Vermilion Flycatcher in Tyler, *Smith* 14 Oct (TP) was a county first but was followed shortly by another at L. Tyler 29 Nov (CBe et al.). Imm. Vermilion Flycatchers wandered n. to Lubbock 23 Aug (AF, CRE, NW) and Buffalo L., *Ran-*

dall 19 Sep (KS). The Dusky-capped Flycatchers present throughout the summer in the Chisos Mts., *Brewster* remained until 1 Aug (EC). An Ash-throated Flycatcher discovered at Alazan Bayou W.M.A., *Nacogdoches* 18–20 Oct (RT et al.) provided the most conclusive record yet for the Pineywoods. A Brown-crested Flycatcher was at the w. tip of its range at Rio Grande Village, *Brewster* 1 Sep (MAd, LL). Wandering Great Kiskadees were found at Elgin, *Bastrop* 3 & 17 Aug (JL) and in w. *Harris* 1 Nov (BH).

A Couch's Kingbird in Marble Falls, *Burnet* 2 Oct (DB et al.) provided a rare record for the e. Hill Country, while another in Austin 4 Oct–15 Nov (HRu) was also a good find. A Cassin's Kingbird at Sweetwater, *Nolan* 2 Oct (BFR) was e. of the normal migration path, and 6 at Sierra Blanca, *Hudspeth* 1 Nov (EC) were certainly late. Single Western Kingbirds in Indianola, *Calhoun* 15 Nov (BFR, PH) and in *Live Oak* 16 Nov (WS) provided late fall records. A Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at El Paso 18 Sep (JSp) was a great find and represented just the 2nd Sep record for the area.

A White-eyed Vireo in Amarillo, *Randall* 28 Sep (RSc) provided a nice Panhandle record. A hatch-year male Black-capped Vireo in the Basin at Big Bend 27 Sep (KB) was the 2nd-latest record for this species in the state. A lingering Gray Vireo was along Indian Cr., *Terrill* 28 Nov (CM). A Plumbeous Vireo in Lubbock 10 Aug (AF) seemed very early. An outstanding fall find, a Philadelphia Vireo was at Balmorhea S.P., *Reeves* 14 Sep (ML, EC). Red-eyed Vireos were found w. to *Donley* 6 Sep (BPi), Lubbock 14 Sep (AF), the Chisos Mts. 26 Sep (BC), and El Paso 22 Sep (BZ). The Yellow-green Vireo seen at Santa Ana during the summer was last reported 29 Aug (TB). Western Scrub-Jays irrupted into El Paso in very good numbers this fall, beginning in early Sep (JPa, BZ). Pinyon Jays made a brief appearance in the Davis Mts. this season, with up to 8 present 22 Sep–6 Oct (M&ME). On the South Plains, a large concentration of 500 American Crows had gathered near Littlefield, *Lamb* by 25 Oct (JST). A Fish Crow documented at Anahuac N.W.R., *Chambers* 27 Sep (CG et al.) was w. of normal haunts. A Common Raven wandered e. to Stillhouse Hollow L., *Bell* 30 Nov (RPi) for a 3rd county record.

SWALLOWS THROUGH WARBLERS

A Violet-green Swallow was picked out of a swarm of swallows at L. Benbrook, *Tarrant* 13 Sep (MR), and 2 others darted over Lubbock 12 Oct (AF). Mountain Chickadee is listed as hypothetical for Big Bend, but this season brought two well-described, independent sightings: one in Boot Canyon 15 Aug (T&EF) and the other from Laguna Meadows 31 Aug (SC). A Bushtit in Wichita Falls, *Wichita* 27 Nov (VP) provided a first county record. White-breasted Nuthatches in El Paso 20 (JPa) & 26–28 Aug (BZ) provided first local Aug records. A Rock Wren on the Granger L. dam 25 Oct (TFe) was noteworthy. A House Wren at Lafitte's Cove, *Galveston* 21 Sep (DVe) was the 3rd earliest for the U.T.C. A Sedge Wren in Lubbock 18 Oct (AF) was unusual there.

