



THE WOOD DUCK



Newsletter #250

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club

November 2020

www.LowerTrinityValleyBirdClub.org

~

PO Box 6051 Liberty, Texas 77575

#250 SPECIAL EDITION

BIRD BRAIN WAVES

LOWER TRINITY VALLEY BIRD CLUB NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 18, 1992

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Can you believe it!

Twenty five people met to elect officers and adopt by-laws at our organizational meeting in May! We now have 56 paid members. We have a permanent place to meet, Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club is a reality! (A big THANKS to Jo Ann & Charles Wiggins for the "Martin House".) Little did we, Pam, Jody, Ellen or I suspect there would be such great interest. Your response is overwhelming and beyond our greatest expectations. We are most grateful to David Dauphin for being the exciting instrument that brought us together.

This organization belongs to each of you and we want you to participate and guide us in the direction you want the LTVBC to take.

With such enthusiasm I know we'll have many fun times and learning experiences together. See you September 12, 10:00 A.M. at the Martin House, 516 Milam in Liberty for our next meeting.

Celeste Newton of Houston will have our first program and her topic will be "Inviting Birds into Your Back Yard".

Mary Ann Calhoon

From our first newsletter in 1992, known as "Bird Brain Waves," we've come a long way. From pages full of type to type and pictures, from typewriter to computer, from black and white to full color, from no software to Publisher, and from mail to email, our newsletter has followed the technology as have other aspects of the birdwatching world. The wonder of birds has not changed, but the way we find them, see them, and report them has changed. We will take a few looks back, in this, our 250th edition of the Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club newsletter.

Editor, Shelli Ellerbe

Meeting Information

Thursday, November 14, 2020

6:30 PM

The November meeting of the LOWER TRINITY VALLEY BIRD CLUB will be held virtually on ZOOM.

Our speakers will be Natalie Banks and Kelley Parker of Sheldon Lake State Park. They will be discussing the history, habitat, and birds of the park.



Salutations! I'm Natalie Banks, a park interpreter at Sheldon Lake State Park. I have worked as an interpreter for two and a half years now, and I have been part of Texas Parks and Wildlife for 18 months. I like working at Sheldon because I can help people more accustomed to urban living to learn to appreciate the outdoors. I also enjoy being a part of the Coastal Prairie restoration efforts.

Kelly Morris Parker is the Park Superintendent at Sheldon Lake State Park.

Expect an email on Wednesday, November 13, from me, Shelli Ellerbe, through the meeting platform Zoom. I will be signed in about 15 minutes early. Consider this our "Birder's Chat" time and sign in early. If you have questions about joining the virtual meeting, please contact me at 936-334-2874. If you need to try out your connection, contact me early in the week.

Shelli Ellerbe

2020-2022 Officer Election

Due to Covid-19 concerns and restrictions, we were unable to elect our new officers in May 2020. At the September meeting, we voted to extend current officer terms until December. A nomination committee will be **searching for vice-president candidates**. All other officers will be nominated for reelection.

2018-2020 LTVBC Officers

(terms extended to December 2020)

President: Gary Holmes

Vice-President; *vacant*

Secretary: Renie O'Connor

Treasurer: Shelli Ellerbe

Newsletter: Shelli Ellerbe

Presentation Coordinators:

Stuart Marcus & Lisa Holmes

Club Chronicler: Margo Taylor

President's Report

By Gary Holmes

Hello Bird Club:

This **250th newsletter** of the Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club is a special edition which contains special birding experiences of our current members. I hope you enjoy the memories!

Sue Davison

Sue Davison, a dear friend and faithful LTVBC member, died on Sept. 24, 2020 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's Disease. Sue was the club secretary, an active member, and an excellent birder. We are thankful for the many wonderful times we had with Sue and for her love of birds and nature. We hope that you will keep Jerrel and her family in your prayers.

LTVBC during Covid-19 Pandemic

I hope everyone was safe and well during the past six months. I know it has been an unusual and difficult time for all. Here is an account of our LTVBC events during the Pandemic:

Our last face-to face meeting was March 12, 2020 with a presentation by Glenn Olsen- *Native Plants for Bird*. We maintained social distancing; it was before the mask mandates.

