



USA – TEXAS SPRING: SET DEPARTURE TRIP REPORT

25 MARCH – 05 APRIL 2025

By Jacob Roalef



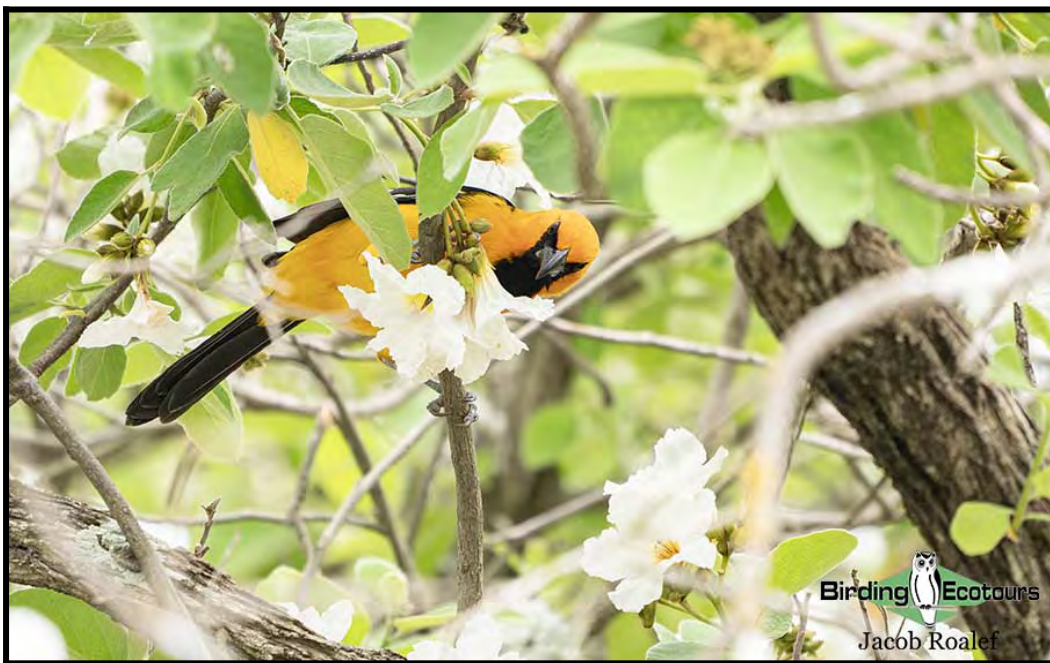
*Stellar, close-up views of this **Whooping Crane** was a top highlight of the tour!*

Overview

This birding tour of south Texas began in Corpus Christi, Texas on the 25th of March, and concluded back there on the 5th of April after making a large loop through this massive state. The trip visited a wide variety of fantastic birding sites, such as Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, King Ranch, Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, Resaca de la Palma State Park, Estero Llano Grande State Park, National Butterfly Center, South Padre Island, Santa Margarita Ranch, Frio Bat Cave, Lost Maples State Park and so much more. With so many great locations, the tour birded many different habitats like coastal marshes, riparian forests, dry desert scrubland, and oak-maple forest of the Texas hill country.

The tour connected with all of the south Texas valley specials plus a solid assortment of migrants, so when it was all said and done, we left with an impressive list for our 12 days in Texas. Avian highlights included **Whooping Crane**, **Altamira** and **Audubon's Orioles**, **Golden-cheeked Warbler**, **Buff-bellied Hummingbird**, **Green Jay**, **Gull-billed Tern**, **Least Grebe**, **White-tailed Hawk**, **Green and Ringed Kingfishers**, **Cassin's Sparrow**, **Red-billed Pigeon**, and **Morelet's Seedeater**. There were also several rarities spotted like **Brown Jay**, **Hook-billed Kite**, **Rose-throated Becard**, and **American Flamingo**.

A total of 236 bird species were seen, a fantastic number for any USA trip. In addition to birds, we enjoyed several mammal highlights such as millions of **Mexican Free-tailed Bats**, close sightings of **Collared Peccary** (Javelina), **Common Bottlenose Dolphin**, and more. Full mammal and bird lists can be found at the end of the report and be sure to check out our eBird Trip Report for more details on specific lists and birding locations.



*This colorful **Altamira Oriole** foraged from these gorgeous white flowers.*

Detailed Report

Day 1, 25th March 2025. Arrival and Corpus Christi birding

While the first day of a tour is typically meant for arrival and introductions, everyone arrived early enough to allow for some afternoon birding. We enjoyed some lunch near the water in Corpus Christi and then headed off to the Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center. This coastal estuary habitat features an impressive boardwalk that allows visitors to get close to many species of waterbirds. We spent several hours here and really racked up the species count with birds like **Blue-winged Teal**, **Northern Pintail**, **Northern Shoveler**, **American Avocet**, **Long-billed Dowitcher**, **Stilt Sandpiper**, **Reddish Egret**, **Tricolored Heron**, and **Osprey**. In front of the center are some small willows which typically host some variety of migrant species and today was no different as we spotted **Northern Parula**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, and **Lincoln's Sparrow** here. We were off to a fantastic start with over 50 species on our first afternoon of birding! We caught the ferry back to the mainland, along with some **Double-crested Cormorants**, checked into our hotel, and enjoyed our first dinner together on the bay.



