



Field Guides Tour Report

Texas Coast Migration Spectacle II 2017

Apr 22, 2017 to Apr 28, 2017

John Coons

For our tour description, itinerary, past triplists, dates, fees, and more, please [VISIT OUR TOUR PAGE](#).



American Avocets are just one of several shorebird species to gather in big numbers at Bolivar Flats on the Gulf Coast during migration. Photo by participant Dennis Rabon.

Spring on the Upper Texas Coast is full of birds. When the passerine migration isn't happening on a particular day there are marshes, rice fields, tidal flats, and coastal prairies to bird that have a wide array of species. Our week was filled with excitement each afternoon as we didn't know what would turn up at the migrant traps. We were quite fortunate with the weather, which was relatively cool all week with clouds and dark skies on the horizon somewhere. This unsettled weather is conducive to birds dropping into the coastal woods, and we were not disappointed. Each day something was going on. The first couple of days on the coast we had just a few warbler species but lots of Baltimore and Orchard orioles, Scarlet and Summer tanagers, and Eastern Kingbirds and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. The later days brought in a good number of warblers, which kept us busy. With Cerulean, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided, and Magnolia warblers all showing up, our binocs got a workout.

Our trip started in the morning north of Houston, where we had scope looks at Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, one of the rarest nesting birds in North America in terms of total numbers. We headed east into the Big Thicket and found territorial Swainson's, Kentucky, Prothonotary, Hooded, Yellow-throated, and Prairie warblers all in full song. A daytime view of a Barred Owl, a Bachman's Sparrow that required quite a bit of effort to see, some Brown-headed Nuthatches, and a few Red-headed Woodpeckers were additional highlights. Heading to the coast, we had our first taste of shorebirds in flooded rice fields. During our stay we found Hudsonian Godwit, Upland Sandpipers, Buff-breasted Sandpipers, lots of Whimbrels, and a flock of White-rumped Sandpipers in these fields, while a handful of Dickcissels sang nearby. Near the coast, we studied Long-billed Curlew, Wilson's and Piping plovers, breeding-plumage Dunlin, and a lot of tern species. We also saw a couple of species that are rarities here: Long-tailed Duck and Lesser Black-backed Gull. The marshes at Anahuac NWR afforded us good views of American and Least bitterns and gave us wonderful looks at King and Clapper rails, Purple Gallinules, and Seaside Sparrows. But the highlight of each day was the afternoon in the woods, where birds could change by the hour. Some of our best birding was quite late in the afternoon, when it seemed new birds were dropping in every minute.

The turnover of birds is always impressive at High Island. One day there are quite a few Swainson's Thrushes, while the next might be a Gray-cheeked Thrush day. Philadelphia Vireos seem to show up together after a couple of days of none. That is really cool and makes for a lot of excitement. The local

culture of east and coastal Texas also adds a special dimension to the trip from the food to the people. All the folks are friendly and accommodating to the birders who show up here for a few weeks each year.

It was great birding with all of you, and I hope to see 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 a few groups flying about the rice fields and some perched at Anahuac.

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) – A quite pretty duck we saw a few at Anahuac and again the odd ones flying.

MOTTLED DUCK (*Anas fulvigula*) – A southeast US specialty, we encountered a few pairs on ponds in the area.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Anas discors*) – This was the commonest duck we encountered.

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Anas clypeata*) – Only a few were found in our birding, including a pair at Bolivar Flats that seemed out of place.

LESSER SCAUP (*Aythya affinis*) – There were about 15 on the beach at Bolivar Flats. These were birds still hanging around from the winter and should be gone soon.

LONG-TAILED DUCK (*Clangula hyemalis*) – We found one in a group of Lesser Scaup that were loafing on the beach at Bolivar Flats. This is an individual that has been seen off-and-on here for several weeks and is a quite rare bird for Texas.

RED-BREASTED MERGANSER (*Mergus serrator*) – Diane spotted our first one flying by at Rollover Pass. This is another species that is quite common in the winter but 99% of them have headed north.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*) – These were quite numerous in several locations and they had young in the nests at the rookery at Smith Woods.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – On our final day we found one perched next to a Neotropic Cormorant on a power pole in the rice fields.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) – We saw some distant ones on a dredge island then a good look at more at Bolivar Flats.

