

although migrants begin to appear in s.e. Nebraska in early October (*fide* JGJ, WRS). Pushing the season were Field Sparrows, with a recently fledged young Sept. 6 in *Pontotoc*, OK (WAC).

Few Baird's Sparrow are reported, many fewer documented. One report in North Platte Sept. 27 (LKM) was submitted to the N.O.U.R.C. Five Henslow's Sparrows in *Linn*, KS Sept. 2 (LM) may have been at a breeding site. Tardy was a Grasshopper Sparrow in *Saunders*, NE Nov. 3 (THo). Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were located at *Lancaster/Saunders*, NE Sept. 15 (WRS) through Oct. 20; an amazing nine were found in *Clay*, NE Oct. 16 (SJD).

West of most White-throated Sparrows was one in *Sioux*, NE Oct. 12 (MB). Early were Harris' Sparrows in *Cherry*, NE Sept. 28 (LR, RH), and *Thomas*, NE Sept. 29 (LR, RH). Ten Chestnut-collared Longspurs in *Morton*, KS Sept. 28 (SS) were early.

Gray-crowned Rosy Finches wandered into *Sioux*, NE, with one present Nov. 9 (RCR, DJR, VC) and 12 Nov. 24 (LKM, HH). Perhaps a species being displaced, only six Purple Finches were reported for Nebraska, including a female Nov. 15 at *Scotts Bluff* (AK), where it is normally rare. A Cassin's Finch appeared Nov. 10 in *Finney*, KS (T&SS)

The surprise outburst of Red Crossbills during the summer continued into August, with birds noted at scattered locations mostly across Nebraska and Kansas, e. to *Sarpy*, NE Aug. 21 (BP, LP). Many were immatures; the best counts were 250 in *Sioux*, NE Aug. 2 (SJD), near where they breed; 60 in *Morton*, KS Nov. 10 (*fide* LM), and >25 in *McCurtain*, OK Aug. 10 (BH *et al.*). Exceptional was an imm. White-winged Crossbill in *Sioux*, NE Aug. 8 (MB). Only one Com. Redpoll was reported for the season, in *Scotts Bluff*, NE Nov. 10 (AK). A modest scattering of Evening Grosbeaks appeared towards the end of the season in Kansas and Nebraska (*fide* JGJ, WRS, LM).

Cited observers (area editors boldfaced):
 KANSAS: Steve Addinall, Laura Allen, Mark & Elaine Corder, Barbara Campbell (BCm), Bob Fisher, Terrell & Nelda Giddens, Tyler Hicks, Chris Hobbs, Pete Janzen, Lowell Johnson, Dan Klusa, Mark Land, Harold McFadden, Mick McHugh, **Lloyd Moore**, Dan Mulhearn, John Northrup, Marie Osterbuhr (MOs), Eric Preston, Galen Pittman, Mike Rader, Leonard & Betty Rich, Mark Robbins (MRo), Scott Seltman, Tom & Sara Shane, Lawrence & Ruth Smith, Art

Smallwell, Don Vannoy. NEBRASKA: Roland Barth, Mark Brogie, Virgil Couch, Stephen J. Dinsmore, Larry Einemann, Carol Falk, Laurence Falk, Marlin French, Robin Harding, Dave Heidt, Thomas Hoffman (THo), H. Hughson, Bill F. Huser, Jan Johnson, G. Jorgensen, **Joel G. Jorgensen**, Alice Kenitz, Lucy Koenig, Sandy Lemmon, Larry K. Malone, Babs Padelford, Loren Padelford, Lanny Randolph, Dorothy J. Rosche, **Richard C. Rosche**, **W. Ross Silcock**, John Sullivan, Edna Clair Thomas, Zee Uridil. OKLAHOMA: James W. Arterburn, Pat Bergey, Charles Brown, Dick Clapp, J. Cross (JCr), Jeff Cox, Bill Carrell, William A. Carter, David Gill, Vicki Hatfield, Berlin Heck, James C. Hoffman, Jay Isbell, Nathan Kuhner, **Jo Loyd**, **Louis McGee** (LMc), Jeri McMahon, Kurt & Sharon Meisenzahl, John G. Newell, Jim & Marion Norman, Mitchell Oliphant, Van Remsen, Pat Seibert, Barbara Tarbutton, Jeff Webster.

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Texas Region

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Sufficient to abundant rains blessed much of Texas, especially in the first half of the season, but in most instances this moisture just moved local totals from "extreme" annual deficits of the summer to only moderate deficits. In far west Texas, the abundant growth of grasses portended excellent habitat conditions to come. Rains associated with a frontal passage in the first week of October created good fallout conditions on much of the coast, the best autumn grounding in some years. A six to eight-inch snowfall in late November was the only notable weather event in the Panhandle.

Any ornithological effects of hurricane *Dolly*, which made landfall in northeast Mexico August 23, were subtle at best. Rains in south Texas derived from *Dolly* were probably responsible for the pile up of Mississippi Kites on the Coastal Bend in late August; *Dolly* may have also contributed to the substantial numbers of



other wandering waders (e.g. Wood Storks) noted later in the season there, but that is more speculative. Heavy rains hit far west Texas in mid-September from the remnants of Pacific hurricane *Fausto*; tropical storm *Josephine* inundated the eastern part of the Lower Rio Grande Valley in October. The relationship of the few interesting pelagic reports to any of the season's tropical weather is unclear.

Movements of waterbirds dominated the first half of the season; Lake Tawakoni, for example, was described as a "hot" birding spot during that time. The abundant waterfowl crops from the mid-West began showing up in east Texas, but elsewhere in Texas numbers seemed not much above normal. A northern/montane finch invasion started early in west Texas, with crossbills reported in several areas by mid- to late August. By mid-October there were clear indications that this constituted a major event in west Texas and the Panhandle. By the end of the season, this would become one of the most notable in recent memory, with crossbills spilling over into central and east Texas. Red-breasted Nuthatches were also showing significant movements, but corvids were conspicuous by their absence in these reports.

