

“Spectacular” best describes the autumn of 2004 in Texas. Ample rains in most areas of the state made for excellent food crops and high-quality habitats of many sorts. A great variety of migrants lingered late into the fall, with large numbers of some species, such as Black-throated Green Warbler, lingering into late November. Migrants from the eastern United States made a fairly good showing in the western part of the state. On top of this, the beginnings of what promised to be an equally good winter for incursions of nuthatches and finches could be detected. The list of rare species has rarely been longer—from the first South Polar Skua for the Gulf of Mexico to the largest incursion of Crimson-collared Grosbeaks ever recorded in the United States! Indeed, all regions of the state enjoyed visits from rarities: Bohemian Waxwings in the Panhandle, a Fork-tailed Flycatcher in the Trans-Pecos, a Gray Flycatcher in the Pineywoods, and a Western Gull among a dozen other vagrants in South Texas.

This will be the last column for which Ken Seyffert will serve as subregional compiler for northwestern Texas. Ken is the expert on bird distribution in the Texas Panhandle and has been part of this team since 1988; he also worked with Frances Williams for many years when the northern half of the state was part of the Southern Great Plains region. For his many contributions over many years of service, we thank him heartily.

Abbreviations: T.B.R.C. (Texas B.R.C.); U.T.C. (Upper Texas Coast); S.P.H. (Smith Pt. Hawkwatch). The following are shortened names for the respective local, county, state, or national parks, and wildlife refuges, etc.: Anahuac, Aransas, Bentsen, Big Bend, Big Bend Ranch, Buffalo Lake, San Bernard, and Santa Ana.

LOONS THROUGH FALCONS

Two Red-throated Loons on L. Tawakoni 7 Nov were a first for Hunt (MWh), and another was found 9 Nov at Balmorhea L., Reeves (BG, SCa). The only Pacific Loon reported was from L. Tawakoni, Van Zandt 6 Nov (RR). Least Grebes were especially common this fall, with 7 at Beaumont, Jefferson 7 Nov (JW, SM, JoH) and as many as 9 in Freestone, including the first documented nesting (Pba, MD). Pelagic trips sponsored by the World Birding Center to waters off S. Padre Island, Cameron this fall rekindled excitement for deepwater birding. The 24 Sep trip found a subad. Red-billed Tropicbird, Texas's 7th (†BMc, EC, TFr, m.ob.), while the 1 Oct voyage produced Texas' 12th Greater Shearwater (†BMc, m.ob.) and a small Cory's Shearwater, possibly of the nominate race (ph., BMc), not yet recorded in the Gulf but known from specimens be-

Texas



tween Georgia and New York. The 6 Nov trip turned up a late Audubon's Shearwater and 2 Masked Boobies. An imm. Brown Booby was reported from Galveston 21 Oct (†EJ). Several other sulids beached themselves in Brazoria and Galveston: Northern Gannets were found 4 Aug, 4 & 24 Sep, and 4 Oct (DSi, JSt). An Anhinga nest with 4 young was discovered at Hagerman, Grayson 31 Aug (LL). The trend of late Magnificent Frigatebirds continued, with one seen 16 Nov from the Bolivar Ferry, Galveston (JSt).

Two American Bitterns at Rio Grande Village, Brewster 2–20 Nov (fide MF) provided a rare Trans-Pecos record. A Great White Heron at the mouth of Carancahua Bay, Calhoun 19–22 Sep was just the 4th for the state (†BFr). A concentration of 32 imm. White Ibis at the Village Creek Drying Beds, Tarrant 19 Aug (SJ), with 15 still present 19 Sep (LB), was significant for n.-cen. Texas. A juv. Roseate Spoonbill at Tornillo Res. 20 Aug was just the 2nd for El Paso (BZ). An impressive count was of 3000 Wood Storks

