

San Antonio Audubon Society

AUDUBON NEWS

A Conservation and Birding Club since 1954

Volume 63, Number 3

May/June 2017

Hooded Warbler By Mike Scully

Inside this issue:

Field Trips	2,3
Field Trip Recaps	3
Monthly Meetings	4
New Members	5
Intl Migratory Bird Day	6
SAAS-Y Notes	7

Here in Texas we are blessed each spring with waves of migrant songbirds that pass through our state, including more than 30 species of warblers. The majority of these beautiful birds move on to more northerly breeding grounds. Among those warblers that do remain to breed, the Hooded Warbler (*Setophaga citirina*) surely ranks among the prettiest. Finding this spritely warbler amid the dense understory of our East Texas woodlands is always a joy.

When the sweet song of the male comes ringing through the shadows, patience will most often reveal an active little bird, bright yellow below and olive above, flashing white outer tail feathers as it darts about after flying insects. The males have a yellow face surrounded by a distinctive

black hood, which is variable in extent and often absent on the females. Hooded Warblers are a characteristic bird of the moist understory of our



Hooded Warbler by Lora Render

Southeast forests, occupying a breeding range extending eastward from East Texas across the Old South, and up the Atlantic seaboard as far as Southern New York State. In the interior, the range extends from Northern Florida north to Western New York State and adjacent parts of Southern Quebec. It encompasses much of Ohio and Southern Indiana and Illinois, and up the Mississippi Valley to Wisconsin.

For most of my lifetime, the Hooded Warbler was placed in the genus *Wilsonia* alongside the outwardly similar Wilson's and Canada Warblers. All three are fly-catching warblers inhabiting dense deciduous understory or

brush, those latter two species breeding in more northern climes. In recent years, DNA analysis has rearranged our bird guides considerably; despite outward appearances, the Hooded Warbler is now placed together with most of our familiar warblers in the genus *Setophaga*, while the Wilson's and Canada warblers have been placed in the primarily Mexican and Central American genus *Cardellina*.

The winter range of the Hooded Warbler extends from East Central Mexico south to Venezuela. The species is especially numerous in winter on the Yucatan Peninsula. It is common among North American warblers for the two sexes to occupy somewhat different habitats in winter. This tendency is especially developed in the Hooded Warbler. Wintering males preferentially occupy more mature forests while females inhabit more open second growth and brush. Hooded Warblers defend territories against conspecifics all year round, and it was believed that the socially dominant wintering males simply excluded females from mature forest areas. Experiments have since shown that the two genders also possess an innate preference for their particular habitat and that winter survival rates are similar for each.

On the breeding grounds, the Hooded Warbler is a forest edge species, foraging amid the wooded understory characteristic of these habitats. As such, the species has been able to weather the modern fragmentation of our forests relatively well. Yet, though an edge species, Hooded Warblers have few behavioral defenses against nest parasitism by cowbirds, suggesting that originally the clearings and streamside edges they favor were most often surrounded by unbroken forests, therefore unsuitable for cowbirds.

(Continued on p. 5)

SAN ANTONIO AUDUBON CALENDAR: MAY/JUNE

Please call the trip leaders if you have questions. Last-minute changes to field trips will be posted at saudubon.org, www.facebook.com/saadubon/ or sent by email through SATX Birds. Please arrive early.

Tuesday, May 2, 8:00 AM

Avenue A

Meet leader Lora Reynolds (210/414-0792) in the parking lot on Red Oak, which intersects with Mulberry in Brackenridge Park. Bring water. It is a good time for migration in San Antonio

Saturday, May 6, 7:30 AM—Note earlier starting time

Junction Hotspots & The Big Sit

We will be birding with Rhandy Helton around Junction, including several hotspots and the state park. South Llano State Park is having a Big Sit that day, so we plan to join in the fun. For those wanting to attend, contact leader Helen Rejzek (hmr78253@gmail.com). Space is limited. More info when you sign up.

Wednesday, May 10, 8:00 AM

O. P. Schnabel Park

Meet leaders Georgina Schwartz (210/342-2073) and Helen Rejzek (hmr78253@gmail.com) at the large pavilion parking lot inside the park, 9606 Bandera Rd. Drive in the main entrance and continue straight until the road ends. Take a left and follow a short distance until you see the Graff Pavillion. We will start here and walk along the creek bed looking for migrants.