March 14, 2020 Field trip-Brazos Bend State Park-many good birds including baby **Great horned owl** and **American bitterns**

In late March, we were ordered to stay-at-home; April field trips, May Picnic and officer elections were cancelled. LTVBC newsletters were suspended until November 2020

Summer Arizona Trip- canceled due to Covid-19

Saturday, May 23, 2020, San Jacinto Co. & Liberty Co. Field trip- John Pike, leader - a great field trip and we observed many **Prairie warblers**

J.J Mayes Wildlife Trace was closed for the summer for road improvements- NO summer birding at JJ Mayes

Sept. 10, 2020 virtual meeting on WebEx

Sept. 19, 2020 Field trip: Baytown Nature Center- 31 species identified

November Activities

I hope you will be able to attend our **virtual meeting on Thursday, Nov. 14, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.** Our speakers will be staff of Sheldon Lake State Park. **The Sheldon Lake State Park Birding Field Trip- Saturday, November 21, 2020** will give us an opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy fall weather and birding.

See you at our meeting and field trip...

Gary



November Field Trip Information is on
Page 13. Please meet near the
Environmental Education buildings.
Parking is available near the buildings.

Meeting Minutes

March 12, 2020

September 10, 2020

October 10, 2020

The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club met Thursday, March 12, 2020, at the First Liberty National Bank Corner in Liberty, Texas. Twelve members and two guests were present. Shelli Ellerbe made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2020, meeting as published in the March 2020 *Wood Duck* #249. Lisa Holmes seconded, all agreed, and the motion was approved.



Treasurer's Report: The checking account balance is \$2,212.48. The David Dauphin savings account balance is \$1,477.79.

Old Business:

- The Arizona trip has been put on hold due to the Coronavirus.
- FEED will start this summer. There will be more information on FEED activities in future newsletters.

New Business:

- The April Newsletter will be our #250th. Please share a bird tale or a photo from "back in the day".
- March field trip will be to Brazos Bend State Park on March 14th.
- We need someone to hold the May picnic meeting. Please get in touch with Gary Holmes if you are interested in hosting the May picnic meeting.
- We will be electing 2020-2021 officers at the May meeting.

Speaker Presentation: Glenn Olsen gave us a very informative presentation of native plants for attracting birds to your yard.

Since there was no more new or old business to discuss, Shelli Ellerbe made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Terri Ford seconded, all agreed, and the meeting was adjourned.

Renie O'Connor, Secretary

The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club met Thursday September 10, 2020, via a virtual meeting due to the Covid19 virus. There were fourteen members present. Margo Taylor made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2020, meeting. Stuart Marcus seconded, all agreed, and the motion was approved.



Treasurers Report: The checking account balance is \$1,812.48. The David Dauphin savings account is \$1,478.28.

Old Business:

- LTVBC is a partner in the Friends Environmental Education Program (FEED). All summer and fall FEED activities were cancelled due to Covid19 restrictions on the Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge.
- 2018-2020 Officers' terms expired in August. Carl Poldark made a motion to retain the present officers until we can have an election of new officers at the December meeting. Denise Barkis seconded, all agreed, and the motion was approved.

New Business:

- New Duck Stamp for 2020-2021 – Black-bellied Whistling Ducks are available for purchase from Shelli Ellerbe. The Stamp is \$25.00. If you are interested in a key chain to put your duck stamp in, you can purchase one from Shelli for \$2.00.

- We will start the newsletter in November. The next newsletter will be the 250th for the LTVBC. In the spring, we had requested special birding memories for the 250th edition. Please share your adventures and experiences that are important to you, such as: memories and experiences with past members, how birding/LTVBC is important to your life, your favorite birds, a humorous or exciting birding experience, or any other memory you would like to share. Please send your newsletter anecdotes and photos to Shelli Ellerbe by October 20, 2020.
- We hope to resume face-to-face meetings for our November 12th meeting.
- The September 19th field trip is to the Baytown Nature Center and Evergreen Park. We will also participate in the 2020 Baytown Birding Challenge.
- Be sure to look at your monthly newsletter for upcoming meetings and fieldtrips.
- Spring Weekend Trip will be to Concan and the Frio River Valley.
- LTVBC possible adventures:
 - Option 1: Colorado – Prairie Chicken/Grouse Run
5-7 days in April when the birds are booming
 - Option 2: Minnesota – Birding/Annual Loon Count
5-7 days – Last week in June-first week in July

Since there was no more new or old business to discuss, Renie O'Connor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Denise Barkis seconded, all agreed and the meeting was adjourned.

Renie O'Connor, Secretary

The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club met Saturday, October 10, 2020, at Champion Lake pier for our meeting and to participate in the Big Sit. Six members were present. President Holmes called for the reading of the minutes. Joe Hall made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2020, meeting. Paul Micallef seconded, all agreed, and the motion was approved.



