

South Texas Birding & Nature | Species List

February 17 - 24, 2019 | Compiled by Michael Marsden



**With Guide Michael Marsden and 8 participants:
Avril, Flo, Nancy, Annie, Allyson, Susan, Jeanne, & Ann**

Outline Itinerary:

- 17th:** Hans & Pat Suter Wildlife Refuge, Corpus Christi - Port Aransas (Wetlands, Birding Center, Jetty, Paradise Pond) - Rockport Beach Park
- 18th:** Tule Wetlands, Rockport - *Skimmer* boat trip - Big Tree & Twelfth Street, Lamar - Cavasso Creek - Goose Island State Park
- 19th:** Rockport (Moore's Pond, Cape Valero, Live Oak Country Club, A-1 Hill Ponds) - Indian Point County Park - Hazel Bazemore County Park - King Ranch Visitors' Center - Sarita Rest Stop - Inn at Chachalaca Bend
- 20th:** Inn at Chachalaca Bend - Bayview resacas - Laguna Atascosa NWR - Port Isabel Reservoir - South Padre Island Convention Center & boardwalk - Zapata Memorial Boat Ramp - Old Port Isabel Road - University of Texas resaca, Brownsville - Oliveira Park
- 21st:** Inn at Chachalaca Bend - Santa Ana NWR - Progreso grain silos - Estero Llano Grande State Park
- 22nd:** Quinta Mazatlan, McAllen - Bentsen Rio Grande State Park - Anzalduas County Park - Granjeno - Hidalgo
- 23rd:** Salineño - Falcon State Park - Rancho Lomitas - La Sagunada, Rio Grande City
- 24th am:** McAllen Nature Park

Species List

- (HO)= Distinctive enough to be counted as heard only
(SP)= Special species of note which is rare, local or endemic
(#) = Number of days encountered in parenthesis

BIRDS (184 species recorded, of which 1 was heard only):

Anatidae: Ducks and Geese (20)

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* (4) - seen at several freshwater wetlands in both the Coastal Bend and Rio Grande Valley, with a particularly memorable flock of some 200 of these spectacular ducks on the wetlands at Twelfth Street in Lamar.

Snow Goose *Chen caerulescens* (2) - feeding flocks on fields at Live Oak Country Club and along Military Highway just east of Weslaco.

Ross's Goose *Chen rossii* (1) - Diagnostic views of 3 with Snow Geese on Military Highway.

Gadwall *Mareca strepera* (4) - small numbers in a variety of freshwater habitats throughout.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana* (5) - small numbers in primarily coastal habitats.

Mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* (3) - we came across several seemingly wild birds during the first part of our tour in the Corpus Christi area but none in the Valley, where they are, to the surprise of many visitors, rather a rarity.

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Mottled Duck *Anas fulvigula* (6) - the common resident dabbling duck of South Texas, present at most wetland sites.

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors* (5) - present at nearly all freshwater wetland sites.

Cinnamon Teal *Spatula cyanoptera* (1) - we enjoyed close views of these handsome ducks at both Santa Ana and Estero Llano Grande

Northern Shoveler *Spatula clypeata* (6) - common and widespread in freshwater wetlands.

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* (5) - still large numbers of these elegant ducks in the bays of the Coastal Bend.

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca* (4) - common and widespread at all freshwater wetland sites.

Redhead *Aythya americana* (4) - over 80% of the world's Redheads winter on the hypersaline waters of the South Texas and Tamaulipas bays, and we were fortunate that many were still in the area during our *Skimmer* boat trip.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* (2) - still small numbers on Moore's Pond and the UT resaca.

Greater Scaup *Aythya marila* (1) - lone bird on the UT resaca.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* (5) - still 100s seen in Mesquite & San Antonio Bays from the *Skimmer*, but we only came across small numbers in the Valley.

