



# The Spoonbill

A Publication of the Ornithology Group (OG)  
of the Houston Outdoor Nature Club

March 2010  
Vol. 59 No. 3

## Monthly Meeting: Monday, March 1

Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston

Learning Corner -- 6:30 p.m.

7:00 p.m. – General Meeting

**Program: The Diverse Birdlife of Goa, India** presented by Steve Matherly

In November 2006, Steve Matherly went on a birding and nature photography trip to the Indian state of Goa, and in this presentation he will share some of his photos and experiences.

Steve is an active volunteer for Houston Audubon where he supports the North American Rare Bird Alert (NARBA). He has provided this support since 1996. He has been published in the British magazine Birdwatch, and his photos are in use on several web sites.

Steve has a deep appreciation of nature that is rooted in the many hours he has spent with his parents and grandparents in outdoor activities. His first recorded outdoor activity took place at the ripe old age of 15 months. His parents were enjoying the spring waterfowl migration along the Missouri River in southwest Iowa. Whenever he would see a duck or goose, he would call out “tintail” (now better known to Steve as a Northern Pintail), and forcefully turn the head of anyone close enough to see the bird.

Steve still likes to share his nature observations with others, but now he prefers to do so via digital images. He purchased his first high quality SLR camera and telephoto lens in 1994. Bird life represents his favorite subject area, but scenery, flowers, and other wildlife are also well represented in his galleries. Steve is an enthusiastic traveler, and he also has an extensive gallery of travel photos from around the world.

## Other Events

**March 20:** [Monthly OG Field Trip \(Sheldon Lake SP\)](#)

**March 27 - May 2:** Houston Audubon [Birdathon](#)

**March 31:** [Dr. Douglas Tallamy lecture](#), Rice University  
“Bringing Nature Home”

**April 5:** Monthly OG Meeting

**April 24 - May 2:** [Great Texas Birding Classic](#)  
(Texas Parks & Wildlife; GCBO)

**April 29 - May 2:** [Quarterly OG Field Trip \(LRGV\)](#)

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**Ornithology Group**  
**Houston Outdoor Nature Club**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Monday, February 1, 2010**  
Bayland Community Center  
Number of Attendees: 42

**1. Learning Corner:** Steve Gross discussed "Ways to Contribute to the Birding Community." Steve reminded members that everyone can help contribute regardless of skill level or experience. Recording sightings on eBird is valuable data for everyone, to learn of first-of-season sightings or shifts in migration patterns. Reporting from areas you have access to that don't get much coverage can be important data. Contributing money to birding organizations and causes plus giving time volunteering on work days is always needed. Buying birding products, helping with bird conversation with Wood Duck boxes and Chimney Swift towers, sharing birding information in the community and introducing people to birding organizations all help to pass on interest in birding.

**2. Sightings:** Birds seen included: A Northern Parula at Brazos Bend; 2 Crested Caracaras, Harris's Hawk, Vermilion Flycatcher, Eastern Screech-Owl at El Franco Lee Park; Rufous Hummingbird and Cedar Waxwings.

**3. Minutes:** Minutes from the January 11, 2010 meeting were approved as printed in *The Spoonbill*.

**4. Treasurer's Report:** Jerry Stanislav reported that the OG balance is \$9,188.00 and will increase over the next few months as membership fees are paid.

**5. Library Report:** Deborah Valdez mentioned that the [OG library](#) has British field guides and tapes available.

**6. The Spoonbill:** Al Shultz reminded members that items for the March issue are due by February 15.

**7. Membership:** Margret Simmons reminded everyone to sign in. Margret explained that members must also join ONC to be an OG member. Dues may be paid for upcoming years if you wish to do so.

**8. Announcements:** Pam Smolen announced the lecture by Dr. Douglas Tallamy on Wednesday, March 31, 2010 at Hamman Hall at Rice University. The lecture is free, but parking is \$5.00, payable by credit card only. Dr. Tallamy is speaking on his book, *Bringing Nature Home*. David Marrack discussed a situation at the Woodlands Subdivision where Egret nests are being knocked down because of noise and possible disease. David suggested that these events should be watched.

**9. Past Field Trips:** Adam Wood reported on the January 16 field trip to Brazos Bend State Park. Sixty-five species were seen, including Cinnamon

## About the Ornithology Group

The Ornithology Group (OG) is a division of the Outdoor Nature Club (ONC), a non-profit organization dedicated to greater knowledge about the environment and wildlife of the Upper Texas Coast. The OG is a club of individuals interested in all aspects of birding, including bird identification, listing bird sightings, competing in birding events, and preserving bird habitat. Some members study bird behavior, biology, distribution and migration, while others just enjoy watching birds. The organization is designed to accommodate these diverse birding interests. Monthly meetings and field trips provide an opportunity to interact with and learn from experts in local and international birding.

