

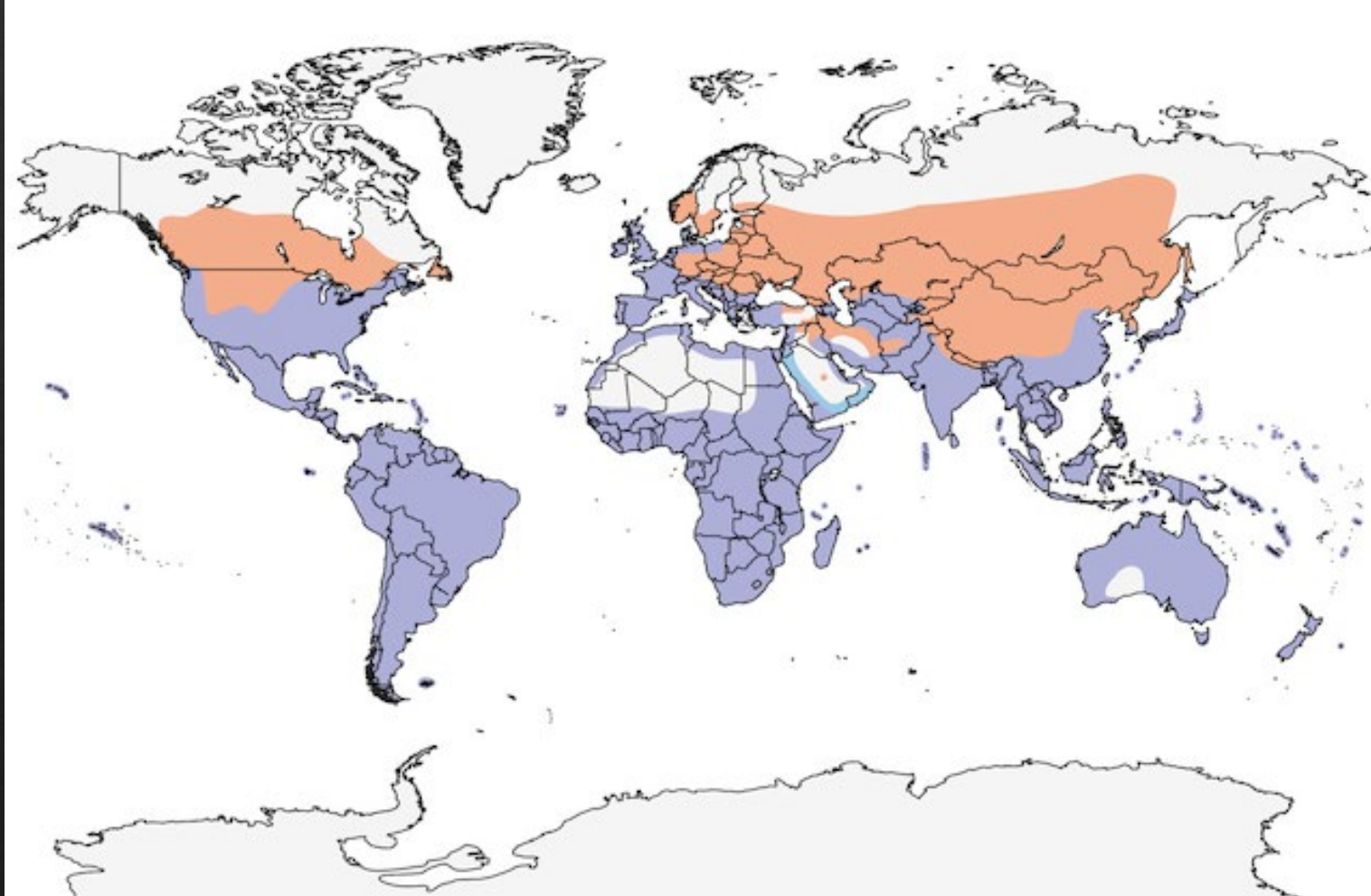
Hérons



Photos by Greg Lavaty

Order: Pelecaniformes

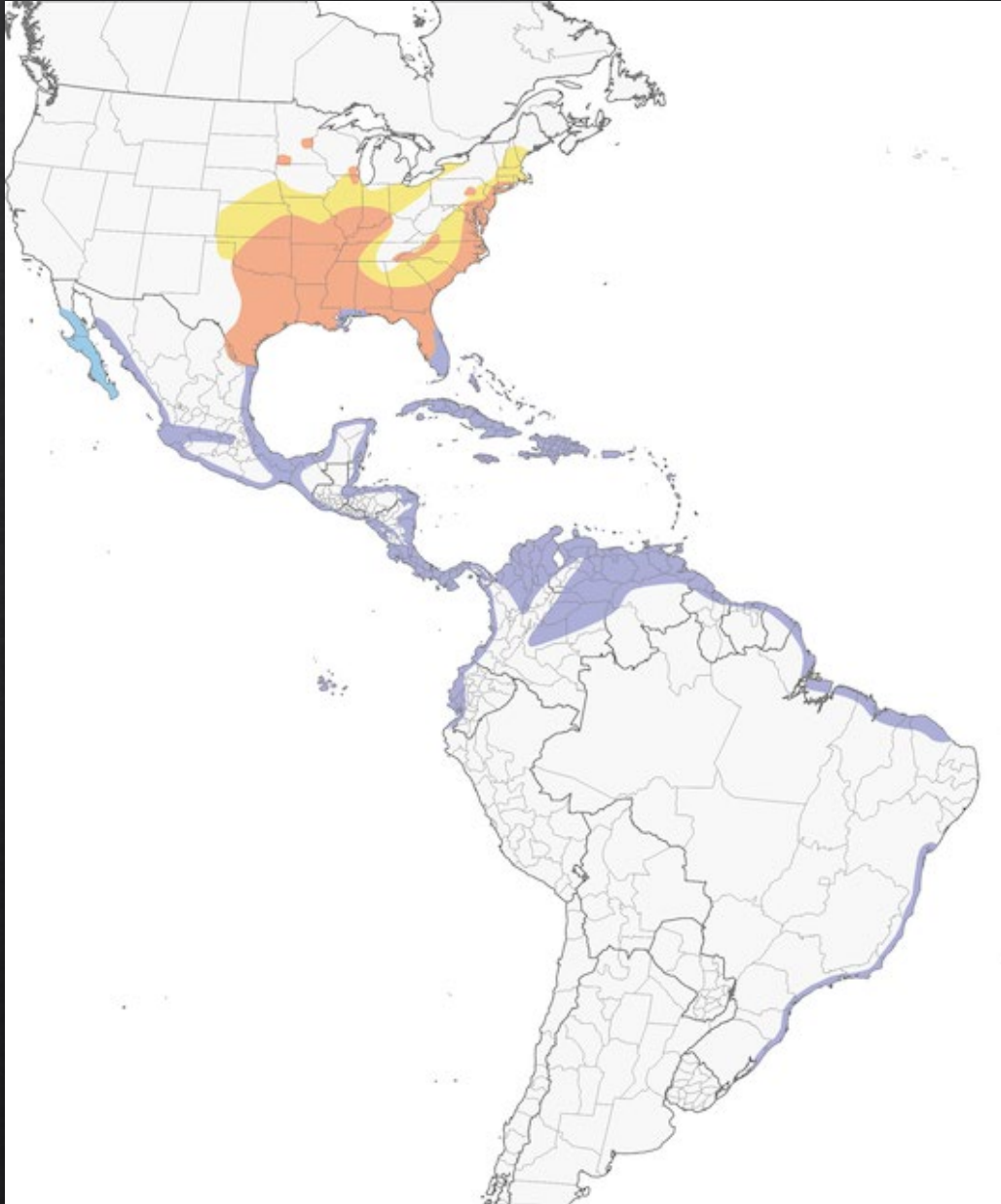
Family: Ardeidae (herons, egrets and bitterns)– 18 genera, 68 species worldwide, 12 species regular in ABA area



Night-Herons



Yellow-crowned Night-Heron



- *Nyctanassa violacea*
- Coastal marshes
- Inland wooded swamps, riparian woodlands
- Most winter in subtropics and tropics

- Central TX – Fairly common in summer, uncommon in winter
- Texas Coast – Common Mar-Oct, uncommon in winter

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron



Adult

- Slate gray body, striped head
- Bill is short, thick, black, and dagger-like
- Heron-like structure and posture

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron



Juvenile

- Dull bluish sheen to body
- Dark bill contrasts with paler face
- Small whitish spots and white edges on wing coverts
- Heron-like structure and posture

