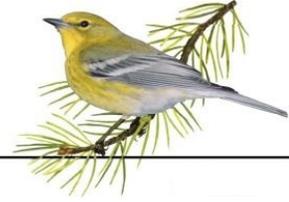


The Pine Warbler



Piney Woods Wildlife Society November 2022
Newsletter



November Program: "Birds of a Feather"

By Mary Anne Morris



One of Houston Audubon's education ambassadors. Photo by Houston Audubon.

Take an Avian Adventure with the Houston Audubon Society (HAS). Learn why birds matter, why their conservation is so important and how Houston Audubon works for bird conservation on the upper Texas Coast. From eagles to gnatcatchers, we will talk bird! Join Mary Anne Morris, Education Director of HAS, along with some of her feathered friends for an evening for the birds!

Mary Anne Morris (formerly Mary Anne Weber) the Education Director of Houston Audubon Society since 2000, has been teaching about birds for over

30 years. She travels with “feathered” teaching ambassadors who are the “spokesbirds” for the avian world during the more than 300 programs she delivers annually. She graduated with honors from Virginia Tech with a degree in Forestry and Wildlife Biology and a minor in Geography. She was a full-time educator and rehabilitator for the world renowned Raptor Trust in New Jersey where she cared for over 3,000 injured and/or orphaned birds each year and taught thousands of school children. During an eight year period in Montana, she taught bird conservation, presented teacher workshops on migratory birds at the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman, and served as summer bird educator at Zoo Montana. She served as President of the Montana Environmental Education Association, and is a member of the North American Association for Environmental Education and the International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators. Mary Anne runs Houston Audubon’s Raptor and Education Center in southeast Houston and became a grandma this spring to a beautiful little girl named Adelina.

The November program for PWWS will be hybrid (in-person and via Zoom) on Tuesday, November 15th, at 6:30 p.m. (snacks & social time at 6:00 p.m.) at Dennis Johnston's Big Stone Lodge. We'd prefer to have you join us in person, though, at the Big Stone Lodge located in Dennis Johnston County Park at 709 Riley Fuzzel Road, Spring, Texas 77373. If you prefer to join in via Zoom, you can email Claire Moore at cdmoore3i@gmail.com for the link or you can wait for the meeting reminder email that you should receive the day before the meeting (if you currently receive the PWWS newsletters).

Latest rules for bringing snacks: We are still not allowed to bring homemade items to the Big Stone Lodge (unfortunately) for social time. However, store bought items brought by members are welcome and NO LONGER have to be individually wrapped now. Yeah!



One of Houston Audubon's education ambassadors. Photo by Houston Audubon



Note from PWWS President

Fall is finally sneaking in on us along with those fall migrant birds. Hope you see a few. Please join us for our meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 15th , the program starts at 6:30pm (snacks at 6pm). Mary Anne (Weber) Morris from the Houston Audubon Society always has a wonderful presentation. Enjoy this cooler weather and the great outdoors at this time of year.

Your President,
Kathy

PWWS Board Members Needed

Calling all volunteers! The search is on for some volunteers to take on several roles on the Board of Piney Woods Wildlife Society. The roles needing filling include Treasurer and Program Chair. The Treasurer tracks incoming and outgoing money to the charity and files needed paperwork for our 501c3 organization. The Program Chair role works to get presenters for the monthly meetings. That role could be taken on by a committee of folks...?

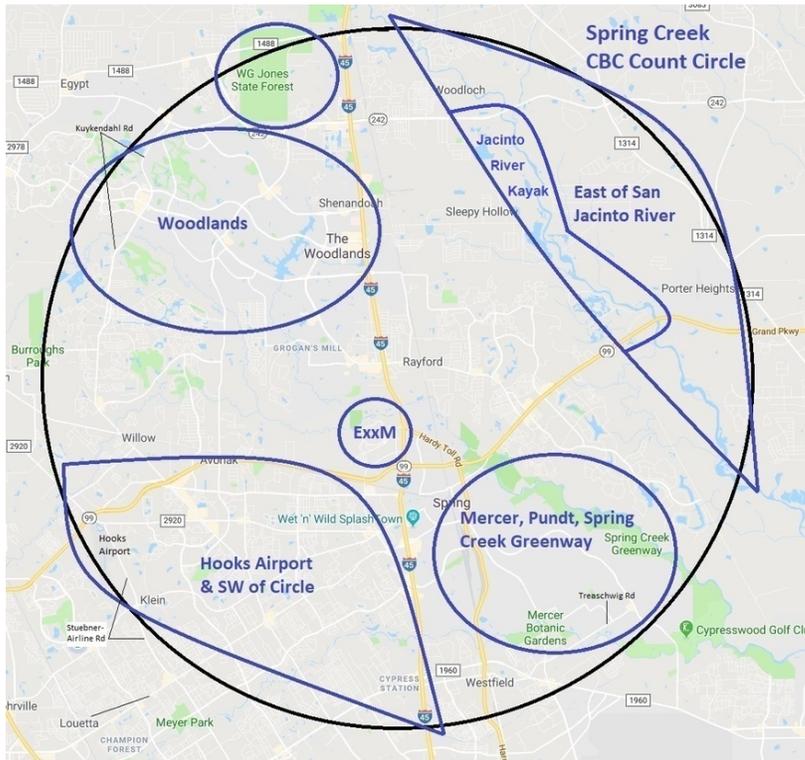
If you might be interested or have any questions, please email our president,

Kathy Coward, at justforthebirds@sbcglobal.net or call her at 281-288-9019.



CBC Birders Needed

by Claire Moore



Please consider volunteering your time on Saturday, December 17th, to bird with one of our teams looking to identify all birds in the Spring Creek count circle. No experience is needed -- just more eyes and ears out in the field to help us locate birds.

Another way to help is if you live inside the count circle (see map) and have bird feeders, you can report what birds you see on Saturday, December 17th, at your feeders.

If you can help in either way, please email me at cdmoore3i@gmail.com. We can't do it without you!

Photos by Claire & Darwin Moore



Claire made some new friends at Mt Pilatus, Switzerland - Photo by Bruce Meshell



She wasn't sure if these Yellow-billed Choughs (relatives of our Crows) weren't going to peck her to death, but it turns out they were quite gentle (but still fast as lightning) while retrieving food from her hand - Photo by Bruce Meshell



...and Claire made friends with a chough. - Photo by Darwin Moore



I got even closer to one of my lifers (on the Switzerland trip) -- Yellow-billed Chough. Looks like they have been fed before! - Photo by Claire Moore



I was trying to point to Houston, but I think I may have overshot and gotten Alaska. - Photo by Claire Moore



Yes, it's just a cow IN YOUR FACE! - Photo By Darwin Moore



A few critters and ice sculptures - Photo by Darwin Moore





We took a different route down so we could see more peaks. We descended to 7600 feet and headed towards Klein Scheidegg at 6000 feet, and the clouds cleared. We could see! - Photo by Darwin Moore



one of several massive glaciers in Switerland - Photo by Darwin Moore



nice reflection lake of the Matterhorn in Switzerland - Photo by Darwin Moore



mountain flowers in Switzerland - Photo by Darwin Moore



Zermatt, Switzerland, as seen from above - Photo by Darwin Moore



At the top of Mt Pilatus, Switzerland, we can see the gondola that will eventually take us down the gentler side of the mountain. - Photo by Darwin Moore



We journeyed through Switzerland, slowly descending on a cogwheel train, and were treated to one grand view after another. - Photo by Darwin Moore

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CWD?