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola* (2) - dozens of these delightful ducks seen on our *Skimmer* boat trip, but just 3 more at Indian Point.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* (3) - several seen on the *Skimmer* trip, at Indian Point and on the bay at South Padre Island Convention Center.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* (2) - seen at Port Aransas & Cape Valero but not, a little surprisingly, in the Valley.

Cracidae: Guans and Chachalacas (1)

Plain Chachalaca *Ortalis vetula* (5) (**SP**) - we enjoyed close views of many of these birds (and experienced their not-so-enjoyable cacophonous calls!) at just about all the Valley refuges, including Bentsen and Quinta Mazatlan, and, of course, at the Inn at Chachalaca Bend.

Odontophoridae: New World Quails (1)

Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata* (1) (**SP**) - Jim Seeden's feeders at Rancho Lomitas are always a birding highlight and again attracted a feeding flock of quail while we were there.

Phasianidae: Partridges, Pheasants, and Allies (1)

Wild Turkey *Meleagris gallopavo* (1) - 4 at the King Ranch Visitors' Center were a welcome and unexpected sight.

Gaviidae: Loons (1)

Common Loon *Gavia immer* (3) - particularly numerous this winter throughout the coastal waters of the Coastal Bend with our first sightings from the Port Aransas ferry.

Podicipedidae: Grebes (3)

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* (2) (**SP**) - seen at several freshwater wetlands in the Valley - at the UT resaca, Santa Ana and Estero Llano Grande.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* (6) - a common and widespread wetland species seen on both freshwater and, perhaps more unexpectedly, the hypersaline waters of Laguna Madre.

Eared Grebe *Podiceps nigricollis* (1) - a flock of 10 or so on Oso Bay at Hans Suter was our only sighting.

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Phalacrocoracidae: Cormorants (2)

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (6) - common and widespread, mostly in freshwater.

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus* (4) - lots along the coast, with smaller numbers in some freshwater habitats, including the Rio Grande at Salineño.

Anhingidae: Anhingas (1)

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* (4) - ones and twos at scattered Valley locations - the resacas at the Inn at Chachalaca Bend and the University of Texas, Estero Llano Grande, and Santa Ana.

Pelecanidae: Pelicans (2)

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* (7) - we came across large numbers of these impressive birds on their wintering grounds throughout our tour, with particularly close views on the Arroyo Colorado at Estero Llano Grande.

Brown Pelican *Pelecanus occidentalis* (4) - common whenever we were near the coast (an especially welcome sight as Texas populations crashed in the 1950s and local nesting didn't resume until the late 1990s).

Ardeidae: Herons and Egrets (9)

Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* (7) - small numbers at just about all wetlands on our route.

Great Egret *Ardea alba* (7) - seen at seemingly all the wetland sites we visited.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* (6) - the most numerous of the herons wherever we were.

Little Blue Heron *Egretta caerulea* (2) - ones or twos at Port Aransas Wetlands, Santa Ana, and Estero Llano Grande.

Tricolored Heron *Egretta tricolor* (5) - small numbers seen in both fresh and saltwater habitats.

Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens* (4) - memorable views of both dark and white morphs frenziedly feeding at Hans Suter, from the *Skimmer*, at Port Aransas, and from South Padre Island Convention Center.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (3) - small numbers on pastures and at freshwater wetlands throughout.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (3) – singletons seen at several sites, with both adults and juveniles together at roosts at the Inn at Chachalaca Bend and Estero Llano Grande.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* (3) - scattered singletons, with several together sharing the two Black-crowned Night-Heron roosts we came across.

Threskiornithidae: Ibis and Spoonbills (3)

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* (6) - widespread, mostly in small numbers but about 50 in a feeding flock at Tule Wetlands in Rockport and 80 in a memorable gathering of waders on fields at A-1 Hill Ponds.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* (4) - there were some 250 with a wader flock at A-1 Hill Ponds, as well as smaller numbers in Port Aransas, on fields across from the Big Tree in Lamar and on South Padre.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* (6) - flocks of these outrageously gaudy birds seen on the *Skimmer* boat tour, on the Lamar Peninsula, A-1 Hill Ponds, and, from just a few feet from us, on South Padre.

