



THE DRUMMER

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RUSSELL COUNTY BIRD CLUB

Editor-Dave Worley
MEETINGS ARE THE 4TH TUESDAY
AT THE LEBANON COMMUNITY ROOM
AT 7:30 PM
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MEETING: Our next meeting is May 22nd at the usual time and place. Dave & Diana Worley will give a program on what they saw and did in Texas.

HAPPENINGS: Dave & Diana Worley spent 12 days in Texas birding over lots of different types of habitat.

In the hill county, they saw such specialties as Black-capped Vireo and Golden-cheeked Warblers. Along the Rio Grande they got birds like Brown Jay, Green Jay, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Least Grebe and Altimira and Audubons Orioles. On a tour of the King Ranch, 825,000 acres, they got Tropical Parula, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl and Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet.

They spent time birding with the teen team of the Great Texas Birding Classic at Bentsen-Rio Grande State Park. On South Padre Island after taking a boat trip to see the Yellow-billed Loon, they ran into Dick Peake, Peggy Spiegel and the rest of the senior team and birded a while with them.

They went to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge hoping that some of the immature Whooping Cranes were still present; but every single one had migrated.

They spent time at Galveston and birded High Island and Anhuac National Wildlife Refuge. Most of Texas is in a severe drought and lots of ponds and lakes were dry. At Falcon Dam they found the water level was 45 feet below normal. For the 12 days they got 225 species and 42 life birds.

May 12th was a special day as Roger & Lynda Mayhorn hosted a birding adventure at their home in Buchanan County. Present were Tom & Laverne Hunter, Bob & Jean Montgomery, Fred & Janice Martin, Sheldon & Ophra Woods and Ed & Michelle Talbott. Total of 48 species. 13 warblers.

Bob Riggs saw a male Cerulean Warbler that could be on territory, he will check back later in breeding season.

FIELD TRIP: June 22, 23, and 24th we will camp at Grindstone Campground with the VSO. Details in the next newsletter.

PRESIDENTS' CORNER: **WOW**, what a trip! The VSO annual meeting at Chincoteague was a great birding experience. The birds were exciting, the locations great and the people were not only interesting but excellent hosts.

Thursday started with a Whimbrel count hosted by the Nature Conservancy. Shorebirds by the thousands were seen on the mud flats around Oyster as we cruised the channels (guts) looking for the Whimbrels. The boat was a Carolina skiff so we could get deep into the guts on shallow water. Terry Tennyson, our host, filled us in on the tidal marshes and the important role they play as a resting place for migrating shorebirds like the Whimbrels. The shorebirds were so close you could have reached out and grabbed them. We saw a pair of nesting Peregrine Falcons, in an old chimney, as we counted the 287 Whimbrels.

Friday was Parramore Island, also hosted by the Nature Conservancy. The island is closed to the public, except for special trips. It was great to stand with my back to the sea and gaze at the undeveloped shore. What a sight, the only manmade object was the wreck of an old sailing ship built in 1867. All the birds were fun and we even saw a Chucks-will-widow perched in a tree.

I met Tom & Laverne Hunter at Chincoteague and we birded the NWR and Saxis Wildlife Management Area. Saturday, Laverne had us walking the marshes looking for Marsh Wrens. We saw them perched upside down with their tails pulled down onto their bodies. This was a life bird for me. I had heard them and seen little brown blurs, but these were Kodak moments.

After even more birding, Scott Weidensaul, author of *Living on the Wind*, gave the best program on bird migration I have ever heard.

The banquet was special as one of our own from southwest Virginia was honored. Tony Decker was honored for all the years and work he has done in authoring *Birds of Smyth County*.

One of the great things about the VSO meetings is the people. Meeting and talking with people who study birds as a hobby and even some who do it for their lifework. Birding with people like Dick Peake, Peggy Spiegel, Teta Kain, Dr. Mitchell, Ruth Beck, Bill Akers, Jerry Via and others who make up the VSO is always exciting..

The weekend started and ended on an exciting note. Bill and Jerry took us to look at some Red Knots and while we were watching, a Northern Harrier flew over and flushed them. Some landed just a few feet away in perfect sunlight. The drive home was filled with memories of 115 species seen for the weekend.

Bob Riggs