



Field Guides Tour Report

Texas Coast Migration Spectacle II 2015

Apr 18, 2015 to Apr 24, 2015

John Coons

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE.

Our week of birding in East Texas and on the Gulf Coast area was filled with great birds throughout. The weather, although not classically conducive to dropping birds in, was unsettled enough, and we had new arrivals each day on the coast. Starting in the Piney Woods and Big Thicket, we opened with a wonderful view of a Red-cockaded Woodpecker flaking bark from a pine, plus Red-headed Woodpecker and Brown-headed Nuthatches. Continuing through east Texas and the Big Thicket, we tracked down a number of the local breeding warblers and other specialties of the area. Northern Parula, Prothonotary, Kentucky, Hooded, Pine, Yellow-throated, and Prairie warblers were all seen well, but the star was a Swainson's Warbler belting out his song from an elevated perch. A pair of Barred Owls put on an amazing show for us during the day in a bottomland forest.

Heading to the coast we found Upland Sandpipers, our first Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, and Fish Crows en route. Arriving at High Island is always exciting as one never knows what the woodlots will hold in terms of incoming migrants. We were not disappointed in our first afternoon as we found Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Black-and-white, Tennessee, American Redstart, Black-throated Green, and a couple of dazzlers, Cerulean and Blackburnian warblers, among the Baltimore and Orchard orioles and Summer and Scarlet tanagers. During the week we returned to the High Island woods each afternoon and saw most of these migrants again but also added such great ones as Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Philadelphia Vireo, Gray-cheeked, Swainson's, and Wood thrushes, Magnolia, Bay-breasted, and Canada warblers, and Yellow-breasted Chat.

Our mornings were spent further from High Island checking the beaches, marshes, and rice fields for local breeding specialties and non-woody migrants. At Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, Rollover Pass, Bolivar Flats and in the rice fields we found Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, American and Least bitterns (thanks, Jeff), Reddish Egret, King and Clapper rails, Purple Gallinule, hundreds of American Avocets, Snowy, Wilson's, and Piping plovers, White-rumped, Pectoral and Baird's sandpipers, a distant Ruff, nine species of terns, a day-perched Common Nighthawk, a handful of Crested Caracaras, Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, a teed up Sedge Wren, Nelson's and Seaside sparrows, and Dickcissels among the more widespread species.

A trip to the nesting rookery at High Island was another treat as we saw Great, Snowy, and Cattle egrets showing off their fantastic plumes with bright colors on their bills that are usually only present for a few days or weeks in the spring. The close and vibrant Roseate Spoonbills were courting and checking every loose stick for a building block for their nests. A handful of American Alligators, a Coyote, Bottle-nosed Dolphin, and the changing colors of the American Anoles added to the wildlife experience.

It was great birding with all of you in east Texas and sharing the cultural experience of birding sites and local cuisine. We were treated to wonderful hospitality by the locals and were well looked after at High Island. I hope to see all of you again in the near future.

--John

KEYS FOR THIS LIST

One of the following keys may be shown in brackets for individual species as appropriate: * = heard only, I = introduced, E = endemic, N = nesting, a = austral migrant, b = boreal migrant

BIRDS

Anatidae (Ducks, Geese, and Waterfowl)

BLACK-BELLIED WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) – We saw these handsome ducks several of the days in the rice fields and area



We saw a good number of Scarlet Tanagers at High Island, which added a lot of color to the trees! (Photo by participant Jody Gillespie)

ponds.

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) – We saw a few small group of these in the rice fields as well.

WOOD DUCK (*Aix sponsa*) – A pair were flying about in the piney woods on our first morning in the field.

MOTTLED DUCK (*Anas fulvigula*)

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*)

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*)

REDHEAD (*Aythya americana*) – A couple of late wintering individuals were on the pond by the lighthouse on the Bolivar Peninsula.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

EARED GREBE (*Podiceps nigricollis*) – We saw one in the Gulf near Bolivar Flats.

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – There were lots of these near the coast and many were nesting at the rookery.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*)

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) – A handful were on one of the dredge islands and visible from Rollover Pass. These are not very widespread along the coast here.

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – We saw lots of these.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

AMERICAN BITTERN (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) – Jeff spotted our first one as we were trying to see the Ruff. It was way out in the marsh. We returned a couple of days later and saw it closer and in better light.

LEAST BITTERN (*Ixobrychus exilis*) – A late save, Jeff found one at the pond at Smith Woods at High Island. It climbed up on the reeds before flying off as I was dashing for the scope.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*)

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – We had many great views at the rookery including those with full plumes and brilliant green lores. Some were incubating eggs while a few had fair-sized chicks.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – Another showy bird in breeding plumage at the rookery at High Island. The bright red lores and plumes are only seen for a few weeks in the spring.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – These were mostly seen in fresh water environs.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*)

REDDISH EGRET (*Egretta rufescens*) – There were about three individuals that we spotted along the Bolivar Peninsula.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – One rarely gets to see the intense colors of breeding condition on the soft parts. The bill on some individuals was yellow, orange and red with purple lores. That would be hard to turn down in a prospective mate.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*)

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*) – We only had a few of these.