Cathartidae: New World Vultures (2)

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* (3) – widespread, with over 20 high above the Rio Grande at Salineño.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* (8) - everywhere, with particularly large numbers migrating north in flocks over Bentsen.

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Pandionidae: Osprey (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (7) - several seen along the coast and at larger inland wetlands, as well as along the Rio Grande.

Accipitridae: Hawks, Kites, and Eagles (9)

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* (2) - a pair of these elegant raptors were by their nest at Estero Llano Grande, and another two at Granjeno.

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius* (6) - singletons, mainly juveniles, seen hunting at several places on our route.

Sharp-shinned Hawk *Accipiter striatus* (2) - just two sightings of singletons.

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* (3) - singletons seen on most of our days in the Valley.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus* (3) **(SP)** - we observed several of these handsome raptors throughout the Valley.

White-tailed Hawk *Geranoaetus albicaudatus* (3) **(SP)** - a couple of sightings in the Valley, but our best views were of our initial encounter with a majestic adult in pristine plumage that soared above us over the *Skimmer*.

Gray Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* (3) **(SP)** - several both seen and heard at Santa Ana, Bentsen, and Salineño.

Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus* (1) - our only sighting of the trip was one at A-1 Hill Ponds.

Red-tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* (8) - several seen, including typical western and eastern birds and some with almost unmarked underparts characteristic of the local resident race *fuertesii*.

Rallidae: Rails, Crakes, and Coots (4)

Virginia Rail *Rallus limicola* (1) - crippling views of one as it fed on open mud at Estero Llano Grande.

Sora *Porzana carolina* (3) - again wonderful views of feeding birds at Estero Llano Grande and Santa Ana.

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata* (4) - seen at just about all reed-fringed freshwater wetlands throughout the tour.

American Coot *Fulica americana* (6) - seemingly ubiquitous in both fresh and coastal habitats.

Gruidae: Cranes (2)

Sandhill Crane *Antigone canadensis* (2) - lingering flocks by the Twelfth Street wetlands in Lamar and at Live Oak Country Club.

Whooping Crane *Grus americana* (1) **(SP)** - one of the unforgettable highlights of the tour was our sighting of 22 Whooping Cranes, mostly in pairs and family groups, during the *Skimmer* boat tour (part of a wild population now estimated at some 440 individuals, all of which winter in the Aransas NWR area - up from just 15 in 1941!). Later the same day we saw an additional pair on the grasslands south of Twelfth Street in Lamar.

Recurvirostridae: Stilts and Avocets (2)

Black-necked Stilt *Himantopus mexicanus* (3) - frequent at both fresh and coastal wetlands, including Hazel Bazemore, Estero Llano Grande, and Santa Ana.

American Avocet *Recurvirostra americana* (4) - memorably large concentrations of this elegant shorebird were seen at Port Aransas Wetlands, from the *Skimmer* and on the Arroyo Colorado at Estero Llano Grande.

Haematopodidae: Oystercatchers (1)

American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus* (3) - ones and twos at Indian Point, from the *Skimmer*, and on the Zapata saltflats.

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Charadriidae: Plovers and Lapwings (3)

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (1) - unusually our only sightings of this common shorebird were on the Zapata saltflats.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius melodus* (1) – at Indian Point County Park.

Killdeer *Charadrius vociferus* (4) - common and widespread.

Scolopacidae: Sandpipers and Allies (14)

Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus* (4) - singletons seen at several Coastal Bend wetlands and during the *Skimmer* boat tour, and in the Valley over a dozen on the Old Port Isabel Road fields.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa* (3) – we observed small groups of these handsome shorebirds on the *Skimmer* boat tour, at Indian Point, at the South Padre Island Convention Center, and on the Zapata saltflats.