There was not a Treasurer's Report.

Old Business:

- Reminder – Dues are due in January. Please don't forget to pay them.
- LTVBC possible adventures:
 - Option 1: Colorado – Prairie Chicken/Grouse Run
5-7 days in April when the birds are booming
 - Option 2: Minnesota – Birding/Annual Loon Count
5-7 days – Last week in June/first week in July
- Spring Weekend Trip will be to Concan and the Frio River Valley. This will be a three or four day trip.

New Business:

- Sue Davison passed away on September 24th. She was a charter member of the Bird Club and held the position of secretary for a number of years. Sue was a wonderful birder and very active in the bird club.
- We will start the newsletter in November. The next newsletter will be the 250th for the LTVBC. Please share your adventures and experiences that are important to you, such as: memories and experiences with past members, how birding/LTVBC is important to your life, your favorite birds, a humorous or exiting birding experience or any other memory you would like to share. Please send your newsletter anecdotes and photos to Shelli Ellerbe.
- There were eight people on the September field trip to the Baytown Nature Center and Evergreen Park. We had 29 species of birds. We had more butterflies than birds.
- We hope to resume face-to-face meeting for our November 12th meeting. Gary will let members know if we will have in-person or virtual meeting.
- The November 21, 2020, field trip will be to Sheldon Lake State Park.
- We need to think about a trip to Beth McBroom's place in the Davis Mountains. Beth is Shelli Ellerbe's sister. Beth has had some great birds at her place.
- We need a new Vice President to replace David Knutson who has moved to the Woodlands. Please contact Gary Holmes if you are interested in this position.

A door prize was given by Marvin Masters and won by Colette Micallef.

Since there was no more new or old business to discuss, Joe Hall made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Paul Micallef seconded, all agreed, and the meeting was adjourned.

Renie O'Connor, Secretary



Trinity River Refuge- Big Sit 2020

On October 10, we held our LTVBC meeting and the **Big Sit** at the Champion Lake Pier. We staffed the circle from 6:30 am to 5:30 pm and had a great time and identified 51 birds. In between birds, we worked on our cormorant identification skills and had some interesting discussions. One was the controversial process of the Gray Jay being selected as the national bird of Canada in 2015, then a year later the

American Ornithological Society officially changed the name of the Gray Jay to Canada Jay. Read about it at [National Bird of Canada](#).

Our best birds were an unusual immature **Purple Gallinule** (a first for Champion Lake) and a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** which we had been hearing all morning. When the nuthatch flew into a cypress tree directly overhead, we all had a great view, and it was a life-bird for Joe Hall. Other good birds were a kettle of 50 **Wood Storks**, a **Bald Eagle**, **Belted Kingfishers**, an **American Kestrel**, and an **Osprey**.

LTVBC participants were **Joe Hall**, **Marvin Masters**, **Barbara Tilson**, **Renie O'Connor**, **Gary Holmes**, **Colette Micallef**, and **Paul Micallef**.



Photo By Collette M

2020-21 Tentative Meeting Schedule

Meetings- Second Thursday at 6:30 Pm

Day/Date	Topics	Events
Thursday, November 12, 2020	Sheldon Lake State Park	Virtual meeting
Thursday, December 10, 2020	Birding Ecuador	Face -to-Face?
Thursday, January 14, 2021	Purple Martins	
Spring Weekend Trip	LTVBC Weekend Trip (Friday-Sunday)	
Thursday, February 11, 2021	TBD	Great Back-yard Bird Count
Thursday, March 11, 2021	Spring Warblers	
NO Thursday meeting in April	"LTVBC Big Day"	
May?	Global Big Day	
NO Thursday meeting in May	Picnic - TBD	

2020-21 Tentative Field Trip Schedule

Field Trips- 3rd Saturday

Day/Date	Location
Saturday, November 21, 2020	Sheldon Lake State Park
Your Choice	Christmas Bird Counts
Saturday, January 16, 2021	Texas City Dike/Galveston/Bolivar
Concan / Frio River (date TBD)	
Saturday, February 20, 2021	Anahuac NWR
Saturday, March 20, 2021	Brazos Bend State Park
Saturday, April 17, 2021	High Island, Bolivar, Anahuac
Saturday, April 24, 2021	Sabine Woods
Saturday, May 15, 2021	The Big Thicket/Roy Larson's

Memories and stories about members' experiences in the Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club were requested to be published in this, the 250th edition of *The Wood Duck*. Looking back through old editions reveals a rich tradition of sharing the stories and experiences of field trip groups and individual members. May that tradition continue. Thank you to all who contributed.

