



# Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Bastrop County Audubon Society

## October Program

### Coco Brennan – Bat Conservation International



Coco Brennan will be our presenter at our meeting on Tuesday, Oct 5<sup>th</sup>. She will be bringing us a presentation on Central Texas' bats!

Coco has lived at Canyon Lake, Texas, since 2007. She became a Master Naturalist in 2006 (Alamo Area Chapter) and started volunteering with BCI in 2009 as a “bat educator.” She has been a birder her entire life and is currently a member of the Bexar Audubon Chapter. She is also a member of TOS, Comal Birders and SA Audubon Society. She enjoys all things with wings! She does bird and butterfly surveys around South/Central Texas on public and private lands, primarily for the endangered Golden-cheeked warbler, but not exclusively. She shares her love of bats, birds and butterflies wherever she can, whether that is to school groups or groups of enthusiasts.

## Meeting Details

Due to concerns about the Covid-19, and in particular the virulence of the Delta variant, the BCAS Board voted to conduct the October and November meetings by ZOOM.

As a member you should have received a prior email detailing how to join the meeting. If you did not or require a “refresher” please [contact us](#).

## The President's Perch

Fall is here. As I write, we have had a string of days waking up to temperatures in the 60's, and afternoons that do not break out of the 80's, delightful. And, it is a special time, the fall bird migration south is underway. Migration will continue through November, but October is really the peak month when half of the total fall migration through Texas occurs. What I love about this time, just like spring migration, is that on any given day almost any bird can be in our backyards or parks. But it is also a time of peril for our feathered friends. Migration is a long and stressful journey, much of it at night when it is cooler. But we can each help the birds on their journey in a meaningful way, and that is by turning off any nonessential lights from 11 pm to 6 am every night through November 30th. Nighttime light pollution can disorient birds and result in window strikes. In major cities, skyscrapers can kill hundreds of birds every night due to window strikes. So, let's do our part and Lights Out Bastrop. For more information about Lights Out go to

<https://www.audubon.org/lights-out-program>

Well, it's October, time to break out your field guide or Peterson Reference Guide Sparrows of North America because the LBJs (little brown jobs) are

*Our Mission: To promote the conservation, restoration and enjoyment of natural resources and habitats for birds and other wildlife*

back. Yep, the sparrows are here, time to brush up on your field IDs. Other than Lark Sparrows and House Sparrows which are found in Bastrop year-round, all other sparrows are migratory and are typically October through April birds. Field Sparrow and Grasshopper Sparrow have a somewhat longer presence in Bastrop, usually absent only during August and September. Found along roadsides, in parks, even yards, they will normally be found on or near the ground. They love to perch in low shrubs and forage for seeds and insects. Some sparrows will come to feeders depending on what you feed and the habitat in your yard. Chipping Sparrows are the most common feeder sparrow, and perhaps House sparrow if you are in town. To cut down on House Sparrows at your feeders some suggest food without millet, cracked corn or wheat. Most songbirds will throw this to the ground, looking for the black oil sunflower seeds, and seed on the ground will attract ground feeding birds like Doves and House Sparrow. So it's great if you want Doves and other ground feeders (we do), but if you are just buried in House Sparrow perhaps changing the buffet will help.

That's all for this month – stay birdy,

Mike Goebel

President Bastrop County Audubon Society.

### BCAS Field Trip

October 16<sup>th</sup>

Hello Auduboners! We're planning a BCAS field trip to Hornsby Bend on Saturday, October 16. This popular birding hotspot is practically in our back yard but boasts an incredible species list.

Plan to meet at 7:45 am at the parking lot by the entrance to the Colony on Hwy. 71, between 21 and 1209 (by the big flag on the right) so we can roll out by 8:00 and caravan to Hornsby. Those who would like to meet us there can plan to be at the CER at 8:30 (rest rooms available). I know it's nice to be in a car with some experienced birders, but we're not encouraging carpooling unless it's with family members or your birding "pod" pals. Plan to bring binoculars, scopes if you have one, water, snacks, and a hat. Hopefully there will be some exposed mudflats by Pond 1. We'll caravan to the bird blind and walk

the River Trail from there to the corner of Pond 2 and pick up some woodland species as well as birds on the river, and plan to wrap it up by 11:30 or so.

