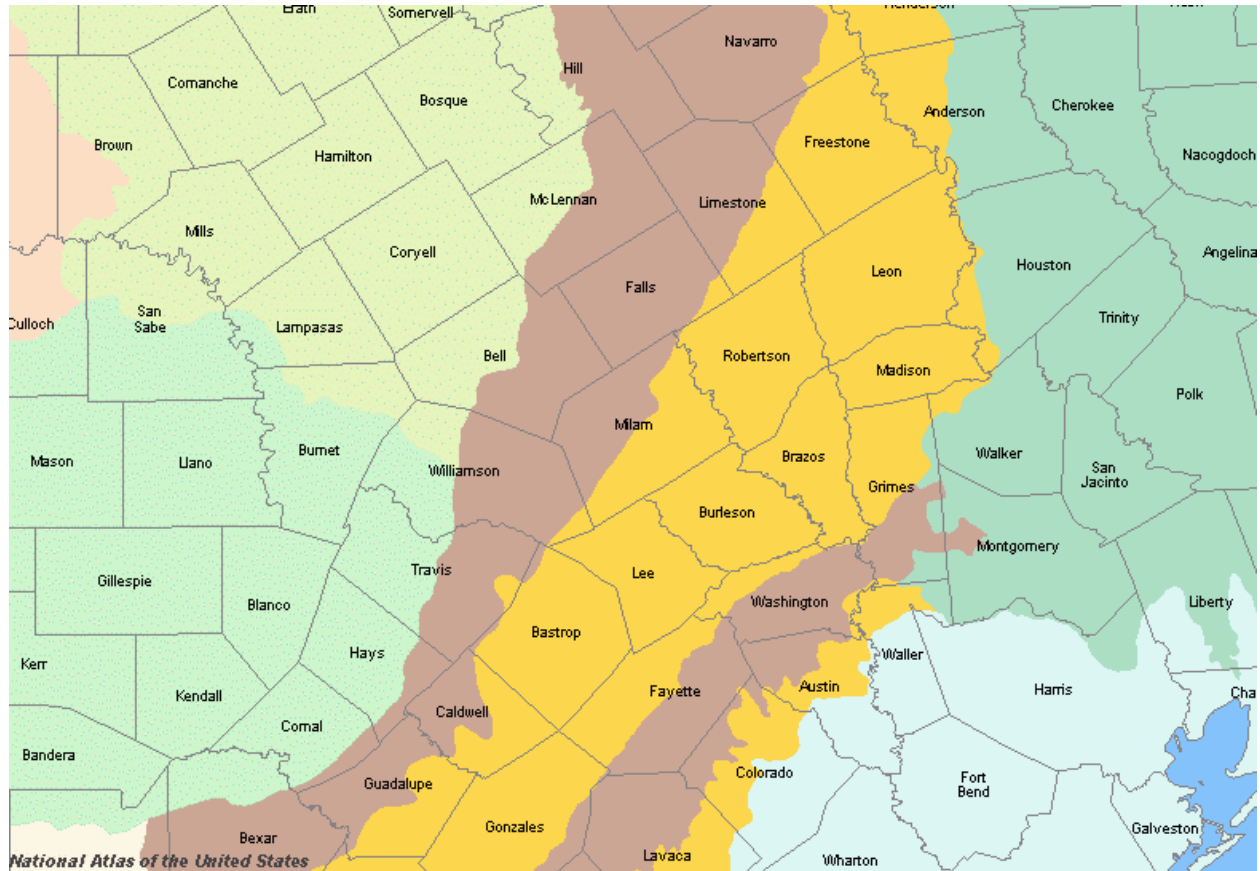


Summer 2019: Central Oaks & Prairies of Texas

By Bert Frenz

This report is from 1 June to 31 July 2019. It includes sightings from the following counties: Bastrop, Bell, Brazos, Burleson, Falls, Fayette, Freestone, Grimes, Lee, Leon, Limestone, McLennan, Madison, Milam, Navarro, Robertson, and Washington.



