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San Antonio Audubon Society
AUDUBON NEWS
A Conservation and Birding Club since 1954
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Click HERE for a PDF of this newsletter.

Gray Catbirds
by Mike Scully

(This article first appeared in the August 2010 SAAS newsletter.)

It is interesting how different cultures can evolve quite different perceptions of the same bird. The Gray Catbird (*Dumetella carolinensis*), for example, is seemingly one of our more descriptively named species. Their common call does indeed bring to mind the mewing of a domestic cat, but only to those familiar with cats.

Arthur C. Bent, in his epochal work, "*Life Histories of North American Birds,*" states that the Chippewa people of the American Midwest called this species "the bird that cries with grief." Bent puzzled in print how the Chippewa could find the pleasant song of the catbird mournful. I believe they were referring not to the song, but to the distinctive call. It can come as a minor paradigm shift when one realizes that the plaintive call of this species does indeed possess a dirge-like quality.

Click HERE to read the complete article.

(Gray Catbird photo by Lora Reynolds)

Zoom Presentation | Thursday, September 3 @ 7:00 PM

LBJs: Beauty in Brown

Presenter: Patsy Inglet, SAAS Member

Sparrows (often called Little Brown Jobs or LBJs) sometimes just don't get the respect they deserve. They are one of most important groups of MIGRATORY birds in Texas and well worthy of any bird enthusiast's serious attention for their subtle beauty and diversity. Patsy's goal in this program is to expand your awareness and appreciation of the little brown beauties that brighten our area in winter and to make us more perceptive observers of this very important and very accessible bird family. You will never again look at a native Texas sparrow as just an LBJ!

(Grasshopper Sparrow photo by Lora Reynolds, Phil Hardberger Park, 4/22/2020.)

About Patsy

Patsy is a native Texan originally from the Houston area, although she lived and worked 25 years overseas as a teacher with her engineer husband, Tom. They "retired" to the San Antonio area in 1999 and started their new career as "professional volunteers." Birds started as a volunteer interest but have now become a passion and a focus of Patsy's educational and conservation efforts and recreational activities and travels. She and Tom have traveled to every continent to see as many birds as possible, banded birds in the field, monitored birds in the nest, and taught many children and adults the basics of birding.

Log-in Information to Watch Patsy's Live Presentation

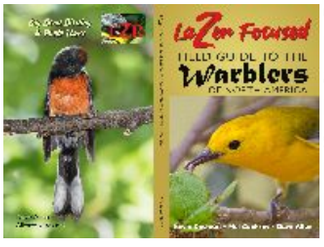
Topic: San Antonio Audubon Society
Time: Thursday, September 3, 2020 | 7:00 PM Central Time
Join Zoom Meeting Here
Meeting ID: 869 8634 2537
Password: 358294
Dial by your location: +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)
Please mute your microphones and turn off your cameras during the presentation.

Zoom Presentation | Thursday, October 1 @ 7:00 PM

Creating Birding Field Guides

Presenter: Kevin Cochran

Author Kevin Cochran of Corpus Christi is our online presenter for October. Using anecdotes and video, Kevin will describe the processes he and his partners Mel Cooksey and Dave Allen use to create a series of specialty field guides titled "LaZer Focused Field Guides to the Birds of North America."



About Kevin

Kevin is a native Texan who grew up in Houston. He has been a fishing guide since 1998 and an avid birder since about 2014, although he has been interested in birds for much longer. He has a degree in English from The University of Texas in Austin and taught 8th, 9th and 12th grade English for 14 years. He has written seven books on fishing, two novels, and scripts for several movies and television series, in addition to five birding guides, with another nearly complete. Kevin has also written a monthly feature column in *Texas Saltwater Fishing Magazine* since April of 1998.

Here's a link to the LaZer Focused Field Guide to the Warblers of North America. Other guides in this series are available for Wading Birds of North America; Hummingbirds of North America; North America's Blackbirds, Orioles and Kin; and Flycatchers of North America.

Log-in Information to Watch Kevin's Live Presentation

Topic: San Antonio Audubon Society
Time: Thursday, October 1, 2020 | 7:00 to 8:00 PM Central Time

San Antonio Audubon Society will send an eBlast to members with log-in instructions closer to the date of the presentation.

Special Event Zoom Presentation
Thursday, November 5 | 6:30 PM

San Antonio Audubon Society & Bexar Audubon Society

The Texas Horned Lizard Reintroduction Project: Preserving a Texas Icon

Presenter: Dr. Andy Gluesenkamp, Director of Conservation, San Antonio Zoo's Center for Conservation and Research

Advance registration is required ($5/person). Due to health concerns we will not gather together in person at the Zoo Beastro for our annual dinner and program. Instead, we will enjoy a short social time and watch the program via the Bexar Audubon Zoom Room from the comfort and safety of our own homes. Below, you will find details about the presentation, the speaker, Horned Lizard resources, and registration information.

