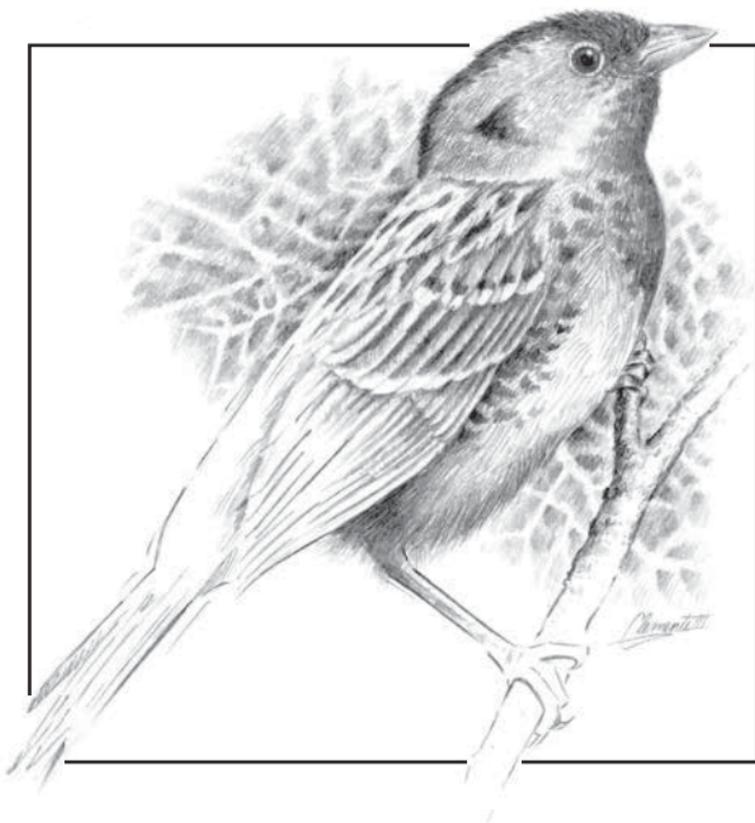


TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

BIRDS

OF

LAKE MINERAL WELLS STATE PARK & TRAILWAY



A FIELD CHECKLIST

2015

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

INTRODUCTION

Lake Mineral Wells State Park, 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 & 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 190 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 and updated by David L. Owens. The co-compilers gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of the park staff 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

- Sp Spring (March – May)
- S Summer (June – August)
- F Fall (September – November)
- W Winter (December – February)

- 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	S	F	W
_____ Black-bellied Whistling-Duck.....	U	U	U	U
_____ 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
_____ Canvasback	R		R	U
_____ 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
_____ American White Pelican	R			F
_____ * 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

	Sp	S	F	W
_____ + Turkey Vulture	C	C	C	C
_____ 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
_____ Sora	U		U	R
_____ American Coot	C	R	C	C
_____ Sandhill Crane.....	O		F	
_____ Black-necked Stilt	O		O	
_____ American Avocet.....	O		O	
_____ Black-bellied Plover			O	
_____ * Killdeer	C	C	C	F
_____ Greater Yellowlegs.....			R	
_____ Willet	O		O	
_____ 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
_____ Least Tern	O	O		
_____ Forster's Tern.....	U		U	U
_____ Rock Pigeon.....	U	U	U	U
_____ + Eurasian Collared-Dove	O	O	O	O
_____ + Inca Dove	U	U	U	U
_____ * White-winged Dove	F	F	F	F
_____ * Mourning Dove.....	C	C	C	F
_____ * Yellow-billed Cuckoo	C	C	F	
_____ + Greater Roadrunner.....	U	U	U	U

	Sp	S	F	W
_____ + Barn Owl	O	O	O	O
_____ + 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	
_____ 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
_____ American Kestrel.....	F		F	F
_____ Peregrine Falcon			O	
_____ Olive-sided Flycatcher	R		R	
_____ Eastern Wood-Pewee.....	R	R		
_____ Least Flycatcher.....	U	/U	U	
_____ Empidonax 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	

	Sp	S	F	W
_____ * 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
_____ Brown Creeper.....	F			F
_____ * Canyon Wren	U	U	U	U
_____ House Wren	F		F	R
_____ Winter Wren.....			U	U
_____ Marsh Wren	U		U	U
_____ * Carolina Wren.....	C	C	C	C
_____ * Bewick's Wren	C	C	C	C
_____ 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
_____ + Brown Thrasher.....	U	U	U	U
_____ * Northern Mockingbird.....	C	C	C	C
_____ American Pipit	R		R	
_____ Cedar Waxwing	C			C
_____ European Starling	F	U	F	U
_____ Black-and-white Warbler	U		U	
_____ Prothonotary Warbler	O	R		
_____ Orange-crowned Warbler.....	U		U	U
_____ Nashville Warbler	F		F	
_____ Mourning Warbler	R		R	
_____ Common Yellowthroat.....	U		U	U
_____ American Redstart.....	O			
_____ Magnolia Warbler	O			
_____ Yellow Warbler.....	U		U	
_____ Yellow-rumped Warbler	F		F	F
_____ Black-throated Green Warbler	U		U	
_____ Wilson's Warbler	U		U	
_____ Yellow-breasted Chat.....	R			
_____ Spotted Towhee.....	C		U	C

	Sp	S	F	W
_____ Eastern Towhee	O		O	O
_____ * Rufous-crowned Sparrow	U	U	U	U
_____ Chipping Sparrow	R			
_____ Clay-colored Sparrow.....	U			
_____ * Field Sparrow	C	U	C	C
_____ 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
_____ * Summer Tanager.....	F	F	F	
_____ * 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., Theresa A. Risdon, and David L Owens. April 2015. Birds of Lake Mineral Wells State Park: a field checklist. Natural Resources Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

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