By Cheryl Conley



Cheryl Conley's backyard Deer - Photo by Cheryl Conley

You don't have to get too far out of the city to see white-tailed deer. They are highly adaptable and are thriving in most of the suburbs around Houston. I realize everyone's idea of beauty is different but I believe most people think deer are beautiful. For me they represent gentleness. If you've ever seen a

close-up photo of a deer face, you'll notice the beautiful eyes and long eyelashes. They are among the most graceful of all hoofed animals. Even though I see them every day in my neighborhood, I still feel in awe when I see them. They give me a sense of peace.

Sadly, there is a disease that threatens many of our hoofed species including North American elk or Wapiti, red deer, mule deer, black-tailed deer, white-tailed deer, Sika deer, reindeer, and moose. It's called Chronic Wasting Disease or CWD. It's a neurological disease and is fatal. It was first recognized in captive mule deer in 1967 in Colorado and has since spread to captive and free-range deer in 30 states, in Canada, Finland, Norway and South Korea. It is believed to be caused by prions which are misfolded proteins that disrupt the nervous system of the host. There is no known vaccination or treatment for it. Scientists aren't sure how the disease is spread but believe it's spread through exposure to contaminated body fluids or tissue, or through food or drinking water. Once exposed, it may take years before the animal shows signs of the disease.

So what are the signs of the disease? The deer experiences drastic weight loss or wasting. You may see them stumble, have drooping ears and appear listless. They may drool, experience excessive thirst or urination and have a lack of fear of people. Based on these symptoms, it is still hard to diagnose the disease since these symptoms are also present in other diseases. To get a definitive diagnosis, laboratory testing is required.

State agencies in Texas are very concerned about the disease and how it could affect the \$2.2 billion hunting industry. With no vaccination and no treatment, it could easily get out of control. CWD has been found in 7 areas of Texas and hunters in those areas are required to bring their animals to a CWD check station within 48 hours of harvest. The areas are within Kimble County, the Trans-Pecos area, South Central Texas, the Panhandle, Van Verde County, Hunt County and Lubbock County. Here is a link to help you determine the exact locations in the areas of concern.

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/hunting/cwd/cwd-zones>

Hunters need to remember that it takes a long time before symptoms appear in the deer. The deer may look normal but could be carrying the disease. That's why it's a requirement to get the animal checked.

As new cases are discovered, more zones may be added. A hunter who is outside a CWD zone and wishes to have an animal tested for CWD should contact a wildlife biologist. Here's a link to help you locate one.

https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/technical_guidance/biologists/

Researchers have found no evidence that CWD poses a risk to humans or

domestic animals.

If you see a deer in your neighborhood or park and suspect that it may have CWD, you should report this to the nearest Texas Parks and Wildlife, Wildlife Division or Law Enforcement Division office immediately. You can call this Austin toll free number if you need help finding the numbers. (800) 792-1112 and enter 5 for wildlife and 1 for general wildlife. Make sure to document the location and take photos if possible. If you're a hunter, make sure you become familiar with information about CWD as well as practical tips you can use in the field to help prevent the spread of CWD. Here are two helpful links:

<http://www.cwd-info.org/>

<http://www.tpwd.texas.gov/cwd>

Whether you're a hunter or not, let's hope that this disease is kept under control so we can continue to enjoy the deer that populate the area.

Infected animals may not show signs of the disease for years.

Cheryl Conley

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated" -Mahatma Gandhi

Photos by Wanda Smith



Gray Hairstreak Caterpillar on Frostweed - Photo by Wanda Smith



Gray Hairstreak Caterpillar on Frostweed - Photo by Wanda Smith



Gray hairstreak - Photo by Wanda Smith



Varigated Fritillary - Photo by Wanda Smith



Crow and eagle at Boykin Springs - Photo by Wanda Smith



Mourning Dove taken in Tyler County - Photo by Wanda Smith



The juvenile Red-shouldered was taken at Watson RNPP - Photo by Wanda Smith

National Butterfly Center - Mission, Texas

Photos by Luciano Guerra



Four-spotted Sailor - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Four-spotted Sailor - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Guava Skipper - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Malachite - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Tawny Emperor & Malachite - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Red-bordered Metalmark - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Silver-banded Hairstreak - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Great Purple - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Dusted Spurwing - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Julia Heliconian - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Gray Cracker - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Fatal Metalmark - Photo by Luciano Guerra



Mexican Bluewing - 10-25-22 - Photo by Luciano Guerra



White-patched Skipper - Photo by Luciano Guerra

Photo by Randy Scott



Sunset west of our home last week. Trees have a few new gaps now that lightening hit one last year and was cut down this summer. Photo by Randy Scott



Photo by Randy Scott



I heard this little juvenile male hummer hit the window. I went out there to console him and protect him. Sure enough, he was just stunned and eventually got up on his feet. Then he flew off after about 5 more minutes - Photo by Randy Scott



Yesterday, we stepped out of the house to be surprised by two Queen Butterflies on a plant that we bought specially to attract this species. We saw many of them feeding on this same plant species in Central Texas last year. - Photo by Randy Scott



Prickly Pear Cactus in Mason, Texas - Photo by Randy Scott



Unusual moths feeding on sunflower at winery. - Photo by Randy Scott

During Fall migration, some images in our backyard in Conroe, Tx. Every year, in September and October, we have a swarm of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. They are always on guard against others and very territorial for feeders. It is a challenge for them to share. This year, we had fewer issues with honey bees than past years, because of the drought, although we have a yard full of natural nectar for them. The ratio of females to males is always high.



Ruby-throat Hummingbirds - Photo by Randy Scott



Ruby-throat Hummingbirds - Photo by Randy Scott



Ruby-throat Hummingbirds - Photo by Randy Scott



Ruby-throat Hummingbird - Photo by Randy Scott



Sometimes, in the spirit of wildness, a snake appears. This is a Ribbon Snake. - Photo by Randy Scott



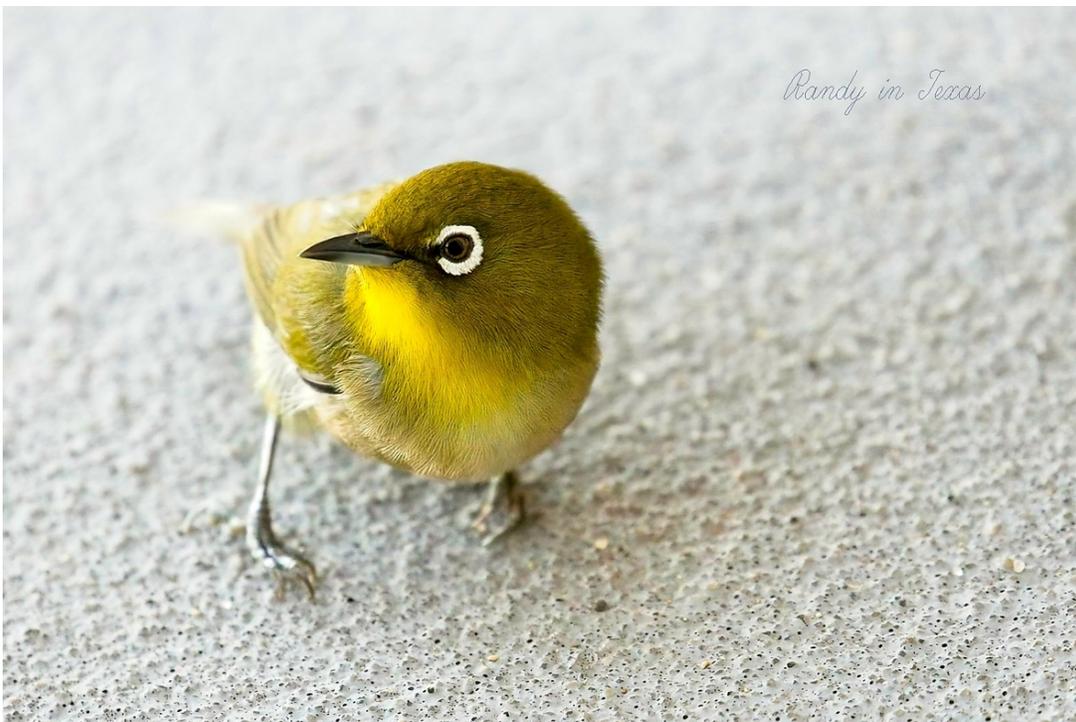
Recent trip to the coast looking for birds. Scissortail Flycatcher. - Photo by Randy Scott