If you're like most Texans of a certain age, you've got memories of finding "buckets" of horned lizards in your youth. Not so much today, as *Phrynosoma cornutum* (commonly referred to as the "horny toad") has declined or disappeared in many places in Texas since the late 1960s.

In fact, Texas Horned Lizard populations have declined so much that it is now on the state's threatened species list. San Antonio Zoo's Center for Conservation and Research is seeking to reverse this trend by producing large numbers of lizards in captivity and then releasing them into predetermined habitats that can support the species. To preserve the abundance of the **State Reptile of Texas**, San Antonio Zoo launched the **Texas Horned Lizard Reintroduction Project.** This program uses GIS data, genetics, and current knowledge about horned lizard ecology and distribution to release large numbers of captive-born individuals in suitable habitats.

"Our goal is to re-establish viable horned lizard populations as part of a healthy native ecosystem and return this species to the landscape for the enjoyment of present and future generations," said Dr. Andrew Gluesenkamp, director of conservation at San Antonio Zoo.

About Andy Gluesenkamp

Andy has over 20 years of experience as a biospeleologist* and conservation biologist, and he served as State Herpetologist for Texas

Parks and Wildlife Department for seven years. He currently leads several research projects in addition to the Texas Horned lizard Reintroduction Project, including a status assessment and genetic analysis of the Rough-footed Mud Turtle, Texas groundwater salamanders, and the Mexican blindcatfish; studies of the evolution of cavefish in Texas and Mexico; and the establishment of captive colonies of rare and endangered species.

*A biospeleologist is a biologist who specializes in cave biology, which is dedicated to the study of organisms that live in caves, a group of organisms referred to as *troglofauna*.

Horned Lizard Resources

- About Texas Horned Lizards
- Horned Lizard Facts
- *Where Did the Horny Toad Go?* Documentary about the decline of our beloved Texas lizard.
- TPWD 2017 segment on the Horned Lizard
- Article about the San Antonio Zoo and bringing the Horned Lizard back
- Information from the San Antonio Zoo about how you can help support the Horned Lizard Reintroduction Program
- Buy a T-shirt or cap from HornedLizards.org and wear it proudly

during this speical event

Log-in Information for the Horned Lizard Zoom Presentation

Tickets are just $5 per person

All proceeds from this program will be donated to our friends at the San Antonio Zoo, who have been so generous in their partnership with Audubon through the years, and will support the Zoo's Center for Conservation and Research.

Registration is a two-part process.
After you've made your donation, you will receive a link for registration for the Zoom meeting on Thursday, November 5, 2020. Social time is 6:30-7:00 (wear a "horny toad" shirt or hat and bring your favorite "horny toad" stories); program starts at 7:00 with plenty of time for questions and answers.

Click here to register.

Welcome New SAAS Members!

Matthew Frondorf
Ross, Haeley, Stella and Hazel Giambalvo
Jean Glauser
Rebecca McQueen
Michelle Molina

Buy the New Duck Stamps!

The 2020-2021 Federal Duck Stamp featuring Black-bellied Whistling Ducks will be available for purchase on July 1, 2020, and will be

available until December 31, 2020, or as long as supplies last. Duck Stamps still cost just $25 (the face value) each. This year, because we are not meeting in person, a small postage and handling charge of $1 should be added ***per order*** for as many stamps as you want to purchase at one time. To purchase the stamps, send your order with the following information:

- Your Name
- Your Mailing Address
- Check made payable to S.A. Audubon Society for the total number of stamps in your order, plus $1 postage and handling per order

Mail your information and check to:
Georgina Schwartz
3006 Belvoir Drive
San Antonio, TX 78230

Your Duck Stamp shows that you support Migratory Birds and their Habitats AND it will admit you to any National Wildlife Refuge that charges an entry fee. Get yours soon. We have a limited number.

SAAS Needs Volunteers!

Board Members
Officers
Nominating Committee

San Antonio Audubon Society is looking for volunteers to serve as members of our Nominating Committee to find Board members and officers for 2021. We will hold elections before the end of the year. Please contact Mariann Golden (marianng9350@juno.com) or Christine Turnbull (cbsturnbull@hotmail.com) as soon as possible if you can help us. We really value your participation!

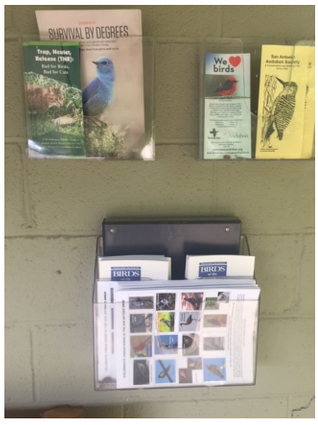
San Antonio Christmas Bird Count

Audubon
CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The San Antonio Audubon Christmas bird count will take place on the Sunday before Christmas, December 20, 2020. We are not planning on a countdown dinner due to COVID-19. All reports will be shared with Dahn Windhorn via mail, either via US Postal Service or email. Please email Dahn for more information: naturenut7@hotmail.com.

