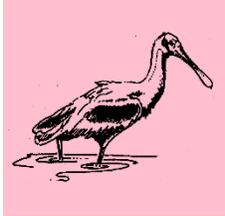


## Monthly Meeting September 14, 2015

**Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet St, Houston, TX**



6:30 pm [Learning Corner](#): Golden-Cheeked Warbler and Black-Capped Vireo by Richard Kostecke

7:00 pm [Ornithology Group](#) (OG) Business Meeting

7:30 pm [Program](#): The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Texas Birding Projects by Richard Kostecke

[Field Trip](#): Brazos Bend State Park, September 13, 8 AM, led by Jean Booth

### [A Novel Program](#)

## Golden-Cheeked Warbler and Black-Capped Vireo

By Richard Kostecke

Richard will start our meeting with a discussion of these two endangered Texas birds.

## The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Texas Birding

By Richard Kostecke

Rich Kostecke earned his B.S. in Biology (Systematics and Ecology) from the University of Kansas in 1995, his M.S. degree in Zoology from North Dakota State University in December 1998, and his doctorate in Wildlife Science from Texas Tech University in 2002. Rich's graduate research was field-based and focused on addressing real-world problems. For his M.S., he assessed ecological hazards associated with a program to control crop-depredating blackbirds in the Dakotas. For his Ph.D., he quantified conservation benefits associated with the removal of invasive cattail at Cheyenne Bottoms, a globally important wetland complex in central Kansas. Rich's first job after completing his Ph.D. was with The Nature Conservancy's (TNC's) Fort Hood Program in central Texas, a cooperative effort with the Army to monitor and manage endangered species (Black-capped Vireos and Golden-cheeked Warblers) and their habitats; seeking to balance the needs of both endangered species and the military training mission. In 2009, Rich became director of the Fort Hood Program. In 2011, Rich assumed his current state-wide role as Associate Director of Conservation for TNC in Texas. In this role, he serves as co-lead for science in the state with a particular focus on evaluating the effectiveness of conservation actions. His recent research projects have included assessing Black-capped Vireo status in the upper Devils River Basin, on-going monitoring of Golden-cheeked Warblers at several of TNC's preserves, assessing the impacts of large-scale wildfires on the birdlife of the

Davis Mountains, and researching the winter ecology of the Sprague's Pipit. Rich has published 28 notes or articles on his research to date.

Rich is a Missouri native, but has now called Texas home for the past 16 years. To a large extent, his work is not only a vocation, but an avocation. Richard spends much of his free time traveling; exploring the outdoors; and studying and photographing birds and other critters.

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## **Brazos Bend State Park Field Trip**

**Sunday, September 13, 8 AM**

**Led by Jean Booth**

We will meet at the 40 Acre Lake parking lot. This is the same place that we met when we were there in February; it is the big lot closest to the entrance.

The start of the field trip will be 8 AM, but I will be there no later than 7:30 to check out the birding in the area. We will meet by the restrooms.

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## **A Novel Program Enlists Civilian Landowners in a Bid to Preserve Habitat of Endangered Birds.**

**By Mark Clayton, Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor, August 6, 2007  
(reprinted with permission)**

FORT HOOD, TEXAS. The rumble of tanks and the blasts of exploding shells at Fort Hood Army base seem not to perturb the golden-cheeked warbler or the black-capped vireo.

The endangered birds, in fact, are thriving in the oak and juniper groves in lesser-used parts of the sprawling base. But as private land surrounding Fort Hood is developed, reducing nesting habitat, the Army is concerned that the base will become the bird's last haven, putting areas needed for tank training off limits forevermore.

Getting paid to be a protector is a big reason McClellan and 10 other landowners have put 1,400 acres of prime habitat into a fledgling program that, scientists and the Army hope, will prompt warblers to take up residence off-base. If it works, still a big "if", not only would the Army get to use more of Fort Hood for training rather than for nesting, but the Bush administration would likely apply this market-based model of species protection to other endangered creatures nationwide.

"We think this system will do a lot for the warbler and begin changing thinking in this part of the country about endangered species," says Steve Manning of the Texas Watershed Management

Foundation, a local group with ranching interests that helped devise the program. "In the long run,... our system could become a national model."

There's no arguing that Fort Hood's existing program to help the endangered birds has paid off. For 15 years it has preserved shrubs and trees the birds prefer and both species have rebounded. About 5,400 warbler pairs were nesting at Fort Hood this spring, more than twice the 2,000 pairs the federal recovery plan mandates.

Warblers and vireo populations "appear stable," says Richard Kostecke, a project scientist with the Nature Conservancy, an environmental group that has long overseen the bird recovery plan at the base.

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## **About the Ornithology Group**

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