Abbreviations: Ft. Bliss (*Fort Bliss sewage ponds, El Paso*); G.M.N.P. (*Guadalupe Mountains N.P.*); L.R.G.V. (*Lower Rio Grande Valley*); S.S.W.T.P. (*South Side Water Treatment Plant, Dallas*); T.B.R.C. (*Texas Bird Records Committee/Texas Ornithological Society*); T.C.W.C. (*Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection/Texas A&M University*); U.T.C. (*Upper Texas Coast*); V.C.D.B. (*Village Cr. Drying Beds, Tarrant*). The following are shortened names for the respective county, state, or national parks, wildlife refuges, etc.: Aransas, Bentsen, Big Bend, Hagerman, Laguna Atascosa, and Santa Ana.

Loons to Flamingos

Single Pacific Loons were at Red Bluff Res., *Reeves/Loving*, Nov. 2 (PG) and Lake O' the Pines, *Marion*, Nov. 10 (CCo). In a repeat of last fall's occurrence, several Least Grebes were again in Beaumont Oct. 19+ (JWh). Pied-billed Grebes took advantage of late summer rains in the Panhandle, where 3 pairs nested at Buffalo L. on the very late date of Aug. 29 (KS). A Red-necked Grebe was at Cooper L., *Hopkins/Delta*, Nov. 28 (†M&KWh). Responding to fall rains, 2 pairs of Eared Grebes with chicks were at Cactus L., *Moore*, Aug. 24 (KS, PBC), a first county nesting record. Interesting W. Grebe reports included singles at *Jackson* Oct. 11–13 (BBr) and at Greenbelt L.,

Donley, Nov. 7 (KS). A Manx Shearwater was found alive on a *Nueces* beach Oct. 28 (*vide TA*), however the bird did not survive (* to T.C.W.C.); interestingly, all 6 Texas records of this sp. are from *Nueces*. The only organized pelagic trip this season was off Port O'Connor Sept. 21. No storm-petrels or shearwaters were seen, but observers were treated to a stunning **Red-billed Tropicbird** (†DPe, ME, PH, RWE, m.ob.). Both previous state records of this sp. were picked up as specimens after storms, so this season's record is the first ever seen by birders in the field. A late Masked Booby was found on Mustang I., Nov. 30, while a very early N. Gannet was at the same location Aug. 25 (TA). Amos reported >100 apparently disoriented Double-crested Cormorants showing up on Mustang I. and nearby Corpus Christi Oct. 25+. The birds were unable to fly and many were later found dead. So far, lab results are inconclusive. A late record for n.c. Texas was provided by a Neotropic Cormorant at V.C.D.B., *Tarrant*, Oct. 30 (JWS). A flock of 540 Anhingas was seen over Corpus Christi Sept. 14 (B&PBe). A late Magnificent Frigatebird was at Boca Chica Nov. 6 (RSch). The Cattle Egret colony in *Moore* mentioned in the summer report had 5 nests with young by late August (*KS, PBC). In addition, evidence of the expansion of this sp. in the Panhandle was provided by 90 Cattle Egrets near Amarillo, *Potter*, Aug. 31 (KS) in the same field where the first Panhandle record of the sp. occurred 30 years ago in September 1966. Two Glossy Ibises were at Corpus Christi Aug. 5 (GS), while singles were at Austin Sept. 2 (†RP) and in *Jefferson* Nov. 17 (†JWh). Far flung Roseate Spoonbills included three at Red Bluff L., *Reeves*, Aug. 14 (ph. GL, BF) and another at Imperial Res., *Pecos*, Oct. 1–10 (BJP); the sp. is very rare in the Trans-Pecos.

SA Staggering and unprecedented numbers of Wood Storks were seen this season at several locations. Whittle counted 5000 Wood Storks in "two loosely joined kettles" near Fannett, *Jefferson*, Sept. 29. Even more amazing was a careful count of 11,100 over Bazemore in Corpus Christi in a one-hour period Sept. 30 (GS et al.). Flocks of several hundred Wood Storks are regularly seen during the annual hawk watch at Bazemore, but the numbers seen this season stunned observers. We can only speculate that these birds originated to our south, then moved into Texas during post-nesting dispersal.

The Greater Flamingo seen off and on at Laguna Atascosa since 1995 was seen occasionally this period. The origin of this bird is still debatable (m.ob.).

Waterfowl

Two Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks were well n.e. of their regular range in *Wood* Aug. 13 (BHe). Of questionable origin was a well-described White-cheeked Pintail at Brazoria N.W.R., Sept. 11 (†RWe). A description of a basic-plumaged Garganey at Laguna Atascosa Nov. 5 (MO) will be received by the T.B.R.C. There were 65 early Gadwalls at L. Sam Rayburn, *Angelina*, Aug. 27 (NB, JWin). A flock of 1000 Canvasbacks was at L. Ray Roberts, *Denton*, Nov. 2 (RA, JT). An Oldsquaw was at Corpus Christi's Pollywog Pond Nov. 16+ (m.ob.). Scattered reports of scoters included a Black at Cooper L., Nov. 29 (GL, BF, M&KWh), a Surf at L. Alcoa, *Milam*, Oct. 26 (BF), and single White-wingeds at White Rock L., *Dallas*, Nov. 3 (PB, BGi, RR) and L. Tawakoni, *Rains*, Nov. 5 (MWh). A Com. Merganser at Junction Nov. 19 (SWie) was unexpected.