-Editor, Shelli Ellerbe

Asa Wright Nature Center *by Gary Holmes*

Birding and the LTVBC have had a significant impact on my life. Birding has led me to amazing places, allowed me to see and appreciate delightful and magnificent birds, meet interesting people, and make wonderful, dear friends.

My most memorable LTVBC Birding Adventure was [Asa Wright Nature Center](#), Trinidad, with eleven colleagues from the LTVBC. Our group was scheduled to arrive by dinner, but due to plane problems we arrived at about 1:00 am to a dark jungle lodge and quickly went to our rooms – unaware of our surroundings and the wonders that lay ahead!



On the "Veranda"- David Knutson is talking with Martyn (far right)

The morning was like Dorothy stepping into Oz. We were awakened by the dawn call of exotic birds and immediately went to the famous Asa Wright Veranda surrounded by gardens and feeders which attracted the astonishing birds. We were amazed by the number and variety of beautiful birds- hummingbirds, honeycreepers, antshrikes, parrots, oropendolas, stunning tropical tanagers, and other fabulous birds. We could

hear the distant "bonk" of the bellbird; using a scope, we were able to barely view it in a treetop about a mile distance down the Arima Valley. I had twenty life-birds before our first breakfast!

Our first morning on the veranda, we birded with Martyn Kenefick, one of the authors of the *Birds of Trinidad & Tobago* field guide; The spacious and comfortable veranda had resident spotters who assisted in locating and identifying the birds- each afternoon we were treated to rum punch and appetizers on the veranda before dinner!

Our day hikes at Asa Wright were equally spectacular. The tiny, superb [Tufted Coquette](#) were frantic feeders on the flowers throughout the gardens around the lodge. A short, steep walk down a grotto brought us to a nesting colony of the rare [Oilbird](#). Asa Wright is one the best places in the world to view the strange, nocturnal, fruit-eating Oilbirds. The trail to the [Bearded Bellbird](#) lek rewarded us with great views of the male Bellbird as he "bonked" in the trees overhead- it's long bearded wattles were amazing. Also, we observed male [White-bearded Manakin](#) and [Golden-headed Manakin](#) perform their courtship displays on their breeding leks.

We spent ten exciting days in the delightful country of Trinidad & Tobago traveling to the varied habitats of the islands. For the trip, I identified 124 life-birds and have splendid stories and memories of our groups experiences. Additionally, I developed an appreciation of Trinidad's interesting history/culture, adored the Trinidadians, and enjoyed their unusual food!

Birding the Coast

by Marvin Masters

The weather was cold with gale force winds. We had 58 species. Lots of shorebirds including one banded Piping Plover. Shelli also spotted a Peregrine Falcon standing on the sand dunes. We ended up on East Beach in Galveston riding in the back of Gary's truck looking for a Pomarine Jaeger. No luck, but we had a great day birding. Participants were Lisa and Gary Holmes, Shelli Ellerbe, Joe Hall, Annie Benzon, Carlton Collier, And Marvin Masters.



Joe Hall, Shelli Ellerbe, Lisa Holmes, Gary Holmes, Carlton Collier

A little newsletter history. Mary Hinze was the first newsletter editor. The following paragraph is from the September/October 1999 newsletter and was apparently written by David Knutson. Following Mary's tenure of 7 years, Barbara Tilton (3 years), Sallie Sherman (7 years), Gary Holmes (1 year), and Shelli Ellerbe (10 years to date) have served as newsletter editors.

Mary Hinze's Retirement

In the summer edition of The Wood Duck, Mary Hinze announced her retirement as its editor and publisher. If you check out our letterhead, you will notice that this is the 75th edition of our newsletter. I have copies going back to June 1995 (#30) which was about the time that the name "**The Wood Duck**" was selected. I believe that Mary was the editor-in-chief and publisher of all but one of the first seventy-four newsletters! She missed the one edition when her husband, Gilbert, was seriously injured in a tractor accident. To the best of my knowledge she did all the rest.

We all owe Mary a great debt (I did not personally know how great a debt until I started trying to piece together the latest edition) for all the years of service she has graciously donated to our club.

