This is the NETFO bird report for October. Twenty-two of the twenty-six counties in the NETFO area had bird reports. Lots of “first of the season” sightings. Highlights include Sandhill Cranes and a Rufous Hummingbird. Thanks to all who birded and sent in their results and thanks again to Luanne for everything.

Recorded in four counties during the period, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks were found with a peak of 80 in Rains county on 10/3 (ebird JC). The first time I ever observed Black-bellied Whistling Ducks in NE Texas was 25 years ago at Lake Fork and they were found in October with a string of chucks behind them. I remember being surprised by them having youngsters so late. On 10/24 LB and I noted 8 adults and 3 little chucks following a parent in Morris county.

The two straggling/resident Ross’s Geese for the area were noted once again at LBS in Titus county on 10/11 (DB, LB) and in Rains county on 10/24 (ebird RK). Noted in five counties, the peak of 21 Canada Geese was reported from Texarkana in Bowie county on 10/18 (ebird JT). Always a neat find in the NETFO area, three Mottled Ducks were tallied at RC WMA in Navarro county on 10/10 (ebird DC, DL), while two were noted in Freestone county on 10/11 (ebird DC, DL).

Two Western Turkeys were found in Cherokee county on 10/12 (ebird JH). A Wood Stork was noted in Smith county on 10/10 (ebird JEH, EV), while another Wood Stork was noted in Upshur county on 10/11 (ME). Two American Bitterns were noted at each of the counties at RC WMA on 10/11 (DC, DL). Tricolored Herons were found on several dates at RC WMA with a peak of six noted on 10/11 in Freestone county (ebird DC, DL). Yellow-crowned and Black-crowned Night-Herons were also restricted to the RC WMA with a peak of two and four respectively were noted on 10/11 in Navarro county (ebird DC, DL). 10/11 was the date for peak White Ibises in Navarro county when 300 were sighted (ebird DC, DL). While 300 was also the peak for White-faced Ibises noted at RC WMA on Freestone county on 10/11 (ebird DC, DL). Six Roseate Spoonbills were tallied at RC WMA in Navarro county on 10/10, while 14 were noted in Freestone county on 10/11 (ebird DC, DL). Another Roseate Spoonbill was observed on both sides of LOP, being observed in both Upshur and Marion county on 10/20 (ebird AH).

Up to three Swainson’s Hawk was tallied at RC WMA in Freestone county on 10/11 (ebird DC, DL). Another Swainson’s Hawk was observed and photographed in Bowie county on 10/19 (DB, LB). Two Virginia Rails, and four Soras were found at the Grand Saline Marsh in Van Zandt county on 10/23 (ebird RK). Up to 30 Sora were tallied at RC WMA in each county on 10/10 and 10/11 (ebird DC, DL). Four Sandhill Cranes were tallied at LTW in Rains county on 10/24 (ebird RK).

Six Black-necked Stilts were reported from RC WMA in Freestone county on 10/10 (ebird DL), while one was noted the next day at the same location (PB). Seemingly everywhere, American Avocets were tallied in nine different counties during the month with a peak of 43 counted from Atlanta State Park in Cass county on 10/25 (DB, LB). A Black-bellied Plover was observed at LTW State Park on 10/7, while another Black-bellied Plover was found at LTW in Rains county on 10/24 (both ebird RK). Noted in five counties, the peak of 12 Lesser Yellowlegs was tallied at LTW in Hunt county on 10/18 (ebird RK). Noted in three counties, the peak of six Stilt Sandpipers was tallied on 10/18 at LTW in Rains county (ebird RK). Two Sanderlings were found at LTW in Rains county on 10/24 (ebird RK). Noted only at LTW, a peak of 12 Baird’s Sandpipers were tallied in Hunt county and also in Van Zandt county on 10/24 (ebird RK). Tailed in eight counties during the period the max of 1000 Least Sandpipers was noted on 10/18 at LTW in Rains county (ebird RK). Noted in five counties, the peak of six Pectoral Sandpipers were tallied at LTW in Rains county on 10/24 (ebird RK). Restricted to LTW, a peak of a dozen Western Sandpipers were noted in all three counties (ebird RK). Found in three counties, the peak of 77 Long-billed Dowitchers was tallied at RC WMA in Freestone county on 10/26 (ebird DL).

The only sighting of Bonaparte's Gull came from Cooper Lake in Hopkins county when 30 were noted on 10/10 (ebird MP). Found in ten counties, the max of 500 Franklin's Gulls were tallied at Lake Fork in Wood county on 10/28 (ebird JC). The sole Caspian Tern was reported from LTW in Rains county on 10/24 (ebird RK). The only Black Tern was found at RC WMA in Freestone county on 10/11 (ebird DC, DL).

The eastern most White-winged Dove was found at Holly Lake in Wood county on 10/26 (ebird SF, TH). A Great Horned Owl reported by John Hale in Cherokee county on 10/10 was the 200th species ever recorded in ebird for the county. Noted in three counties, the last Common Night Hawk was tallied on 10/12 in Cherokee county (ebird JH). The latest date for Chimney Swift was 10/21 in Gregg county (ebird AH). The late date for Ruby-throated Hummingbird was 10/18 at Lake Fork in Wood county (ebird JC). A male Rufous Hummingbird seen last winter at a feeder in Tyler, appears to have returned. The bird was first observed on 10/29 (DB). Crested Caracaras sightings were limited to the LTW area (ebird RK). A pair of Merlins were noted at RC WMA in Freestone county on 10/11 (ebird DC, DL). Single Peregrine Falcons were noted in both counties at RC WMA area on 10/11 (ebird RK). Single Peregrine Falcons were also noted at LTW on 10/18, 10/19 and 10/24 (ebird RK).

