



Field Guides Tour Report

TEXAS COAST MIGRATION SPECTACLE II 2018

Apr 21, 2018 to Apr 27, 2018

John Coons

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



We had several nice looks at Bay-breasted Warblers, one of the later migrants to show up on the coast in good numbers. Photo by participant Jim Philipson.

Our week of birding in Texas was a great time. We struck it rich with one of the best migrations I have seen for years. Each day brought new treasures and it's good when your arms are tired at the end of the day from lifting your binoculars so much. We were fortunate to have good birding weather. A cold front passed through at the beginning and our first day was coolish and, I believe, curtailed some of the bird song on the breeding grounds in east Texas. But, we still managed to find what we wanted to see there before heading to the coast, where north winds had to help with the fallouts but there was not any huge weather event that led to our great time, which shows how difficult it is to predict migration.

Our time in the piney woods and Big Thicket area started with a Red-cockaded Woodpecker soon after arriving at our first stop, that gave us a great view. We ended up seeing wonderful Brown-headed Nuthatches and Pine Warblers before we headed east. The rest of our day was spent seeing a bunch of great breeding warblers which included Prothonotary, Hooded, Yellow-throated, Kentucky, Prairie and a great Swainson's Warbler that afforded a wonderful view. Barred Owl and Red-headed Woodpecker were also enjoyed. We drove north the next morning and found a fabulous Bachman's Sparrow singing away in classic piney woods habitat that we watched for twenty minutes. We then headed to Winnie, with a couple of stops where we saw Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Hudsonian Godwit, among others. Getting to High Island for the afternoon was profitable, with several Blackburnians, Cerulean, and Chestnut-sided warblers showing well, along with orioles, tanagers and thrushes.

The next three days we birded various sites in the mornings and returned each afternoon to High Island, which had great birding each day. Ovenbird, Bay-breasted, Golden-winged, Blue-winged, Worm-eating, Magnolia, Blackpoll, American Redstarts, and Black-throated Green were some of the warblers we encountered, usually with multiple numbers of all. Other highlights of our time in the woods, rice fields, marshes and beaches were Fulvous Whistling Ducks at Anahuac, good looks at both American and Least bitterns, Piping Plovers on the beach, Upland Sandpiper, multiple encounters with Buff-breasted Sandpiper, a daytime Barn Owl, Crested Caracaras, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, a handful of Philadelphia Vireos, Cave Swallow, daily sightings of four species of brown thrushes, Nelson's Sparrow, several Painted Buntings, a hedgerow full of Dickcissels, and a surprise Bobolink, one of our last new birds on our final morning.

Another interesting sighting was the rookery at Smith Woods where Great Egrets, Neotropic Cormorants, Snowy Egrets, and Roseate Spoonbills were all in fine feather, with some tending to young in the nests. While there, we watched a large American Alligator climb up on the island's shore and pick

up the carcass of a Great Egret that appeared to have been there for a few days. Over a dozen of the spoonbills left their nearby nests and walked down toward the alligator and ogled at it while the gator chewed, then swallowed, the egret whole. It was almost like they couldn't not watch.

We also got to experience the culture and cuisine of east Texas and the Cajun influenced coast. While we heard a lot of talk, we saw little damage from Hurricane Harvey in the areas we visited, which was a good thing! This was a great trip, and a lot of fun, and I hope to see you all again soon. 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 odd ducks on a few days, with several groups flying over showing their large white wing patches.

FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) – A few were swimming about on Shoveler Pond at Anahuac.

WOOD DUCK (*Aix sponsa*) – We had two flybys on our first morning in the piney woods.

BLUE-WINGED TEAL (*Spatula discors*)

NORTHERN SHOVELER (*Spatula clypeata*) – There were a few at Anahuac.

MOTTLED DUCK (*Anas fulvigula*) – We had good views of this usually shy duck in the shallow ponds we birded.

GREEN-WINGED TEAL (AMERICAN) (*Anas crecca carolinensis*) – We saw one in the marsh at Tyrrell Park near Beaumont.

Podicipedidae (Grebes)

PIED-BILLED GREBE (*Podilymbus podiceps*)

Phalacrocoracidae (Cormorants and Shags)

NEOTROPIC CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax brasilianus*)

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) – Somewhat surprising, our only sighting was near the Trinity River on our last day.

