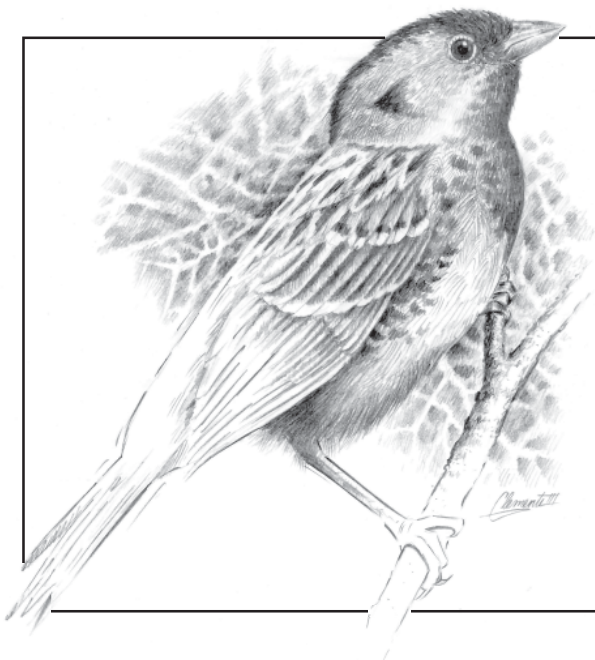


TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

BIRDS

OF

LAKE MINERAL WELLS STATE PARK AND TRAILWAY



A FIELD CHECKLIST

2005

Cover: Illustration of Harris's Sparrow by Clemente Guzman.

INTRODUCTION

Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Trailway located in Western Parker County and Eastern Palo Pinto County encompasses 3,282 acres of rolling to hilly terrain and is dissected by several deep canyons. Fed by Rock Creek, the lake itself covers 646 acres. Sandstones and shales of the Mineral Wells Formation were deposited over 300 million years ago during the Pennsylvanian Period to form the geologic setting for the park. The Trailway consist of 262 acres spanning the 20 miles of abandoned Weatherford, Mineral Wells and Northwestern (WMW&NW) railroad bed that travels between Cartwright Park on the northwest edge of Weatherford to the southwest and ends in downtown Mineral Wells, all the while being nestled in between ranches, farms and rural communities. The vegetation is typical of the Cross Timbers and Prairies Vegetation Region with upland savannas covered by mid to tall grasses with scattered Post Oak, Blackjack Oak and Mesquite, also canyons and bottomlands supporting deciduous forests of Pecan, Texas Oak, Texas Ash, Cottonwood, American and Cedar Elm trees. Thick brush rims the deeper canyons, while upland dry woodlands contain Ashe Juniper, Sugarberry and several oaks. Elbow bush and Fragrant Sumac are common shrubs

Nearly 170 species of birds have been recorded inside the park. Here, Canyon Wrens reach their eastern limit in North Texas where they can usually be found at Penitentiary Hollow. A canoe ride along Rock Creek in summer can yield nesting Yellow-crowned Night-Herons and Great Blue Herons plus a variety of woodland species such as Red-shouldered Hawk and Barred Owl. Hooded Mergansers, Wood Ducks and other duck species usually hide out in winter at "Lost Lake" located upstream from Lake Mineral Wells along Rock Creek. Though mud flats are lacking in the park, a glance over the spillway area during migration

may yield a shorebird or two. The marsh below the spillway and the larger patches of reeds found along the lake's edge attract Common Yellowthroat, Marsh Wren and sometimes a Sora or two, especially in migration.

Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Trailway is truly a point where "east meets west" in Texas. White-eyed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo and Prothonotary Warbler near or reach their western limit here in north Texas, while the Rufous-crowned Sparrow and Black-crested Titmouse are examples of those reaching their eastern limit. This mix of eastern and western species also includes both Ladder-backed and Downy Woodpeckers as well as Ruby-throated and Black-chinned Hummingbirds. Newcomers to this part of the country may be pleased to learn that Painted Buntings and Harris's Sparrows are both common here in proper season and habitat.

Some of the best birding in the park can be done on a canoe ride up Rock Creek where species indicative of river bottom woodland can be found. Other favorite birding areas include the primitive camping areas, the Trailway, the marsh and woods immediately below the spillway and Penitentiary Hollow.

This checklist was compiled by Carl B. Haynie and Teresa A. Risdon. The co-compilers gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of the park staff, Warren Pulich, Sr. and the Fort Worth Audubon Society for their contributions to this checklist. Checklist nomenclature and organization follow the A.O.U. *Check-list of North American Birds* (7th edition) as currently supplemented.

