

San Antonio Audubon Society

AUDUBON NEWS

A Conservation and Birding Club since 1954

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Black-throated Green Warblers By Mike Scully

I'm recalling memories of Septembers past; 45 years ago while participating in the Hook Mountain Hawk Watch on the Lower Hudson River. Besides the hawks passing over that rocky mount, I recall throngs of south-bound Black-throated Green Warblers (*Setophaga virens virens*) moving through the yellowing foliage on the wooded slopes. While our closely related Golden-cheeked Warbler (*S. chrysoparia*) remains imperiled across its limited breeding range, the Black-throated Green Warbler (BTGW) reaps the benefits of broader habitat tolerances and remains a common bird across most of its wide range.

Most of the BTGW population breeds across a broad band of Southern Boreal Forest extending from Eastern British Columbia clear to Labrador and Newfoundland. In addition, the high-pitched songs of the males are a familiar springtime sound in coniferous, mixed and deciduous forests in New England, New York, Pennsylvania and at higher elevations along the Appalachians to Northeast Alabama. A smaller subspecies (*S. v. waynei*) breeds in cypress swamps along the Atlantic Coastal Plain from Virginia to the Carolinas.

Studies in Maine have indicated that BTGW populations breeding in coniferous forests can have a limiting effect on the numbers of some competing warbler species, whereas the presence of those competitors appears to have less effect on densities of BTGW. This species was included in MacArthur's classic 1950's study of resource

partitioning. Now, as then, in spruce woodlands at least, BTGW spend much of their time gleaning insects from mid-level branches, less often hovering to take insects from the underside of foliage, and occasionally fly-catching as opportunity presents. More recent studies have shown that males forage somewhat higher up in the canopy than do females.



Black-throated Green Warbler
By Lora Render

Those BTGW breeding in deciduous forests demonstrate a wider range of foraging strategies, perhaps in response to the absence of some competing warbler species. Significant morphological differences have been noted between BTGW breeding in coniferous forests and those breeding in deciduous woodlands, even within the same geographical area. Individual habitat preferences may have a strong genetic component maintained by assortative mating.

Certainly separate habitat preferences are manifested in the case of the physically smaller and shorter-billed *S. v. waynei* subspecies breeding along the Atlantic Coastal Plain. This subspecies is also reproductively isolated from other BTGW populations by time, distance and altitude. The nearest representatives of the much more widely distributed *virens* subspecies breed in the Appalachians 150 or more miles away at elevations beginning at 2,000 feet and these mountain populations return later in the springtime to breed. A similar process of isolation may have played a role in the speciation of our own Golden-cheeked Warbler from common BTGW ancestors. Golden-cheeked Warblers return earlier in the year to exploit the mixed woodlands in our Texas Hill Country at a season when our late winter/early spring climate resembles late spring and summer further north.

Not surprisingly, the breeding behavior of these two sibling species is similar in most respects. One limiting factor governing the distribution and population density

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SAN ANTONIO AUDUBON CALENDAR: MARCH/APRIL

Please call the trip leaders if you have questions. Last-minute changes to field trips will be posted at saaudubon.org, www.facebook.com/saadubon/ or sent by email via SATXBirds. Please arrive early.

Friday, March 1, 8:00 AM

Pearsall Park

Meet leader Christian Fernandez (210/415-0843) in the parking lot by the playground at 5102 Old Pearsall Road. Take Exit 2 off SW Loop 410 to Old Pearsall Road. The park is located 2 miles inside the loop on the right. Be sure to go past the first entrance for Pearsall Park, which is the dog park.

Saturday, March 2, Afternoon

Rockport Whooping Crane Boat Tour

We will meet Captain Tommy Moore in Rockport for the afternoon boat tour. This trip is full, but if you have questions, please contact Karen Moulder (210-824-2547, moulderkf@gmail.com).

Tuesday, March 5, 8:00 AM

Medina River Greenway Pleasanton Road Trailhead

Meet leader Helen Rejzek (hmr78253@gmail.com) in the parking area. From Loop 410, take Exit 46 (Moursund/Pleasanton Road). Turn south and drive past Mitchell Lake Audubon Center. Continue for about 3 miles and the park will be on your left at the blinking light.

Saturday, March 9, 8:00 AM

SAAS Beginners' Bird Walk

Meet leader Georgina Schwartz (210/342-2073) at the Judson Nature Trails, 246 Viesca Street. We have some binocs to lend out and you don't have to be a beginner to come on this walk. From the 5900 block of Broadway, turn west on Ogden Street and drive to the stop sign at Greeley Street. You'll see a sign to Judson Nature Trails. Turn left, go one block and turn right on Viesca, then into parking lot on left.

