



Mark W. Lockwood • Eric Carpenter
Willie Sekula

For much of Texas, the autumn season started off very hot and dry. The exception was in the western Trans-Pecos, where El Paso in particular received abundant rainfall. Conditions of the desert grasslands throughout the Region are generally better than they were five years ago. The remainder of the state was generally described as dry to extremely dry. Brownsville had recorded a scant 299.7 mm of rainfall for the entire year at the end of November. At Houston's Intercontinental Airport, only 217.4 mm of precipitation was measured for the fall, which is half of normal. Many freshwater areas along the coastal prairies dried up for the first time in recent memory. Obviously, the major weather event of the period was Hurricane *Rita*, which came ashore along the Texas-Louisiana border as a Category 3 storm on 23 September. Although *Rita* weakened before landfall, it was still packing winds of 120 mph, which ravaged a swath of Texas from Sabine Pass up through Jasper. Overall, Upper Texas Coast damage was less than expected and much better than wooded areas farther inland, such as Village Creek State Park, where up to 90% of the canopy was destroyed.

The birding season was unremarkable in most aspects. There were many species that arrived on the early side, and in general weather conditions were favorable for migrants, making for an uninspiring season according to most observers. Irrupective winter species such as American Robin and Cedar

Waxwing were virtually absent, in contrast to last year's huge numbers. The exceptions to that rule were Golden-crowned Kinglet and Brown Creeper. These species seemed to arrive in good numbers in October and remain through the season, at least in the eastern half of the state. As with all seasons, there were rarities that made news, among them a Greater Flamingo along the Central Coast that had been banded in the large colony at Ría Lagartos, Mexico, and the state's second Streak-backed Oriole, which made a brief visit to El Paso.

WATERFOWL THROUGH GREBES

Single drake Eurasian Wigeons were documented at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, El Paso 10–11 Nov (†JSp) and at Muleshoe N.W.R., Bailey 22–25 Nov (†TS, SJ, †LBa). An early Canvasback was noted at Muleshoe N.W.R., Bailey 5 Sep (AHe, AvH), as were 3 Ring-necked Ducks at Cactus Playa, Moore 17 Sep (BP). Hornsby Bend, Travis hosted a White-winged Scoter 14–18 Nov (SBr, m.ob.) and a Black Scoter 15–21 Nov (PS, DP, m.ob.). A Long-tailed Duck at Port Aransas, Nueces 17 Nov (BSh) and one taken by a hunter 20 Nov at McFaddin N.W.R., Jefferson (*vide* JWh) were the only reports for the season. A Masked Duck put in an appearance at Sabal Palm, Cameron 29 Nov (†DB), while another one was at San Bernard, Brazoria 13 & 21 Nov (DN, †JWi). A covey of 12 Gambel's Quail found in Fresno Canyon, Big Bend Ranch S.P., se. Presidio 22 Nov (BBR) was well e. of the known range. Montezuma Quail continue to be detected in the Chisos Mts., Brewster, with one male along the South Rim 21 Aug (DL). Single Pacific Loons were found at Lake J.B. Thomas, Scurry 25 Nov (AHe) and at L. Tawakoni 13 & 27 Nov (BG, RR, MW). Least Grebes continue to expand northward and eastward, with 17 individuals present at five U.T.C. locations and at least 6 present at Hornsby Bend, Travis throughout the season (m.ob.). A Clark's Grebe was noted at Greenbelt L., Donley 26 Nov (BP); the status of the species in the Panhandle is still uncertain.

SHEARWATERS THROUGH FALCONS

A deepwater fishing trip 237 km off of Pt. Aransas 1–2 Oct netted over 200 Audubon's Shearwaters (JMc). The 17 Sep pelagic trip out of South Padre I. produced a Red-billed

Tropicbird (†BMc, EC, m.ob.). A Brown Booby was present 13–28 Nov just off the tip of South Padre I., Cameron (†GB, ScC, m.ob.), while a weakened Brown Booby was picked up along the beach near Pt. Aransas Nueces 29 Sep (†TA). Well inland was a Brown Pelican at Brady L., McCulloch 9 Nov (BoF, DF); another was at Hagerman N.W.R., Grayson 20–21 Aug (m.ob.). Six Double-crested Cormorants arrived early in Lubbock, Lubbock 6 Aug (AnH). An Anhinga was reported 30 Nov along the Lower Canyons section of Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River



This immature Greater Flamingo was the seventh to be documented in Texas. It had been banded at the Ría Lagartos Biosphere Reserve, Yucatan, Mexico. This is the second Yucatan-banded flamingo to be discovered in the United States, the first being in Florida. This bird wandered to several locations along the central Texas coast from 14 October 2005 onward (here 13 November at Goose Island State Park). Photograph by Steve Sykes.