All the doves were paired up. - Photo by Randy Scott



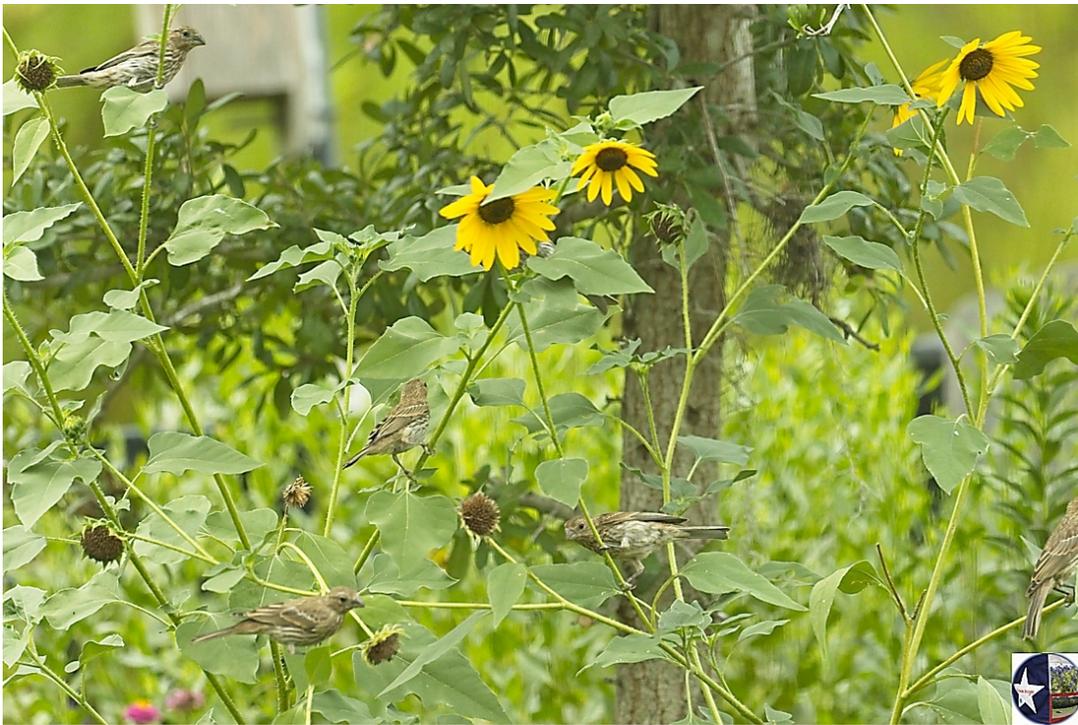
Cardinal in Maui 2022 - Photo by Randy Scott



Bird in Maui 2022 - Photo by Randy Scott



Wildflowers like this native Sunflower are part of our everyday life, attracting pollinators. - Photo by Randy Scott



House Finches love the Sunflowers and seeds we put out in our feeders. Bettina is much more experienced than I. -Photo by Randy Scott



Native Turks Cap - Photo by Randy Scott



American Beauty Berry in the backyard - Photo by Randy Scott



Bird watching is a specialty hobby of both Bettina and I. Bluejay is a regular visitor of our home. - Photo by Randy Scott



Ruby-throat Hummingbird - Photo by Randy Scott

Randy in Texas



2022 Blood Moon - Photo by Randy Scott

Randy in Texas



Bettina and I on a whale watching cruise in Hawaii - Photo by Randy Scott



Our home is positioned to view magnificent sunsets from our backyard. - Photo by Randy Scott

CREATOR'S CANVAS-OSTRICHES, RHEAS AND EMUS/THE WORLD'S LARGEST FLIGHTLESS BIRDS!

By Wayne Easley



ostrich, masai, red-necked kenya in the mid 1990s RD - Photo by Wayne Easley

During the time my wife and I lived in Kenya we were traveling one day in Tsavo National Park, one of East Africa's largest reserves. As luck would have it, we

got behind a pair of healthy Common Ostriches out for an afternoon jog. There was heavy bush along each side of the isolated track and we could not get around those two birds. We clocked them running at well over thirty miles an hour and they were determined we would not pass them. There are two species of ostriches, the Common Ostrich which is sometimes called the Masai or Red-necked Ostrich and the Somalia Ostrich which has the name of Blue-necked as well and it is a bit shorter than the Masai which measures in at an inch or two above the nine foot mark. These two birds join the Emus of Australia, the Kiwis of New Zealand and the Rheas of South America as the only birds on the planet that can not fly. Flight is denied these interesting creatures due to the lack of muscles that would join the bony sternum to their wings. But what they are missing in flight, they make up for in speed. The Common Ostrich has been clocked in at a breath-taking forty-three miles an hour. In running ability, they are right up there with the Cheetahs.

The two ostriches live mostly on the savannas of East Africa. Males form harems with as many as a dozen females. Nesting is communal which means several females will lay eggs in a common nest that may have up to twenty or more eggs at times. The egg itself is the largest egg of the avian world. Obviously, some of those eggs will never hatch and on occasions the infrequent rains will wash some eggs away from the nest site. Females incubate the eggs during the day time, while the males do the chore during the night. Diet is made up of seeds, plants, roots and at times they will take lizards and reptiles. Possessing powerful legs and very sharp claws, they are able to defend themselves and their chicks with good success.

The Emu of Australia is the second largest bird out there. Its plumage is a rather dull brown color. We did see several Emus in Australia, mostly closer to Melbourne which is more inland than some of the large cities on the East Coast. We searched for a couple of days for the other flightless bird in Australia, the Cassowary but were not successful. The Emu possesses long stout legs and like the ostriches of Africa can run very fast with a top speed of somewhere around thirty miles per hour. Young emus are famous for being able to walk, run and swim shortly after hatching. It has been noted too that Emus can go long periods of time with no food or water. They generally subsist on seeds, grasses, shoots, leaves, and at times will take insects and spiders. Several females again will dump their eggs in a large common nest but the males seem to do all of the incubating. What's up with that?