Saturday, March 16, 8:30 AM—note later start time

Land Heritage Institute

Meet Patsy and Alan Kuentz (210/493-2673 or 210/749-7196) at the LHI gate on Neal Road. Take Exit 46 off Loop 410 on the south side and turn south on Moursund Blvd., which turns into Pleasanton Road. Turn right onto Neal Road about 5 miles south of 410. Follow Neal Road 2.3 miles to the gated entrance. A \$3 donation is requested. Bring snacks and water.

Tuesday, March 26, 8:00 AM

Crescent Bend Nature Park

Meet Sandi Wheeler (wheels5683@gmail.com) in the parking lot of the park. From San Antonio, take IH-10 east to the FM 1518 exit and go north toward Schertz. Look for a brown park sign at Schafer Road. Turn right and go 3 miles to the park. Entrance on left before Cibolo Creek. Bring water.

Saturday, April 6, Call Helen Rejzek for start time

Junction Hot Spots

We will be joining Rhandy Helton for a trip to Junction. For directions and other information, contact Helen Rejzek (hmr78253@gmail.com). Sign up early, as this trip will have a limited number of participants. SAAS members have first priority.

Sunday, April 7, 8:00 AM

Maverick Ranch

Meet Mary and Bebe Fenstermaker (956/236-3779) at the gate to their ranch on Boerne Stage Road. Exit I-10 West in Leon Springs. Turn left on Boerne Stage Road and drive 3 miles to the stop sign and turn right on Boerne Stage Road. Drive 1.4 miles to the gate on the left. The gate will be locked after we meet, so please note the start time and arrive early. Wear suitable footwear for hiking. Bring snacks and water!

Saturday, April 13, 8:00 AM

SAAS Beginners' Bird Walk

See directions for March 9.

Sunday, April 14, 8:00 AM

Crescent Bend Nature Park

See directions for March 26.

Saturday, April 20, 8:00 AM

Castroville Regional Park

Meet Georgina Schwartz (210/342-2073) in the upper parking lot of the park. Take US 90 West to Castroville. At the end of the Medina River bridge, as you enter Castroville, turn left onto Florence Street and follow the signs to the park. Bring water and snacks; lunch at a local restaurant.

Thursday, April 25, 8:00 AM

Warbler Woods, 19349 Old Wiederstein

Meet Sandi Wheeler at Don and Susan Schaezler's sanctuary in Cibolo. Take I-35 north toward Austin. Take Exit 176, Wiederstein Road. Turn right onto Wiederstein at the overpass. Turn left at the next road, Old Wiederstein Road. After you pass Dean Road, the Schaezler property begins on the right.

SAAS APRIL FIELD TRIPS CONTINUED

Sunday, April 28, 8:00 AM

Medina River Nature Area Plants & Birds

Patty Leslie Pasztor (agarita@me.com) or 210/837-0577) will lead SAAS on a walk to observe and ID plants as well as look and listen for birds at Medina River Natural Area, 15890 TX Hwy 16, San Antonio, TX 78264. From Loop 410, drive 4.2 miles south on Hwy 16; the park entrance is on the east (left) side just before the Medina River bridge. Meet in the parking lot.

Tuesday, April 30, 9:00 AM—note later start time

Woodlawn Lake & Elmendorf Lake Park

Meet leader Margie Zumbehl at the parking lot for the Woodlawn Lake Casting Pond, 115 Alexander Ave. Take I-10 to Exit 567 (Woodlawn Ave.), turn west onto Woodlawn and go 0.5 miles to Zarzamora Street and turn left. Go 0.3 miles to Cincinnati Ave and turn right. The pond is 2 blocks on the left. We will look for nesting night-herons and then continue to Elmendorf Lake and look for nesting egrets and cormorants.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Tempella Guernsey
9001 Wurzbach Rd., #308
San Antonio, TX 78240
210/526-3030

Linda McMahan
106 Arrow Mound
San Antonio, TX 78231
210/865-5251

Ed Rogers
132 View Point Dr. E.
Boerne, TX 78006
210/296-7609

Watch this Short Film about Migratory Birds

The Fight for Flight is a 16-minute film well worth watching, posted on Vimeo by Fauna Creative.

Black-throated Green Warblers continued from page 1

of the Golden-cheeked Warbler, however, has been that species' dependence upon shreds of mature Ashe Juniper bark for nest-building. No such constraint applies to the BTGW. The females of both species do most of the work when constructing the bowl-shaped nests, typically in the fork of a twig. BTGW females can incorporate a variety of fibrous plant materials into the nest structure, including shreds of bark, depending on availability. Both species bind the structure together with spider silk.



Black-throated Green Warbler
By Lora Render

The winter range of the BTGW extends from South Texas, South Florida and the West Indies south to Colombia and Venezuela. The *waynei* subspecies winters primarily in Cuba and most *S. v. vires* winter in the highlands of Central America. This Central American portion of the winter range entirely encompasses that of the Golden-cheeked Warbler.