Raptors

Thirteen Swallow-tailed Kites along the coast between Aug. 18–Sept. 19 (JE, m.ob.) were a few more than expected, but a single Swallow-tailed at Mexia, *Limestone*, Sept. 2 (BFI) was more noteworthy. Two White-tailed Kites at Richland Creek W.M.A., *Freestone*, Sept. 15 (DHa, T&SPo) were unexpected. Fall hawk watchers tallied some interesting Mississippi Kite numbers this season, with a total of 3500 seen during the period at Bazemore (*vide JE*), and 1150 at Smith Pt., *Chambers* (WB). The best dates at Bazemore were Aug. 14 with 2000 kites and Aug. 31 with 1445 kites. An imm. Bald Eagle in *Jefferson* Nov. 15 (JWh) provided a rare record for that area. Fred Gehlbach at Baylor University and others report that Cooper's Hawk is increasingly becoming a nester in parks, golf courses, and riparian creeks and rivers in urban Texas, thanks in large part to the abundant prey base of grackles (*vide JE*). In Texas, Gray Hawks are usually only expected in the L.R.G.V. and occasionally in Big Bend. This season Gray Hawks were seen around Baffin Bay on several occasions (GP), while another was at Ricardo, *Kleberg*, Oct. 6 (N&PP). Red-shouldered Hawks are rare in the Panhandle area, so one in *Crosby* Aug. 10 (BRa) provided a good record. Hawk watchers documented a notable Broad-winged Hawk migration this season. Bazemore counters tallied 343,000 Broad-

winged during the season, with the best total of 103,000 birds seen Sept. 29 (JE *et al.*). Smith Pt. tallied 14,000 Broad-wingeds, while Peace's radar watch from Houston detected a whopping 567,000 Broad-wingeds in that area Sept. 19–Oct. 6. His best day was also Sept. 29, with 118,000 Broad-wingeds tallied there. Short-tailed Hawks were previously considered extremely rare in Texas. In the past few years, however, the T.B.R.C. has accepted 7 records of this species. This season, a dark-morph imm. Short-tailed Hawk was reported at Santa Ana Sept. 6 (†TB). Two Swainson's Hawks in *Angelina* Sept. 14 (NB, CM, JWin) were well e. of their expected range. A pair of Swainson's Hawks fledged one young during September in *Johnson* (CE), providing a first county nesting record. A single Zone-tailed Hawk passed over Corpus Christi Aug. 18 (JS, *fide* GS), the first record in that area in 5 years. An amazing sight Sept. 21 for hawk watchers at Bazemore was a Red-tailed Hawk seen entering a kettle of migrant Broad-wingeds, grasping an ad. Broad-winged in its talons, and decending with its smaller prey into a nearby woodland (JE, m.ob.). A Golden Eagle in *Hunt* Oct. 17 (MWh) provided an interesting record for that area of the state. The Peregrine Fund released a total of 29 more Aplomado Falcons this year in s. Texas; some of these banded birds were irregularly reported from *Aransas* to *Cameron* along the coast. An Aplomado Falcon was seen Nov. 12 near Van Horn, *Culberson* (†PH, BF). Like the 1992 bird in *Presidio*, we suspect a natural origin on this particular individual. Two Prairie Falcons Sept. 28 and another Sept. 30 at Bazemore were unexpected (JE). Also out-of-place was another Prairie Falcon on Galveston I., Oct. 13 (PG). An injured Peregrine Falcon picked up in San Antonio wore a leg band indicating it had been banded in Greenland in 1990.

Rails to Shorebirds

A Black Rail found in a Ft. Worth parking lot Oct. 3 (*fide* EW) provided *Tarrant* with its first record. This was certainly a banner year for Whooping Crane reports in the Panhandle. Three were seen over *Carson* Oct. 23 (SP), and eight were seen there the next day (JoHal, EK, RSc). Remarkably, another four Whoopers were seen near Happy, *Randall*, Nov. 2 (Ja). At this time of this writing we had not received the total number of Whooping Cranes that arrived at Aransas this fall, but a record population was anticipated. Unusual in the Trans-Pecos, two Am. Golden-Plovers were at Imperial Res.,

Oct. 18 (BJP). A count of 45 Snowy Plovers on Mustang I. and N. Padre I., Aug. 24 (CS, GL) was notable. A Snowy Plover at L. Tawakoni Sept. 9 (MWh) provided a first *Rains* record, while three Snowys at Imperial Res., Nov. 13 (BF, PH) were considered late. A count of 185 Piping Plovers along 20 mi of beach in *Nueces* and *Kleberg* Aug. 24 (CS, GL) was interesting, but 385 Pippings Nov. 29–30 on San Jose I., and Mustang I. (TA) provided a notable high count. A total of nine Piping Plovers were seen at L. Tawakoni during 6 dates, Aug. 10–Sept. 8 (RK, M&KWh, KL, m.ob.). A Mt. Plover was in *Jim Wells* Nov. 15 (KA). A flock of 67 Am. Avocets at L. Tawakoni Sept. 24 (MWh) represented the highest number seen in that area of Texas in many years. A late (for the Panhandle) Solitary Sandpiper was at Buffalo L., Nov. 2 (EK). A count of 30 Spotted Sandpipers at Ft. Bliss Aug. 21 (BZ) was notable. A Whimbrel at L. Tawakoni Aug. 3 (RR, ph., MWh) provided a first record for *Rains*. Unusual Marbled Godwit records included singles at L. Tawakoni Aug. 11, and Sept. 1 & 17 (M&KWh, SC), one at S.S.W.T.P., Aug. 16–19 (EW), and two at Ft. Bliss Aug. 23 (BZ). Unusual inland, 21 Ruddy Turnstones were tallied between Aug. 10–Sept. 24 at L. Tawakoni (RK, RR, MWh, m.ob.). An unprecedented number of Baird's Sandpipers were at Ft. Bliss during the period, with a high count of 372 Aug. 23 (BZ). Two reports of a juv. Sharp-tailed Sandpiper at San Antonio, Sept. 12 (†BD) and Sept. 21–22 (†CCu), will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C.; currently there is only one record of this sp. in Texas. A high count of 120 Buff-breasted Sandpipers were at L. Tawakoni Sept. 12 (MWh). An Am. Woodcock at Hagerman Nov. 11 & 21 (DMa, KH) and two in w. *Tarrant*, Nov. 28 (MR) were w. of their more typical range. As is expected, several Red-necked Phalaropes were in c. Texas during the season. More unexpected was a single Red-necked Phalarope on S. Padre I., Aug. 27–Sept. 1 (BMc).