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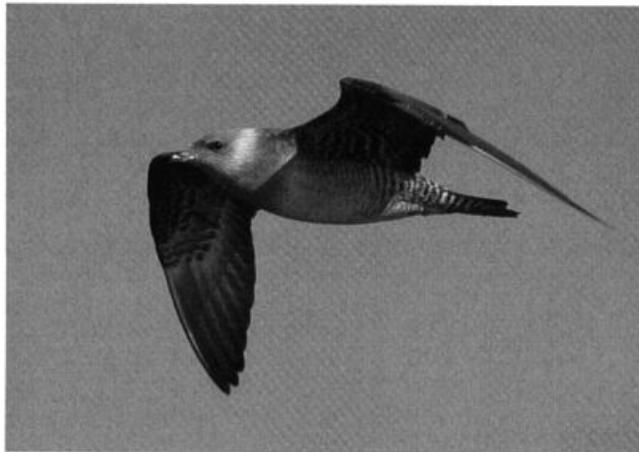
Providing only the seventh documented record for Texas, this young Red-billed Tropicbird was well studied off South Padre Island, Cameron County on 24 September 2004. Photograph by Lynn Barber.

moving by Smith Pt., *Chambers* 12 Oct (S.P.H. staff).

A family group of 6 Muscovy Ducks including a subad. and 4 "almost-grown" young was found 8 Oct at the species' traditional location at Salineño, *Starr* (KE). A male Eurasian Wigeon in *Lubbock* 24 Oct–1 Nov was a first for the South Plains (ph., †BBe, m.ob.). Three Cinnamon Teal found 14 Sep at the Freeport Wetlands, *Brazoria* were the second-earliest ever for the U.T.C. (DJa). Inland scoters noted at the newly christened Mitchell L. Audubon Center at San Antonio, *Bexar* included a Surf on 27–28 Nov and a Black 15–19 Nov (SCo, MR). Other Surf Scoters were in e. *Bell* 19 Nov (BBu), L. Tawakoni, *Hunt* 19 Nov (MWh), and Red Bluff L., *Loving* 25 Nov (EC, HL). Mitchell L. also had a Long-tailed Duck 15 Nov that was joined by another 17 Nov (BD et al.); others included 3 at L. Tawakoni, *Hunt* 28 Nov (MWh) and singles at Waco, *McLennan* 28–29 Nov (fide FB) and Hornsby Bend, *Travis* 22 Nov+ (Bly et al.). The best duck of the fall had to be an apparent female *Barrow's Goldeneye* reported from Greenville City L., *Hunt* 28 Nov (ph., †MWh).

An impressive single-day total of 48 Swallow-tailed Kites was counted 27 Aug at Smith Pt., *Chambers* (S.P.H. staff). Also noteworthy was a single flock of 11 flying over Corpus Christi, *Nueces* 8 Aug (KT). An amazingly late individual seen 8 Nov over Buffalo Bayou at Houston, *Harris* (BH) was almost without precedent. An unusually early and large gathering of 75 pre-migrant Mississippi Kites was noted at Amarillo, *Potter* 13 Aug (LSa), and a very early Sharp-shinned Hawk was there 8 Aug (PA). Two ad. Gray Hawks lingered through Nov at Cottonwood Campground, Big Bend

(m.ob.), where they wintered last year. Unexpected were reports of Common Black-Hawks from the Hill Country: one near Wimberley, *Hays* 23 Nov and 2 there the next day (CT, JoM); 2 others were reported between Kerrville and Ingram, *Kerr* 28 Nov (JKe, AA). A young Harris's Hawk photographed in downtown Houston's Hermann Park 4–5 Aug was joined by an ad. shortly thereafter (WN, KSk et al.). Both birds were unbanded and spent time on and around various cages at the nearby Houston Zoo through the period. In excess of 15,000 Swainson's Hawks were seen along a cold front in *Williamson* 3 Oct (RB). A pair of rare early fronts were likely responsible for record-early U.T.C. falcons, including an



Long-tailed Jaeger is still considered rare in Texas, with only 18 documented records, but this fall, individuals were seen on all three pelagic trips out of South Padre Island, Cameron County. This juvenile was seen 24 September 2004; it or another was at the same location 1 October. Photograph by Tony Frank.

