



# Rustlin's

*Newsletter of Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society*

Feb 2014

## *Building a Bird Friendly North Texas Community*

One of the missions of Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society is to help establish a bird friendly community in North Texas. Our activities such as bird walks, field trips, and programs are free and open to anybody; because we want to promote enjoyment, education and preservation of birds and wildlife habitats. Our promotion of other bird friendly organizations through grants is less well-known. Our members are familiar with many of these organizations as we have birded on their properties and/or their staff has given talks at our meetings.

We are able to award these grants because of the generous financial support of many of our members. The board recently created the category of "Supporting Member" to honor these members. For details see a later article in this newsletter.

At the January meeting, the board awarded the grants for the current year. This year's grants are:

First, \$530 dollars was granted to purchase 5 new mist nets and associated supplies for the Heard Bird Banders. The station was established in 1978 and is the oldest bird banding station in the state of Texas. Our March field trip will be with the banders, so come and see this important work which monitors the flow of migrant songbirds during spring and fall migration each year.

Ken Stiegman, of the Lake Lewisville Environmental Lake Area (LLELA), requested \$1,000.00 to offset the cost of replacement bird banding equipment for the bird banding station at LLELA. They need 10 new nets, sets of poles and anchors for the station to continue to operate. With a UNT student, they are starting a winter site fidelity project for grassland birds to assess whether individuals return to the same area year



after year. They will be looking for Le Conte's, and grasshopper sparrows, sedge wrens as well as many other winter residents at LLELA. PTAS granted the request.

A grant of \$500 was given to the Blackland Prairie Raptor Center (BPRC) to continue the sponsorship of Miki, a Mississippi Kite, and Hunter, a Great Horned Owl. The purpose of these educational birds is to inspire local audiences to think about and actively participate in helping preserve raptors and their environment for generations to come. An addition \$500 was granted to purchase a wireless microphone/speaker system for educational programs with these birds. As the popularity of the programs has increased, the audience has grown to a size where a speaker system is now needed to reach the audience.

Last year PTAS provide a grant to BPRC for the supplies for an airlock for the accipiter cage. The airlock was built with the associated cage. This year BPRC is starting on a second set of cages for medium-sized raptors. The board approved \$500 to provide an airlock for this cage.

This year the PTAS board allocated \$1400 to support the travel and equipment expenses of three field research studies by students of Associate Professor Doug Wood. Phillip Leonard is continuing his "Study of Grassland Birds in Managed Prairie and Agricultural Fields" which PTAS sponsored last year. This study is evaluating whether grassland birds actively use agricultural fields as a substitute for native prairies. Phillip will present his initial work at the March program. The second student, Sarah DeGarmo, is starting a study titled "Eurasian Collared-Dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*) Nesting Phenology and Reproductive Success in Southern Oklahoma". The third student is Gary Akin and his study is titled "Lark Sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*) Nest Success and Brown-headed Cowbird (*Molothrus ater*) Brood Parasitism in Southern Oklahoma".

An amount of \$1000 was reserved for expected cost of signage at the Heard Museum. The signs will improve and maintain their native plant and butterfly garden. PTAS is working with the Collin County Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas to provide expertise and labor for the project. This was the same amount reserved last year but activity was delayed but is expected to resume after the April Native Plant sale.

An additional \$1000 was reserved for a possible grant for a grassland bird study under Dr. Meyer at the Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge.

## *Program Schedule*

Programs scheduled for the rest of this Spring are:

**Tuesday, February 25 - 7:00 pm**

**Bird ID class:** Doves, Quail, Dickcissels, ground nesters

**Main Program:** Urban Wildlife Program, Brett Johnson, Urban Biologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife

**Tuesday, March 25 - 7:00 pm**

**Bird ID class:** Warblers

**Main Program:** "LLELA Quail Restoration Project" Dr. Ken Seigman, Director, LLELA

**Tuesday, April 22 - 7:00 pm**

**Bird ID class:** Woodland Birds – Vireos, Wrens, Nuthatches, Creepers, Chickadees, and Kinglets

**Main Program:** "Birding in China" Dr. Doug Wood Associate Professor of Biology at Southeastern State University

**Tuesday, May 27 - 7:00 pm**

**Bird ID class:** None

**Main Program:** Pot luck dinner and night activity at the Heard.

## *February Program: "Urban Wildlife"*

Brett Johnson will be presenting our February program on urban wildlife. He is an urban wildlife biologist for TPWD. Over the last several years there have been several instances in the DFW area where egret rookeries have become an issue. Part of the problem is by the time folks realize an issue has popped up, the birds are legally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. He will be discussing why this is an issue, the particular bird species themselves, some nuances of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and what actions can legally be done to avoid conflicts with these birds. Brett grew up in the DFW area, and got his interest in conservation from years in the boy scouts and growing up hunting. He went on to get a BS in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M, and an MS from Texas Tech. He has worked on research related to white-tailed deer, red imported fire ants, turkeys, bobcats, mountain lions and his personal favorite, black bears.

## *March Program: "Quail Restoration"*

Lake Lewisville Environmental Learning Area has been one of PTAS's favorite areas to bird. Dr. Ken Stiegman has lead many field trips there and talked about the desire to re-introduce quail to the area. For the past two years PTAS has partially funded a quail research and restoration effort there including modules to provide habitat and water. Dr. Ken Steigman, Director of LLELA, will discuss the Lake Lewisville Environmental Learning Area and the Quail Restoration Project. Dr. Steigman has been a dynamic conservationist and ornithologist in the Dallas area for many years. He has been instrumental in saving native plants from many areas that were slated for development.

LLELA is a 2,000 acre preserve formed in the early 1990s which is south of Lewisville Lake. It is managed by a consortium consisting of the US Army Corp of Engineers, Lewisville ISD, and several universities (North Texas, Texas A&M, and the University of North Texas at Arlington).

## *April Program: “Birding in China”*

For our April meeting one of our most popular speakers is returning, Dr. Doug Wood of Southeast Oklahoma State University. He has already presented excellent talks on the birds of the Panama Canal Zone, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Ethiopia and now he has been to China. Dr. Wood traveled to China with four other birders/eco-tourists where they visited traditional tourist locations, such as the Great Wall. They did extensive birding in Sichuan Province and Tibet, and located a few mammals as well. Dr. Wood fills his presentations with many interesting observations and facts that make an entertaining and informative evening.

Dr. Wood's students have engaged in many research projects involving local bird research and conservation which PTAS has helped to fund. We are scheduling one of them, Phillip Leonard, to give a short presentation at the March meeting. His topic will be his research work on the abundance, diversity and nest success of birds within managed prairie and agricultural fields at the Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge.

## *May Program: “Evening at the Heard”*

Get ready for a Pot Luck Dinner at the Heard with a slide show of birds and some animals spotted on the birding trips taken by PTAS members.

PTAS will provide plates, napkins, cutlery, soft drinks and water. Bring a dish to share and share your birding adventures with your fellow members.

Activities and additional details are being planned so stay tuned.

## *Field Trip Schedule*

Here is the current schedule. This schedule is subject to additions and changes at any time. Last minute changes can be made because of weather conditions or the latest bird reports from the field. Visit our website [prairieandtimbers.org](http://prairieandtimbers.org) for the latest updates. If you are not on the email distribution list, send an email to Tom at [heathwtom@netscape.net](mailto:heathwtom@netscape.net) to get on the list announcing field trips and updates.

Sign-in for “2nd Saturday at the Heard” walks will be at the Heard store 7:30 am till 8:00 am, rain or shine!

For all other field trips RSVP to Linda Ergonis at [lindaergonis@yahoo.com](mailto:lindaergonis@yahoo.com) or Tom Heath at [heathwtom@netscape.net](mailto:heathwtom@netscape.net)

If there is a carpool, the meeting place is the Walmart at the SW corner of 75 and Springcreek in Plano. We meet in the NE corner of the parking lot.