In Nov. of 2018, I traveled with Kevin, my middle son on a birding trip to Chile. We flew first off to Santiago and then made our way to Tierra del Fuego down in an area called Patagonia. It was there, next door to Antarctica, that we found another of the large flightless birds of the world. We were fortunate to see

Rheas with chicks on the windswept slopes and lake shores of Patagonia. The adult's head and bill is very small for such a massive bird. This is quite a combination since the Rhea has such a long neck and long legs. The wings of the Rheas are exceptionally long, something that is thought to aid the bird with balance since in Patagonia, it seems the wind never stops blowing. Like other flightless birds of the world, the Rheas feed on seeds, leaves, fruits and seem to be fond of reptiles and rodents. The Rheas of the world are near-threatened. Please enjoy this brief journey into the world of the flightless birds. And by the way, we never did pass those two ostriches in Tsavo National Park. We finally gave up!

Wayne Easley/written on Sept. 14, 2022/Harvey, North Dakota

PICTURE GALLERY: YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO USE MY PHOTOS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES.

1-6- Common Ostrich often called the Masai. It is a extremely tall flightless bird.

7-8-Somalia or Blue-necked Ostrich. Fairly common in Northern Kenya.

9-11-Rheas of Patagonia. Note chicks grazing alongside the adults.

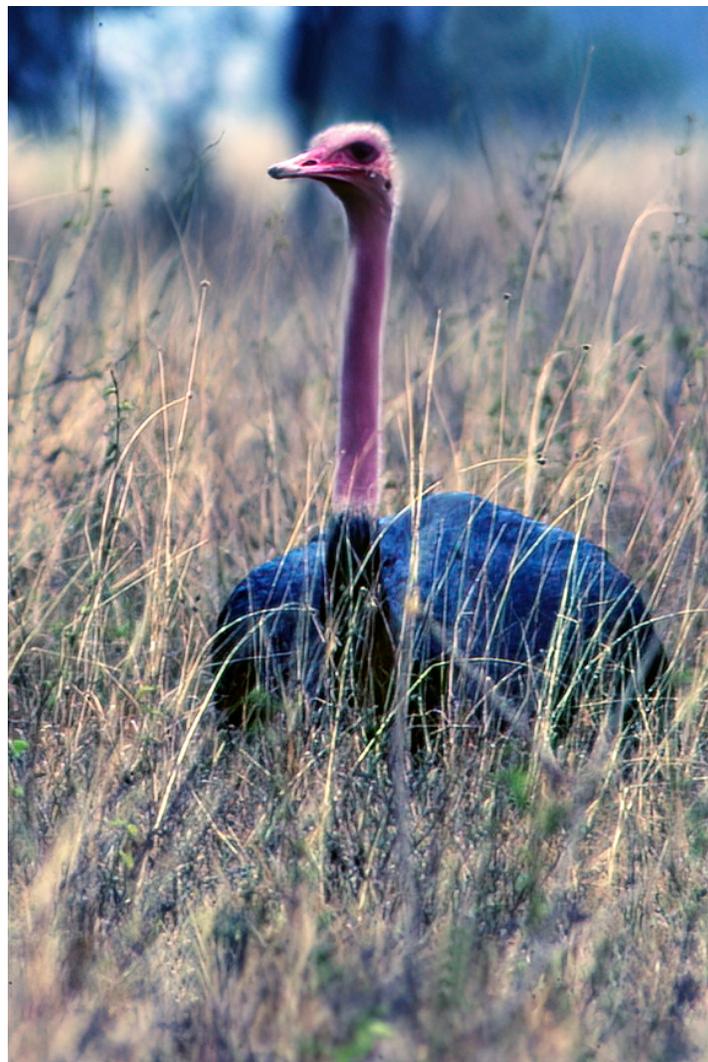
12-Emu of Australia with chicks.



ostrich family, parents and young, blue-necked in samburu national park, kenya, in mid 1990s RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



ostrich, masai in kenya, east africa, mid 1990s RD copy - Photo by Wayne Easley



ostrich, masai, nairobi national park, kenya mid 1990s RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



ostrich, masai or red-necked in kenya, mid 1990s RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



ostrich, immature in kenya, east africa mid 1990s RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



NOV 22 7 ostrich, blue in samburu national park, kenya, mid 1990s RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



ostrich, blue-necked in samburu national park, kenya, mid --1990s RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



rhea, darwin's male, patagonia, chile nov., patagonia, chile in nov. of 2018 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



rhea with chicks in patagonia, chile, nov., 2018 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



rhea, darwin's in patagonia, chile in nov. of 2018 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



emu with chicks in australia, summer of 2000 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley

CREATOR'S CANVAS/PART 4-THE TIGERHERONS!

Photos by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, bare-throated immature near cano negro, cr., dec., 2014 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley

As we continue our series on the herons, egrets, and bitterns of the world (Family Ardeidae), we will take a quick look at the incredible Tigerherons. The

entire heron family consists of sixty-four species but believe it or not, there are only six Tigerherons in the entire world. The bold, tiger-like stripes give the group its name. Since I have pictures of only three of them, we will concentrate on those three. Tigerherons are shy birds, mostly solitary that spend most of their time looking for food in wetlands and along the rivers and streams of the world. They are extremely patient in their search for food. They feed mostly on fish, crabs, eels, water beetles, dragonflies and their larva and occasionally grasshoppers. Let's begin with the most common one in the Americas.

The Bare-throated Tigerheron is found from Mexico down through Central America and into South America. It has a bare throat and the adults have a black head The Bare-throated Tigerherons have heavy bodies, thick necks and subtly intricate plumage patterns. Their flight is labored and they nest on a stick platform with usually two to three green-tinged white eggs in the nest. Several years ago now, a lone Bare-throated was spotted in South Texas giving the United States it one and only record.

Another Tigerheron is the Fasciated which is the smallest of the three we are featuring. It usually is found at higher elevations than the Bare-throated and spends a lot of time standing motionless on the river's edge or often on rocks in the stream itself. It is content to allow fish or large insects to come close enough so they can stab their prey with a lightning thrust of that powerful beak. The bird is not common at all and some think it should be on the endangered list.

Our last Tigerheron is the superb Rufescent Tiger Heron. It can be found from Honduras in Central America down into South America. While we are not sure of its numbers, its huge range includes most of South America. It is a medium sized bird with the head and neck and upper parts of the body a rich rufous. Since the rufous covers more than half of the body, that is the predominate color of the bird. While the adults are easy to identify, it takes five years for the young to acquire its adult plumage making identification difficult. If your coming months include birding trips to exciting places, please keep in mind the incredible Tigerherons. You will not be disappointed as they are birds worth seeing.

Wayne Easley/written on Oct. 7, 2022/Harvey, North Dakota

PICTURE GALLERY-PLEASE FEEL FREE TO USE THESE PHOTOGRAPHS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES. THANK YOU,

1-Immature Bare-throated Tigerheron in Costa Rica.

2-Adult Bare-throated Tigerheron on the Tarcot River in Costa Rica.

3-4-Adults, heavy bodied Bare-throated Tigerherons.

5-Bare-throated Tigerheron with food-an immature waterbird called a Jacana.