American Kestrel at Smith Pt., *Chambers* 13 Aug (RW, BLi) and a Merlin at Houston's Memorial Park, *Harris* 11 Aug (SH).

QUAIL THROUGH TERNS

Several Yellow Rails found at Anahuac, *Chambers* 12 Sep represented a new early fall date for the U.T.C. (MaW), while another near Stegal, *Bailey* 17 Sep (JST) most likely reflects the species' typical fall arrival date there. A Black Rail at Cement Creek L., *Tarrant* 23 Sep (DPo) was an unusual find. Three flocks of Sandhill Cranes totaling 50–60 birds in e. *Bexar* 5 Sep were early for so many (JHe). Whooping Crane numbers at Aransas reached a modern-day

record 216 by the end of the period (TS); migrants included one in *Johnson* 31 Oct (SJ), 2 photographed near Welcome, *Austin* 1 Nov (ph. DH, DVo), 9 in *Clay* 8 Nov (GJa), and singles in *Hutchinson* 7 Nov (fide BP) and *Galveston* 27 Nov (ph. JaM, DPe).

The number of reports of Black-bellied Plover in the Panhandle was much higher than usual: 6 in *Hale* 2 Oct; one in *Parmer* 10 & 26 Oct; 5 in *Swisher* 23 Oct; 3 in *Briscoe* 23 Oct and 5 there on 29 Oct; and 11 in *Armstrong* 24 Oct (m.ob.). American Golden-Plovers included singles in *Reeves* 5 Sep (EC), *Hansford* 11 Sep (RC et al.), Bryan Beach, *Brazoria* 26 Sep (CTL), and Hornsby Bend, *Travis* 20 Oct (JHa), with 3 near Granger, *Williamson* 28–30 Oct (TFe). A flock of 22 Mountain Plovers appeared at a known wintering location along Dauer Ranch Road, *Comal* 29 Sep (BD); at Granger, *Williamson* they were first noticed 16 Oct, with a high of 97 on 29 Oct (TFe). An encouraging count of 1222 Upland Sandpipers was tallied 21 Aug at the Hornsby Bend Hawkwatch, *Travis* (JHa, GJo). Eight Semipalmated Sandpipers were still present on the late date of 13 Nov along Gibbons Creek Res., *Grimes* (DPH). Late Baird's Sandpipers included 2 near Springlake, *Lamb* 7 Nov (AF, IG) and one in *El Paso* 14 Nov—the latest ever by three weeks for that county (JPa). The season's shorebird highlight was Texas's 3rd Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, found on a playa near Springlake, *Lamb* 15–17 Nov (ph., †BG, SCa, m.ob.). A juv. Dunlin found at Temple, *Bell* 21 Aug was extremely early (RPi). An amazing 800–1000 Buff-breasted Sandpipers were estimated at the turf farms in the Brazos River bottoms, *Burleson* 31 Aug–18 Sep (RTi et al.); the world population of the



This first-winter Western Gull, a third for Texas, was discovered at the La Sal del Rey National Wildlife Refuge, Hidalgo County 14 (here) through 16 November 2004. Photograph by Gary Rosenberg.



First documented in Texas (and the United States) in 1988, Green-breasted Mango has been found with increasing frequency in recent years. This adult male, one of three this season, appeared in a McAllen, Hidalgo County, Texas yard on 24 September 2004, where it remained through the remainder of the period (here 11 November). Interestingly, a male of the species frequented this same yard in winter 2001–2002. Photograph by Gary Rosenberg.

species is about 15,000. A Buff-breasted Sandpiper in *Deaf Smith* 2 Sep (ph. JST) provided a very rare Panhandle record. Short-billed Dowitchers are rarely detected in West Texas, so a juv. at Balmorhea L., *Reeves* 3 Sep was notable (EC). Red-necked Phalaropes were well represented with five records, including 2 juvs. at Bryan Beach, *Brazoria* 26 Sep (CTL) and a first for *Bell* at Stillhouse Hollow L. 11 Oct (RPi).

