



The Phalarope

The Newsletter of the Midland Naturalists

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Midland Naturalists Field Trips

BILL POLLED THE MIDNATS AND THEY VOTED NOT TO HOLD FIELD TRIPS UNTIL JUNE

June 6, 2020 I-20 Wildlife Preserve, meet 8:00 am at preserve
June 13, 2020 Goldeneye Pond, meet 8:00 am at pond entrance

All of these locations do not require car-pooling. Social distancing is achievable at these locations.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Aside from the two Saturday birding walks listed above, there are no upcoming events planned at this time, due to efforts to keep everyone away from each other because of Covid 19. Mary Stortz has indicated that she does not plan to schedule any butterfly activities until social distancing is no longer required.

Shameless Filler

Indigo Buntings,
2 males, 1 female
from the internet



Midland County Bird Records – March, 2020

There are still many ducks. Canada Geese made a brief visit. Muscovy Ducks were spotted at Blakemore Pond. There were good numbers of Blue-winged Teal, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Shovelers, Gadwalls, Mallards, a few Green-winged Teal, Redheads, Ring-necked Ducks, Buffleheads, and many Ruddy Ducks were seen at several ponds. Others have evidently moved north for the summer.

A few Northern Bobwhite were spotted. There were lots of reports of Scaled Quail. One Wild Turkey was seen. Pied-billed Grebes were reported at several ponds, and an Eared Grebe at Faudree and Hogan Park. There were numerous Rock Pigeons, Eurasian Collared-Doves, an Inca Dove, White-winged Doves, and Mourning Doves. Greater Roadrunners were seen at Midland College and the east side of the county. Black-chinned Hummingbirds were seen everywhere.

Wading birds were seen at various ponds: Sora, Common Gallinule, American Coots, Black-necked Stilts, American Avocets, Snowy Plovers, Killdeer, Stilt Sandpipers, Least Sandpipers, Semipalmated Sandpipers, Western Sandpipers, Long-billed Dowitchers, Wilson's Phalarope, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Neotropic Cormorant, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Black-crowned Night-Heron, and White-faced Ibis.

Raptors seen include Turkey Vultures, an Osprey (Faudree), Mississippi Kites, Northern Harriers, Cooper's Hawks, Harris's Hawk, Swainson's Hawks, and Red-tailed Hawks. Barn Owls and Great Horned Owls and Burrowing Owls were spotted around the county. A Belted Kingfisher was seen at I-20 Preserve.

Ladder-backed Woodpeckers were seen. Falcons seen include American Kestrels and a Peregrine Falcon. Flycatchers reported were Say's Phoebes, Ash-throated Flycatchers, lots of Western Kingbirds, and some Scissor-tailed Flycatchers. Bell's Vireos and Loggerhead Shrikes also made an appearance.

Blue Jays were seen around town. Chihuahuan Ravens were seen. Verdins were seen frequently. Horned Larks were seen on FM 1788 and ECR 120. A Purple Martin was spotted on Todd Road. Barn Swallows and Cliff Swallows were numerous around the county. A few Ruby-crowned Kinglets are around town. A Blue-gray Gnatcatcher was seen at Midkiff and Golliday. Wrens seen include Rock Wrens, House Wren, Marsh Wren, Carolina Wren (I-20), Bewick's Wrens (everywhere), and Cactus Wrens. European Starlings were reported frequently. Thrashers seen include Curve-billed Thrashers and Northern Mockingbirds. Thrushes including a Hermit Thrush (Palko home), and American Robin were seen around town. House Sparrows and House Finches were seen in good numbers. American Pipits were seen at Faudree and Midland College. Lesser Goldfinches and American Goldfinches were spotted.

--Pat Hunter Please send your bird sightings to me at pcthunter@hotmail.com. Thank you for reports from Carol Bailey, Karen Hardie, Bill Lupardus, Greg Palko, Shirley Stafford and Sara St.Clair.

Sparrows seen include Cassin's Sparrow, Chipping Sparrows, Clay-colored Sparrows, Lark Sparrows, Lark Buntings, Dark-eyed Juncos, White-crowned Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows, Savannah Sparrows, Song Sparrows, Lincoln's Sparrow, Canyon Towhees and Spotted Towhees. Yellow-breasted Chats were seen at I-20 Preserve. Blackbirds reported include Yellow-headed Blackbirds, Western Meadowlarks, W/E Meadowlarks, Bullock's Orioles, a Baltimore Oriole (Harris Tank), Red-winged Blackbirds, a Bronzed Cowbird (Palko home), Brown-headed Cowbirds, Brewer's Blackbirds, Common Grackles, and Great-tailed Grackles. Warblers reported include a Northern Waterthrush (Palko home), a Black-and-White Warbler (Midkiff), Orange-crowned Warblers, Nashville Warblers, Common Yellowthroats, a Yellow Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warblers (Myrtle and Audubon's), and Wilson's Warblers. Other birds seen include a Summer Tanager (I-20 Pond), Northern Cardinals, Pyrrhuloxias, a Lazuli Bunting, and an Indigo Bunting (Palko home).

--Pat Hunter Please send your bird sightings to me at pcthunter@hotmail.com. Thank you for reports from Carol Bailey, Karen Hardie, Bill Lupardus, Greg Palko, Shirley Stafford, and Sara St. Clair.



Shameless Filler

Painted Buntings,
1male, 1 female
from the internet



A FEW WORDS FROM YOUR EDITOR ABOUT THE “ MASTER NATURALISTS”

In the article below, Pat Hunter mentions that the Llano Estacado Master Naturalists were invited to join the Midnats to conduct the Big Day Count. As editor, I was not sure who the Llano Estacado Master Naturalists were or even whether they came from Midland or Lubbock. Thus I asked Pat. She explained that the “Master Naturalists” is a program sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Texas A & M Agrilife Extension. I went to the TPWD webpage and looked up “Master Naturalists”. I learned that the program was started in 1997 and has the following mission: “The Texas Master Naturalist Program’s mission is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within the communities for the State of Texas.”

