March 2019

Board’s Bird’s Eye View:
Will the springtime migration ever get here? After the freezing temperatures in early March, one has to wonder! One of our favorite locations for springtime migration birding in SE Texas is the High Island area. There are four sanctuaries and one rookery owned and managed by the Houston Audubon Society. They are open from March 15 to May 15 for spring migration. The best time to go is right after a wet cold front around mid-April when there is a “fallout”, where the migrating birds flying north are exhausted and need a rest from their long flights. High Island Sanctuaries are just the place! Keep your eye on the weather forecast as a last minute decision based on the weather may lead to a very exciting birding day in High Island. For more information about High Island, check out the Houston Audubon website (Houstonaudubon.org/sanctuaries). If we anticipate the potential for a “fallout” this spring, we may send out a notification to our email list alerting of this birding opportunity.

MARCH MEETING
Please join us for our monthly meeting at St. Stephens Episcopal Church, 5019 Sam Houston Ave., Huntsville
Thursday, March 21, 2019
6:00 pm – Snacks and chat
6:30 pm – Guest Presentation
Business meeting to follow presentation

VISITORS WELCOME
Please bring a snack to share. Bottled water will be provided.

PRESENTATION: Our guest speaker will be Karen Debrot, an avid birdwatcher and photographer for many years. She will present: “The Birds of Curacao”. Curacao is a small island in the southern Caribbean off the coast of Venezuela.

Directions to St Stephens Episcopal Church:
From the corner of Sam Houston Ave and 11th street (in the downtown square), go south on Sam Houston Ave (State Hwy 75) approximately 2.3 miles. Once past Montgomery Rd (FM1374) and Old Houston road, the entrance to the church is on the left at 5019 Sam Houston Ave. Follow our Audubon signs from the parking lot to the Parish Hall entrance on the south side of Church building.

Huntsville Audubon
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
P. O. Box 6818
Huntsville, Texas 77342

Our Mission
To increase our community’s awareness of the natural world and the need for its preservation, through education and the active enjoyment of birds and other wildlife.

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Our Website: http://www.huntsvilleaudubon.org/
Our Email: huntsvilletxaudubon@gmail.com

Field Trip
Due to the cold and wet weather, our last field trip planned for March 2nd at the Winters Bayou Sanctuary was cancelled because of lack of interest. As noted above if we anticipate a mid-Spring cold front, we may send out an email alert to see if any of you may be interested in heading down to High Island to witness the Spring migration “fallout”.

Hummingbird Migration (did you know?)
Several factors affect hummingbird migration and WHEN exactly these small birds set forth on their long journeys. The most important factor that determines the timing of hummingbird migration is daylight- the amount of daylight and the angle of the sun relative to the bird’s location! As the light levels change seasonally, hummingbirds purposefully eat more to increase body weight by 25-40%. That extra fat will be valuable energy for the upcoming long flight!

Treasury Report
HAS account balance: $1971.87
Birdseed: $59.27
Donations designated for Jr Audubon /Education /Memorial: $26.82
**Bird of the Month: Ruby-throated Hummingbird** – The only species of hummingbird that breeds in the Eastern U.S. (including here in Huntsville) and Canada. In some hummingbird species such as the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, males migrate a few days before females. This gives the male birds time to establish territories, so they can successfully court arriving females at the beginning of the breeding season. If you have a hummingbird feeder or flowers in your yard or garden you have probably seen them “dive bomb” each other for control of the territory, feeder and potential mate. Feeders should be hung outside by the first of March if not out all year. Fill the feeders with a mixture of 4 parts water to 1 part sugar. The mixture must be boiled IF the excess will be stored in the refrigerator for later use. During the hot summer days, replacing the sugar water every 3-4 days is recommended.

**Books on Birding/Nature:**

**Junior Audubon/Education:**
The Huntsville Public Library at 1219 13th street, will host a spring break children’s program titled: “Explore the World of Birds” on Wednesday, March 13, 2019 at 2:30-3:30 PM. This interactive program features live birds and lots of music. Audiences will leave humming a new tune. Our own Huntsville Audubon Society is sponsoring an educational free program (thanks to our own Anne Staples) featuring live mystery birds in partnership with the Children’s Department at Huntsville Public Library. The program will be presented by Mary Anne Weber, the Education Director at Houston Audubon and manager of the Sims Bayou Urban Nature Center. This program is geared for elementary grades and younger audiences. (Volunteers are needed to help set-up tables and chairs at the Huntsville Public Library. Should you be available to help please arrive at the community center in the library at 2:00 p.m. We should be finished by approximately 3:45 p.m. with putting the tables and chairs back in storage.)

**Nest Boxes**
To further encourage our next generation of younger birders, our Huntsville Audubon Society will soon be erecting newly-built bird houses on Gibbs elementary school grounds!

**Facebook Page**
Have you checked out our Facebook page lately? When you share your sightings, please remember to include identification, date observed and general location.

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**EarthShare Texas**
http://www.earthshare-texas.org

**Huntsville Audubon**
P.O. Box 6818
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