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*)

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

AMERICAN BITTERN (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) – At Anahuac we watched a flying bird seemingly hanging in the stiff wind as it flew over the marsh.

LEAST BITTERN (*Ixobrychus exilis*) – We ended up seeing about six individuals at Anahuac. Once we saw the first one the rest popped up well.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*)

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Quite common, we saw many at nests at the rookery at Smith Woods. Some had full plumes and others were feeding fair-sized young in the nest.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*) – We saw many including several at nests at the rookery where they were in fine breeding colors.

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*)

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*)

REDDISH EGRET (*Egretta rufescens*) – We saw both a reddish and a white morph individual near the coast. This species is quite saltwater oriented.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*) – One of the first ones we stopped to look at had incredible soft part colors with a purple base to the bill turning to orange then yellow. The field guides don't illustrate these colors since they only have it for a short time in the breeding season.

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*)

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax*)

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – Our first one at Tyrrell Park was seen very well with nice head plumes,

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*)

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*) – We saw a good number in the rice fields.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – Always a favorite, we saw many at the breeding rookery at Smith Woods where a few babies were in the nests. The orange tail and bright soft part colors made them more impressive than usual.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*) – These were seen daily. Before Hurricane Ike in 2010, they were quite rare on the Bolivar Peninsula.

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – Only a couple were spotted along the coast.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

MISSISSIPPI KITE (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) – Rita spotted one flying over Kountze at our lunch stop.

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus cyaneus*) – A couple of late wintering birds were still around.

BROAD-WINGED HAWK (*Buteo platypterus*)

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – We saw a few in the rice fields and had a couple perched on power poles.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

KING RAIL (*Rallus elegans*) – We had great looks at this skulker at Anahuac NWR. This species is found much more in fresh water than Clapper Rail.

CLAPPER RAIL (GULF COAST) (*Rallus crepitans saturatus*) – We saw a few at Anahuac then a few more here and there on the Peninsula.

VIRGINIA RAIL (*Rallus limicola*) – We saw one dash off the side of the road and we couldn't get it to venture out.

SORA (*Porzana carolina*)

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinicus*) – This colorful species was in fair numbers at Anahuac NWR.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*)

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*) – We saw at least a few each day along the coast.

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – We had great looks at many individuals in a couple of places, Those at Bolivar Flats were fantastically moving together like a single celled organism.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*) – A couple of birds were together at Rollover Pass.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – We saw good numbers with several in full breeding plumage with black bellies.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*) – Sometimes a rather hard to find species here, we had a few on our first afternoon in the rice fields.

WILSON'S PLOVER (*Charadrius wilsonia*) – This large-billed banded plover was seen well at Bolivar Flats.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*) – Good numbers were seen in some of the fields.

PIPING PLOVER (*Charadrius melodus*) – A threatened species in Texas we saw a handful of them at Bolivar Flats.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

UPLAND SANDPIPER (*Bartramia longicauda*) – Our first was in a grassy field on our way to the Big Thicket then we saw a few more in a couple of places in the rice fields.

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*) – A good number were seen in some of the rice fields. These birds are headed up to the low tundra in Canada to breed.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*) – Our only one, a late bird still hanging around, was seen well in a park in Crystal Beach.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (*Limosa haemastica*) – We found one in a rice field on our way to Anahuac. This is a much sought after bird along the Texas Coast. This species used to migrate north with Eskimo Curlews.

MARbled GODWIT (*Limosa fedoa*) – A handful were seen near Rollover Pass.

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*)

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*) – We saw four at our first stop in the rice fields on our first morning on the Coast then we did not see any more.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – There were a lot of them on the beaches. Some were beginning to get the brown plumage which they only have for a short time.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – Good numbers of these in some places and most had their black bellies of breeding plumage.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*) – This was the most common small peep we saw.

WHITE-RUMPED SANDPIPER (*Calidris fuscicollis*) – On our last morning we found a handful in a flooded rice field. They took off and circled and we could see the white rumps quite well.

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER (*Calidris subruficollis*) – We had a group of about 15 birds alight then take off again quickly one day in the rice fields, then we had a fine view of one at the grassy park on the Peninsula. This is another much sought-after species along the Coast.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*Calidris melanotos*)

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Calidris pusilla*) – This and the following species were seen together in a group that was huddled together at Bolivar Flats.