The trip schedule is:

**Sat, Feb 8** — 2nd Saturday at the Heard  
**Leader:** Gailon Brehm, Rodney Thomas  
**Time:** 7:30 am preliminary, 8:00 am main, 2 hours  
**Meeting Place:** Heard Museum Reception area  
**Target:** Monthly survey of the birds of the Heard

**Sat, Feb 15** — White Rock Lake  
**Leader:** Chris Runk  
**Time:** 7-10 am  
**Meeting Place:** Parking lot where Winsted runs into Garland Rd (next to the spilway)  
**Carpool:** none  
**Target:** Ducks, grebes, gulls

**Sat, Mar 8** — 2nd Saturday at the Heard  
**Leader:** Gailon Brehm, Rodney Thomas  
**Time:** 7:30 am preliminary, 8:00 am main, 2 hours  
**Meeting Place:** Heard Museum Reception area  
**Target:** Monthly survey of the birds of the Heard

**Sat, Mar 8** — Heard Museum Prairie Survey  
**Leader:** Linda Ergonis  
**Time:** 7:30 am  
**Meeting Place:** Heard Museum parking lot  
**Target:** Sparrows

**Sat, April 12** — 2nd Saturday at the Heard  
**Leader:** Gailon Brehm, Rodney Thomas  
**Time:** 7:30 am preliminary, 8:00 am main, 2 hours  
**Meeting Place:** Heard Museum Reception area  
**Target:** Monthly survey of the birds of the Heard

**Wed-Sun, April 9-13** — Lower Rio Grande Valley Trip (Full)  
**Leader:** Linda Ergonis  
**Time:** Multi-day traveling trip  
**Target:** Texas specialties Neo-tropic migrants and western species

**Sat, May 10** — 2nd Saturday at the Heard  
**Leader:** Gailon Brehm, Rodney Thomas  
**Time:** 7:30 am preliminary, 8:00 am main, 2 hours  
**Meeting Place:** Heard Museum Reception area  
**Target:** Monthly survey of the birds of the Heard

**Sat, May 17** — Springcreek Park and 111 Ranch  
**Leader:** Gailon Brehm  
**Time:** TBD  
**Meeting Place:** TBD  
**Target:** Neo-tropic migrants

## *Update on Connemara Conservancy Switch Grass Maze*

PTAS is working with the Connemara Conservancy Foundation (CCF) to create a maze using Switch Grass, a Blackland Prairie native in the lower Meadow Preserve of the foundation. The maze is partially funded by a grant obtained by PTAS from the Audubon Foundation of Texas (AFT). This maze will be part of the outdoor classroom at the Meadow Preserve and will support, enhance and expand the education activities currently held there. The primary audience will be school children of the Allen and Plano school districts and scouting organizations. In addition local suburban residents visiting the preserve will be exposed to the benefits of native plantings. The planted 5 acres will provide a more productive area for native and migratory birds.

Connemara Conservancy was able to get significant additional funding from other sources including the US Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This was in part due to the interest shown in the project by Prairie and Timbers Audubon and funding from the Audubon Foundation of Texas. The additional funding allowed expanding the scope of the project from 5 acres to 10 acres. The expanded area will have a more diverse group of grasses with big bluestem, little bluestem, and yellow Indian grass added to the switch grass.

The effort to remove the existing vegetation, which was mainly Johnson grass, took much longer than originally planned because of the increased area and the Johnson grass living up to its reputation of one very tough grass. The original plan called for three sprayings of herbicide but we ended up spraying 5 times trying to reach the goal of less than 2% invasive plants.

Planting was re-scheduled due to the additional sprayings of the Johnson grass and completed in early December 2013. We rented a no till drill from the USDA in Bonham, and used it to plant the entire 10 acres. We also used the drill to plant some extra seed in other parts of the Meadow as the drill planted at a less dense rate than calculated.

In 2014 we will be monitoring the growth of the grass. We are hoping Mother Nature will do her part by providing gentle winter and spring rains without flooding or washing out the area. If so, the grass should be up by late March/early April of 2014. If it is six inches tall or more by June, it should have a good chance of surviving the summer, but again Mother Nature must play her part by not being too brutally hot and dry. If the grass survives we hope to cut the maze in the Fall.