Chair:	Pam Smolen	832-212-1368
Vice-Chair:	John Schneider	713-952-3770
Secretary:	Lenore Alfredson	281-579-8551
Treasurer:	Jerry Stanislav	936-271-7772
Clearing House:	David Sarkozi	713-412-4409
Library:	Deborah Valdez	281-879-8668
Membership:	Margret Simmons	713-776-2511
Field Trips:	Adam Wood	713-515-1692
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OG website: <http://www.ornithologygroup.org/>

ONC website: <http://www.outdoornatureclub.org/>

Teal, Bald Eagle, Canvasbacks, Sprague's Pipits (3) and Vermilion Flycatchers.

**10. Upcoming Field Trips:** Adam Wood announced this month's field trip to the Katy Prairie on February 20, 2010. Meeting times: 5:00 a.m. at the Nelson Farms Viewing Platform to look for owls, or 8:00 a.m. at Paul Rushing Park. A signed release form is needed and can be obtained from the OG website. The Quarterly Field Trip to San Antonio, February 11-14, has 2 openings available. Contact Adam for information.

**11. Program:** John Schneider introduced Helen and John Baines who presented the program, "Birding and Bird Conservation in the English Lake District." At the Smardale Gill National Nature Reserve they observed a variety of birds including the Common Blackbird, European Robin and Winter Wren. At the Grassholme Reservoir Lunedale Lakes an Eurasian Curlew, Lapwing and Eurasian Oystercatcher were spotted. In Haweswater Reserve a Golden Eagle, Great Crested Grebes, and Common Buzzard were photographed. At St. Bees Head, Linnet, European Stonechats and Common Murre were nesting on the sandstone cliffs. The Lake District Osprey Project at Bassenthwaite Lake has a webcam to observe the Osprey nesting sites from April to August. The [RSPB](#), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, maintains all of the Lake District areas. Conservation measures are in effect to preserve the birds and the area.

-- Lenore Alfredson, OG Secretary

## March 20, 2010 -- Trip to Sheldon Lake State Park

**Meet at Environmental Learning Center Parking Lot, 8:00 a.m.**

This month's trip will be to Sheldon Lake State Park on March 20, 2010. A Texas Parks and Wildlife Department official stationed at the Park will be our guide for the morning, and will give us an introduction to the natural history of Sheldon Lake State Park and its flora and fauna and of course will help us find wintering ducks, geese, and sparrows as well as other interesting birds. Some tough-to-find birds we will be keeping an eye out for are American Woodcock, Hairy Woodpecker, Great Kiskadee, Vermilion Flycatcher, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Bewick's Wren, Winter Wren, Palm Warbler, Fox Sparrow, and Grasshopper Sparrow. Sheldon Lake State Park and Environmental Learning Center is a 2,800 acre outdoor education and recreation facility located in northeast Harris County. The park is split into two units: Sheldon Lake is accessible from Garrett and Pineland/Fauna roads, and the Environmental Learning Center is accessible from Beaumont Highway. The reservoir levees encompass 1,200 acres, of which 800 are permanently inundated and 400 acres are marsh and swampland. Sheldon Reservoir, located on Carpenter's Bayou, a tributary of Buffalo Bayou, was constructed in 1942 by the Federal government to provide water for war industries along the Houston Ship Channel. Texas Parks and Wildlife acquired the reservoir in 1952 and designated it as the Sheldon Wildlife Management Area; it was opened in 1955. Sheldon Lake was designated a state park in 1984. This should be a great trip so you will not want to miss it. So come out and join us for a nice late winter's day of birding. We will meet in the parking lot for the Environmental Learning Center at 8:00 a.m.

**Heading northbound on Beltway 8:** proceed under the overpass of US 90 (Crosby Freeway) for one-quarter-of-a-mile and take "JCT 90 (Business)" exit. Turn right on Business 90 (Beaumont Highway) and head east for two miles to Park Road 138. Look for the flag pole on the north side of the road. There is also a brown highway sign on the right. Turn left over the railroad tracks to the park entrance.

**Heading southbound on Beltway 8:** turn left and head east on Garrett Rd. for one-half-mile to Fauna. Turn right and head south on Fauna which will change its name to Pineland. On your left will be the Sheldon Lake levee. After two-and-a-half miles cross over the railroad tracks to a stop light. Turn left at the traffic light onto Business 90 (Beaumont Highway) for one mile to Park Road 138. Look for the flag pole on the north side of the road. There is also a brown highway sign on the right. Turn left over the railroad tracks to the park entrance.

**Be sure to bring:** binoculars, a hat, sunscreen, raingear (in case it rains, but we will bird rain or shine), camera, scope, water, and snacks and a lunch if you plan on birding after lunch or just enjoying a picnic lunch with your fellow birders before leaving.

~ Adam Wood, OG Field Trip Coordinator, [birdsondabrain@earthlink.net](mailto:birdsondabrain@earthlink.net), 713-515-1692

## Remembering John Tveten

I was raised in rural Southeast Texas by parents who had a deep appreciation of wild birds. We observed birds in our daily lives--what they looked and sounded like, what they were doing. Were they foraging under the fallen leaves or high in the trees? Everything birds did was interesting to us.