WESTERN SANDPIPER (*Calidris mauri*)

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*) – We had some good views in the tidal ponds of the Bolivar Peninsula.

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*) – This species is more likely to be found in freshwater areas than the above.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – We saw a few including the more brightly colored females.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*)

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*)

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – We saw a few but they were far outnumbered by Lesser Yellowlegs.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*)

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – By far the most common gull we saw on the Coast.

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – Only a few were seen.

HERRING GULL (AMERICAN) (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*)

LESSER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus fuscus*) – We saw this gull with black wings fly in and land with the crowd at Bolivar Flats. This individual had been seen over the last few weeks in the area but would disappear for stretches so we were fortunate to see it. It is rather rare on this part of the Texas Coast.

LEAST TERN (*Sternula antillarum*) – This tiny tern was well seen along the beach at Bolivar Flats.

GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – This species is more likely to be found in the rice fields and marshes than along the coast which is just where we saw them.

CASPIAN TERN (*Hydroprogne caspia*)

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – There were quite a few on the sandbar and flying about at Rollover Pass. This used to be a quite rare bird here but we saw about 60 individuals.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – Not many were left but we had a handful at Bolivar Flats.

FORSTER'S TERN (*Sterna forsteri*)

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – A few large groups were well seen along the Coast.

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – One of the handsomest of the terns we had scope views of several showing the yellow-tipped bills.

BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops niger*) – There was a large group at Rollover Pass lounging on the sandbar.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves)

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [I]

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

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – A rather uncommon species on this trip, we saw a couple around High Island.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos)

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) – We had a couple of good views at the woodlots on our last day.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls)

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – We had a nice experience with two of these white bats flying about near High Island.

Strigidae (Owls)

BARRED OWL (*Strix varia*) – It was a bit of a surprise to see this great bird fly across the road in the Big Thicket and land for a scope view during the day. It flew again and Dennis spotted it for a better view.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies)

COMMON NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles minor*) – we saw our first one flush off the edge of the road and land just a few yards from the van right in the open.

Apodidae (Swifts)

CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chaetura pelagica*)

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds)

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) – A fair number were working the bottlebrush trees near Boy Scout Woods.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers)

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*) – Diane spotted our only one on a power line.

Picidae (Woodpeckers)

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) – We had good views of two birds at our pit stop in the Piney Woods then watched a close one on a fence post in the Big Thicket. This is one of the great woodpeckers of the world.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes carolinus*) – We saw a couple in the Big Thicket and one at Sabine woods that was likely the hybrid with a Golden-fronted Woodpecker that has been seen there for a couple of years.

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Picoides pubescens*) – We heard several but, I believe, our only visual was a pair at a probable nest site on our final morning on the way back to Houston.

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER (*Picoides borealis*) – We had a great view of a rather close bird at a probable nest hole at Jones State Forest. A real southeast U.S. specialty, this is one of the rarest breeding birds in North America in terms of overall numbers.

PILEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus pileatus*) – We had a fly-by or two near Silsbee then a great experience on our last day at Lake Charlotte where we had one perching right in the open for a scope view. Another great woodpecker.

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras)

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – Rob spotted one on our final day that landed behind a dike in a rice field and we could not see it.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers)

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus virens*) – We saw a handful in the woods as migrants where a couple were beginning to sing.

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax virens*) – A calling bird was seen at Smith Woods. Surprisingly, we did not hear any on their breeding grounds. They were certainly late in arriving this year.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*)

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – On our last two days we saw about 3-4 individuals, as if they just migrated in.

EASTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) – We saw a good number of these migrants on a couple of days.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus forficatus*) – One of the prettiest flycatchers we had good looks at several on fence fires and power lines.

Laniidae (Shrikes)

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – A pair was seen behind our motel in Silsbee and we saw a few more on power lines in the pastures and rice fields.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis)

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*) – A quite common song, we heard them daily and had a few okay views before our last day when we saw a couple quite well.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*)

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – After a few dry days we ran into about 3-4 individuals at Smith Woods one afternoon.