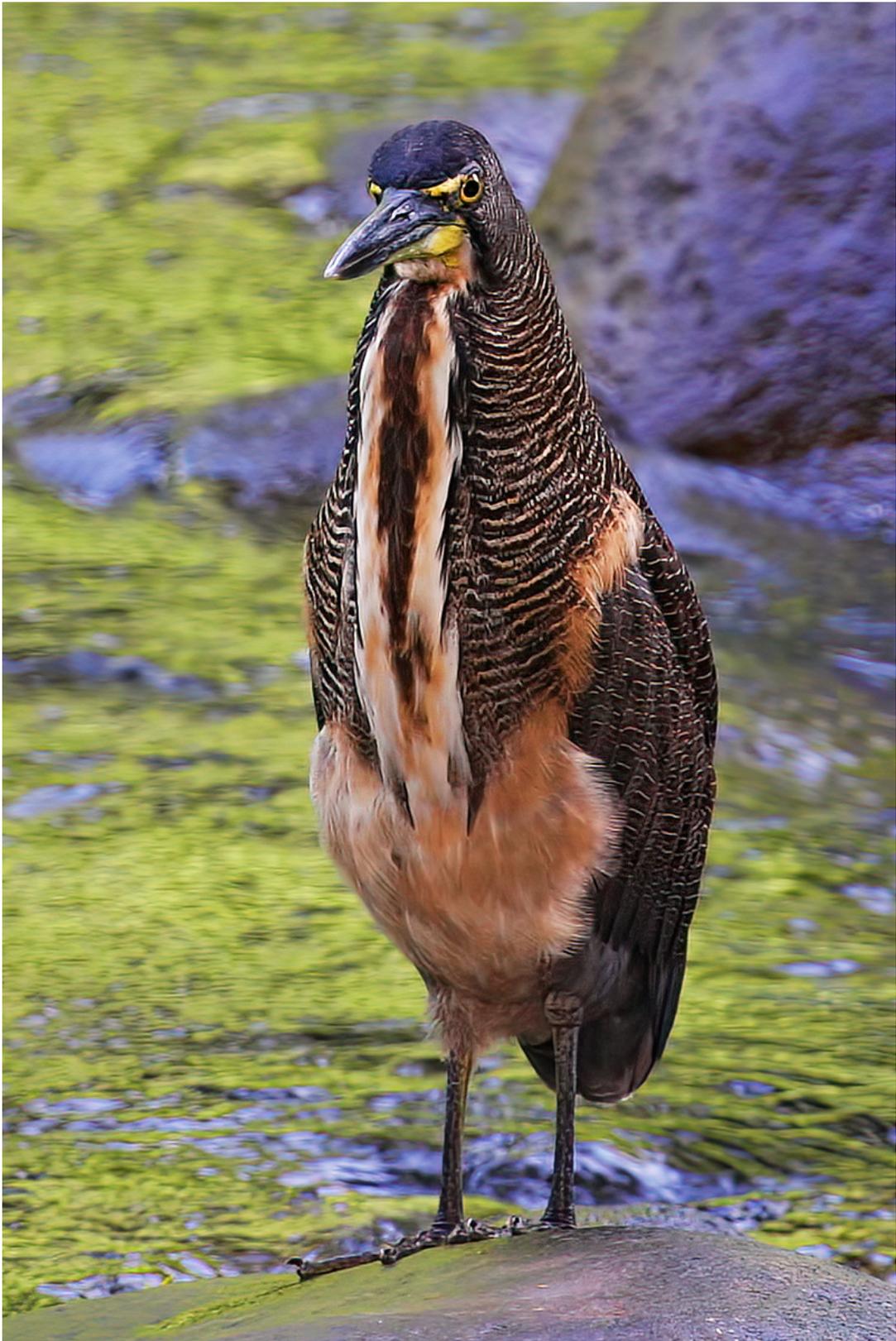
6-An adult Bare-throated Tigerheron flexing its muscles.

7-A Fasciated Tigerheron. Generally found on fast-flowing streams or rivers that are higher up in the mountains.

8-9-Rufescent Tigerheron showing that gorgeous rufous plumage and a shot showing an adult at its nest.



tigerheron, bare-throated at catie research ctr., cr., feb. of 2018 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, bare-throated at muamba, cr. oct., 2009 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, bare-throated, cano negro in march of 2014, RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, bare-throated with jacana, cano negro, cr. mar., 2014 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, bare-throated tarcol river, costa rica date not sure RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, fasciated at arenal, costa rica mar., 2014 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, rufescent, panama, ca., feb., 2015 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley



tigerheron, rufescent, panama, feb., 2015 RD - Photo by Wayne Easley

Photos By Bill Miller



A lot of migratory birds in the yard on this beautiful morning. The resident hawk took notice and paid a visit. Usually hawks don't let me get this close. - Photo by Bill Miller



Huge Red-shouldered Hawk hanging around in the garden making the doves nervous - Photo by Bill Millers



Monarch - Photo by Bill Miller



Monarch - Photo by Bill Miller



Three on this Tithonia simo - Photo by Bill Miller



A mural of three ears of Indian corn...built out of pumpkins. Myriad Botanical Gardens Oklahoma City, Oklahoma - Photo by Sue Miller

Photo by Jim Snyder



Ceraunus Blue - Photo by Jim Snyder

Yesterday was the best day for butterfly diversity in our yard in year 2022 by far as I counted 30 individual species! I took that opportunity to practice my photography skills as I am driving next week down to the Lower Rio Grande

Valley to attend the Texas Butterfly Festival. I'm very excited since this will be my first trip of any kind since the beginning of Covid-19 in February 2020.



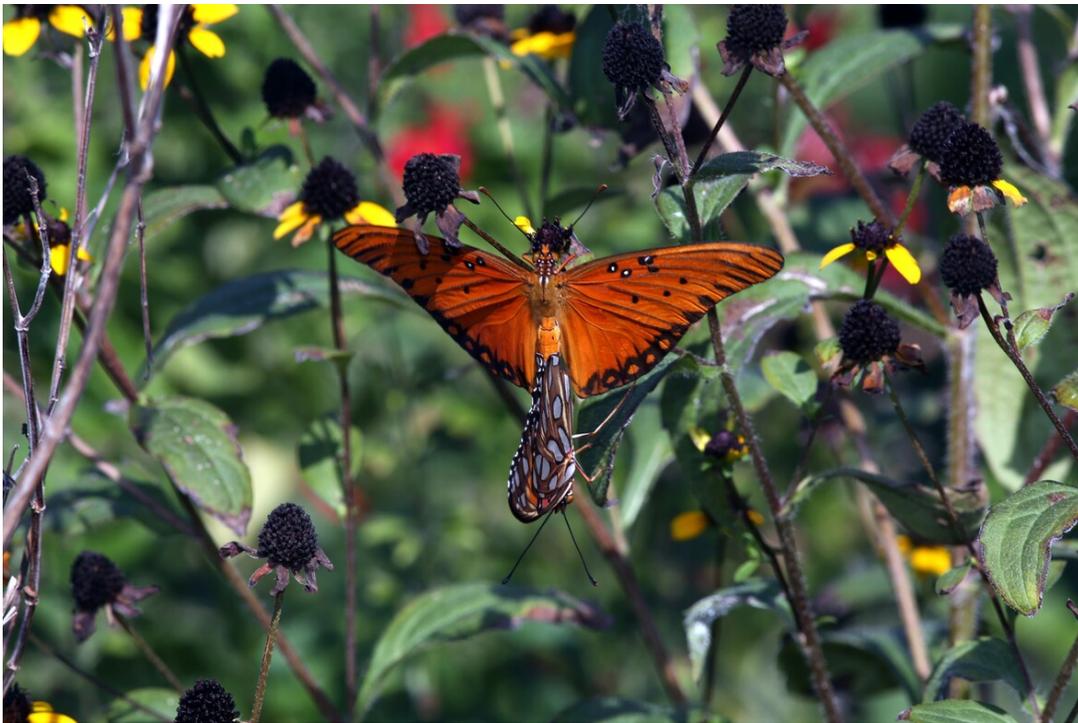
Common Buckeye - Photo by Jim Snyder



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (female yellow form) - Photo by Jim Snyder