N.P., Terrell (BMO, MP). Documented records of this species in w. Texas are few, though there are previous sightings in winter/early spring from this same area. Exceptionally late were 2 Magnificent Frigatebirds off South Padre I., Cameron 15 Nov and one at that location 24 Nov (ScC), possibly wanderers displaced by tropical-storm activity. Unusual for the Panhandle, an American Bittern was detected near Pampa, Gray 24 Aug (JE, KG). A Little Blue Heron at White River L., Crosby 3 Sep (AHe) provided a rare record for the High Plains. A white-morph Reddish Egret was at Mitchell L., Bexar 28 Aug (MR). A single White Ibis was near Canutillo, El Paso 29 Aug, while 2 were present at the same location 2 Sep (DAI). A Glossy Ibis at Kirby L., Taylor 14 & 19 Oct was the only one reported inland (LBI). White River L., Crosby hosted a

SA A banded imm. Greater Flamingo was discovered in Shoalwater Bay, Calhoun 14 Oct (†CB) and was immediately suspected of being an escapee from captivity, as some birds noted in Gulf Coast areas have proven to be in the past (including presumably at least one individual of the Old World subspecies *roseus*). However, the bird wandered southward to Goose Island S.P., Aransas, where its band was read and researched, revealing that the bird had been banded in Aug 2006 at the Ría Lagartos Biosphere Reserve, Yucatan, Mexico. It remained in Aransas Bay, Aransas for the remainder of the period (†m.ob.)



This immature Sooty Tern lingered around the South Padre Island jetties, Texas 13-14 (here 13) November 2005, providing a late date for the state. Photograph by Scarlet Colley.

Roseate Spoonbill 24 Sep (BBe).

An Osprey in Moore 6 Aug (BP) was very early. A pre-migratory assemblage of 17 Swallow-tailed Kites in Liberty 2 Aug was noteworthy (SD). White-tailed Kites were reported at five locations in the High Plains and w. Central Texas, where the species is irregular but increasing in the past few years. White-tailed Kites continued near Rio Bosque Wetlands Park, El Paso, with an ad. and 2 imm. present sporadically 7-19 Aug (JSp). A pair of these birds attempted to nest in w. Jeff Davis but was not successful (*vide* AM). An incredible count of 56 White-tailed Kites was made in e. Brazoria 29 Sep (JSt). A Cooper's Hawk at Buffalo Lake, Randall 9 Aug (KS) represented the earliest fall report for the Panhandle. There were three sightings of Broad-winged Hawks 17 Sep-9 Oct in the Trans-Pecos, where the species is a very rare migrant. The species also made a good showing in the Panhandle and High Plains area, with five scattered reports 27 Aug-3 Nov. The Hazel Bazemore Hawkwatch, Nueces had a Short-tailed Hawk 2 Sep (†JSi); undocumented sightings of this or another came from the area on 13 Sep and 18 Oct as well. The Smith Point Hawkwatch, Chambers recorded new high counts for Mississippi Kites (7978), Harris's Hawks (7), and White-tailed Hawks (25). Unusual for the L.R.G.V, a Golden Eagle was near Penitas, Hidalgo 24 Nov (DD); another was found 10 Nov near Brazoria N.W.R., Brazoria (JSt). The Peregrine Fund continues its efforts to reestablish a population of Aplomado Falcons in the grasslands of n. Presidio and w. Jeff Davis. This fall, a wandering banded individual was noted at the far

w. side of the state, well away from release sites at Balmorhea L., Reeves 23 Sep (ML).

CRANES THROUGH TERNS

A Whooping Crane strayed away from its usual Aransas haunts, visiting Corpus Christi, Nueces 4-6 Nov (PBe, PY) and farther s. in Willacy 18 Nov+ (SBe, m.ob.). American Golden-Plover sightings included one in Randall 6-16 Aug (RM, KS), up to 5 at Cactus Playa, Moore 9-22 Oct (BP), singles at Anahuac, Chambers 11 Aug and 11 Sep (CTL), and one 13 Oct at the Texas City Dike, Galveston (JSt). Three Snowy Plovers stayed the season at L. Tawakoni, Rains 31 Aug+ (m.ob.). A group of 14 Mountain Plovers was discovered 19 Oct in Moore (BP), where the species is seldom detected; it was hard to come by in its usual haunts around Granger, with the first bird detected 30 Oct in Bell (RPi) and 42 present in Williamson 23 Nov (TFe). Rare in the fall, a Hudsonian Godwit was at Bolivar Flats, Galveston 7 Aug (ph. CTL). Inland Marbled Godwits included one at Cactus Playa, Moore 6 Aug (BP), 4 in Castro 26 Aug (BJ), and one at Hagerman N.W.R., Grayson 20-21 Aug (m.ob.). A Red Knot found 30 Aug at Hagerman N.W.R., Grayson lingered into early Nov (m.ob.). Cactus Playa hosted Sanderlings 6 Aug-9 Oct, with an unusually high count of 16 birds 17 Sep (BP). White-rumped Sandpiper records in fall are extremely rare, so a bird present at L. Tawakoni, Rains 10-18 Oct was noteworthy (m.ob.). Starting in mid-Nov, American Woodcocks were unusually conspicuous, with reports of birds in residential yards pouring in from cen. Texas and along the length of the coast. Red-necked Phalaropes made a fine showing, with small numbers scattered throughout the state. High counts included 29 at Marfa, Presidio 14 Sep (ML) and the same number at Cactus Playa, Moore 9 Oct (BP). A Red Phalarope was well documented at Mitchell L., Bexar 10-12 Oct (BD, ph. MR, †WS).