Although we maintained an interest in birds, our learning to identify them was hampered by our lack of a field guide and binoculars. Actually, it was pretty amazing that we could identify as many birds as we could, because about all we owned to aid in bird identification were cards ordered from the back of cereal boxes and one coloring book. There was also a book with Audubon prints in the school library that would have remained on the library shelves had I not rechecked it so many times.

One of the greatest gifts of my life came in the early 1970s when my new husband and I moved to Houston and I learned of classes given at the Houston Museum of Natural Science. John L. Tveten was teaching birding and photography classes. I signed up for both. With infinite patience, John taught us about bird identification and the many different things we should observe while we were

watching birds. He taught us to study our field guide in our spare time and study the birds while we were in the field; the importance of observing not just the feather patterns and colors, the bill length, shape and size, and other identifying features, but to pay careful attention to the habitat. The time of year we were observing the bird was important. What birds were resident in Houston year round? Which birds would we expect to see during migration? Yes, this slide identifies a male Red-winged blackbird, but what is this next slide of a bird that is dark brown above with heavy brown streaking below? John also shared a few easy to remember i. d. tricks from his childhood. The egret with the golden slippers is a Snowy. The Marsh Hawk has a marshmallow rump patch.

To add to our field guide, good birding binoculars and our own growing powers of observation, John introduced us to a small pamphlet called "A Birder's Checklist of the Upper Texas Coast" compiled by members of the Houston Outdoor Nature Club, Ornithology Group. What a valuable compilation of information to have in one's possession! John encouraged all of us to join the ONC and OG.

It was my privilege to hear John speak on many different occasions on a number of nature-related topics. He was one of the finest speakers I've ever heard. His accuracy was exceptional, and his ability to teach, unequalled. I still find "Nature Trails" columns I've tucked away for further perusal. His and Gloria's books are an indispensable part of my reference library.

My parents fostered a lifelong love of nature deep in my soul, but John Tveten, through sharing his vast knowledge, increased my observational skills to a higher level. Learning from John enriched my life.

--Margaret Penrod, OG member

## Who was.....Alexander Wilson?

I've been curious about the people behind some of our common bird names such as Wilson's Warbler, Bicknell's Thrush, LeConte's Sparrow, and Bewick's Wren. So this month I'm going to start with the Father of American Ornithology, Alexander Wilson.

Wilson was born in Scotland in 1766, the son of a poor distiller. He was apprenticed to his brother-in-law as a weaver at the age of 13. Wilson became interested in poetry and politics. It was a time of political unrest and social upheaval in Scotland. Wilson was sentenced to a short prison term after he wrote a scathing satire about a prominent capitalist and his unfair treatment of the weavers. Dissatisfied with the oppression in Scotland, Wilson and his 16-year-old nephew left for a better life in America in 1794. They settled near Philadelphia where he worked as a school teacher and weaver. He met William Bartram, a naturalist, who encouraged his interest in birds.

In 1802, Wilson decided to publish a book illustrating all the North American birds. He traveled widely, observing and painting birds, and gathering subscribers for his book. His nine-volume "American Ornithology" was published in 1808-1814 and illustrated 268 species including descriptions of 26 new species. Wilson published many observations of natural history and influenced many later artists and ornithologists including John James Audubon. Wilson died in 1813 by drowning in a river while pursuing a bird.

The common names of Wilson's Phalarope, Wilson's Snipe, Wilson's Plover, and Wilson's Storm-Petrel commemorate Alexander Wilson. Wilson gave his name to Wilson's Warbler which he first described in 1811. The Wilson Ornithological Society was named in his honor.

  
OG Chairperson



# Clearing House - January 2010

David Sarkozi [david@sarkozi.net](mailto:david@sarkozi.net) 713-412-4409

This is a summary of birds reported to eBird.org. Rare and very rare birds are in **bold**. There were 244 species reported for the Upper Texas Coast (Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, and Jefferson Counties) for January 2010 from 822 checklists. Rare and very rare are listed in this format: County:location(date)[Observer]

Use of eBird is exploding and I had an amazing 12,686 sightings to work with this month. I think historically the most I ever had was an April or May with 5000 sightings. January is a slow bird month and usually less than 200 species are reported, but this list would be a good May! Some notable sightings are Franklin's Gull (Very Rare), Ladder-backed Woodpecker (Very Rare), Rock Wren (one previous record for the UTC, 1974), and Rufous-crowned Sparrow (one previous record, 1979). This is a listing of species reported and not all of these reports have been validated and reviewed. For ease of editing, domestic and exotic species reported were left in.

