

Texas Coast & Big Thicket | Trip Report

April 22 – 30, 2019 | Written by Bob Behrstock



With Guides Bob Behrstock and Robert Gallardo, with 10 participants: Pete, Betty, Jeanne, DJ, Henry, Leo, Joanne, Sid, Loretta, and Jane





Monday, Apr. 22 | George Bush Intercontinental Airport to The Woodlands/George Mitchell Nature Preserve

After a little terminal jockeying, Robert and I met eight of the tour participants who were gathered curbside at Houston's George Bush Intercontinental Airport. A half-hour drive northward took the first group of participants to our hotel. Just a few minutes later, Robert pulled up in the second van with the final arrivals, Henry and DJ.

With a bit of time for some afternoon birding, we headed west a bit, driving through a residential section of The Woodlands to George Mitchell Nature Preserve, a patch of forest in a lush 28,000-acre master planned community situated on the north side of Houston. It was a warm afternoon and bird activity was subdued but by walking a short trail through the oaks and sweetgums, we encountered some widespread forest birds such as Red-bellied Woodpecker, Red-eyed and White-eyed vireos, Blue Jay, and Northern Cardinal, and heard the first of many Summer Tanagers and Carolina Wrens.

Dragonflies and damselflies including Eastern Pondhawk, Blue Dasher, and Blue-fronted Dancer were numerous along the trail and a few butterflies such as Broad-winged Skipper and Little Wood Satyr were present. Returning to the hotel, we had a quick break then enjoyed a Mexican dinner at nearby Mama Juanita's.

Tuesday, Apr. 23 | W. G. Jones State Forest/Big Creek Scenic Area, Sam Houston National Forest/ B. A. Steinhagen Lake/Jasper

Our hotel was favorably situated for getting quickly into the field; so after a 6:30 breakfast and a quick pack-up, we made the short drive to W. G. Jones State Forest. This managed conifer woodland has several clusters of Red-cocked Woodpecker nests and is a convenient site to search for this federally endangered species. The forest did not disappoint, and we had prolonged views of this rare woodpecker at its nest hole, as well as Downy, Red-bellied, and Red-headed woodpeckers, Eastern Bluebirds, Summer Tanagers, flocks of Cedar Waxwings and Pine Siskins, Tufted Titmice, and several glowing Indigo Buntings.

Driving east then north again, we entered the Sam Houston National Forest. Heading down a quiet dirt road to the parking area for the Big Creek Scenic Area, we stopped for a Swainson's Warbler that was singing just outside my van's windows. With a little patience, folks were able to get views of this drab but still rather special



denizen of moist southeastern forests. The Scenic Area didn't yield the hoped-for Louisiana Waterthrushes—here at the south end of their nesting range—but we saw several strikingly beautiful Ebony Jewelwing damselflies.

Continuing, we learned that my trusty lunch stop had closed, so we relied on internet suggestions for a nearby lunch recommendation, eating at the Blue Duck in Livingston – which was slow, but good. From there, we continued east through Woodville to the Dogwood Trail. It was little more than an opportunity to get off the road for a few minutes, but produced a mixed flock with Ruby-crowned Kinglet, American Redstart, and Tennessee Warblers, a Pine Warbler, and our first Pileated Woodpecker.



Further east, we stopped at a boat ramp on the western shore of B. A. Steinhagen Lake, a huge recreation and hydro power reservoir located just south of the confluence of the Neches and Angelina rivers. Among Bald Cypress, and Spanish moss-draped Live Oaks, we saw Yellow-throated and Northern Parula warblers, here on their nesting grounds, as well as three stunning Swallow-tailed Kites wheeling overhead, as well as Monarch and Pipevine Swallowtail butterflies, and the first of many American Alligators.

A short drive got us to Jasper, where we had a tasty dinner at Smitty's Smoke House.

Wednesday, Apr. 24 | Angelina National Forest/Boykin Springs Recreation Area/Bouton Lake Rd./Hamilton Cemetery

After 6:30 breakfast, we departed for the longleaf pines south of Lake Sam Rayburn in search of Bachman's Sparrow, one of the iconic birds of the East Texas Piney Woods. Bachman Sparrow's song is an ethereal two part buzz and trill of minor notes and can usually be heard throughout the area we visited.