Continuing a trend from previous fall seasons, a Long-tailed Jaeger was seen off South Padre I., Cameron on a pelagic trip 5 Nov (†m.ob.). Among the few reported incursions of larids into East Texas as a result of Hurricane Rita were 2 Laughing Gulls at L. Wright Patman, Cass 25 Sep (MW) and 25 at L. Sam Rayburn, San Augustine on the same date, one of which stayed until 6 Oct (DW). An estimated 5000 Franklin's Gulls were at San Luis Pass, Galveston 11 Nov (JSt). An ad. Little Gull graced L. Ray Hubbard, Dallas 11 Nov (ph. BG). Two rather early Bonaparte's Gulls were seen at Kirby L., Taylor 16 Sep (LBI). A Mew Gull was at White Rock L., Dallas 25 Nov (RR). A juv. California Gull was at L.

Tawakoni, Rains 20 Oct, with a third-winter bird there 3 Nov (MW). A first-winter gull photographed by Reid 26 Oct at Galveston was thought to be a candidate for Yellow-legged Gull, though others have suggested a hybrid. A first-winter Thayer's Gull was at East Beach, Galveston 26 Oct (MR). Sabine's Gulls were somewhat scarce this fall, with single birds at L. Tawakoni, Van Zandt 20-22 Sep (MW, m.ob.), South Padre I., Cameron 11-12 Nov (PL et al.), Balmorhea L., Reeves 23 Sep (LBa), and McNary Res., Hudspeth 16 Oct (JPa). Eighteen Caspian and 2 Royal Terns were seen at L. Sam Rayburn, San Augustine 25 Sep (DW) after Hurricane Rita. Pelagic trips off South Padre I. 17 Sep and 5 Nov yielded 5 & 16 Bridled Terns, respectively (BMc). Up to 2 imm. Sooty Terns in the surf off South Padre I., Cameron 13-14 Nov (CC, PL et al.) were late.

PIGEONS THROUGH WOODPECKERS

A Common Ground-Dove at L. Tawakoni, Van Zandt 20 Sep (MW) and 29 Oct (GC) represents a first county record. Amazing was a flock of 50 Yellow-headed Parrots seen in Mission, Hidalgo 5 Nov (DD). A juv. Black-billed Cuckoo in El Paso 5 Oct (ph. BZ) constituted the first fully documented record for the Trans-Pecos. An exceptionally late Yellow-billed Cuckoo was heard in Chappell Hill, Washington 29 Nov (DVo). A Burrowing Owl was found at the entrance to McFaddin N.W.R., Jefferson 16 Nov+ (JWh). An early Short-eared Owl was seen at Surfside, Brazoria 21 Oct (RW). A Common Poorwill brought to a Lubbock wildlife rescue center 6 Nov was a late record for the South Plains.

An apparent Vaux's Swift was discovered in a flock of swallows at San Antonio's Mitchell L. 11-13 Oct (ph., †MR). If accepted, it would represent a long-awaited first for the state of this species, which is known from Louisiana and Florida. A *Chaetura* in El Paso 28 Sep was not identified to species but was thought to be a Chimney (BZ). At least 3 Broad-billed Hummingbirds graced Zimmer's yard in El Paso this fall, while single birds were near Barksdale, Edwards 10 Sep (ph. TT), Utopia, Uvalde 4 Sep (MH), and at Midland 4-9 & 19 Oct (D&J). Up to 3 White-eared Hummingbirds lingered in the Davis Mountains Resort, Jeff Davis until 12 Oct (JSm). A Blue-throated Hummingbird was a one-day wonder at a College Station feeder 27 Sep (ph. LBi). Perhaps owing to the drought, large numbers of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were noted along the Upper Texas Coast and South Texas this fall, while single birds in Amarillo, Potter 2 Aug and 27 Sep (LS), along with one in Canyon, Randall 17 Sep (PT), rep-

