



TWIN LAKES AUDUBON SOCIETY

<http://www.twinlakesaudubon.org>

October 2006



President's Letter

Greetings friends,

By the time you read this, I will be in Vera Cruz, Mexico, enjoying numerous tropical birds, as well as southbound migrants that bred in the U.S. and Canada. In particular, Vera Cruz is renowned for its raptor migration. During certain, peak days during the fall migration, 0.75 million raptors can pass overhead. I am sure I will have many stories (and pictures) to share upon my return. Anyway, it is always important to remember that many of the birds we enjoy are birds of two worlds. Their continued existence is not only dependent on conservation of their breeding grounds, but also their migratory and winter grounds. I urge you to support agencies and organizations that promote avian conservation during all stages of the birds' annual cycle. Further, I urge you to visit the wintering grounds. Neotropical birding is a fantastic experience!

However, if you are not able to travel south of the border like me, you can still take advantage of our October field trip to bird the Granger Lake area, which is the wintering grounds of special birds like Mountain Plover, pipits, and longspurs. Mid-October may be slightly early for the aforementioned species, but, regardless, the lake and its surrounding agricultural and grassland habitats should be productive for a variety of other species. Gil Eckrich has arranged for Tim Fennell, a local Granger Lake area birder, to guide the TLAS field trip. Tim is extremely knowledgeable about the area and if there are Mountain Plovers, pipits, longspurs, or other birds on interest in the area, he is sure to get you views of them. The field trip is scheduled for **21October**. Further details are provided in this newsletter.

Some of you may be familiar with the speaker for our 10 October meeting, DJ Ortmann. She will be talking about her wildlife rehabilitation activities which have a strong focus on raptors. In fact, if I recall correctly, she is one of the few wildlife rehabilitators in our area. Wildlife rehabilitation can be a costly and time-consuming activity, but we all likely agree that it is a worthwhile endeavor. In my opinion, it is a great way to educate the public about wildlife and wildlife conservation. I am sure she would welcome any donations to help defray the costs of feeding and housing her raptors.

Hasta la próxima reunion! See y'all in November!

Rich Kostecke

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

10 October 2006: Wildlife Rehabilitation by DJ Ortmann (Moody, TX)

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

21 October 2006: Lake Granger. We will meet our guide, Tim Fennell, at 09:00 at the boatramp for Friendship Park map at this link, http://www.swf-wc.usace.army.mil/granger/p2_Lake_Map.htm and also on the TLAS Website. Those who opt not to link up at the lake, we will meet at 08:00 at the Belton Park & Ride, and maybe even do some birding enroute.

18 November 2006: TBD

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 4th of July Butterfly Count

7 July 2007: Stillhouse Hollow 4th of July Butterfly Count

Snack and Drink Sign-up

	<u>Snacks</u>	<u>Drinks & Ice</u>
10 Oct	Lana Shields	Gil Eckrich
14 Nov	Lorraine William Karen Smith	Marilyn Miller
12 Dec	EVERYONE BRING SOMETHING	
09 Jan	Chrissy & Scott Golda	
13 Feb	Jack Williams Ilse Meier	
13 Mar	Paula Wickham Chuck Jones	
09 Apr	Marilyn Miller	

BIRDS SEEN/BIRDS HEARD

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

<http://twinlakesaudubon.org/>

At evening twilight of 23 Sep Gil Eckrich saw 3 flocks of American White Pelicans, totaling about 300 birds, over Stillhouse Hollow. This phenomenon was repeated the following evening when he spotted about 200. It is likely they were riding the front that passed through the area on Saturday, 23 Sep.

Teri, Scott, and Steve Snyder went on a little field on 23 Sep into a wooded area down by the parking lot at McLanes on the loop. When they entered the trees, they immediately spotted the Great Horned Owl. He got a little fidgety and flew, but not far. Scott was able to get some great pictures of him (see website gallery). Scott was able to get right up underneath the tree he was in. After it flew further away the Snyders saw another owl fly out of the tree that they were standing by. Also 4 Red-tailed Hawks that call that area home.

Early in the morning of 26 Sep Gil spotted FOS Ring-billed Gull on Stillhouse.

September Field Trip Report:

Gil Eckrich and Rich Kostecke lead the Twin Lakes Audubon Society on a field trip onto Fort Hood (11 participants total) ([pics here](#)) on the morning of 16 Sept., primarily to look for waders and shorebirds. A few of the smaller lakes (Airfield and Engineer) are still productive, as well as Belton Lake. In regards to the latter, water level continues to fall. However, with some of these fronts that have hit recently, a lot of the waders and shorebirds have moved on as numbers were a bit lower. Participants observed at least 51 species within 4 hrs. The following were the highlights: Blue-winged Teal 61, Lesser Scaup 1, Great Blue Heron 11, Great Egret 13, Tricolored Heron 2, Little Blue Heron 1, Snowy Egret 1, Yellow-crowned Night-heron 2, Osprey 3, Cooper's Hawk 1, American Kestrel 5, Killdeer 72, Spotted Sandpiper 3, Solitary Sandpiper 1, Lesser Yellowlegs 1, Sanderling 1, Western Sandpiper 3, Least Sandpiper 76, Baird's Sandpiper 1, Pectoral Sandpiper 4, Black Tern 9, Belted Kingfisher 4, Olive-sided Flycatcher 1, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher 76, Cave Swallow 2, House Wren 1 (first of season), American Robin 1, Yellow Warbler 7, Common Yellowthroat 1, Clay-colored Sparrow 1 (first of season), Baltimore Oriole 2

PLEASE report your sightings for inclusion!

Website

Our TLAS website, <http://www.twinlakesaudubon.org> serves several purposes, one of which is to keep our members informed of upcoming events, such as meetings and field trips. If you have any doubt about a field trip being held because of inclement weather, check out the website – I will post any decision about one hour before starting time. Now for a *mea culpa* on my part regarding the October field trip date. The likelihood of key TLAS members not being able to attend on the 14th, as well as Tim Fennell's tight schedule persuaded me to change the date to the 21st. Tim is SUCH a fantastic guide and birder that I did not want to deprive us of his knowledge and birding skills.



Twin Lakes Audubon

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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).

