



February 23 - March 1, 2020
South Texas Birding & Wildlife Tour - Species List
with guide Michael Marsden and 7 participants:
Louise, Holly, Dan, Julie, Gail, Jean, and Delsa

Compiled by Michael Marsden

Summary: Any region with the array of habitats of South Texas is going to be rich in birdlife, but it is its geographic location - with temperate lands to the north, the Gulf of Mexico to the east, the Chihuahuan Desert to the west, and above all the Sierra Madre Oriental and the tropics to the south - that makes South Texas so exceptional and such an attraction for visiting birders.

After meeting at noon in Corpus Christi, we drove north to the Inn at Fulton Harbour, where we were to spend the next two nights, by way of Mustang Island, seeing on the way just about all the expected species of the South Texas coastal wetlands, together with a normally not-so-expected Mew Gull.

The highlight of the following day was a morning boat trip on the celebrated *Skimmer* with close views of Whooping Cranes, as well as a myriad of other waders, wildfowl, larids, and shorebirds. In the afternoon on the Lamar Peninsula we came across yet more Whooping Cranes, this time sharing a pasture with Sandhill Cranes, and visited the Big Tree (the largest live oak in Texas), and the productive bird-feeding stations at Goose Island State Park.

The next day we drove down to the Rio Grande Valley by way of Pollywog Ponds and Hazel Bazemore County Park in Corpus Christi ("the birdiest city in the U.S."), where we first came across our first Great Kiskadee, Green Kingfisher, and other regional specialties, and then through the historic South Texas ranchlands to the Rancho Viejo Country Club and Resort, where again we were to stay two nights.

Our first full day of birding from Rancho Viejo was spent exploring the birding hotspots of Cameron County - Old Port Isabel Road for Aplomado Falcon, the photographic blinds and trails of Laguna Atascosa NWR, the migratory traps and coastal flats of South Padre Island, the resacas of Brownsville (for kingfishers and a long-staying Common Black-Hawk), and the parrot roost at Oliveira Park. The following day, on our way to Alamo, we divided our time between the mixed habitats of Estero Llano Grande State Park and the wetlands and Spanish Moss-festooned woodlands of Santa Ana NWR.

We stayed the next three nights at the Alamo Inn, a renowned birding bed-and-breakfast in inland Hidalgo County. From there we spent two full days exploring areas to the west - the venerable Bentsen-Rio Grande State Park, riverside Anzalduas County Park, Edinburg Scenic Wetlands and, in Starr County, the Valley Land Fund feeding station and riparian woodland at Salineño and Benito & Toni Trevino's Rancho Lomitas. At the latter we learned about ethnobotany and local history while taking a tour of the ranch and watching such characteristic birds of the area as Greater Roadrunner, Scaled Quail,

Naturalist Journeys, LLC PO Box 16545 Portal, AZ 85632 PH: 520.558.1146 Toll free 866.900.1146 Fax 650.471.7667

www.naturalistjourneys.com

Email info@naturalistjourneys.com

and Pyrruloxia at the ranch's many feeders. Our last morning was spent mainly at the McAllen Nature Center, conveniently close to the airport.

And, as always on these tours, we made sure to have dinner at local restaurants reflecting the cuisine and character of the area, which this time included Rockport's Glow, Joe's Oyster Bar in Port Isabel, Lola's Bistro in Brownsville, and McAllen's Republic of the Rio Grande.

Outline Itinerary:

23rd pm: Mustang Island - Port Aransas (Wetlands, Birding Center, Jetty, Paradise Pond) - Rockport Beach Park

24th: *Skimmer* boat trip - Big Tree & Eighth Street wetlands, Lamar - Goose Island State Park

25th: Rockport (Tule Wetlands, Moore's Pond, Cape Valero, Live Oak Country Club) - Indian Point County Park - Pollywog Ponds, Corpus Christi - Hazel Bazemore County Park - Sarita - La Parra road, Kenedy Ranch - Rancho Viejo Country Club & Resort