Saturday, May 13, 8:00 AM

SAAS Beginners' Bird Walk

Meet leader Georgina Schwartz (210/342-2073) at the Judson Nature Trails, 246 Viesca Street. From the 5900 block of Broadway, turn west on Ogden Street and drive to the stop sign at Greeley Street. You'll see sign to Judson Nature Trails. Turn left, go one block and turn right on Viesca, then into parking lot on left.

Tuesday, May 16, 8:00 AM

Crescent Bend Nature Park

Meet leader Sandi Wheeler (wheels5683@gmail.com) in the parking lot of the park. From San Antonio, take IH-10 east to the FM 1518 exit and go north toward Schertz. Look for a brown park sign at Schafer Road. Turn right and go 3 miles to the park. Entrance will be on your left before Cibolo Creek. Bring water.

Tuesday, May 30, 8:00 AM

Salado Creek Greenway Trail

Meet guides Barbara, Margie and Georgina at the trailhead parking lot near the old farmhouse on Voelcker Lane next to Hardberger Park (East). From Blanco Road, enter Longfield, the street next to Blanco BBQ, and turn left at the stop sign. Where the road ends, turn right onto Voelcker Lane into the park. Drive to the parking lot, where you'll see a port-a-potty. We plan to walk the Salado Creek Greenway for about an hour and return. Please carry water, as it will get hot. Info at 210/342-2073.

Sunday, June 4, 7:30 AM—note earlier starting time

Hill Country State Natural Area

Meet leader Zachary Tonzetich (210/232-3670 or (zachary.tonzetich@gmail.com) outside the headquarters of the park. The park is located on the outskirts of Bandera, TX. From Bandera, travel south on State Highway 173 (a left at the intersection with Hwy 16), go across the Medina River and continue for approximately 1/4 mile to State Highway 1077. Turn right and go 10 miles on Ranch Road 1077 to end of the blacktop. Continue on the caliche road and follow the park signs to the park headquarters. There is a \$6 entrance fee unless you have a Texas State Parks Pass. Bring plenty of water and allow for travel time. The drive is approximately 50 minutes from Helotes, TX. We will have lunch in Bandera if there is interest.

Saturday, June 10, 7:30 AM—note earlier starting time

SAAS Beginners' Bird Walk

Please see directions for May 13 walk.

Sunday, June 11, 7:30 AM—note earlier starting time

Crescent Bend Nature Park

Please see directions for May 16 walk.

Saturday, June 17, 8:00 AM

Haggard Ranch and Potluck Lunch

Meet Metha at her ranch in south Bexar County. Go south on I-35 about 4 miles south of Loop 1604. Take Exit 137 (Shepherd Road); go left over the bridge, then left on the northbound access road. Drive 0.5 mile to the entrance gate (cattle guard). After you enter, drive over the second cattle guard and go left at the fork to the house. After birding, we'll have our potluck on the porch overlooking the pond and bird feeders. Bring a sandwich for yourself and a side dish to share. For info, call Metha (210/622-3886.)

SAAS CALENDAR: JUNE (CONTINUED)

Saturday, June 24, 7:00 PM—note evening starting time

Warbler Woods at Night

Join Sandi Wheeler for an evening visit to Don and Susan Schaezler's sanctuary to look and listen for nightjars, nighthawks and owls. Bring a flashlight, insect repellent, chairs and water. To join us for dinner at Siam Cuisine (Thai) in Schertz before the field trip, contact Sandi Wheeler (wheels5683@gmail.com) so she can make a reservation. Directions to Warbler Woods are at warblerwoods.org under the header Contact/Visitor.

The Mindful Birding List of Ethical Birding Guidelines

Mindful of Wildlife: How aware are you of the "bird" in birding? The ethical guidelines presented here focus on increasing awareness of the needs of birds and on minimizing disturbance to wildlife.

Putting the Birds First: The birds' welfare is the highest priority.

Awareness of the Lives and Needs of Birds: Disturbance can keep birds from their nests, leaving chicks hungry or enabling predators to take eggs or young. Migrants may be tired and hungry and should not be kept from resting or feeding.

Noticing Bird Behavior: If you are approaching birds, and they adopt an upright alarmed posture, it is time to stop and allow them to settle back down. Do not harass birds by flushing.

Dress, Posture, and Lessening Your Impact: In no-hunt areas, blend in with your surroundings. Wear neutral-colored clothing. Keep movements slow and steady rather than fast or sporadic. No approaching nests, roosts, and display areas. Share your lunch only with other humans.

Use of Audio Playback, Laser Pointers, Pishing, etc.: Refrain from using audio playback.

