



Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Bastrop County Audubon Society

Annual Meeting, Election, "Town Hall"

Summer Reading

Here's a list of a dozen books-in-print, half of them revealing what scientists know about the yet-mysterious bird migration, great reading for beach and hammock.

All have 4 or 5-star reader reviews on Amazon.com and all have new and used copies available.



1. *Songbird Journeys: Four Seasons in the Lives of Migratory Birds*, by Miyoko Chu. "The most enjoyable blend of birding lore and ornithological knowledge I have ever read. . . ."
2. *Living on the Wind*, by Scott Weidensaul
3. *The Migration Ecology of Birds*, by Ian Newton, new \$73.
4. *Silence of the Songbirds*, by Bridget Stutchbury. Price range: \$1.74-\$16.47!
5. *How Birds Migrate*, by Paul Kerlinger.
6. *Bird Migration*, by Thomas Alerstam.
7. *Bird Migration: a General Survey* (Oxford Ornithology Series), by Peter Berthold.
8. *Birder's Conservation Handbook: 100 North American Birds at Risk*, by Jeffrey V. Wells. New & used, \$9 up.
9. *The Life of the Skies: Birding at the End of Nature*, by Johnathan Rosen. \$6-10. "a beautifully written account of birding, but it's actually about so much more. . . about being human, and the way we relate to the natural world. . . ."
10. *The Singing Life of Birds*, by Donald Kroodsma. "The writing style pulls you into the author's world as he tracks birds and ponders the meaning of their song."
11. *National Geographic Birding Essentials*, by Johnathan Alderfer. \$1-11. "It is inexpensive and well-done (you'll save some money for those binoculars). It summarizes a LOT of information, it maintains the tradition of National Geographic's amazing photographs, and, if you don't have an ornithology text laying around, it has detail as well."
12. *Of a Feather: a Brief History of American Birding*, by Scott Weidensaul. Price range: \$1-10.

June meetings tend to be celebratory

The General Meeting in June is also the annual meeting, as outlined in BCAS Bylaws. On Tuesday, June 16, 2009, members can discuss the organization's progress this year.

BCAS also will elect a new president to serve until July, 2010. Normally, board and officer positions are for two-year terms. At the May General Meeting Nominating Committee Chair Alan Jaeger nominated Sue Brubaker, who was vice president, for BCAS president, due to the resignation of Mary Beth Gradziel. The membership may also elect the Vice President and Special Events Chair if they are nominated before or at the annual meeting.

The formal program/Learners' Corner for the meeting will be a slide show produced by Mary Ellen Branan, Editor, entitled "The Year Book." The 20-minute show is another (and entertaining) way to recall this eventful year.

A major concern for the Board has been having our income (sales, dues, and donations) outdone by our expenses. A large expense the past two years, for example, has been meeting the demand for Audubon Adventures classroom kits for the 4th and 5th science classrooms in the County. BCAS also has been generous in its donations to other worthy non-profit organizations, its various membership services and its community outreach.

The Board hopes through the format of the meeting to hear some ideas for fund-raising for next year. A proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year and the minutes of meetings will be available for examination. Membership Chair Priscilla Jarvis is providing a written description of the duties of each officer and chair.

The Board welcomes comment and discussion concerning future projects and priorities for the organization. "I hope everyone will attend this important annual meeting," said Jarvis.

The social theme for the meeting is "Let's Have a Picnic." Hospitality Chair Judy Walker asks that everyone bring his or her favorite picnic "finger food." Among the beverages to be provided? Lemonade, of course. See you at First National Bank, Bastrop, Hasler Blvd. @ Hwy. 71w. Doors open at 7:00 p.m.



Gleaning in the Field

2009 Whooping Crane Numbers

With estimated losses that have occurred at Aransas this winter, the current flock size is estimated at 225 adults + 22 juveniles = 247. The estimated peak winter flock size was 232 adults + 38 juveniles = 270



total.

“Habitat use

“For the first time all winter, all the whooping cranes on today’s flight were found in salt marsh. The cranes are believed to be feeding on fiddler crabs since blue crabs in the marsh ponds are still scarce due to the continuing drought. A blue crab count done on April 1st found zero crabs in the marsh. The refuge has discontinued its program of supplemental feeding with corn since most of the cranes have migrated.

“A lightning-caused wildfire that started April 18th on Matagorda Island burned approximately 10,000+ acres of upland prairie lands. The fire, located between Pringle Lake and Power Lake, was contained on April 20th and allowed to burn out. The burn will benefit the prairie habitat by recycling nutrients and controlling brush.”

By Tom Stehn - Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

Attwater’s Prairie Chicken

“The booming sound emitted by Attwater’s prairie chickens during their communal courtship displays once echoed along Gulf Coast prairies from Texas to southwestern Louisiana. In 1900, approximately 1 million birds populated these grasslands. A century later, however, fewer than 50 remained in the wild, and today only three populations survive in four Texas counties.”

in 2008, Nature Conservancy released captive-bred birds in Refugio and Goliad Counties, providing more habitat to existing refuges in Galveston and Colorado Counties.

Nature Conservancy Magazine, , Summer, 2009

Job Opening: BCAS Vice President. Self-motivated, yet able to work cooperatively in group settings. Leadership skills and ideas desirable. Presides in absence of prez. Can leap tall buildings on demand. Apply to Sue Brubaker or any nearby BCAS Board Member.

New members this year

Membership Chair Priscilla Jarvis lists the following members joining BCAS between June 2008 and May 2009.

- Kay Collins
- Janet Fitzsimon-Barr
- Dan Kagay & Charlotte Norris
- Bob & Mary Lockhart
- J. P. Pawlus
- Dale Tilson

Welcome!



