

The Pine Warbler



Newsletter of the Tyler Audubon Society

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

September 2009

TYLER AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Conservation – open

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Program – Marvin Mayer
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Newsletter – Mary Wilkins
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Hospitality Alice Rhodes
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Field Trips & Christmas Bird Count –
Peter Barnes
pbarnes123@gmail.com

See you at our next meeting!

Tuesday, September 8, 6:30 pm
Pollard Methodist Church
on New Copeland Road

*Please note the new earlier start time
(6:30 rather than 7:00).*

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

September 8, 2009

Birds Of Madagascar
Peter Barnes

October 13, 2009

Bird Photography Through The Year
Andy Long

November 10, 2009

Birding By Ear
Cliff Shackelford

December 8, 2009

Christmas Party

January 12, 2010

Summer Birding in S.E. Arizona
Bob Metzler

Tyler Audubon Society is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization – all donations are tax-deductible.

Birding Field Trips with Tyler Audubon

Saturday, September 5, 2009

Richland Creek WMA for large wading birds, early waterfowl and shorebirds.

Directions. Richland Creek WMA is in Freestone and Navarro counties, approximately 75 minutes drive from Tyler. The north unit is off Hwy 287, near the junction with FM488, south west of Athens. The south unit is off FM 488, near the junction with Hwy 287. From Hwy 287 going north, take FM488 left (you can only go left) for 2 miles. Turn left at the green sign "Richland Creek WMA" onto a PAVED road and meet at the entrance station. The field trip starts here at 7:30 am. We will spend an hour or so here and drive to the north unit at 9 am to look for waterbirds. If you wish to arrive later, meet us at the north unit at 9 a.m. Call Peter (903-343-3437) to meet up with us after 7:30. We should be done by noon-2 pm, depending on the birding.

Everyone who enters the WMA must have a limited public use permit (\$12 per year), available where hunting and fishing licenses are sold, e.g. Wal-Mart. There are no food or restroom facilities in the WMA.

Saturday, September 12, 2009

Texas Eastman in Longview for shorebirds and early waterfowl.

Important! This trip is limited to 10 birders, so sign up early if you plan to come. Mark Edmund will lead this trip. We need a final head count by Wednesday, September 9. Email Peter, pbarnes123@gmail.com, to get on the trip list.

Directions. Meet at 7:30 am at the circle in front of the administration building at Texas Eastman. From Tyler, take I-20 east to exit 595a, Estes Parkway. Take a right at the stop light onto Estes Parkway. Get in the left lane immediately. At the next set of lights from the left most turn lane go left on Estes drive. Estes Drive is on the interstate side, north side, of Walmart. Continue down Estes Drive until you see the Eastman sign. Turn left into the plant and continue on across the lake to the administration building, which is on the left. Park anywhere on the circle to meet the group. We will bird until about noon. Most territory will be covered by car with minimal walking at each stop.

Bathrooms are not available at Texas Eastman. There is a Walmart at Estes Parkway and Estes Drive, where you turn at the stop light to come down to the plant.

Sunday, October 4, 2009

John Bunker Sands Wetland Center for waterfowl, large wading birds and shorebirds.

This location has extensive wetlands and is not yet open to the public. We should see ducks and geese, lingering herons and ibis, and shorebirds if water levels are appropriate. We will drive through the wetlands, and there will be minimal walking. There are no restroom facilities at the wetlands center, so come prepared.

Important! This is a Dallas Audubon field trip led by Bob Stone and is limited to 10 participants. You must contact Bob Stone at 214-351-2940 before 6 pm the Sunday before the trip to give your name, address and phone number. You will have to sign a limited liability waiver to be allowed to go on the property.

Directions. Meet at the Rock Church, off Hwy 175, in Kaufman County, near the Dallas County line, at 7 am. From Tyler, take I-20 toward Dallas. Past Terrell, take FM741 south to Hwy 175. Take 175 west to the FM1389/Combine exit and cross over to the left side of the highway. The church is visible from the highway. This is a half-day trip.