As is true of most Neotropical migrants, habitat destruction on the wintering grounds remains a threat. An additional threat to the BTGW here in North America has arisen with the spread of the hemlock and balsam wooly adelgids, introduced insects that kill off Eastern hemlocks and Fraser firs respectively, resulting in a steep decline in BTGW numbers in some areas.

SARA Bird Walk on March 2

Christian Fernandez and Georgina Schwartz will lead a birdwalk for the San Antonio River Authority on Saturday March 2 beginning at 8 AM and starting at the Acequia Park on the east side of the river across from Espada Park. Reserve your spot by contacting Nicki Apostolow at napostolow@sara-tx.org or 210/302-3252.

SAAS/BAS MEETINGS CALENDAR

Thursday, March 7 • 7:00 PM
San Antonio Zoo Education Center
Hop, Skip, and Jump:
Why Migration Matters
Presenter: Dr. Maureen Frank

Much of the research on migratory bird conservation has focused on breeding habitat, but the conditions that birds encounter on their spring and fall journeys are critical for population health. The importance of



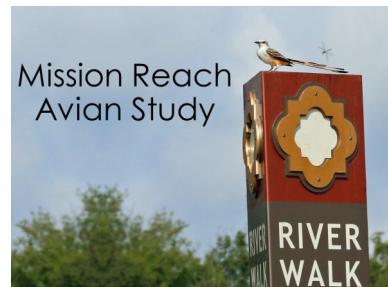
habitats along the migration route is a topic that deserves more consideration in conservation efforts. In this talk, Dr. Maureen Frank will highlight some key features of stopover and staging areas for birds and share an example based on research from the migratory hotspot of Great Salt Lake. Finally, we'll discuss migration routes through Central Texas and the role of birders in helping to provide a successful journey.

Dr. Maureen Frank is an Assistant Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. She has a Ph.D. in Wildlife Biology from Utah State University, where she studied migrating phalaropes (pictured above) and grebes on Great Salt Lake. Her undergraduate degree is from Texas A&M. In her current role, Dr. Frank provides outreach and education about all things wildlife, especially through programs that create connections between people and natural resources.



Thursday, April 4 • 7:00 PM
San Antonio Zoo Education Center
Mission Reach Avian Study 2015-2018
Presenters: Martin Reid & Lee Marlowe

The Mission Reach Ecosystem Restoration and Recreation Project was constructed from 2008 to 2013, expanding the San Antonio River Walk to the south of downtown. The project transformed over 8 miles of the San Antonio River from a drainage ditch into a thriving ecosystem with over 100 acres of aquatic habitat and over 400 acres of riparian habitat that varies from prairie to brushland and woodland.



The San Antonio River Authority began a multi-year study of the birds within the Mission Reach between 2015 and 2018 to document which species and how many individuals were using the restored habitat. During that period, 196 bird species and 62,484 individual birds were recorded. A variety of species indicative of the project's success have been identified, including range-restricted species, wary species, and habitat specialists. Notable species include Black-billed Cuckoo, Cassin's Kingbird, Lazuli Bunting, Hooded Oriole, Sprague's Pipit, Great Kiskadee, Rufous Hummingbird, Wood Stork, Anhinga, Least Grebe, Sora, and remarkably, a territorial Black-capped Vireo! Additionally, 12 duck species, three kingfisher species, 19 flycatcher species, five vireo species, six wren species, 16 sparrow species, and 16 warbler species were recorded using the restored habitat.

Martin Reid was born and raised near London, England. In 1986 he had an epiphany with birds and birding that changed his life, causing him to travel widely in search of birds and move to Texas in 1991, his home ever since. Martin has found four new bird species for Texas, five dragonfly species new for the U.S., and two butterfly species new for the U.S.

Lee Marlowe is the Sustainable Landscape Ecologist for the San Antonio River Authority. She is a restoration ecologist with over 19 years of professional experience working in the field of ecological restoration and natural resource management including sustainable landscape practices and applications for improved ecological functions.

A GREAT BIRDING EVENT IS COMING TO SAN ANTONIO!

**PLEASE VOLUNTEER
TO HELP WITH THE
TOS SPRING MEETING!**

Bexar Audubon and San Antonio Audubon are teaming up to host the **Texas Ornithological Society (TOS) Spring Meeting in San Antonio May 2 through 5**. All activities will be based at the **Hilton Garden Inn at The Rim**.

This represents a big opportunity for local birders. As a TOS member, you can sign up for field trips and attend all the great presentations being planned for the meeting, including the banquet on Saturday night with the Keynote Speaker, Dr. Bruce Beehler.