Anhingidae (Anhingas)

ANHINGA (*Anhinga anhinga*) – After seeing a couple in flight near High Island, we had a bonanza of Anhingas at the rookery near the Trinity River, where we saw a few on nests and a group of over ten individuals soaring about at once.

Pelecanidae (Pelicans)

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*)

BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*) – There were lots of these seen along the coast.

Ardeidae (Herons, Egrets, and Bitterns)

AMERICAN BITTERN (*Botaurus lentiginosus*) – Nancy spotted our first one at Anahuac as we went around Shoveler Pond. We ended up with another a bit later. Always a great species to see.

LEAST BITTERN (*Ixobrychus exilis*) – It took some looking, but we ended up with great views of at least seven individuals at Anahuac.

GREAT BLUE HERON (*Ardea herodias*)

GREAT EGRET (*Ardea alba*) – Some of those at the nests at Smith Woods had three chicks and exquisite plumes.

SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta thula*)

LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Egretta caerulea*) – We saw one daily at Prothonotary Pond at Boy Scout Woods, an unusual sight here.

TRICOLORED HERON (*Egretta tricolor*) – This is one of the prettiest of the herons when it is in full plumage.

REDDISH EGRET (*Egretta rufescens*) – We had a great look at a white morph bird dancing about in the shallows.

CATTLE EGRET (*Bubulcus ibis*)

GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens*)

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

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT-HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*) – We had a very nice look at our first one at Cattail Marsh.

Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills)

WHITE IBIS (*Eudocimus albus*) – We saw a few each day of our trip.

WHITE-FACED IBIS (*Plegadis chihi*)

ROSEATE SPOONBILL (*Platalea ajaja*) – We had several looks at this fancy species, with the best being those at nests at Smith Woods. It was interesting and entertaining to watch the troop of them walk to the edge of the water at the rookery as they were keeping an eye on the alligator that came up on shore.

Cathartidae (New World Vultures)

BLACK VULTURE (*Coragyps atratus*)

TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura*)

Pandionidae (Osprey)

OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus*) – We only saw a couple of these.

Accipitridae (Hawks, Eagles, and Kites)

NORTHERN HARRIER (*Circus hudsonius*) – Two or three lingering birds were still hanging around from the winter.

COOPER'S HAWK (*Accipiter cooperii*) – We had a fly-over at Smith Woods as we were getting in the van one afternoon.

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK (*Buteo lineatus*) – On our first morning, we had a nice view of one perched on a power line right next to the road.

SWAINSON'S HAWK (*Buteo swainsoni*) – Only a few were seen in the open pasture land.

RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo jamaicensis*)

Rallidae (Rails, Gallinules, and Coots)

KING RAIL (*Rallus elegans*) – At Anahuac, we had great looks at five adults and two chicks as they walked along the side of the dike and even crossed the road in front of us.

CLAPPER RAIL (GULF COAST) (*Rallus crepitans saturatus*) – We had to look a bit harder to see this more saltwater species, but we had a couple of good views in the coastal marshes.

SORA (*Porzana carolina*)

PURPLE GALLINULE (*Porphyrio martinica*) – We had several nice views at Anahuac and at Smith Woods.

COMMON GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*)

AMERICAN COOT (*Fulica americana*)

Recurvirostridae (Stilts and Avocets)

BLACK-NECKED STILT (*Himantopus mexicanus*)

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*) – Most were in breeding colors with distinct peachy heads and necks.

Haematopodidae (Oystercatchers)

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*) – The pair we saw at the Bolivar Peninsula took off as we tried to get closer.

Charadriidae (Plovers and Lapwings)

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER (*Pluvialis squatarola*) – A few individuals were in nearly full breeding plumage.

AMERICAN GOLDEN-PLOVER (*Pluvialis dominica*) – We ended up seeing this short-grass specialist several times, with as many as 10 in the field with the Buff-breasted Sandpipers.

WILSON'S PLOVER (*Charadrius wilsonia*) – We had a couple of nice looks at this local specialty at Bolivar Flats.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Charadrius semipalmatus*)

PIPING PLOVER (*Charadrius melodus*) – We saw a fair number on the coast even though the north wind had taken the tide way out.

KILLDEER (*Charadrius vociferus*)

Scolopacidae (Sandpipers and Allies)

UPLAND SANDPIPER (*Bartramia longicauda*) – On our last morning we found a field with three of these great grassland birds near Nome.

WHIMBREL (*Numenius phaeopus*)

LONG-BILLED CURLEW (*Numenius americanus*) – Another late-lingering species, we saw a couple on the way into Bolivar Flats.

