



The Prairie Horned Lark

Newsletter of the Panhandle Bird Club

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Panhandle Rare Bird Alert **Connie Fordham (806 655-7034)** **cfbirder52@yahoo.com**

Please call or e-mail Connie, with information on any unusual birds or first seasonal arrivals you see in the Panhandle.

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Bad Luck on March Field Trips

The famous Panhandle weather did us in for the month of March. A field trip had been scheduled for March 20 but cold temps, rain and mud caused that one to be postponed to March 27. March 27 saw winds that could not be believed which were fortunately predicted far enough ahead to cancel the trip. We are hoping that the trip to Cactus Lake and Palo Duro Lake will be rescheduled at a later date. A number of interesting field trips are planned for April, May and June, though, so stay tuned! (See back page.)

March Bird Report by Connie Fordham

Double-crested Cormorant

2on3/15/2010, Jim's Lake, Hutchinson County, Rudy Cadra

Ross's Goose

600on3/13/2010, Lk.RitaBlanca, Hartley Co., Barrett Pierce

Turkey Vulture

1on3/20/2010, Canyon, Randall Co., Ashley Long

Harris's Hawk

1on3/17/2010, Pantex, Carson Co., Monty Schoenhals

Lesser Prairie-Chicken

6 on3/21/2010, Deaf Smith County, Susan Thompson

Say's Phoebe

1on 3/13/2010, Dallam Co., Barrett Pierce

Ash-throated Flycatcher

2on3/22/2010, PaloduroCanyon St. Pk., Randall Co., Steven

Cedar Waxwing

3/4/2010, Canyon Country Club, Randall Co., Betty B.

1on3/14/2010, Dumas, Moore Co., Shelly Burnett



Western Scrub-Jay photo by Robert King in Palo Duro Canyon

Western Bluebird

1on3/14/2010, Dumas, Moore Co., Shelly Burnett

Northern Shrike

2on3/13/2010, RitaBlancaNat'l Grasslnd,Dallam Co., Barrett Pierce

Western Scrub-Jay

1on3/13/2010, Texline,Dallam Co., Barrett Pierce

Lesser Goldfinch

3/22/2010, LkTanglewood, Randall Co., Tom Johnson

American Goldfinch

1on3/14/2010, Dumas,Moore Co., Shelly Burnett

Turkey Vultures in Amarillo

Many people (even non-birders) have commented to me on the large numbers of Turkey Vultures soaring above Amarillo in huge kettles. They are quite a sight to see – sometimes 50 or 60 at a time. Mark McKinney reports that vultures are roosting near Amarillo College around the streets of 26th and Lipscomb and Ong if anyone is interested.



Turkey Vulture photo by Jim Stevenson

Also from Mark McKinney...

Mark McKinney reported to Connie Fordham that his father's (Bill McKinney) Purple Martin houses are becoming occupied again. Mark and his brother cleaned out the houses and removed the sparrow nests and right away the Purple Martins started arriving. He invites anyone who wants to see the

birds to come by any time and watch the activity. The houses are located by the alleyway behind Coulter Road Baptist Church at the corner of Seville and Coulter in Amarillo.



Unidentified Purple Martin house from web

Message from Billie Shalvey about the April 23-25 Wichita Mountains extended field trip:

If you plan to attend the field trip to Wichita Mountains and Hackberry Flats, please contact Billie Shalvey at 654-2598 or by email billies7105@yahoo.com I need to know where attendees are staying in Lawton or camping in the Wichitas in order to make daily itineraries with our guides. Note: If you plan on staying in a hotel/motel, you should make your reservations as soon as possible. Fort Sill has graduation several times a year and hotels/motels fill up quickly on those weekends. I do not know if there is a graduation that weekend; so do not take a chance on being able to stay where you wish.....Make your reservations ASAP!!

Gardening Note...

Spring is a good time to think about expanding your bird-attracting plantings in your yard. Also now is the time to put out your hummingbird feeders!

Unique Opportunity!

We received the following press release from Pete Salmansohn, Education Coordinator, National Audubon Society's Seabird Restoration Program. It sounds wonderful if a bit out of my range (both geographically and financially!)