The native grass maze will be a significant addition to the outdoor educational classroom at Connemara Meadow which will allow students and the public to experience the native Blackland Prairie plants in an intimate and entertaining way. Being native, the maze should not only be attractive to children and adults but also host a selection of native insects, birds, reptiles and mammals to expose them too. Audubon species of concern that are expected as annual habitants are Harris's Sparrows, Painted Buntings, and Dickcissels. The maze will be one of the few native grass mazes in the country. CCF will be targeting children from the ages of 3 to 12 as well as suburban residents in the area to teach them about the Blackland Prairie ecology. The maze may also support fundraising activities to provide additional funds for the restoration of the rest of the prairie areas. The planted native grass will provide a more productive area for native and migratory birds and other native animal species in the middle of a highly developed suburban area similar to goals espoused by Douglas Tallamy in his book "Bring Nature Home"



**Seed Drill at Work**



**The Seeded Field Completed**



Blue-winged Teal

## *Join the Flock — Become a Supporting Member of PTAS*

As you know, Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society (PTAS) is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society. For those living in the PTAS service area, membership in the National Audubon Society automatically provides you a voting membership in PTAS. As expected, your membership in National Audubon provides you access to important services and national conservation activities, and it also provides PTAS some financial support on an annual basis to fund our organization's local activities. It may surprise you, however, that typically four fifths or more of the funds for conservation and education grants that PTAS provides to local organizations comes from the direct contributions of local members.

As of Jan 1st, the PTAS board has established the Supporting Member category to recognize those who directly support PTAS with annual donations independent of any dues/donations to the National organization, and retired the Local Member category. A minimum contribution of \$15 qualifies you and your immediate family (one household at a single address) to become Supporting Members of PTAS. Since the Local Member category is being eliminated, anyone who has joined or renewed as a Local Member since September 1, 2013 will automatically be designated as a Supporting Member for 2014. It is not too late to become a Supporting Member for 2014 — Donations through

August 31, 2014 will qualify you this year, while donations after September 1, 2014 will qualify you for the following calendar year. Higher levels of contribution are common among our donors, so the board is considering honorary titles for those levels of contribution; member comments regarding this approach are encouraged.

As always, PTAS activities and field trips are free to everyone to best serve our mission of education and conservation, but we encourage regular meeting and field trip attendees to strongly consider supporting PTAS directly. For more information regarding the new PTAS Supporting Membership, please contact any of the PTAS officers or board members. Please note that the full value of all direct contributions to PTAS are tax deductible.



Earth Share  
OF TEXAS

Earth Share of Texas represents the Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society in payroll deduction plans for charitable giving. For information, E-mail [estx@earthshare-texas.org](mailto:estx@earthshare-texas.org) or call 1-800-GREENTX

## Bali Birding With Linda

My beloved S.O.B. (spouse of birder) happily accompanies me on most of my birding trips. This past November he wanted to make a trip to Bali with friends, but not birding friends. How could I say no after I have dragged him around the world to chase so many birds! When we left Texas I had mentally prepared myself to be content with 10 days of lounging in Bali.

Bali is one of the 17,500 islands that make up Indonesia. You can easily see Java, just fifty miles to the west and it is ninety miles north of Perth, Australia. Being in a new land and agonizing to see what birds were around the island, I soon became restless and began to look for birding opportunities. It took me five days to convey my desire to see wild birds to the staff at the villa. "Oh, you want to see birds? We take you to market. You buy bird for cage, no?" they

ask. "No, no, no free, wild birds" I answered. "Oh, we take you to park with big cage and lots of birds." "No, no, free, wild birds" I replied. "We do not understand, what for, why?" they ask. Finally I found a park ranger, Pak Yudi, on the internet that managed the Bali Taman Nasional (Bali National Forest) and made arrangements to go birding with him.

He and his driver drove four hours to pick us up. No freeways in Bali. By now my husband was restless with sitting around and actually looked forward to some birding. Surprise! They drove us four hours to a lodge near the National Forest where we would spend the night. Pak Yudi picked us up at 6:00 AM to begin a morning of birding in the National Forest.

At the top of my wish list was the one true endemic, the Bali Starling *Leucopsar rothschildi*. We knew the odds that we would see one were slim. This bird is so