Northern Shoveler was one of several waterfowl species we saw up close on our first day.

Day 2, 26th March 2025. Aransas National Wildlife Refuge boat trip

Today was full of excitement as we had a private boat trip on Aransas Bay planned for the entire morning. We ate breakfast and headed off for the docks in Rockport where we met up with the captain a little after sunrise. It was a beautiful morning to be out on the water, and we began to tally species right away at the docks. Species like **Laughing Gull**, **Brown Pelican**, **Sandwich Tern**, and **Black-bellied Whistling Duck** were all spotted before we set sail. Our first stop once we departed was the break wall area and nearby mudflats. This area was teeming with birds, and the

species count really started to pile up with things like **Wilson's Plover**, **Willet**, **Dunlin**, **Least Sandpiper**, **Black Skimmer**, **Royal Tern**, **American Avocet**, **Black-necked Stilt**, **Northern Pintail**, **Mottled Duck**, and **Franklin's Gull**. Eventually, we made the turn and entered into the estuary areas of Aransas National Wildlife Refuge where we began to search for our main target. Thankfully, the massive size and bright white body made it easy to spot a **Whooping Crane**, even from a great distance. Of course, we kept cruising along and added even more species out over the estuaries like **Northern Harrier**, **Merlin**, **Tricolored Heron**, **Snowy Egret**, **Neotropic Cormorant**, and **American White Pelican**. We managed to spot several **Whooping Cranes** and even got onto a pair that were foraging close to the water's edge where we were in the open canal. We positioned the boat and waited. These impressive birds walked right by us for an unreal experience! A sneaky **Seaside Sparrow** was singing as we waited, but with the right patience, we all managed to see this great bird too. At the end of our journey, we scanned through a large group of birds on a rock jetty and added several great species like **Gull-billed Tern**, **Hudsonian Whimbrel**, and **Ruddy Turnstone**. We turned around and headed back to the channel where we spotted a cute **Belted Kingfisher** and a whole family of **Collared Peccaries** digging in the sand, how strange! We made it to the docks and back to dry land after an incredible time tallying 60 species from the boat!



*With a little patience, we all managed to get nice views of this **Seaside Sparrow**.*

After lunch, we headed out for some late afternoon birding around the Guadalupe Delta Wildlife Management Area. We stopped and scanned a few areas before really finding a sweet spot that was loaded with birds. As we scoped through everything, we saw a storm quickly approaching. We knew this would be our final birding for the day, so we made it count with a full search right until we felt drops and saw lightning. Our efforts were successful as we added **Fulvous Whistling Duck**, **Virginia Rail**, **American Wigeon**, **Common Gallinule**, **American Golden-Plover**,

Caspian Tern, Pied-billed Grebe, Anhinga, Roseate Spoonbill, White-tailed Hawk, and more! The storm came in fast and strong, so we hung around the hotel until dinner. After we ate, a few **Black-crowned Herons** flew over the car as we drove back to the hotel, final bird of the day.

Day 3, 27th March 2025. Corpus Christi area birding and transfer to Kingsville

The forecast for today was a bit dicey at best, but things were OK after we ate, so we headed off to do some birding in the Rockport area. First up was a check of some coastal marshlands. We enjoyed the classic wetland species like **Reddish Egret, Little Blue Heron, Seaside Sparrow, Forester's Tern**, and more. It began to drizzle a little bit, but we toughed it out and headed for an inland reservoir which hosted loads of birds. We added many new trip birds like **Lesser Scaup, Eared Grebe, Bronzed Cowbird, Loggerhead Shrike, American Kestrel, and Western Cattle Egret**. After this, we headed back to the hotel, grabbed our luggage and began our transfer south towards Kingsville. However, since the weather was still cooperating for the most part, we headed to Sunset Lake, a small strip of habitat underneath a large bridge crossing. We made our way through the park with frequent stops to scan and check for shorebirds. Our efforts yielded **Long-billed Curlew, Sanderling, Semipalmated Plover, Semipalmated and Western Sandpipers, and American Avocet**. It was just about lunch time, and the rain was coming fast, so we loaded up, and headed off. By now, it was storming and the rain poured down. There were no real chances for birding. We made the several-hour drive to Kingsville. When we arrived, it felt almost like a hurricane with heavy rain and intense winds! Nothing to do but call it a day and wait for dinner. Even by dinner, the weather had not let up but we braved the conditions to enjoy a tasty meal together and rest before an early start to tomorrow.