Photography: Refrain from using flash when photographing birds. When photographing birds, study their reaction and if they become agitated, back off.

This article is excerpted from www.mindfulbirding.org. Please visit their website to read more.



SAAS FIELD TRIP RECAPS

View in-depth field trip reports at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SATXbirds/> and search using the message numbers below.

Palmetto State Park, 2/25

Led by Karen Moulder. Message #: 24588. Species: 34. Highlights: Zone-tailed Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker.

Stone Oak Park, 3/1

Led by Bill Zwartjes. Species: 31. Highlights: Greater Yellowlegs, Say's Phoebe.

Judson Nature Trails, 3/11

Led by Georgina Schwartz. Message #: 24618. Species: 20. Highlights: Wood Duck, Snowy Egret.

Land Heritage Institute, 3/18

Led by Alan and Patsy Kuentz. Message #: 24629. Species: 36. Highlights: Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Eastern Bluebird.

Friedrich Wilderness Park, 3/22

Led by Helen Rejzek. Message #: 24636. Species: 19. Highlights: Hutton's Vireo, Golden-cheeked Warbler.

Crescent Bend Nature Park, 3/28

Led by Sandi Wheeler. Message #: 24640. Species: 37. Highlights: Barred Owl; Scissor-tailed Flycatcher; Black-chinned Hummingbird and Field, Lark, White-crowned, White-throated, Vesper and Lincoln's Sparrow.

Judson Nature Trails, 4/8

Led by Georgina Schwartz. Message #: 24655. Species: 23. Highlights: Little Blue Heron

Love Creek Preserve, 4/9

Led by Ryan Smith. Message #: 24654. Species: 45. Highlights: Black-capped Vireo, Golden-cheeked Warbler, Yellow-throated Vireo, Yellow-throated Warbler, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Summer Tanagers

Maverick Ranch, 4/10

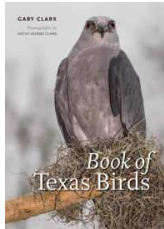
Led by Bebe and Mary Fenstermaker. Message #: 24658. Species: 26. Highlights: Chuck-will's-widow, Red-eyed Vireo and Summer Tanager.

SAAS MEETINGS CALENDAR

Thursday, May 4 • 7:00 PM
San Antonio Zoo Education Center
“The Book of Texas Birds”

Gary Clark and Kathy Adams Clark, Authors

The *Book of Texas Birds* is full of information about more than 400 species of birds in Texas, most of which author Gary Clark has seen firsthand. Written in a conversational tone, the book, which is organized in standard taxonomic order, presents a wide-ranging discussion of each bird’s life history as well as an intimate look at some of its special characteristics and habits. Magnificent photographs by Kathy Adams Clark accompany the entry for each bird.



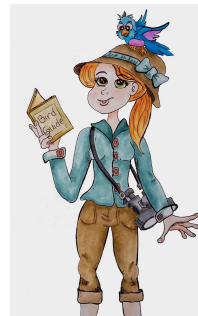
Gary Clark, professor, former dean, and former vice president of Lone Star College–North Harris County, writes the weekly nature column for the *Houston Chronicle* and is the author of six books. Wife **Kathy Adams Clark** owns The Woodlands-based KAC Productions and is past president of the North American Nature Photography Association. Her photographs have appeared in magazines, books, and calendars.

Signed copies of the book will be available for sale at the meeting for \$35 including sales tax, a savings of 20%. You may reserve your copy by emailing Education-Outreach Chair Patsy Inglet at saasforbirds@gmail.com.

Thursday, June 1 • 7:00 PM
San Antonio Zoo Education Center
2015: My Awesome Big Year in Photos
Delaney Kempf, Student

The family that birds together, bonds together. During the year 2015, Delaney Kempf, then a 14-year-old young birder from San Antonio, Texas, set out on a Big Year. She began with the goal not only to see, but to photograph 365 species in Texas—one for each day of the year. So, along with her parents, on January 1st she set out on an amazing year-long journey.

After birding a total of 200 days and driving thousands of miles, she met and exceeded her goal.



With the help of countless friends and fellow birders, Delaney learned all about the wonderful (and sometimes crazy) world of birding.

Delaney is a young birder from San Antonio Texas, as well as a member of the San Antonio Audubon and San Antonio Young Birders Club.