26th: Rancho Viejo - Old Port Isabel Road - Bayview resacas - Laguna Atascosa NWR - South Padre Island Convention Center & boardwalk - SPI Birding & Nature Center - Zapata Memorial Boat Ramp flats - University of Texas resaca, Brownsville - Oliveira Park, Brownsville

27th: Rancho Viejo - Santa Ana NWR - Estero Llano Grande State Park - Progreso grain silos

28th: Bentsen Rio Grande State Park - Anzalduas County Park - Granjeno - Hidalgo - Edinburg Scenic Wetlands

29th: Salineño - Rancho Lomitas, Rio Grande City

1st am: Bannworth Park, McAllen - McAllen Nature Park - La Piedad Cemetery

SPECIES LISTS

BIRDS (178 species recorded, of which 3 were heard only):

(SP) - a regional specialty with a U.S. range limited wholly or mainly to South Texas

HO - heard only

(#) - number of days encountered

Anatidae: Ducks and Geese (16)

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck *Dendrocygna autumnalis* (5)— seen at several freshwater wetlands in both the Coastal Bend and the Rio Grande Valley, with particularly memorable gatherings of these spectacular ducks on the fields at Eighth Street wetlands in Lamar and at Bannworth Park in McAllen.

Blue-winged Teal *Spatula discors* (8)— small numbers at nearly all wetland sites.

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

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

Gadwall *Mareca strepera* (7)— seen in small numbers in a variety of freshwater habitats throughout.

American Wigeon *Mareca americana* (3)— small numbers at both inland and coastal wetlands.

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

Northern Pintail *Anas acuta* (4)— still large numbers of these elegant ducks in the bays of the Coastal Bend.

Green-winged Teal *Anas crecca* (5)— common and widespread at all freshwater wetland sites.

Redhead *Aythya americana* (6)— over 80% of the world's Redheads winter on the South Texas and Tamaulipas bays and, though many seemed already to have left, we encountered several flocks during our *Skimmer* boat trip.

Ring-necked Duck *Aythya collaris* (1)— our only sightings were of 4 on Pollywog Ponds and singletons at Estero Llano Grande and Anzalduas.

Lesser Scaup *Aythya affinis* (6)— distant large flocks in Mesquite & San Antonio Bays from the *Skimmer*, but only small numbers remained in the Valley.

Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola* (3)— several of these delightful ducks seen on our *Skimmer* boat trip and at Indian Point, Pollywog Ponds, and Estero Llano.

Hooded Merganser *Lophodytes cucullatus* (1)— a spectacularly handsome drake at Pollywog Ponds.

Red-breasted Merganser *Mergus serrator* (2)—several seen on the *Skimmer* trip and on Laguna Madre.

Ruddy Duck *Oxyura jamaicensis* (2)— small numbers at Cape Valero and Edinburg Wetlands.

[We also came across feral Muscovy Ducks and Mallards just about every day in the Valley, together with an apparently hybrid MexicanxMottled Duck at the SPI Birding & Nature Center showing the broadly white-edged speculum of Mexican Duck but with a dark spot at the base of its lower mandible characteristic of Mottled Duck]

Cracidae: Guans and Chachalacas (1)

Plain Chachalaca *Ortalis vetula* (4) (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.

Odontophoridae: New World Quails (2)

Scaled Quail *Callipepla squamata* (1)— the feeders at Rancho Lomitas are always a highlight of our tour and we all got wonderful views of coveys of both Scaled Quail and Northern Bobwhite there.

Northern Bobwhite *Colinus virginianus* (1)— several at Rancho Lomitas.

Podicipedidae: Grebes (2)

Least Grebe *Tachybaptus dominicus* (3) (SP)— present at most freshwater wetlands from Pollywog Ponds south, with the largest gathering of a dozen or so on a resaca at Rancho Viejo Country Club.

Pied-billed Grebe *Podilymbus podiceps* (7)— a common and widespread wetland species seen on both freshwater ponds and, at first sight more unexpectedly, the hypersaline waters of Laguna Madre.

Columbidae: Pigeons and Doves (6)

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

Eurasian Collared-Dove *Streptopelia decaocto* (6)— small numbers throughout South Texas (the first Valley sighting was as recently as 1998).