The Hornsby bird lists includes these as likely species in October: Eared Grebe, White-faced Ibis, several duck species, osprey, avocets, snipe, Loggerhead Shrike, tree swallows, American pipit, and a number of sparrows. We'll check eBird for recent rarities showing up the week of the trip.

Please email me if you plan to join us, along with any questions, at <mailto:flridlon@hotmail.com>. I look forward to seeing many of you there!

Happy Birding!

Louise Ridlon

Field Trip Chair

### Virtual Audubon Convention 2021

Board Member Susan Schroeder brings us this report of the Day 1 session.

“The overarching themes were climate change, natural solutions to combat climate change, the need for hemispheric cooperation which is critically important to successful bird migration, and diversity, equity, and inclusion in birding.

Regarding hemispheric cooperation, it blew my mind, so to speak, to learn that 50% of U.S. migratory birds spend 50% of their lives in Latin America and the Caribbean!

I particularly enjoyed the Audubon Chapter member from Alaska. She described how critical Alaska is not only for migratory bird habitat, but also if Alaskan public lands were to be converted from oil/gas production to carbon sequestration, it would be enormously beneficial for the climate.

It was also very interesting to learn about the Prothonotary Warbler research projects in which the Delta region Audubon Chapters participated.

EPA Administrator Regan spoke and was encouraging about priorities of the current administration, like combating climate change and increasing protected lands in the United States.

I learned quite a lot and enjoyed the first day of the convention. Did you attend any of the convention, if so, what did you think?"

### Conservation Minute

Every garden is a step closer to replenish resource for wildlife.

Tips from the National Wildlife Federation: Build a brush pile to provide space for birds to hunt, roost and even nest. Place feeders and a fresh water source. Remove invasive plants and replace with native species; offer trees and shrubs for cover. Reduce space dedicated for solely for lawns. Do not use pesticide as this kills insects, the source for birds to feed. Allow dead trees to remain if safe as this can be a great place for birds to nest and find food. Have your home become a Certified Wildlife Habitat. You may also participate in the Million Pollinator Garden Challenge. You can make a difference in what you do and especially in being an influence on others. Consider adding native habitat in your business, neighborhood, religious community, nonprofit and government agencies.

Recently we have helped create a native habitat with Pecan Springs Elementary School in east Austin, DAR has created a native plant garden at the Kerr Center in Bastrop and plans are underway for a native garden at Good Shepherd Lutheran church. We can be the change!

Kent Bohls

(Visit [WWW.nwf.org](http://WWW.nwf.org)

for more worthwhile suggestions)

### This is YOUR Newsletter!

If you have enjoyed a recent trip that including birding, we would love to publish a report of your trip. Please make submissions to the newsletter through BCAS email address published at the end of this newsletter. We are also always on the lookout for pictures of birds that have been taken in Bastrop County, especially rarities or "lifers".

Title your email "Newsletter Submission".

### Upcoming Events

Oct 5<sup>th</sup>, Tue, 7:00pm: - BCAS meeting - ZOOM.

Oct 8<sup>th</sup>, Fri, 8:30am: - Bird City Bastrop Little Hike, Dragonfly Trail at Colorado River Refuge - guided by Laszlo Perlaky The group will meet at the River Trailhead. 315 E. Riverside Dr, Bastrop, TX 78602

Oct 16, Sat., 7:45 am: – Hornsby Bend Field Trip

Oct 23, Sat, 8:30 am: – Bird City Bastrop BIG SIT – CEDAR CREEK PARK BUTTERFLY GARDEN - 5540 FM 535, Cedar Creek, TX 78612

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