Judson Nature Trails News

The Second Saturday Beginner's Bird Walk with San Antonio Audubon Society's (SAAS) Georgina Schwartz has been an institution at the Judson Nature Trails (JNT) in Alamo Heights for years. The walk had a group of regulars who attended faithfully and also attracted newcomers on a regular basis. After the walks, the practice was to enter the species and numbers seen into the Bexar County checklist books (before eBird was created) while having lemonade, coffee and cookies at the Trail House.

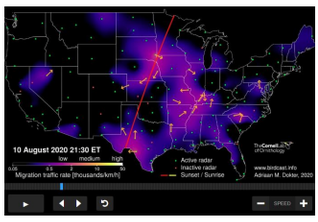


The walks focused on educating the participants not only in identification, but all things bird, such as taxonomic relationships, range and behavior. This practice came to a screeching halt in March 2020, along with all other SAAS-sponsored bird walks.

In an attempt to fill the gap and to continue our focus on community education, we have created a library of brochures in a station on the outside of the JNT Trail House for visitors and walkers to take. These include flyers from National Audubon on bird loss, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department brochures on birds, information on membership in SAAS and Bexar Audubon Society and a very colorful sheet on 16 urban birds likely to be seen in the San Antonio area. It's not as much fun as in-person bird walks, but hopefully will keep interest in birds and nature alive until we can meet once again.

BirdCast Fall Migration Maps

Fall migration is underway and you can track the movement of birds with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's real-time analysis maps. The organization's BirdCast website features maps to show intensities of actual bird migration as detected by the US weather surveillance radar network. Click here to access the site.



Mitchell Lake Audubon Center Online Presentations

Please continue to check the Mitchell Lake Audubon Center website, as events are added weekly.

Dragonfly Biology & Identification
Thursday, August 20, 2020
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM Central
Zoom Webinar | Registration Cost: $5
Register here

Explore the dragonflies of south central Texas with us!
Join dragonfly expert and enthusiast Martin Reid for an enlightening overview of the lives of these winged predators. You will learn how to recognize and identify dragonflies based on structure, coloration, and behavior. This presentation will focus on the odonata found in and around Bexar County, Texas, to help you become better acquainted with the dragonflies in our region. This presentation is approved for Alamo Area Master Naturalist Advanced Training.

Birding for Beginners
Wednesday, September 02, 2020
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM Central
Zoom Webinar | Registration Required | FREE
Register here

Learn the birding basics with us!

Birding is an incredible hobby that will have you pursuing the joys of nature for a lifetime. If you're a beginner and want to learn the birding basics, then this webinar is for you! Experienced birder and educator Angel Poe will lead you through an exploration of the skills, gear, and resources that will help you become a better birder. She'll offer easy tips for getting started right in your own backyard, as well as offer advice for getting out into the field.

The Littlest Birds Sing the Prettiest Songs

Tuesday, September 08, 2020
6:30 PM - 8:00 PM Central
Co-sponsored by Bexar Audubon Society
Zoom Webinar | Registration Cost: $5
Register here

Song Learning and Courtship Displays of Hummingbirds

Dr. Christopher J. Clark, Associate Professor, University of California Riverside, will present recent results from research on how Costa's Hummingbirds learn their songs, as well as research about how they produce an amazing array of sounds with their wings and tail-feathers, with an emphasis on hummingbirds of Texas.

Birds on Your Block

Thursday, September 17, 2020
6:00 PM - 7:30 PM Central
Presenters: Audubon Texas Educators - Katie Christman, Marcus Cole, Angel Poe, Jacob Poinsett
Zoom Webinar | Registration Required | FREE
Register here

Have you wondered what birds you're seeing as you walk through your neighborhood?

Do you want to know how to identify "parking lot and power line" birds? Join Audubon educators from the state of Texas as we discuss common backyard and urban birds in our neighborhoods! We'll also give pointers on how to identify common birds without binoculars, provide some skill-building tips, and help you connect with other birders in your community.

SAAS Officers, Directors & Committee Chairs

San Antonio Audubon Society
5150 Broadway #257
San Antonio TX 78209-5710
info@saaudubon.org
www.saaudubon.org

Officers
Vacancy, President
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Lorna Engleman
Christian Fernandez
Christine Turnbull

Committee Chairs
Bird Records
Dodge Engleman----------birdreports@saaudubon.org
Education/Outreach----------info@saaudubon.org
Field Trips
Christian Fernandez--------christian1253@yahoo.com
Historian, Betty Walters
Membership
Database, Michael Shaw-----saasforbirds@gmail.com
Judson Nature Trails
Barbara Sykes----------btsykes@sbcglobal.net
Publicity, Debra Engler-------------- info@saaudubon.org
Newsletter, Lora Reynolds---------editor@saaudubon.org
Website, Christine Turnbull----------web@saaudubon.org

SAAS Membership Form

San Antonio Audubon Society Membership/Renewal Form

☐ New ☐ Renewal ☐ Gift

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

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>

Click here for online membership form and payment.

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 saasforbirds@gmail.com

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