Inca Dove *Columbina inca* (5)— locally common in the Coastal Bend and the Valley, where we came across small numbers throughout the region, including one in McAllen sitting on a nest.

White-tipped Dove *Leptotila verreauxi* (6) (SP)— fairly common in most wooded areas in the Valley, but our best views were at the feeders at Santa Ana, Bentsen, and Salineño.

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

Mourning Dove *Zenaida macroura* (8)— ubiquitous in South Texas

Cuculidae: Cuckoos and Allies (1)

Greater Roadrunner *Geococcyx californianus* (2)— wonderfully close views at Laguna Atascosa and Rancho Lomitas.

Caprimulgidae: Nighthawks and Nightjars (1)

Common Pauraque *Nyctidromus albicollis* (1) (SP)— close views of roosting birds well camouflaged in the underbrush at Estero Llano Grande were a highlight of our tour (thanks to Huck Hutchens!).

Trochilidae: Hummingbirds (2)

Black-chinned Hummingbird *Archilochus alexandri* (1)— female at the feeders at Bentsen.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird *Amazilia yucatanensis* (1)— at the feeders at Estero Llano Grande.

Rallidae: Rails, Crakes, and Coots (3)

Sora *Porzana carolina* (2 - HO)— calling birds on South Padre and at Estero Llano Grande.

Common Gallinule *Gallinula galeata* (5)— seen at just about all the reed-fringed freshwater wetlands throughout the tour with a bizarre cream-colored amelanistic oddity at the Port Aransas Birding Center.

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

Gruidae: Cranes (2)

Sandhill Crane *Antigone canadensis* (2)— lingering birds at the Eighth Street wetlands in Lamar and at Hazel Bazemore.

Whooping Crane *Grus americana* (2) (SP — one of the unforgettable highlights of the tour was our sighting of some 16 Whooping Cranes, mostly in pairs and family groups, during the *Skimmer* boat tour, together with a further 2 at the Port Aransas Birding Center and 6 in the Lamar fields (all part of a wild population now estimated at around 500 individuals, all of which winter in the Aransas NWR area - an astonishing increase from just 15 in 1941!).

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 the Port Aransas Birding Center, from the *Skimmer*, and on the Arroyo Colorado at Estero Llano Grande.

Haematopodidae: Oystercatchers (1)

American Oystercatcher *Haematopus palliatus* (1)— close views of 3 of these striking birds from the *Skimmer*.

Charadriidae: Plovers and Lapwings (4)

Black-bellied Plover *Pluvialis squatarola* (3) — small numbers on just about all the coastal flats we visited.

Semipalmated Plover *Charadrius melodus* (2) — seen on both Mustang and South Padre Islands, including a flock of 20 at the former.

Piping Plover *Charadrius melodus* (1)— singleton with the flock of Semipalmated Plovers on Mustang Island.

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

Scolopacidae: Sandpipers and Allies (15)

Long-billed Curlew *Numenius americanus* (3)— singletons seen at several Coastal Bend wetlands and during the *Skimmer* boat tour, but our only flock was at least a dozen on the Old Port Isabel Road fields.

Marbled Godwit *Limosa fedoa* (1)— our only sighting of these handsome shorebirds was a group of 15 or so on the Zapata flats.

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

Stilt Sandpiper *Calidris himantopus* (2)— small numbers on South Padre and on the Arroyo Colorado at Estero Llano Grande.

Sanderling *Calidris alba* (3)— numerous on sandy beach areas on Aransas Bay, Mustang Island, and South Padre.

Dunlin *Calidris alpina* (3)— frequent on all the coastal flats we visited.

Least Sandpiper *Calidris minutilla* (2)— numerous both on the coastal flats at Indian Point and the freshwater wetlands at Estero Llano Grande.

Western Sandpiper *Calidris mauri* (2)— particularly close views at Indian Point and on the South Padre Convention Center flats.

Short-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus griseus* (2)— flocks in Aransas Bay and on the Zapata flats.