Longleaf pine is a statuesque, fire adapted species that grows on dry, often acidic soils. As its name suggests, it has the longest needles of the eastern pines. Forests of this species once covered much of the southeastern U.S.



from Eastern Virginia to East Texas. Now, after 200 years of timber cutting, only several percent of the original range, much of it managed, is occupied by these superb trees. The understory of the pine forest is inhabited by a host of special plants and insects and these too have been severely impacted by the tree's shrinking range.

The first road we checked, which had been productive in the past, provided plenty of bird song, but did not yield sparrows. The second road we tried almost resulted in my getting a van stuck in mushy sand, but that crisis was averted. The third spot we checked produced a singing sparrow and we all had very good looks at this avian specialty which is, like the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, endemic to the Southeastern United States. As we drove away from the sparrow, several more could be heard singing, suggesting a different starting point for our next visit.



From there, we drove to Boykin Springs Recreation Area. En route, we had nice looks at a Hooded Warbler singing next to the road. After the requisite visit to the washrooms, we hiked up a low, grassy berm for a view over the small lake. There, we watched a kettle of at least 40 Mississippi Kites as they circled northward to their nesting grounds. From Boykin Springs, we drove to Zavalla where we were to have lunch in a simple cafe; but we decided instead to try a different restaurant in the next town of Huntington. This proved to be a good choice, both for the food and loads of East Texas ambiance. The restaurant was a cavernous place with families and work crews filling the tables and cases of freshly cut steaks, sausages, ribs, and chops, and jars of locally-made honey, pickles, and jams filling one wall. As we ate, the friendly owner, a woman in her later years, visited our table, chatted with us, and asked everyone to write down what state they were from.



We left the restaurant in a light rain that quickly dissipated. Retracing our route, we drove down Bouton Lake road, which I hoped might produce Kentucky Warbler, but that species was put on hold. We then

returned to Boykin Springs to listen for Brown-headed Nuthatch (unsuccessfully) and another visit to the washrooms (successful).

Heading back toward Jasper, we turned off at Hamilton Cemetery Road, which produced an afternoon-singing Prairie Warbler two years ago. It was raining a bit and few birds were vocalizing, so we drove to the cemetery so people could stretch their legs and read the historic plaque documenting the region's earliest settlers. As we drove away from the gravestones, the rain stopped, the sky brightened, and right on cue, a Prairie Warbler sang outside my van. We stopped and were very happy to see the singing warbler atop a short oak and another nearby sitting on a utility line. Slowly, we were picking away at the warblers we were unlikely to see in the woodlands (aka migrant traps) immediately adjacent to the coast.

Arriving at the hotel, we took a bit of a break then reconvened for dinner at Martin's Mexican Restaurant where, in a bit of a Twilight Zone moment, the trip's first Purple Martins flew over their parking lot.

Thursday, Apr. 25 | Sandy Creek Park/Pitcher Plant Trail and Big Thicket Headquarters/Tyrrell Park and Cattail Marsh/Winnie

We began with the usual 6:30 breakfast. As we packed our luggage in the van, a Pileated Woodpecker flew over the hotel's parking lot—an auspicious start to the day's birding. Our first stop was at Sandy Creek Park on the southeast side of B. A. Steinhagen Lake. There, I had encountered Prothonotary Warbler on two previous trips at a small, open swamp adjacent to the road. Seeing little more than a Carolina Wren singing from a power pole insulator and a few other common species, we moved on, retracing our steps to Woodville then heading south.

Our next stop was in the Big Thicket National Preserve, where a sandy road led us to the parking area for the Pitcher Plant Trail. The Big Thicket hosts four of the country's five genera of carnivorous plants, and here, we had a good chance of seeing two of them, as well as some nice birds. As we stepped out of the vans, we were greeted by a lovely male Kentucky Warbler singing in a sapling adjacent to the bathroom building. This required several well-caffinated participants to make a hard decision, but eventually, everyone had good looks at the bird. I thought we might have a chance to see more Kentuckys at High Island, but their migration is early and apparently they were already on the nesting grounds. Thus, we were fortunate to see this one individual.