Reports by the following observers were used in this report: Adam Wood, Alasdair Brown, Albert Shultz, Amy Haussmann, Andy Jordan, Arlette Keene, Art MacKinnon, Asdf Slkd, Bernd Gravenstein, Bill Duke, Bill Townsley, Bill Wright, Brandan Robertson, Bryan Tarbox, Cameron Cox, Carl Hahn, Charlie Brower, Charmaine Ganson, Chester Studdard, Chuck Davis, Damien Carey, David Dolan, David Ely, david florance, David Whipple, Deborah Valdez, Debra Logsdon, Denise Herzberg, Dennis Shepler, Derek Grayson, Don and Kristi Person, Dorothy Borders, Dorothy Cooney, Drew Dickert, Dwayne Litteer, Ed Allday, Elizabeth dUCOTE, Frank Farese, Fred Collins, Gary Binderim, Gil Bozeman, Gordon White, Heidi Good, Houston Audubon Bolivar Count, Houston Audubon Heights 11th Street Survey, Howard Smith, J Berner, J. C. Stormer, Jacob Walker, Jacqueline Melancon, Jade Hems, James Shewbert, Janet Landry, Janet Rathjen, Jason Bonilla, Jean Bodeau, Jeff Mohamed, Jeff Mundy, Jennifer Newton, Jerry Eppner, Joe Cornelius, Joe Fischer, John Cocanower, John O'Brien, John Pike, John Schneider, John Sharp, Judith Evans, Judy Behrens, Judy Sharp, Karen Horn, Karen K, Keith Kingdon, Kelly Hill, Ken Hartman, Kristin Bonilla, Laurie Foss, Laurie Sines, Liston Rice, Margaret Farese, Mark Meyer, Mark Scheuerman, Mark Westeleventh, Mark Woodrey, Matthew Fisher, Matthew York, Michael Hardee, Michael Kuzio, Mike Austin, Nancy Keese, P Angert, Rebecca Rodionov, Regan Golden-McNerney, Richard Houck, Rick Geloff, Robert Opperman, Ron Ware, sarah kuzio, Shelia Hargis, Sherry Moore, Stephanie Smith, Steve Astrich, Susan Herman, Susan Thompson, Thomas Kihn, Tim Gilheart, Tom Morris, Tom SoRelle, Tom Taroni, Tony Frank, Tracy Caldwell, V L Kirby, Zach Berner.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck reports=58  
total= 1,196  
Swan Goose reports=1 total= 1  
Greater White-fronted Goose reports=43 total=  
2,608  
Graylag Goose (Domestic type) reports=3  
total= 16  
Snow Goose reports=57 total= 18,450  
Ross's Goose reports=17 total= 20  
Cackling Goose reports=6 total= 78  
Canada Goose reports=6 total= 20  
goose sp. reports=1 total= 5  
Black Swan reports=1 total= 1  
Muscovy Duck (Domestic type) reports=14  
total= 64  
Muscovy Duck x Mallard (Domestic type)  
reports=1 total= 6  
Wood Duck reports=20 total= 27  
Gadwall reports=77 total= 2,295  
American Wigeon reports=32 total= 327  
Mallard reports=50 total= 184  
Mallard (Domestic type) reports=20 total= 179  
Mottled Duck reports=43 total= 72  
Blue-winged Teal reports=84 total= 540  
Cinnamon Teal reports=9 total= 5  
Northern Shoveler reports=70 total= 861  
Northern Pintail reports=38 total= 1,323  
Green-winged Teal reports=37 total= 1,044  
Canvasback reports=13 total= 57  
Redhead reports=6 total= 60  
Ring-necked Duck reports=63 total= 520  
Greater Scaup reports=3 total= 9  
Lesser Scaup reports=42 total= 1,405  
Bufflehead reports=3 total= 3  
Common Goldeneye reports=9 total= 22  
Hooded Merganser reports=22 total= 38  
Red-breasted Merganser reports=30 total= 180  
Ruddy Duck reports=27 total= 208  
duck sp. reports=1 total= 7

Northern Bobwhite reports=4 total= 12  
**Pacific Loon reports=1 total= 1**  
Galveston:Galveston- Offatts Bayou (UTC  
065)(1)[Tom SoRelle]  
Common Loon reports=17 total= 13  
**Least Grebe reports=1 total= 2**  
Pied-billed Grebe reports=158 total= 259  
Brazoria:Old Riverside CC(3)[V L Kirby]  
Eared Grebe reports=5 total= 14  
Northern Gannet reports=2 total= 2  
American White Pelican reports=66 total=  
3,439  
Brown Pelican reports=81 total= 148  
Neotropic Cormorant reports=76 total= 126  
Double-crested Cormorant reports=151 total=  
798  
cormorant sp. reports=4 total= 41  
Anhinga reports=21 total= 69  
American Bittern reports=10 total= 6  
Great Blue Heron reports=227 total= 85  
Great Egret reports=274 total= 180  
Snowy Egret reports=197 total= 125  
Little Blue Heron reports=73 total= 55  
Tricolored Heron reports=64 total= 24  
Reddish Egret reports=14 total= 5  
Cattle Egret reports=26 total= 48  
**Green Heron reports=14 total= 5**  
Galveston:High Island- Smith Oaks (UTC  
052)(17)[Andy Jordan], Galveston:High  
Island- Smith Oaks (UTC 052)(23)[Laurie  
Foss], Galveston:High Island- Smith Oaks  
(UTC 052)(23)[Jeff Mundy],  
Galveston:High Island- Smith Oaks (UTC  
052)(23)[Shelia Hargis], Harris:Corbindale  
Library 77024(16)[Janet Landry],  
Harris:Edith L. Moore Nature Sanctuary  
(UTC 094)(31)[Asdf Slkd], Harris:El  
Franco Lee Park(12)[Judy Behrens],  
Harris:El Franco Lee Park(17)[Judy