The 6 Nov pelagic trip off South Padre Is. tallied 16 Pomarine and 6 Parasitic Jaegers (m.ob.). Single first-year Long-tailed Jaegers off South Padre I. 24 Sep & 1 Oct (†BMc, EC, TFr, m.ob.) provided only the 17th and 18th documented records in the state; a second-year Long-tailed Jaeger was present off South Padre I. 6 Nov (†BMc, MR et al.). One of the highlights of the season was a South Polar Skua found on the 1 Oct pelagic trip (ph. AGA, †BMc, m.ob.); excellent photographs provided sufficient detail for a first record for Texas and the Gulf of Mexico. The identification of a *Stercorarius* off South Padre I. 6 Nov (†BMc, †EC, †MR, ph. CME et al.) has been debated, with some considering it a South Polar Skua and others leaning toward Pomarine Jaeger. Almost annual in ne. Texas, an ad. Little Gull was present at L. Tawakoni, *Hunt* 18–20 Nov (†MWh, m.ob.). A first-year California Gull was at L. Tawakoni, *Van Vandt* 2–21 Nov (ph. MWh) for a rare ne. Texas record. The only Thayer's Gull reported was a first-year bird at L. Tawakoni, *Rains* 30 Oct (MWh). The first-year Lesser Black-backed Gull that lingered at Bolivar Flats, *Galveston* during the summer was joined by another 28 Aug, with one remaining until 11 Sep (CTL). The outstanding gull of the season

was a first-year Western Gull at La Sal del Rey N.W.R., *Hidalgo* 14–16 Nov (†JD, m.ob.), providing only the 3rd state record. Sabine's Gulls were at eight locations throughout the state 30 Aug–17 Oct, with 7 imms. and 2 ads. reported. Two Bridled Terns were off South Padre I. 6 Nov (BMc, EC, m.ob.), providing the first Nov record for the state. Freeman noted up to 4 imm. Sooty Terns on different *Calhoun* bays 1–18 Aug, possibly indicating nesting activity on nearby spoil islands.

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

Three Red-billed Pigeons were discovered in sw. *Dimmitt* 8 Sep (MMc), providing a rare but perhaps not totally unexpected record for the county. A Band-tailed Pigeon at Hueco Tanks, *El Paso* 21 Nov (Bjo, RHe) provided a rare record for far w. Texas. A Ruddy Ground-Dove at Ft. Bliss, *El Paso* 28 Sep (†BZ) was quite early; a pair was present at



A spectacular find was this female Magnificent Hummingbird near San Antonio in Wilson County, Texas 23 (here) and 24 October 2004, providing the second documented record for the state east of the Pecos River. Photograph by Martin Reid.

Big Bend's Cottonwood Campground 21 Nov+ (†EC, HL). Noteworthy sightings of Black-billed Cuckoo this season include one inland at Wright Patman L. 11 Sep (MD) and one very late at Sabal Palm, *Cameron* 20 Nov (ph. BC). Unusual for w. Texas, a Groove-billed Ani was at Midland 18 Sep (DK, RMS et al.). A Flammulated Owl recovered at Lubbock 2 Nov (CLe) added to the number of records there in recent years; more unusual was a road-killed bird found in *Hunt* the same day (MWh), a first record for ne. Texas. An apparent Northern Pygmy-Owl was heard calling in the Chisos Mts., *Brewster* 13 Aug (†MA); there remain only two fully documented records of

this species for the state. A Short-eared Owl at Midland 9 Sep (AWi) was remarkably early. Chuck-will's-widows continue to turn up in the High Plains, with one at Lubbock 30 Sep (AF) and up to 2 in *Donley* 21–28 Aug (BP). Lingered Lesser Nighthawks included singles at Rio Grande Village, *Brewster* 11 Nov (BG, SCa) and El Paso 20 Nov (JPa). One to 2 large, dark swifts were at Mitchell L., *Bexar* 25–26 Sep (MCR, BD), but identification was not possible.

