Greetings friends,

‘Tis the season...the CBC season that is. The Bell County Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is scheduled for Saturday 16 December. I sure hope y’all can make it. It is shaping up to be an interesting winter season in central Texas. We’re experiencing quite the influx of Golden-crowned Kinglets, and other uncommon wintering species such as Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Winter Wren, and Le Conte’s Sparrow are already present in good numbers. Other winter birds, like Cedar Waxwings and American Goldfinches, are beginning to arrive. Although the Red Phalarope that was present at Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir has left, perhaps other county rarities, such as the Reddish Egret and Rock Wrens at Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir, will linger through our CBC. We’ll be planning for the CBC at our next meeting, which is Tuesday 12 December. Everyone is invited to participate in the CBC - old and new members, beginning and long-time birders, etc. Every pair of eyes out in the field helps.

Other than planning for the CBC during our December meeting, we will also have our potluck holiday social (please bring something to share) and show-and-tell (if you have some digital pictures to share, please bring them!).

Now I need to deal with some serious business. This is a matter I will keep bringing up until it is resolved. The chapter needs volunteers to fill officer and board positions for terms beginning in fall 2007. We need a Secretary and a Treasurer, as well as 2 Board Members. Ideally, I would like to have nominees or volunteers for these positions by our February 2007 meeting.

So, you might ask what these positions entail. Officers and Board Members meet a minimum of 4 times per year. In recent times, these meetings have been scheduled about an hour or so before our normally scheduled chapter meetings. We have gathered at Schoept’s BBQ in Belton, where we eat supper and discuss TLAS business. If needed, Officers and Board Members vote on different matters. Attending these meetings and voting is pretty much the extent of Board Members’ duties. Besides having a vote, Officers also have additional duties. The Secretary takes notes at board and chapter meetings. The Treasurer is responsible for the chapter bank account (writing and depositing checks, balancing the check book, etc.). If anyone is willing to volunteer for these positions, please let me know. I would also encourage newer TLAS members to apply for some of these positions. If we do not get any nominees from the membership (you can contact me if you have suggestions on who might be good for these positions) or volunteers for these positions, then the nominating committee (Gil Eckrich, Tom Robbins, and 1 other to be determined) and myself are not above using extortion and other strong-arm tactics to get warm bodies into these positions. Thank you.
PRESENTATIONS AND FIELD TRIPS

Unless otherwise noted, the contact for programs is Scott Summers and the contact for field trips is Rich Kostecke Phone: (254) 547-2047; Cell: (314) 346-0658; E-mail: rkostecke@tnc.org or rkost73@yahoo.com.

Talks and Events
12 December 2006: CBC planning and Christmas Party
13 February 2007: TBD
13 March 2007: TBD
9 April 2007: TBD
8 May 2007: Membership slide show and annual business meeting

Field Trips
16 December 2006: Bell County CBC
13 January 2007: Fort Hood Owls (now 2 Burrowing Owls) and sparrows…
17 February 2007: Rockdale, reclaimed coal mine that now has nesting Bald Eagles and also has Wood Stork.
17 March 2007: TBD
14 April 2007: TBD
Late April or Early May: Spring bird count, date TBD
12 May 2007: TBD
30 June 2007: Fort Hood 4th of July Butterfly Count
7 July 2007: Stillhouse Hollow 4th of July Butterfly Count

Snack and Drink Sign-up

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Snacks</th>
<th>Drinks &amp; Ice</th>
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<tr>
<td>12 Dec</td>
<td>EVERYONE BRING SOMETHING</td>
<td>Tim Marston</td>
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<td>09 Jan</td>
<td>Chrissy &amp; Scott</td>
<td>Tom Robbins</td>
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<td>Golda Roberts</td>
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<td>13 Feb</td>
<td>Jack Williams</td>
<td>Sabrina Nicholson</td>
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<td>Ilse Meier</td>
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<td>13 Mar</td>
<td>Paula Wickham</td>
<td>O.K. Smith</td>
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<td>Chuck Jones</td>
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<td>09 Apr</td>
<td>Marilyn Miller</td>
<td>Golda Roberts</td>
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<td>08 May</td>
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<td>Terie &amp; Steve Snyder</td>
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For up-to-date reports of bird sightings, go to the TLAS website!
http://twinlakesaudubon.org/

On the morning of 23 November, Rich Kostecke spent 3.25 hrs in Lampasas County. Primary stops included Hancock Park in the city of Lampasas and Lometa Reservoir. Highlights at the Hwy 190 crossing of the Lampasas River just west of Kempner were 13 American Wigeon, 27 Gadwall, and 1 Belted Kingfisher.