After enjoying the warbler, we made the short walk to the pitcher plant site. Surrounded by Longleaf pines, we started to walk out the trail, first encountering a singing Yellow-throated Vireo. Continuing to a stretch of elevated boardwalk, we were surrounded by perhaps thousands of Pale Pitcher Plants (*Sarracenia alata*), some still in flower. These elegant, insect-eating plants have become very rare in Texas, requiring an exacting combination of soil moisture and chemistry, fire management, and protection from plant collectors. Here their upright trumpets were abundant, and among them we saw small numbers of sundews—another carnivore—and a colony of delicate Grass Pink Orchids. We had not seen Brown-headed Nuthatch yet, so it was a relief to have one sit in the open for several minutes adjacent to the boardwalk. The stroll also produced Yellow-breasted Chat, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Indigo Buntings, Summer Tanager, more Carolina Chickadees, and a Pileated Woodpecker. The combination of birds, flowers, and the pine woods surrounding us made for a stunning little hike.



Working our way south, we visited the Big Thicket National Preserve headquarters. This very nicely done interpretive center focuses on the flora, fauna, geology, and history of this biologically special part of the United States. As well, there was a gift shop and a great selection of books highlighting the region's natural history. Continuing to the town of Kountze, we picked up sandwiches for a picnic, as well as the trip's first Fish Crows. Next, we drove to Beaumont where, for better or for worse, oil was first discovered in Texas.

Our lunch and birding stop was Tyrrell Park, a golf course with picnic areas and Yellow-crowned Night-Herons hunting crayfish in the roadside ditches. After eating, we visited the city's Cattail Marsh, an extensive set of diked ponds that makes use of treated sewage effluent. A nicely constructed elevated boardwalk with benches and a viewing platform gave us intimate access to the birds living in open water and cattail beds. Here, we saw Least Bittern, Purple Gallinules, Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, Mottled Ducks, both White-faced and Glossy Ibis, Boat-tailed Grackle, Sora, and a host of other birds. A short drive took us to Winnie where we checked in, had a break, and then immersed ourselves in the world of Cajun food at Al-T's, a long-standing culinary tradition popular with visiting birders.

Friday, Apr. 26 | Whooping Cranes/High Island/Rollover Pass

After the usual 6:30 breakfast, we drove a few miles NW of Winnie. There, two Whooping Cranes, apparently from the new experimental population in Louisiana, had been present for some weeks. The birds were easily located, appearing like white beacons in the field and towering over any other wading birds in the area. By official birding standards, the cranes are not yet "countable" but were an interesting anomaly to add to the trip list; and, if they do become established in Louisiana or the upper Texas Coast, we will be able to say "I knew you when."

Heading south through Winnie, we stopped at a wet rice field that had been mentioned during breakfast by a fellow member of the International Brotherhood of Itinerant Naturalists. There are innumerable rice fields in Chambers County, but not every one of them is farmed each year. Rice fields with young green sprouts are prime real estate for migrating shorebirds, including a number of species that don't appear in marine habitats such as beaches or salt flats. Furthermore, areas that are thronging with shorebirds one day may be dry the next and seemingly devoid of life. Therefore, tips about productive fields are of great value and a highly sharable commodity. Stopping at the roadside, we saw innumerable Whimbrels, American Golden Plovers, White-rumped Sandpiper, dozens of Pectoral Sandpipers, and the object of our quest, two fine Hudsonian Godwits well into breeding plumage. These godwits are one of the latest migrants to appear on the Texas coast and are missed by many of the earlier tour groups (just as we missed some of the earliest migrants), so I was very happy to see them.

After getting our fill of mudpeckers, we drove a bit further to High Island, where Houston Audubon Society owns and manages several woodlots that serve as refueling stops for trans-Gulf migrating birds. Not an island at all, High Island sits atop a salt dome that rises just a few feet above the surrounding coastal marsh. This minor elevation permits trees such as Live Oaks and Pecans to grow and these, in turn, attract migrating birds, as well as thousands of birders.

Although the weather had been warm with a south wind (good for the birds but bad for birders), we managed some nice sightings including Scarlet Tanager, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, a late Swainson's Warbler and a roosting Chuck-will's-widow—the latter two both spotted by Robert, and a Golden-winged Warbler, an increasingly scarce migrant, and the first of several we would encounter. Departing High Island, we steered SW toward a lunch spot in Crystal Beach; but first we stopped at Rollover Pass, an artificial cut in the Bolivar Peninsula. Tidal action and currents have deposited sediments here, forming several flats that are attractive to a diversity of feeding and roosting waterbirds. We hit the tide nicely, and numerous species awaited us. Of particular interest were several Wilson's Plovers and Reddish Egret, both coastal specialties, as well as stunning Black-bellied Plovers, our only Marbled Godwits, Black Skimmers, both pelicans, Black Terns in midnight breeding plumage, Dunlin sporting black belly patches, American Oystercatcher, displaying Least Terns and "Eastern" Willets, bushy-crested Sandwich Terns, and many other species.