*Everyone loves the alien-like **Roseate Spoonbill**.*

Day 4, 28th March 2025. King Ranch and transfer south

It was an early morning with a quick breakfast at the hotel before departure in the dark. We rolled into the meeting place at the King Ranch headquarters about 30 minutes before sunrise and got checked in for a full day exploring the Norias division of their property. As we waited for the rest of our group to arrive, we heard and then spotted a few **Pauraque** as they got their last activity in before bed. We loaded up and made the 45-minute transfer to the Norias division. Thankfully the storms from the previous day had subsided and it looked like a beautiful day to bird King Ranch. Right away we were greeted by **Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**, **Brewer's Blackbird**, and **Golden-fronted Woodpecker**. As we approached the restrooms, a **Greater Roadrunner** shot across the road and a pair of **Hooded Orioles** were nestbuilding in their usual palm tree. We notched several other nice species here like **Couch's Kingbird**, **Curve-billed Thrasher**, **Lark Sparrow**, **Wild Turkey**, and **Western Meadowlark**. Once everyone was set, we headed off to our first stop in an old growth oak forest. It was a bit quiet here, but eventually we came across a small mixed flock of **Northern-Beardless Tyrannulet**, **Yellow-throated Warbler**, **Black-crested Titmouse**, and **Audubon's Oriole**. Along the road we managed to get into a nice group of sparrows which contained **Grasshopper**, **Lark**, **Vesper**, and **Savannah Sparrows**, not to mention the many **Scissor-tailed Flycatchers** in the background and a stunning **Pyrrhuloxia** along the fence row. As we pulled into the lunch site, we spotted a few new trip species like **Summer Tanager** and **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, before we enjoyed a tasty lunch provided by the King Ranch staff.



Pyrrhuloxia is a real desert scrub specialist.

As we finished up lunch, we heard some nice activity nearby, so we got up and sorted through a great mixed flock. In it were **Black-and-white** and **Hooded Warblers**, **Yellow-throated Vireo**, **Blue-grey Gnatcatcher**, and the top highlight of the trip, **Tropical Parula**. King Ranch is one of the only places in the US to reliably see **Tropical Parula** and we had to work a bit to get a look at

this one, but we all managed to with some patience. It was time to make the long drive back out of the Norias division as we had ventured deep into the property. On our way out, we enjoyed a real show as a male **Bronzed Cowbird** was giving his best efforts to impress a nearby female. The puffed-up collar and bright red eye didn't do the trick and sadly the female flew off unimpressed, but the rest of us were quite impressed. We said our goodbyes to the group and left King Ranch behind and made the several-hour drive to McAllen and into the Lower Rio Grande Valley. We got to the hotel, checked in, took a little break, and then headed for dinner. Of course, when in the valley the birding is never over. After dinner we checked the nearby neighborhoods before sunset and enjoyed finding **Clay-colored Thrush**, **Plain Chachalaca**, **Yellow-crowned** and **Black-crowned Night-Herons** in the front yards. Eventually we heard our main target, a large group of **Red-crowned Amazons**. We managed to get in the car and track them to some nearby power lines where the group gathered and became 120+ individuals. What a way to cap off a long and amazing day of birding!

Day 5, 29th March 2025. Lower Rio Grande Valley birding

This morning, we slept a little bit after a long day yesterday, ate breakfast, and headed off for our first full day birding the LRGV! Our first stop was a small area near the University of Texas RGV. It was humid and hazy this morning and the storm from the previous day really had a major impact on the valley. As we drove along, we noticed a tremendous amount of flooding, and it even washed out some roads. However, it didn't slow down our birding efforts, and we began the day with a valley special, **Green Parakeet**! A perfect way to start off the day as we checked off the second member of the parrot family. We then headed off to Resaca de la Palma State Park for our first real taste of birding in the area and the incredible state parks in south Texas. Sadly, the usual feeding stations in the parking lot were flooded out, but we still ventured around the building and began to check off targets like **Green Jay**, **White-tipped Dove**, **Olive Sparrow**, **Tropical Kingbird**, and **Long-billed Thrasher**. Once we got our fill here, we headed off to a special viewing area near Laguna Atascosa. As soon as we pulled in, an **Aplomado Falcon** flew right by and over our heads! That was easy. We waited a little bit to see if we could get another good view but to no avail. We continued along the highway, crossed the bridge, and enjoyed lunch on South Padre Island.

The South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center is a great place to look for migrants as well as walk some boardwalk trails through estuary habitat, so we headed there after lunch for a few hours. Migration was a bit slow in front near the water feature, but we still enjoyed **Myrtle** and **Hooded Warblers**, **Orchard Oriole**, and **White-eyed Vireo**. We decided to hit the boardwalks and enjoyed the plethora of waterbirds like **Green**, **Little Blue**, and **Tricolored Herons**, **Snowy Egret**, **Roseate Spoonbill**, **Common** and **Purple Gallinules**, **Sora**, **Black-bellied Whistling-Duck**, and **Neotropic Cormorant**. By now, we were hot and needed to cool off, so we headed to the nearby store for some cold drinks and a drive in the nice air conditioning of our car as we made our way to Estero Llano Grande State Park. This was our final birding stop for the day, one of the best places to bird in all the valley. We made our way down to the pond area first and scanned from there. We noted **Least Grebe**, **Least Bittern**, **Blue-winged Teal**, and **Great Kiskadee**. The nearby feeders hosted **Buff-bellied** and **Ruby-throated Hummingbirds**, and **Plain Chachalaca**. From here, we went off to explore the tropical zone of Estero. We took a short loop hike and explored around the camper area where we noted **Golden-fronted Woodpecker**, **Altamira Oriole**, **Black-crested Titmouse**, and **Clay-colored Thrush**. The water drip feature was buzzing with activity, so we decided to park ourselves on the bench nearby and wait to see what dropped in for a drink and a

bath. Several nice migrants were utilizing this feature like **Worm-eating** and **Nashville Warblers**, **Ovenbird**, and even a lingering **Winter Wren** made a visit. We were tired and hungry by now, so we packed our things and headed for dinner and the hotel to call it a day.