Long-billed Dowitcher *Limnodromus scolopaceus* (4)— numerous at freshwater wetlands both in the Coastal Bend and in the Valley.

Wilson's Snipe *Gallinago delicata* (1)— unexpectedly close views of 2 in the open at Estero Llano Grande.

Spotted Sandpiper *Actitis macularius* (5)— several sightings, primarily in freshwater habitats.

Greater Yellowlegs *Tringa melanoleuca* (5)— fairly common at both inland and coastal wetlands throughout our tour.

Willet *Tringa semipalmata* (4)— large numbers in Aransas Bay, on Mustang Island, and on the flats at the South Padre Island Convention Center and Zapata.

Lesser Yellowlegs *Tringa flavipes* (4)— seen just about wherever we also came across Greater Yellowlegs, with some side-by-side views for instant comparisons!

Laridae: Gulls and Terns (13)

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

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* (4)— small numbers seen at all coastal sites.

Lesser Black-backed Gull *Larus fuscus* (1)— perched adult in Aransas Bay seen from the *Skimmer*.

Mew Gull *Larus canus* (1)— memorable scope views of this long-staying Texas rarity at the Port Aransas Birding Center.

Gull-billed Tern *Gelochelidon nilotica* (1)— close views of at least 8 at the Port Aransas Birding Center.

Caspian Tern *Hydroprogne caspia* (4)— fairly common along the coast.

Common Tern *Sterna hirundo* (1)— good views of an unseasonable singleton showing its diagnostic blackish carpal-bar on Port Aransas beach.

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

Royal Tern *Thalasseus maximus* (4)— very common on sandy beaches along the coast, with particularly large concentrations at the South Padre Convention Center and the Zapata flats.

Sandwich Tern *Thalasseus sandvicensis* (1)— at least 2 with other resting terns on Port Aransas Beach.

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

Gaviidae: Loons (1)

Common Loon *Gavia immer* (3)— particularly frequent this year throughout the coastal waters of the Coastal Bend.

Anhingidae: Anhingas (1)

Anhinga *Anhinga anhinga* (4)— present at just about all the larger freshwater wetlands, including the resacas in Bayview, Brownsville, Estero Llano Grande, and Bentsen, with at least 4 at Eighth Street in Lamar.

Phalacrocoracidae: Cormorants (2)

Neotropic Cormorant *Phalacrocorax brasilianus* (7)— common and widespread, mostly in freshwater habitats.

Double-crested Cormorant *Phalacrocorax auritus* (5)— lots along the coast, with smaller numbers in some freshwater habitats, including deeper sections of the Rio Grande.

Pelecanidae: Pelicans (2)

American White Pelican *Pelecanus erythrorhynchos* (4)— we came across several 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* (3)— 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 (10)

American Bittern *Botaurus lentiginosus* (1)— brief views from the *Skimmer* of one flying low over one of the spoil islands.

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

Great Egret *Ardea alba* (7)— regular at all wetland sites.

Snowy Egret *Egretta thula* (6)— the most numerous of all the herons at the wetlands we visited.

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

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

Reddish Egret *Egretta rufescens* (3)— memorable views of both dark and white morphs, including some with nuptial fluorescent-pink bills, from the *Skimmer*, at Port Aransas, and on South Padre.

Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis* (2)— our only sightings were at a shopping mall in downtown Alamo (!) and of birds coming into roost at Edinburg Wetlands.

Black-crowned Night-Heron *Nycticorax nycticorax* (5)— singletons seen at several sites, with both adults and juveniles together at roosts at Estero Llano Grande and Edinburg Wetlands.

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron *Nyctanassa violacea* (3)— scattered singletons with several together at the Estero Llano Grande and Edinburg roosts.

Threskiornithidae: Ibis and Spoonbills (3)

White Ibis *Eudocimus albus* (5)— widespread in small numbers in both freshwater and coastal habitats.

White-faced Ibis *Plegadis chihi* (1)— our only sighting was of a half dozen at Santa Ana NWR.