Behrens], Harris:El Franco Lee Park(24)  
[Tony Frank], Harris:El Franco Lee Park(27)  
[Judy Behrens], Harris:El Franco Lee Park  
(27)[Mike Austin], Harris:El Franco Lee  
Park(31)[Judy Behrens], Harris:Houston-  
Arthur Storey Park(2)[Deborah Valdez],  
Harris:Sheldon Lake SP(1)[Damien Carey]  
Black-crowned Night-Heron reports=40 total=  
176  
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron reports=12 total=  
16  
White Ibis reports=149 total= 479  
White-faced Ibis reports=51 total= 563  
Roseate Spoonbill reports=52 total= 63  
Black Vulture reports=192 total= 239  
Turkey Vulture reports=226 total= 192  
Osprey reports=98 total= 19  
White-tailed Kite reports=25 total= 12  
Bald Eagle reports=38 total= 9  
Northern Harrier reports=109 total= 50  
Sharp-shinned Hawk reports=24 total= 6  
Cooper's Hawk reports=73 total= 8  
Accipiter sp. reports=8 total= 4  
**Harris's Hawk reports=7 total= 3**  
Brazoria:San Bernard NWR (UTC 125)(10)  
[Frank Farese], Harris:El Franco Lee Park  
(22)[Mike Austin], Harris:El Franco Lee  
Park(24)[Tony Frank], Harris:El Franco Lee  
Park(24)[Judy Behrens], Harris:El Franco  
Lee Park(27)[Judy Behrens], Harris:El  
Franco Lee Park(27)[Mike Austin],  
Harris:Sheldon Lake SP (UTC 033)(29)  
[Tony Frank]  
Red-shouldered Hawk reports=146 total= 25  
White-tailed Hawk reports=21 total= 12  
Red-tailed Hawk reports=223 total= 118  
Buteo sp. reports=1 total= 1  
Crested Caracara reports=49 total= 15

