

Meetings will include guest



Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Bastrop County Audubon Society



TPW's Cullen Hanks & Friend

A New Feature on our Web Site

When you visit the web site at bastropcountyaudubon.org, you will find under "Special Stuff" a list of YouTube videos which are special indeed. They are listed because they are related to BCAS in some way, for instance, shown at one of our meetings or recording our field trip in March, 2014.

Michelle Belden offers several of her video shows, including "Red-headed Woodpecker in Bastrop," "Wood Stork in Bastrop County," "Whooping Cranes," and the March field trip.

"Green Heron Catches Fish" records this bird's incredible cleverness and persistence; similarly, "The Intelligence of Crows" captures the crow's multi-level tool use.

Enjoy the spectacular photography in Sustainable Human's new video on the wolves in Yellowstone Park and Dylan Winter's "A Murmuration of Starlings," which we viewed at a BCAS meeting last year.

We remind you that the Gallery of Members' Photography awaits your contributions. Send photography to webmaster@bastropcountyaudubon.org.

Insider comment: For me, it was easier to go to YouTube and search instead of a complicated download of an Adobe Flash Player update when I clicked from our web site.

by Mary Ellen Branan, Editor

November Program

Cullen Hanks on How Texas Bird and Wildlife Species Have Changed Over Time

Cullen Hanks, biologist for the Texas Nature Tracker Program within the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, will connect the past, present and future for birds and other species in Texas at our meeting on November 18.

Cullen states, "As naturalists, we only see a snap shot in ecological time. However, naturalists from the past gives us a valuable perspective on how our local biodiversity has changed over time."

Cullen will profile species of birds and reptiles, exploring perspectives from the past and what we know about the species in the present. He will highlight some of the resources from the past that are available to naturalists today, along with tools for documenting observations.

"By understanding our past and present, we will be better prepared to detect patterns of change, and to advocate for bio-diversity in the future" says Cullen.

"This is an excellent follow-up to October's program from National on the effects of today's climate changes on birds," Jan Goebel, Programs Chair, observed.

Cullen is a biology graduate from Cornell University and has a Masters in Latin American Studies from University of Texas. He has worked for TP&W for seven years and lives in Austin.

The meeting will include Mike Goebel with his second "**Bird of the Month**" segment. In October we learned how better to identify the Pine Warbler.

The meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. at the First National Bank second floor meeting room. Doors open at 6:30. All members and the public are invited. Refreshments will be served.

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



Field Reports

Mike Goebel, Field Trip Chair

Hornsby Bend, September 27:

For our morning of birding at Hornsby Bend on September 27, 2014, it was a comfortable 72° with light clouds. The four birders identified 38 species. Noteworthy were the nine Blue-gray Gnat-catchers and the flocks of Cave Swallows and Monk Parakeets. Also noteworthy, we did not see one American Coot! We ran into Victor Emanuel, who was also out birding.

Species identified:

Blue-winged Teal	6
Great Blue Heron	5
Great Egret	2
Snowy Egret	1
Black Vulture	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	1
Killdeer	6
Spotted Sandpiper	1
Semipalmated Sandpiper	1
Western Sandpiper	1
Least Sandpiper	1
Rock Pigeon	2
Eurasian Collared-Dove	2
Mourning Dove	2
Monk Parakeet	21
Chimney Swift	1
Belted Kingfisher	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	5
Eastern Wood-Pewee	2
Eastern Phoebe	5
Western Kingbird	1
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	4
Loggerhead Shrike	1
Blue Jay	3
American Crow	5
Cliff Swallow	2
Cave Swallow	60
Carolina Wren	2
House Wren	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	9
Eastern Bluebird	6
Northern Mockingbird	4
European Starling	26
Yellow Warbler	1
Red-winged Blackbird	22
Common Grackle	12
Great-tailed Grackle	6
House Sparrow	2



Jan Goebel, Compiler

The **November field trip** will be the 22nd at Lake Bastrop North and South shore, looking for Teal, American Widgeon, Northern Pintail, Ruddy Ducks, and other returning water birds. We will also check the feeding station for returning Red-breasted Nuthatches, sparrows, Orange-crowned and other winter warblers. Several species of woodpecker are always likely, with American Eagle, Osprey, and Belted Kingfisher.

