



THE CHIRP

NEWSLETTER OF THE TWIN LAKES AUDUBON SOCIETY

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April 2014



Greetings everyone from your President!

In the last newsletter notes I lamented over having not seen a single American Goldfinch at our feeder this winter. The day after I wrote the notes, a group of six goldfinches visited the feeder. The absent House Finches also returned about the same time. This morning (3/25) I saw a single goldfinch on the feeder.

The Whooping Cranes have begun migrating from the Aransas NWR to their northern Canada breeding grounds. Central Texas is located on their migration route. Interesting that they travel in small groups with 71% of the groups sighted having three or less birds. The groups may contain as many as ten birds. Last year one whooper traveled from Granger Lake to South Dakota in six days. If you spot whoopers in the area, Texas Whooper Watch wants to know. Just search for Texas Whooper Watch for a printable report form. They ask that you check to see if any are wearing colored bands on their legs.

Perhaps you have seen the news articles about the thousands of snowy owl sightings across the country this winter. One was even spotted in the Orlando area! Because of their size and danger to aircraft, Boston's Logan Airport has a "catch and release" program. As of early February they had captured 80, normally they capture 6-8 in a winter. Some think this is starting to shape up to be an irruption year. 'Irruption' refers to the unpredictable migrations <<http://www.livescience.com/29781-animal-great-migration-gallery.html>> the birds make.

Yesterday I checked out the TLAS facebook page for the first time. I encourage you to check it out, and post any sightings, questions, comments... <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Twin-Lakes-Audubon-Society/247380531971644> I look forward to seeing you at the TLAS meeting on April 8 in room 117 of the York Science Building.

Bert Pope

UPCOMING EVENTS

Unless otherwise noted, the contact for programs and field trips is Gil Eckrich; Cell: 254-534-0061,
Email is: gil.eckrich@att.net



PRESENTATIONS

08 Apr - Judy Hutka will give a presentation on "Attracting Bluebirds", one of the favorite songbirds in America

13 May - Picture Show and Tell, Everyone bring pictures to share!



FIELD TRIPS

26 Apr – Warbler Woods! This has become a traditional, and much anticipated field trip each year. We will meet at Warbler Woods at 8:30 that morning. Participants will be able to see how the TLAS donation to Warbler Woods was invested in a wagner feature that draws both birds and birders. Directions and more information can be found on their website <http://warblerwoods.org/>

May – Bald Eagle nest on the Lampasas River on private ranch near Maxdale. Details forthcoming and will be based on nest status/timing

Snack and Drink Sign-up

DATE	SNACK	SNACK	DRINKS & ICE	PAPER GOODS Cups,napkins,plates
8 Apr	NEEDED	NEEDED	Marilyn Miller	NEEDED
13 May	EVERYONE BRING SOMETHING			

BIRDS SEEN AND HEARD

Migration is on! Each day can bring new birds that will breed here, or passing through on their way northward.

Liz Cowan found breeding plumaged Red-breasted Merganser at Temple Lake Park, and Katy Cantu got photos that she posted on the TLAS facebook page. As the Prez noted in his comments, let's use this page as a source of birding tips, new sightings, and asking questions.

Earlier in the month, Kathy spotted and photographed this nice Barred Owl at Iron Bridge Park.



Liz is obviously on a bird finding streak! She located these Black-bellied Whistling Ducks at Slough Pond on 15 March – great find, Liz!



Chalk Ridge Falls Park has traditionally been a real hot spot for spring migrants, but has been closed for several months for renovation. Latest word is that the park should reopen mid-April! In lieu of visiting Chalk Ridge, check out Miller Springs, <http://www.millerspringsnaturecenter.org/>. The trails there have been improved, marked, and lead to some excellent birding.

Other spots to hit: Temple Lake Park (NOT on weekend, after about 10 in morning!) Franklin's Gulls are passing through, and our wintering Bonaparte's Gulls are molting into alternate plumage. And, finally, do NOT forget our Golden-cheeked Warblers! They can be seen at Miller Springs, Stillhouse Park, or BLORA.





Twin Lakes Audubon Society

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Return Service Requested

ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

All members will receive THE CHIRP electronically instead of in printed form. If a member does not have access to a computer, please contact Cathy Cantu @254-541-3689 and we will gladly send you a printed copy.

As each issue goes to press, you will receive an email with a PDF of the new issue attached. The PDF is also available at our website: www.twinklakesaudubon.org

Meetings

7:00 p.m., second Tuesday of the month in Room 117, York Science Center, University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, Belton (No meetings March, June, July or August).