WARBLING VIREO (*Vireo gilvus*)

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – A fair number were encountered. Sharon finally got her vireo.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies)

BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*)

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*) – We heard and saw a few birds in Silsbee where they have recently invaded inland.

Alaudidae (Larks)

HORNED LARK (*Eremophila alpestris*) – Dennis spotted this local species running about in the sand in the higher beach at Bolivar Flats.

Hirundinidae (Swallows)

NORTHERN ROUGH-WINGED SWALLOW (*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*)

PURPLE MARTIN (*Progne subis*) – A good number were seen on a few days around nesting boxes. They were a common vocalization over the woods at High Island.

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*) – A fair number had nests at the motel in High Island.

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – We saw lots including a number of nests under bridges.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice)

CAROLINA CHICKADEE (*Poecile carolinensis*) – This diminutive chickadee was seen the first two days in the Piney Woods.

TUFTED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus bicolor*) – On our final day we had a singing bird in a tall pine near Lake Charlotte.

Sittidae (Nuthatches)

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH (*Sitta pusilla*) – Another specialty of the southeast pine forest, we had good views at Jones State Forest then again near Jasper.

Troglodytidae (Wrens)

SEDGE WREN (*Cistothorus platensis*) [*]

MARSH WREN (*Cistothorus palustris*)

CAROLINA WREN (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) – It took awhile but he had nice looks at this species at Sabine Woods.

Poliophtilidae (Gnatcatchers)

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliophtila caerulea*)

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies)

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*) – A couple of bright males were seen at our breakfast spot near Sam Rayburn Lake.

VEERY (*Catharus fuscescens*) – A few of these small thrushes were seen in the woods and Diane and Rita saw one coming to the drip at High Island.

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH (*Catharus minimus*) – We had a fair number of these on a couple of days and finally found one at Sabine Woods where there were a good number of Swainson's Thrushes.

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – On our first afternoon at High Island we found about ten individuals then a few more on each day. Some were early singing, doing a whisper-like partial song as they "practiced" on their way north.

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – One of the prettiest of the thrushes we had few on a few days.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers)

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – Lots of these were seen feeding in the mulberry trees.

BROWN THRASHER (*Toxostoma rufum*) – We found a couple of these nicely marked thrushes at Sabine Woods. Surprisingly, they were the only ones we saw.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*)

Sturnidae (Starlings)

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) [I]

Bombycillidae (Waxwings)

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) – A good number were seen at Jones State Forest on our first day then each day around High Island.

Parulidae (New World Warblers)

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – At Sabine Woods we had a nice look at one or two of these after a couple of views at High Island.

WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) – Most of us got a fair view of a skulking individual at Sabine Woods but it wasn't being cooperative.

LOUISIANA WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia motacilla*) – Just after arriving at Sabine Woods we had great looks at this southern species as it slowly worked its way around the pond and hopped up on the water drip. We heard the chip which is much drier sounding than Northern Waterthrush.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – A couple of different birds were seen at Sabine Woods soon after seeing the Louisiana Waterthrush.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – Rita spotted a nice male at Smith Woods but it got away before we could all get to it.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) – After much looking we finally came across this not-uncommon migrant at Smith Woods.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – Diane spotted our first then we had a few more the next day but their migration through High Island was winding down.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – A brilliant bird of the cypress bottomland forest we saw a couple on our first morning in the Big Thicket.

SWAINSON'S WARBLER (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) – One of the most sought-after warblers of the southeast we had a great view of a chipping bird in the Big Thicket. One of my favorites. Yip! Yip! Yip!

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – On a few days these were quite numerous in the woods at High Island.

NASHVILLE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis ruficapilla*) – One late individual showed up at the drip at Boy Scout Woods.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Geothlypis formosa*) – We had nice looks of a singing bird in the Big Thicket then a couple more as late-migrants at High Island.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Several were encountered but the best views were probably the 3-4 birds that were coming to the water drip at Smith Woods.

HOODED WARBLER (*Setophaga citrina*) – Once we had a good view at a bird on the breeding grounds we knew we would see a few migrants at High Island, and we did.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – fair numbers were seen on a couple or three days.

CAPE MAY WARBLER (*Setophaga tigrina*) – We looked for a continuing individual at High Island several times with no luck, but Cheryl saw it on the day she stayed back, This is an uncommon warbler on the Texas Coast as most migrate up through Florida from the Caribbean.