HUDSONIAN GODWIT (*Limosa haemastica*) – Our only sighting was quite fortunate, as we found it at Cattail Marsh near Beaumont, a place I would not expect to see one. It was nearing breeding plumage with dark underparts.

MARbled GODWIT (*Limosa fedoa*)

RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres*) – At Rollover Pass, we had to watch where we were driving to avoid them on the sand.

STILT SANDPIPER (*Calidris himantopus*) – Our best look was a close one at Cattail Marsh.

SANDERLING (*Calidris alba*) – There were a lot of these on the beach at Bolivar Flats and I don't think we saw any with many breeding plumage feathers coming in.

DUNLIN (*Calidris alpina*) – We had nice looks at breeding plumaged individuals on a few occasions, as well as a couple of large flocks in the distance at Bolivar Flats.

LEAST SANDPIPER (*Calidris minutilla*)

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER (*Calidris subruficollis*) – After getting a tip, we stopped at a short grass pasture on the way back to Winnie and saw at least 35 of these great shorebirds. We had a slightly better view the next morning and then another 20-30 on our last morning as we headed back to Houston.

PECTORAL SANDPIPER (*Calidris melanotos*) – A couple of the rice fields that had water had a fair number of these high arctic breeders.

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Calidris pusilla*) – Our only sightings were at Bolivar Flats.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus griseus*)

LONG-BILLED DOWITCHER (*Limnodromus scolopaceus*)

WILSON'S SNIPE (*Gallinago delicata*) – Two individuals were spotted by our sharp-eyed crew at Anahuac NWR.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE (*Phalaropus tricolor*) – We found two birds swimming about in one of the flooded rice fields.

SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularius*)

SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Tringa solitaria*) – We had a couple of nice looks at this lonely species.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa melanoleuca*) – We only saw a few compared to Lesser Yellowlegs.

WILLET (*Tringa semipalmata*) – Many were seen both on the beaches and on fence posts.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS (*Tringa flavipes*)

Laridae (Gulls, Terns, and Skimmers)

LAUGHING GULL (*Leucophaeus atricilla*) – This was far and away the most common gull we encountered.

RING-BILLED GULL (*Larus delawarensis*) – It always surprises me how few of these there are on the upper Texas Coast.

HERRING GULL (AMERICAN) (*Larus argentatus smithsonianus*) – Only a few were seen.

LEAST TERN (*Sternula antillarum*) – This tiny tern was seen well flying about at Rollover Pass and on the beach at Bolivar.

GULL-BILLED TERN (*Gelochelidon nilotica*) – We had a couple of these large marsh terns in a backwater of Galveston Bay.

BLACK TERN (*Chlidonias niger*) – We saw a surprising number. These seem to be increasing in numbers here each year.

COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*) – We saw several in winter plumage and a few in nice breeding plumage.

FORSTER'S TERN (*Sterna forsteri*)

ROYAL TERN (*Thalasseus maximus*) – There were lots of these in flocks on the beach.

SANDWICH TERN (*Thalasseus sandvicensis*) – One of the prettiest of the terns; we had a few good studies of the long black yellow-tipped bill.

BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops niger*) – Always a favorite; there were good numbers at Rollover Pass.

Columbidae (Pigeons and Doves).

ROCK PIGEON (*Columba livia*) [H]

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

WHITE-WINGED DOVE (*Zenaida asiatica*) – We heard more than we saw around High Island and also saw them at Sabine Woods.

MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaida macroura*)

Cuculidae (Cuckoos).

YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus*) – We only had a couple or three individuals.

Tytonidae (Barn-Owls).

BARN OWL (*Tyto alba*) – A friend gave us a tip and we had a nice look at one on a day roost at High Island.

Strigidae (Owls).

BARRED OWL (*Strix varia*) – We got one to fly in and perch during the cloudy afternoon as we birded the edge of the Big Thicket.

Caprimulgidae (Nightjars and Allies).

COMMON NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles minor*) – We saw a few, with one on a day roost at the blind at the water drip at Anahuac.

Apodidae (Swifts).

CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chaetura pelagica*) – These were seen most days.

Trochilidae (Hummingbirds).

RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*) – The bottle brush trees across the road from the entrance to Boy Scout Woods were always good for a hummingbird or two.

Alcedinidae (Kingfishers).