resent rare fall records for the Panhandle. The beginning of an eastward movement of Anna's Hummingbirds was noted this fall, with the most significant record from Rusk 24 Oct–4 Nov (PHa). A female Costa's Hummingbird was at Panther Junction, Big Bend N.P. 1–2 Oct (†MFI). Up to 5 Calliope Hummingbirds were tallied near Utopia, Uvalde 7 Aug–4 Oct (MH), while a female visited a feeder near Poth, Wilson 20 Nov (WS). An ad. male Broad-tailed Hummingbird was in San Benito, Cameron 24 Nov (TF). An ad. male Allen's Hummingbird appeared in Alpine, Brewster 27 Aug+ (ML), while the ad. male present in the Davis Mountains Resort during the summer remained until 13 Nov (M&ME). Elsewhere in the state, an ad. male showed up in a Houston yard 30 Aug (SWi); a male was at another Houston location 8 Nov (*vide* JHi).

All three Texas kingfisher species were seen at the same spot along the San Gabriel R. in Georgetown, Williamson 6 Nov (TFe). A female Ringed at Gibbons Creek Res., Grimes 19 & 25 Nov (DVo, JHo, MS) was evidence of continuing range expansion in the state. A Lewis's Woodpecker was present at Frijole Ranch, Guadalupe Mountains N.P. 25 Nov+ (JWo). Six Red-headed Woodpeckers in Potter 24 Sep (BP) were noteworthy so far west. Just as they did two winters ago, up to 5 Acorn Woodpeckers set up shop in a residential area on El Paso's w. side 7 Nov+ (JPo). A male Williamson's Sapsucker along the Pinnacles Trail, Big Bend N.P. 11 Oct (AW) represented a rare park record. Single Red-naped Sapsuckers near Spring Branch, Comal 16 Oct (LL) and Common Fords Ranch, Travis 29–30 Oct (EF, RKa, StW) were noteworthy Central Texas records. A Ladder-backed Woodpecker lingered from summer at Quintana, Brazoria until 21 Aug (MLi). A Downy Woodpecker at Paradise Pond, Port Aransas, Nueces 20 Nov+ (JMc) provided a rare barrier island record. An imm. Northern Flicker brought to Wild Bird Rescue, Wichita 8 Aug was suggestive of local breeding.

FLYCATCHERS THROUGH SWALLOWS

A Least Flycatcher at Muleshoe N.W.R., Bailey 15 Oct (BBe) was late for the South Plains. Out-of-range Black Phoebes included singles near Lubbock, Lubbock 27 Aug (RLe) and Katy, Harris 12 Sep+ (ASh). A Great Crested Flycatcher at Paint Gap, Big Bend N.P. 18 Sep was a good find for the Trans-Pecos (EH). A

Brown-crested Flycatcher on w. Galveston I., Galveston 19 Oct (JSt) was the earliest ever of the three fall records for the Upper Texas Coast. A great find for the Concho Valley was a Great Kiskadee near Eden, Concho 14 Sep (ED). A Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher on w. Galveston I., Galveston 22 Sep (ph. †JSt) represents the 4th record for the Upper Texas Coast. A Tropical Kingbird found 20 Nov in ne. Kenedy was considered rare for the location (BFR). Riding the heels of this spring's first nest for the Upper Texas Coast, two breeding pairs of Couch's Kingbirds, one with 2 grown juvs., were found 20 Aug at Smith Point, Chambers (JA). A Western Kingbird at L. Tawakoni, Hunt 29 Oct was very late (GC, BG). A Fork-tailed Flycatcher had an amazingly long stay at Austin's Hornsby Bend 23 Sep–30 Oct (IH, HR), providing an opportunity for hundreds of birders to see this U.S. rarity. A brilliant juv. Rose-throated Becard was found at the Rio Hondo Cemetery, Cameron 7 Oct (ph., †MC). Unprecedented was the sighting of 3 Bell's Vireos at Quintana, Brazoria 5 Sep (RW, GLa et al.). A Yellow-throated Vireo at Arapaho Park, Dallas 8–9



Black-billed Cuckoo is a rare visitor to the western half of Texas. This immature was found in El Paso 5 October 2005, providing the first fully documented record of the species for the Trans-Pecos. Photograph by Barry Zimmer.

Oct (RR) tied the record late date for this rare n.-cen. Texas fall migrant. A Plumbeous Vireo was present 5 Nov+ at Rosehill Cemetery, Corpus Christi, Nueces (WS). In virtually the same spot it was seen last year, a Cassin's Vireo was on Arbuttle Rd. in Bastrop 24 Nov (BFR). A Blue-headed Vireo at Clapp Park, Lubbock 27 Aug was early (AHe). A Philadelphia Vireo at White River L., Crosby 1 Oct was rare for the subregion (AHe, AvH). Two Yellow-green Vireos were reported as late as 19 Sep, lingering birds from the nesting season at Sabal Palm Grove, Cameron (JiP).