American Kestrel reports=154 total= 32  
Merlin reports=15 total= 13  
Peregrine Falcon reports=10 total= 5  
Yellow Rail reports=7 total= 55  
**Black Rail reports=2 total= 9**  
Brazoria:San Bernard NWR(16)[Charlie Brower], Brazoria:San Bernard NWR (UTC 125)(5)[Jacob Walker]  
Clapper Rail reports=5 total= 6  
King Rail reports=4 total= 1  
Virginia Rail reports=1 total= 1  
Sora reports=3 total= 3  
Common Moorhen reports=63 total= 309  
American Coot reports=140 total= 4,823  
Sandhill Crane reports=41 total= 469  
Black-bellied Plover reports=32 total= 121  
Snowy Plover reports=7 total= 36  
Semipalmated Plover reports=4 total= 31  
Piping Plover reports=4 total= 38  
Killdeer reports=175 total= 348  
American Oystercatcher reports=8 total= 35  
**Black-necked Stilt reports=11 total= 233**  
American Avocet reports=11 total= 6,345  
Spotted Sandpiper reports=37 total= 16  
Greater Yellowlegs reports=37 total= 58  
Willet reports=57 total= 310  
Lesser Yellowlegs reports=20 total= 44  
Long-billed Curlew reports=20 total= 157  
Marbled Godwit reports=7 total= 200  
Ruddy Turnstone reports=16 total= 21  
Sanderling reports=30 total= 258  
Western Sandpiper reports=11 total= 231  
Least Sandpiper reports=26 total= 171  
Dunlin reports=10 total= 277  
**Stilt Sandpiper reports=1 total= 6**  
Brazoria:Surfside- Crab Rd(22)[V L Kirby]  
peep sp. reports=1 total= 3  
Short-billed Dowitcher reports=6 total= 41  
Long-billed Dowitcher reports=6 total= 155  
Short-billed/Long-billed Dowitcher reports=5 total= 80  
Wilson's Snipe reports=8 total= 37  
American Woodcock reports=1 total= 2  
Bonaparte's Gull reports=7 total= 40  
Laughing Gull reports=127 total= 3,450  
**Franklin's Gull reports=1 total= 1**  
Jefferson:Beaumont Wastewater Treatment Plant(4)[Cameron Cox]  
Ring-billed Gull reports=132 total= 3,349  
Herring Gull reports=36 total= 127  
Lesser Black-backed Gull reports=1 total= 1  
gull sp. reports=1 total= 30  
Gull-billed Tern reports=3 total= 19  
Caspian Tern reports=21 total= 18  
Forster's Tern reports=52 total= 153  
Royal Tern reports=26 total= 63  
Black Skimmer reports=24 total= 442  
Rock Pigeon reports=129 total= 667  
Eurasian Collared-Dove reports=48 total= 79  
White-winged Dove reports=152 total= 1,600  
Mourning Dove reports=328 total= 370  
Inca Dove reports=18 total= 17  
Monk Parakeet reports=21 total= 131  
**Greater Roadrunner reports=1 total= 1**  
Harris:Kleb Woods Nature Preserve(23)  
[Karen Horn]  
Barn Owl reports=7 total= 2  
Eastern Screech-Owl reports=11 total= 12  
Great Horned Owl reports=16 total= 6  
Barred Owl reports=11 total= 6  
Short-eared Owl reports=5 total= 1  
**Buff-bellied Hummingbird reports=1 total= 1**  
Brazoria:Lake Jackson(9)[V L Kirby]  
**Ruby-throated Hummingbird reports=6 total= 4**  
Galveston:Home(2)[Michael Hardee], Galveston:Home(31)[Michael Hardee], Galveston:Jane's House(10)[Nancy Keese], Harris:77070 Houston(1)[Keith Kingdon], Harris:77070 Houston(3)[Keith Kingdon], Harris:77070 Houston(10)[Keith Kingdon]  
Black-chinned Hummingbird reports=8 total= 8  
Ruby-throated/Black-chinned Hummingbird reports=2 total= 1  
Rufous Hummingbird reports=14 total= 8  
hummingbird sp. reports=1 total= 1  
Belted Kingfisher reports=104 total= 17  
Red-headed Woodpecker reports=10 total= 9  
Red-bellied Woodpecker reports=269 total= 65  
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker reports=125 total= 28  
**Ladder-backed Woodpecker reports=1 total= 1**  
Harris:Sheldon Lake SP(1)[Damien Carey]  
Downy Woodpecker reports=174 total= 38  
**Hairy Woodpecker reports=1 total= 1**  
Harris:Houston(1)[Ron Ware], Harris:Sheldon Lake SP(1)[Damien Carey]  
Northern Flicker reports=50 total= 16  
Pileated Woodpecker reports=47 total= 11  
**Least Flycatcher reports=2 total= 7**  
Galveston:Galveston(22)[Regan Golden-McNerney], Galveston:League City(26)[Gil Bozeman]  
Eastern Phoebe reports=220 total= 103  
Vermilion Flycatcher reports=29 total= 11  
**Ash-throated Flycatcher reports=1 total= 0**  
Brazoria:Hanson Riverside County Pk. (UTC 120)(18)[Joe Cornelius]  
**Great Kiskadee reports=1 total= 0**  
Harris:Bridgeland Property(1)[Gordon White]  
**Couch's Kingbird reports=2 total= 2**  
Fort Bend:Cullinan Park (Sugar Land) (UTC 095)(14)[J Berner], Fort Bend:Cullinan Park (Sugar Land) (UTC 095)(16)[Joe Cornelius]  
Loggerhead Shrike reports=188 total= 34  
White-eyed Vireo reports=4 total= 3  
Blue-headed Vireo reports=28 total= 11  
Blue Jay reports=287 total= 88  
American Crow reports=253 total= 149  
Horned Lark reports=11 total= 43  
**Purple Martin reports=3 total= 2**  
Fort Bend:Double Lake Dr.(29)[Bill Duke], Harris:Houston- Arthur Storey Park(26)[Ed Allday], Harris:Sheldon Lake SP (UTC 033) (29)[Tony Frank], Harris:Sheldon Lake SP (UTC 033)(31)[mark westeleventh]  
Tree Swallow reports=26 total= 1,648  
**Northern Rough-winged Swallow reports=5 total= 16**  
Chambers:Anahuac NWR (UTC 049)(17)[Andy Jordan], Fort Bend:Cullinan Park (Sugar Land) (UTC 095)(31)[Joe Cornelius], Harris:Katy Prairie- Warren Ranch Lake (UTC 099)(1)[Denise Herzberg], Harris:Sheldon Lake SP (UTC 033)(10)[Andy Jordan]  
**Cave Swallow reports=9 total= 55**  
Brazoria:Brazoria NWR (UTC 108)(5)  
[Jacob Walker], Brazoria:Brazoria NWR (UTC 108)(5)[Mark Woodrey], Brazoria:INEOS Chocolate Bayou(4)  
[Michael Hardee], Brazoria:San Bernard NWR (UTC 125)(1)[Tom Morris], Chambers:Anahuac NWR (UTC 049)(4)  
[Cameron Cox], Fort Bend:Cullinan Park (Sugar Land) (UTC 095)(14)[J Berner], Harris:Houston- Addicks Reservoir(2)[Drew Dickert], Harris:Houston- Addicks Reservoir (2)[David Dolan], Harris:Katy Prairie (Harris Co.)(1)[Thomas Kihn]  
swallow sp. reports=1 total= 15  
Carolina Chickadee reports=264 total= 103  
Tufted Titmouse reports=131 total= 53  
**Brown-headed Nuthatch reports=7 total= 5**  
Harris:77070 Houston(3)[Keith Kingdon], Harris:Kleb Woods Nature Preserve(17)  
[Laurie Sines], Harris:Kleb Woods Nature Preserve(17)[Denise Herzberg], Harris:Kleb Woods Nature Preserve(17)[sarah kuzio], Harris:Kleb Woods Nature Preserve(17)  
[michael kuzio], Harris:backyard, Cypress, Tx(23)[michael kuzio], Harris:backyard, Cypress, Tx(23)[sarah kuzio]  
Brown Creeper reports=16 total= 3  
**Rock Wren reports=13 total= 3**  
Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(2)[John O'Brien], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(3)[Janet Rathjen], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(3)[Ken Hartman], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(3)[Adam Wood], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(3)[J. C. Stormer], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(4)[Bernd Gravenstein], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(9)[Frank Farese], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(9)[Margaret Farese], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(10)  
[Nancy Keese], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(10)[Denise Herzberg], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(10)  
[Laurie Sines], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(23)[Joe Fischer], Harris:Pine Gully Park (UTC 079)(25)[Bill Wright]  
Carolina Wren reports=186 total= 88  
House Wren reports=51 total= 36  
Winter Wren reports=9 total= 5  
Sedge Wren reports=33 total= 146  
Marsh Wren reports=21 total= 26  
Golden-crowned Kinglet reports=13 total= 8  
Ruby-crowned Kinglet reports=244 total= 112  
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher reports=89 total= 46  
Eastern Bluebird reports=51 total= 53  
Hermit Thrush reports=27 total= 20  
American Robin reports=114 total= 2,057  
Gray Catbird reports=23 total= 9  
Northern Mockingbird reports=352 total= 74  
Brown Thrasher reports=9 total= 2  
European Starling reports=205 total= 2,885  
American Pipit reports=80 total= 124  
Sprague's Pipit reports=8 total= 7  
Cedar Waxwing reports=121 total= 1,060  
Orange-crowned Warbler reports=173 total= 42  
**Yellow Warbler reports=1 total= 1**  
Brazoria:Brazoria Co. Rd 508 (Burke Rd)(3)  
[Tom Morris]  
Yellow-rumped Warbler reports=330 total= 539  
Pine Warbler reports=132 total= 65  
Palm Warbler reports=10 total= 13  
**Black-and-white Warbler reports=3 total= 2**  
Brazoria:Riverside Estates(3)[Tom Morris],