Ruddy Turnstone *Arenaria interpres* (4) - several at coastal habitats throughout.

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* (2) - small numbers on South Padre, at both Pintail and Willow Lakes at Santa Ana, and a flock of at least 30 on the Arroyo Colorado at Esero Llano Grande.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* (2) - numerous on beaches and flats on Mustang and South Padre Islands.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (2) - our best views were on the flats by the South Padre Island Convention Center.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* (2) - common on both inland and coastal wetlands, allowing us particularly close views at Estero Llano Grande.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri* (1) - close views on the South Padre Convention Center flats.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* (3) - numerous at Port Aransas and the South Padre Convention Center flats.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* (1) - at rest and in flight at Santa Ana and Estero Llano Grande.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* (4) - several sightings, primarily in freshwater habitats.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* (4) - fairly common at both inland and coastal wetlands throughout our tour.

Willet *Tringa semipalmata* (4) - large numbers on Mustang Island, on the flats at the South Padre Island Convention Center, and on the Zapata saltflats.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* (3) - seen just about wherever we came across Greater Yellowlegs, and often side-by-side for instant comparisons!

Laridae: Gulls and Terns (9)

Bonaparte's Gull *Chroicocephalus philadelphia* (1) - singleton with a mixed flock of gulls and terns on the beach at Port Aransas Jetty.

Laughing Gull *Leucophaeus atricilla* (4) - everywhere along the coast.

Ring-billed Gull *Larus delawarensis* (4) - still fairly common in all coastal areas.

Herring Gull *Larus argentatus* (2) - small numbers seen at all coastal sites.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* (1) - our only sightings were from the Zapata Boat Launch.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* (3) - fairly common along the coast.

Forster's Tern *Sterna forsteri* (4) - numerous at just about all coastal localities we visited.

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* (3) - very common on sandy beaches along the coast with large concentrations at Port Aransas and the South Padre Convention Center.

Black Skimmer *Rynchops niger* (3) - large flocks lolling at Rockport Beach Park, on the South Padre Convention Center flats, and on the Zapata saltflats.

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Columbidae: Pigeons and Doves (8)

Rock Pigeon *Columba livia* (8) - common in most urban areas.

Red-billed Pigeon *Patagioenas flavirostris* (1) (SP) - singleton flying over the Rio Grande at Salineño.

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* (5) - small numbers now just about throughout South Texas (the first Valley sighting was as recently as 1998).

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* (5) - locally common in the Valley, where we came across small numbers at Hazel Bazemore, Estero Llano Grande, Santa Ana, Quinta Mazatlan, and Rancho Lomitas.

Common Ground-Dove *Columbina passerina* (2) - pairs at Laguna Atascosa and on the ground by the feeders at Salineño.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* (5) (SP) - fairly common in most wooded areas in the Valley, but our best views were at the feeders at the Inn at Chachalaca Bend and Laguna Atascosa.

White-winged Dove *Zenaida asiatica* (7) - common throughout, with an especially large flock at Salineño.

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* (8) - ubiquitous in South Texas away from riparian woodland.

Cuculidae: Cuckoos and Allies (2)

Groove-billed Ani *Crotophaga sulcirostris* (1) (SP) - prolonged views of a pair at Estero Llano Grande.

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus* (1) - wonderful views at Laguna Atascosa and Rancho Lomitas.

Strigidae: Owls (2)

Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus* (1) - one at its daytime roost in the grounds of the Inn at Chachalaca Bend.

Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia* (1) - memorable views of one on wintering territory in Granjeno.

Caprimulgidae: Nighthawks and Nightjars (1)

Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albigollis* (1) (SP) - close views of a roosting bird in the underbrush at Estero Llano Grande were one of the highlights of our tour.

Trochilidae: Hummingbirds (3)

Ruby-throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* (1) - female at the feeders at the King Ranch Visitors' Center and an adult male at feeders at Estero Llano Grande.