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – Surprisingly, we only saw one along the dike road at Anahuac NWR.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – We saw a few groups in flight but most were ones and twos feeding in the marsh.

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*)

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – Also seen very well at the rookery at Smith Woods, these too were in full breeding plumage.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – We saw these daily. Black Vultures were almost never encountered along the Bolivar Peninsula prior to Hurricane Ike in 2008.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Our first one was perched atop a road sign along the highway.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

WHITE-TAILED KITE (*Elanus leucurus*) – We found one of these open country specialists on the Bolivar Peninsula.

MISSISSIPPI KITE (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) – After a couple of quite distant soaring birds we found a couple more that were much closer as they flew above the Big Thicket.

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*)

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK (*Buteo lineatus*) – We only had one individual in the piney woods of east Texas.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*)

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – We had pretty good views of a flying bird over the open country around the rice fields.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

KING RAIL (*Rallus elegans*) – Great looks at a very curious bird right next to the van at Anahuac.

CLAPPER RAIL (GULF COAST) (*Rallus crepitans saturatus*) – Also seen well at Anahuac and we heard several more during the week.

SORA (*Porzana carolina*) – We heard a few and one was seen briefly by a couple of folks running between reed clumps at Rollover Pass.

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – A quite colorful bird, there were several seen at Anahuac.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*)

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – Fair numbers were scattered about here and there.

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – There were hundreds and hundreds of individuals at Bolivar Flats after our first ones were seen at Rollover Pass. The scope view of all of them tightly packed and with all the legs showing in the background was especially memorable.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*) – There were a few pairs of this distinctive shorebird at Rollover Pass.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – Fair numbers were seen along the beaches and in the rice fields and we saw birds in near breeding plumage to full winter plumage.

SNOWY PLOVER (*Charadrius nivosus*)

WILSON'S PLOVER (*Charadrius wilsonia*) – We saw a handful of these local specialties on the beach at Bolivar Flats.

SEMPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Some of the rice fields had a lot of these migrant shorebirds.

PIPING PLOVER (*Charadrius melodus*) – We saw several at Bolivar Flats.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*)

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – We only found one at the edge of rice field near Anahuac.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – These were far outnumbered by Lesser Yellowlegs in the rice fields.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – Willets were common in many of the rice fields, beaches and marshes that we birded. Some are migrants and others were local nesters.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

UPLAND SANDPIPER (*Bartramia longicauda*) – We saw a few in the sod farm on our way to the coast and then again on the Bolivar Peninsula.

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – The big flocks had already moved through but we found them in the rice fields.

MARbled GODWIT (*Limosa fedoa*)

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – One of the sharper plumaged shorebirds we saw several colorful individuals on the Bolivar Peninsula.

RUFF (*Calidris pugnax*) – We had looks at a rather distant bird at Anahuac NWR after getting a tip from another birder. It was probably a female, a Reeve, and could have given us some better looks as it poked through the vegetation.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – Lots were on the beach at Bolivar Flats.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – This was, perhaps, the most abundant shorebird we saw. There were lots of these in the rice fields and a fair number at Bolivar Flats and Rollover Pass as well.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER (*Calidris bairdii*) – We had a nice scope view of one in a rice field. There were certainly several in the field but most birds were a bit far out.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*)

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER (*Calidris fuscicollis*) – One we were watching took flight and showed the conspicuous white rump.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*Calidris melanotos*) – Many nicely plumaged individuals were found in rice fields north of High Island.

SEMPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Calidris pusilla*)

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*)

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*) – We ended up with pretty a good comparison between this and the next species.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – This was the most common gull, by far, that we encountered on our trip.

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – In areas with lots of gulls it seems odd to point out the few Ring-billed Gulls we encountered.

HERRING GULL (AMERICAN) (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*) – Most of these were at Rollover Pass or on the beach at Bolivar Flats.

LEAST TERN (*Sternula antillarum*) – We saw a good number along the beaches. It seems this species did well right after Hurricane Ike as the widespread sand created new nesting areas.

GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – After a fly-by at Bolivar Flats we had a couple of pairs at Anahuac.

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*) – There were a few here and there.

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – This small tern has become more numerous in recent years with the Rollover Pass area being the best locale for seeing them.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – Good numbers were on the beaches with our best views at Rollover Pass where we went over the ways to identify these from the following species.

FORSTER'S TERN (*Sterna forsteri*) – This is the local breeding tern and we saw a few carrying small fish into the marshes to feed their mates.