*The colorful **Green Jay** was a fan favorite and a special species of South Texas.*

Day 6, 30th March 2025. More LRGV birding

It was a beautiful morning today, so we ate breakfast and headed off for the National Butterfly Center to explore the grounds and trails. We started off strong, adding **Ladder-backed Woodpecker**, which somehow eluded us all day yesterday, to our list. As we continued along, we were treated to some excellent views of **Audubon's**, **Altamira**, and **Hooded Orioles**, a great show for these color species! It was a good day for raptor migration as well and we noted many **Broad-winged Hawks** circling overhead. Eventually we arrived at the back where some bird feeders were set up but empty. The birds didn't know this though and still tried to visit the area, so we sat down and enjoyed **Plain Chachalaca**, **Long-billed Thrasher**, **Inca Dove**, and **Green Jay**. After a solid morning, we ventured back towards the river section of the park and made it only as far as the canal as the recent flooding prevented us from going further to the actual Rio Grande River. That was OK though as we picked up **Cave Swallow** and **Eastern Phoebe** here. We left the butterfly center and headed off to Anzalduas Park, located right on the Rio Grande. We made several stops throughout the park and scanned the river, peered over into Mexico, and noted a few nice species like **Gull-billed** and **Caspian Terns**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Black-necked Stilt**, and **Long-billed Dowitcher**. The highlight though was when a pair of **Muscovy Ducks** flew down river just long enough for us to catch a glimpse! It was getting hot, and we were getting hungry, so it was time for lunch and some air conditioning.

For the afternoon, we made the journey over to the Edinburgh Scenic Wetlands, an enjoyable little park with some larger bodies of water to check. We had a pleasant couple of hours birding here and noted **Indigo Bunting**, **Least Grebe**, **Ring-necked** and **Ruddy Ducks**, **Great Kiskadee**, **Couch's Kingbird**, **Orange-crowned Warbler**, and a rare female **Lazuli Bunting**. It was hot and humid at this point, and we all needed a break, so we headed back to the hotel to rest and then enjoyed a tasty dinner together.



This Plain Chachalaca became territorial when another male was nearby.

Day 7, 31st March 2025. Bentsen and Falcon Dam State Parks

On our final morning in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, we only had two real targets left, both kingfishers. That was our goal, so we loaded up the vehicle and headed back to the Edinburgh Scenic Wetlands. This morning, we fared better than yesterday afternoon and, after a little searching, managed to find a **Green Kingfisher** as it flew around some water edges. Of course, we enjoyed the other species on offer here, like **Long-billed Thrasher**, **Olive Sparrow**, **Indigo Bunting**, and **Least Grebe**. With one target down, we headed off for Bentsen State Park to spend the rest of the morning. It was such a nice morning that we decided to walk the beginning portion of the park and took the road towards the water overlook. We spotted several great birds along the way like **Altamira Oriole**, **Harris's Hawk**, **Ladder-backed Woodpecker**, **Green Jay**, and **Clay-colored Thrush**. When we made it to the water, we set up the scope and scanned to see what was perched around and what might fly by. Across the water was a stunning **Grey Hawk**, a new species for the trip, as well as **Osprey**, **Anhinga**, and **Belted Kingfisher**. Finally, we heard a loud rattle call, and a pair of **Ringed Kingfishers** flew by! We managed to get one into the scope for some better views of its massive bill. With the kingfishers in the bag and a bonus hawk, we flagged down the tram here and enjoyed a ride back to the visitor's center and our car. It was getting late and hot, so we took a break for a quick lunch and some fuel for our drive towards Zapata.

After a few hours, we pulled into Falcon Dam State Park for a short break and squeezed some more birding in. It was toasty outside so our birding efforts, hiking around, didn't last too long. We managed to pick up some new species for the trip like **Black-throated** and **White-crowned Sparrows**, **Northern Bobwhite**, and **Bullock's Oriole**. The rest of our time we spent birding from the vehicle and the cool air conditioning. We checked out the water here and found **Northern Mockingbird**, **Greater Roadrunner**, and **Pyrhuloxia**. After this, we made the rest of the journey to Zapata, checked into our hotel, and then headed off for dinner and a rest before our long day of birding tomorrow.



*The adorable **Least Grebe** is a South Texas specialty and was great to see.*

Day 8, 1st April 2025. Santa Margarita Ranch

Today was a real treat for us as we had special access to bird on Santa Margarita Ranch, a private piece of land on the Rio Grande River, full of spectacular birding! There were many potential targets for us here, including some rarities for the US. We grabbed an early and quick breakfast and then hit the road to arrive at the ranch just before sunrise to meet up with our local guide who would be escorting us today. He entered the security code and we crossed the huge boarder wall to get closer to the Rio Grande River. We spent the first few morning hours scanning from up on the bluffs. Our efforts proved fruitful, with some nice birds like **Red-billed Pigeon**, **Muscovy Duck**, **Lesser Scaup**, **Least Sandpiper**, **Caspian Tern**, **Green** and **Ringed Kingfishers**, and a low flying **Zone-tailed Hawk**. Throughout the morning, we noticed the many migrating **Swainson's Hawks** and a few of us managed to get onto a very distant **Hook-billed Kite** mixed into the raptor movement. As we packed up to head out to the next spot, we spotted a few **Chihuahuan Ravens**, another new species for us, goofing around on the boarder wall.