Roseate Spoonbill *Platalea ajaja* (5)— flocks of these outrageously gaudy birds seen on the *Skimmer* boat tour, on the Lamar Peninsula, and from just a few feet from us on South Padre.

Cathartidae: New World Vultures (2)

Black Vulture *Coragyps atratus* (5)— widespread, with particularly good views over the Rio Grande at Salineño.

Turkey Vulture *Cathartes aura* (8)— everywhere, with in addition to resident birds large numbers of apparent migrants flying north each day.

Pandionidae: Osprey (1)

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* (7)— seen daily along the coast and at larger inland wetlands, including several along the Rio Grande.

Accipitridae: Hawks, Kites, and Eagles (9)

White-tailed Kite *Elanus leucurus* (2)— our best views of these elegant raptors were of a pair at Estero Llano Grande.

Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius* (8)— singletons, mainly juveniles, seen hunting low over fields on every day of the tour.

Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* (3)— seen in woodland habitats both in the Coastal Bend and the Valley.

Common Black Hawk *Buteogallus anthracinus* (1)— memorable views of a long-stayer at the University of Texas resaca in Brownsville.

Harris's Hawk *Parabuteo unicinctus* (4) (SP)— we observed several of these handsome raptors throughout the Valley.

White-tailed Hawk *Geranoaetus albicaudatus* (1) (SP)— we enjoyed watching several of these majestic hawks during our day's birding in Cameron County.

Gray Hawk *Buteo plagiatus* (1) (SP)— after frustratingly brief glimpses at Bentsen , we were rewarded, thanks to the help of a visiting birder, with close views of a perched adult at Anzalduas.

Red-shouldered Hawk *Buteo lineatus* (2)— calling at Bentsen, but our only sighting of the trip was a singleton at Hazel Bazemore.

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*.

Strigidae: Owls (1)

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

Alcedinidae: Kingfishers (3)

Ringed Kingfisher *Megaceryle torquata* (2) (SP)— at Santa Ana, Anzalduas, and along the Rio Grande at Salineño.

Belted Kingfisher *Megaceryle alcyon* (3)— seen at both inland and coastal wetlands.

Green Kingfisher *Chloroceryle americana* (5) (SP)— our first encounter was at Pollywog Ponds, but we subsequently saw several at freshwater wetlands in the Valley.

Picidae: Woodpeckers (3)

Golden-fronted Woodpecker *Melanerpes aurifrons* (7) (SP)— common in all wooded and suburban habitats.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker *Sphyrapicus varius* (1)— a wintering immature at Salineño.

Ladder-backed Woodpecker *Picoides scalaris* (4)— less frequently encountered than Golden-fronteds but in a wider range of habitats, including mesquite scrub.

Falconidae: Falcons and Caracaras (4)

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.

Aplomado Falcon *Falco femoralis* (1)— one of our highlights was finding an 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)— one flew over the Skimmer during our boat trip, but our best views were of a happily co-operative perched female at Cape Valero.

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 unforgettable experience on our tour was the sight (and sound!) of at least 200 parrots, mostly Red-crowns, flying in at dusk to roost in the trees at Oliveira Park in Brownsville.

Green Parakeet *Psittacara holochlorus* (4) **(SP)**— we came across several groups of Green Parakeets coming in to roost in downtown Brownsville in the late afternoon, as well as a small flock over McAllen Nature Park, but our best view was of some 150 perched along a power line looking brilliant in the sunlight on our way to Bentsen State Park.

[We also saw a flock of 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., they are not considered countable by the ABA]

Tyrannidae: Tyrant Flycatchers (8)

Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet *Camptostoma imberbe* (2) **(SP)**— after a frustrating search for a calling bird at Santa Ana, we were finally rewarded with wonderful views of one at Bentsen State Park.

Say's Phoebe *Sayornis saya* (1)— good views of this long-staying local rarity at Anzalduas.

Black Phoebe *Sayornis nigricans* (3)— individuals of this increasing western species seen at the University of Texas resaca in Brownsville, Estero Llano Grande, and Bentsen.