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*)

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – One of the more handsome terns we had several pairs at Rollover Pass.

BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops niger*) – A quite unusual bird, there was a flock of 100+ at Rollover Pass.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

EURASIAN COLLARED-DOVE (*Streptopelia decaocto*) [I]

INCA DOVE (*Columbina inca*) – We heard several around High Island but only saw them a couple of times.

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*)

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) – We saw a few of these as migrants at High Island.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – We saw three different birds flying about just after dusk. It was easy to see how this ghostly looking bird led to many superstitions.

Strigidae (Owls)

BARRED OWL (*Strix varia*) – We had a great show from two birds that started calling during the day in the Big Thicket. They both ended up flying around and landing above us giving us great views. Yip! Yip! Yip!

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

COMMON NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles minor*) – We had a nice look at one perched during the day in a tree near the visitor's center at Anahuac. We also saw a few flying around during the day.

Apodidae (Swifts)

CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chaetura pelagica*) – Several were flying about over Silsbee and even more at High Island.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) – We saw these daily in the woods at High Island.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*) – A few were spotted perched on powerlines during our travels.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) – One of the great woodpeckers of North America we had a couple at Jones State Forest on our first morning of birding.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes carolinus*) – We had a few in the Big Thicket area.

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER (*Sphyrapicus varius*) – We saw one dull-plumaged individual still hanging around Smith Woods from the winter.

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Picoides pubescens*)

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER (*Picoides borealis*) – After a bit of searching and waiting we had a great scope view of one of these extremely local woodpeckers at Jones State Forest as it flaked bark from a tall pine. There are only a few thousand of these rare birds in existence.

PILEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus pileatus*) [*]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Nice looks at a few individuals of this unusual bird. We are just at the northeast corner of its range here with most being seen in central and south Texas.

PEREGRINE FALCON (*Falco peregrinus*) – We saw one flush a large number of shorebirds along the Bolivar Peninsula.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus virens*) – There were a handful about the woods at High Island.

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax virens*) – Our first was a singing bird along a creek in the Big Thicket, then we saw a few migrants in the woods at High Island.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*)

EASTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) – We saw good numbers of these both as breeders in the open areas of the Big Thicket and many more as migrants near the coast. We saw about 25 individuals fly in to a tree at Smith Woods one afternoon, probably just having arrived from the south.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus forficatus*) – A great local breeder, this species is a highlight of the open farmlands and rice fields north of High Island.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*)

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*) – We had nice looks on our first morning of this sometimes skulker. We saw and heard several more at High Island.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*) – We heard a few on the breeding grounds where they are relatively early arrivals. Then we saw it in the migrant traps of High Island.

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*) – Jeff found our only one in the willows at Anahuac NWR.

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – We had pretty good views of one at Boy Scout Woods as it moved around above the pond.

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – Several were encountered during our week.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*)

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*) – Our first ones were in the town of Silsbee where this species has recently invaded. Most of the the Fish Crows in Texas are not found far from the coast.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

PURPLE MARTIN (*Progne subis*) – After our first at the condo at our lunch spot in the Big Thicket we saw them daily at High Island.

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*) – There were some big flocks of these in some places.

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*)

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – Groups were seen darting over and under a few of the bridges in the Big Thicket.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

CAROLINA CHICKADEE (*Poecile carolinensis*) – One of the first birds we encountered on our first morning we also saw them on our last morning on our way to the airport in Houston.

TUFTED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus bicolor*) – A few were seen around Jones State Forest and a few other places in the piney woods.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH (*Sitta pusilla*) – We enjoyed nice looks at this tiny local specialty at Jones State Forest and again the next morning.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

SEDGE WREN (*Cistothorus platensis*) – We had great looks at a singing bird perched up in a small shrub on our way to Anahuac NWR.

MARSH WREN (*Cistothorus palustris*)

CAROLINA WREN (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) – This was a common voice in the Big Thicket and a few were also around High Island.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*)

Regulidae (Kinglets)

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – There were a few late-remaining wintering birds hanging around in the piney woods and at High Island.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*) – We saw a few on our first morning at Jones State Forest where they were using the nest boxes. These have become much more common in this area over the last several years.

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH (*Catharus minimus*) – We had a couple of individuals at High Island including one hopping about on the open ground near Hooks Woods.

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – We saw several including at least twenty on our second day at High Island.

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – A few of these beauties were seen during our week.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – These were quite common around the woods, especially at Boy Scout Woods at High Island.

BROWN THRASHER (*Toxostoma rufum*)

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – We saw and heard several including one doing a Chuck-will's-widow imitation at Anahuac.