BELTED KINGFISHER (*Megasceryle alcyon*) – We saw a few on the power lines on the Bolivar Peninsula.

Picidae (Woodpeckers).

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) – One of the great woodpeckers anywhere, we had a nice scope view of one atop a dead tree in the Big Thicket.

RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes carolinus*) – We heard a few in the Big Thicket and had a good view at Sabine Woods.

DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Picoides pubescens*)

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER (*Picoides borealis*) – We had great looks Jones State Forest on our first morning. We arrived and spotted one right away for a fair look before it flew further into the woods. We hung around for awhile and heard it again and eventually spotted it right behind us for a much better view. We then saw it fly to a pine and investigate a cavity.

NORTHERN FLICKER (YELLOW-SHAFTED) (*Colaptes auratus auratus*) – We heard a couple of these in the forest of east Texas near Jasper. [*]

PILEATED WOODPECKER (*Dryocopus pileatus*) – We heard a few but were never close to a calling individual. [*]

Falconidae (Falcons and Caracaras).

CRESTED CARACARA (*Caracara cheriway*) – A few of these were spotted, with our best one on the ground at the lower end of the Bolivar Peninsula.

Tyrannidae (Tyrant Flycatchers).

EASTERN WOOD-PEWEE (*Contopus virens*) – We saw these each day in the migrant woods.

ACADIAN FLYCATCHER (*Empidonax virescens*) – We had a few good looks. These had just arrived in numbers along the coast.

GREAT CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*)

WESTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus verticalis*) – We found one sitting on a fence wire in the pastures on the morning we were headed to Anahuac.

EASTERN KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus tyrannus*) – Good numbers were seen on a few days.

SCISSOR-TAILED FLYCATCHER (*Tyrannus forficatus*) – Another great bird that is always a favorite.

Laniidae (Shrikes).

LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus*) – The first ones were seen at our motel in Silsbee then we had a few on wires during the week.

Vireonidae (Vireos, Shrike-Babblers, and Erpornis).

WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus*) – We ended up seeing several at the migration areas after hearing many and getting brief looks in the piney woods.

YELLOW-THROATED VIREO (*Vireo flavifrons*)

BLUE-HEADED VIREO (*Vireo solitarius*)

PHILADELPHIA VIREO (*Vireo philadelphicus*) – A handful showed up on Tuesday and then we saw them the rest of the week.

RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo olivaceus*) – These were seen and heard daily along the coast.

Corvidae (Crows, Jays, and Magpies).

BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata*)

AMERICAN CROW (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)

FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*) – We had a couple flying by and giving their distinctive calls at Cattail Marsh near Beaumont.

Hirundinidae (Swallows).

PURPLE MARTIN (*Progne subis*) – We saw a fair number, with our first ones at the nesting colony at our lunch stop in Kountze.

TREE SWALLOW (*Tachycineta bicolor*)

BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo rustica*)

CLIFF SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*) – Most every large bridge had them flying about and we saw birds in nests at Anahuac.

CAVE SWALLOW (*Petrochelidon fulva*) – Thanks to a tip, we had pretty good views of a few flying about near a bridge on the Bolivar Peninsula.

Paridae (Tits, Chickadees, and Titmice).

CAROLINA CHICKADEE (*Poecile carolinensis*)

TUFTED TITMOUSE (*Baeolophus bicolor*) – We heard and saw them near Turkey Creek in the Big Thicket.

Sittidae (Nuthatches).

BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH (*Sitta pusilla*) – We had great looks at one perched on a short stub on a tall pine at Jones State Forest. It just about filled the scope.

Troglodytidae (Wrens).

HOUSE WREN (*Troglodytes aedon*) [*]

SEDGE WREN (*Cistothorus platensis*) – We had good views near Anahuac of a singing bird along the roadside.

MARSH WREN (*Cistothorus palustris*) – One in the marsh at Anahuac showed well for us.

CAROLINA WREN (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*) – We heard a lot in the piney woods and daily at High Island where we saw one gong to a nest box.

Poliopitilidae (Gnatcatchers).

BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Poliopitila caerulea*)

Regulidae (Kinglets).

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET (*Regulus calendula*) – A couple of late-lingering individuals were hanging around at High Island.

Turdidae (Thrushes and Allies).

EASTERN BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis*) – We saw these at a nest box at Jones State Forest while we were waiting for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers to reappear.

VEERY (*Catharus fuscescens*) – We saw these each day at High Island or Sabine Woods. This is a dainty little thrush.

GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH (*Catharus minimus*) – Towards the end of the week we saw more and more of these.

SWAINSON'S THRUSH (*Catharus ustulatus*) – We heard some giving partial songs in the migration areas. This was a good year for this species, with at least 20 being seen on some days.

WOOD THRUSH (*Hylocichla mustelina*) – Again, we saw several with at least eight being seen on one day.

AMERICAN ROBIN (*Turdus migratorius*) – Jim saw one in the piney woods on our first day.

Mimidae (Mockingbirds and Thrashers).

GRAY CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*) – These were quite common as they scratched in the leaf litter.

BROWN THRASHER (*Toxostoma rufum*) – We saw them daily at High Island but not many in total.

NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*) – The one at our motel in Winnie was never not singing from the light pole when we were there.

Sturnidae (Starlings).

EUROPEAN STARLING (*Sturnus vulgaris*) [H]

Bombycillidae (Waxwings).

CEDAR WAXWING (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) [*]

Parulidae (New World Warblers).

OVENBIRD (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) – We had nice looks at a few as they walked along on the forest floor.

WORM-EATING WARBLER (*Helmitheros vermivorum*) – Great views of this subtly marked species were had on a few occasions.

NORTHERN WATERTHRUSH (*Parkesia noveboracensis*) – We saw up to four in a day at the edges of the pools and ponds.

GOLDEN-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora chrysoptera*) – We enjoyed both a male and female at Sabine Woods. This is always one of the most sought after species as a migrant along the coast.

BLUE-WINGED WARBLER (*Vermivora cyanoptera*) – We had nice looks at a few at High Island and Smith Woods.

BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilta varia*) – There were many of these seen with at least 20 recorded on one of our days.

PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*) – Our first was on territory in the Big Thicket and we ended up seeing a few more as migrants near the coast.

SWAINSON'S WARBLER (*Limnothlypis swainsonii*) – This is always a tough one and we did a fair amount of looking and listening before getting a great look at one in the Big Thicket. Amazingly, it stayed on a perch for more than a minute!

TENNESSEE WARBLER (*Oreothlypis peregrina*) – These were numerous on some of the afternoons on the coast.

KENTUCKY WARBLER (*Geothlypis formosa*) – We found a territorial male in the Big Thicket area and ended up with nice looks before seeing a few more on the coast.

COMMON YELLOWTHROAT (*Geothlypis trichas*) – Our first ones were coming to the drip at Anahuac NWR.

HOODED WARBLER (*Setophaga citrina*) – Another species we saw on its breeding grounds, then we encountered many near the coast with over 20 seen on back-to-back days.

AMERICAN REDSTART (*Setophaga ruticilla*) – We saw several with most of them adult males.

CERULEAN WARBLER (*Setophaga cerulea*) – Another highly sought after species here, our first was seen near the water drip at Anahuac then we had a few more and even nice looks at a female at Sabine Woods. This was a great year for these.

NORTHERN PARULA (*Setophaga americana*) – Driving south from our Bachman's Sparrow foray we stopped at some tall cypress trees and saw a brilliant male. Then we had a few as migrants.

MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Setophaga magnolia*) – Good looks at a handful of these colorful guys.

BAY-BREASTED WARBLER (*Setophaga castanea*) – We enjoyed good views of about six individuals including a female that was very close to us on our last afternoon at High Island.

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER (*Setophaga fusca*) – This showy warbler performed well for us with several seen on a couple of our days.

YELLOW WARBLER (*Setophaga petechia*) – Both males and females were seen.

CHESTNUT-SIDED WARBLER (*Setophaga pensylvanica*) – These were seen each day with up to 12 seen one afternoon at High Island.

BLACKPOLL WARBLER (*Setophaga striata*) – The only spot we saw this species was at Sabine Woods where we saw three one morning.

PINE WARBLER (*Setophaga pinus*) – A bird of the piney woods, we had nice looks on our first day.

YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER (*Setophaga coronata*) – This is one of the first warblers to leave this area in spring so it was fortunate that we found a singing male at Jones State Forest on our first morning.

YELLOW-THROATED WARBLER (*Setophaga dominica*) – We tracked down a singing bird in the Big Thicket. This is another early arriver and we don't always count on seeing it as a migrant near the coast.

PRAIRIE WARBLER (*Setophaga discolor*) – A male singing from the top of a short pine showed well in the Big Thicket. It really has a great song.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER (*Setophaga virens*) – A handful were seen most days on the coast.