Green-breasted Mangos returned to a residential area of McAllen, *Hidalgo*, where individuals have been present in past years: a male frequented one yard 22 Aug–21 Nov (GH, †m.ob.), while another male present just 3 km away 24 Sep+ (FF, †m.ob.) was joined by a 2nd ad. male in late Nov. Broad-billed Hummingbirds were noted at Big Bend's Boot Canyon 14 Aug (MF) and in the Davis Mts., where 2 were present through 14 Oct (M&ME). A male Broad-billed was present at Houston, *Harris* 30 Oct+ (KKi, SG et al.), a rare U.T.C. record. A reported male White-eared Hummingbird seen in the Chisos Mts., *Brewster* 5 & 11 Aug (†GC, KF, J&LW) is under T.B.R.C. review. Considerably out of range, a female Magnificent Hummingbird was in *Wilson* 23–24 Oct (LH, ph. MR et al.), representing only the 2nd documented e. of the Pecos R. in Texas. Unusual for the Pineywoods, female Black-chinned Hummingbirds were at Nacogdoches 16–24 Nov (NM, JFa) and Loco Valley, *Nacogdoches* 18 Nov+ (RuH, JFa, DW). An imm. male Costa's Hummingbird was studied at Big Bend's Cottonwood Campground 10 Nov (†BG, SCa). Providing more evidence that Allen's Hummingbird is of annual occurrence along the coastal prairies, an ad. female was banded near Victoria, *Victoria* 18 Sep and remained through the period, and an imm. male was banded at the same location 24 Nov (BO). Another imm. male Allen's Hummingbird was banded at Rock-



Providing one of the very few records for the western United States, this adult Fork-tailed Flycatcher was at El Paso, Texas 14 and (here) 15 October 2004, an unexpected first record for the Trans-Pecos region. Photograph by Jimmy Zabriskie.

port, *Aransas* 18–19 Sep (BR). Single Allen's Hummingbirds reported in the summer remained throughout the period in the Davis Mts. (M&ME) and in *Hays* (SSt). Lasley ran across one or 2 Green Kingfishers at three different locations along the N. Llano R., *Sutton* 2 Aug. The only Lewis's Woodpecker reported was one along Terlingua Cr., *Brewster* 4 Nov (KBe). A Red-naped Sapsucker at San Antonio 19–20 Sep (BD, WS) provided a rare *Bexar* record. Casual in far w. Texas, 2 Downy Woodpeckers were at Ft. Bliss 6 Oct, with one lingering until 6 Nov (BZ).

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

Details of a Greater Pewee at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village 5 Aug (†CR) will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C. Late Eastern Wood-Pewees were in *Nacogdoches* 21 Oct (MHW, DW) and e. *Travis* 6 Nov (BFR). Single Hammond's Flycatchers near Pearsall, *Frio* 23 Sep (ph. MR) and Three Rivers, *Live Oak* 21 Nov (ph. WS) provided rare documented records for the South Texas Plains. The bird of the season in the Pineywoods was a well-studied Gray Flycatcher near Sam Rayburn Res., *San Augustine* 6 Sep (ph., †JFa, RTr, DW), the easternmost record for the state. Pacific-slope/Cordilleran Flycatchers were found in four locations e. of the expected migration corridor, with singles in *Kendall* 14 Sep (SW), w. *Bell* 21 Nov (RPi), near Pearsall, *Frio* 26 Nov+ (ph. WS, DMu, MR), and Utey, *Bastrop* 28–30 Nov (BFR). A Brown-crested Flycatcher was present at w. Galveston I. 9–12 Sep (JSt). Continuing the trend of recent years, Great Kiskadees were noted at three locations along the U.T.C. An ad. Fork-tailed Flycatcher at L. El Paso, *El Paso* 14–15 Oct (A&MG, †JPa, JZ) provided an unexpected first Trans-Pecos record, while another was at Anahuac, *Chambers* 9–10 Nov (†MaW, CSh et al.). Several Couch's/Tropical Kingbirds were reported from *Brewster*, including singles at Rio Grande Village 12 Aug (VF), along Terlingua Cr. 3 Nov (KBe), and at Cottonwood Campground 21 Nov (EC, HL). A female Rose-throated Becard was at Pharr, *Hidalgo* 28 Nov+ (AIW, †m.ob.).

