

The Spoonbill

A Publication of the Ornithology Group
of the Houston Outdoor Nature Club

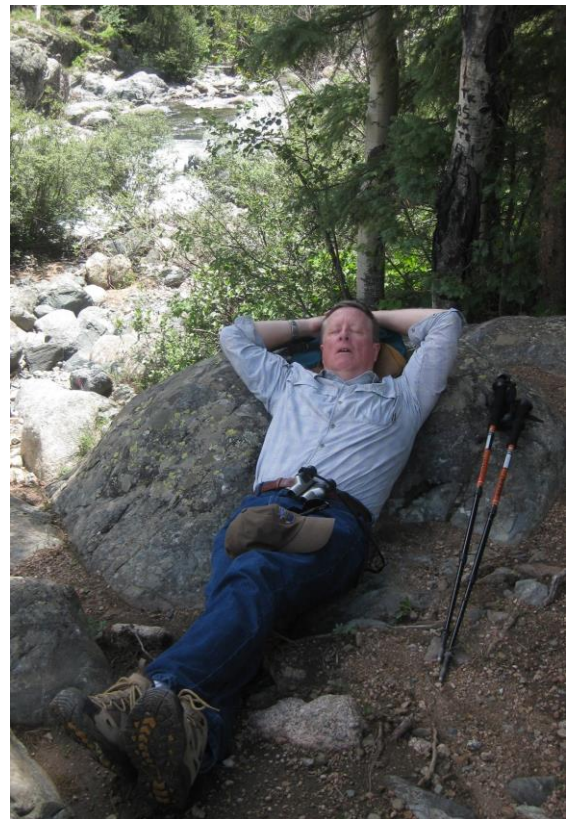
February 2021

Greetings! Although Bayland Community Center has reopened, in an abundance of caution, we used the Zoom online platform for our **February 1 meeting**.

The February program: “**Corvids—The Amazing Crow Family**” was presented by Scott Kiester, Flower Mound, TX.

A certified Texas Master Naturalist since 2003, Scott is a lifelong birder and student of nature. He has worked on conservation-related projects with different conservation groups throughout north Texas. He is currently active in the Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists, leading monthly bird walks at the Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center near Denton and at Lake Ray Roberts State Park, and is engaged in various volunteer projects at LLELA. Scott is a retired geologist and has an M.S. in environmental science.

He previously presented this program in October 2020 at the annual meeting of Texas Master Naturalists.



· CORVIDS ·



February Trivia Q:

What bird species set a new record for non-stop flight in September 2020?

(The answer is at the very end of the newsletter)

===== **February 2020 Field Trip** =====

New date: Saturday, 27 February – Heading to CBFS in Huntsville!

Destination: Sam Houston State University's **Center for Biological Field Studies**

Situated in Walker County, adjacent to Sam Houston National Forest, the CBFS is a biological field station owned and operated by Sam Houston State University, and not normally open to the public. It covers 100 hectares (274 acres) and is bisected by Harmon Creek. As an eBird hotspot, CBFS has so far recorded 78 bird species; <https://ebird.org/hotspot/L8668963>

Printable checklist: <https://ebird.org/printableList?regionCode=L8668963&yr=all&m=>

The field trip will be led by CBFS Director Alan Byboth. It's a walking tour, about 4 hours.

Advance sign-up is required. Contact Lisa Li at scissortailed20@yahoo.com

Time to Renew Membership for 2021 - NOW

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2021, please do so. We are all volunteers, but the ONC/OG has continuing expenses.

OG/ONC single membership \$20, Family \$30, or consider once-in-a-lifetime ONC dues! Life membership \$250, Patron \$500, Founder \$1000, or Benefactor \$5000.

Please make checks payable to "Outdoor Nature Club" and mail to:

Outdoor Nature Club, P.O. Box 1014, Bellaire, TX 77402-1014



Three Great Volunteer Opportunities

1. The Ornithology Group needs someone to serve as Newsletter Editor for The Spoonbill.
2. The OG Vice-Chair (**your name here**) is in charge of arranging our monthly speakers – consider volunteering and trying this out for a year!
3. Harlan Evans has volunteered for many years but would finally like to step down as OG's Treasurer and is looking for someone else to take on the responsibility.

Please contact Nina if you are interested in any of these positions.