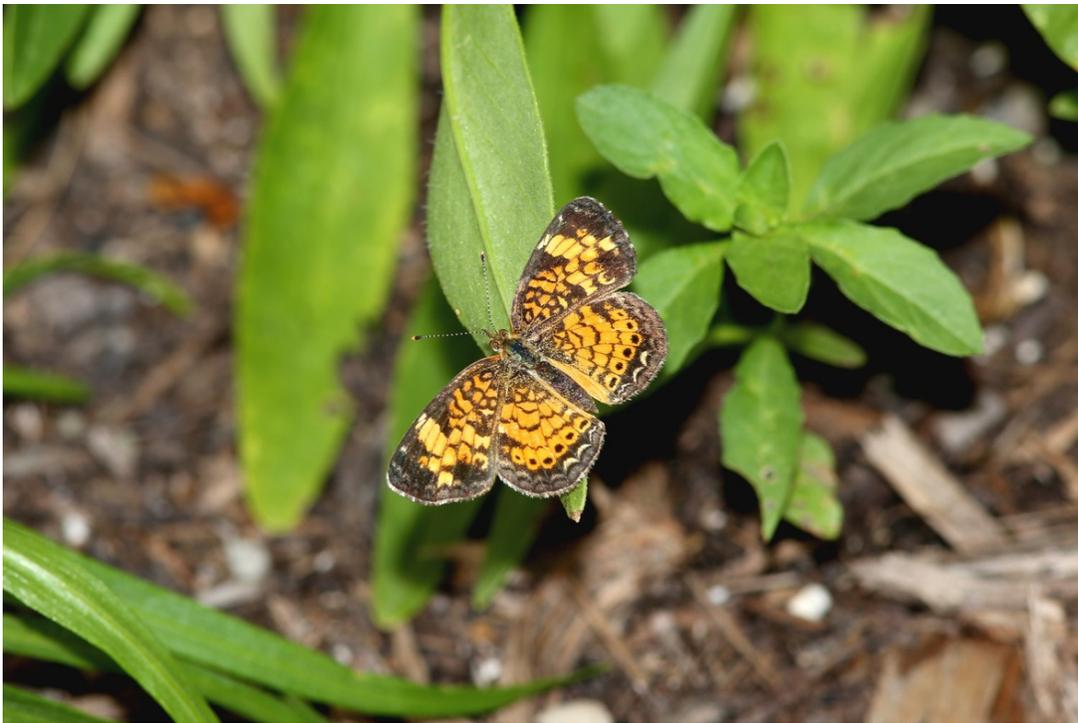
Hackberry - Photo by Jim Snyder



Gulf Fritillaries (mating) - 10-22-22 - Photo by Jim Snyder



Long-tailed Skipper - Photo by Jim Snyder



Pearl Crescent - Photo by Jim Snyder



Pipevine Swallowtail (male) - Photo by Jim Snyder



A couple of photos of the Viceroy we had at the bait dish today. -10-26-22 - Photo by Jim Snyder



Viceroy - 10-26-22, Photo by Jim Snyder



Brazilian Skipper - Photo by Jim Snyder



Celia's Roadside-Skipper - Photo by Jim Snyder



Cloudless Sulphur (female white form) - Photo by Jim Snyder



Dainty Sulphur - Photo by Jim Snyder



Large Orange Sulphur (male) - Photo by Jim Snyder



Question Mark - Photo by Jim Snyder



Red-spotted Purple - Photo by Jim Snyder



Silver-spotted Skipper - Photo by Jim Snyder



Sleepy Orange (ovipositing on Partridge Pea) - Photo by Jim Snyder



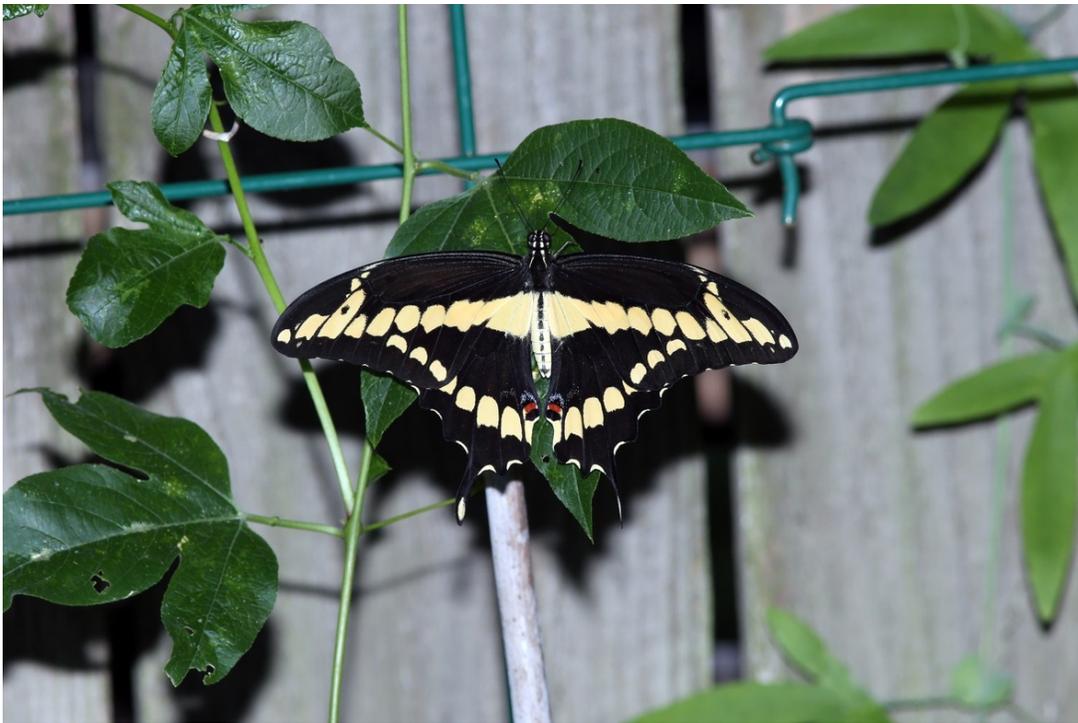
Dusky-blue Groundsreak - Photo by Jim Snyder



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (male) - Photo by Jim Snyder



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail (female dark form) - Photo by Jim Snyder