A Steller's Jay in Lubbock, Lubbock 1 Oct (AHe) was at an interesting location for this

montane species. A Fish Crow was seen and recorded 20 Oct at Humble, Harris (MR), well w. of the species' known range in se. Texas. A Common Raven at Buffalo Springs L., Lubbock 13 Oct (CS) was the first report for the county since 1977. There were 2 lingering Purple Martins at Richland Creek W.M.A., Freestone 13 Nov (PBa, MDi). Cave Swallows continue to move to the nw., with one in Lubbock, Lubbock 4 Sep (AHe) and 2 at Muleshoe N.W.R., Bailey 8 Oct (AHe), both new county records. A late Barn Swallow was noted at L. Ray Hubbard, Dallas 23 Nov (PBa, BG).

CHICKADEES THROUGH WARBLERS

A Carolina Chickadee in Whiteflat, Motley 26 Nov (AHe) was w. of the normal range, as was a Bush-tit in Brownfield, Terry 11 Aug (CD). A Brown Creeper at Weslaco, Hidalgo 5 Nov (DJ) provided a very rare fall record for the L.R.G.V. Rock Wrens moved eastward with singles at Cameron Park, McLennan 11–16 Sep (EH, KHa), Koehne Park, McLennan 2–29 Nov (JMu, EH), L. Tawakoni, Rains 10–29 Nov (BG, MW, DAr), and Lamar 25 Nov (MW). Very early arriving were a Winter

Wren in San Antonio, Bexar 7 Oct (GLi) and a Marsh Wren in Lubbock 27 Aug (AHe). Golden-crowned Kinglets invaded Texas with numerous reports beginning 22 Oct and above-average numbers remaining throughout the e. half of the state. A Western Bluebird in Yellowhouse Canyon, Lubbock 7 Nov (CS) was a nice find for the South Plains. Veery and Gray-cheeked Thrush are very rare fall migrants in Texas. A Veery was at Quintana, Brazoria 24 Oct (JSt) and a Gray-cheeked Thrush there 2 Nov (TC et al.); a Gray-cheeked in Kendall 9 Oct (PM) was also of interest. An amazingly early Swainson's Thrush

was at Cibolo, Guadalupe 31 Aug (ph. SS) while another at Canyon, Randall 25 Nov (CF, LS) represented a new late record for the Panhandle. An exceptionally early Hermit Thrush was at Quintana, Brazoria 28 Aug (ph. GLa). Fall Wood Thrushes of note included one at Lubbock 24 Sep (AHe, AvH), 2 in Lufkin, Angelina 11 Oct (JaW), and one near Volente, Travis 22 Oct (ASn). A Clay-colored Robin at Corpus Christi, Nueces 4 Sep (SCo, MR, WS) was the 5th for the county. Two Varied Thrushes were documented in the state, both on the upper coast: a female at Sea Rim S.P., Jefferson 22 Oct (†LBa) and a male found dead on w. Galveston I. 29 Oct

(JSt, *Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection).

A very early Gray Catbird was at Cibolo, *Guadalupe* 4 Aug (SS). A Sage Thrasher at the Texas City Preserve, *Galveston* 29 Oct (PK) was one of only a few Upper Texas Coast records in the past 20 years. A Sage Thrasher at Lewisville L., *Denton* 6 Nov (RC) was a nice find for n.-cen. Texas. Two Sprague's Pipits at Miller's Creek Res., *Throckmorton* 8 Oct (GC, BG, TR) were the first for the county. Exceptionally early were 4 Cedar Waxwings, including a streaky juv., at Graham, *Young* 2 Oct (GC, BG). A Phainopepla at Muleshoe N.W.R., *Bailey* 19 Sep (KaB, HW) was n. of the typical migration route.