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri* (1) - adult male at the feeders at Bentsen.

Rufous Hummingbird *Selasphorus rufus* (1) - singleton at the feeders at Rancho Lomitas.

Alcedinidae: Kingfishers (3)

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* (1) (SP) - a lone bird on the resaca at the Inn at Chachalaca Bend.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* (6) - seen just about every day at both inland and coastal wetlands.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* (1) (SP) - 2 on the UT resaca in Brownsville.

Picidae: Woodpeckers (3)

Golden-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes aurifrons* (6) (SP) - encountered in just about all woodland and suburban areas.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* (1) - sightings of wintering birds at Bentsen and Salineño.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris* (3) - seen less frequently encountered than Golden-fronteds but in a wider range of habitats, including mesquite scrub.

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Falconidae: Falcons and Caracaras (5)

Crested Caracara *Caracara cheriway* (6) - frequent throughout the Coastal Bend and the Valley.

American Kestrel *Falco sparverius* (7) - we came across several individuals of this wintering raptor on our travels in the Valley.

Merlin *Falco columbarius* (3) - we were fortunate to have three sightings of this uncommon raptor - at Laguna Atascosa, Bentsen, and Salineño.

Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis* (1) **(SP)** - one of the highlights of our tour was finding a pair of Aplomado Falcon on Old Port Isabel Road (a particularly handsome raptor that had been extirpated in the U.S. in the 1950s and was subsequently, from the 1980s, the beneficiary of a remarkably successful reintroduction program in South Texas spearheaded by the Peregrine Fund).

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* (2) - singletons on Mustang Island and South Padre.

Parrots: Psittacidae (3)

Monk Parakeet *Myiopsitta monachus* (1) - several seen in and around their nests in Hidalgo.

Red-crowned Parrot *Amazona viridigenalis* (1) **(SP)** - another memorable experience on our tour was the sight (and sound!) of some 200 parrots, almost all Red-crowns, coming in at dusk to roost in the trees at Oliveira Park in Brownsville.

[We also saw small numbers of Red-lore Parrots [*Amazona autumnalis*], Yellow-headed Parrots [*Amazona oratrix*], and White-fronted Parrots [*Amazona albifrons*] at Oliveira Park but, in the absence of evidence that they have viable self-sustaining wild populations in the U.S., none are considered 'countable' by the ABA]

Green Parakeet *Psittacara holochlorus* (1) **(SP)** - we came across several groups of Green Parakeets coming in to roost in downtown Brownsville in the late afternoon.

Tyrannidae: Tyrant Flycatchers (7)

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* (2) - individuals of this western species seen at both the University of Texas resaca in Brownsville, and at Bentsen.

Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe* (8) - fairly common in open wooded and brushy habitats throughout.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* (5) - wonderful views of this striking flycatcher at Hazel Bazemore and multiple places in the Valley, including unusually two at the South Padre Convention Center.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* (5) **(SP)** - first seen at Hazel Bazemore and then just about everywhere in the Valley.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* (5) **(SP)** - almost all of the kingbirds that we came across in the Valley and were able to specifically identify with confidence were Tropicals.

Couch's Kingbird *Tyrannus couchii* (1) **(SP)** - our only definite sighting was of a pair calling as we watched them at Salineño.

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher *Tyrannus forficatus* (1) - wonderful views of an unseasonable but very welcome lone bird at the Big Tree in Lamar.

Laniidae: Shrikes (1)

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus* (6) - fairly common throughout.

Vireonidae: Vireos (1)

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* (4) - often heard, but just two sightings of unusually co-operative birds.

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Corvidae: Jays and Crows (2)

Green Jay *Cyanocorax yncas* (6) (SP) - memorably close views at the King Ranch Visitors' Center and at feeding stations at Estero Llano Grande, Santa Ana, Bentsen, and Salineño.

Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus* (1) - a pair flying over the wetlands on Hwy 48.