The only Northern Shrike reported during the period was an imm. in *Dallam* 15 Nov (BG, SCA). Unexpected in Big Bend, a White-eyed Vireo at Rio Grande Village 12 Nov (BG, SCA) was a nice find. Three Bell's Vireos were found on the U.T.C., with singles at Quintana, *Brazoria* 6 & 29 Aug (CTL) and w. Galveston I. 19–20 Sep (JSt). A Plumbeous Vireo at Corpus Christi 30 Oct (ph. MR, WS, SCo) provided a rare documented record away from the Trans-Pecos. Cassin's Vireos were reported in *Bastrop* 21–23 Nov (BFR) and on w. Galveston I. 8

Nov (JSt). A Hutton's Vireo was heard in s. Austin 10 Aug (JHa), adding to the increasing number of area records in recent years. A Red-eyed Vireo made an appearance at Lubbock 18 Sep (JL, m.ob.). A Northern Rough-winged Swallow at Dumas, *Moore* 22 Nov (BG) provided a new late date for the Panhandle by more than a month. A flock of 100 Cliff Swallows at Gibbons Creek Res., *Grimes* was still present as late as 26 Nov (DPH). Up to 50 Cave Swallows lingered through the season at College Station, *Brazos* (ER), and more than 100 were in *Bastrop* 23 Nov (BFR). Other lingering Cave Swallows included 20 at Ft. Bliss, *El Paso* 24 Nov (JPa) and 3 near Clint, *El Paso* 30 Nov (BZ).

BUSHTIT THROUGH WARBLERS

Very unexpectedly, Bushtits wandered on the High Plains of the Panhandle: 20 were seen at *Texline*, *Dallam* (and another nearby 7



Among the many spectacular rarities documented in Texas this season was an influx of Bohemian Waxwings into the northern portion of the Panhandle—the first such incursion since the early 1970s. This bird was found in *Dalhart*, *Hartley* County 21 November 2004. Waxwings were found at five different sites, but none could be relocated. Photograph by Brian Gibbons.

Nov [BG, SCA]), 10 at Etter, *Moore* 21 Nov (BG), 20 at *Texhoma*, *Sherman* 21 Nov (BG), and 10 at Perryton, *Ochiltree* the next day (BG). Red-breasted Nuthatches made a very good showing throughout the n. half of the state; one near Pearsall, *Frio* 26 Nov (WS, DMu) was the farthest south. Out of range was a Cactus Wren near Canyon, *Randall* 23 Oct (JR). Carolina Wrens in unexpected places in the Trans-Pecos included 2 at Boot Spring, *Brewster* 9 Sep (EC, ML) and one at Canutillo, *El Paso* 7 Nov (JPa). A Winter Wren at Rio Grande Village, *Brewster* 12 Nov (BG, SCA) was a good find, as was a Sedge Wren at Buffalo Lake, *Randall* 30 Sep (KS). An incredibly early Ruby-crowned Kinglet appeared at Woodway Ravine, *McLennan* 19 Aug (FG). Up to 15 eastward-wandering Western Bluebirds were in *Kimble* 7–21 Nov