A very rare fall migrant Gray-cheeked Thrush was reported at Caddo L., *Harrison* 15 Oct (C&JF). A Hermit Thrush near Sea Rim S.P., *Jefferson* 15 Sep represented a new fall early arrival for the U.T.C. (DVe). A late Wood Thrush was along Alum Cr., *Bastrop* 5 Nov (BFR). A



One of the surprising finds of the fall season was a Lapland Longspur at Lake Benbrook, Tarrant County 7 October 2003; this species is normally not expected in Texas before mid-November. Photograph by Martin Reid.

lingering Gray Catbird was near Lorenzo, *Crosby* 21 Nov+ (ML). An amazing count of 19 Brown Thrashers was made at Sweetwater, *Nolan* 9 Oct (BFR). Another Brown Thrasher frequented the cen. Davis Mts., *Jeff Davis* 31 Oct+ (T&CH). One of the more interesting finds of the season were the 2 Crissal Thrashers at Big Spring S.P., *Howard* 27 Sep (RMS); the species has been noted here regularly by the Midnats since Nov 2002. Single Sprague's Pipits were noted at three Trans-Pecos locations: Sierra Blanca, *Hudspeth* 1 Nov (EC), Red Bluff L. 2 Nov (EC), and near Kent, *Jeff Davis* 4 Nov (RPi). Certainly another important discovery this

season was a major movement of Sprague's Pipits through the Rolling Plains 12 Oct, when Freeman counted 207 flyovers near Sweetwater. A Phainopepla wandered e. to Midland 30 Aug–2 Sep (BL).

A Golden-winged Warbler in Wichita Falls, *Wichita* 11 Oct (†JiH) appears to be a county first. Tennessee Warblers were noted in Lubbock 13 Sep (BBE et al.) and 2 Oct (AF), and in El Paso 21 Sep (JPa). A late Nashville Warbler was noted along the Lampasas R., *Bell* 10 Nov (RPi). A remarkable 6 Lucy's Warblers were in El Paso 15 Aug (RR), and another was in El Paso on the notably late date of 27 Sep (JPa). Northern Parulas made appearances in Lubbock 17 (AF, BRa) & 23 Aug (TS). A male Tropical Parula was in San Antonio, *Bexar* 21–22 Aug (GLi et al.). A Magnolia Warbler in Lubbock 28 Sep (AF) and 2 at L. Tanglewood, *Randall* 12 Oct (A&TC) were uncommon. A Cape May Warbler at Sea Rim S.P., *Jefferson* 19 Oct (DVe) made for a good fall record. The only inland Black-throated Blue Warbler reported this season was a male in Austin 2 Oct (SB). Black-throated Gray Warblers made an excellent showing in the state this season, with one at Amarillo, *Randall* 5 Aug (RSc), one in Lubbock 11 Sep (AF), different individuals at Rose Hill Cemetery, Corpus Christi 6 Oct (LJ) & 11–13 Oct (DMu, WS), one in Austin 1 Nov (C&JS, ph.), and one in sw. *Bandera* 8 Nov (MiH). An interesting pattern of early arriving Black-throated Green Warblers was noted in the e. third of the state, with 4 found 5–14 Aug. Also of note was a female Black-throated Green in the Chisos Mts. 9 Aug (BS, TFe, ML). A Pine Warbler made a brief appearance in Midland 23–24 Aug (D&JM).

Palm Warblers are casual migrants in the Pineywoods; singles at Central Heights, *Nacogdoches* 7 Oct (DWO, MHW, JF) and L. Livingston, *San Jacinto/Polk* 18 Oct (JO) were both rarities, and one in *Hemphill* 27 Sep (DSm) provided a county first. A Blackpoll Warbler at High I., *Galveston* 19 Aug (EC) was the earliest ever reported for the U.T.C. Cerulean Warblers are very rare fall migrants in Texas, so singles at Beaumont, *Jefferson* 22 Aug (HJ) and Central Heights, *Nacogdoches* 29 Aug (DWO) were extraordinary. Early American Redstarts were noted at El Paso 17 Aug (RR) and in w. *Guadalupe* 20 Aug (LCL, SSc). Noteworthy Worm-eating Warbler

records came from Amarillo, *Randall* 24 Sep (RSc) and Spring Branch, *Comal* 29 Sep (BD) this season. A Swainson's Warbler at High I. 19 Aug (EC) was the second-earliest fall record for the U.T.C. An Ovenbird at Sea Rim S.P. 10 Aug was the earliest-ever fall record for the U.T.C. (DVe). A lone Louisiana Waterthrush was in Boot Canyon, *Brewster* 9 Aug (ML, EC, TFe), and another was at a Davis Mts. ranch 4 Sep (JG, CE). Also of interest were single Louisiana Waterthrushes at Buffalo L. 21 Aug (KS) and Lubbock 31 Aug (AF).