As a BAS-SAAS member, you can **join our support team** for this event:

- Volunteer to be a Field Trip Assistant: Meet a group at the hotel and guide them to their destination; learn from a veteran field trip leader and see the birds they help the group find and identify; perfect your eBird skills and share the lists with the other participants and enter the data on the TOS Master List.
- Volunteer to help with other TOS Meeting duties: Help secure items and monitor the Silent Auction and Raffle; help set up AV Equipment for the speakers; help distribute box lunches every morning; be the official TOS meeting photographer—the list goes on.

In return for your volunteer help, you are eligible to:

- Participate in field trips.
- Attend all presentations on Thursday evening, Friday afternoon and evening, and Saturday afternoon.

WANT TO JOIN TOS?

Support a fine organization: Texas Ornithological Society formed in 1953 to promote the discovery, knowledge, observation, and conservation of birds in Texas. TOS does all this in many ways, and you can read all about their various activities, events, publications, and information about birds and birding in Texas on their excellent website, where you can also join: www.texasbirds.org.

WANT TO HELP?

Contact Patsy Inglet sajasforbirds@gmail.com. We are happy to find a role for you to fill to make this meeting a great success.

A complete list of field trips and presentations will be available soon.

Don't miss this great opportunity!

LOCAL BIRDING LOCATIONS

MITCHELL LAKE AUDUBON CENTER

10750 Pleasanton Road
San Antonio, TX 78221

Visit <http://mitchelllake.audubon.org> or email mlac@audubon.org or call 210/628-1639

SAN ANTONIO BOTANICAL GARDEN

555 Funston, San Antonio, TX 78209
Visit www.sabot.org or call 210/207-3250

GOVERNMENT CANYON

12861 Galm Rd, San Antonio, TX 78254
Visit www.friendsofgc.org or call 210/688-9055

CIBOLO NATURE CENTER

140 City Park Rd., Boerne, TX 78006
Visit www.cibolo.org or call 830/249-4614

MITCHELL LAKE MONTHLY BIRDING TOURS

Pre-register online at MLAC website

1st Sunday: March 3 & April 7, 8:00 AM
2nd Sunday: March 10 & April 14, 8:00 AM
2nd Tuesday: March 12 & April 9, 8:00 AM
3rd Sunday: March 17 & April 21, 8:00 AM
4th Sunday: March 24 & April 28, 8:00 AM,
4th Saturday (Beginning Birders Tour): March 23 &
April 27, 8:00 AM

\$8 for non-members; Free for members

Visit <http://mitchelllake.audubon.org> or email mlac@audubon.org or 210/628-1639

SAAS Membership

The SAAS newsletter is sent by email only to all members who have provided an email address. You will also receive a membership renewal notice by email. We no longer mail a printed membership directory to everyone, but a PDF copy is available by email from the membership secretary at members@saaudubon.org

SAN ANTONIO AUDUBON NEWS

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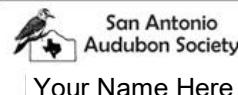
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SAAS-Y NOTES

ORDER YOUR SAAS NAME BADGE

Patsy Inglet is taking orders for magnetic SAAS name badges. We need 10 individuals to sign up to place the order. Each individual will pay for their own badge. Please contact Patsy at



sasforbirds@gmail.com to let her know how you want your name to appear. Cost will vary depending on quantity ordered and shipping fees, but expect to pay around \$9-10 for your badge.

SAAS Board of Directors Meeting AREA Real Estate, 1221 Broadway #104

Thursday • March 28 • 6:00 PM

Thursday • April 25 • 6:00 PM

All are invited. Contact Mariann Golden for more info: MariannG9350@juno.com

San Antonio Audubon Society

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Christine Turnbull

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Education/Outreach

Patsy Inglet-----info@saaudubon.org

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Historian, Betty Walters

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Judson Nature Trails

Barbara Sykes-----btsykes@sbcglobal.net

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Newsletter, Lora Reynolds-----editor@saaudubon.org

Website, Christine Turnbull-----web@saaudubon.org

San Antonio Audubon Society Membership/Renewal Form

New

Renewal

Gift

Name(s) _____

Address _____

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Phone Number _____

E-mail address _____

How did you hear about us? _____

Please be sure your e-mail address is correct.

Your newsletters will be sent via e-mail unless other special arrangements have been made.

Please check box(s): Individual (\$20 per year)
 Household (\$30 per year)

We need and appreciate your financial support. Please indicate additional donations below.

Donation: Special Projects Fund \$_____
 Donation: Judson Trails Fund \$_____
 Donation: General Operating Fund \$_____

Please make checks payable to: **San Antonio Audubon Society**. Send dues and address changes to:

ATTN: MEMBERSHIP
SAN ANTONIO AUDUBON SOCIETY
5150 BROADWAY #257
SAN ANTONIO TX 78209-5710

Payments can also be made online at: <www.saaudubon.org/membership.html>