Highlights at Hancock Park in Lampasas were: Pied-billed Grebe - 4 on Sulphur Creek, Red-shouldered Hawk - 1, Belted Kingfisher - 1, Northern Flicker - 2, Golden-crowned Kinglet - 1 heard
Cedar Waxwing - 4 first of the season for the, county, Marsh Wren - 1, Brown Creeper - 1, Yellow-rumped Warbler - 32, Pine Warbler - 2 (male and female), my first of the season, Swamp Sparrow - 1, American Goldfinch 8 - first of the season for the county

Perhaps due to the warmer weather or water levels that continue to fall, bird numbers at Lometa Reservoir seem to be down. Highlights at Lometa Reservoir were:
Great Blue Heron - 3, Great Egret - 1, American Coot - 256, Greater Yellowlegs - 3, Ring-billed Gull - 2, American Pipit - 6+

Rich also reports seeing the female Rufous Hummingbird at his feeders (SW Copperas Cove, Coryell Co.) again on 23 November.

On the morning on 18 Nov, 10 Twin Lakes Audubon Society members (see pics) birded Chalk Ridge Falls Park and Union Grove WMA at Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir (Bell Co.).Highlights at Chalk Ridge Falls included 1 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 1 Western Scrub-jay, 2 Brown Creeper, 2 Rock Wren (riprap on the north side of the Lampasas River), 2 House Wren, 5+ Golden-crowned Kinglet (though Tom Robbins reported a mega-flock of C Kinglets when he first arrived - perhaps 30 individuals!), 12+ Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 18+ Yellow-rumped Warbler, and 6 LeConte's Sparrow.

No Red Phalarope at Union Grove WMA. Highlights at Union Grove WMA were 1450 Canvasback, 16 Bufflehead, 1 Reddish Egret, 6050 American Coot, 1 Greater Yellowlegs, 13 Least Sandpiper, 10+ Long-billed Dowitcher, 4 Wilson's Snipe, and 4+ Swamp Sparrow. The numbers of Canvasback and coot are very rough estimates at best.

PLEASE report your sightings for inclusion!

2006 Christmas Bird Count (TXBU) Planning

The Bell County CBC (roughly; Temple south to Salado forms the west boundary; the east boundary is highway 95) will be conducted on 16 Dec. Last year we were blessed with pleasant weather (cool, but no rain or wind). Seventeen participants tallied 115 species (including 3 count week species), which tied the record high species tally set in 2004. So, we have a challenge to surpass that total. ALL member, and non-members who are interested, are encourage to attend the 12 Dec monthly TLAS meeting for planning purposes. Those of you who can't attend that meeting, Check our TLAS webpage to see how the CBC circle was divided out and where, and at what time, the respective groups will meet. You do NOT have to be an expert birder to participate and contribute! A pair of eyeballs detecting a hidden bird can make the difference of being able to report an additional species. Also, those of you who are not fully proficient with our winter birds, this is an excellent opportunity to learn from some of our experienced members.
Twin Lakes Audubon
3415 Whispering Oaks
Temple TX 76504

Return Service Requested

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

OFFICERS/CHAIRS
President: Rich Kostecke
   Tel: 254-547-2047
Vice President: Tom Robbins
Secretary: Golda Roberts
Treasurer: Scott Summers
Membership: Carol Ann Wadley
Publicity: Jonnie Summers
Newsletter: Gil Eckrich
ggeckrich@hot.rr.com
Hospitality: Shirley Beyer
Finance: Jack Williams
Directors: Joye Johnson
          Gil Eckrich
          Jonnie Summers
Chapter Reps: Joye &
          Corky Johnson