Giant Swallowtail (male) - Photo by Jim Snyder



Goatweed Leafwing, College Station, TX 10-22-22 - Photo by Jim Snyder



Southern Dogface (male) - Photo by Jim Snyder



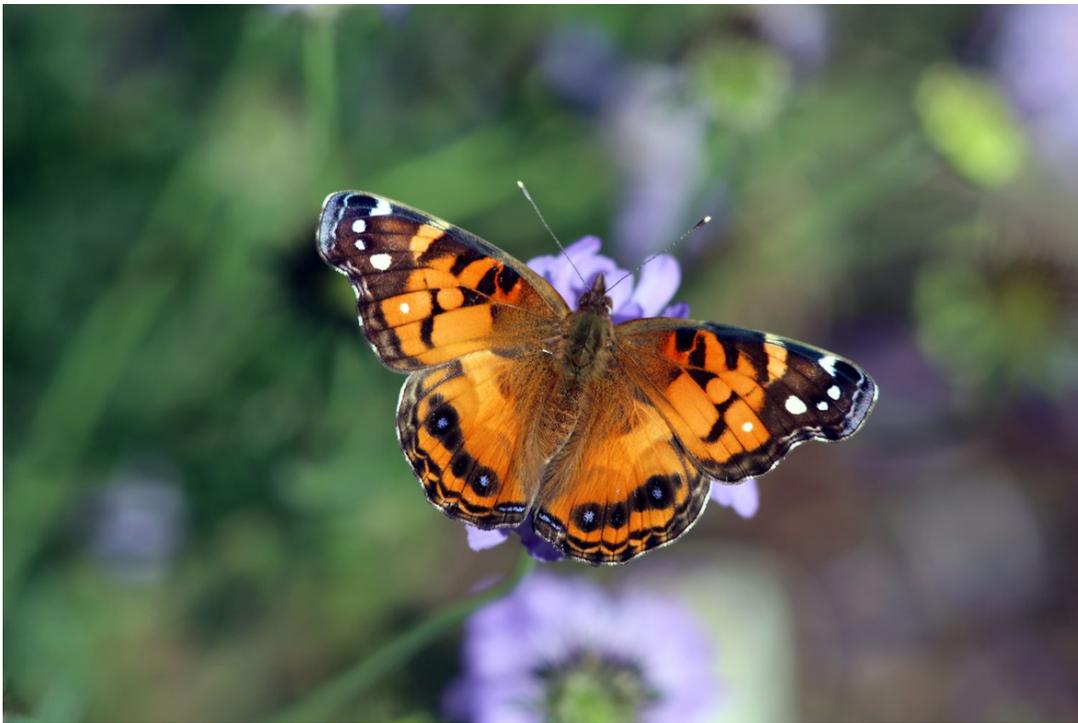
Tawny Emperor - Photo by Jim Snyder



Texan Crescent - Photo by Jim Snyder



Variegated Fritillary - Photo by Jim Snyder



American Lady - Photo by Jim Snyder

Sabine Woods - Oct. 24, 2022

Photos by Paul Gregg



White-eyed Vireo - Photo by Paul Gregg

An autumn/winter welcome!

For a few weeks now, there's been two out of range birds found at Sabine Woods, near Sabine Pass, TX. I went there yesterday to try and find them and had enough success to at least identify them by photo. I saw and photographed some 15 other birds also. It was a good day to get out.

The 1st out of range bird is very, very out of range. It is a Red-legged Honeycreeper and it should be in Central and South America. Evidently 4 or 5 have shown up in America. One, a female, is the one that is found at Sabine Woods. A male and female have been found in either Florida or Grand Isle, Louisiana, and there's another report of one in the Miami, FL area. If you would like to see how beautiful the male is, go [here:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honeycreeper](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honeycreeper) The female at Sabine Woods tends to stay high in a particular oak tree on the west end of the slough there. Some have been lucky enough to photograph it when it came to the water drip. My photo is a poor one, as it was high in the tree and the wind was blowing heavily. But it was nice to get a lifer ID shot. (Note: Carol and I had gone there last Tuesday and I got a photo of it then. See attached)

The 2nd sort-of out of range bird is the Tropical Parula whose range is usually far south Texas into eastern and western Mexico, near coastal regions. This one sort of stays in the tree where the honeycreeper is, but also visits different areas of the woods, including the water drip(s). The photo I did get of it was taken in series with other birds at the water drip, including a Northern Parula. I

didn't realize I got a photo of the Tropical until I got home and was comparing photos. I thought I had come home without seeing the tropical and was so pleased to at least get a fairly decent photo of it.

Others included in this email are: White-eyed Vireo, Wilson's Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Northern Parula, Swainson's Thrush, American Redstart (I think an immature male). Other birds, photos not included are: Black-throated Green Warbler, Brown Thrasher, Tennessee Warbler, Pine Warbler, Palm Warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, Downy Woodpecker, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, possible Orange-crowned Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet.

I definitely consider yesterday a success for photos of 2 lifers and a good number of fall migrants. (I didn't add some hummingbirds to the list!)

Enjoy, and maybe you should high-tail or sashay over to Sabine Woods and look for those two!

Paul Gregg, SMSGT, USAF (Ret.)



Red-legged Honeycreeper - Photo by Paul Gregg



Wilson's Warbler - Photo by Paul Gregg



Tropical Parula - Photo by Paul Gregg



Nashville Warbler - Photo by Paul Gregg



Northern Parula - Photo by Paul Gregg



Northern Parula - Photo by Paul Gregg



Swainsons Thrush - Photo by Paul Gregg



Swainson's Thrush - Photo by Paul Gregg



American Redstart - Photo by Paul Gregg



Red-legged Honeycreeper - Photo by Paul Gregg

Bald Eagle pair has returned to Humble, TX

Photos by Paul Gregg



Humble Eagles - Photo by Paul Gregg

Howdy!

I received information last week that the pair of bald eagles that have nested in the Humble, TX area for a number of years have returned to reinforce their nest, mate, and hopefully produce some eaglets in the next few weeks, into early 2023. I visited the location yesterday (Sunday, Oct. 9, 2022). I found the nest in the woods, but didn't see the eagles. The nest looks like it still needs some additional branches and repair. I thought they were not around at the moment and was slowly starting to leave the area when I saw one perched on a branch at some distance into the woods. I positioned the car where I could watch and photograph from my car window.

First one was there, then its mate showed up for a few minutes. It took off and the female was left on the branch. Then she began calling out and I got a decent video of her calling for her mate.

The mate returned and as it flew in, it appeared that mating was taking place, then the male joined the female on the branch. I took a good number of photos and here's 3 of the better ones. The photos and video were taken with the Canon R6 body set for 1.6x, and the 100-500L lens at ISO 500, F7.1, 1/1600 sec. and processed in Lightroom CC and Topaz Photo AI.

Yesterday's photo shoot has me excited about getting out more and searching out fall and winter photo moments. I'll plan to revisit the eagles on a regular basis for the next 3 or 4 months. For residents in the greater Houston area, bald eagles will be returning to their nests for the next few weeks. Get out and look for them!

For my YouTube video, go here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=63PNy_o3YcY&ab_channel=PaulGreggJr

Enjoy!

Paul Gregg, SMSGT, USAF (Ret.)



Humble Eagles - Photo by Paul Gregg



Humble Eagles - Photo by Paul Gregg



Tale of Two Birding Trips - 10-27-22

Photos by Hank Arnold

It was a wonderful, clear, cool morning.

No wind

No clouds

Perfect day to go birding.

Ok, a little MORE perfect than every other day is a perfect day to go birding.

Upper Management was busy doing something with paper and checkbooks, so the puppies and I decided to head out to Goose Island State park.

Once inside the park, we found a large open area of about 10 campsites, completely deserted.

As each site had a picnic table, I set my camera down on one and while the puppies explored the nearby bushery, and sat back and took in the beautiful, silent, scene.

After a few seconds, off in the distance, there was a slight sound that I recognized, but couldn't quite place.

The puppies both stopped exploring and looked off in that direction.

It was a faint honking sound.

Ahhhh!

Sandhill Cranes

Coming our way.



Sandhill Crane - Photo by Hank Arnold

Now, folks, let's review the scoring, here.

Calm day

Perfect light

600mm prime lens

61 megapixel sensor

Fully charged battery

Comfortable picnic table

Happy dogs

If that's not a cross-section of heaven, I don't know what is.