You can contribute to our knowledge of the park's birdlife by sharing new and unusual sightings or changes in status with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Please report your observations to the Natural Resources Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin Texas 78744, or leave your detailed observations at the park headquarters for forwarding.

Please help us protect the natural avian communities in state parks by refraining from using playback tapes of bird songs. Frequent use of these tapes disrupts normal avian activity patterns, disrupts essential territorial behavior and may lead to nest failure. Thank you for your cooperation.

LEGEND

Seasons

- Sp - Spring (Mar.-May) F - Fall (Sept.-Nov.)
S - Summer (Jun.-Aug.) W - Winter (Dec.-Feb.)

Abundance

- C - Common - Should be seen or heard on any given day in proper season/habitat.
F - Fairly Common - Likely to be seen or heard on any given day in proper season/habitat.
U - Uncommon - Usually present but difficult to locate or local in distribution.
R - Rare - Not expected more than once or twice per season or year.
O - Occasional - Very Rare. Not Expected more than once every 2 to 5 years.
V - Vagrant - Far out of normal range or season. Not expected to occur more than once every 10 years.

Note: "proper season" typically implies some fraction of the total season.

- I - Irregular: when used with status above, indicates abundance may vary plus or minus a status code from year to year.
/ - When preceding summer status, indicates bird's presence in summer is due to early fall migrants.
* - Confirmed breeding.
+ - Suspected breeding.

CHECKLIST

	Sp	SU	F	W
___ Greater White-fronted Goose	O		U	
___ Canada Goose	O		U	
___ * Wood Duck	F	U	F	F
___ Gadwall	U		U	U
___ American Wigeon	U		U	U
___ Mallard	R		U	F
___ Blue-winged Teal	U		U	
___ Northern Shoveler	U		U	
___ Northern Pintail	R		R	U
___ Green-winged Teal	U		F	F
___ Redhead	R		R	
___ Ring-necked Duck	R		U	U
___ Lesser Scaup	O		R	U
___ Bufflehead	O		U	U
___ Common Goldeneye				O
___ Hooded Merganser	R			F
___ Ruddy Duck				R
___ * Wild Turkey	U	U	U	U
___ * Northern Bobwhite	C	C	F	U
___ Pied-billed Grebe	F		F	F
___ Horned Grebe	R		R	R
___ Eared Grebe	R		R	
___ Double-crested Cormorant	F		F	C
___ * Great Blue Heron	C	C	C	C
___ Great Egret	U	U	U	
___ Snowy Egret	O		R	
___ Little Blue Heron	U	F	U	
___ Cattle Egret	U	U	U	R
___ * Green Heron	F	C	U	
___ Black-crowned Night-Heron	O	R		
___ * Yellow-crowned Night-Heron	F	F	U	
___ White-faced Ibis	O	R		
___ + Black Vulture	F	F	F	C
___ + Turkey Vulture	C	C	C	C

	Sp	SU	F	W
___ Osprey	U		U	
___ Mississippi Kite	R	R		
___ Bald Eagle				O
___ Northern Harrier	O		U	U
___ Sharp-shinned Hawk	U		U	R
___ Cooper's Hawk	U		U	R
___ * Red-shouldered Hawk	F	F	F	F
___ Broad-winged Hawk	O		R	
___ Swainson's Hawk	U	R	U	
___ + Red-tailed Hawk	F	F	F	F
___ American Kestrel	F		F	F
___ Peregrine Falcon			O	
___ Sora	U		U	R
___ American Coot	C	R	C	C
___ Sandhill Crane	O		F	
___ Black-bellied Plover			O	
___ * Killdeer	C	C	C	F
___ Greater Yellowlegs			R	
___ Lesser Yellowlegs	R	/R	R	
___ Spotted Sandpiper	U		U	
___ Upland Sandpiper	U		U	
___ Least Sandpiper	U	/U	R	
___ Baird's Sandpiper	O			
___ Wilson's Snipe	O		U	U
___ American Woodcock				O
___ Franklin's Gull	R		R	
___ Ring-billed Gull	U		U	F
___ Forster's Tern	U		U	U
___ Rock Pigeon	U	U	U	U
___ * Mourning Dove	C	C	C	F
___ * Yellow-billed Cuckoo	C	C	F	
___ + Greater Roadrunner	U	U	U	U
___ + Eastern Screech-Owl	R	R	R	R
___ + Great Horned Owl	U	U	U	U
___ * Barred Owl	F	F	F	F
___ Common Nighthawk	C	F	U	