Hirundinidae: Swallows and Martins (5)

Northern Rough-winged Swallow *Stelgidopteryx serripennis* (3) - the most frequently encountered swallow on our tour .

Purple Martin *Progne subis* (1) - 6 seen on our last morning in and around the nest boxes at McAllen Nature Center.

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* (2) - large flocks over Santa Ana and Estero Llano Grande.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (1) - small numbers with other swallows over Santa Ana and Estero Llano Grande.

Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva* (1) -small numbers over Santa Ana and Estero Llano Grande.

Paridae: Tits and Chickadees (1)

Black-crested Titmouse *Baeolophus atricristatus* (5) (SP) - in all wooded habitats throughout South Texas.

Troglodytidae: Wrens (4)

House Wren *Troglodytes aedon* (2) -singletons at the Inn at Chachalaca Bend and Santa Ana NWR.

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus* (2) - we heard several but our only decent sighting was at Hazel Bazemore.

Bewick's Wren *Thryomanes bewickii* (1) - clear views (at last!) at Rancho Lomitas.

Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus* (2) - great views at the feeders at Rancho Lomitas; one calling at McAllen Nature Center.

Poliptilidae: Gnatcatchers (1)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Poliptila caerulea* (4) – widespread, but particularly numerous during our visit to Santa Ana, where we came across well over 30 individuals.

Regulidae: Kinglets (1)

Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Regulus satrapa* (7) - in just about every wooded area.

Turdidae: Thrushes (2)

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis* (2) - several at the Big Tree in Lamar and La Sagunada.

Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi* (2) (SP) - the first U.S. nest of this species was found in the Valley in 1986, but numbers have increased dramatically since then and they are particularly common at Quinta Mazatlan, where we had our best views.

Mimidae: Mockingbirds (3)

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre* (3) - seen at Estero Llano Grande , Rancho Lomitas, and McAllen Nature Center.

Long-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma longirostre* (5) (SP) - seen and heard on multiple occasions in the Valley.

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Northern Mockingbird *Mimus polyglottos* (8) - a very common and widespread species throughout South Texas.

Sturnidae: Starlings (1)

European Starling *Sturnus vulgaris* (8) - small numbers throughout.

Motacillidae: Pipits and Wagtails (1)

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens* (1) - our only sighting was of a flock of about 30 on the grasslands at Hazel Bazemore..

Parulidae: Wood-Warblers (7)

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* (2) - with feeding flocks at Santa Ana and McAllen Nature Center.

Orange-crowned Warbler *Oreothlypis celata* (4) - the second most frequent warbler we came across in the Valley.

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* (3) - seen in and around freshwater wetlands at A-1 Hill Ponds, Estero Llano Grande, Santa Ana, and by the Rio Grande at Salineño.

American Redstart *Setophaga ruticilla* (1) – an unseasonable adult male at Santa Ana NWR.

Pine Warbler *Setophaga pinus* (1) – a lone bird at the Big Tree in Lamar.

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata* (7) - by far the most frequently encountered of the wintering warblers.

Black-throated Green Warbler *Setophaga virens* (1) - singleton at Bentsen.

Emberizidae: Sparrows (8)

Olive Sparrow *Arremonops rufivirgatus* (4) (**SP**) - a common bird in the Valley, allowing us particularly good views at Santa Ana and Rancho Lomitas.

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina* (3) - small flocks at Goose Island State Park, La Sagunada, and McAllen Nature Center.

Field Sparrow *Spizella pusilla* (1) - this is a rare bird in the Valley, so we were particularly happy to see several at one of the feeding stations at Goose Island SP.

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata* (1) - several seen at Rancho Lomitas.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* (2) - several along Old Port Isabel Road and at Falcon.

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandvicensis* (3) - by far our most frequently encountered sparrow.

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii* (4) - fairly common with our best views at Hazel Bazemore and the feeders at Salineño.