Jaegers to Skimmer

A Parasitic Jaeger at L. Tawakoni Aug. 12 (ph., MWh) was very unusual, but a well-described ad. Long-tailed Jaeger there Nov. 5 (†MWh) was even more so. A dark-morph jaeger (Parasitic or Pomarine) was in *Upton* Nov. 13–16 (JWim, RMS, ph., GG). Any jaeger is very rare in w. Texas. An albino Laughing Gull was on Mustang I., Aug. 24 (WS, BF, CS, ph., GL). There were at least a dozen records of inland Laughing Gulls statewide from El Paso to far n.e. Texas (m.ob.). An amazing



Albinistic Laughing Gull at Mustang Island State Park, Texas, on August 24, 1996. This bird easily could have been misidentified by incautious observers. Photograph/Greg W. Lasley.

count of 15,000 Franklin's Gulls at Granger L., *Williamson*, Oct. 26 (BF) represented perhaps the highest count ever in c. Texas. A Black-headed Gull found at Cooper L., Nov. 2 (ph., †M&KWh, RW) remained through the period, representing the 9th Texas record. Another report of a Black-headed Gull at Imperial Res., Nov. 11 (†BJP) will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C. An ad. Mew Gull was at White Rock L., *Dallas*, Nov. 22 (†RR), while another was at Braunig L., *Bexar*, Nov. 24+ (†ph., WS) for about the 11th and 12th Texas records. A first-winter California Gull was on N. Padre I., *Kleberg*, Sept. 17 (†ph., A&MC) while an adult was on Mustang I., Oct. 25 (†ph., WS). A first-winter Thayer's Gull delighted observers at Lake O' the Pines Nov. 23+ (†GLu, m.ob., ph., CM). At least three Lesser Black-backed Gulls were on the c. coast during the period. A 2nd- or 3rd-winter Glaucous was on Galveston's East Beach Nov. 16+ (†JS, ph., DPe), while the imm. Great Black-backed Gull from last spring and summer remained at Bolivar Flats at least until Aug. 10 (RW). Black-legged Kittiwakes showed up in good numbers this season, with single first-winter birds at Imperial Res., Nov. 13 (†BF, PH), L. Bryan, *Brazos*, Nov. 20 (†KA), Cooper L., Nov. 23 (†M & KWh), and L. Wright Parman Nov. 30 (†CM, ph., GL, BF, M&KWh). Like kittiwakes, Sabine's Gulls were obvious this season, with a juvenile at L. Tawakoni Aug. 29 (†ph., MWh, SC), another there Oct. 5 (†JWS, RK *et al.*), an adult in *Harrison* Sept. 8 (†GLu), and another juvenile at Imperial Res., Sept. 29 (†BJP). There were surprising single Royal Terns at L. Tawakoni Aug. 6 (M&KWh) and at L. Grapevine, *Denton/Tarrant*, Oct. 20 (EW). Arctic Tern is still not accepted in this state, but the Sept. 21 pelagic off Port O'Connor turned up three birds identified as Arctic Terns by most observers. Written documentation will be

reviewed by the T.B.R.C. A high count of 5000 Forster's Terns at L. Tawakoni Sept. 24 (MWh) was notable, as were 1500 Least Terns on Mustang I., Aug. 24 (GL, CS). Black Terns were very common in late August on the c. coast; 10,000 were counted along *Nueces* and *Kleberg* beaches Aug. 24 (GL, CS). Two late Black Terns were in *Matagorda* Nov. 15 (RWe). Three Black Skimmers were a surprise at L. Tawakoni Aug. 5 (ph., MWh); at least one bird remained until Aug. 10 (EW).

Doves to Nightjars

We continue to monitor Eur. Collared-Doves in Texas. At this time we think many of the birds are expanding from populations to our east, yet we know of some released birds from captive stock. This season \leq three Eur. Collared-Doves were in the Texas Panhandle in Canyon, *Randall* (AS, MS, KS) from Sept. 3+. Out-of-place Band-tailed Pigeons in El Paso Nov. 9 (JPa) and at Balmorhea S.P., Nov. 17-18 (WS, TJ). White-winged Doves are still expanding northward through the c. parts of Texas, as evidenced by two birds in *Dallas* Nov. 13 (KR), as well as regular reports in Amarillo most of the period (*fide* KS). There were single reports of Com. Ground-Dove in Abilene Sept. 29 (LB) and in Midland Oct. 12-19 (RMS). A White-tipped Dove was far north in *Goliad* Sept. 7 (RW). Two Lesser Nighthawks lingered in El Paso until the late date of Nov. 6 (JPa). Rare in the area, a Chuck-will's-widow was flushed along the Devil's R., in Val Verde, Sept. 11 (*fide* KB). Providing a first record for *Goliad* was a road-kill Com. Poorwill and another live bird calling nearby Sept. 7 (RW).

Hummingbirds to Sapsuckers

Two imm. Green-breasted Mangos were discovered Aug. 17 in Harlingen, *Cameron* (†ph., TFu). At least one bird was seen regularly until Aug. 20 by numerous observers, providing the 5th Texas and United States record. Single Broad-billed Hummingbirds were in Big Bend Aug. 23 (†W&JR), San Antonio Oct. 6+ (SCa, †ph., WS, CB) and at Inez, *Victoria*, Nov. 16+ (EG, †PH). A Buff-bellied Hummingbird in Uvalde Oct. 2-4 (ph., EM) provided a first documented record for that area, while a Violet-crowned Hummingbird Oct. 31 at L. Amistad (ph., JWim) furnished the 3rd record for the state. Blue-throated Hummingbirds were certainly wandering this season, with one at Riviera, *Kenedy*, Aug. 8 (GP), one at Levelland, *Hockley*, Oct. 4-5 (JB), and another probable Blue-throated in Amarillo, *Potter*, in early October (RWi, RSc).