(NB). The Black-headed Nightingale-Thrush present during the summer was relocated at the same Pharr, *Hidalgo* location 19–29 Oct (AIW, JB et al.), after an apparent two-month absence. A Wood Thrush at *Amarillo*, *Potter* 30 Sep (LSa) was unusual there. Clay-colored Robin has become a regular sight in many areas of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, but one near Fallurrias, *Brooks* 28 Nov (AC, MC) was noteworthy. An amazing 3 Varied Thrushes were documented this season: at San Antonio, *Bexar* 8–9 Nov (†MCR, m.ob., ph.), at El Paso 14–17 Nov (KaK, †JPa), and near *Texhoma*, *Sherman* 21 Nov (ph., †BG). The Blue Mockingbird at Pharr, *Hidalgo* returned briefly 19 Oct–2 Nov (AIW, m.ob.), after an apparent two-month absence. For the first time in about 30 years, Bohemian Waxwings moved into the Panhandle. Gibbons and Campbell (t, ph.) were in the right place at the right time, finding multiple birds 21–22 Nov, including 3 at *Dalhart*, *Hartley* 21 Nov, one at Gruber, *Hansford* 21 Nov, 2 at Spearman, *Hansford* 22 Nov, one at Perryton, *Ochiltree* 22 Nov, and 2 at Stinnett, *Hutchinson* 22 Nov. Diligent searches by others failed to relocate these birds.

Noteworthy sightings of Blue-winged Warbler included singles at White Rock L., *Dallas* 29 Aug (BG, PBi) and Ft. Bliss 24 Sep (ph. BZ), a first for El Paso. A somewhat late Tennessee Warbler was at Port Aransas, *Aransas* 20 Nov (WS). Up to 6 Lucy's Warblers in w. El Paso 1 Aug–30 Sep (JPa) suggested possible local breeding; the species was also noted at Ft. Bliss 14 Aug–1 Oct (JPa, BZ). A late Northern Parula was near Pearsall, *Frio* 9 Nov (MR et al.). A Tropical Parula was extralimital at Port Aransas, *Nueces* 20 Nov (WS). Chestnut-sided Warblers were found in *El Paso* at Ft. Bliss 17 Sep and in town 21 Sep (BZ), while a rather late Chestnut-sided was at Paradise Pond, *Aransas* 20 Nov (WS). Inland Black-throated Blue Warblers included singles in *Mason* 24 Oct (DF, BoF, TH) and *Gillespie* 12 Nov (JHo). Black-throated Gray Warblers farther e. than expected included singles at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 16–19 Sep (GO, DVe) and near Pearsall, *Frio* 31 Oct (MR, SCo, WS). A Black-throated Green Warbler was noted in the Chisos Mts., *Brewster* 5 Sep (CMc), while farther e., this species lingered in large numbers well into Nov. A Townsend's Warbler was a good find near Pearsall, *Frio* 26 Nov (DMu, MR, WS). A Hermit Warbler at El Paso 17 Sep (JPa) provided an uncommon lowland record. What appeared to be Townsend's x Hermit Warblers were found at Boot Canyon, *Brewster* 4 Sep (EC) and *Texline*, *Dallam* 7 Nov (BG, SCA). Yellow-throated Warblers, not typically fall migrants through Central