QUESTIONS? NEED MORE DIRECTIONS?

Contact Peter Barnes (pbarnes123@gmail.com or 903-839-8359; on field trip days, call Peter at 903-343-3437.

Nature's Helping Hands

The following is an article written by Marvin Mayer for a children's literature writing course. It's delightful for grown people, too.

What do you do when your dog or cat is sick or hurt? Take him to the vet, right? That's what any of us would do for our pets. But who helps "nature's" sick or injured pets like squirrels, owls, or raccoons?

Because these animals are wild, it is against the law to keep or take care of them. Nature usually provides ways for animals to care for themselves. But if a bird's wing is broken, a car has hit a young deer, or a baby squirrel has fallen from its nest, who helps it survive? Most of the time, they are brought to someone called a rehabber.

Rehabbers are adults who have dedicated their lives to helping sick or injured animals. Because there are so many different types of animals, rehabbers generally work with only a few types. Beverly Grage is now a Texas rehabber. While driving on a busy street, she happened across an injured opossum. She stopped her car, then making sure to protect herself from its sharp teeth, she reached down from the driver's seat and carefully scooped up the injured animal. That's when she decided that she was meant to be a rehabber.

Just like you, she didn't know what to do, so she phoned a friend. The friend happened to be a state-certified rehabber. Using the friend's rehabbing permit, Beverly was able to keep the opossum while she nursed it back to health. It was a bitter-sweet moment when she was able to release the animal back into its own world.

What does it take to be a rehabber? Each state has its own requirements. In Texas, you need to be at least 18 years old to apply for a permit. Getting the permit, however, is the easy part. The hard part is doing the work.

Veterinarians help heal animals. They get paid for their services. Rehabbers do what they do just because they want to help sick or injured creatures. They are volunteers who use their own money to pay for their "patients'" food. If the local vet won't donate his services, the rehabber pays veterinary fees, too.

Feeding animals can be expensive. Ms. Grage cares for several raptors – birds of prey such as

owls and hawks. Raptors eat rats and mice. Beverly spends between \$300 and \$350 each month to buy rats for her feathered friends.

Animals don't always understand that rehabbers just want to help them.

To protect themselves, they may bite or scratch the hand that feeds them. To protect herself when handling raptors, Beverly wears heavy gloves. She also has to take shots to protect herself from rabies, distemper, and other diseases carried by animals.

People call at all hours of the night and day. When they find an injured bird or animal, they want to know if they can bring it to her. After telling the caller how to calm the injured animal, she usually has them bring it to her. Once in her care, the animal cannot be returned to the person who brought it. Instead, it must be released back into its own environment when she feels it is able to take care of itself.

Ms. Grage is just one of less than a dozen rehabbers in twenty-four east Texas counties. Each rehabber decides the types of animals he or she will help. Believe it or not, some choose to work only with skunks! Others work only with small mammals except for deer. Still others include deer with their small mammals, and some choose to work just with owls, hawks, eagles, and vultures.

Beverly cares for owls, hawks, and other raptors, but she actually prefers "furry" creatures. She has treated squirrels, opossums, raccoons, and even skunks. Then, when were ready for independence again, she released them to their natural habitat. Because of their special dietary and space needs, she cannot accept bobcats or other large cats. As federally protected animals, she cannot accept fox and coyote. Neither will she take in a "wild" animal that grew too big to continue being a family pet.

So let's take another look at the life of a rehabber. There's ...

- ✓ No pay
- ✓ Little help



- ✓ Lots of responsibility.
- ✓ Risk of being hurt or having someone else get hurt.
- ✓ Lots of expenses to be paid out of your own pocket.