Strangely, the Blue-throated Hummingbird at Lost Maples from the summer remained there through Nov. 5 (*fide* ML). Calliope Hummingbirds are fairly regularly encountered during August in parts of the Trans-Pecos, but Panhandle records are now turning out to be almost expected as well. This season \geq seven individuals were seen in various *Potter* and *Randall* locations Aug. 1-Sept. 23 (m.ob., *fide* KS). A very early Broad-tailed Hummingbird was in Corpus Christi Aug. 17 (GS). At least 25 reports of Rufous Hummingbirds in the e. half of the state were received, many lingering through the period. Very late for the Panhandle was a Rufous that lingered until early November in Amarillo (RB, *fide* MS). An interesting behavioral note was reported from the Panhandle, where on two successive mornings a Blue Jay was observed as it captured, then beat to death a hummingbird in a suburban Canyon yard (MS, AS). An apparent ad. ♂ Allen's Hummingbird was in San Antonio July 26+ (†ph., H&KW, m.ob.). Single Ringed Kingfishers at Kingsville Aug. 8 (*fide* AW) and Nov. 9-30 (TH, m.ob.) and at *Uvalde* Sept. 14 (PH) were slightly away from their expected haunts. One of the most intriguing reports of the season was of Amazon Kingfisher near Rangerville, *Cameron*, Oct. 21 through at least mid-November (†DCB *et al.*). Written descriptions of a ♂ and a ♀ Amazon have been submitted to the T.B.R.C. by several observers; 2 photos of a ♂ bird have been examined and are inconclusive for specific identification. A great many observers looked for the bird(s), but only a very few reported seeing them. This is a sp. that has been expected to occur in Texas for some time; however, we hope any future reports of this (or any other potential first United States record) can be thoroughly documented with identifiable photos. A pair of Green Kingfishers at Big Bend Aug. 18 (RW ph., GL) provided one of very few photographed Trans-Pecos records. Last fall, two Lewis' Woodpeckers in El Paso represented the first documented records for that area. Amazingly, both returned this season (Oct. 30 & Nov. 5) to the same trees they occupied last year (†ph., BZ, JPa). Another Lewis' was at Big Bend Oct. 29 (†JHi). Out-of-place Red-headed Woodpeckers included one in Midland Sept. 17 and Oct. 17 (WW, BLu) and one in Grandfalls, *Ward*, Sept. 19-20 (BJP). A Williamson's Sapsucker was at Big Bend's Panther Junction Sept. 17 (MF).

Flycatchers to Shrikes

Details were submitted on a Greater Pewee at Grandfalls Aug. 27 (BJP); there are only

5 accepted records of this sp. for Texas. An E. Wood-Pewee at Rancho Viejo Nov. 19 (BMc) was very late. A Great Crested Flycatcher at Buffalo L., Oct. 10 (KS) was very late, while another at El Paso Oct. 19 (JPa) was both late and out-of-place. A Great Kiskadee at Park Chalk Bluff, *Uvalde*, Sept. 14 (PH) was at the n. edge of its expected range. Tropical Kingbirds remained at their well-established Brownsville area locations, while another was in Harlingen Aug. 13 (†OC) and two more were found at Rangerville, *Cameron*, Nov. 5+ (RSch, CS). A Couch's Kingbird at Brazos Bend Oct. 20 (J&WRi) provided one of few U.T.C. records. An E. Kingbird at Ft. Bliss Aug. 28 (BZ) and a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher there Oct. 6 (JPa) were unexpected. A concentration of 400 Scissor-tailed Flycatchers leaving a roost site Sept. 15 at Lufkin, *Angelina* (NB), was notable for the Pineywoods. Early and unusual for the Pineywoods, a Horned Lark was in *Angelina* Oct. 19 (NB *et al.*). A Steller's Jay in El Paso Nov. 9 (B&ML) represented the only out-of-place report of the sp. in the Trans-Pecos this season. In a pattern similar to last fall, Red-breasted Nuthatches again invaded the n. three-fourths of the state. They were especially common in the Panhandle and in the Midland area, where Frances Williams remarked they experienced "the largest invasion ever...by Sept. 20 they were everywhere!" The most southerly Red-breasted were three birds at Port Aransas Nov. 8 (N&EA). A single White-breasted Nuthatch in *Coryell* Sept. 16 (BFI) was slightly w. of its expected range. Noteworthy was an out-of-range Rock Wren on the dam at Cooper L., Nov. 17+ (ph., M&KWh). Hard to find in the Trans-Pecos, a Sedge Wren was s. of Marathon, *Brewster*, Nov. 27 (T&PF). Black-tailed Gnatcatchers seem to be increasing in numbers in the Devil's River area of *Val Verde* (KB, LH *et al.*). A good find for the Panhandle were 13 W. Bluebirds in Caprock Canyons S.P., *Briscoe*, Oct. 27 (TFe). Townsend's Solitaires began moving into the Midland area by Sept. 27 (FW), while one in *Mason* Nov. 13 (DC) was noteworthy. A Wood Thrush in *El Paso* Oct. 14 (JF) was a surprise, as was a Sage Thrasher in Austin Oct. 17 (BF). A Brown Thrasher was netted in the Davis Mt., Oct. 3 (KB); the sp. is rare in this area of Texas. A Cedar Waxwing at Buffalo L., Aug. 18 was quite early (KS). The only N. Shrike reported was in *Armstrong* Nov. 20 (PA, KS).

Vireos to Warblers

Rare on the c. coast, two Bell's Vireos in Corpus Christi Aug. 18 (KT) and another Sept. 18 (A&MC) were a surprise. Hut-

Table 1. Unusual warblers in West Texas, Fall 1996

Species	Dates	Location	Observer
Blue-winged (2)	Sept. 7	<i>Hemphill</i>	JE <i>et al.</i>
Blue-winged	Oct. 6	Grandfalls	BJP
Tennessee	Oct. 2	Grandfalls	BJP
Tennessee	Oct. 12	Big Bend	MF
Chestnut-sided	Nov. 23	<i>El Paso</i>	BZ <i>et al.</i>
Magnolia	Sept. 29	<i>Randall</i>	RSc
Black-throated Blue	Sept. 24	Ft. Bliss	BZ
Black-throated Blue	Oct. 18	<i>Gray</i>	JE
Black-throated Blue	Nov. 23	El Paso	ScW
Blackburnian	Sept. 24	Ft. Bliss	BZ
Palm	Sept. 1	<i>Randall</i>	RSc
Palm	Sept. 1	Imperial Res.	BJP
Cerulean	Aug. 15	Grandfalls	BJP
Black-and-white	Nov. 12–20	Balmorhea S.P.	TJ, KB
Worm-eating	Sept. 8	Devil's River	<i>fide</i> KB
Mourning	Oct. 7	Buffalo Lake	KS