Eastern Phoebe *Sayornis phoebe* (6)— fairly common in open wooded and brushy habitats throughout.

Vermilion Flycatcher *Pyrocephalus rubinus* (6)— memorable views of this striking flycatcher at Hazel Bazemore and several places in the Valley.

Great Kiskadee *Pitangus sulphuratus* (6) **(SP)**— first seen at Hazel Bazemore and then just about everywhere in the Valley.

Tropical Kingbird *Tyrannus melancholicus* (4) **(SP)**— we came across kingbirds in most of the places we visited in the Valley, with almost all we were able to identify with confidence being Tropicals.

Couch's Kingbird *Tyrannus couchii* (4) **(SP)**— individuals identified by range and bill shape in Lamar and Salineño. and by call at Estero Llano Grande.

Vireonidae: Vireos (1)

White-eyed Vireo *Vireo griseus* (4)— often heard but infrequently seen!

Laniidae: Shrikes (1)

Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus* (5)— fairly common throughout.

Corvidae: Jays and Crows (2)

Green Jay *Cyanocorax yncas* (6) **(SP)**— memorably close views at feeding stations at Estero Llano Grande, Santa Ana, Bentsen, and Salineño.

Chihuahuan Raven *Corvus cryptoleucus* (2)— sightings along the Hwy 48 wetlands and at Salineño.

Paridae: Tits and Chickadees (1)

Black-crested Titmouse *Baeolophus atricristatus* (6) **(SP)**— in all wooded habitats throughout South Texas.

Remizidae: Penduline Tits (1)

Verdin *Auriparus flaviceps* (1) — our only sightings were at Edinburg Wetlands.

Hirundinidae: Swallows and Martins (5)

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

Purple Martin *Progne subis* (2)— early arrivals at Port Aransas and around the nesting boxes at Estero Llano Grande and the McAllen Nature Center.

Tree Swallow *Tachycineta bicolor* (1)— small flocks over Estero Llano Grande.

Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica* (1)— rather oddly, our only sighting was of one over the Port Aransas Wetlands.

Cave Swallow *Petrochelidon fulva* (2)— small numbers over Hazel Bazemore and the McAllen Nature Center.

Regulidae: Kinglets (1)

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

Poliptilidae: Gnatcatchers (1)

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher *Poliptila caerulea* (4)— widespread in woodland habitats.

Troglodytidae: Wrens (3)

Marsh Wren *Cistothorus palustris* (1 - HO)— heard from the reed beds at Santa Ana NWR.

Carolina Wren *Thryothorus ludovicianus* (2 - HO)— heard singing several times but nary a view.

Cactus Wren *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus* (2)— great views at the feeders at Rancho Lomitas.

Sturnidae: Starlings (1)

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

Mimidae: Mockingbirds (4)

Gray Catbird *Dumetella carolinensis* (1)— bathing in a water dish at Goose Island State Park.

Curve-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma curvirostre* (3)— seen in drier areas at Bentson, Salineño, Rancho Lomitas, and McAllen Nature Center.

Long-billed Thrasher *Toxostoma longirostre* (6) **(SP)**— seen and heard on multiple occasions in the Valley.

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

Turdidae: Thrushes (2)

Eastern Bluebird *Sialia sialis* (2)— several on the Lamar Peninsula and at Pollywog Ponds.

Clay-colored Thrush *Turdus grayi* (1) **(SP)**— surprisingly our only sighting was at Santa Ana NWR.

Passeridae: Old World Sparrows (1)

House Sparrow *Passer domesticus* (6)— common in urban areas and around feeders.

Motacillidae: Pipits and Wagtails (2)

American Pipit *Anthus rubescens* (1)— our only sighting was at Estero Llano Grande.

Sprague's Pipit *Anthus spragueii* (1)— memorable views of 4 perched on the ground on the (thankfully!) newly mowed fields at Anzalduas.

Fringillidae: Finches (2)

House Finch *Haemorhous mexicanus* (2)— we came across several of these patchily distributed birds at the University in Brownsville and at Salineño .

Lesser Goldfinch *Spinus psaltria* (2)— our only sightings were at Pollywog Ponds and Edinburg Wetlands.