“What’s in My Gutter?” by Beth McBroom

Several years ago, while working at my desk, I heard a scratching sound. I thought the sound was coming from inside the wall and my immediate thought was that the scratching sound was being made by a mouse. As I began to investigate, I determined the noise was from coming from an outside wall, so I went outside to see if perhaps it wasn’t inside the wall, but outside the house. I realized the sound was coming from the downspout next to the front porch. Still thinking a rodent was involved, I sought to flush the critter from the downspout by pouring water in the gutter attached to the downspout. I filled a gallon size pitcher with water, went upstairs to the balcony, poured the water in the gutter and leaned over the railing to watch the mouse get washed from the downspout. Nothing happened. No water and no critter escaped from the downspout. The downspout must be clogged with leaves, so I found my small garden spade and went to work dragging wet leaves from the end of the downspout. I cleared it best I could, refilled the pitcher, went upstairs, poured water in the gutter, leaned over the railing and saw water come out, but no critter. But, I could still hear the scratching. I hastened back downstairs and outside to stare at the end of the downspout to see what might appear. Shortly, a critter did appear! But, it was not a mouse, as I suspected. What wiggled out the end of the downspout, turned its head, and looked at me was an Eastern Screech Owl! It shimmied its shoulders, squeezed out of the downspout, landed on the ground, shook a little and flew into a nearby mountain laurel. I grabbed my camera and took photos of a water drenched owl. In the process of rescuing it from the downspout, I may have just about drowned the poor thing! I called my sister Shelli, who suggested I build an owl house for it. We suspected the bird had chosen the gutter under the eave of the house as a nesting place without realizing there was a very deep hole in the bottom of the cozy spot. After searching the internet for plans, I called my husband with a list of items to pick up from the lumber yard on his way home from work. He built the house and hung it in a tree the next day. Within a week, the owl found the box! About three months later, four owlets were bathing in my bird bath. For most of the next ten years we lived in that house in Helotes, TX, I was thrilled to watch owls come and go and raise babies in that box. (You can see a few videos of the first clutch of baby owls by searching “mrsbethmcb” on YouTube.)

**Owl Boxes Consequences by Shelli Ellerbe**

Beth’s phone call (story above) and her subsequent experience with Eastern screech-owls lead me to put up my own owl box. Independently, my father-in-law, Ed Ellerbe put up Eastern screech-owl boxes in his very urban residential landscape and attracted the little owls. In November 2019 Ed came and talked to LTVBC about screech-owls. The club built and sold owl boxes, and a few members reported owls in their boxes that winter. So, a phone call can have consequences for years to come.

Amazon Kingfisher with Shelli Ellerbe**by Lisa Holmes**

Late one evening, I received a phone call from Shelli Ellerbe about an Amazon Kingfisher in Laredo, Texas. She wanted to go on a chase. I immediately said, "Yes, let's go!" I called Gary to let him know and off we went around 9 that evening! Shelli drove until we got more than halfway, we stopped for the night, and then got up very early to start the chase. I think we got to Laredo around 9 am and



hit the river to start looking for the Amazon Kingfisher. Laredo was so crowded with trucks. It was a little difficult to navigate around. We found the park where we could walk down to the river and began our search. We saw the Green Kingfisher, Belted Kingfisher and thought we heard the Amazon, but no show. We met a group that was on a bird tour and we followed their guide and waited. Finally, after about an hour or more it came flying down the river. We were able to follow and get good looks. Shelli was able to get a picture with her spotting scope and camera! Fun chase! Probably had the white collared seed eaters as well but forgot to check for them. After lunch at H.E.B., we went to the golf course and spent the afternoon riding around in a golf cart bird watching! But, no red billed pigeon! Wonderful trip and lots of fun!

I always have great fun with our LTVBC people! We always have an adventure birdwatching!

Joe Hall can spot an interesting angle for a field trip report, and this personal field trip report is an excellent example of that talent. -Editor