Green Jungle Fowl

Photo by Linda Egronis

critically endangered that there are fewer than fifty, perhaps only 24, left in the wild and all of them are under the protection of the Bali National Forest. In the 1980's there were an estimated 350 birds and the number fell to an alarming 10 in 2005 due largely to poaching. They are so beautiful and sing so prettily that they are prized as cage birds which makes them the target of a very lucrative market. There are an estimated 1,000 birds in captivity and an estimated 2,000 on the black market. Successful attempts have been made through a breeding program of licensed captive breeders. They are required to release ten percent of the hatched birds back into the wild. Bird sanctuaries have been established on three uninhabited islands off the southeast coast of Bali. The birds have good habitat and are safer from poachers than on the Bali mainland. One island has a population of one-hundred of the introduced birds. Ten starlings are to be released each year from different breeders to ensure a broad gene pool. Each bird is banded, tracked and monitored throughout

its' life. As we drove towards the park, we spotted Java Mynas, rare but, not as rare as the Bali Starling. We continued on.... finding more species. To my surprise, my husband spotted a pair of Racket-tailed Treepies. In the same family as magpies and about the same size, they were black with an iridescent green sheen and long tail feathers rounded at the tip and flaring out like a ruffled skirt. There is hope for my husband becoming a birder! Soon we found another endemic to Indonesia, Green Jungle Fowl, about half the size of our domesticated chickens but, far more beautiful.

When we arrived at Pak Yudi's ranger station and residence, there they were...six magnificent Bali



## Bali Starling

Photo by Linda Egronis

Starlings. Yudi was so proud that we saw them. They were snowy white with a bright blue mask and about the size of an American Robin. When they flew they revealed the black tips on their wings and tail. We watched a male flare his long crest as he was calling and singing to his mate below. What a treat it was to see so many up close!

At noon we began the four hour drive back to the villa. We had tallied thirty-seven species for a half day of birding. In spite of the fact that Bali is not known as a great birding destination, we managed to enhance our stay with some fabulous birds.

By Linda Ergoins

Caleb Frome and Mike Cameron were guest leaders for the January 11th bird walk at the Heard. They guided 26 eager birders along the trails of the Heard on a beautiful morning, and the birds did not disappoint. Among the highlights were a flock of Snow and Ross's Geese flying over the Heard, a pair of Hooded Mergansers in the wetlands, Wood Ducks, both species of Kinglets, and a couple of Rusty Blackbirds.



Mallard	5
Double-crested Cormorant	5
Black Vulture	7
Turkey Vulture	1
Red-shouldered Hawk	1
Red-tailed Hawk	1
Ring-billed Gull	4
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	17
Mourning Dove	5
Red-bellied Woodpecker	3
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	4
Downy Woodpecker	4
Hairy Woodpecker	1
Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted)	1
Eastern Phoebe	1
Blue Jay	3
American Crow	4
Carolina Chickadee	11

*Harris Sparrow*

### *January Heard Bird Walk*



Tufted Titmouse	5
Winter Wren	1
Carolina Wren	3
Golden-crowned Kinglet	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	5
Eastern Bluebird	4
Hermit Thrush	2
American Robin	12
Brown Thrasher	2
Northern Mockingbird	2
Cedar Waxwing	120
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)	10
Spotted Towhee	1
Field Sparrow	3
Savannah Sparrow	1
Fox Sparrow	5
Song Sparrow	3
White-throated Sparrow	12
Harris's Sparrow	15
White-crowned Sparrow	3
Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)	2
Northern Cardinal	8
Red-winged Blackbird	42
Brown-headed Cowbird	2
House Finch	13
American Goldfinch	24
House Sparrow	3

*Fox Sparrow*

Photos by Mike Cameron

On Dec. 14th, 7 intrepid birders joined trip leaders Caleb Frome, Rodney Thomas, and Mike Cameron on a cold and somewhat windy Saturday morning. Despite the wind, the day turned out surprisingly birdy, with 45 species seen. Highlights for the day were a pair of brown thrashers, a Hairy Woodpecker, a large number of Harris's Sparrows, and a tame and vocal Winter Wren that posed for pictures.

Snow Goose		30
Ross's Goose		40
Canada Goose		15
Wood Duck		3
Mallard		6
Hooded Merganser		2
Double-crested Cormorant		21
Cooper's Hawk		1
Red-shouldered Hawk		3
Red-tailed Hawk		2
Ring-billed Gull		25
Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)		5
Mourning Dove		6
Red-bellied Woodpecker		5
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		3
Downy Woodpecker		4
Northern Flicker (Yellow-shafted)		3
Eastern Phoebe		2
Blue Jay		3
American Crow		5
Carolina Chickadee		5
Tufted Titmouse		5
Brown Creeper		1
Winter Wren		1
Carolina Wren		5
Golden-crowned Kinglet		3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		5
Eastern Bluebird		3
Hermit Thrush		1
American Robin		25
Northern Mockingbird		3
European Starling		10
Cedar Waxwing		75
Orange-crowned Warbler		1
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle)		10
Spotted Towhee		1
Field Sparrow		2
Fox Sparrow		7
Song Sparrow		2
White-throated Sparrow		10
Harris's Sparrow		5
White-crowned Sparrow		4
Dark-eyed Junco (Slate-colored)		5
Northern Cardinal		15
Red-winged Blackbird		200
Rusty Blackbird		2
House Finch		4
American Goldfinch		23
House Sparrow		6