A Blue-winged Warbler at Arapaho Park, *Dallas* 5 Sep (m.ob.) provided a rare fall record for n.-cen. Texas. An early Orange-crowned Warbler was in Lubbock 13 Aug (AHe, AvH). Lucy's Warblers continue to be found in El Paso with increasing frequency. This season, one was at Rio Bosque Wetlands Park on 7 & 13 Aug (JSp), and 4 were in w. El Paso 3 Sep–9 Oct (JPa). Far more surprising was one in Aguja Canyon, *Jeff Davis* 18 Aug (ph. HB). A Tropical Parula was near Indianola, *Calhoun* 23 Aug (BFR). A very late migrant Yellow Warbler was at Amarillo, *Potter* 1 Oct (DM). A very late Chestnut-sided Warbler was at Dallas, *Dallas* 26 Nov (m.ob., ph. BG). A male Black-throated Blue Warbler at Davis Mountains S.P., *Jeff Davis* 23 Sep (AHa, ph. JR), was an excellent find. Black-throated Gray Warblers of note included a very early migrant at Lubbock 12 Aug (CD), 2 at Spring Branch, *Comal* 6 Oct (BD), and a late bird at El Paso 7 Nov+ (BZ); a male at Dallas, *Dallas* 24–25 Nov (MFr, ph. BG, m.ob.) furnished one of the very few records for the subregion. Eastward-wandering Townsend's Warblers appeared at Choke Canyon, *McMullen* 10 Oct (JHa) and Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 17–18 Sep (JWh). A brightly plumaged Townsend's Warbler × Hermit Warbler hybrid in w. El Paso 3 Sep (JPa) was a first for the El Paso area and one of few ever reported for the state. A Pine Warbler in Amarillo, *Potter* 28 Sep–10 Oct (BP, KS) and one in Wollin, *Randall* 9 Oct (BP) were good finds in the Panhandle. A Blackpoll Warbler at Arapaho Park, *Dallas* 30 Sep (BG) provided a 3rd fall record for the area. Very rare in fall, a female Cerulean Warbler was in *Lamar* 26 Aug (MW). A Worm-eating Warbler was banded at the Heard Museum, *Collin* 8 Sep (*vide* MDu). Ovenbirds made news as one arrived very early at Canyon, *Randall* 24 Aug

(RM), while one at Pecan Grove W.M.A., *Williamson* 10 Nov (JL, KH) was late. A high count of 12+ Northern Waterthrushes came from upper L. Sam Rayburn, *Angelina/Nacogdoches* 16 Sep (DW). A very late migrant MacGillivray's Warbler was at Muleshoe N.W.R., *Bailey* 6 Nov (AHe, AvH). A male Hooded Warbler at Big Bend's Rio Grande Village 12 Nov (MFI) and another at Galveston 26 Nov (TE) were late. Single Red-faced Warblers were documented at Big Bend's Boot Canyon 6–9 Aug (†ML, PS, LBA) and 28 Aug (†GL et al.) and more unexpectedly at Rio



Although Black-throated Blue Warblers are known to wander westward across Texas in the fall, there are few records as nicely documented as this adult male at Davis Mountains State Park 23 September 2005. Photograph by John Rosford.

Grande Village 13–14 Aug (†JiH, m.ob.). A Painted Redstart dropped into an El Paso yard 12 Sep (HJ).

TANAGERS THROUGH FINCHES

Late migrant tanagers included a Summer in *Robertson* 24 Oct (DC), a Scarlet at Sabine Woods, *Jefferson* 20 Nov (JWh), and a Western at El Paso 13 Nov (JPa). A Western Tanager in *Washington* 16 Oct (DVo) was a good find for the Central Brazos Valley. Green-tailed Towhees e. of their normal range included singles in e. *Travis* 24 Sep (RKa) and near Indianola, *Calhoun* 1 Nov (ph. DN). An Eastern Towhee at Old Sabine Bottom W.M.A., *Smith* 26 Aug (BN) may have been a summering bird. A Clay-colored Sparrow at Quintana, *Brazoria* 20 Sep (GLa) was early. A Sage Sparrow at Muleshoe N.W.R., *Bailey* 5 Nov (AHe) provided a rare record from the South Plains. Four Lark Buntings at Granger L., *Williamson* (JL, KH) and another in ne. *Travis* 10 Nov (RKa) were far east. A Baird's Sparrow was along the Rio Grande at Big Bend Ranch S.P., *Presidio* 22 Sep (†ML); more expected were 3 in the mixed grasslands sw. of Marfa, *Presidio* 26 Nov (RP). A Henslow's Sparrow was photographed at Keller, *Tarrant*

16 Oct (DSm), providing an unexpected county first. A very early Song Sparrow was at Ransom Canyon L., *Lubbock* 3 Sep (AHe). A Harris's Sparrow at South Padre I., *Cameron* 12 Nov (BMc, m.ob.) was a notable sighting for the L.R.G.V. A spate of early White-crowned Sparrows arrived in the state in early Oct, notably singles in Nacogdoches 8 Oct (DW) and near Poth, *Wilson* 9 Oct (WS). Also early were Dark-eyed Juncos in Houston, *Harris* 24 Oct (KK) and at Quintana, *Brazoria* 28 Oct (RW). A Lapland Longspur at Bolivar Flats, *Galveston* 24–25 Nov (ph. TE et al.) was well s. and e. of its normal haunts. Also of note was a flock of 10 Chestnut-collared Longspurs at Port O'Connor, *Calhoun* 22 Oct, with 4 others there 3 Nov (BFR).