If there is no pay, what “rewards” do rehabbers receive? It probably can best be summed up in one word: satisfaction. Most rehabbers around the country would probably say

they would mark an animal’s bill “PAID IN FULL” each time they return one of God’s wonderful creatures to its natural environment. Knowing that the released animal will be able to manage for itself, thanks to the care he or she gave it, is all the payment a rehabber could ask. As Ms. Grage said, “It’s a feeling I couldn’t begin to describe.”

June and July 2009 Bird Sightings

Although the usual summer heat kept most birders indoors and the total number of sightings is limited, there were two extraordinary sightings of **Long-eared Owl** and **Sandhill Crane**, both unprecedented at this time of year.



A **Black-bellied Whistling Duck** was observed in Henderson Co. on June 13 (DC, DL), 5 were at Lake Fork, Wood Co., on June 18 (JC), and 7 were at Richland Creek WMA, Freestone Co., on July 24 (DWo). Nice finds were a **Least Bittern** at Richland Creek WMA, Freestone Co., on June 21 (DOh) and a **Black-crowned Night Heron** at Lake Fork, Wood Co., on June 5 (JC). Richland Creek WMA, Navarro Co., hosted 10 early **Wood Storks**, post-breeding visitors from Mexico, on June 13 (DC, DL), 250 **Little Blue Herons**, 20 **White Ibis**, 3 **Plegadis Ibis**, and 1 **Wood Stork** on July 24 (DWo), and 3 **Tricolored Herons** and 3 **Anhingas** on July 25 (DC). This location also yielded a completely unexpected

Sandhill Crane on July 16 (TF). We have no prior summer records of this species, which is a scarce winter visitor. A **White-tailed Kite** was an early migrant at Richland Creek WMA, Freestone Co., on July 24 (DWo). A **Northern Bobwhite** was on Hut Horton Road, Harrison, Co., on July 12 (CT, LE). An **Upland Sandpiper** was over the UT Health Center at Tyler on July 29 (PB), signaling the beginning of fall shorebird migration. Eight **Least Terns**, 3 on nests, were at Richland Creek WMA, Navarro Co., on June 13 (DC, DL). This is one of few nesting records of the endangered inland subspecies of Least Tern in our area.

Single **Greater Roadrunners** were spotted in Harrison Co. on July 12 (CT, LE) and south of Tyler on July 27 (PB). A dead **Long-eared Owl** was an unfortunate but remarkable find for Smith Co. on July 20 (JDa). There are only a handful of winter records of this species for north-east Texas, the last in 1999, and a summer record is unprecedented. Five **Western Kingbirds** were in and near



Cooper and one was in Hopkins Co. on June 14 (PB). A **Bachman’s Sparrow** was singing in sandy-soiled oak savannah at Gus Engeling WMA on June 3 (CS, PB). They have been summering here for several years, an alternative breeding habitat from their more expected pineywoods surroundings. Twenty-five breeding **Orchard Orioles** were an unusual concentration at Lake Murvaul on June 7 (PB).

Observers:

PB	Peter Barnes
JC	Janet Cook
DC	D.D. Currie
JDa	Jim Day
LE	Lisa Evers
TF	Tim Fennell
DL	Dell Little
DOh	Dale Ohl
CS	Cliff Shackelford
CT	Candy Troop
DWo	David Wolf

Counties and Locations:

Anderson County:	Gus Engeling WMA
Delta County:	Cooper
Panola County:	Lake Murvaul
Smith County:	Tyler, UT Health Center at Tyler

President's Message ~ September 2009

I'm having trouble getting my "Audubon" hat on, as the summer has been filled with house guests, our Lake Annual Meeting, and work on my 60th high school reunion coming up in September, but with an Audubon meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 8th, I can no longer procrastinate. In preparation, I have reviewed our Chapter's goals for the year and am wondering how active the membership wants to be this year in relation to projects and perhaps a membership drive. I'm sure some of us have little extra time to donate to TAS activities and I do not want to create a hardship for anyone. It may be that attending Chapter meetings and going on field trips would be the extent of one's desired participation. If you have thoughts about your level of activity, I hope you will discuss them with one of the Board members, and if you have a certain area of interest with which the Chapter could be involved, please let us know.