*Winter Wren*

## *December Heard Bird Walk*

*White-throated Sparrow*

Photos by Mike Cameron

## November Heard Bird Walk

We had a great bird walk today with 14 attending. And extra thanks to the Banders for showing us some great birds in hand. Pleasant fall day with mild temperature and light wind. Seven species of winter sparrows observed. Little water in the wetlands so few waterfowl were seen.

Northern Flicker ( <i>Colaptes auratus</i> )	2
American Kestrel ( <i>Falco sparverius</i> )	1
Eastern Phoebe ( <i>Sayornis phoebe</i> )	5
Blue Jay ( <i>Cyanocitta cristata</i> )	3
American Crow ( <i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i> )	5
Carolina Chickadee ( <i>Poecile carolinensis</i> )	5
Tufted Titmouse ( <i>Baeolophus bicolor</i> )	3
Brown Creeper ( <i>Certhia americana</i> )	1
Carolina Wren ( <i>Thryothorus ludovicianus</i> )	4
Golden-crowned Kinglet ( <i>Regulus satrapa</i> )	1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet ( <i>Regulus calendula</i> )	3
Eastern Bluebird ( <i>Sialia sialis</i> )	24
American Robin ( <i>Turdus migratorius</i> )	4
Northern Mockingbird ( <i>Mimus polyglottos</i> )	12
European Starling ( <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> )	9
Yellow-rumped Warbler ( <i>Setophaga coronata</i> )	11
Yellow-rumped Warbler (Myrtle) ( <i>Setophaga coronata coronata</i> )	1
Spotted Towhee ( <i>Pipilo maculatus</i> )	2
Chipping Sparrow ( <i>Spizella passerina</i> )	2
Fox Sparrow ( <i>Passerella iliaca</i> ) Seen while being banded	1
Song Sparrow ( <i>Melospiza melodia</i> )	5
Lincoln's Sparrow ( <i>Melospiza lincolni</i> )	1
White-throated Sparrow ( <i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i> )	3
White-crowned Sparrow ( <i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i> )	4
Dark-eyed Junco ( <i>Junco hyemalis</i> )	12
Northern Cardinal ( <i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i> )	8
Red-winged Blackbird ( <i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i> )	7
House Finch ( <i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i> )	30
American Goldfinch ( <i>Spinus tristis</i> )	3
House Sparrow ( <i>Passer domesticus</i> )	4

*Ruby -crowned Kinglet*

Photo by Mike Cameron

## American White Pelicans on Lake Lavon



Photo by Mike Cameron

### *2013 Christmas Bird Count*

On Dec 26, Prairie and Timbers and The Heard Museum and Sanctuary sponsored a Christmas Bird Count. The count has been a successful joint venture between the Heard Museum and Sanctuary, and the Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society since 1976.

To view the 2013 McKinney CBC count go to: <http://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/CurrentYear/ResultsByCount.aspx>. Enter TXMC for the "Count Code" press Enter key, then click on the button beside "McKinney" To view any current year or previous years count go to: <http://netapp.audubon.org/CBCObservation/>

Long time PTAS member, Sally Evans, wrote the following poem as she sat by the Heard Museum window in front of the bird feeder.

#### **CHRISTMAS COUNT**

December 26 is the date it always falls upon.  
Assignments are made to nine different zones;  
Most folks go in groups – one or two go alone.  
The one place left and often neglected  
Is the big window in the museum – not selected  
By avid birders. They go out to the fields  
To see what species those areas yield.  
Or some walk the woods amongst the trees  
Finding woodpeckers, blue jays or chickadees.  
The whole day is spent on counting the birds  
Returning at noon for lunch at the Heard.  
On this day I stayed as a greeter  
And sat by the window to watch birds at the feeder.  
At first only doves and juncos on the ground;  
Then cardinals and titmice flying around.  
As the sun rose higher and the air became warm,  
I noted a waxwing flock beginning to form  
Around the green mistletoe and bushy cedar trees  
Eating multitudes of white and blue berries.