After enjoying this assortment of feeding birds, we moved on to feed ourselves. We ended up at one of the area's popular restaurants that overlooks the Intracoastal Canal. As we left, we found a Crested Caracara, an Osprey, and two Common Nighthawks roosting on structures along the road. Returning to High Island, we spent a short time at Smith Oaks Sanctuary looking for migrants, finding a lovely Blackburnian Warbler and several of the more common species.

A short walk took us to the rookery (heronry) at Clay Bottom Pond, part of the Smith Oaks Sanctuary. The rookery is one of the most popular birding attractions in all of Texas. Houston Audubon had constructed a boardwalk, decks, and elevated viewing platforms allowing birders (and many photographers) very close looks at nesting herons of several species, Neotropic Cormorants, and Roseate Spoonbills. Birds in the colony were feeding young, squabbling over nesting materials, displaying, or just serenely sitting on their nests incubating eggs or protecting their young. After looking at Roseate Spoonbills in a telescope, it's quite another experience to see them at close range, where their naked pea-green heads, orange tails, and pink and crimson wings can truly be appreciated. Visiting the rookery is always a highlight of the tour (some folks opted to go twice) and the faces of participants were either smiling, staring in wonderment, or hidden behind camera bodies. A bonus at the rookery was a singing Prothonotary Warbler working the edge of the boardwalk and the foliage at the edge of the pond.

Back at Winnie, the participants opted for no break before dinner, so we were soon off to Tony's Barbecue, which was both good and fast, two prerequisites for a successful dinner after a day of birding.

Saturday, Apr. 27 | Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge/ Sabine Woods and Port Arthur

After breakfast, we departed for Anahuac N.W.R., stopping briefly at a couple rice fields where at least some of us saw a Yellow-headed Blackbird sitting on a low earthen dike. Anahuac was good, as it generally is on any spring morning. We had nice looks at Orchard Orioles, Least Bittern, more Glossy Ibis and Fulvous Whistling-Ducks, Mottled Ducks with ducklings, Solitary, Stilt and other sandpipers, confiding King and Sora rails, a pair of Ring-necked Ducks, and a number of other waterbirds. And, of course, we saw many American Alligators as we circumnavigated Shoveler Pond, a favorite spot to see these once endangered but now common reptiles.

Departing Anahuac, we took Pear Orchard Road north to 1941, checking for shorebirds. One field was being burned and a Swainson's Hawk was working the margins of the flames for small creatures fleeing the conflagration. In an adjacent field, there was a flock of Buff-breasted Sandpipers that moved enough times that eventually most or all participants got a reasonable look at these high arctic breeders, even seeing their white underwings as they flew by.

Back in Winnie, we paused for sandwiches and cold drinks, and then drove east to the Texas Ornithological Society's Sabine Woods Sanctuary near the Louisiana border. Separated from the Gulf of Mexico by a narrow band of salt marsh, Sabine Wood offers weary migrants their first roosting trees after a tiring Gulf crossing. The addition of several small ponds, innumerable oaks, mulberries, and other trees planted by volunteers, benches, boardwalks, and bathrooms makes the woods an important resource for migrating songbirds and birders from all over the United States. At the woods, we picked up some trip birds including Acadian Flycatcher (previously heard), Black-billed Cuckoo, Ovenbird, Magnolia Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Cerulean Warbler, and a male Black-throated Blue Warbler, an uncommon species that generally makes its trans-Gulf landfall east of the Texas



Coast. Another Golden-winged Warbler provided additional views for people who didn't see it well at High Island. At one pond and drip, we had excellent looks at a Gray-cheeked Thrush.

Deciding to eat locally, we went to the large and obviously popular Rodair Roadhouse in Port Arthur, where we had snappy service, a great waiter, and, arguably, one of the best dinners of the tour.

Sunday, Apr. 28

Leaving Winnie, we proceeded directly to Yacht Basin Road near Rollover Pass. As we turned off the main road, I heard a Sedge Wren chittering nearby. The wren proved difficult to see but some of the participants got a pretty good view. As we drove along the narrow road through the salt marsh, we saw Clapper Rails, displaying "Eastern" Willets, and various large wading birds.