Mike (cell ph. 512-629-1057)

Field Trips continued on page 3

News of Texas Whoopers

Citizen Reports Essential

This year, Texas Parks and Wildlife biologists with the Whooper Watch Program expected the bulk of the whooping cranes to have arrived in Texas in late October or early November. The growth of the flock has made traditional census methods more difficult. The Watch program will help track the movement of these endangered birds across the state, as well as monitor whooping cranes that might spend the winter in locations other than the National Wildlife Refuge at Aransas. Recently, some whooping cranes have spent the winter in other coastal areas and even inland sites in Central Texas, such as Lake Granger.

Mark Klym reports that the Texas Whooper Watch is essentially a volunteer program, part of TPWD's Texas Nature Trackers program. Klym wrote on October 8: **"Citizens can help by reporting sightings of whooping cranes and by preventing disturbance of cranes when they remain overnight at roosting and feeding locations. Sightings can be reported to whoopingcranes@tpwd.texas.gov or 512-389-TXWW (8999). Observers should especially note whether the cranes have colored leg bands on their legs. Volunteers interested in attending training sessions to become 'Whooper Watchers' may contact the TPWD at whoopingcranes@tpwd.texas.gov or 512-389- 8999.**

"Since beginning their slow recovery from a low of 16 birds in the 1940s, whoopers have wintered on the Texas coast on and near Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

"Whoopers usually follow a migratory path through North and Central Texas that includes cities such as Wichita Falls, Fort Worth, Waco, Austin, and Victoria. During migration they often pause overnight to use wetlands for roosting and agricultural fields for feeding, but seldom remain more than one night. The typical sighting (71 percent of all observations) is fewer than three birds, but last year Texas had multiple sightings of larger groups including one of 19 individuals. Whooping cranes can also be seen roosting and feeding with large flocks of smaller sandhill crane.

"Whoopers are the tallest birds in North America, standing nearly five feet. The cranes are solid white in color except for black wing-tips that are visible only in flight. They fly with necks and legs outstretched."

The November *Texas Co-op Power Magazine* featured the Lost Pines Christmas Bird Count in its article "Out for the Count." 72 observers identified 133 species in Dec. 2013.



October Refreshments

spookily provided by

Steve Pyrczak and
Susan Leslie

President's Letter

Some Fall Concerns

While working in my yard a few days ago, I was delighted to hear a flock of Sandhill cranes flying south. Mike Goebel, VP/Field Trip Chair is considering some trips this fall and winter to see the incoming birds. Sound exciting? Join us for our field trips. We always have a splendid time.

Another fall concern is the preparation of BCAS's annual report to the National Audubon Society. We include information about our fiscal state, activities, projects, initiatives, and successes for fiscal year 2013-14. We provide details on field trips, programs, education and communications. We also present a plan with goals for 2014-15. Let me know if you have ideas for activities or projects for BCAS.

One focus for this year is to better inform ourselves on how climate change will impact the birds of North America, especially species in Central Texas, but also our coastal birds. Have you taken the pledge? (See climate.audubon.org.)

We can help by participating in the Lost Pines Bird Count on Dec. 21 and the State Parks Christmas Bird Count on Jan. 1. The CBC is the longest-running (114 years) citizen science data-collection effort in the world.

I hope to see you at our November meeting—and field trip.

Priscilla Jarvis, BCAS President

Texas Birds & Climate Change

Audubon scientists used three decades of citizen-scientist observations from the Audubon Christmas Bird Count and the North American Breeding Bird Survey to define the “climatic suitability” for each bird species—the range of temperatures, precipitation, and seasonal changes each species needs to survive. Then, using internationally recognized greenhouse gas emissions scenarios, they mapped where each bird’s ideal climatic range may be found in the future as the climate changes.