We loaded up in the car and headed down into the riparian zone to search for our main target. Luckily, we didn't have to search for them, as this now famous family of **Brown Jays** were waiting for us, asking if we had brought them any food. We set up the feeders, sat down for our own lunch, and enjoyed eating with some excellent birds. **Brown and Green Jays, Audubon's and Altamira Orioles, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, and Olive Sparrow** all made visits to the feeder area. After everyone was satisfied, we moved deeper into the riparian habitat. Here we connected with another rare bird nesting in this area, **Rose-throated Becard**. Both the male and female made some quick appearances, and we managed some solid views despite them being up high and in the tangles. As we made our way out, we noticed a few stunning red birds, **Summer Tanager** and **Vermillion Flycatcher**, just amazing! We still had a little time left to explore the desert scrub habitat away from the river. Ryan took us to some good spots, and we picked up several new species for our trip list, like **Scaled Quail, Verdin, Black-tailed Gnatcatcher, Bewick's Wren, and Cassin's Sparrow**. We said goodbye to Ryan and thanked him for our tour through Santa Margarita Ranch! Just before we hit the highway, we heard the loud calls of a **Cactus Wren**. We quickly hopped out and enjoyed this charismatic bird, a great cap to the ranch.

Our birding efforts for the day weren't yet complete. We took a short break because of the heat and then met up again for a little evening pre-dinner birding around Zapata. Down by the river we managed to pick up **Black Phoebe** and **Gadwall**. We had one final target for the day and one more place to check. We pulled into the local park in Zapata and amazingly our target appeared right away in the reeds by the water, **Morelet's Seedeater**! This was another difficult species and specialty of this region. Time to celebrate with dinner and some sleep, after a long, hot day of productive birding with a total of nearly 100 species for the day!



*This family of **Brown Jays** has taken a liking to Santa Margarita Ranch recently.*

Day 9, 2nd April 2025. Transfer to hill country and bat viewing

After such a long day of birding yesterday, we all enjoyed a much more leisurely morning today, with breakfast at the hotel. The plan for today was a long transfer out of the valley and into the Texas hill country, with one or two birding stops along the way. We loaded our luggage and set off. Our first stop was a local park in Laredo along the US/Mexico border. There was a large **Cliff Swallow** colony under the international bridge. After explaining to border patrol what we were looking at, we moved on to another area of the park and found **Clay-colored Sparrow**, **Grey Hawk**, **Mexican Duck**, and **Couch's Kingbird**. We kept moving and checked out another local park on the north side of Laredo. It was a lovely place, and we picked up several new species including **Bell's Vireo**, **Black-chinned Hummingbird**, and **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**. We also scored our best views yet of **Ringed Kingfisher**, we all got kicks out of this, considering the effort we had put in for this species only a few days prior. Time for lunch and then a few hours in the car before arriving in Uvalde, where we checked in to our hotel and had a short break.

This evening we had some big plans with a few bats, but first was a little more birding. We made our way over to Garner State Park. It was a pleasant evening, and we drove around exploring this large park as quickly as we could. We made several stops when we heard or saw something, and we managed to pick up **Eastern Bluebird**, **House Finch**, and **Ash-throated Flycatcher**. We found a nice patch of maple habitat, so we got out to explore and managed to find a **Golden-cheeked Warbler** rather quickly! It was great to have some incredible views and get this huge hill country target under our belt. We moved on to the Concan Frio bat cave for the real show of the evening. We waited patiently by the cave entrance and, just around sunset, millions of **Mexican Free-tailed Bats** began to pour out of the cave! It is the second largest mammal congregation in the world. Several raptors like **Merlin** and **Red-tailed Hawk** were waiting around to snag some tasty bats before bed. This was truly a spectacle and one of the top highlights.



*It was great to catch up with a **Golden-cheeked Warbler** while in the Texas hill country.*

Day 10, 3rd April 2025. Lost Maples and more hill country

Today was fully dedicated to exploring the Texas hill country and all this new habitat and region had to offer us. There were several new targets for us, including one major one. We began at Lost Maples State Park, and we knew it would be a great day when we spotted a **Golden-cheeked Warbler** from the entrance parking lot. We gathered some intel from the visitor center and headed off towards one of the trails for a short hike, but we didn't get far. A small flock of **Cedar Waxwings** was perched near the road and allowed for some great views, along with a **Yellow-throated Vireo** nearby. At the trailhead we noted **Chipping Sparrow** and **Hutton's Vireo**. It was a great morning for a hike, so we ventured on and ticked **White-eyed Vireo**, **Northern Parula**, and **Rufous-crowned Sparrow** along the way. We eventually came to some nice scrub habitat where we could search for our main target, **Black-capped Vireo**. Thankfully, this time of year these birds are noisy. It wasn't long before we heard one and then spotted it. We spent some time with this **Black-capped Vireo**, really taking in the sharp contrast of its white and black, before heading back to the vehicle. On our way out we heard the unmistakable call of a **Canyon Wren** echoing throughout the valley. We managed to track it down and got some views of it singing from the rocks.