Upcoming 2021 Ornithology Group meetings (Monday evenings, on Zoom for now)

March 1 – Program: "**Birding Northeast Brazil**," by Lisa Li

April 5 & May 3– TBA

August 2 – Prof. Timothy Brush, UTRGV, author of "Nesting Birds of a Tropical Frontier: The Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas" (TAMU Press)

Cool Local Birds! Over the last month...

Harris County:

Hooded Oriole in Seabrook; **Black-headed Grosbeak**, **Bullock's Oriole**, **Western Tanagers** at private feeders; **Painted Redstart** still in Briarforest area, off Dairy-Ashford; **Red-naped Sapsucker** still off E NASA Pkwy in Taylor Lake Village Community Park; **Lark Bunting** and **Ladder-backed Woodpecker** on Warren Ranch; and **Pine Siskins** seemingly everywhere.

Montgomery County:

Red Crossbills and **Purple Finches** on Kelly's Pond Road off 204, south of 1375 in Sam Houston National Forest, near the Walker County line.

Fort Bend County:

Greater Scaup and **Lapland Longspur** at Cross Creek Ranch Wetlands; **Anna's Hummingbird** and **Broad-tailed Humminbird** at private feeders; and Purple Finches abound.

Galveston County:

Pyrrhuloxia on Artist Boat property- Spanish Grant subdivision off Stewart Rd; **Least Bittern** and **Fox Sparrow** at High Island-Smith Oaks

Brazoria County:

Black-headed Grosbeak in Pearland; **Bullock's Oriole**, **Baltimore Oriole**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, **Summer Tanager** at private feeders; plus Purple Finches.

Upcoming local birding events – please wear a mask

Baytown Nature Center Monthly Bird Count, Harris County –

Third Thursdays: Cancelled Feb 18 (weather). **Next will be March 18.**

Meet David Hanson & Chuck Davis at 8:00am in the parking lot behind the entrance building.

Seabourne Creek Nature Park, Rosenberg, Fort Bend County - Weekly Wednesday Bird Walks

- Meet at 8:00am. <https://rosenbergtx.gov/seabourn-creek/>

Kleb Woods Nature Preserve, Tomball, Harris County – Wednesday morning bird walks, 8:30am-11:30am. Kleb Woods staff also run First Saturday bird walks, 8-10am (**March 6, April 3**) and Senior (50+) Fri. bus trips.

John Paul Landing Environmental Education Center, 9950 Katy-Hockley Rd, Katy, Harris County – Thursday morning bird walks 8:30am-11:30am

Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary Open Day (usually third/fourth Sat): **Feb 27, March 27**



Texas State Parks Status

Almost all Texas State Parks are open, although access and hours may be limited, and camping is still closed at some. The following are closed: Balmorhea SP (Toyahvale), and Wyler Aerial Tramway (El Paso). But Indian Lodge (Fort Davis) has reopened – book online!

See <https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/parks-map>

Ornithology Group - www.OrnithologyGroup.org

Chair	Nina Rach	Nina.Rach@yahoo.com
Vice-chair (Programs)	- OPEN – interesting job!	Your email here!
Field Trips	Lisa Li	scissortailed20@yahoo.com
Secretary	Jean Greenhalgh	Jeanbrit01@yahoo.com
Treasurer	Harlan Evans – leaving soon	HarlanJ42@sbcglobal.net
Membership	Michael Honel	MichaelHonel@sbcglobal.net
ONC Board Represent.	Tira Overstreet	Oddbird47@comcast.net
The Spoonbill Editor	- OPEN – temporarily Nina -	Nina.Rach@yahoo.com

February Trivia Q answer: 4BBRW beats E7

On Sept 16, 2020 a male **Bar-tailed Godwit**, fitted with a 5gm satellite transmitter, left southwest Alaska and flew non-stop across the Pacific Ocean in 11 days, arriving on the mudflats at Miranda, east of Auckland, a journey of more than 7500 miles. The record-breaking, fearless flyer is known as “4BBRW” (after the blue, red and white rings attached to its legs).

The previous record for a non-stop flight was 7250 miles, set by a Bar-tailed Godwit known as E7, in 2007.

Brought to you by the **Global Flyway Network**, a collaborative group of researchers that track extreme migratory journeys, led by University of Groningen professor Theunis Piersma.

www.globalflywaynetwork.org

References:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/godwit-record-bird-flight-alaska-global-flyway-network-b1035517.html>

Audio: <https://www.rnz.co.nz/audio/remote-player?id=2018768439>