	Sp	SU	F	W
___ Common Poorwill	R	R	R	
___ + Chuck-will's-widow	C	C	R	
___ + Chimney Swift	C	F	C	
___ Ruby-throated Hummingbird	U		U	
___ * Black-chinned Hummingbird	F	F	U	
___ * Belted Kingfisher	F	F	F	F
___ Red-headed Woodpecker	R		R	R
___ * Red-bellied Woodpecker	F	F	F	C
___ Yellow-bellied Sapsucker				U
___ * Ladder-backed Woodpecker	F	F	F	F
___ * Downy Woodpecker	F	F	F	F
___ Northern Flicker	C		C	C
___ Olive-sided Flycatcher	R		R	
___ Eastern Wood-Pewee	R	R		
___ Least Flycatcher	U	/U	U	
___ <i>Empidonax</i> sp.	F	/U		
___ * Eastern Phoebe	F	U	F	U
___ * Great Crested Flycatcher	C	C	U	
___ Western Kingbird	U		U	
___ Eastern Kingbird	R		R	
___ * Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	C	C	C	
___ Northern Shrike	V			
___ + Loggerhead Shrike	U	U	U	F
___ + White-eyed Vireo	F	F	F	
___ Blue-headed Vireo	U		U	
___ Red-eyed Vireo	F	F		
___ * Purple Martin	F	F		
___ Northern Rough-winged Swallow	F		F	
___ Bank Swallow	O			
___ * Cliff Swallow	C	C		
___ * Barn Swallow	C	C	C	
___ * Blue Jay	F	F	C	C
___ * American Crow	F	F	F	F
___ * Carolina Chickadee	C	C	C	C
___ * Black-crested Titmouse	C	C	C	C
___ Red-breasted Nuthatch	IU		IU	IU

	Sp	SU	F	W
___ Brown Creeper	F			F
___ * Canyon Wren	U	U	U	U
___ * Carolina Wren	C	C	C	C
___ * Bewick's Wren	C	C	C	C
___ House Wren	F		F	R
___ Winter Wren			U	U
___ Marsh Wren	U		U	U
___ Golden-crowned Kinglet	IF		IF	IC
___ Ruby-crowned Kinglet	C		C	C
___ * Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	F	C	F	R
___ + Eastern Bluebird	F	U	F	F
___ Swainson's Thrush	U		U	
___ Hermit Thrush	U			U
___ American Robin	C	R	F	C
___ * Northern Mockingbird	C	C	C	C
___ + Brown Thrasher	U	U	U	U
___ American Pipit	R		R	
___ Cedar Waxwing	C			C
___ European Starling	F	U	F	U
___ Orange-crowned Warbler	U		U	U
___ Nashville Warbler	F		F	
___ Yellow Warbler	U		U	
___ Yellow-rumped Warbler	F		F	F
___ Black-throated Green Warbler	U		U	
___ Black-and-white Warbler	U		U	
___ Prothonotary Warbler	O	R		
___ Mourning Warbler	R		R	
___ Common Yellowthroat	U		U	U
___ Wilson's Warbler	U		U	
___ Yellow-breasted Chat	R			
___ * Summer Tanager	F	F	F	
___ Spotted Towhee	C		U	C
___ * Rufous-crowned Sparrow	U	U	U	U
___ Chipping Sparrow	R			
___ Clay-colored Sparrow	U			
___ * Field Sparrow	C	U	C	C

	Sp	SU	F	W
___ Vesper Sparrow	U		U	U
___ + Lark Sparrow	U	F	U	R
___ Savannah Sparrow	U		U	U
___ Fox Sparrow	F		U	C
___ Song Sparrow	C		F	C
___ Lincoln's Sparrow	F		F	C
___ Swamp Sparrow	R			U
___ White-throated Sparrow	F		U	C
___ Harris's Sparrow	F		U	C
___ White-crowned Sparrow	U		U	U
___ Dark-eyed Junco	C		C	C
___ * Northern Cardinal	C	C	C	C
___ + Blue Grosbeak	U	U	R	
___ Lazuli Bunting	O			
___ * Indigo Bunting	F	F		
___ * Painted Bunting	C	C		
___ * Red-winged Blackbird	C	C	C	C
___ + Eastern Meadowlark	U	U	U	U
___ + Common Grackle	F	F	F	
___ Great-tailed Grackle	U		U	
___ Brown-headed Cowbird	C	F	F	O
___ Orchard Oriole	R			
___ Bullock's Oriole	F		F	
___ Baltimore Oriole	R		R	
___ Purple Finch				IU
___ House Finch	U	U	U	U
___ Pine Siskin	IU			IU
___ American Goldfinch	U		U	C
___ * House Sparrow	U	U	U	U

CITATION

Haynie, Carl B. and Theresa A. Risdon. June 2005. Birds of Lake Mineral Wells State Park: a field checklist. Natural Resources Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

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