A Rose-breasted Grosbeak in El Paso 3 Oct (BZ) was a rare Trans-Pecos migrant. Black-headed Grosbeaks at Austin 1 Sep (IS) and Corpus Christi, *Nueces* 10 Oct (WS, MR) provided rare fall records e. of the expected migration path. A very early Blue Grosbeak was at Sea Center Texas, *Brazoria* 4 Aug (TC), while another on w. Galveston I. 24 Nov (JSt) was late. Lingered Dickcissels included singles on the Katy Prairie, *Waller* (AW, SG) and Pelican I., *Galveston* (JSt), both 19 Nov. Common Grackles are rare in the

Trans-Pecos; this season, 2 were at Panther Junction, Big Bend N.P. 6 Nov (MFI), and one was at El Paso 20 Nov (JPa). Two male Bronzed Cowbirds were at White River L., *Crosby* 3 Sep (AHe), providing a late record for the South Plains. A female Streak-backed Oriole made a brief stop at El Paso 16 Sep (†BZ), providing a 2nd record for the state. Among the other early arriving birds on the upper coast this season, a Bullock's Oriole was on w. Galveston I. 3 Sep (JSt). An Audubon's Oriole was reported from Utopia, *Uvalde* 23 Nov (MH), providing a rare Hill Country record. A female Baltimore Oriole at El Paso 22 Oct (JPa) provided a rare local record.

A flock of 8 Pine Siskins at Dickens Springs, *Dickens* 3 Sep (AHe) was early for the South Plains. A male Lesser Goldfinch near Tyler, *Smith* 30 Nov (IH, DSI, GR) provided a very rare Pineywoods record. Finishing the cavalcade of early records were American Goldfinches at Lubbock 20 Aug (AHe) and Smith Point Hawkwatch, *Chambers* 21 Oct (WB), which was surprisingly the 2nd earliest fall record for the Upper Texas Coast.

Cited observers (subregional editors in bold-face): Dan Allen (DAL), Tony Amos, David Ar-

bour (DAr), John Arvin, Helen Baines, Lynn Barber (LBA), Peter Barnes (PBA), Patty Beasley (PBe), David Benn, Steve Bentsen (SBe), Brandon Best (BBe), Laura Biddle (LBI), Gavin Bieber, Lorie Black (LBI), Colin Bludau, Sally Breed (SBr), Kathy Brodhead (KaB), Bill Broyles (BBr), Winnie Burkett, Eric Carpenter, Ron Chenault, Sheridan Coffey (SCo), Scarlet Colley (ScC), Tom Collins, Greg Cook, Mel Cooksey (South Texas: 16 Townhouse Lane, Corpus Christi, TX 78412; email: ssi@stx.rr.com), Debra Corpora, Cameron Cox, Elisa Dale, David Dauphin, Sue Davison, Mike Dillon (MDi), Bob Doe, Michele Dudas (MDu), Curtis Dykstra, Marc & Maryann Eastman, Jan Elston, Ted Eubanks, Ed Fair, Tim Fennell (TFe), Mark Flippo (MFL), Connie Fordham, Michael Francis (MFr), Bobbye Frazier (BoF), Brush Freeman (BFR), Bert Frenz (BeF) (East Texas: 221 Rainbow Dr., #12190, Livingston, TX 77399-2021; email: bert2@bafrenz.com), Dixie Fueurbacher, Terry Fuller, Brian Gibbons, Kathryn Green, Steve Gross, Jim Hailey (JHa), Irene Hamel, Peggy Harding (PHa), Audrey Harvey (AHa), Eric Haskell, Kiyomi

Haskell (KHa), Mitch Heindel, Anthony Hewetson (AHe) (Northwest Texas: 4407 36th St., Lubbock TX 79414; email: terverts@yahoo.com), Aveline Hewetson (AvH), Derek Hill (North-central Texas: 1508 Linden Drive, Denton, TX 76201; email: kinglet32@yahoo.com), Jim Hines (JiH), Jim Hinson (JHi), Kelly Holligan (KHo), Jan Horbaczewski, Ingrid Huskey, Hugh Jameson, Simone Jenion, Bill Johnson, Dan Jones, Richard Kaskan (RKa), Paula Kennedy, Keith Kingdon, Greg Lasley (GL), Greg Lavaty (GLa), Dan Leavitt, Cin-Ty Lee, Rob Lee (RLe), Paul Lehman, Jason Leifester, Michael Lindsey (MLi), Leslie Linehan, Greg Liscian-dro (GLi), Mark Lockwood (ML), Paul Mason, Ray Matlack, Don McCall, Jon McIntyre (JMc), Brad McKinney (BMc), Don & Joann Merritt, Angel Montoya, Betty Moore (BMo), John Muldrow (BMu), Dan Naber, Brooke Nicotra, Dennis Palafox, Marco Paredes, Jim Paton (JPa) (Trans-Pecos: 4325 Boy Scout Lane, El Paso, TX 79922; email: patonjn@net-zero.net), Jimmy Paz (JiP), Barrett Pierce, Randy Pinkston (RPi), Jane Poss (JPo), Ross Rassmussen, Martin Reid, Thomas Riecke,

