



Monthly FWAS Report

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President's Pen

We maybe in the middle of the summer doldrums, but we have plenty to be thankful for. For starters, I got a notice in the mail last month from BlueStone Natural Resources saying that they were dropping their bid to put an injection well precariously close to the earthen dam for Lake Arlington. You can read more about this in our "Conservation" section below.

Courtesy of our friends at the Texas Conservation Alliance, you might also enjoy the following statistics: "According to the EPA, the US is already beating the Paris Accord goal of returning the US to the 2005 levels of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020, and has been for several years. There are nearly three times as many solar jobs today in the US as there are coal industry jobs (wind and solar together account for half a million jobs). The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the job of wind turbine technician will be the fastest-growing occupation over the next 10 years. Between 2008 and 2015, the cost of electricity fell 41% for wind, 54% for rooftop solar cells, and 64% for utility-scale solar energy. In some regions of the country, renewable energy costs half that of energy from coal. The city of Georgetown, Texas, has gone 100% renewable for its residents' electrical power because it's cheaper. At a recent press conference, Energy Secretary Rick Perry affirmed that the US will continue to be a leader in the climate issue. He said flatly that the climate is changing and that man is having an impact on that change. He said that the US will still be very engaged, irrespective of the Paris Accord."

Just last week, I met with our new FWAS board for our annual summer planning session and came away energized. I'm lucky to have a very enthusiastic group to work with and I know you'll love the programs, trips, and outreach programs we'll have coming your way for the 2017 – 2018 season. You'll notice that the fruits of all their efforts are already in evidence below. To start, I'll single out our newest board member, Bill Utley, who will be taking over the Conservation Chair from Scott Hollinger. Bill is responsible for bringing the wonderful Aldo Leopold quote (see below) to our attention. Other board member changes include Scott starting his first full season as our Publicity Chair. Vicki Moore, who started out with us in Publicity, took over as Treasurer during last season and is starting her first full season in that role. Of course, I am very grateful for returning board members Ann Hoover in Programs, Glenda Keilstrup in Membership, Jim Jones in Education, Holly Stricklin as Secretary, Karen Rice in Grants, Tom Haase as Audubon Representative, Chuck Baskin in Bird Counts, Mary Sanford and Shiela Shallcross in Hospitality, and our directors at large Jean Ferguson and Gail Morris.

Aldo Leopold, along with John Muir, is one of our most famous early conservationists. His book, *A Sand County Almanac* is probably the greatest of all classic conservation books. Here is a quote from *A Sand County Almanac*: "When we hear his [the crane's] call we hear no mere bird. We hear the trumpet in the orchestra of evolution. He is the symbol of our untamable past,

of that incredible sweep of millennia which underlies and conditions the daily affairs of birds and men."

I'd love to visit with you in person at our meetings, or "online" at take5birder@charter.net, or call/text me at (817) 965-7284. Warmest regards, Michael Francis, President, FWAS.

Programs

Ann Hoover has been working her magic in the off season lining up some great programs for our enjoyment at the monthly meetings, the first of which will be Thursday, September 14, 2017. That first meeting's guest speaker will be David Sarkozi, a famous Texas birding personality who is currently working on a Big Year within our state. His topic will be "One of a Kind-Monotypic Species of Birds". We are still hoping to get Victor Emanuel for October, and if we do, the meeting will be held on Saturday (instead of Thursday), October 14, 2017. Please keep checking back to the following link for the latest details on all our monthly meetings:

<http://www.fwas.org/forumdisplay.php?2-Upcoming-Meetings>

We'll meet in our usual place, room, and time. You can follow this link for exact details on the location: <http://www.fwas.org/showthread.php?4-Monthly-Meetings>

