

USACE Natural Resource Management

Migratory Birds



Golden-cheeked Warbler

FAST FACTS

REASONS FOR CURRENT STATUS: This small neo-tropical bird was listed in 1990 as an endangered species. The Golden-cheeked Warbler nests only in the juniper-oak woodlands of central Texas. Habitat loss and degradation were the primary reason for listing of the species. The clearing of old juniper woodlands has decreased and fragmented suitable nesting and foraging habitat while increasing the threat of parasitism by the Brown-headed Cowbird. Additionally, wintering ground loss to timber harvesting and agricultural development threatens the species.

MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION: The Golden-cheeked Warbler requires an area of mature oak-Ashe juniper woodlands. The Ashe juniper (commonly called cedar) bark is an integral and primary nest component. The loose, stringy bark is only found in mature trees.

Management efforts generally focus on the identification and protection of mature juniper stands. Golden-cheeked Warblers will utilize second growth forests if suitable conditions exist; therefore, restoration of mature juniper forests is a priority. (USFWS) Additionally, some areas of central Texas may experience an overpopulation of deer and other native herbivores which may hinder the regeneration of mature oak-Ashe juniper woodlands that the warbler depends upon. The species will also benefit from cowbird control.

HABITAT NEEDS:

- Forest stands typically average about 40 years in age and 20 feet in height, with about 70-percent canopy cover and a tree density of 400 trees/acre.
- Patchy or flat woodlands surrounding ideal breeding habitat can function as a buffer and may serve to protect Golden-cheeked Warbler populations from other land-use practices, including cattle grazing, urban growth, and agricultural practices.
- A woodland buffer of approximately 300 feet around patches of high quality breeding habitat is suggested. (ERDC)

Height: Adult warblers are about 4.5 inches long and weigh only 0.5 ounces. (*All About Birds*)

Color: Adults have a yellow face, with black throat extending as stripes down the sides of the chest. They have a black crown and back with two white wingbars and a white belly. (*All About Birds*)

Migration: Arrives to breeding grounds typically in March departing in August to winter in Mexico and northern Central America. (*USFWS*)

Information and photos from All About Birds, USFWS, Audubon Society, USACE-ERDC

Natural Resource Management (NRM)

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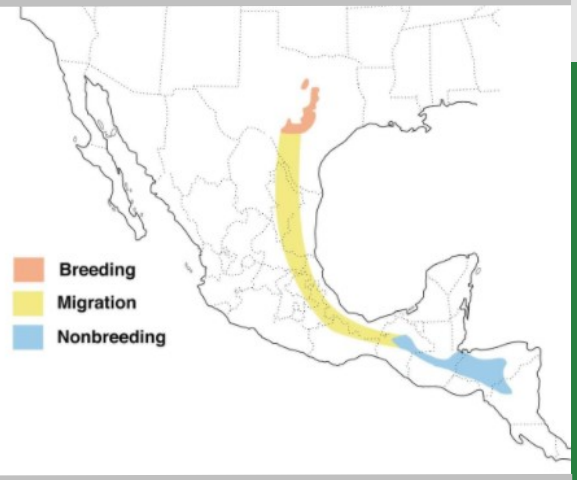
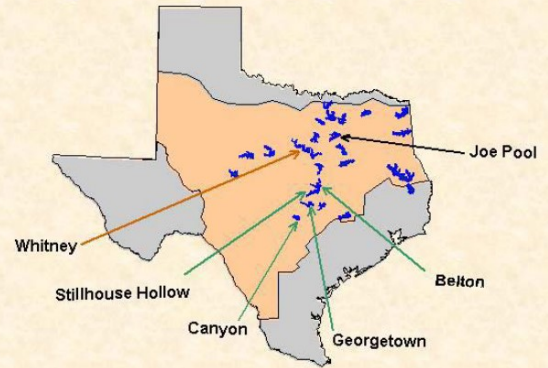


USACE NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROLE: Populations of the Golden-cheeked Warbler have been located within the vicinity of several USACE reservoir projects in central Texas such as Whitney Lake, Joe Pool Lake, and Lake Georgetown. USACE lands provide the opportunity to improve habitat conditions for the species through protection of breeding areas, habitat restoration, and cowbird control.