Famed Hog Island Audubon Camp Reopens

The National Audubon Society will reopen its legendary Hog Island camp for 4 adult ornithology sessions and one teen bird studies session during the summer of 2010. Dr. Steve Kress, Audubon's VP for Bird Conservation, will direct the sessions. He will be joined by some of the country's top ornithologists who will serve as instructors, including Kenn Kaufman, Pete Dunne, and Scott Weidensaul. Additionally, said Dr. Kress, there will be two new sessions offered in association with Exploritas (formerly Elder Hostel) http://www.exploritas.org/Programs/search_res.asp?Type=A&StateCode=ME

where June participants will assist Project Puffin biologists to census gulls, eiders and cormorants at several nearby seabird nesting islands. Participants in the September session will learn about land and seabirds through bird banding and presentations and assist with a habitat management project for endangered terns and storm-petrels at Eastern Egg Rock. They will also assist a Saw Whet Owl banding project.

Known to thousands as the Audubon Camp in Maine, Hog Island was closed during the summer of 2009 to permit planning for the future. This process led to Project Puffin bringing back the popular ornithology programs for adults and teens. The adult programs are for both beginning and avid birders who would like to learn more about Maine birdlife and the biology of birds. The teen session is for 14-17 year olds with a keen interest in birds. (This session is co-sponsored by the American Birding Association.) Due to its varied habitats, Hog Island and vicinity are an ideal setting for the program, as more than 300 species frequent the area.

Participants live in authentic, turn of the century housing on the 330 acre spruce-covered island. Here, they will enjoy three superb home-

cooked meals by renowned chef Janii Laberge. The meals are served in an historic island farmhouse that overlooks Muscongus Bay. During the five-day sessions, small field groups will go on a variety of trips and boat cruises, and attend presentations on topics ranging from migration, and the identification of warblers, to the restoration of Atlantic Puffins and three species of terns on nearby Eastern Egg Rock. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about bird banding, sound recording, and bird photography from leaders in their fields.

THE HOG ISLAND CAMP FIRST OPENED IN 1936, WITH ROGER TORY PETERSON AS ITS FIRST BIRD INSTRUCTOR. IT IS WELL KNOWN IN AMERICA'S ENVIRONMENTAL COMMUNITY AS A DISTINGUISHED AND BEAUTIFUL PLACE OF LEARNING AND ENJOYMENT. FOR MORE INFO:

Visit www.projectpuffin.org for dates, sessions, instructors, and registration. To read testimonials and see photos from previous Hog Island programs, visit www.naturecompass.org/fohi.



Photo by Robert King at Palo Duro Canyon

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Panhandle Bird Club
1213 S Bryan St
Amarillo, TX 79102

Application for membership in the Panhandle Bird Club \$15.00. Annually September 1 to August 31
Make checks payable to Panhandle Bird Club, Mail to: Robert King, 4809 Journey, Amarillo, TX 79110

Name: _____ New: ___ Renew: ___ Telephone: _____ email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Field Trip Calendar for Spring 2010

17 April 2010 Caprock Canyon and Cottonwood Lake. Meet at Southwest Library at 7:20 a.m. or at 9:00 a.m. at entrance to Caprock Canyon State Park. Take a lunch. **Leader: Joel Reese.**

23-25 April 2010 (Note changed date!)Wichita Mountains National Wildlife Refuge: The Wichitas are located in SW Oklahoma and this NWR is one of the oldest in the nation. Local birders Kurt and Sharon Meisenzahl will be our guides. **Leader: Billie Shalvey** (Contact Billie for more information at 654-2598 or by email billies7105@yahoo.com)

1-MAY 2010 Lipscomb County for Lesser Prairie-Chickens and more. I will overnight in Canadian, TX at the Best Western Oasis Inn 303 South 2nd Street Canadian, TX (806-323-9660). Meet at the Best Western at 5:45 am and we will depart from there at 6:00 am to be at the lek at first light. After some time at the lek, we will bird Lipscomb County until mid-afternoon or so. Bring a lunch. Please let me know if you plan to attend: 806-290-4855 or bpierce@riopetro.com
Leader: Barrett Pierce

15 May 2010 Hawk's Nest Ranch Meet at SW Library at 6:20 a.m. It is about a 2 hour drive to the ranch in Collingsworth County. An alternative meeting spot is the Outpost in Clarendon at 7:20 a.m. Bring lunch. **Leader: Georgia Swift**

12 June 2010 Pampa area. Meet at 7:20 a.m. at Southwest Library parking lot or at McDonalds, 1201No. Hobert St, in Pampa at 8:20 a.m.. **Leaders: Jan Elston and Kathryn Green.** Call 806-665-5870 if you have any questions.