The rest of our time at Lost Maples was spent at a small bird feeder blind. Several nice species came in while we watched, such as **Woodhouse's Scrub-Jay**, **Lesser Goldfinch**, **Scott's Oriole**, and **Black-chinned Hummingbird**. Just outside of the blind, we found a few **Eastern Phoebes** nesting under the nearby structures. After a fantastic morning of birding, it was time for lunch. The remainder of the afternoon was spent at South Llano River State Park. By now it was getting hot, and the bird activity had dropped off, so we spent our time going to various feeder stations. We managed to find a few new trip birds like **Brown Thrasher** and **Spotted Towhee**, plus several other nice species like **Orange-crowned Warbler**, **Bewick's Wren**, and **Black-throated Sparrow**. From here we headed off to Kerrville for dinner, and our hotel for the night.



Black-capped Vireo has quite a striking contrast between head and body.

Day 11, 4th April 2025. Fredericksburg and back to Corpus Christi

At this point we were extremely thin on potential targets for new trip species. We cleaned up along the coast, in the valley, and in the hill country. After some digging for targets, we hatched a plan for the day and set off to a nearby local park in Kerrville. Here we managed to find both **Blue Jay** and **Carolina Chickadee**, adding two more species to our list. We had a little spare time today, so we ventured over to Fredericksburg to allow those who wanted to visit the National Museum of the Pacific War a chance to do so. The rest of us went birding around the area and managed to find two more new trip birds, **Downy Woodpecker** and **American Robin**, as well as a **Red Fox** at the nearby cemetery. It was time to start making the long drive back to Corpus Christi with a few stops around the San Antonio area after lunch. Woodlawn Lake netted us a lingering **Greater White-fronted Goose** plus **Egyptian Goose**, an established species here. One final stop at some city powerlines had us on another established exotic, **Monk Parakeet**. These birds like to nest in the power grids of the city and form colonies. This was our final new species for the day; we made the rest of the few hours' drive from San Antonio to Corpus Christi for our final dinner together.



*This **Golden-fronted Woodpecker** has a subtle beauty that is to be admired.*

Day 12, 5th April 2025. Final birding and transfer to airport

On our final morning, we all had late afternoon flights, leaving the morning for birding. The forecast was a little spotty, so we tried to dodge the rain a bit. We also seriously lacked targets for new trip birds and we were scraping the bottom of the barrel after a very successful trip. We checked a few tidal spots at Mustang Island and managed a few **Marbled Godwits** out on the flats, new for the trip! As we cruised along the road we spotted a nighthawk, strangely flying mid-morning over the fields. We tracked it down and managed some distant views of this **Lesser Nighthawk**, another new one! The migrant traps were slow, so we decided to finish the trip at the Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, where we had started the trip. Thus, we could tie a nice bow on everything and come full circle. As we walked out on the boardwalk we spotted a tall pink bird out in the water, but this one wasn't a spoonbill, it was an **American Flamingo**, incredible! The usual suspects were also present, but it was hard to get over this amazing bird as our final new trip bird. What a way to cap things off! We headed to the Corpus Christi airport to say goodbye, after what was certainly an incredible tour of south Texas!



*This rare **American Flamingo** was quite a surprise on our final day of birding!*

Bird List - Following IOC (15.1)

The following notation after species names is used to show conservation status following BirdLife International: CE = Critically Endangered, EN = Endangered, VU = Vulnerable, NT = Near Threatened.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Flamingos (Phoenicopteridae)	
American Flamingo	<i>Phoenicopus ruber</i>
Oystercatchers (Haematopodidae)	
American Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>
Stilts and Avocets (Recurvirostridae)	
Black-necked Stilt	<i>Himantopus mexicanus</i>
American Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>
Plovers (Charadriidae)	
Grey Plover - VU	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>
American Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis dominica</i>
Killdeer	<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>
Semipalmated Plover	<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>
Wilson's Plover	<i>Anarhynchus wilsonia</i>
Sandpipers, Snipes (Scolopacidae)	
Hudsonian Whimbrel	<i>Numenius hudsonicus</i>
Long-billed Curlew	<i>Numenius americanus</i>
Marbled Godwit - VU	<i>Limosa fedoa</i>
Long-billed Dowitcher	<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>
Short-billed Dowitcher - VU	<i>Limnodromus griseus</i>
Spotted Sandpiper	<i>Actitis macularius</i>
Lesser Yellowlegs - VU	<i>Tringa flavipes</i>
Willet	<i>Tringa semipalmata</i>
Greater Yellowlegs	<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>
Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>
Stilt Sandpiper	<i>Calidris himantopus</i>
Sanderling	<i>Calidris alba</i>
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>
Least Sandpiper	<i>Calidris minutilla</i>
Pectoral Sandpiper	<i>Calidris melanotos</i>
Western Sandpiper	<i>Calidris mauri</i>
Semipalmated Sandpiper	<i>Calidris pusilla</i>
Gulls, Terns, Skimmers (Laridae)	