MOST UNUSUAL SIGHTINGS:

White-winged Dove – While White-winged Doves are found in abundance along the I-35 corridor, their arrival in *Brazos* was late and has been slow to build to numbers. This season, for the first time, counts in the mid to high double digits have been noted, including 65 in Bryan 24 Jul (Russell Moses), 75 at Country Club Lake 15 Jul (Warren Hardin) and 96 at Heritage Park 31 Jul (Russell Moses).

Purple Gallinule – Purple Gallinules again nested at Carlos Lake, *Grimes* with multiple sightings throughout the summer season, including 5 chicks 22 Jun (ph. Greg Page) and two juveniles with adults 26 Jul (Mike Rogan).



© Greg Page, 22 Jun 2019, Grimes County

Common Gallinule – Two adults with 3 chicks were noted at Carlos Lake, *Grimes* 9 Jun (Darrell Vollert).

American Avocet – Two American Avocets 8 Jul (Warren Hardin) in the Brazos River bottoms were early for the Oaks and Prairies region and the earliest for *Burleson*.

Snowy Plover – A Snowy Plover 28 Jul (ph. Steve Glover, Greg Cook) at the Gibbons Creek Reservoir dam is a first county record for *Grimes*.



© Steve Glover 28 Jul 2019, Grimes County

Buff-breasted Sandpiper – A first summer record for Lake Somerville, though expected during migration, is a Baird's Sandpiper at Welch Park, *Washington* 31 Jul (†Jean Martin, †Cinda Crosley).

Least Tern – A rare record for *Limestone* was a single Least Tern at Park 3 of Lake Limestone at 11 AM 6 Jun (†Jeremy Webster), followed soon at 4:30 PM at a location 2.7 mi. northeast of the lake (†Greg Cook, Steve Glover). The second location was at the *Leon* border so it also established a rare record for that county.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker – Although not unusual in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, there had been only 2 records since then for *Brazos*; now a third record is 16 Jun (ph. Smily Flores) at a home in College Station.



© Smily Flores 16 Jun 2019 Brazos County

Peregrine Falcon – Two Peregrine Falcons soaring very high above Lick Creek Park, *Brazos* 1 Jun (†Bruce Neville, †Sandy Dillard, m.ob.) are a first June record for the Central Brazos Valley, filling a gap between records 15 May and 22 Jul. Surprisingly, another (or the same?) peregrine flew low over buildings at the Texas A&M University campus 26 Jun (†Bruce Neville).

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher – A first summer record for *Bell* is a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher 11 Jun (ph. Gil Eckrich).



© Gil Eckrich 11 Jun 2019 Bell County

Least Flycatcher – A Least Flycatcher is the only June record for *Bell*, photographed at Stillhouse Park, Stillhouse Hollow Park 3 Jun (ph. Gil Eckrich). Another was observed 24 Jul (†Simon Kiacz) in Bryan, *Brazos*, where it is rare in July.



© Gil Eckrich 3 Jun 2019 Bell County

Vermilion Flycatcher – Rare in summer in *Bell*, a family group of 3 Vermilion Flycatchers were observed 23 Jun (unknown eBird reporter) in Belton.

Horned Lark – Rare in summer in *McLennan*—perhaps only one other dated record—up to 3 Horned Larks were watched 19 May–23 Jun (Matthew York, ph. Fay Ratta, †ph. Tyler Miloy) in cotton fields along Steiner Road.



© Fay Ratta 6 Jun 2019, McLennan County

Cedar Waxwing – An out-of-season Cedar Waxwing at Belton 21 Jun (ph. Gil Eckrich) provided the only summer record for *Bell*.



© Gil Eckrich 21 Jun 2019, Bell County

Bronzed Cowbird – Up to 3 Bronzed Cowbirds have been observed at Country Club Lake, *Brazos* since 16 Apr, seen regularly during the summer (m.ob.), and with a fourth cowbird 24 Jul (Russell Moses).



© Russell Moses 17 Jun 2019 Brazos County

Yellow-throated Warbler – An early migrant for *Brazos* and only the third summer record was a Yellow-throated Warbler at Red Feather Nature Preserve, Kurten 30 Jul (ph. Mary Richards).



© Mary Richards 30 Jul 2019, Brazos County

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