Gloria Rognlie, John Rosford, Homer Rushing, Isaac Sanchez, Laura Sare, Susan Schaezler, Willie Sekula (Central Texas: 7063 Co Rd. 228, Falls City, TX 78113-2627; email: wsekula@ev1.net), Ken Seyffert, Marsha Seyffert, Bruce Sherman (BSH), Al Shultz, (ASH), David Sierra (DSi), Joel Simon (JSi), David Smith (DSm), Jeff Smith (JSm), Aletha Snowden (ASn), Tom SoRelle, John Sproul (JSp), Jim Stevenson (JSt), Cliff Stogner, Paul Sunby, Tom Taylor, Peggy Trosper, Darrell Vollert (DVo), Adrian Webb, Ron Weeks (Upper Texas Coast: 110 Indian Warrior, Lake Jackson, TX 77566; email: empidonax@sbc-global.net), Matt White, John Whittle (JWh), Stephen Williams (SWi), Jennifer Wilson (JWi), Stu Wilson (StW), Jack Windsor (JaW), Jan Wobbenhorst (JWo), David Wolf, Adam Wood, Hope Woodward, Phyllis Yochem, Barry Zimmer. ☺

Mark W. Lockwood, 402 East Harriet Avenue, Alpine, Texas 79830, (mark.lockwood@tpwd.state.tx.us); **Eric Carpenter**, 10610 Morado Circle #2325, Austin, Texas 78759, (ecarpe@gmail.com); **Willie Sekula**, 7063 County Road 228, Falls City, Texas 78113, (wsekula@ev1.net)

Idaho & Western Montana



David Trochlell

For most of the Region, the autumn of 2005 began with unusually warm and dry weather in August but shifted to nearly normal temperatures and increasing precipitation in the ensuing months. A major exception occurred in a large portion of south-central Montana, where an unusually wet season prevailed. But the Region's reinvigorated precipitation status was not the only good news for the period. In portions of

northern Idaho and west-central Montana, it was also a banner year for shorebird numbers and variety. Perhaps best of all was the relative bounty of rare birds discovered, as evidenced by 15 that warranted boldface type.

Abbreviations: A.FR. (American Falls Res., Bingham and Power, ID); Camas (Camas N.W.R., Jefferson, ID); I.P.R. (Island Park Res., Fremont, ID); L.M. (Lee Metcalf N.W.R. near Stevensville, MT); L.P. (Idaho Bird Observatory's banding station at Lucky Peak near Boise).

GEESE THROUGH GULLS

A Greater White-fronted Goose, rare in w. Montana, stopped at Warm Springs 30 Aug (NK, GS). Cackling Geese (of subspecies *minima*) were noted in both states, with one in Boise, ID 5-30 Nov+ (JC) and 6 in Polson, MT 11 Nov (BR). The only Eurasian Wigeon reports were in Lewiston, ID 9 Oct-10 Nov (TG) and Flathead, MT 16 Oct (BR). The season's tally of 19 Surf Scoters and 2 White-winged Scoters was the lowest in five years. With only nine previous Black Scoter records in Montana, one at Ennis L., Madison 28 Oct (†JP) and 2 at L.M. 3 Nov (*fide* WT) were surprising. Long-tailed Ducks were scarcer than usual, with only

2 recorded in Idaho. Both states discovered rare Red-throated Loons. One provided Montana's 14th record at Ennis L., Madison 11-13 Nov (†EH, JP), and another stopped at I.P.R. 20 Nov (CW). Only 6 Pacific Loons were discovered, about half the usual fall total. A peak count of over 200 Common Loons was made at Montana's Ennis L. 1 Nov (JP). One of the headline



With its mild climate, lush meadows, and extensive wetlands, Montana's Bitterroot Valley attracts a good array of water birds each autumn. This immature Little Blue Heron was spotted near Hamilton 30 October 2005 (here); it was last seen 5 November and marks Montana's 6th record. Photograph by Wayne Tree.

birds of the season was an imm. Little Blue Heron near Hamilton 30 Oct-5 Nov (ph. WT), Montana's 6th record. The near-record tally of 27 Broad-winged Hawks at L.P. 8 Sep-6 Oct (JC) was notable, but far less expected was one in Bozeman, MT 20 Sep (DC, m.ob.). Three