They even circled around to give me a little more time...



Sandhill Cranes - Photo by Hank Arnold

It was so perfect that I was feeling guilty that Nancy wasn't there with me. I also knew that when Karan found out I was birding without her it would go badly for me.

I took a few more pictures of some other local sights, and decided to head home to get the rest of the team.

It took a while, but we all piled into the car (Ms. Post in the back seat with both dogs) and headed back up to Lamar.

Sure enough, as soon as we got to the large open field with the pond, we heard honking to our left, and there was another squadron of Sandhill Cranes.

With a mixture of both confidence and anticipation, I raised my dream 600mm/61mp dream rig, pointed it towards the sound, and switched it on.

“Battery Exhausted”

Oops

In my previous state of endorphin overload I had left it turned on

In my state of anticipation to get back to photographic Utopia I had not packed any extra batteries.

About that time even that message turned off...

The last available electrons had bit the sticky wicket.

No gotty squatty

A Marine without a rifle

Then a calm voice from the back seat says, “Why aren’t you taking pictures?”

At this point, in the silence, with my eye pressed against a dead screen, I realized that all 8 eyes were on me.

All 8 ears listening intently for my response.

The pressure was so bad I couldn’t even think of a remotely rational lie.

Try as I might

Given time, I might have been able to, but it would have been difficult.

“Dead battery”

It was about this point that uncontrolled laughter broke out in the vehicle. I didn’t want to look back, but I’m sure both dogs were laughing their furry little derrières off..

Besides not packing any extra batteries, we also pretty obviously didn't pack any compassion or sense of pity for this trip.

They made me promise...

Sandhill Cranes...



And an osprey on a pole eating a fish (in perfect light)...



Here are some actual pictures from the morning...

<https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20221026-Lamar/>

Almost a Great Plan

by Hank Arnold

We have visited the area along HW774 that connects HW35 out of Rockport to the ANWR several time over the past week, all with good results.

Hawks, eagles, harriers, and burrowing owls.

Great area

Went yesterday and set my chair up next to a bridge over a drainage gully. Same one we saw the harrier flying straight towards us.

Water, green grass

All the right stuff.

We went up there with Kathy, Lee, Karan, and 3 dogs.

Only the wind was blowing hard. The Airport records show gusts to 30mph.

Lee and I sat by that bridge for about an hour while the ladies were off somewhere else.

We only saw one bird.

It was a relatively nice looking Turkey Vulture, holding his own on the wind...

Hovering over us to see if we were dead.

We did see some owls...



Burrowing Owl - Photo by Hank Arnold

Saw this Red-Tail off in the distance that looks like he's missing all the flight feathers on his starboard side...



White Tailed Hawk - Photo by Hank Arnold

Probably a run in with a coyote or bobcat.

But the star of the show was this juvenile (2nd year?) white tailed hawk...



Just a magnificent sight

It turns out he was in the same spot as the eagle the other day, right next to HW 35.

My new plan is to set my chair up right there next to the highway, then watch the sky.

It occurs to me that people zooming by at 75mph might find it odd, but who knows...

If I set out a bucket, some might slow down and throw money in.

<https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20221023-HW-774/>

Hawks and Hummers

by Hank Arnold

We had occasion to wander north the other day.

Just a wandering

Saw our first Kestrels of the winter.



Photo by Hank Arnold

One Kestrel caught a trophy sized grasshopper/locust...



Photo by Hank Arnold

Then proceeded to tear it apart and eat it, mid-flight...



Photo by Hank Arnold

Look at some of the other images of this Red-Tail, with his hanging wing feather on his right side...



Photo by Hank Arnold

There are several pictures of it hanging and waving in the slipstream.

No damage on the other side, so I don't think it's a molting thing.

Here are the pictures from the trip...

<https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20221002-North/>

Then yesterday, the sun came out and I took a friend up on her offer to help ID an odd hummingbird she has been seeing at her house over near Little Bay.



Photo by Hank Arnold

I'm thinking Rufous, but at one point, after seeing the picture, Susan was claiming it was an Allen's.

But...

She lives in College Station now, and it is a college town, so it might just have been a whacky-tobbaccy infused ID.

I do appreciate them telling me about it and allowing me to go sit for a while, though, so maybe I'll go along with the whole Allen's thing.

There were several other birds around, and Susan (probably correctly this time) IDed this as a female Black-Chinned...



This is her explanation...

“Longer bill and you can see the wing tips come almost to the end of the tail”.

Ok, I’m on board with that one.

I think there is also a hint of a horizontal band across her belly that comes from sitting in a nest.

But that doesn’t say anything about whether it is a Black-Chin or Ruby-Throat female, just somebody that’s been sitting in a nest.

<https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20221005-Rockport/>

Today is the Monarch Madness up at the Finessey Ranch. 10 or so busloads of 5th graders. My job is to talk them into being aware of the problems we have caused in the environment, and in at least one instance, Monarch Butterflies, there is something we can do to help...

Plant milkweed...

<https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20200325-Monarchs/>

It's an opportunity I look forward to every year.

I also get to find out how some of the milkweed patches we have started at the different schools are coming along.

I think it's not uncommon for them to get mowed over by well meaning public landscaping officials.

Not much I can do about that, but it does give me a sense of accomplishment to picture in my mind some guy on a mower being chased off school property by a group of irate kids, shaking their fists and offering 5th grader level (hopefully) derogatory epithets.



Big Stone Lodge - Dennis Johnston Park

709 Riley Fuzzel Road

PWWS meetings are held at the Big Stone Lodge at the new Dennis Johnston County

Park at 709 Riley Fuzzel Road.

The directions to get there are much the same as to the Nature Center. Aldine-Westfield turns into Riley Fuzzel Road just northeast of Spring so there are several ways to get there.

1. Take the Rayford/Sawdust exit and go east on Rayford Rd. At Grand Parkway (99), turn right on the Grand Parkway frontage road. Go 2 miles (staying on the frontage road) watching for the Johnston Park sign on your right just before you get to the Hardy Toll Road overpass; or,
2. Take Louetta Road east from I45 to where it deadends into Aldine-Westfield. Turn left on Aldine-Westfield until it deadends into Riley Fuzzel Road. Turn right onto Riley Fuzzel Road and go only 0.5 miles to the park entrance on your left just after passing under Hardy Toll Road; or,
3. Take Aldine-Westfield north from Mercer Arboretum until it deadends into Riley Fuzzel Road. Turn right onto Riley Fuzzel Road and go only 0.5 miles to the park entrance on your left just after passing under Hardy Toll Road.

Piney Woods Wildlife Membership Form		
Last Name(s):		First Name of Member(s):
Street Address:	City:	State and Zip:
Home Phone No:	Work Phone No:	Email Address(s):
Pine Warbler will be delivered by E-mail Only		
Annual Membership Fee \$15.00* Additional Contribution \$ _____ Total \$ _____		Mail this form and check made payable to PWWS to: Piney Woods Wildlife Society P.O. Box 189 Spring, TX 77383-0189
*Per Household – Includes <i>The Pine Warbler</i> newsletter New _____ Renewal _____ Rejoining _____		

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Please submit any articles you'd like considered for the PWWS Newsletter. The Pine Warbler, to our President, Kathy Coward, justforthebirds@sbcglobal.net or Diane Wedgeworth, Editor, milanodi@yahoo.com

Please send all new address changes and any corrections to cdmoore3@gmail.com (Claire Moore) and add PWWS to the subject line.
Thank you.





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