Field Trips

Summer Birding Scavenger Hunt Jul. 15

The Annual FWAS Birding Scavenger Hunt will be held July 15th, 2017 from 6:00 a.m. to noon. Everyone needs to meet at 5:45 a.m. in the parking lot in front of Al's Hamburgers, located at 1001 NE Green Oaks Blvd, Ste. 103, Arlington, TX 76006 (NE corner intersection of Collins and Green Oaks Blvd.). This will be a "bragging rights" competition, so bring your team, or bring yourself and you'll be assigned to a team. Please call or text FWAS Scavenger Hunt leader Paula Channell ahead of time at (817) 405-8132 to let her know who all is coming, and to ask questions if needed. There are no participation limits, and non-members as well as FWAS members are welcome. Team groups will depart from the parking lot at 6:00 a.m. and spread out to find birds on the list anywhere around Tarrant County until 12 noon, at which time everyone must stop counting wherever you happen to be and rush back to Al's, where we'll join together to tally the lists and have lunch.

Basic rules for our scavenger hunt include the hunt area being restricted to Tarrant County, 2 team members must hear or see the bird for it to count (birds do not necessarily need to be identified by sight as we also count birds identified by vocalization), and teams decide their own birding locations. In addition to the value of points assigned a particular bird species, 5 points will be deducted for every species marked at "must find" that a team fails to find, and an additional 2 points will be awarded to a team for each species that only your team found. Our bird species list and corresponding scoring classifications are based upon *A Bar Graph Checklist of the Birds of Tarrant County Texas, 2nd Edition*.

Scoring sheets will be provided when we meet in the parking area, but you can use the following link to our Website to get a sneak preview of the full list of species and their corresponding point values: <http://www.fwas.org/showthread.php?2933-2017-Scavenger-Hunt>

Big Bend Birds & Wildflowers Aug. 25 – 29

The Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge are sponsoring a one-of-a-kind bus trip to Big Bend National Park in far southwest Texas at the end of August, 2017. The "Friends" Website starts with a description of their trip as follows:

“A naturalist led trip to Big Bend National Park in late August. Why Big Bend then? It is toward the end of the rainy season and it is very pleasant in the mountains as well as the most reliable time to see wildflowers. The summer residents are there and maybe some early fall migrants might be coming through. Granted it will get hot in the low desert. The average August temperature is 92 taken at the headquarters which is about mid-elevation. The lower elevations are 5-10 degrees warmer and the mountains are 5-10 degrees cooler. We will be headed back to the mountains by noon each day to have lunch and a siesta. The bus will always be close to us if you need to take a break from the heat. Big Bend NP covers over 800,000 acres and is part of the Chihuahuan Desert Biosphere Reserve. Habitats range from river and floodplain through low, mid and high deserts, grasslands and mountain forest. There are over 1200 plant species, 11 species of amphibians, 56 species of reptiles, 40 species of fish, 75 species of mammals, over 400 species of birds, and about 3,600 species of insects making the park one of the most biologically diverse ‘deserts’ in the world.”

Please go to the following link on the "Friends" Website for their Itinerary and pricing:

<http://naturecenterfriends.org/index.php/big-bend-trip/>

Time is running out, so get your reservations in soon!

Richland Creek WMA Sept. 2

FWAS Board member Jim Jones will again be leading some great field trips to areas in North Central Texas outside of Fort Worth this season. The first of these will be to the Richland Creek Wildlife Management Area which is southeast of Corsicana. Weather has had a bad habit of causing this area to close – it’s managed by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. (TPWD). These closures have caused us to abandon plans to go there the past few years, but we think we’ll be able to make it this time. In order to be eligible to enter a Wildlife Management Area like Richland Creek, TPWD does require you to get a Limited Use Permit (permit #175) that you can purchase for about \$12.00 (it’s good for a year) from your local sporting goods or Walmart store, or from a TPWD office. Jim will be posting on our Website the final details about this trip around the first of August, so you’ll need to check back to our Field Trip listing through the following link: <http://www.fwas.org/forumdisplay.php?10-UPCOMING-FIELD-TRIPS>

Trinity River Birding Walk & Count

FWAS Board member Tom Haase will be leading several walks along the Trinity River over the upcoming season, the first of which will be held on Sunday, August 27, 2017. These will most likely start at his usual spot at the Trinity River access in Fort Worth at the intersection of Hulen and Bellaire, but keep checking back to our Field Trip listing on our Website as follows:
<http://www.fwas.org/forumdisplay.php?10-UPCOMING-FIELD-TRIPS>

