



# TWIN LAKES AUDUBON SOCIETY

<http://www.twinlakesaudubon.org>

November 2006



## **President's Letter**

Greetings friends,

As many of you know, I had opportunities to visit Alaska and Mexico recently. They were fantastic destinations. However, I will not be talking about them directly in this letter. Rather, I want to focus on the time I spent in transit. I find air travel to be quite stressful now-a-days. The lines at the airport are often long and slow-moving. Flights are often over-booked or delayed. Airplane seats have become increasingly less comfortable. I will not even comment on in-flight food (or the lack thereof). However, if there is a silver lining (besides reaching great destinations), perhaps it is the opportunity that air travel provides for reading, and believe me, I had plenty of time to read before, during, and between flights.

Now-a-days, there is a plethora of books on birding and nature that we can choose from for our reading pleasure (see Amazon.com, ABA [American Birding Association] Sales, etc.). One book that I read, and almost finished, during my travels that might be of general interest is "Prairie Time" by Matt White. White, a native Texan, provides historical anecdotes and personal observations about the Blackland Prairie, one of the most endangered habitat types in North America. We should all be familiar with the Blackland (or at least what it has become) as it lies just to our east. Another book that I read was "Songbird Journeys" by Miyoko Chu, which provides a nice overview of the annual cycle of migratory songbirds. Chu successfully presents some of the most recent science on migratory songbirds in a manner that is non-technical and easy to read, yet still informative and quite interesting. Of course, although reading is a great way to learn as well as be entertained, it is no substitute for actually getting out there in the Blackland or watching birds (preferably while on a beach in Mexico with a cold beer in hand) as they wing their way south.

By the way, if any of you have read any good books on birds or nature lately, then let Gil or me know and we can print your recommendation or review in future newsletters.

Finally, I am quite thrilled about our October field trip to Granger Lake. Admittedly, it was not among the better executed of our outings (everyone met up...eventually). However, it was quite encouraging to see all of the new faces. Of the 10 participants, I was the only "old-timer". The rest of the folks were new to TLAS or only recently involved with the chapter. For our chapter to be successful, we not only need the continuity of purpose that our long-time members provide, but the energy, enthusiasm, and new ideas that new members often provide. Hopefully some of you new folks will continue to be active in the chapter. As a reminder (a suggestion?), there are numerous ways that new and old members can be active in TLAS. One simple way is to provide input or leadership on field trips and programs (we are always open to ideas). Another simple way is to provide Gil with bird sightings, pictures, and news for the newsletter and website. A more substantial contribution can be made to the chapter by volunteering to be an officer or board member. I will be forming a nominating committee soon to come up with a slate of officers and board members (to be voted on by the chapter) to take office in fall 2007. By my reckoning, at least 2-3 of the primary officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer), and 2 of the board members will need to be replaced. Some of our other officers may also need to be replaced. If interested (or at least willing)

in serving the chapter in this way, please contact me. I would encourage our new members to consider volunteering for some of these positions (like board member or Secretary) as well.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 14 November. Erin Tighe Macchia (Arkansas State University) will talk to us about bird collisions with cellular towers. While at the North American Ornithological Conference in Vera Cruz, I attended her talk on this topic and found it quite informative and interesting. Our next field trip is scheduled for Saturday 18 November at Chalk Ridge Falls Park at Stillhouse Hollow Reservoir. We will focus on finding and identifying sparrows and wintering woodland songbirds. Also, depending on up-to-date reports, we might visit Union Grove Wildland Management Area, where some interesting birds have been seen in recent days.



## **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](mailto:rkostecke@tnc.org) or [rkost73@yahoo.com](mailto:rkost73@yahoo.com).