Texas, were seen in *Austin* 30 Oct (BeF) and *Gonzales* 20 Nov (BFr, AD). A Palm Warbler was at *Lubbock* 29 Sep (AF). A late American Redstart was found in *Bastrop* 25 Nov (BFr), and a lingering Prothonotary Warbler was in *Travis* 11 Nov (NB). Notable warblers from nw. Texas included a Mourning Warbler at *Lubbock* 3 Oct (AF) and a Hooded Warbler at *Amarillo*, *Randall* 20 Sep (RSc). As is now expected, a Red-faced Warbler was noted at *Boot Spring*, *Brewster* 7 Aug (†MF); more unexpected was another in the Franklin Mts., *El Paso* 15 Aug (ph. JKi). A Painted Restart in *Sabine* 25 Nov (RTTr) was remarkable for the coastal location. Single Rufous-capped Warblers were documented from two locations this season: in a side canyon of the Basin in *Big Bend*, *Brewster* 12 Aug (†DL, AFr) and along the *Frio* R. near *Pearsall*, *Frio* 31 Oct+ (†WS, MR, m.ob.).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Hepatic Tanagers made an unexpectedly good showing in *El Paso* this fall, with at least 4 recorded 21 Aug–6 Oct (JPa). Single Scarlet Tanagers were unexpected visitors to *Nacogdoches* 2 Sep (DW, MHW), *Fayette* 5 Sep (MMa), and *Lubbock* 11 Sep (DSt). Several pairs of Bachman's Sparrows were located in *Lamar* 27 Aug (MWh), providing a first breeding record and what appears to be the westernmost population in Texas. A Baird's Sparrow was documented 53 km sw. of *Marfa*, *Presidio* 13 Nov (†BG, Sca), with 2 along the same road 7 km from *Marfa* 22 Nov+ (†EC, HL). Le Conte's Sparrows of note included singles at *Big Bend's* Rio Grande Village 12 Nov (BG, Sca) and *Lubbock* 20 Nov (AF).

A small eastward irruption of Pyrrhuloxia occurred this season, with one noted on *North Padre I.*, *Nueces* 21 Nov (MC), nine reports of single birds from *Bastrop*, *Bell*, *Gonzales*, and *Travis* from 20–28 Nov (BFr, m.ob.), and a total of 11 in *Gonzales* 20 Nov (BFr). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks of note included one at *Ft. Bliss*, *El Paso* 6 Oct (BZ) and another in *Nacogdoches* 5 Nov (MHW). A Lazuli Bunting was discovered near *L. Worth*, *Tarrant* 30 Aug (MK et al.). Up to 6 Painted Buntings were still present at Cot-

tonwood Campground, *Brewster* 22 Nov (CE, JG). A tardy Dickcissel was near *Pearsall*, *Frio* 26 Nov (MR, DMu, WS). Common Grackles were noted at four Trans-Pecos locations with reports, from two locations in *Big Bend*, *Terlingua*, and *Ft. Davis*. A very good find was a Scott's Oriole at the *Muleshoe N.W.R.*, *Bailey* 11 Sep (AF). After more than a decade of meager Purple Finch sightings, this fall brought widespread reports in the e. half of Texas, with sightings s. to the U.T.C. and w. to *Uvalde*. A female Cassin's Finch was at *Ft. Bliss* 9 Oct (JP), and 30 were noted in the *Guadalupe Mts.*,



Searches on a private ranch near *Pearsall*, *Frio* County, Texas in autumn 2004 uncovered a number of interesting birds, with this Rufous-capped Warbler found 31 October (here) one of the more surprising finds; it stayed into the spring 2005 season. Photograph by *Martin Reid*.

Culberson 24 Nov (EC, HL). A flyby Red Crossbill on *W. Galveston I.* 12 Nov (JSt) was just the 4th for the U.T.C.; singles at *Lubbock* 20 (AF) & 28 Nov (RR) were also of note.

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SA A male **Crimson-collared Grosbeak** discovered at *Weslaco*, *Hidalgo* 2 Nov+ (BB, †m.ob.) became the first sighting in an unprecedented invasion by this species. By 10 Nov, a female was discovered at the same location, and during the remainder of the month, another male and 2 imms. were found. Yet another imm. was found at *Pharr* 21 Nov+ (AIW et al.), and the winter season would produce still more reports of this Mexican endemic, for which there were only eight previous Texas records prior to this fall.