Field Trip Report:

Aransas Week End

--by Stan Wellso, Field Trips Chair

Port Aransas: April 25: 7:00am to 4:30 p.m, and April 26: 8:00 a.m. till noon. Port Aransas is an excellent site to spend time watching birds. This year things were somewhat different. The Port Aransas area was under a very severe drought with most of the marshes and ponds being too dry. A strong East breeze greeted us when we arrived, and continued when we left. The lack of rain reduced insect populations. Not one mosquito or midge was encountered. These conditions resulted in low numbers and species of birds than normal, especially warblers and shorebirds.

Some of the more interesting birds observed were: Tricolored Heron, Roseate Spoonbill, King Rail, Black bellied Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, Dunlin, Stilt Sandpiper, Caspian Tern, Least Tern, Horned Lark, Gray Catbird, Tennessee Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Wilson’s Warbler, Summer Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Painted Bunting, Orchard Oriole, and Baltimore Oriole. Total Species= 90.

The coastal food and companionship were great, and the wine and cheese party was welcomed after a full day of birding. Those enjoying the outing were Mary Ellen Branan, Betty Brendalen, Sue Brubaker, Betty Dunkerley, Judy Ing, Carol and Stan Wellso. (See photos, p. 3)

Bird Calls is published seven times September to June each year by the Bastrop County Audubon Society (BCAS). It is edited and produced by Mary Ellen Branan, PhD. We invite letters, articles,, news tips, calendar items, reviews, and photos by mail or email.

Circulation via U.S. Mail. Copy deadline: First of the month of issue. See also: bastropcountyaudubon.org.

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From the Editor's Desk---

Omission: From the April *Bird Calls*, I omitted the by-line for Judy Ing, who wrote the article "Margaret Campbell Bamberger." Thank you.

May Program: We got talent! The travelogues presented by Alan Jaeger and Sharon Finlay on St. Vincent/Ecuador and Eastern Australia, respectively, were excellent programs. I commend Jaeger and Finlay as charming *personas* in their narrations of the slide shows and as photographers. Wow! --M.E.B.



EarthShare

**One Environment
One Simple Way to care for it.**

Too Late to Change?

"Though the facts and figures of climate change are sobering, it's not too late to clean up the planet. Here at EarthShare, we're committed to doing exactly that —working with our member organizations to support earth-first initiatives." [from earthshare-texas.org]

Join or Renew Annual Membership

Benefits include Bird Calls, field trips, social events, continuing education, public influence, good feelings and fun. Membership Chair: Priscilla Jarvis at (512) 281-2762.

Dues are used to support local conservation and education concerning bird and other wild life, habitats, and ecology. You may join at our web site or use the form on this page. Please consider the Supporting Membership category. www.bastropcountyaudubon.org

BCAS Membership Application

- Individual \$20
- Family \$35
- Supporting \$75

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Please make checks payable to: Bastrop County Audubon Society. Send to:
 Alan Jaeger, Treasurer
 117 Kaelepulu Dr.
 Bastrop TX 78602



BCAS Rack Card--Printed a year ago with the aid of a Audubon Foundation of Texas outreach grant, the attractive rack card is supplied at the Bastrop Visitors' Center (above), the Hyatt Lost Pines Resort, The Bastrop Chamber of Commerce, and the Colorado River RV Park, targeted to newcomers and visitors.



Port Aransas, 4/25/09: Blackpoll Warbler



Hudsonian Godwit: near-threatened status

B.C.A.S
 c/o Priscilla Jarvis
 783 Lower Elgin Road
 Elgin TX 78621



piranga rubra

Emergency Responses to Life-Threatening Anaphylaxis Shock

At the April meeting, we had a lively discussion about the extreme dangers of being stung by some flying insects, more often the yellow-jacket wasp. Stew Brubaker, for example, who is known to be allergic to their stings was stung in March. Sue Brubaker had immediately administered epinephrine from a syringe device they keep on hand. Mary Anne Casey is also allergic.

We know that most bee/wasp venoms are primarily only dangerous to those who are highly allergic to the stings, unless a victim receives a large number of stings, but Susan Leslie reminded all that one can have become allergic without knowing it before being stung. She advised always carrying a bottle of benadryl.

Pam Hohman stated "benadryl comes in a quick dissolve strip that instantly melts in the mouth and gets into the system quicker than the capsules [The Benadryl Allergy Quick Dissolve Strips from Pfizer]. . . . The children's is exactly 1/2 the adult dosage so if the person stung is a child under 12 and you have an adult size, just tear the strip in half."

If you know you are going to be in an area where there will be yellow jackets around, dress in light-colored clothes because they are attracted to dark clothing and don't wear perfume or other fragrance.

Calendar

June 6 Saturday: Bastrop SP Trail Work Party, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., reservations req'd, 321-3740.

June 6 Saturday: Bastrop SP "Discover the Lost Pines" Hike, 10-11:00 a.m., meet kiosk nr playgnd.

June 14 Sunday: BCAS Board Meeting, 4:00 p.m., 1005 Pine St., Bastrop, Judy Ing's. Pot luck supper.

June 16 Tuesday: BCAS General Meeting: First Nat'l Bank Bldg. Hasler Blvd. @ Hwy. 71w, Bastrop, 7:30 p.m.

June 18 & June 20: Bastrop SP Family Fishing Clinic, 9:00 a.m.-12 noon, rods, reels, bait provided. All ages. Five learning stations. 321-2101.

June 20 Saturday: Hornsby Bend Bird Observatory Monthly Bird Walk, 7:30 a.m.

June 27 Saturday: Hornsby Bend Ecological Literacy Day, 9:00 a.m.

Sept. 15 Tuesday: BCAS resumes General Meetings.