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) [H]

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – A fair number were around in the Big Thicket and Jones State Forest.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – There were a couple of birds working the edges of the pond at Boy Scout Woods and we also had good looks at Smith Woods.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) – A few were seen during the week at High Island.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – One of the most sought after of the warblers on the Texas Coast we had nice looks at a few including a male and female on our last afternoon.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*)

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – We had great looks at a singing bird along the Trinity River. Then we saw a migrant at High Island.

SWAINSON'S WARBLER (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) – It was great to see this bird so well in the Big Thicket near the Trinity River. We watched it singing from an exposed perch in a sweet gum tree.

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – Quite common on some of the days at High Island.

ORANGE-CROWNED WARBLER (*Oreothlypis celata*) – Jeff saw one at Boy Scout Woods. Most have passed through by this time.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Geothlypis formosa*) – We had wonderful views of a singing and territorial bird in the Big Thicket. Often a skulker, it sat out for us well.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*)

HOODED WARBLER (*Setophaga citrina*) – Good views on the breeding grounds of singing birds and then a few more migrants at High Island.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – We saw a few of these handsome birds on our first afternoon at High Island.

CERULEAN WARBLER (*Setophaga cerulea*) – Always one of the more wanted warbler species at High Island we saw a few including a brilliant male then a female that was bathing at the drip at Boy Scout Woods.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – We heard several on the breeding grounds in the Big Thicket area and had a nice look at one in a bald cypress covered with Spanish moss.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – Our first one slipped away but we saw another at the water drip at Boy Scout Woods,

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Setophaga castanea*) – We had great repeated views of the one at Prothonotary Pond at Boy Scout Woods as it worked back and forth in a bald cypress tree. This is one of the later warblers to appear as a migrant on the coast.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – We had several nice looks at this dazzler including about five individuals on our last day at High Island.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – There were a handful of red streak-breasted males seen in the woods.

PINE WARBLER (*Setophaga pinus*) – Not a migrant on the Texas Coast we saw a couple and heard a lot more in the piney woods.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*)

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Setophaga dominica*) – Nice looks at a singing male in a tall pine in the Big Thicket. These are usually associated with water courses in the area.

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Setophaga discolor*) – We had great looks at a male singing away in a regenerating pine plantation in the Big Thicket. This is one of my favorite warblers and bird songs.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – We had several of these on some of the days at High Island.

CANADA WARBLER (*Cardellina canadensis*) – Another late-arriving warbler species we had one at Boy Scout Woods. Another beauty.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – We heard a number in the Big Thicket and saw a couple of them including one that came to the water drip bath at Boy Scout Woods.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

BACHMAN'S SPARROW (*Peucaea aestivalis*) – Well, this could have been better. After hearing one in the Big Thicket on our first afternoon some got brief glimpses of a singing bird. We returned the next morning sure that we would get it well. After hearing it sing a couple of times it disappeared on us.

CHIPPING SPARROW (*Spizella passerina*) – We saw a few at White Memorial Park on our last birding stop before heading to the airport.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – These were quite numerous along the sides of the road at Anahuac NWR.

NELSON'S SPARROW (*Ammodramus nelsoni*) – We had great close views of a few of these late-remaining specialties in the saltwater marshes on the Bolivar Peninsula.

SEASIDE SPARROW (*Ammodramus maritimus*) – Also seen well in the coastal marshes of the Bolivar Peninsula.

SWAMP SPARROW (*Melospiza georgiana*)

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) [*]

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*) – It was somewhat of a surprise to see this late-wintering bird on Anahuac NWR.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – There were a lot of these around on a few of the days. There were about equal numbers of males and females on one of the days.

SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga olivacea*) – Great looks at many of these brightly colored species on a few of the days. They sure lit up the woods at High Island.

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – A good number had come in by the end of the week.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – We saw three females feeding together in a weedy field on the Bolivar Peninsula.

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*)

PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*) – We saw a few females and a couple of quite green immature males but we could never connect with a colorful adult male.

DICKCISSEL (*Spiza americana*) – We saw a few small groups in the rice fields north of High Island.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*)

COMMON GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula*)

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus major*) – Good views and in comparison with the following species. These are the grackles that are seen in the coastal prairies and were very common at Anahuac NWR.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – Two males were prancing about on the grass near the visitor's center at Anahuac. This is a quite uncommon bird in this part of Texas.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*)

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – Seen daily at High Island, there were adult males, females and black-throated 1st year males.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – Also seen each day on the coast. This is another species that really brightens up the forest.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [H]

MAMMALS

SWAMP RABBIT (*Sylvilagus aquaticus*) – These were fairly common and rather tame in the woods at High Island.

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*)

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – Some of us saw one surface a few times at the mouth of Galveston Bay during our pit stop.

COYOTE (*Canis latrans*) – A rather healthy looking individual was spotted in the rice fields.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 191 bird taxa and 4 mammal taxa