Common Name	Scientific Name
Black Skimmer	<i>Rynchops niger</i>
Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica</i>
Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>
Forster's Tern	<i>Sterna forsteri</i>
Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>
Royal Tern	<i>Thalasseus maximus</i>
Laughing Gull	<i>Leucophaeus atricilla</i>
Franklin's Gull	<i>Leucophaeus pipixcan</i>
Ring-billed Gull	<i>Larus delawarensis</i>
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
American Herring Gull	<i>Larus smithsonianus</i>
Loons (Gaviidae)	
Common Loon	<i>Gavia immer</i>
Anhingas, Darters (Anhingidae)	
Anhinga	<i>Anhinga anhinga</i>
Cormorants, Shags (Phalacrocoracidae)	
Neotropic Cormorant	<i>Nannopterum brasilianum</i>
Double-crested Cormorant	<i>Nannopterum auritum</i>
Ibises, Spoonbills (Threskiornithidae)	
American White Ibis	<i>Eudocimus albus</i>
White-faced Ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>
Roseate Spoonbill	<i>Platalea ajaja</i>
Hérons, Bitterns (Ardeidae)	
Least Bittern	<i>Botaurus exilis</i>
Yellow-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nyctanassa violacea</i>
Black-crowned Night Heron	<i>Nycticorax nycticorax</i>
Little Blue Heron	<i>Egretta caerulea</i>
Tricolored Heron	<i>Egretta tricolor</i>
Reddish Egret	<i>Egretta rufescens</i>
Snowy Egret	<i>Egretta thula</i>
Green Heron	<i>Butorides virescens</i>
Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Western Cattle Egret	<i>Ardea ibis</i>
Great Blue Heron	<i>Ardea herodias</i>
Pelicans (Pelecanidae)	
American White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i>
Brown Pelican	<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>
New World Vultures (Cathartidae)	
Black Vulture	<i>Coragyps atratus</i>
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
Ospreys (Pandionidae)	
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Kites, Hawks, Eagles (Accipitridae)	
Hook-billed Kite	<i>Chondrohierax uncinatus</i>
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Astur cooperii</i>
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus hudsonius</i>
Harris's Hawk	<i>Parabuteo unicinctus</i>
White-tailed Hawk	<i>Geranoaetus albicaudatus</i>
Grey Hawk	<i>Buteo plagiatus</i>
Red-shouldered Hawk	<i>Buteo lineatus</i>
Broad-winged Hawk	<i>Buteo platypterus</i>
Swainson's Hawk	<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>
Zone-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo albonotatus</i>
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
Kingfishers (Alcedinidae)	
Green Kingfisher	<i>Chloroceryle americana</i>
Ringed Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle torquata</i>
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>
Woodpeckers (Picidae)	
Golden-fronted Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes aurifrons</i>
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus varius</i>
Ladder-backed Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates scalaris</i>
Downy Woodpecker	<i>Dryobates pubescens</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Caracaras, Falcons (Falconidae)	
Crested Caracara	<i>Caracara plancus</i>
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
Aplomado Falcon	<i>Falco femoralis</i>
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
African & New World Parrots (Psittacidae)	
Monk Parakeet	<i>Myiopsitta monachus</i>
Red-crowned Amazon - EN	<i>Amazona viridigenalis</i>
Green Parakeet	<i>Psittacara holochlorus</i>
Tyrant Flycatchers, Calyptura (Tyrannidae)	
Northern Beardless Tyrannulet	<i>Camptostoma imberbe</i>
Eastern Phoebe	<i>Sayornis phoebe</i>
Black Phoebe	<i>Sayornis nigricans</i>
Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>
Vermilion Flycatcher	<i>Pyrocephalus obscurus</i>
Great Kiskadee	<i>Pitangus sulphuratus</i>
Tropical Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus melancholicus</i>
Couch's Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus couchii</i>
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	<i>Tyrannus forficatus</i>
Ash-throated Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus cinerascens</i>
Brown-crested Flycatcher	<i>Myiarchus tyrannulus</i>
Tityras, Becards, Sharpbill (Tityridae)	
Rose-throated Becard	<i>Pachyramphus aglaiae</i>
Vireos, Greenlets, Shrike-babblers (Vireonidae)	
Hutton's Vireo	<i>Vireo huttoni</i>
Yellow-throated Vireo	<i>Vireo flavifrons</i>
White-eyed Vireo	<i>Vireo griseus</i>
Bell's Vireo	<i>Vireo bellii</i>
Black-capped Vireo	<i>Vireo atricapilla</i>
Shrikes (Laniidae)	
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Crows, Jays (Corvidae)	
Brown Jay	<i>Cyanocorax morio</i>
Green Jay	<i>Cyanocorax luxuosus</i>
Blue Jay	<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>
Woodhouse's Scrub Jay	<i>Aphelocoma woodhouseii</i>
Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Chihuahuan Raven	<i>Corvus cryptoleucus</i>
Waxwings (Bombycillidae)	
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>
Tits, Chickadees (Paridae)	
Black-crested Titmouse	<i>Baeolophus atricristatus</i>
Carolina Chickadee	<i>Poecile carolinensis</i>
Penduline Tits (Remizidae)	
Verdin	<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>
Swallows, Martins (Hirundinidae)	
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>
Purple Martin	<i>Progne subis</i>
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
American Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>
Cave Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon fulva</i>
Goldcrests, Kinglets (Regulidae)	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Corthylio calendula</i>
Wrens (Troglodytidae)	
Cactus Wren	<i>Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus</i>
Canyon Wren	<i>Catherpes mexicanus</i>
Marsh Wren	<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>
Bewick's Wren	<i>Thryomanes bewickii</i>
Carolina Wren	<i>Thryothorus ludovicianus</i>
Winter Wren	<i>Troglodytes hiemalis</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Northern House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>
Gnatcatchers (Polioptilidae)	
Blue-grey Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila caerulea</i>
Black-tailed Gnatcatcher	<i>Polioptila melanura</i>
Mockingbirds, Thrashers (Mimidae)	
Northern Mockingbird	<i>Mimus polyglottos</i>
Brown Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>
Long-billed Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma longirostre</i>
Curve-billed Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma curvirostre</i>
Starlings, Rhabdornises (Sturnidae)	
Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Thrushes (Turdidae)	
Eastern Bluebird	<i>Sialia sialis</i>
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>
Clay-colored Thrush	<i>Turdus grayi</i>
Old World Sparrows, Snowfinches (Passeridae)	
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Finches, Euphonias (Fringillidae)	
House Finch	<i>Haemorhous mexicanus</i>
Lesser Goldfinch	<i>Spinus psaltria</i>
New World Sparrows (Passerellidae)	
Cassin's Sparrow	<i>Peucaea cassinii</i>
Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>
Olive Sparrow	<i>Arremonops rufivirgatus</i>
Black-throated Sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>
Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>
Clay-colored Sparrow	<i>Spizella pallida</i>
White-crowned Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>
Seaside Sparrow	<i>Ammospiza maritima</i>
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>
Lincoln's Sparrow	<i>Melospiza lincolni</i>
Swamp Sparrow	<i>Melospiza georgiana</i>
Rufous-crowned Sparrow	<i>Aimophila ruficeps</i>
Spotted Towhee	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>
Oropendolas, New World Orioles, Blackbirds (Icteridae)	
Western Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>
Scott's Oriole	<i>Icterus parisorum</i>
Audubon's Oriole	<i>Icterus graduacauda</i>
Altamira Oriole	<i>Icterus gularis</i>
Bullock's Oriole	<i>Icterus bullockii</i>
Hooded Oriole	<i>Icterus cucullatus</i>
Orchard Oriole	<i>Icterus spurius</i>
Red-winged Blackbird	<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>
Bronzed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus aeneus</i>
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>
Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>
Boat-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus major</i>
Great-tailed Grackle	<i>Quiscalus mexicanus</i>
New World Warblers (Parulidae)	
Ovenbird	<i>Seiurus aurocapilla</i>
Worm-eating Warbler	<i>Helmitheros vermivorum</i>
Blue-winged Warbler	<i>Vermivora cyanoptera</i>
Black-and-white Warbler	<i>Mniotilta varia</i>
Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Leiothlypis celata</i>
Nashville Warbler	<i>Leiothlypis ruficapilla</i>
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>
Hooded Warbler	<i>Setophaga citrina</i>
Northern Parula	<i>Setophaga americana</i>
Tropical Parula	<i>Setophaga pitiauyumi</i>
Myrtle Warbler	<i>Setophaga coronata</i>
Yellow-throated Warbler	<i>Setophaga dominica</i>
Golden-cheeked Warbler - EN	<i>Setophaga chrysoparia</i>