Harris:Sheldon Lake SP(1)[Damien Carey],  
 Harris:houston --stein family park(2)  
 [Deborah Valdez]  
**American Redstart reports=1 total= 0** Fort  
 Bend:Brazos Bend State Park (UTC 117)(1)  
 [Derek Grayson]  
 Common Yellowthroat reports=38 total= 31  
 Wilson's Warbler reports=14 total= 8  
**Rufous-crowned Sparrow reports=1 total= 0**  
 Galveston:312 Eagle Lakes Dr.(8)[Joe  
 Fischer]  
 Chipping Sparrow reports=90 total= 136  
 Field Sparrow reports=12 total= 9  
 Vesper Sparrow reports=10 total= 32  
 Savannah Sparrow reports=153 total= 276  
 Grasshopper Sparrow reports=2 total= 1  
 Le Conte's Sparrow reports=7 total= 8  
 Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow reports=1 total=  
 60  
 Seaside Sparrow reports=14 total= 27  
**Fox Sparrow reports=3 total= 4** Harris:15915  
 Katy Frwy(13)[Charmaine Ganson],  
 Harris:Katy Prairie (Harris Co.)(1)[Thomas  
 Kihn], Harris:Nelsons Farm (Harris County)  
 (1)[Adam Wood]  
 Song Sparrow reports=28 total= 22  
 Lincoln's Sparrow reports=35 total= 13  
 Swamp Sparrow reports=56 total= 86  
 White-throated Sparrow reports=36 total= 60  
**Harris's Sparrow reports=8 total= 22**  
 Harris:Katy Prairie (Harris Co.)(1)[Thomas  
 Kihn], Harris:Katy Prairie- Warren Ranch  
 Lake (UTC 099)(1)[Denise Herzberg],  
 Harris:Kleb Woods Nature Preserve(6)[Fred