I had a friend/former co-worker who became a Master Naturalist when she retired from Chevron/Texaco nearly 20 years ago. She described in detail all the training in zoology, botany, geology, meteorology etc. that she attended prior to receiving her “Master Naturalist” certification. One of the requirements to maintain your certification was/is that you have to provide a minimum of 40 hours per year of service work to TPWD. There are a number of categories from which to choose to fulfill the “service work” requirement and if you are interested, you can look the information up on the “Master Naturalist” section of the TPWD website. About 60-70% of the counties in Texas belong to various chapters of the Master Naturalist program. I live in Harris County (Houston/ Cypress) and that county has its own, single county, chapter. 10 counties in west Texas make up the Llano Estacado chapter (of which Midland is obviously one). The website has a colored map that shows which counties have chapters, what the chapter is called, and directs you to that particular chapter’s webpages. Although Pat did not clearly state “I am a Master Naturalist” I assume that she is and you can get more information about the program from her.

MIDLAND NATURALISTS/MASTER NATURALISTS BIG DAY COUNT

The Big Day Count was held on Saturday, April 18. Pat hunter invited the Llano Estacado Master Naturalists to join us. A total of twenty-seven of us covered as much of Midland County as we could. With Covid 19 keeping everyone close to home, it was great to get out, even in ones and twos, to see the birds (but not each other). The weather was pretty brisk in the morning — about 46° F, misty and cloudy in the morning, but cleared and warmed up to 71° in the afternoon. We saw 108 different species and counted 4695 individual birds. Many thanks to John Adams, Carol Bailey, Jane and Paul Brown, Mary Jane Brown, Barbara Drissel, Sybil Eberhart, Jennifer Gamrod, Ben Hardie, Karen Hardie, Brad Holland, Pat Hunter, Bill and Kathy Lupardus, Ethel Mathews, Shari Maxie, Susan May, Von McCallum, Sonja Millichamp, Carolyn Mitchell, Greg Palko, Ismael Perez, Ken Rust, Sara St Clair, Shirley Stafford, Betsy Triplett-Hurt, and Susie Yarbrough.

Pat Hunter

Canada Goose	3	Black-crowned Night-Heron	4	Curve-billed Thrasher	39
Muscovy Duck (Domestic type)	6	White-faced Ibis	21	Northern Mockingbird	121
Blue-winged Teal	104	Turkey Vulture	6	American Robin	51
Cinnamon Teal	17	Osprey	1	House Sparrow	248
Northern Shoveler	86	Cooper's Hawk	1	American Pipit	19
Gadwall	111	Northern Harrier	1	House Finch	105
Mallard	64	Harris's Hawk	1	Lesser Goldfinch	2
Mallard x Mexican Duck (hybrid)	3	Swainson's Hawk	18	Cassin's Sparrow	159
Bufflehead	2	Red-tailed Hawk	4	Chipping Sparrow	79
Ruddy Duck	27	Buteo sp.	2	Clay-colored Sparrow	33
duck sp.	20	Barn Owl	2	Brewer's Sparrow	1
Northern Bobwhite	7	Great Horned Owl	2	Lark Sparrow	61
Scaled Quail	67	Burrowing Owl	5	Lark Bunting	220
Pied-billed Grebe	6	Belted Kingfisher	1	White-crowned Sparrow	179
Eared Grebe	1	Ladder-backed Woodpecker	10	Vesper Sparrow	47
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	140	American Kestrel	3	Song Sparrow	14
Eurasian Collared-Dove	68	Say's Phoebe	4	Savannah Sparrow	8
White-winged Dove	408	Ash-throated Flycatcher	15	Lincoln's Sparrow	6
Mourning Dove	458	Western Kingbird	103	Canyon Towhee	4
Inca Dove	2	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	15	Sparrow sp.	30
Greater Roadrunner	2	Bell's Vireo	3	Yellow-headed Blackbird	1
Black-chinned Hummingbird	12	Loggerhead Shrike	5	Western Meadowlark	21
hummingbird sp.	5	Blue Jay	57	Western/Eastern Meadowlark	9
American Coot	50	Chihuahuan Raven	3	Bullock's Oriole	10
Black-necked Stilt	56	raven sp.	3	Baltimore Oriole	1
American Avocet	47	Verdin	7	Red-winged Blackbird	163
Snowy Plover	1	Purple Martin	4	Bronzed Cowbird	1
Killdeer	51	Barn Swallow	118	Brown-headed Cowbird	40
Least Sandpiper	64	Cliff Swallow	157	Brewer's Blackbird	25
Long-billed Dowitcher	5	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	1	Common Grackle	28
Wilson's Phalarope	14	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	Great-tailed Grackle	466
Greater Yellowlegs	2	Rock Wren	5	Common Yellowthroat	6
Lesser Yellowlegs	1	House Wren	1	Black-and-white Warbler	1
Neotropic Cormorant	1	Marsh Wren	1	Orange-crowned Warbler	2
Double-crested Cormorant	2	Carolina Wren	1	Yellow-rumped Warbler	5
Great Blue Heron	2	Bewick's Wren	7	Wilson's Warbler	1
Snowy Egret	2	Cactus Wren	5	Northern Cardinal	18
		European Starling	42	Pyrrhuloxia	9

Midland Naturalists, Inc.
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Thank you! Please join us on a field trip soon. Schedule of field trips on page 1.