Common Name	Scientific Name
Cardinals & Allies (Cardinalidae)	
Summer Tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>
Northern Cardinal	<i>Cardinalis cardinalis</i>
Pyrrhuloxia	<i>Cardinalis sinuatus</i>
Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>
Lazuli Bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>
Tanagers & Allies (Thraupidae)	
Morelet's Seedeater	<i>Sporophila moreletii</i>
Total Recorded	236

Mammal List

Common Name	Scientific Name
Squirrels and Relatives (Sciuridae)	
Easetern Grey Squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>
Fox Squirrel	<i>Sciurus niger</i>
Rabbits and Hares (Leporidae)	
Black-tailed Jackrabbit	<i>Lepus californicus</i>
Eastern Cottontail	<i>Sylvilagus floridanus</i>
Free-tailed Bats (Molossidae)	
Mexican Free-tailed Bat	<i>Tadarida brasiliensis</i>
Canids (Canidae)	
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Armadillos and allies (Daypodidae)	
Nine-banded Armadillo	<i>Dasypus novemcinctus</i>
Raccoons and Relatives (Procyonidae)	
Northern Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>
Oceanic Dolphins (Delphinidae)	
Common Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>
Peccary (Tayassuidae)	
Collared Peccary	<i>Dicotyles tajacu</i>
Deer, Elk, Mooses (Cervidae)	
White-tailed Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>
Total	11