Collins], Harris:Kleb Woods Nature  
 Preserve(21)[Jeff Mohamed], Harris:Kleb  
 Woods Nature Preserve(23)[Liston Rice],  
 Harris:Kleb Woods Nature Preserve(23)  
 [Karen Horn], Harris:Kleb Woods Nature  
 Preserve(31)[Jeff Mohamed],  
 Harris:Nelsons Farm (Harris County)(1)  
 [Adam Wood]  
 White-crowned Sparrow reports=18 total= 40  
 Dark-eyed Junco reports=5 total= 5  
 Northern Cardinal reports=349 total= 297  
**Indigo Bunting reports=2 total= 6**  
 Galveston:Arkansas Home(8)[Dorothy  
 Cooney], Harris:Eisenhower Park (Harris  
 Co)(16)[Bill Townsley]  
 Red-winged Blackbird reports=151 total=  
 1,235  
 Eastern Meadowlark reports=78 total= 161  
**Western Meadowlark reports=1 total= 1**  
 Harris:Katy Prairie (Harris Co.)(1)[Thomas  
 Kihn]  
 meadowlark sp. reports=6 total= 20  
**Rusty Blackbird reports=2 total= 3**  
 Harris: Bear Creek Park (Houston)  
 (UTC097)(22)[Matthew York], Harris:bay  
 area park(31)[david florange]  
 Brewer's Blackbird reports=11 total= 58  
 Common Grackle reports=64 total= 3,300  
 Boat-tailed Grackle reports=31 total= 252  
 Great-tailed Grackle reports=143 total= 988  
 grackle sp. reports=2 total= 21  
**Bronzed Cowbird reports=3 total= 6**  
 Harris:Houston- Arthur Storey Park(26)[Ed  
 Allday], Harris:Houston- Wesleyan x U.S.

59(24)[mark westeleventh], Harris:Swifts  
 over Houston- Whole Foods/AT&T(24)  
 [John O'Brien]  
 Brown-headed Cowbird reports=24 total=  
 1,348  
**Bullock's Oriole reports=1 total= 1**  
**Bullock's x Baltimore Oriole (hybrid)**  
**reports=1 total= 1** Brazoria:Lake Jackson  
 (31)[V L Kirby]  
**Baltimore Oriole reports=3 total= 3**  
 Brazoria:Lake Jackson(19)[V L Kirby],  
 Brazoria:Lake Jackson(22)[V L Kirby],  
 Brazoria:Lake Jackson(31)[V L Kirby],  
 Galveston:Arkansas Home(8)[Dorothy  
 Cooney], Harris:Our Home(30)[Don and  
 Kristi Person]  
 blackbird sp. reports=15 total= 1,050  
**Purple Finch reports=2 total= 5**  
 Galveston:Home(3)[Michael Hardee],  
 Harris:77018 Houston(1)[Jacqueline  
 Melancon], Harris:77018 Houston(3)  
 [Jacqueline Melancon]  
 House Finch reports=75 total= 75  
**Pine Siskin reports=1 total= 20**  
 Galveston:Arkansas Home(8)[Dorothy  
 Cooney]  
 American Goldfinch reports=231 total= 640  
 House Sparrow reports=183 total= 249  
 Orange Bishop reports=2 total= 8  
 Nutmeg Mannikin reports=7 total= 68

## Safe and Great Birding in Colombia

Recently my wife and I spent a week birding in Colombia. I am originally from Colombia, but I had not done any birding there because of the violence that has for years affected it. All of that has changed. Most of the birding sites are now completely safe, and last year companies such as VENT and Field Guides conducted several birding tours in Colombia.

Colombia has almost 1900 bird species, of which 62 are endemics. We visited a preserve called "El Dorado", located on the northern coast, that has 19 endemics. This preserve is located on an isolated, snow-capped mountain three hours from Santa Marta, a resort city on the coast. This permits covering a variety of habitats from the cloud forest to the sea shore. On the coast, there is a flamingo sanctuary with many shorebirds, and scrub habitat with many different species such as the Vermilion Cardinal and the Scarlet Ibis. We had a wonderful time and saw over 140 species new to us, including White-tipped Quetzal, Santa Marta Mountain Tanager, Santa Marta Toucanet, Black-fronted Wood Quail, White-lored Warbler, Black-crested Antshrike, and Russet-throated Puffbird.

Besides fantastic birding, Colombia offers very reasonable prices since they are trying to attract more tourists. We had a private, one-week tour that included everything with an expert English-speaking guide, for \$2600 for the two of us (not including airfare to Santa Marta). The guides recognize the bird calls, then call the bird back with their iPod. If you have ever birded in a tropical forest, you know that is the only way to see certain species.

This was our second trip with Ecotours, which is the for-profit company operated by ProAves, a non-profit corporation whose main purpose is bird and habitat conservation. They have 17 preserves distributed throughout the country that cover over 60% of the threatened bird species of Colombia. If you are interested in birding in Colombia, I will be happy to give you more information and put you in contact with ProAves.

--Sergio Henao

Outdoor Nature Club  
Ornithology Group  
P.O. Box 270894  
Houston TX 77277-0894

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