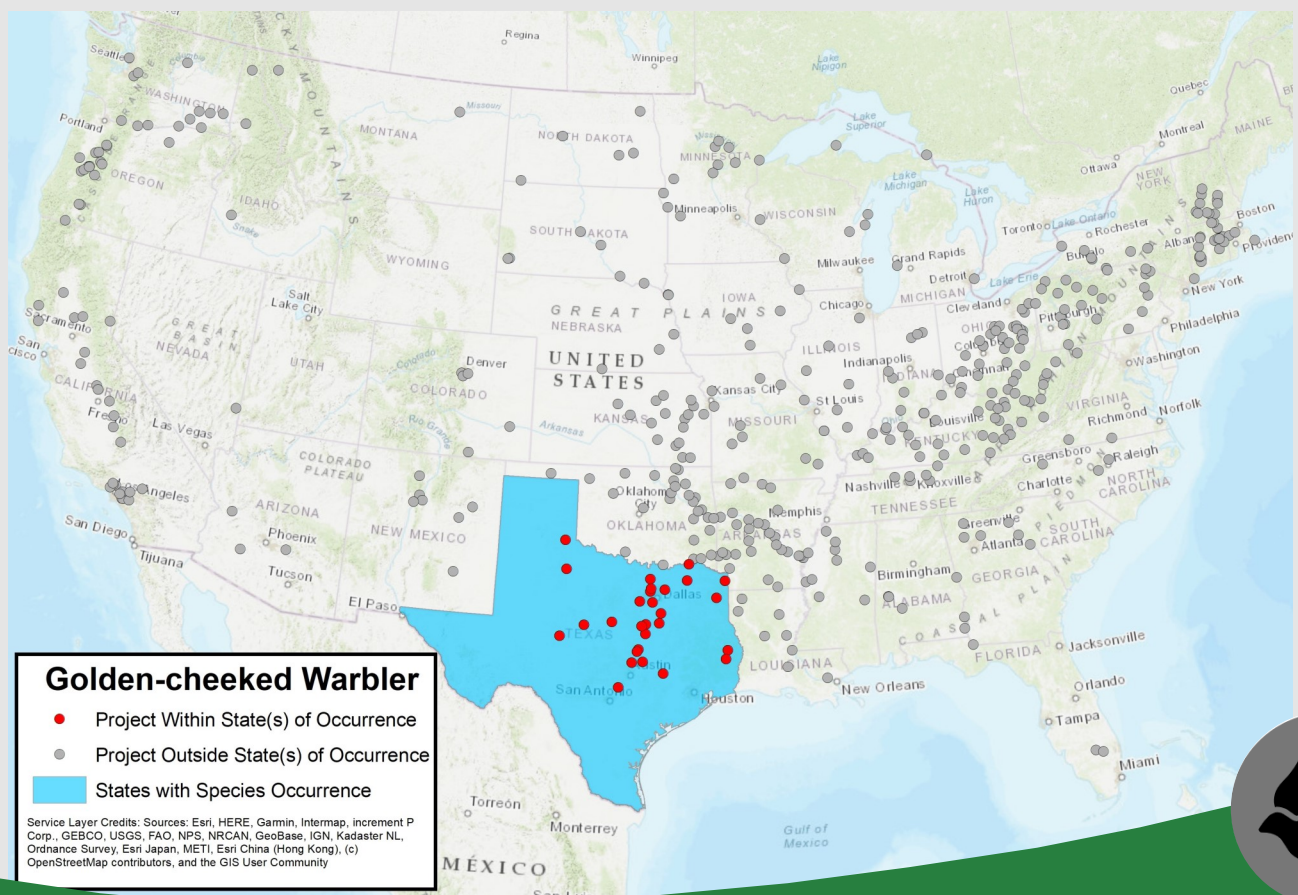
Map Top: Provided by ERDC (Guilfoyle, Michael), this map depicts reservoirs under USACE management in south-central Texas that may support golden-cheeked warblers in addition to the federally listed Black-capped Vireos. Map Bottom: Provided by Birds of the World, this map depicts the breeding, migration, and nonbreeding range of the Golden-cheeked Warbler.

Fort Worth District Reservoirs



WHAT IS USACE NRM DOING:

- 1 The Golden-cheeked Warbler has been found in several areas around Lake Georgetown. USACE personnel have taken special care to protect the birds that are utilizing the land surrounding the lake. The Golden-cheeked Warbler has been found along the Good Water Trail in Cedar Breaks Park. During the nesting season, visitors of the trail are requested to take extra care in being quiet and remaining on developed areas of the trail since the birds are susceptible to disturbance.



Source: Map provided by Ashleigh Boss, ORISE Fellow, Institute for Water Resources

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