Conservation/Grants/Bird Counts

Proposed Injection well near Lake Arlington

Along with the city of Fort Worth, the city of Arlington, many civic agencies and environmental groups, FWAS sent a letter of protest to the Texas Railroad Commission during the comment period for the proposed injection well some months back. We felt there were two obvious reasons to get involved. One, no less than the Army Core of Engineers had previously recommended injection wells to be well more than the 9600 feet from an earthen dam that BlueStone Natural Resources was proposing. Two, Lake Arlington is the city of Arlington's sole water supply. Fortunately, BlueStone got the message and sent a letter to all parties the middle of June stating that they were dropping their bid to get approval for the well.

North Texas Giving Day Sept. 14

Karen Rice, Grants Chair for FWAS, has once again gotten us signed up to be potential beneficiaries of the North Texas Giving Day program which will be held on Thursday, September 14, 2017 (same day as our first meeting of the season). FWAS asks that you wait to make any donations to us on that day so that we have a chance at bonus funds through this program. All donations collected for FWAS during the North Texas Giving Day will be used to fund our civic and community projects. Every gift of \$25 or more will go further with additional bonus funds and prizes. All you need to do to participate is go to the following Website on September 14th between 6 A.M. to midnight and make a credit card donation:
<https://northtexasgivingday.org/npo/fort-worth-audubon-society-inc>

Save the dates for FWAS Christmas and Spring Bird Counts

Chuck Baskin, Bird Count Chair for FWAS, has set Saturday, December 16 for the 2017 Christmas Bird Count, and Saturday, April 28, 2018 for the Spring Bird Count. Please plan on spending a good part of both days with us and enjoy all the fun and camaraderie that goes along with these annual bird count events.

Miscellaneous

Migrations getting out-of-synch?

The Cornell Lab of Ornithology reports that migratory species in North America are falling out-of-synch with spring. A new paper in Scientific Reports uses eBird data to show that there is an increasing mismatch between when plants leaf out in the spring and when birds return. Check out their report on this subject in the following link to the Cornell eBird Website:

http://ebird.org/content/ebird/news/mayorspringmig/?utm_source=Cornell+Lab+eNews&utm_campaign=1d4a1e7351-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_06_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_47588b5758-1d4a1e7351-304137989

Reliant Energy Program gives back to Audubon

Through the Reliant EcoShare program, Reliant Energy customers have a simple way to support the environment and lower their carbon footprint, and well as support FWAS. This program involves the customers of Reliant purchasing carbon offsets and contributing to EarthShare of Texas. The entire portion of Reliant customer's money going to EarthShare is distributed to the members of EarthShare as Reliant covers both their and EarthShare's administrative cost. What does this mean for FWAS, you might ask? Money from Reliant's EcoShare program goes to EarthShare of Texas, which then distributes money to the Audubon Foundation of Texas, which then distributes funds to FWAS as well as other Audubon chapters in Texas. So, if you are a Reliant Energy customer, please consider signing up for their EcoShare program. We've been told this could bring as much as \$1,000 a year to our chapter! To find out all the details, please go to the Reliant Energy Website through the following link:

<http://www.reliant.com/en/residential/save-energy/green-living/carbon-offsets.jsp>

Membership

We know it can be confusing, and one day we might change this, but our annual membership dues run from January through December of the year while our seasons run from September through May. If you wish to join or renew, the amount is \$25.00 for a single membership and \$35.00 for a family membership. To use a credit card, you'll need to do that online as we do not have a way to process credit transactions otherwise. Simply go to www.fwas.org and look for the "Join FWAS/Membership Options" section on the left side of our Homepage and click on the Pay Now button to get started. If you wish to send us a check the old-fashioned way, go to the same section of our Homepage, but look below the Pay Now button where there is a link to our printable mail-in form.