Six squirrels scampered in and began to feed  
On safflower, millet and sunflower seed.  
Around about four the teams return  
To start a tally and to discern  
Who saw the best birds or had a surprise  
(Or even the team who can tell the best lies!)  
Whatever the count, we had a good day  
And helped Audubon in one more way.  
It may seem over but be of good cheer;  
We'll probably be back again next year.  
By Sally Evans

### **A Surprise For the CBC counters, a Western Red-tailed Hawk in Lucas**



Photo by Mike Cameron

**Note: If you would like to receive email notifications when the newsletters are available, or to update your email address, please contact Merrick Darley at [hmdarley@prairieandtimbers.org](mailto:hmdarley@prairieandtimbers.org).**

**PRAIRIE & TIMBERS AUDUBON SOCIETY**

**Officers, Chairpersons and Board Members**

**PRAIRIE & TIMBERS AUDUBON SOCIETY**

**Officers, Chairpersons and Board Members**

**President:** *Merrick Darley\**.....972-422-5355

**Vice President:** *Denise Dengler\**.....972-208-7448

**Secretary:** *Betty Parker\** .....972-618-1130

**Treasurer:** *Glen Shaffer\**.....972-881-0654

**Conservation/Armchair Activist:**

*Roger Sanderson\** .....972-333-5671

*Bill Woodfin\**.....972-838-9290

**Newsletter:** *Merrick Darley\** ..... 972-422-5355

**Field Trips:** *Linda Ergonis\**..... 972-596-6109

*Tom Heath\**..... 972-867-8646

**Education**

*Rodney Thomas\**.....214-533-8756

*Gailon Brehm*..... 972-517-2542

**Hospitality:** *Paula Brehm* .....972-517-2542

**Membership:** *Merrick Darley\** .....972-422-5355

**CBC:** *Roger Sanderson\** .....972-516-2297

**Website/Electronic Communications:**

*Tom Heath\**..... 972-867-8646

**Programs:**

*Carolyn Oldham*..... 972-517-8987

*Denise Dengler\**.....972-208-7448

**Publicity:** *Denise Dengler\**.....972-208-7448

**Board Member:** *Mike Cameron\**.....214-293-7778

- *Board Member.*

**Membership Application**

\_\_\_ I would like to be a Supporting Member of Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society (PTAS), knowing that my contribution will be used to support local bird-related projects and habitats. To use your PayPal account or credit card go to [prairieandtimbers.org](http://prairieandtimbers.org), select the Join Audubon tab at the top of the page, and follow the directions. Or enclosed is a check for \$15 or more (includes all family members at a single address) made out to: **PTAS**. PTAS is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization; your membership fee and any donations made to PTAS are fully tax deductible.

\_\_\_ I would like to support the National Audubon Society. The special new member introductory price is \$20. To use your credit card, go to [prairieandtimbers.org](http://prairieandtimbers.org), select the Join Audubon tab at the top of the page, and follow the directions. Or make out a check to **National Audubon Society** and with the information below send it to the treasurer below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

(E-mail addresses are used to notify members of updated website newsletters, upcoming field trips, and important local bird-related issues. E-mail addresses are NOT shared with, or forwarded to, any other source.)

**How did you hear about Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society?**

\_\_\_ From a member of PTAS

\_\_\_ From the PTAS website

\_\_\_ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society  
c/o C. Glen Shaffer Jr.,  
1421 Thames Dr  
Plano, TX 75075

**Audubon code: 7XCH PTAS Chapter Code: W15**

**SEND US YOUR UPDATED E-MAIL ADDRESS**

Email is the most efficient way for us to let you know about events, meetings and last minute changes. We send only 1 or 2 emails per month, and we do not share our mailing list with anyone. If you are not on our email distribution list, or if your email address has changed recently, please contact Merrick Darley at [hmdarley@prairieandtimbers.org](mailto:hmdarley@prairieandtimbers.org)