Swamp Sparrow *Melospiza georgiana* (1)- singleton by the Rio Grande at Salineño.

Cardinalidae: Grosbeaks and Buntings (4)

Northern Cardinal *Cardinalis cardinalis* (7) - common and widespread throughout South Texas.

Pyrrhuloxia *Cardinalis sinuatus* (1) - great views at the feeders at Rancho Lomitas.

Black-headed Grosbeak *Pheucticus melanocephalus* (1) - eagle-eyed Flo was (of course!) the only one of us to get a view of this long-staying local rarity at Laguna Atascosa.

Indigo Bunting *Passerina cyanea* (1) - at the feeders at Quinta Mazatlan.

Icteridae: Blackbirds and Orioles (10)

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* (7) - abundant in South Texas, especially at feeders and grain silos.

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Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta* (3) - we came across flocks of these wintering birds on fields next to A-1 Hill Ponds, at Anzalduas, and at Falcon.

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* (2) - several seen and heard singing as we drove the roads of Hidalgo and Starr Counties.

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* (1) - small numbers with hundreds of other blackbirds and cowbirds at the Progreso grain silos.

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus* (1) - a flock of these western birds greeted us, as usual during the winter, at the Sarita Rest Stop.

Great-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus mexicanus* (8) - everywhere!

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater* (2) – widespread, but our only really good views were at Rockport Beach Park and the Progreso grain silos.

Hooded Oriole *Icterus cucullatus* (1) - one at Bentsen (where it a rather uncommon visitor) was oddly our only sighting.

Altamira Oriole *Icterus gularis* (4) (SP) - memorable views at Santa Ana, Bentsen, Rancho Lomtas and, most memorably, the feeders at Salineño.

Audubon's Oriole *Icterus graduacauda* (1) (HO) (SP) - one heard singing by the Rio Grande at Salineño but it unhappily remained elusive.

Fringillidae: Finches (3)

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus* (1) - a male and two females of these patchily distributed birds in the Valley were at McAllen Nature Center.

Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria* (1) - our only sightings were at Bentsen.

American Goldfinch *Spinus tristis* (3) - this has been a good year for American Goldfinches wintering in South Texas and we saw several flocks at Goose Island, Hazel Bazemore, and Bentsen.

Passeridae: Old World Sparrows (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (7) - common in urban areas and around feeders.

MAMMALS (10 species recorded):

Eastern Cottontail *Sylvilagus floridanus* (4) - the common rabbit in South Texas, seen on most visits to woodland habitats.

Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus* (1) - 4 on the fields at Corpus Christi Airport.

Eastern Fox Squirrel *Sciurus niger* (3) - seen in the Valley just about whenever we came across feeders!

Mexican Ground Squirrel *Ictidomys mexicanus* (1) (SP) - at Laguna Atascosa NWR.

Northern Raccoon *Procyon lotor* (1) – ubiquitous in South Texas, but only a single sighting during our tour.

Hispid Cotton Rat *Sigmodon hispidus* (1) - taking advantage of fallen seed at the feeders at Laguna Atascosa.

Nutria *Myocastor coypus* (1) - at ponds in Rockport.

Collared Peccary *Tayassu tajacu* (1) (SP) - one feeding at Green Jay blind at Bentsen.

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus* (2) - two seen from the Skimmer on the spoil islands in Aransas Bay; others close to the Visitors' Center at the King Ranch.

Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* (1) - several following in the wake of the *Skimmer* during our boat trip.

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REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS (3 species recorded):

American Alligator *Alligator mississippiensis* (1) - a huge singleton on the wetlands south of Twelfth Street in Lamar.

Red-eared Slider *Trachemys scripta* (1) - oddly, and presumably because of the generally cool weather, we only had two sightings at ponds in the Coastal Bend of this normally abundant turtle.

Blue Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus cyanogenys* (1) (**SP**) - several, perhaps in the hope of some sun, basking on walls at Bentsen State Park.