SAAS Monthly Meetings Move to SA Zoo Education Center in May

We’ve heard your concerns about the shortage of parking at our monthly meetings due to the golfing activities at The First Tee, especially in months with a late sunset. We looked for a place that met our needs for parking, seating, and AV equipment, was within our budget, and was convenient and centrally located for our members. We’re happy to announce that our friends at the San Antonio Zoo have offered to let us meet in the Zoo Education Center starting with our May 4 meeting. Please see map on page 5.

We will have access to the **Zoo Alternate Parking Lot** just around the corner from the main entrance to

the zoo. This lot is just a short walk down a brick path to the Education Center. For those with mobility concerns, a parking permit for the few spaces just outside the Education Center will be available. If for some reason all these parking spaces are taken, there is ample parking in the Zoo Main Parking Lot near the Train Station.

We are grateful for the support of The First Tee during the past several years. We look forward to our new “Zoo Venue.” We’ll send a reminder about this change by email just before the May meeting and include a map of parking lots and the meeting location.

Hooded Warbler (Continued from p. 1)

For the most part a trans-Gulf migrant, in spring and summer male and female pairs jointly occupy defended breeding territories. However, males frequently make forays into surrounding territories seeking to copulate with other females. Likewise, beyond territorial defense, the males do not specifically guard their mate against the attention of other males. The female builds a nest in low understory and incubates the eggs. While the paternity of her offspring is often open to question, the resident male actively helps feed the young. The fledged brood is often divided between the adults and this time it is the female who often leaves, leading her share of the young some distance away from the breeding territory.

Many nests are lost to predators, but if time remains after the rearing of a first brood, a second brood will be attempted, with Hooded Warblers sometimes singing quite late into the summer. In some species of warblers, the female will usually seek another mate and territory for a second nesting attempt, in genetic terms distributing her offspring between different baskets. Perhaps because the relative promiscuity of the species renders that issue moot, Hooded Warbler females typically remain on the same territory paired to the same male for the second brood.

Contact Mike at: mike.scully@nisd.net

WELCOME NEW SAAS MEMBERS!

Tom and Mary Ann DeKunder
801 Marilyn Drive
Schertz, TX 78154
210/658-8102

Jessica Pomales
7111 Aldebaran Sun
San Antonio, TX 78252
937/321-6128

GOVERNMENT CANYON HIKES

Visit the website for info about the many hikes and programs offered monthly at Government Canyon. Natural Area fees apply. Reservations are required for most activities: www.friendsofbc.org or 210/688-9055

SAN ANTONIO BOTANICAL GARDEN

Visit www.sabot.org or call 210/207-3250. Located at 555 Funston, San Antonio, TX 78209. Bird Walks: Sat., May 20, 9:00 AM. Walks will not take place in June, July or August. Free to SABG members; \$10 non-members

SAAS Moves to the SA Zoo Education Center



International Migratory Bird Day, May 13
Stopover Sites: Helping Birds Along the Way

It can be a long journey between non-breeding sites across the Americas and the Caribbean to nesting sites in the United States and Canada. Annually, for example, a Bobolink can travel as many as 12,500 miles roundtrip (20,000 kilometers) between grasslands and rice fields as far south as Argentina to breeding areas in northern United States and Canada.

Along the way, birds may need to rest and refuel, and the health and safety of these sites is critical to the survival of migratory birds. In 2017, International Migratory Bird Day celebrates the importance of these habitats and encourages everyone to get involved in protecting these areas. Your own backyard may serve as a stopover site, especially if it provides the food, water, and shelter birds need, along with a haven that is safe from threats, such as free-roaming cats and pane glass. Join us this year as we Help Birds Along the Way!

When birds migrate between nesting and wintering sites, they don't just stop anywhere; they rely on a handful of resource-rich and strategically located sites where they may double their body weight as they acquire the energy-rich fat stores needed to fly thousands of kilometers across continents and oceans. These places are known as stopover sites. Some stopover sites are well known, such as along the coasts of Louisiana, New Jersey, and the Upper Bay of Panama, where birds stop after traveling along the

shoreline. Others are inland, such as Venezuela's grasslands, wetlands in the central United States, and even urban parks and backyards.

In 2017, Environment for the Americas and Mitchell Lake Audubon Center—the most important stopover site in the San Antonio area—invite you to join our celebration of the importance of stopover sites and their habitats. Whether you learn about a stopover site near your home, visit one far away, or create a safe place for birds in your backyard, your support can mean a safe journey for a migratory bird.

JOIN THE CELEBRATION!