### **Talks and Events**

- 14 November 2006:** Bird collisions with cellular phone towers by Erin Tighe Macchia (Arkansas State University)
- 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**

- 18 November 2006:** Chalk Ridge Falls & perhaps Union Grove Wildlife Management Area. Meet at Chalk Ridge Falls parking area (below Stillhouse Dam)
- 16 December 2006:** Bell County CBC
- 13 January 2007:** TBD
- 17 February 2007:** TBD
- 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 4<sup>th</sup> of July Butterfly Count
- 7 July 2007:** Stillhouse Hollow 4<sup>th</sup> of July Butterfly Count

## Snack and Drink Sign-up

	<u>Snacks</u>	<u>Drinks &amp; Ice</u>
<b>14 Nov</b>	Lorraine William Karen Smith	Marilyn Miller
<b>12 Dec</b>	EVERYONE BRING SOMETHING	
<b>09 Jan</b>	Chrissy & Scott Golda Roberts	
<b>13 Feb</b>	Jack Williams Ilse Meier	Sabrina Nicholson
<b>13 Mar</b>	Paula Wickham Chuck Jones	O.K. Smith
<b>09 Apr</b>	Marilyn Miller	Golda Roberts
<b>08 May</b>		Terie & Steve Snyder

### BIRDS SEEN/BIRDS HEARD

For up-to-date reports of bird sightings, go to the TLAS website!

<http://twinlakesaudubon.org/>

The most exciting bird sighting for Central Texas in a long time was made by Randy Pinkston and his son on Monday, 23 October – a Red Phalarope at Union Grove Wildlife Management Area! Since then, birders from all over the state have come to view this true rarity. Pictures of this great bird have been posted to our web page <http://twinlakesaudubon.org/Red%20Phalarope/index.html> . Other interesting birds include an immature Reddish Egret, Black-bellied Plovers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Canvasbacks, Redheads, Least Sandpipers, thousands of Coots, Ospreys, and many more.

Teri, Scott, and Steve Snyder spent the weekend camping at Cedar Ridge Park on Lake Belton. Part of the weekend was very windy, but when the wind quit, they got to see some birds. Friday morning they drove to see the Red Phalarope, here is a list of other birds seen at Cedar Ridge.

Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted) 2, Eastern Phoebe 4, Carolina Chickadee –numerous, White-eyed Vireo 6, Canyon Wren 4, Wild Turkey 7, Belted Kingfisher 2, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 1, Great Blue Heron 3, Red-tailed Hawk 2, Osprey 1, Northern Cardinal 10, Northern Mockingbird 5, Blue Jay 6, Sandhill Crane 50+, Red-bellied Woodpecker 3.

Gil Eckrich and Rich Kostecke scouted the Cowhouse Creek Arm of Belton Reservoir and Airfield Lake on Fort Hood (Bell Co.). Observed 58 species with the following highlights: Wood Duck 2, Gadwall 66, American Wigeon 69, Mallard 4, Green-winged Teal 6, Redhead 22, Ring-necked Duck 3, Lesser Scaup 1, Pied-billed Grebe 8, Double-crested Cormorant 8, Great Blue Heron 13, Great Egret 5, Osprey 4, Bald Eagle 1 adult, American Coot 560, Killdeer 38, Greater Yellowlegs 9, Spotted Sandpiper 2, Semipalmated Sandpiper 1, Least Sandpiper 76, Long-billed Dowitcher 3, Wilson's Snipe 1, Ring-billed Gull 2, House Wren 1, Belted Kingfisher 4, Northern Flicker 1, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher 7, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 6+, Brown Thrasher 1, Orange-crowned Warbler 2, Spotted Towhee 2, Vesper Sparrow 3, Savannah Sparrow 3+ , Song Sparrow 2, White-crowned Sparrow 1 Common Yellowthroat 1, Clay-colored Sparrow 1 (first of season), Baltimore Oriole 2

**PLEASE report your sightings for inclusion!**



## Twin Lakes Audubon

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### OFFICERS/CHAIRS

President: Rich Kostecke  
Tel: 254-547-2047  
Vice President: Tom Robbins  
Secretary: Golda Roberts  
Treasurer: Scott Summers  
Membership: Carol Ann Wadley  
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Hospitality: Shirley Beyer  
Finance: Jack Williams  
Directors: Joye Johnson  
Gil Eckrich  
Jonnie Summers  
Chapter Reps: Joye &  
Corky Johnson

### 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).