ton's Vireo, a common montane sp. in the Trans-Pecos, is rarely seen in lowland areas; one at El Paso Nov. 23 (BZ, JPa, ph., GL) represented only the 4th county record. A Philadelphia Vireo at Big Bend Oct. 19 and a Red-eyed there Aug. 12 (MAd) were of interest for that area. October 5 & 6 were excellent warbler migrant days on the c. coast. Several observers (WS, GS, A&MC) in different Corpus Christi area locations tallied 23 or more species. Highlights included four Golden-wingeds and eight Worm-eatings. As usual, scattered, out-of-place eastern warblers were found in w. Texas (*see Table 1*). About ten different Tropical Parulas were in scattered locations in *Cameron* and *Hidalgo* during the season (m.ob.). Unusual Prairie Warbler records included singles at L. Tawakoni Aug. 18 (PB, RR) and Sept. 1 (MWh) and at Austin Sept. 2 (BF), while a Bay-breasted Warbler at Sabal Palms Nov. 9 was late (ML). Details for a Connecticut Warbler on Galveston I., Oct. 6 (†JSt) have been forwarded to the T.B.R.C.; this remains an extremely rare bird in this state, with only 6 accepted records. Two MacGillivray's Warblers in *Bosque* Oct. 5 (PM) were about on the e. edge of where they are expected. Farther afield, a MacGillivray's in Portland, *San Patricio*, Oct. 9 (*fide* GS) was more unusual. Representing the 14th Texas record, a Red-faced Warbler was in Big Bend's Pine Canyon Aug. 12 (†CEd, JGe).

Tanagers to Finches

Scarlet Tanagers are typically very rare fall migrants in Texas, but this season they were in amazing abundance. At least 17 different Scarlet Tanagers were in various places on or near the c.l coast Oct. 5–9 (m.ob.), while \geq seven Scarlets were on the

U.T.C., Oct. 6–12 (JWh, RWe). Unexpected was a W. Tanager in San Marcos Nov. 5 (DHe). It was very surprising to find \leq 20 Black-headed Grosbeaks in Palo Duro Canyon, *Randall*, Nov. 2 (ph., IJ, WJ). Good details on a ♀ Blue Bunting at Laguna Atascosa Nov. 16 (†LB) and a male at Bentsen Nov. 30+ (†m.ob.) have been forwarded to the T.B.R.C. Two Brewer's Sparrows in *Comal* Nov. 1 (SWie) were rare for c. Texas. A well-described report of a Sage Sparrow at Rio Grande City, *Starr*, Sept. 14 (†A & MK) suggests an unprecedented southward movement of the sp. this season. Two–three Baird's Sparrows were in n. *Jeff Davis* Nov. 15+ (†R&NA *et al.*), while another was at Davis Mountains S.P., Nov. 28 (†T&PF). A single Le Conte's Sparrow in Palo Duro Canyon Nov. 19 (PT) and five–six in the grassy flats along Tornillo Cr. in Big Bend (MD *et al.*) were nice finds. Three Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrows were seen Nov. 19 at Sam Rayburn Res., *Angelina*, a very rare inland e. Texas record (NB, JWin). A White-throated Sparrow in *El Paso* Nov. 11 (PR) was unexpected, while an early White-crowned Sparrow was at Abilene Aug. 28 (*fide* LB). Harris' Sparrows made their first appearance in Midland since 1988 when three were sighted there Nov. 2–24 (m.ob.). A Yellow-eyed Junco was in Dog Canyon, G.M.N.P., *Culberson*, Nov. 25 (†T&PF), providing the 6th Texas record. A very rare fall visitor to Texas, a Bobolink was in *Goliad* Sept. 29 (RW). In c. and s. Texas, E. Meadowlarks seemed to be abnormally sparse early in the season before the influx of wintering birds (PP, CS, m.ob.). Not previously documented there before late November, a Rusty Blackbird was at Ft. Bliss Aug. 29 (BJ) There

was a minor invasion of Purple Finches in the Panhandle and w. Texas. This was also one of the best influxes of Cassin's Finches in at least a decade. Some of the more notable reports of Cassin's came from Amarillo, Abilene, and El Paso. Building on the initial reports from July, several more Red Crossbills began showing up at Trans-Pecos locations in early August. By Aug. 21, a flock of eight were stationed in Ft. Davis. Quickly thereafter the sp. was widespread and rather common locally in the Trans-Pecos. As early as Aug. 16, Red Crossbills began being reported at numerous Panhandle locations (*fide* KS), and a single crossbill was seen well to the east at Temple (CoJ) the same day. In November, further reports of crossbills came from *Midland*, *Upton*, and *Glasscock*. Crossbills made their first appearance ever in far e. Texas Nov. 21, when seven were discovered in Angelina National Forest, *San Augustine* (RiS). Most remarkable was Hansen's report of a Red Crossbill calling overhead Nov. 9 at Rangerville, *Cameron*, the first L.R.G.V. report in 24 years. Details on a possible ♀ White-winged Crossbill from a Rusk feeder Nov. 25 (†PHa) and a probable Com. Redpoll from *Jeff Davis*, Nov. 30 (†T&PF) will be reviewed by the T.B.R.C.

SA Lawrence's Goldfinches staged an historic invasion into the w. Trans-Pecos. Not since the early 1950s has this sp. been reported in such numbers in Texas. The parade started Oct. 12 when single birds were found in the Davis Mts. (†AD) and Ft. Bliss (†JPa). Paton found and photographed three more the same day at Hueco Tanks. Further reports include five near Marathon, Brewster, Oct 21 (†LBli *et al.*), four near Terlingua, Brewster, Oct. 22 (†JHi *et al.*), one at Tornillo Res., Hudspeth, Nov. 3 (†MA), and one n. of Ft. Davis Nov. 18 (†RWe). Many observers took advantage of the opportunity to see this sp. at Hueco Tanks, where \leq 12 were reported regularly through the period (†ph., m.ob.).

Evening Grosbeaks blasted into the Panhandle and w. Texas in mid-October (KB, KS *et al.*). Numbers peaked in early November when flocks of several dozen and \leq 100 birds were present at numerous locations through the end of the period.