Marvin Mayer has planned interesting Chapter programs and Peter Barnes has scheduled our field trips for the next few months. Peter is also presenting our program in September and would like to start at 6:30. Since we do not have anyone to lead birding classes, we will plan on starting all our meetings at 6:30. If any member is interested in presenting a birding class or knows someone who would like to do so, we would be most appreciative of their efforts. Cheryle's classes were always of interest to all of us and added to our knowledge base.

Our new Pine Warbler editor, Mary Wilkins, has many ideas for the coming year and I'm sure will appreciate any items you would like to submit for upcoming editions. The year 2010 will mark TAS's 60th anniversary, so let's all consider how we can make it a special year for the chapter and the community.

Tappa Burt, President

It's time to pay your local Audubon dues!

Please mail this form and your check to: Tyler Audubon Society, P. O. Box 132926, Tyler TX 75713 Make checks payable to Tyler Audubon Society.
(You may also pay local dues at the regular meetings.)

Choose your membership level:

Kestrel:

- Individual (\$30)
- Family (\$40)
- Student (\$15)

Sustaining (family):

- Merlin (\$75)
- Red-tailed Hawk (\$150)
- Peregrine Falcon (\$250)
- Osprey (\$500)

Lifetime Member:

- Bald Eagle (\$1500)

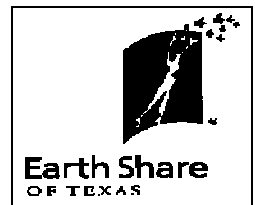
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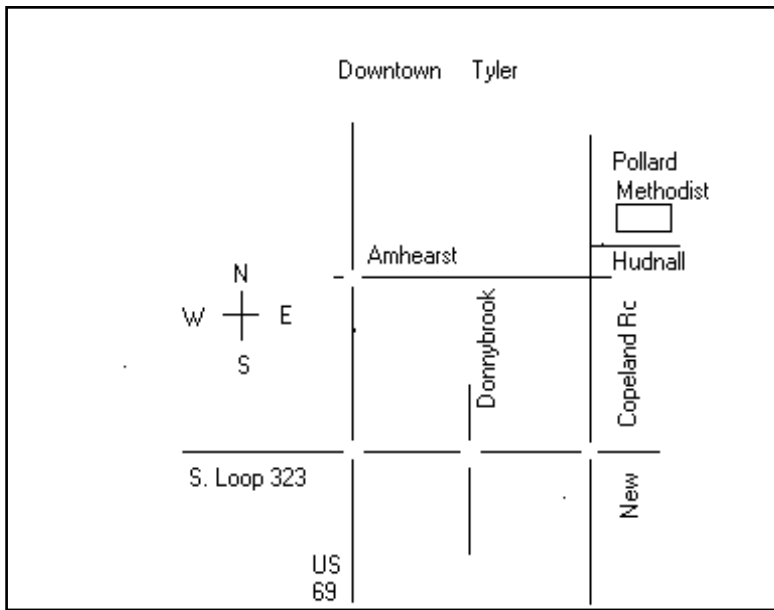
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Please send my newsletter by e-mail or by snail mail.



Earth Share of Texas represents Tyler Audubon Society in workplace payroll deduction plans throughout Texas. For more information on how you can support your Tyler Audubon society and other leading environmental groups at your workplace, call 1-800-GREENTX, or visit www.earthshare-texas.org.



The Tyler Audubon Society Meets the second Tuesday of each month, September through May, at the Pollard United Methodist Church at 3030 New Copeland Rd beginning at 6:30 PM (except for the December Christmas Party and the May Picnic). Visitors are always welcome to the meetings.

Please park in the front parking lot and enter through the main doors. Go up the ramp and turn left. The meeting room is in the middle on the left.

Tyler Audubon Society
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