INTERNATIONAL
MIGRATORY BIRD DAY
AND NATIVE PLANT SALE
AT MITCHELL LAKE AUDUBON CENTER

SATURDAY, MAY 13 | 9AM-2PM | FREE

BIG FESTIVAL FUN FOR EVERYONE

mitchelllake.audubon.org/events



Mitchell Lake Monthly Birding Tours

No reservation necessary

- 1st Sunday: May 7, 8:00 AM & June 4, 7:30 AM
- 2nd Sunday: May 14, 8:00 AM & June 11, 7:30 AM
- 2nd Tuesday: May 9, 8:00 AM & June 13, 7:30 AM
- 3rd Sunday: May 21, 8:00 AM & June 18, 7:30 AM
- 4th Sunday: May 28, 8:00 AM & June 25, 7:30 AM

\$8 for non-members; Free for members

Visit <http://mitchelllake.audubon.org/events> or email mlac@audubon.org or 210/628-1639

CIBOLO NATURE CENTER

Visit www.cibolo.org to view the calendar of events or call 830/249-4614.

Located at 140 City Park Rd., Boerne, TX 78006

SAAS-Y NOTES

SAAS MEMBERSHIP FEES: Please remember that our membership renewal rates have gone up (\$20/individual and \$30/household). See form on page 8.

USED BOOK SALE PAYS OFF: Georgina Schwartz sends thanks to all who gave and bought books at our April 6 meeting. We made \$93 and have lots of books left. Thanks to Debbie Engler, Karen Moulder, Sandy Wilkinson, and Ron Huffman for their help.

FAIRCHILD WARBLERS: I had a call a while back from LaToya Mabry. The Fairchild Warblers were going to have a birthday party for their mentor, Carlotta Hargrove. I went and had a real treat seeing our old birding team all grown up and with little and not so little kids. Charles Franks, Roberta Chase, Catherine Menig, and 5 more whose names I don't recall. Carlotta was surprised when the "kids" gave her a plaque in appreciation for all that she had done for them. If you remember, they birded many years in the Great Texas Birding Classic and brought home a lot of awards. The year was 2001. Some of you will remember. -- Georgina Schwartz

NOTABLE PASSING: Renowned ornithologist, author, educator, and public servant, Chandler S. Robbins, passed away on March 20th in Laurel, Maryland at the age of 98. He was a colleague of Rachel Carson and was best known as lead author of *A Guide to Field Identification: Birds of North America*.

SAAS Board of Directors Meeting Community Meeting Room at the SA Zoo

Thursday • May 25 • 6:00 PM

Thursday • June 22 • 6:00 PM

All are invited. Contact Christine Turnbull for more info: cbsturnbull@hotmail.com

SAN ANTONIO AUDUBON NEWS

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Mailing Labels: Tom Inglet

The newsletter is published bimonthly. Send submissions to editor@saaudubon.org.

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TO VOLUNTEER!**
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SAAS Membership

For those few of you still receiving your SAAS newsletter by U.S. Postal Service, the first line of your mailing label includes your membership type and the date your current membership expires. The date on the label is the only "notice" you will receive; if your membership expires, we must stop sending you the newsletter. Therefore, please pay attention to the expiry data on the label and renew when appropriate. We want you to continue participating in and supporting SAAS efforts.

If you receive the SAAS newsletter by email, you will receive a membership renewal notice by email. You will also have the advantage of receiving the newsletter in color.

Although we no longer mail out a printed membership roster to everyone, a PDF copy is available by email from the membership secretary at

members@saaudubon.org

SAN ANTONIO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC
5150 BROADWAY #257
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78209-5710

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

San Antonio Audubon Society Membership/Renewal Form

New Renewal Gift

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail address _____

How did you hear about us? _____

Please be sure your e-mail address is correct.

Your newsletters will be sent via e-mail unless other special arrangements have been made.

Please check box(s): Individual (\$20 per year)
 Household (\$30 per year)

We need and appreciate your financial support. Please indicate additional donations below.

Donation: Special Projects Fund \$ _____
 Donation: Judson Trails Fund \$ _____
 Donation: General Operating Fund \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: **San Antonio Audubon Society**. Send dues and address changes to:

ATTN: MEMBERSHIP
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5150 BROADWAY #257
SAN ANTONIO TX 78209-5710

Payments can also be made online at: <www.saaudubon.org/membership.html>

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR SAAS EVENTS! (See p. 4)
7 PM, Thursday, May 4, "Book of Texas Birds"
Thursday, June 1, Delaney Kempf, Texas Big Year in 2015