Continuing to the Bolivar Peninsula, we visited the Houston Audubon Society's Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary, a sandy beach that developed when the North Jetty of Galveston Bay blocked the transport of sediments suspended in longshore currents. Fine grains of sand carried by these longshore currents are responsible for the formation of several well-known birding and recreational venues including Galveston, Matagorda, and South Padre islands. A walk down the beach rewarded us with close-up comparisons of Piping, Semipalmated, Snowy, and Wilson's plovers. There were hundreds of breeding Least Terns, Sanderlings—some of which were changing into their breeding colors—Royal, Caspian, and other terns, skimmers, gulls, White Ibis, and many other saltwater birds.

As we left the beach, I spotted a couple of roosting Gull-billed Terns on a sand flat, and they were patient enough to let us set up scopes for a closer look. Continuing toward the tip of the peninsula, we spied the trip's only White-tailed Kite, then entered Fort Travis Seashore Park for a washroom stop. In 1836, the Republic of Texas established Fort Travis to protect the mouth of Galveston Bay. The fort went through several military iterations before being decommissioned. The gun emplacements are surrounded by broad grassy lawns that are attractive to migrating shorebirds and picnickers. That day, there were Ruddy Turnstones and a couple American Golden Plover.

Backtracking to Crystal Beach, we had lunch on the elevated porch at Hardheads Icehouse and Grill, where various signs on the walls provided amusement until we were finally served. Heading East again, we stopped at Bob Road, another side road that penetrates the saltmarsh. There were more Clapper Rails and we had our first looks at Seaside Sparrow. On our way back to High Island, we saw another Crested Caracara along the road. At High Island, Sid and Jeanne opted to revisit the rookery while the rest of us ambled through the woods or stationed ourselves at drips. The birding was still being affected by south winds and sunny skies, but we saw a number of birds including a couple female Painted Buntings, Magnolia, Black-and-white, and Bay-breasted warblers, Gray-cheeked Thrush, and finally a Wood Thrush. The mulberry trees attracted numbers of birds we'd seen previously such as Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Scarlet and Summer tanagers, Baltimore Orioles, and many Gray Catbirds.

Back in Winnie, the group voted for a return to Al-T's. The food was good but I'm guessing that by the end of dinner, our new waitress had made other career plans.

Monday, Apr. 29 | Bolivar Peninsula / Ferry to Galveston

Once the van was packed (we were getting good at it), we departed for the Bolivar Peninsula. This was our last morning on the coast and the pressure was on for Nelson's Sparrow and better looks at Seaside Sparrow. Along the Texas coast, both of these sparrows are restricted to tidally inundated saltmarsh. Fortuitously, the Bolivar Peninsula provides several quiet side roads that penetrate this habitat.

Our first stop was at Tuna Road where, even before the vans came to a halt, Seaside Sparrows could be seen flying low over the Smooth Cordgrass. We pulled to the road's mucky edge and were surrounded by sparrows, the wheezy songs of Seasides coming from all directions. Among them were a number of colorful Nelson's Sparrows (here on their wintering grounds), and before long, we had very good looks at both species. Proceeding to the Galveston ferry we sat in line for a short time, but were soon crossing from the western tip of the Bolivar Peninsula to the east end of Galveston Island.

During the brief crossing, we saw oceangoing container ships, barges, tug boats, fishing vessels, the skyline of the city of Galveston, and a female Magnificent Frigatebird that took a few turns over our ferry boat. As soon as we pulled into Galveston traffic, we noted that the island is home to innumerable White-winged Doves, absent during our earlier travels. The east end of the island used to have a small park, mudflats, sandbars and tidal pools, all of which were utilized by feeding and roosting birds. Sadly, these features were erased by recent hurricanes. Nonetheless, the shoreline here should be checked by birders. Stopping on a bridge over a tidal



channel, we saw a roosting flock of migrant “Western” Willets, the first of the trip, and I was able to discuss their field marks. When Willet is eventually split, these distinctive western breeders will finally, and much deservedly, become a species unto themselves.

