

JULY 2006 SOUTHERN HIGH PLAINS BIRDING HIGHLIGHTS:

With only 0.22 inches of rain (for a month during which 2.37 inches is average), Lubbock is slipping even further into drought and is now 5.36 inches below average year-to-date totals of 10.40 inches. Playas with standing water are few and far between, making noteworthy almost any sighting of waterfowl, waders, or shorebirds and vegetation is noticeably 'not green', leading some local birders to worry about the upcoming songbird migration. The impact on both wildflowers and butterflies has also been noted by observers - a grim year, indeed.

As always the county follows the site in () and birds are listed by virtue of rarity, unusual scarcity, or unusual abundance.

CANADA GOOSE: 19 at Dupree Park (Lubbock) on 7/9/06 had become 38 by 7/18/06 (CR, FR) - HIGH NUMBERS FOR THE SITE, SUGGESTING EARLY MOVEMENT.

GADWALL: 2 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) and 6 at Maxey Park (Lubbock) on 7/21/06 (AnH) the only reports - RARELY SEEN IN JULY.

AMERICAN WIGEON: 2 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only report - RARELY SEEN IN JULY.

NORTHERN SHOVELER: 2 at Higginbotham Park (Lubbock) on 7/7/06 (AnH), 25 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB), and 2 at Maxey Park (Lubbock) on 7/21/06 (AnH) represented - A PRETTY GOOD SHOWING.

REDHEAD: 20 in eastern Lynn County on 7/1/06 (BB) and 15 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only reports - LOW.

LESSER SCAUP: 2 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) - A VERY RARE JULY RECORD.

RUDDY DUCK: 20 in eastern Lynn County on 7/1/06 (BB) and 4 at Whisperwood Pond (Lubbock) on 7/7/06 (AnH) the only sightings - VERY LOW.

AMERICAN WHITE PELICAN: 5 over Lubbock on 7/14/06 (AnH) - THE THIRD JULY RECORD FOR THE REGION - ACCIDENTAL FOR THE MONTH.

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: 1 at Earl Crow Park (Lubbock) on 7/11/06 (BB) - AT ONE TIME CONSIDERED ACCIDENTAL FOR THE MONTH; THE FIRST OF THE SEASON GENERALLY ARRIVE DURING JULY THESE YEARS.

GREAT EGRET: 1 at Mae Simmons Park (Lubbock) on 7/2/06 (CR, FR), 1 at Whisperwood Park (Lubbock) on 7/7/06 (AnH), and 1 at White River Lake (Crosby) on 7/22/06 (BB) were the only reports - LOW BY RECENT YEARS' STANDARDS.

SNOWY EGRET: 12 reports of from 1-11 birds throughout the region and period (BB, AnH, CR, FR, LW) - ABOUT AVERAGE THESE DAYS.

WHITE-FACED IBIS: 2 in eastern Lynn County on 7/1/06 (BB), 4 in southern Lubbock County on 7/10/06 (BB), 15 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB), and 1-4 at Dupree Park (Lubbock) from 7/24/06-7/31/06 (CR, FR, AnH) the only reports - LOW.

NORTHERN HARRIER: 1 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) - A RARE SUMMER REPORT FOR THE SPECIES.

SNOWY PLOVER: 2 in eastern Lynn County on 7/1/06 (BB) the only report - VERY LOW.

SEMIPALMATED PLOVER: 1 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) - FORMERLY CONSIDERED ACCIDENTAL FOR THE MONTH; THIS IS THE FOURTH JULY RECORD SINCE 2001.

GREATER YELLOWLEGS: 1 in southern Lubbock County on 7/1/06 (BB), 1 along Woodrow Road (Lubbock) on 7/5/06 (LW), 2 at Dupree Park (Lubbock) from 7/6/06-7/11/06 (CR, FR), 12 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/7/06 (AnH), 10 in southern Lubbock County on 7/10/06 (BB), and 1 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/10/06 (BB) the only reports - A VERY POOR SHOWING.

LESSER YELLOWLEGS: 15 in southern Lubbock County on 7/1/06 (BB), 20 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/7/06 (AnH), 6 in southern Lubbock County on 7/10/06 (BB), 36 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB), and 1 at White River Lake (Crosby) on 7/22/06 (BB) the only reports - A BIT LOW.

SOLITARY SANDPIPER: 2 in southern Lubbock County on 7/17/06 (BB) the only report - LOW.

LONG-BILLED CURLEW: 3 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only report - VERY LOW.

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER: 5 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/7/06 (AnH), 7 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB), and 1 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only reports - LOW.

WESTERN SANDPIPER: 7 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/7/06 (AnH) and 10 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only reports - VERY LOW.

LEAST SANDPIPER: 2 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/7/06 (AnH), 15 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB), and 1 at White River Lake (Crosby) on 7/22/06 (BB) the only reports - VERY LOW.

BAIRD'S SANDPIPER: 8 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/7/06 (AnH) and 10 at Muleshoe

NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only reports - LOW.

STILT SANDPIPER: 2 near Smyer (Hockley) on 7/7/06 (AnH) and 4 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only reports - LOW.

SHORT-BILLED DOWITCHER: 4 at Chas Guy Park (Lubbock) on 7/18/06 (BB) - A GOOD REPORT FOR THIS POORLY UNDERSTOOD BIRD.

WILSON'S PHALAROPE: 10 in southern Lubbock County on 7/17/06 (BB) the only report - EXTRAORDINARILY LOW.

FRANKLIN'S GULL: 1 adult at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) - ACCIDENTAL FOR THE MONTH; ONLY THE SECOND JULY RECORD FOR THE REGION.

BLACK TERN: 1 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) the only report for the month - LOW.

CALLIOPE HUMMINGBIRD: 1 male in a Lubbock yard on 7/20/06 (JC) and another male (probably) in the same yard on 7/25/06 (JC) - A NICE START.

BROAD-TAILED HUMMINGBIRD: 1 male in a Lubbock yard on 7/31/06 (AnH) - ALSO, WE HOPE, A START.

RUFIOUS HUMMINGBIRD: 1 at Hamilton Park (Lubbock) on 7/7/06 (BB), 1 male in a Lubbock yard on 7/24/06 (JD), and 1 male in another Lubbock yard on 7/28/06 (JC) - LIKEWISE, A GOOD START.

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER: a pair at a nest cavity with a fledgling at Lubbock Country Club (Lubbock) on 7/2/06 (RL) - A RARE SIGHTING SO FAR WEST.

WESTERN TANAGER: 1 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB) - ACCIDENTAL FOR THE MONTH; ONLY THE THIRD JULY SIGHTING FOR THE REGION.

YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRD: 5 in southern Lubbock County on 7/1/06 (BB), 4 at Muleshoe NWR (Bailey) on 7/15/06 (BB), and 41 at White River Lake (Crosby) on 7/22/06 (BB) - A GOOD SHOWING.

LESSER GOLDFINCH: 1 male in a Lubbock yard on 7/29/06 (BB) the only report - LOW BY RECENT YEARS' STANDARDS.

OBSERVERS: BB=Brandon Best, JC=Jim Crites, JD=Jewel Downing, AnH=Anthony Hewetson, RL=Rob Lee, CR=Clarice Robertson, FR=Floyd Robertson, LW=Lois Wallace.

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