Wandering MacGillivray's Warblers were found 2–27 Oct at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* (m. ob.) and Chappell Hill, *Washington* 1–2 Nov (DVo). A Hooded Warbler on w. Galveston I. 8 Aug was the 4th earliest ever for the U.T.C. (JSt). An early Canada Warbler was at High I. 8 Aug (CTL). Red-faced Warblers were again documented in the Chisos Mts., with one in Boot Canyon 6–14 Aug (†EC, †TF et al.) and 2 present 12 Aug (†PH). The Painted Redstarts present in Boot Canyon during the summer were last noted 5 Sep (JL). Sekula and Heindel recorded an astounding 135 Yellow-breasted Chats in Corpus Christi 6 Sep.

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

A lone migrant Hepatic Tanager was in El Paso 30 Aug (JPa). Noteworthy Scarlet Tanagers included one in Amarillo, *Randall* 24 Sep (RSc), a male in El Paso 7–8 Oct (ph. BZ), and one in *Marion* 11 Oct (DMe, C&JF). A female Yellow-faced Grassquit was reported from Santa Ana, *Hidalgo* 28 Sep (p. a., †MO). Eastern Towhees were noted at Palo Duro Canyon S.P. 25–31 Oct (I&WJ, m. ob.) and Lubbock 26 Oct (AF). A Clay-colored Sparrow at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 22 Sep was the 3rd earliest for the U.T.C. (DMu). A rather early Brewer's Sparrow was in Midland 15 Sep (D&JM). There was a spate of early-arriving sparrows on the South Plains this season, with 10 Clay-colored Sparrows in Lubbock 11 Aug (JBru), 3–5 Vesper Sparrows at Muleshoe N.W.R. 9–16 Aug (BPh), and a Savannah Sparrow at the same location 16 Aug (AF). A Sage Sparrow in w. *Jeff Davis* 5 Oct was an early arrival (KB, ML). Paton photographed a Baird's Sparrow near Tornillo Res. 30 Aug, providing a first for El Paso and the first Aug record for the state. A very early Le Conte's Sparrow was at Hagerman, *Grayson* 14 Sep (DDC, DL); another was found in s. *Midland* 8 Nov (RMS et al.). An early Fox Sparrow was in Midland 13 Oct (DK). A Swamp Sparrow at Smith Pt., *Chambers* 4 Oct was the second-earliest fall record for the U.T.C. (DVe). A very early Dark-eyed Junco was

discovered by the Midnats in s. *Midland* 13 Sep. Another truly astounding fall record was a Lapland Longspur at L. Benbrook, *Tarrant* on the very early date of 7 Oct (ph. MR).

Rose-breasted Grosbeaks visited El Paso on 20–21 Sep and 4–11 Oct (JPa), and a female was in Wichita Falls 29 Sept (VP) for only the 2nd fall record for that county. Quite late were 2 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks in Palo Duro Canyon S.P. 4–13 Oct (I&WJ). A Lazuli Bunting at Port O'Connor, *Cathoun* 24 Sep provided a rare fall Central Coast record (BFr). A late migrant Indigo Bunting was in the Guadalupe Mts. 22–23 Nov (EK). Late were a Painted Bunting in Pinto Canyon, *Presidio* 25 Sep (KB) and a Dickcissel at Quintana, *Brazoria* 8 Nov (MAu). A Rusty Blackbird made a very rare appearance in the Permian Basin at Midland 12 Nov (DK). An imm. male Baltimore Oriole was found at L. Ransom Canyon, *Lubbock* 4–13 Sep (CRe, AF et al.), and an ad. male was there 6 Sep (AF). A rarity these days, a lone Purple Finch was in San Antonio 21 Nov (GLi). A great find was a Cassin's Finch in Dalhart, *Dallam* 8 Nov (BPI). House Finches continue to expand their range southward; this season, 3 were at Falcon County Park, *Starr* 6 Nov (DMu, CC, WS). An Evening Grosbeak seen briefly at L. Worth, *Tarrant* 31 Oct (MR et al.) was only one reported this season.

Undocumented reports: Northern Goshawk in Dallas 17 Nov; Red-faced Warbler in Boot Canyon, *Brewster* 25 Aug; Yellow-faced Grassquit at Santa Ana, *Hidalgo* 29 Sep. The Blue Mockingbird present in Pharr, *Hidalgo* last winter reportedly returned in mid-Sep and was irregularly seen through the season.

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