CANADA WARBLER (*Cardellina canadensis*) – A singing individual was just above us at Smith Woods on our last visit and we could not track it down before it disappeared. [*]

Passerellidae (New World Buntings and Sparrows)

BACHMAN'S SPARROW (*Peucaea aestivalis*) – This was truly one of the trip highlights. We drove north to the Jasper area and found this wonderful bird singing from a small branch in the piney woods. It stayed perched for quite awhile and we ended up having breakfast with it. Yip! Yip! Yip!

NELSON'S SPARROW (*Ammodramus nelsoni*) – This took a bit of looking but we found a late wintering bird in the marshes along the Bolivar Peninsula. It is quite a colorful sparrow.

SEASIDE SPARROW (*Ammodramus maritimus*) – We saw a couple in the wetter parts of the coastal prairies.

LARK SPARROW (*Chondestes grammacus*) – A rather rare bird here, we found one along the roadside near Anahuac NWR. This is a most strikingly marked sparrow.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) – Another wintering bird that was still hanging around.

SAVANNAH SPARROW (*Passerculus sandwichensis*) – Many were seen along the road edges, especially at Anahuac.

SWAMP SPARROW (*Melospiza georgiana*)

Icteriidae (Yellow-breasted Chat)

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens*) – We heard several early in the trip but never got close to a calling bird. [*]

Cardinalidae (Cardinals and Allies)

SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra*) – We certainly saw a lot of these, including adult males, females and those red and yellow blotched one year old males.

SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga olivacea*) – This stunner showed in good numbers a couple of our days. It really lights up the forest.

NORTHERN CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis*)

ROSE-BREASTED GROSBEAK (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) – A fair number were eating the mulberry fruits at Smith Woods and Boy Scout Woods.

BLUE GROSBEAK (*Passerina caerulea*) – I believe, surprisingly, our only one was at a water drip at Sabine Woods.

INDIGO BUNTING (*Passerina cyanea*) – A good number were seen on a few of the days.

PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*) – A male and female appeared at one of the water drips on our first afternoon at High Island. Then we ended up seeing a few more during the week. The males are really amazingly colored.

DICKCISSEL (*Spiza americana*) – We saw this interesting species a couple of times with a good number of them spotted on our last morning at the edge of a rice field.

Icteridae (Troupials and Allies)

BOBOLINK (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*) – It was a surprise to see this late arriving species pop up on the top of a shrub while we were looking at a group of Dickcissels in the rice field area on our last morning.

EASTERN MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna*)

ORCHARD ORIOLE (*Icterus spurius*) – A fair number were feeding in the bottle brush trees near the entrance to Boy Scout Woods. Most that we saw were females or first year males with black throats.

BALTIMORE ORIOLE (*Icterus galbula*) – A daily sight in the woods along the coast, we had a few days with many individuals arriving.

RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD (*Agelaius phoeniceus*)

BRONZED COWBIRD (*Molothrus aeneus*) – We spotted one male with a group of Brown-headed Cowbirds near the football field at High Island.

BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD (*Molothrus ater*)

COMMON GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula*)

BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus major*) – We had nice looks and a good comparison with the following species at Anahuac.

GREAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Quiscalus mexicanus*)

Fringillidae (Finches, Euphonias, and Allies)

PINE SISKIN (*Spinus pinus*) – We saw a group of about seven fly over us calling at Jones State Forest.

Passeridae (Old World Sparrows)

HOUSE SPARROW (*Passer domesticus*) [I]

MAMMALS

EASTERN COTTONTAIL (*Sylvilagus floridanus*) – We saw one along the roadside near a cattle pasture.

SWAMP RABBIT (*Sylvilagus aquaticus*) – This is the common rabbit in the woods near the coast.

EASTERN GRAY SQUIRREL (*Sciurus carolinensis*) – These were very common and distracting in the woods at High Island.

NUTRIA (*Myocastor coypus*) – We saw one at Cattail Marsh and another at Anahuac. These are introduced and considered a pest in these parts. [I]

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN (*Tursiops truncatus*) – There were about three seen at the entrance to Galveston Bay near the ferry crossings.

WHITE-TAILED DEER (*Odocoileus virginianus*) – A small group was seen north of Jasper in the Piney Woods.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Totals for the tour: 197 bird taxa and 6 mammal taxa