What is a Kettle? by Joe Hall

On a recent visit to Smith Point Hawk Tower by LTVBC members Marvin Masters and Joe Hall, one of the non-LTVBC birders remarked that a kettle (which on viewing consisted of four vultures) had formed just at the edge of visibility. On inspection of this group of birds, one of the LTVBC members asked if four birds qualified as a "kettle". Some discussion occurred as to the lower limits of what grouping of raptors could be described as a kettle with no consensus among those present. Clearly one bird is not a kettle. But are two birds properly described as a kettle? As is often the case in the field, a return to home and a dive into non-field resources (in this case, the internet) was necessary to clarify some ambiguous question identified in the field. However, this question is not answered in the vast wasteland that is the internet. There are descriptions of "why" raptors form a kettle--<https://www.birdwatchingdaily.com/beginners/birding-faq/what-makes-a-group-of-hawks-a-kettle/>-- but not of what number of birds constitutes a kettle. Some articles described a "kettle" as an alternative descriptor of a "flock" --<https://www.thespruce.com/flock-names-of-groups-of-birds-386827>--but the use of a synonym hardly clarifies the definition, and in particular the author of the immediate preceding article implies that depending on the species, a flock may have different numbers. Clearly some birds are more equal than others. There is also the issue of the fact that "kettling" is not solely applied to groups of hawks, but that White Pelicans and Wood Storks are often described as kettling, and importantly a kettle does not describe a group of stationary birds but describes the act of birds rising on thermals. 100 vultures in a tree may be a note-worthy sight, but would not be logged in a bird diary as a "kettle". And a 1000 Snow Geese in a V-formation scooting North in April would never be described as a kettle. At least not properly. In the end this question of what is a "kettle" remains ambiguous, and like beauty, may exist only in the eye of the beholder.

Birding with Ellen Pickett *by Stuart Marcus*

I don't remember the year, but it was probably in the late 1990s. I do remember the incident. I picked up Ellen to bird with the LTVBC group somewhere out in the Katy area. That was a time when there were actually geese and many sparrows that could be found in the fields. We would park along some roadsides and walk in some of the prairies to look for sparrows. Just by chance it started to rain when we were headed back from the field. Being much younger back then, I sprinted, OK – jogged back to my car. Ellen, being a step or two slower, eventually made it back also. I couldn't drive any closer, so I had to wait. I was fairly wet, but Ellen was drenched. That ended our birding trip so we headed home. I heard some commotion as Ellen had jumped in the back seat. She sternly told me to look straight ahead and not in the rear-view mirror. A few minutes later she said it was OK to turn around. She had gotten undressed while on I-10 (at least her top) and put a trash bag over her shoulders and poked 2 holes for her arms. She said she felt much better and threatened to air-dry her clothes out the window on the way back. I said, "Nooo way." RIP Ellen and I hope you are still keeping a spare trash bag around.



Ellen Pickett, 1992



Becoming a New Birder

by Margo Kirby Taylor

I first became interested in birds...no, I first met Shelli Ellerbe and she was fun and interesting so when she asked if I wanted to go look at birds, I thought, "Why not?" I had no idea what I was getting into! She'd drive and I'd point and say "Bird!" and she'd tell me the name of the bird. Eventually, we went on a trip with friends and spouses to Big Bend, stopping in Fort Stockton for the night. While we were hanging out around the parking lot, Shelli exclaimed that there was a Yellow-headed blackbird in that tree over there! Well, a Yellow-headed blackbird sounded quite strange to me. I mean, blackbirds are black, right? Then we saw a roadrunner and a Vermillion flycatcher at Balmorhea.

By the time we got to Big Bend and stopped at Panther Junction, I was starting to realize that not all birds were a redbird or a blue jay. I picked up a National Geographic field guide in the gift shop and paid what I thought was a huge amount of money for a book just about birds. Then, I became interested in birds. Later, I decided to visit the bird club meetings and there I met former coworkers and new friends, people who would take the time to help me find the bird in the tree or the bush or even right there in front of me (brown bird in brown grass!) Eventually I went on trips with the club to exotic places like Oregon and Maine and finally back to Big Bend in 2018. I now have over 400 birds and I even understand what that means! Thanks, Gary and Lisa and Shelli and Ceal and Barbara and Renie and many more!

A look back from the archives about the founding of the club:

IN 1990, SEVERAL PEOPLE TRAVELED TO THE BAYTOWN MUNICIPAL LIBRARY IN BAYTOWN, TEXAS TO HEAR A LECTURE ON "BIRDING IN TEXAS" BY NOTED BIRDER DAVID DAUPHIN. THOSE ATTENDING FROM OUR AREA INCLUDED: ELLEN PICKETT, MARY ANN CALHOON, PAM MILENTZ(FROM LIBERTY), AND JODY HORNBACK, FLORIAN CHALFANT, JUANITA ROGERS , MARGARETTE SHIVERS (FROM HULL/DAISETTA). THESE LADIES THOROUGHLY ENJOYED MR. DAUPHIN'S LECTURE AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE LIBERTY MUNICIPAL LIBRARY, ELLEN PICKETT, INVITED MR. DAUPHIN TO COME TO LIBERTY AND GIVE A PROGRAM THERE. HE ACCEPTED.