Proceeding through Galveston, we spent a few minutes driving by some of the city’s historic buildings—huge ornate structures that had survived the devastating hurricane at the beginning of the last century. We then headed toward the west end of the island. At Lafitte’s Cove, we birded a pond and small oak woodland that are surrounded by a housing development. The pond provided close looks at Solitary Sandpipers, Lesser Yellowlegs, and several species of ducks. The trails through the woodland were quiet, but hosted a few birds including Indigo Buntings, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, Rose-breasted Grosbeaks, and three common birds we’d not yet seen well, Brown Thrasher, Bronzed Cowbird and Common Grackle, thus completing the grackle trifecta.

Leaving the development, we drove a few minutes to Jamaica Beach for lunch at Nate’s, a spot that’s popular with the locals. Backtracking a bit, we drove along Settegast and 8 Mile roads looking for migrant shorebirds. These fields hosted the last Eskimo Curlews to pass through the upper Texas coast and visiting them always elicits feelings of melancholy. Probably, the highlight there was long, close looks at Scissor-tailed Flycatchers. We’d already seen many; but these were the first that sat low and “behaved” for the photographers. The shallow roadside pools produced a few shorebirds including Least, Pectoral, and White-rumped sandpipers. As we still had a bit of a drive, we departed Galveston, crossing a long bridge to the mainland.

From there we continued more or less northwest to the town of Alvin and our hotel for the evening. Dinner was at the Gordon Street Tavern, a sports bar with decent food.



Tuesday, Apr. 30 | Alvin/Brazos Bend State Park/George Bush Intercontinental Airport

After eating breakfast and packing the vans, we drove about 40 minutes westward to Brazos Bend S.P. The park is a mosaic of oak woodland, bottomland forest, and man-made lakes, and, being close to the Houston metroplex, attracts many naturalists, photographers, hikers, and bicyclists. Indeed, it was one of my favorite places to visit when I lived in Houston.

Arriving early on a Tuesday morning, we had no crowds to contend with—a bit of a bonus. Our plan was to walk the trail around the perimeter of 40-Acre Lake, but there was so much to look at, we got part way around and then back-tracked. It was a lovely morning and we started our walk surrounded by huge Live Oaks dripping with Spanish moss, while hearing titmice, Pileated Woodpecker, and a Northern Parula. Reaching the lake edge, we found a singing Prothonotary Warbler and a Baltimore Oriole atop drowned trees in the swamp adjacent to the lake.

The west side of 40-Acre Lake was good to us; there we saw our first Anhingas, a Sora and two Virginia rails that walked in the open for 10 minutes, a distant American Bittern spotted by Robert, displaying Boat-tailed Grackles, close looks at Little Blue Herons, Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, and Purple Gallinules, and a large Common (Red-eared) Slider laying eggs in the bank adjacent to the trail. Of course, there were additional birds, American Alligators, dragonflies, butterflies, and other things to occupy the photographers. Although our time was limited, visiting this attractive location and picking up some new birds was a nice way to end the tour.

At 11:00, we boarded the vans for the drive north to the airport. Our route took us through miles of Houston sprawl construction, which really didn't slow us down thanks to navigators on our phones. I think it's safe to say that nobody on the tour wanted to move to Houston after that freeway experience. We made it to the terminals in plenty of time for bittersweet good-byes. It was a very nice group of participants with whom I would have been pleased to continue birding. Robert and I dropped off our rental vans, and had a final lunch together. I'd really enjoyed co-leading with Robert Gallardo, whom I had not met previously. His knowledge, enthusiasm, and patience were a great asset to the tour.

Photo Credits:

American Alligator, Robert Gallardo (RG); Chuck-wills Widow, RG; Common Nighthawk, RG; Bachmans Sparrow, RG; Hooded Warbler, RG; Nesting Least Tern, RG; Roseate Spoonbills, RG; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, RG; Seeing Bachmans Sparrow in the pine woods, RG; Northern Parula, Terry Peterson, (TP); Prairie Warbler, Carlos Sanchez (CS); female Purple Martin, Naturalist Stock; Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Mike Boyce, (MB); Least Bittern, Tom Dove, (TD); Purple Gallinule, TD; Crested Caracara, Paul Roberts, PR; Osprey, Sandy Sorkin (SS); Swainson's Hawk, CS; Piping Plover, CS; Sanderling, Greg Smith (GS); Nelson's Sparrow, Naturalist Stock; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, TD; Pileated Woodpecker, SS; Prothonotary Warbler, Doug Pratt (DP).