Addendum

We received 2 photos of what appears to be a Red-breasted Sapsucker at McGregor, *McLennan*, Feb. 27, 1996 (A Gor-



Lawrence's Goldfinches appeared in numbers in western Texas this autumn, their first real invasion in some forty years. This shot taken November 22, 1996, at Hueco Tanks State Park, shows three Lawrence's Goldfinches together (along with two House Finches). Photograph/Greg W. Lasley.

don). There are no previous reports of this sp. in Texas. The T.B.R.C. is currently attempting to obtain more documentation on this amazing record for review.

Undocumented Rarities

We received the following reports of Texas Review Species this season with no documentation. We hope such documentation is forthcoming. Masked Duck at Santa Ana, Collared Forest-Falcon at Laguna Atascosa, Sabine's Gull on N. Padre I., Red Phalarope at McNary Res., Red Phalarope at Lubbock, Clark's Nutcracker at Alice, and Bohemian Waxwing at Lubbock.

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Idaho- Western Montana Region

DAN SVINGEN

How quickly things change in the west! A wet spring had turned into a dry summer by July, spawning wildfires this autumn. The end of the fall period, however, was unusually wet. Most observers felt that fall migration was early and, while interesting, not remarkable.

Abbreviations: A.F.R. (*American Falls Res., by American Falls, ID*); B.R. (*Boise Ridge Hawk Watch, Lucky Peak, n.e. Ada Co., ID*).

Loons to Ibises

Single Red-throated Loons were at A.F.R., Oct. 22 (DTa) and Hauser Res., *Lewis and Clark*, MT Nov. 2 (JV). Pacific Loons have become more regular and numerous in Idaho during recent falls. This year's sightings included one at Mann's Creek

Res., *Washington*, Oct. 28 (JG, DSm), one at C.J. Strike Res., *Owyhee*, Nov. 15 (DJT), \leq six at A.F.R. in late October (DTa, CT), and 20 at Cascade Res., *Valley*, Oct. 1 (MC, FK). One-two Pacific Loons were at Hauser Res., Nov. 9 & 23 (BE, DSt, JV) for about Montana's 8th record. Out-of-place Idaho grebes included a Red-necked in Lewiston Nov. 16 (DNS, ICS, m.ob.), an Eared on Pend O'reille L., *Bonner*, Oct. 25 (GS), and a Clark's at Mann L., *Nez Perce*, Oct. 26 (KD, DNS, ICS).

There are only about 25 Great Egret records in Montana, making the singles at Warm Springs in early August (DSt) and Helena L., *Lewis and Clark*, Aug. 24 and Sept. 14 (GH, DSu, GW) of interest. In Idaho, Great Egrets have been increasing both in numbers and range for several years, but the 15 at the n.e. corner of A.F.R., Sept. 2 (CT) were still noteworthy. Unusual Cattle Egret reports from Idaho included eight far-north birds in Lewiston Oct. 13 (DBe), two far-north birds at Lapwai Oct. 21–Nov. 3 (DNS, ICS), a high of 20 birds near Springfield Aug. 23 (CT), and three tardy birds at Deer Flat N.W.R., *Canyon*, persisting until at least Nov. 31 (JG). A rare Green Heron was at A.F.R., Aug. 25 (DE, EF). A White-faced Ibis at Willow Creek Res., n.e. *Madison*, MT Aug. 17 (EL, MD, JP) provided an unusual latilong record, while 40 tardy White-faced were still at A.F.R., Sept. 29 (CT).

Waterfowl

Four Trumpeter Swans, rare in n. Idaho, were at Medicine L., s. *Kootenai*, ID Nov. 10 (JH, MH). Unusual sightings of Greater White-fronted Geese included three at Mann L., Oct. 5–6 & 26 (C.A.S., KD, DNS, ICS), one at Hagerman W.M.A., *Gooding*, ID Nov. 23 (DMo), and an immature in Lewiston throughout November (DNS, m.ob.). An early Eur. Wigeon was in Boise, ID Oct. 29 (MC, FK). Up to seven Greater Scaup were in Lewiston Nov. 16–31 (DNS, m.ob.). A late and out-of-place ♀ Harlequin Duck was at Lewiston Oct. 20 (JH, MH). Higher than normal numbers of Oldsquaw were reported this fall, including singles at Canyon Ferry Res,

Lewis and Clark, MT in mid-October (BS), Mountain View Res., *Owyhee*, ID Nov. 1 (DTa), upper Pahsimeroi R. Valley, n.e. *Custer*, ID Nov. 23–25 (DF, RC), Cascade Res., *Valley*, ID Nov. 15 (MSm), and one-three Oldsquaw at Mann L., Nov. 3–16 (DNS, m.ob.). As usual, scattered Surf Scoter were seen across the Region, with one-two at A.F.R., Oct. 26 and Nov. 4 (DTa, CT), three at Glen L. near Bozeman, MT Oct. 26 (EL, JP, TP), and four at Frenchtown, MT Oct. 27 (DH). The only White-winged Scoter reports were of singles at Bean L., *Powell*, MT in late October (*vide* PW), in Lewiston Nov. 5 (C&SW), and at A.F.R., Nov. 29 (RC, CT). Idaho's 2nd Black Scoter, a female, was at A.F.R., Nov. 4 (RC, †CT, DTa). The ♀ Red-breasted Merganser at Lewiston Nov. 24–31 (DNS, m.ob.) and male at nearby Mann L., Nov. 24 (DNS) were unusual.

Raptors to Shorebirds

The 5128 raptors observed at B.R. provided the highest count so far for this new study. The biggest increases over last year were all 3 accipiters, Swainson's Hawk, and Merlin. Seven Broad-winged Hawks were recorded during the last half of September (JC, SHa, GK, m.ob.), compared to nine in 1995. Two early Merlins were in Pocatello, ID Aug. 30 (CT). Last winter's Gyrfalcon returned to Gannet, ID, in mid-November (*vide* LB), while another was near Howe, ID, in late-November (*vide* CT).