DAVID DAUPHIN LECTURED AT THE LIBERTY MUNICIPAL LIBRARY TO A LARGE GROUP OF AREA CITIZENS IN 1991. THE EVENT WAS HOSTED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBERTY MUNICIPAL LIBRARY.

DUE TO THE SUCCESS OF THAT PROGRAM AND GENUINE INTEREST SHOWN BY SUCH A LARGE VARIETY OF AREA CITIZENS, MARY ANN CALHOON, JODY HORNBACK, ELLEN PICKETT AND PAM MILENTZ MET IN MILENTZ' HOME ON FEBRUARY 28, 1992, TO DISCUSS THE IDEA OF FORMING AN AREA BIRD CLUB. THEY DECIDED TO START ONE AND TO HAVE MEMBERSHIP FORMS READY AND AVAILABLE TO THOSE ATTENDING THE NEXT PLANNED LECTURE OF MR. DAUPHIN IN APRIL , 1992.

ON APRIL 7, 1992, THE FRIENDS OF THE LIBERTY MUNICIPAL LIBRARY HOSTED MR. DAVID DAUPHIN'S LECTURE ON BIRDING. THERE WERE 32 PEOPLE THAT FILLED IN A MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION THAT NIGHT.

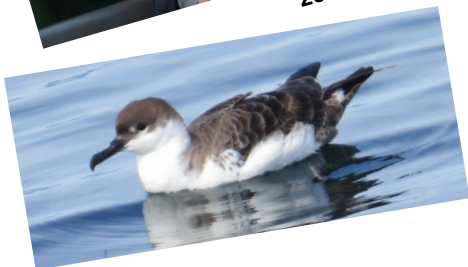
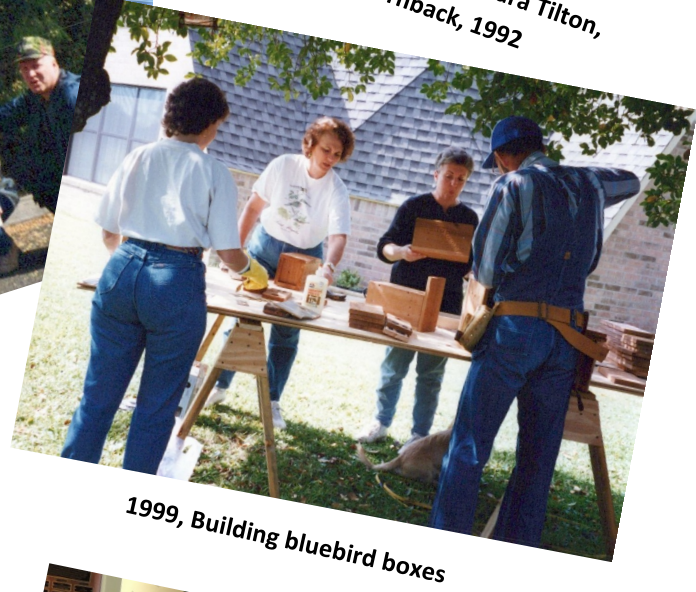
ON APRIL 30, 1992, JODY HORNBACK, PAM MILENTZ, ELLEN PICKETT , DAVID DAUPHIN , AND MARY ANN CALHOON MET AT PICKETT'S HOME TO DISCUSS THE BY-LAWS OF THE NEW CLUB. THEY HAD TO WORK QUICKLY TO GET MANY DETAILS COMPLETED BEFORE THE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING ON MAY 9, 1992.

THE MAY 9, 1992, ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING WAS ADVERTISED IN THE AREA NEWSPAPERS. THE MEETING WAS HELD IN LIBERTY AT THE MARTIN HOUSE BELONGING TO CHARLES AND JOANN WIGGINS. THERE WERE 48 IN ATTENDANCE. THESE MEMBERS VOTED TO NAME THIS NEW CLUB THE LOWER TRINITY VALLEY BIRD CLUB, TO ACCEPT A NEW SLATE OF OFFICERS AND THE BY-LAWS.

THE FIRST OFFICIAL MEETING OF THE LOWER TRINITY VALLEY BIRD CLUB MET AT 10:00 A.M. ON SEPTEMBER 12, 1992, AT THE MARTIN HOUSE IN LIBERTY, TEXAS. THERE WERE 59 CHARTER MEMBERS.