A Traill’s Flycatcher was noted at Pleasant Acres Lake in Smith county on 10/21 (MB). Not in there “normal” area, up to two Fish Crows were noted at Pleasant Acres Lake on 10/12 (PB) and on 10/24 (ebird MB). The first Blue-headed Vireo reported for the season was noted at LTW State Park on 10/7 (ebird RK). A Philadelphia Vireo was found in Morris county on 10/10 (DB). The first of the season Brown Creeper was noted at LBS State Park in Titus county on 10/17 (ebird AH). The earliest Winter Wren was found in Morris county on 10/20 (ebird AH). The first of the fall House Wrens were found at LTW State Park on 10/7 (ebird RK). The earliest Golden-crowned Kinglet was noted at Bonham State Park in Fannin county on 10/18 (ebird CW). A Hermit Thrush was first found on 10/16 at LBS State Park (ebird AH). Found in three counties the first Gray Catbird was sighted at LTW State Park on 10/7 (ebird RK). The first American Pipit of the fall was found in Smith county on 10/19 (ebird PB).

The only Black-and-white Warbler reported was noted in Gregg county on 10/21 (ebird AH). A Tennessee Warbler was found at Mineola Nature Preserve in Wood county on 10/24 (ebird PJ, SL) and on 10/25 (ebird RK). Noted in five different counties the last Nashville Warbler was noted on 10/25 at the Mineola Nature Preserve (ebird RK). The only Hooded Warbler reported was found at LTW State Park on 10/7 (ebird RK). Single American Redstarts were noted in Henderson county on 10/10 (ebird DC, DL), and at LTW State Park on 10/12 (ebird RK). On the same date the only Northern Parula noted during the period was also found at LTW State Park (ebird RK). A Blackburnian Warbler was found at LTW State Park on 10/16 (ebird RK). The sole Yellow Warbler reported during the month was found in Cherokee county on 10/4 (ebird JH). The earliest Yellow-rumped Warbler was tallied at Tyler State Park on 10/7 (ebird BS). Found in five different counties, the last two Black-throated Green Warblers were discovered at LOP in Upshur county on 10/20 (ebird AH). A Wilson’s Warbler was found at LTW State Park on 10/7 (ebird RK). Another Wilson’s Warbler was discovered in Morris county on 10/20 (ebird AH).

The first of the season Eastern Towhee was tallied in Camp county on 10/17 (ebird AH). The sole Clay-colored Sparrow reported came from LTW in Rains county on 10/25 (ebird JS). The earliest Vesper Sparrow reported came from Edgewood in Van Zandt county on 10/21 (ebird RK). The first of the fall Song Sparrow came from Lamar county on 10/12 (ebird JH). Two Grasshopper Sparrows were tallied at LBS State Park on 10/16, and three were found in Morris county on 10/20 (both ebird AH). The earliest Lincoln’s Sparrow was recorded from LTW State Park on 10/7 (ebird RK). The earliest Swamp Sparrows were found at LTW in Hunt county on 10/18 (ebird RK). The first of the fall White-throated Sparrow was tallied at LTW State Park on 10/16 (ebird RK). While the earliest White-crowned Sparrows were tallied in Hunt county on 10/18 (ebird RK). The earliest Dark-eyed Junco was spotted in Canton in Van Zandt county on 10/18 (ebird DO). Western Meadowlarks were only reported from LTW in Rains count on 10/24 (ebird RK). Noted in two counties the first and most, twelve Pine Siskins, were found on 10/7 at LTW State Park (ebird RK). The first two American Goldfinches were tallied at Mineola Nature Preserve on 10/25 (ebird RK).

Locations and Counties:

Bowie Co.: Texarkana
Camp Co.:
Cass Co.: Atlanta State Park
Cherokee Co.:
Fannin Co.: Bonham State Park
Freestone Co.: RC WMA - Richland Creek WMA
Gregg Co.:
Henderson Co.:
Huntington Co.: Cooper Lake
Hunt Co.: Lake Tawakoni State Park
Lamar Co.: Pat Mayse Lake
Marion Co.: LOP - Lake O Pines
Morris Co.:
Navarro Co.: RC WMA - Richland Creek WMA
Rains Co.: LTW - Lake Tawakoni
Smith Co.: Pleasant Acres Lake, Tyler State Park, Tyler
Titus Co.: LBS - Lake Bob Sandlin, Lake Bob Sandlin State Park

Northeast Texas Bird Report  
October 2014 by David Brotherton

October 2014
Observers:

PB Peter Barnes
DBi Dee Bishop
MB Mike Bloodsworth
DB David Brotherton
LB Luanne Brotherton
JC Janet Cook
DC D.D. Currie
ME Mark Edmund
SF Stephen Fuqua
TH Tania Homayoun
JHa John Hale
AH Anthony Hewetson
EJ Evan Janson
PJ Patricia Jordan
RK Richard Kinney
DL Dell Little
SL Shannon Love
DO Dale Ohl
MP Michael Pease
JR Jane Ramberg
JS James Sipiora
BS Boyd Sanders
JT Jane Tillman
EV Eileen Vennum
CW Catherine Winans

For You Ebirders:

With Cherokee county reaching the 200 Club, the only two counties that do not have 200 species overall in ebird are Red River with 192 and Camp with 194. The lowest counties for the year are Cherokee with 116, Red River with 117 and Delta with 121. The counties with over 200 species for 2014 are Van Zandt with 237, Hunt with 224, Freestone with 221, Smith with 217, Navarro with 216 and Rains with 212. Good luck birding this month!