Emberizidae: Sparrows (7)

Olive Sparrow *Arremonops rufivirgatus* (3) **(SP)**— a common bird in the Valley, allowing us particularly good views at Laguna Atascosa, Salineño, and Rancho Lomitas.

Chipping Sparrow *Spizella passerina* (4)— fairly common, with small flocks at Goose Island State Park 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 the feeding stations at Goose Island SP.

Black-throated Sparrow *Amphispiza bilineata* (1)— wonderfully close views of these handsome sparrows at the feeders at Rancho Lomitas.

Lark Sparrow *Chondestes grammacus* (1)— our only sighting was of 3 on our last morning at McAllen Nature Center.

Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandvicensis* (6)— the most frequently encountered sparrow by far.

Lincoln's Sparrow *Melospiza lincolnii* (4)— fairly common with our best views at the feeding stations at Goose Island SP and McAllen Nature Center.

Icteridae: Blackbirds and Orioles (11)

Yellow-headed Blackbird *Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus* (1)— at least 30 among the hordes of blackbirds at the Progreso grain silos.

Red-winged Blackbird *Agelaius phoeniceus* (7)— abundant in South Texas, with many thousands at the Progreso grain silos.

Western Meadowlark *Sturnella neglecta* (2)— we came across flocks of these wintering birds at Cape Valero and Anzalduas.

Eastern Meadowlark *Sturnella magna* (2)— several flushed showing their extensive white outer tail feathers on our drive south from Corpus Christi, on Old Port Isabel Road, and at Anzalduas.

Brewer's Blackbird *Euphagus cyanocephalus* (1)— a flock of these western birds greeted us, as usual at this time of year, at the Sarita Rest Stop.

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

Boat-tailed Grackle *Quiscalus major* (1)— 2 seen from the *Skimmer* (at the very southern extremity of their range in Texas).

Bronzed Cowbird *Molothrus aeneus* (1)— our only sightings were of several at the Progreso grain silos.

Brown-headed Cowbird *Molothrus ater* (3)— fairly common, with uncountable numbers among the blackbirds at the Progreso grain silos.

Altamira Oriole *Icterus gularis* (3) **(SP)**— first seen at Santa Ana NWR, but our most memorable views were at the feeders at Salineño and Rancho Lomitas.

Audubon's Oriole *Icterus graduacauda* (2) **(SP)**— spectacular views at the feeders at Salineño and Rancho Lomitas.

Parulidae: Wood-Warblers (6)

Black-and-white Warbler *Mniotilta varia* (1)— at Edinburg Wetlands.

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

Common Yellowthroat *Geothlypis trichas* (2)— seen in and around the freshwater wetlands at South Padre and Santa Ana.

Yellow-rumped Warbler *Setophaga coronata* (5)— by far the most frequently encountered of the wintering warblers

Yellow-throated Warbler *Setophaga dominica* (1)— at Edinburg Wetlands.

Wilson's Warbler *Cardellina pusilla* (1)— at Edinburg Wetlands.

Cardinalidae: Grosbeaks and Buntings (2)

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

Pyrrhuloxia *Cardinalis sinuatus* (2)— great views of this primarily western species at the feeders at Rancho Lomitas and McAllen Nature Center.

MAMMALS (9 species recorded):

Eastern Cottontail *Sylvilagus floridanus*

Black-tailed Jackrabbit *Lepus californicus*

Eastern Fox Squirrel *Sciurus niger*

Mexican Ground Squirrel *Ictidomys mexicanus*

Coyote *Canis latrans*

Collared Peccary *Tayassu tajacu*

White-tailed Deer *Odocoileus virginianus*

Nilgai *Boselaphus tragocamelus*

Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops truncatus*

REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS (5 species recorded):

American Alligator *Alligator mississippiensis*

Red-eared Slider *Trachemys scripta*

Texas Spiny Softshell *Apalone spinifera emoryi*

Brown Anole *Anolis sagrei*

Blue Spiny Lizard *Sceloporus cyanogenys*