Pam Milentz

Pictures Through the Years



LTVBC November Field Trip

Saturday, November 21, 2020

Sheldon Lake State Park

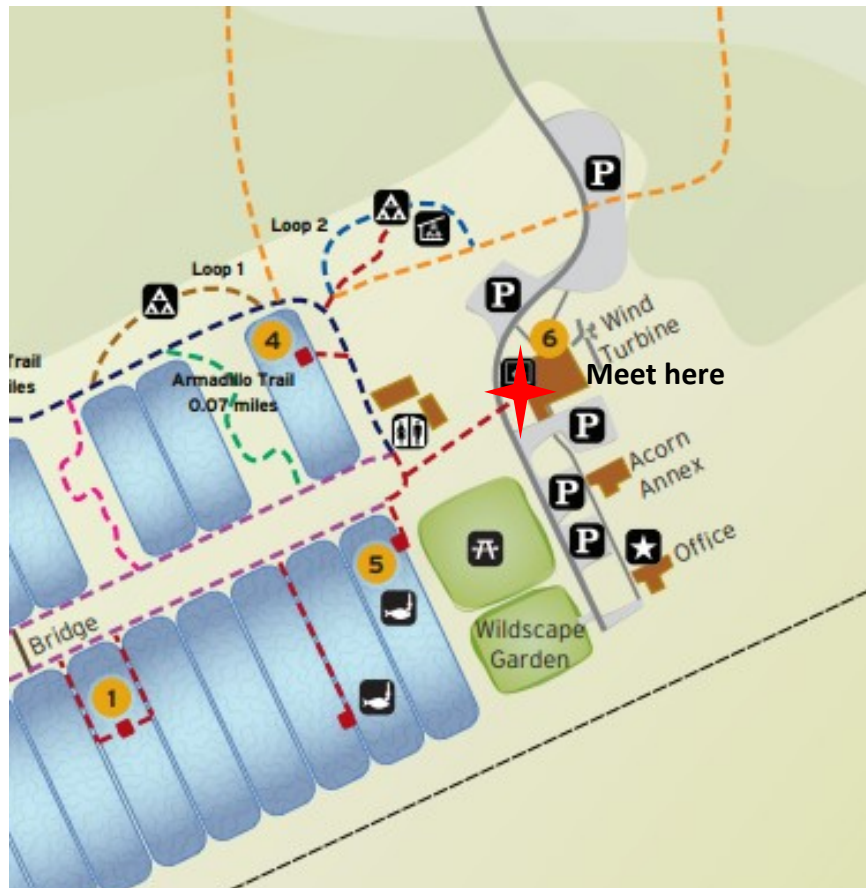
Sheldon, Texas

14140 Garrett Rd.

Houston, TX 77044

Bring binoculars, mosquito repellent, spotting scopes, and lunch.

Sheldon Lake State Park and Environmental Learning Center is an outdoor education and recreation facility located in northeast Harris County. The Sheldon Lake Unit encompasses 1,200 acres; 800 are permanently inundated and 400 acres are marsh and swampland. Fishing, small boats/canoes, and bird watching are the main activities.



LTVBC has 2020-21 Duck Stamps

Officially called the **Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp**, these stamps help conserve habitat for birds. The bird club is allowed to sell them to you at face value plus a handling fee. We're going to **sell them at face value which is \$25**. If you want a key chain to display it in, we have those, too. The **blank key chain will be \$2.00**. **Cash or check to LTVBC, please.**

Contact Shelli Ellerbe to arrange purchase of your stamp.
shellerbe@gmail.com or 936-334-2874

Learn more about Duck Stamps at
<https://www.fws.gov/birds/get-involved/duck-stamp/duck-stamp-dollars-at-work.php>





LOWER TRINITY VALLEY BIRD CLUB

Membership Information

[Check us out on Facebook!](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/98618981435/>

Would you like to get your
newsletter by email?

Let us know at:

geholmes52@gmail.com

You'll get full color pictures and live links.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

_____ New Member _____ Renewing Member

_____ Donation \$ _____

_____ Donation to D. Dauphin Memorial Fund
\$ _____

_____ Update my information

Send newsletter by _____ email or _____ mail

**It's time to pay
2020 club dues.**

**Please make
checks payable to
LTVBC.**

_____ Student Membership \$10.00

_____ Individual Membership \$20.00

_____ Family Membership \$35.00

_____ Sponsor Membership \$50.00

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club

P.O. Box 6051

Liberty, TX 77575