

Spring 2012: Central Oaks & Prairies and East Texas Pineywoods

By Bert Frenz

This report is reduced from 281 sightings of 150 species from 1 March to 31 May 2012.

MOST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS:

Ross's Goose – Two Ross's Geese resided with domestic geese at the boat ramp near that dam of Lake Bob Sandlin, *Titus*, on 3 Mar (Peter Barnes, Dennis Scott).

Cinnamon Teal – A drake Cinnamon Teal was observed 3 Mar (Peter Barnes, Dennis Scott) at Lake Bob Sandlin, *Titus*.

Red-breasted Merganser – More Red-breasted Mergansers were reported than usual in East Texas, including sightings of 3 in *Harrison* 19 Apr (David Brotherton, Mark Edmund), 4 at Sabine Mining Co., *Harrison*, on 10 May (Peter Barnes), and 3 at Lake Bob Sandlin, *Titus*, on 13 May (David Brotherton, Luanne Brotherton).

Anhinga – A count of 8 Anhingas on 10 May (Cliff Shackelford, Hayden Haukey, Matt Symmank) is unusually high for spring at Richland Creek WMA, *Freestone*.

Brown Pelican – Once unusual, now fairly common, 2 Brown Pelicans were among 486 American White Pelicans at the Lake Livingston spillway, *Polk/San Jacinto*, on 26 Mar (Bruce Neville).

American Bittern – **American Bitterns** were in good numbers in the eastern portions of Texas with up to 4 at County Club Lake in *Brazos* 25 Mar–6 Apr (David Scott, Susan Scott, John & Helen Baines, et al.), 1 at Pleasure Acres Lake in *Smith* 16 Apr (Mike Bloodsworth), and another at the eastern edge of *Smith* 22 Apr (Peter Barnes).

Black-crowned Night-Heron – Few *Lee* records for **Black-crowned Night-Heron**, plus an impressive count of 6, makes a 14 Apr (Hugh Brown) sighting noteworthy.

White Ibis – Forty White Ibis at Richland Creek WMA, *Freestone*, 10 May (Cliff Shackelford, Hayden Haukey, Matt Symmank) is a good count. Another was heard on a BBS in *Panola* 20 May (Linda Price).

Sora – A Sora was late at Richland Creek WMA, *Freestone*, 10 May (Cliff Shackelford, Hayden Haukey, Matt Symmank).

American Golden-Plover – East Texas reports of American Golden-Plovers were more than usual, including counts of 2-10 from 4 Mar to 8 Apr in *Burleson*, *Henderson*, *Hopkins*, *Red River* and *Titus* (m.ob.).

Hudsonian Godwit – Three Hudsonian Godwits were a good find 10 May (Cliff Shackelford, Hayden Haukey, Matt Symmank) at Richland Creek WMA, *Navarro*.

Wilson's Snipe – A count of ~100 Wilson's Snipes on Forehand Rd in *Henderson* 17 Mar (Linda Price, Peggy Harding) is surprising.

Caspian Tern – A Caspian Tern visited Lake Bob Sandlin, *Titus*, 15 May (Linda Price).

Black-chinned Hummingbird – A **Black-chinned Hummingbird** remained at feeders in *Rusk* at least to 7 May (Peggy Harding).

Rufous Hummingbird – Two Rufous Hummingbirds were in *Hardin* 7 Mar (Kelly Walker), following single occurrences since 29 Nov.

Northern Flicker – East of its normal range, a female Red-shafted Flicker was at Lake Bob Sandlin State Park in *Titus* 3 Mar (Peter Barnes, Dennis Scott).

Philadelphia Vireo – More than usual were many reports of Philadelphia Vireos in *Gregg*, *Rusk* and *Upshur* 3 Apr-17 May (Linda Price, Peggy Harding).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow – Northern Rough-winged Swallows were numerous, including juveniles, at Lake Gilmer in *Upshur* throughout the season (Linda Price).

Cave Swallow – Adult and juvenile **Cave Swallows** were seen 23 May (Martin Reid) at Big Creek Scenic Area, only the second record for *San Jacinto*. Cave Swallows were also reported in *Henderson* and *Rains*.

Winter Wren – Two Winter Wrens at Sugar Hill in *Panola* 28 Mar (Linda Price) is a noteworthy find.

Veery – Not often reported inland, single Veery were seen 27 Apr (David Brotherton) in *Gregg* and 14 May (Hugh Brown) in *Lee*.

Gray-cheeked Thrush – A good find for *Lee* was Gray-cheeked Thrush seen 7 May and 21 May (Hugh Brown).

Lapland Longspur – A Lapland Longspur was in *Hopkins* 4 Mar (David Brotherton, Luanne Brotherton).

McCown's Longspur – Lapland and McCown's Longspurs were at the turf farms in the Brazos River bottoms of *Burleson* on 3 Mar (Bryan Calk).

Orange-crowned Warbler – An **Orange-crowned Warbler** 22 May (Linda Price) in *Panola* was very late.

Blackburnian Warbler – Linda Price, a compiler for north-east Texas, reports, "An unusual number of Blackburnian Warblers for the Eastern Pineywoods was reported by many through April and May."

Lark Bunting – Continuing an unusual eastern-bound influx of **Lark Buntings**, 3 were in *Austin* 1 Mar and 15-20 were observed there 14 Mar (Darrell Vollert).

Lincoln Sparrow – A Lincoln's Sparrow 14 May (Linda Price) in *Gregg* was late.

Harris's Sparrow – An unusually large number of **Harris's Sparrows** were reported in East Texas to 16 Apr (m.ob), with multiple sightings in *Austin*, *Franklin*, *Hopkins*, *Lamar*, *Rusk*, and *Washington*.

Lazuli Bunting – Surprisingly, an immature male **Lazuli X Indigo Bunting** was documented at Camp Tyler in *Smith* 3 May (Peter Barnes) and a male **Lazuli Bunting** was at the same place 7 May.

Indigo Bunting – An **Indigo Bunting** that overwintered in Chappell Hill, *Washington*, was still present to 25 Mar (Darrell Vollert).

Bobolink – Not often reported inland in East Texas, a **Bobolink** was at Richland Creek WMA, *Navarro*, 10 May (Cliff Shackelford, Hayden Haucke, Matt Symmank) and 15 were in *Smith* on 12 May (Linda Price).

Western Meadowlark – **Western Meadowlarks** are being reported with increased frequency in East Texas with sightings of 1-15 birds 1-29 Mar (David Brotherton, Luanne Brotherton, Linda Price, Peggy Harding) in *Bowie*, *Gregg*, *Henderson*, *Hopkins*, *Rusk*, *Smith*, and *Titus*.

Pine Siskin – There were few reports of Pine Siskins in East Texas, but up to 20 visited feeders in *Rusk* throughout April (Peggy Harding).

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