CERULEAN WARBLER (*Setophaga cerulea*) – Another most wanted warbler we had about 3-4 individuals at High Island. This is subtly one of the prettiest warblers.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – We saw these on the breeding grounds where we heard them singing and again as migrants at High Island.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – We saw a few including those coming to the water drip.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Setophaga castanea*) – A great warbler that breeds well north in the spruce-fir forests of Canada we saw a few individuals at Sabine Woods then a couple more at High Island later in the day. This must have been the arrival day.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – A brilliantly colored species we had several individuals at High Island.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – A widespread and familiar species we saw a handful during the week.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – Another nicely plumaged warbler we had a few during the week.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Setophaga striata*) – One of our last new warblers, we saw it at Boy Scout Woods on our last full day there.

PINE WARBLER (*Setophaga pinus*) – Quite common by voice in the Piney Woods we had some good views of this rather nondescript warbler.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*) – Cheryl saw a late individual at our breakfast spot near Sam Rayburn Lake.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Setophaga dominica*) – We had nice looks in a couple of places in the Big Thicket. Another breeding species of the southeast that we did not see as a migrant.

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Setophaga discolor*) – In the Big Thicket we had a great look at a bird singing from the top of a small pine. A great song and wonderful bird.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – Not a lot, but we saw several at High Island and Sabine Woods.

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – Often a real skulker, we had nice looks in the Big Thicket at a singing individual.

Emberizidae (Buntings and New World Sparrows)

BACHMAN'S SPARROW (*Peucaea aestivalis*) – This one took some work but we had a scope view of a singing bird in its native habitat near Jasper. There were about three individuals singing in the area and they were not sitting still for very long as they moved around their territories. This is another iconic species of the southeast forests.

NELSON'S SPARROW (*Ammodramus nelsoni*) – A species that breeds in the northern US and southern Canada there are often a few wintering birds staying in to late-April. We had wonderfully views of one in the saltmarsh on the Bolivar Peninsula.

SEASIDE SPARROW (*Ammodramus maritimus*) – We had good views of a few singing birds in the saltmarsh at Anahuac and again on the Peninsula.

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*) – A quite uncommon species this far east, Cheryl found two in a yard at High Island on the day we went to Sabine Woods.

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

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – A good number were along the roadsides at Anahuac.

LINCOLN'S SPARROW (*Melospiza lincolni*) – We saw a few in the woods at High Island and Sabine where they were late wintering individuals.

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – Seen daily, there were good numbers in the woods on some days.

SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga olivacea*) – Another brilliant species, we saw several individuals at High Island on a few days.

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – We saw several feeding on mulberries at High Island.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – The best views were the couple of males and females that were coming to the feeding station at the B&B at Smith Woods.

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*) – We saw about 20-30 individuals at the seed spread on the ground at the B&B at Smith Woods.

PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*) – Always a fan favorite, we saw our first at the feeding station at Smith Woods then we saw a fair number at Sabine Woods.

DICKCISSEL (*Spiza americana*) – Good views were had of a few birds along the shrubs in the fence lines around the rice fields.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*)

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) – This was the bird with the yellowish throat that we saw on the football field at High Island but it flew off before we could get a good look. It is an uncommon species here.

COMMON GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula*)

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus major*) – We had nice looks at this coastal prairie species at Anahuac and a few other places along the coast.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – In high Island we found one with a few Brown-headed Cowbirds on the fence of the football field. This is a rather uncommon bird in this part of Texas.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*)

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – There were a lot of these present on some days in the woods.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – A well known species, we had many good views of these migrants.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [I]

MAMMALS

SWAMP RABBIT (*Sylvilagus aquaticus*) – these were fairly common in the woods at High Island.

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*) – Common in the woods at High Island and at Sabine Woods.

FOX SQUIRREL (*Sciurus niger*) – We saw a few at Tyrrell Park in Beaumont.

NUTRIA (*Myocastor coypus*) – One was seen in the marsh at Anahuac where they were quite common years ago but I have not seen one there in about eight years. [I]

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – A few of us saw one or two surfacing in the shipping channel off of Point Bolivar.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 199 bird taxa and 5 mammal taxa