Three locally-rare Sandhill Cranes were at Mann L., Nov. 4–24 (DBe, C&SW, m.ob.). American Golden-Plover are rare in the Region, making the singles at Lee Metcalf N.W.R., *Ravali*, MT Sept. 8 (DH) and Mann L., Oct. 5 (C.A.S.), six at Central Park, MT Oct. 5 (EL, MD, JP, TP), and ten in n. *Gallatin*, MT Oct. 2 (EL) of interest. Unusual Solitary Sandpiper sightings included one at Fernan L., *Kootenai*, ID Sept. 5 (JS). A Willet was at Mann L., Sept. 12 (ICS), for a rare n. Idaho record. A Marbled Godwit was at Mann L., Sept. 12–15 (ICS, m.ob.), where the species has become almost annual. Sanderling reports included one at A.F.R., Aug. 11 (EH), one at Sandpoint Sept. 7 & 20 (JS), and one-two at Mann L., Sept. 13–16 (KD, WH, MSm, DNS, ICS). Dunlin reports included two at Blackfoot Res., *Caribou*, ID Oct. 5 (CT), two at Coeur d'Alene L., *Kootenai*, ID Oct. 19–20 (GC, PAC), one at Dry Lakes, *Canyon*, ID Oct. 18 (JG), and \leq six at Mann L., Oct. 26–Nov. 31 (DNS, ICS, m.ob.). Stilt Sandpipers were seen at Idaho's 2 most dependable locations for the species when two were at Mann L., Aug. 30–Sept. 12 (ICS, m.ob.), and one





A juvenile Sabine's Gull at the Valley View Golf Course, Bozeman, Montana, September 13, 1996.
 Photograph/Eric Lichtwardt.

was at A.F.R., Sept. 2 (CT). An imm. Short-billed Dowitcher was at Mann L., Aug. 23 (KD, DNS, ICS).

Gulls to Woodpeckers

An imm. Franklin's Gull was at Sandpoint, ID Sept. 7 (JS). Idaho's 8th Mew Gull, an adult, was at Lewiston Nov. 23 (†DNS), as was the state's 4th Black-legged Kittiwake, seen just a few minutes later (†DNS, ICS). There are <15 Montana records of Sabine's Gull, so the singles in Bozeman Sept. 13–17 (JC, EL, JP, TP, m.ob.) and Helena Sept. 24 (AH, JR) were a treat. The one-two Com. Tern at Mann L., Sept. 13–16 (KD, DNS, m.ob.) and one at Sandpoint Oct. 11 (EC) were unusual, as the species is not annual in n. Idaho. A rare Band-tailed Pigeon flew over B.R., Sept. 30 (DTa).

Snowy Owls were more numerous than usual in the Region. Idaho records included singles near Genesee in early November (GLe), at Mann L., Nov. 5–7 (MK, C&SW, m.ob.) and near Hagerman Nov. 12 (DMc). The Snowy at Kootenai N.W.R., *Boundary*, ID in late October and early November was only the 4th there in 32 years (JRy). A gathering of 30 Short-eared Owls near Genesee in mid-November had declined to just a few birds by the end of the month (GLe). A flock of 200 Vaux's Swift was at Mann L., Aug. 30 (m.ob.). The n. limit of Broad-tailed Hummingbird in Idaho is poorly understood, making the female by Ola Aug. 10–13 and Sept. 3 (FZ) of interest. A Williamson's Sapsucker at Monument Peak, *Cassia*, ID Sept. 29 (DTa) was a first

for Latilong 26. White-headed Woodpeckers are apparently benefiting from recent wildfires in s. Idaho (*vide* DJT). The White-headed in far-north Priest R., ID Oct. 31 (†ES), was especially noteworthy.

Flycatchers to Finches

A late Say's Phoebe was by Whitebird, ID Nov. 24 (DNS). Blue Jays were numerous and widespread this fall. In Idaho, 31 were found at 20 different locations! In other jay news, observers speculated that a failure in the local pine-nut crop spurred the wandering of Pinyon Jays and Clark's Nutcrackers in s.e. Idaho. Unusual Pinyon Jay sightings included 20 at Massacre Rocks S.P., *Power*, ID Oct. 6 (CT), one-three at B.R., Sept. 23–Oct. 27 (JC, SHa), and one at Lolo, MT in November (PB).

A Bewick's Wren was along the Clearwater R. in *Nez Perce*, ID Sept. 14 (C.B.), not far from the small, persistent population in Coyote Coulee. A late Swainson's Thrush was in Bozeman Nov. 10 (TP). Idaho's 7th Brown Thrasher was at Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, *Butte*, ID Oct. 24 and Nov. 25 (DMi), under the same bush where one was seen Oct. 3 last year. A Solitary Vireo thought to be of the "Blue-headed" type based on head color and contrasting olive back was in Boise Oct. 14 (MC, FK). A rare Black-and-white Warbler was in Moscow, ID Oct. 1 (†PWj). The Am. Redstart in Boise Sept. 27 (MC, FK) was an unusual fall sighting. A late Com. Yellowthroat was in Missoula Nov. 21 (DH).

An Am. Tree Sparrow, rare in n. Idaho, was at Mann L., Nov. 1–16 (MK, C&SW,

m.ob.). A late Vesper Sparrow was in Moscow Oct. 9 (KD). Single Idaho White-throated Sparrows were at Boise Oct. 4–5 (MC, FK, DJT), at Deer Flat N.W.R., Oct. 19 (JG), and at Viola Oct. 30 (MH). Harris' Sparrow reports included singles at Boise Oct. 18 (DJT), Aberdeen, ID in late October (DB), Marsing, ID Nov. 16 (DJT), and A.F.R., Nov. 31 (CT). An ad. ♀ and four imm. Great-tailed Grackle were at Marsing Sept. 26–Nov. 31 (JG, DNS, m.ob.). Unusual sightings of Gray-crowned Rosy Finch included a single in s. *Benewah*, ID Oct. 28 (KD), and five in n. *Nez Perce* Nov. 4 (KD). At least three Lesser Goldfinch were still in Boise Oct. 21 (MC, FK, DJT), where the species likely nested this summer.

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