Here is a sampling from a list they compiled of 49 Texas birds which will be under serious threat as seen in their loss of summer and winter habitat:

Bird	Summer Range Lost....	Winter Range Lost
American Pipit	94%	15%
White Pelican	92%	52%
Northern Harrier	86%	5%
Bald Eagle	74%	58%
Osprey	79%	33%
Pine Warbler	73%	8%
Pine Siskin	60%	42%
Common Loon	56%	75%
Wild Turkey	49%	87%
Orchard Oriole	46%	93%

Our friend Roy Smallwood passed away on Wednesday, October 29, in Waco. A wonderful man, sorely missed.

October Field Trip Report, Oct. 25:

Bastrop and Buescher State Parks. It was a comfortable 59° and clear for our morning of birding. Our group of ten birders identified 29 species. Noteworthy was the Swainson's Hawk flying overhead. Special thanks to Ranger Josh Crawford for joining us and assisting with spotting. He also is one of our newest BCAS members.

Great Blue Heron	1	
Great Egret	1	
Black Vulture	5	
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	
Swainson's Hawk	1	
Red-tailed Hawk	1	
Crested Caracara	1	
Killdeer	6	
Rock Pigeon	1	
Eurasian Collared-Dove	3	
Mourning Dove	2	
Red-bellied Woodpecker	16	
Downy Woodpecker	1	
Eastern Phoebe	3	
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	2	
Blue Jay	11	
American Crow	21	
Tufted Titmouse	11	
Carolina Wren	7	
House Wren	2	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	
Eastern Bluebird	32	
Northern Mockingbird	27	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	
Pine Warbler	3	
Chipping Sparrow	9	
Northern Cardinal	6	
Great-tailed Grackle	1	
House Sparrow	2	Jan Goebel, Compiler

Winter Marvel-Meal for Birds by David Carson

1 cup peanut butter
1 cup Crisco or similar
4 cups cornmeal (yellow or white)
1 cup white flour

Mix all ingredients together. Refrigerate.
Stuff into holes in log feeder or elsewhere.

Bird Calls is published by Bastrop County Audubon Society six times a year. We invite letters, articles, news tips, event reviews, book reviews, poems, cartoons, and photos appropriate to our mission. The deadline for a pending issue is noon on the last day of the preceding month. Submit to editor@bastropcountyaudubon.org. Or by mail: 216 Schaefer Blvd., Bastrop TX 78602, ph. (512) 303-2734.

BCAS
c/o Dru Gabrysch
206 Lois Lane
Paige TX 78659

Return Service Requested



Cave Swallow



November/December Calendar

Nov. 5-9, Wednesday-Sunday: Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival, Harlingen. 21st annual. rgvbf.org.

Nov. 15, Saturday: Free monthly field trip at Hornsby Bend, 2210 So. FM973, 7:30a.m.-11:00 a.m., with expert leader. Meet at Research Center Bldg. 50 species guaranteed.

Nov. 18, Tuesday: BCAS General Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 22, Saturday: BCAS Field Trip, Lake Bastrop. Meet at Bank parking lot 7:45 a.m., departing 8:00.

Dec. 16, Tuesday, BCAS General Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Details of CBCs and more.

Dec. 21, Sunday: Lost Pines Christmas Bird Count. Register at visitlostpines.com or at Hyatt Lost Pines Resort 5:45-6:30 a.m., Dec. 21. Plus optional events.

Jan. 1, Thursday, State Parks CBC. Sign up at bastropcbc.com web site. Laurie Foss & Sheila Hargis, managers.

November Refreshments

provided by

**Sandy Simon
&
Jan Earhart**



Field Trip: Bastrop State Park

Ranger Josh Crawford, Jackie Fisher, Steve Pyrczak, Priscilla Jarvis, Alan Jaeger, Mike Goebel, May Ellen Branan, and Marti Carlson. Linda Salerno also participated, and Jan Goebel, photographer.