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron

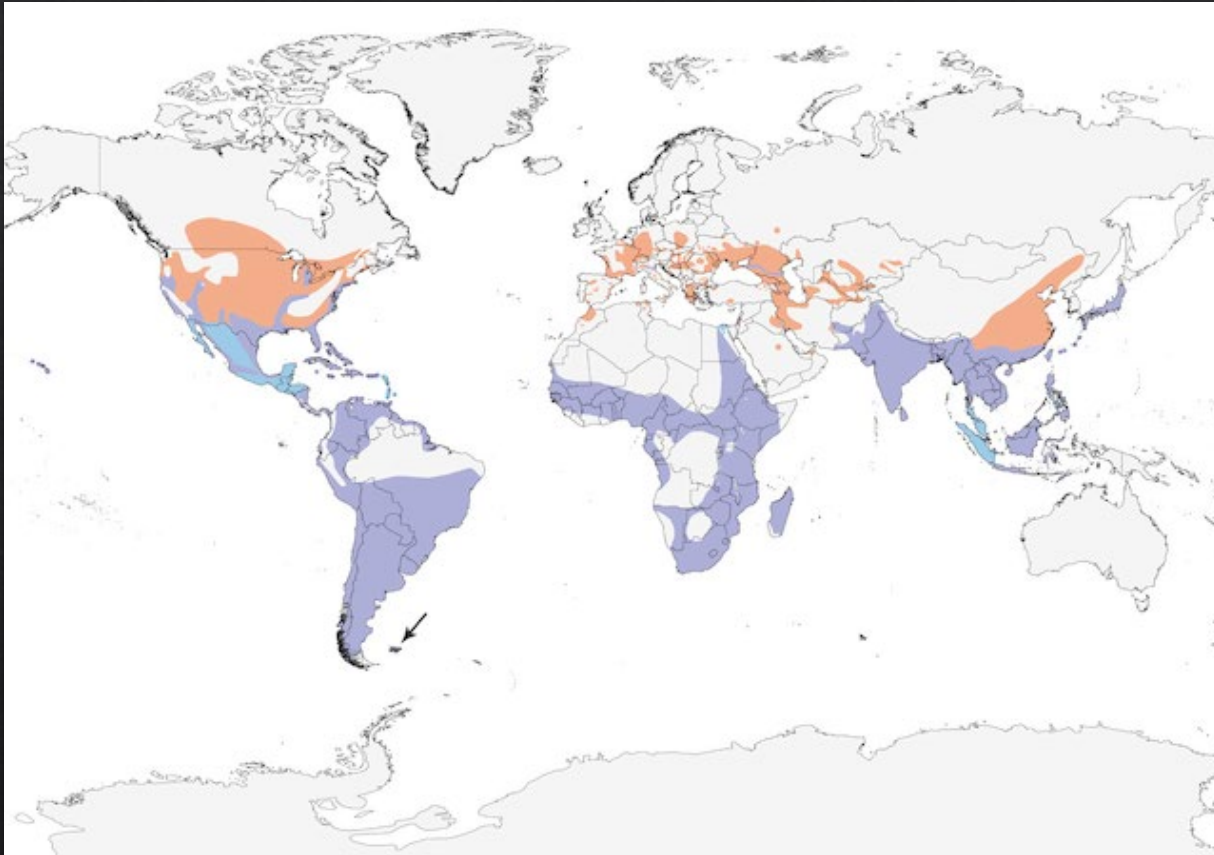


Yellow-crowned Night-Heron



Legs extend well past tail

Black-crowned Night-Heron



- *Nycticorax nycticorax*
- “Waterfront Thug”
- Widespread in fresh and salt water habitats
- Roosts in trees and bushes
- Central TX – Uncommon Aug - Mar
- Texas Coast – Common all year

Black-crowned Night-Heron



Adult

- Pale gray with contrasting dark crown and back
- Stocky, no neck
- Shorter legs and longer, slightly downcurved bill
- Red or orange eye

Black-crowned Night-Heron

Juvenile

- Flat, dull brown color
- Pale lower mandible
- Large white spots on wing coverts
- Note shorter legs, less heron-like structure and posture



Black-crowned Night-Heron



Black-crowned Night-Heron



Only feet extend past tail

Great Blue Heron



Great Blue Heron

Adult

- Largest and heaviest heron
- Grayish overall
- Black head plumes
- Foraging birds stand tall, stationary



Great Blue Heron

Juvenile

- Overall gray
- Black crown



Great Blue Heron

Great White Heron

- Very heavy straight bill



Great Egret



Great Egret

Adult

- Largest white heron
- Long legs and neck
- Black legs and feet
- Bright yellow bill



Great Egret

Stalks slowly with head held high



Snowy Egret



Snowy Egret



Adult

- Dark legs with yellow feet
- Thin black bill, yellow lores

Snowy Egret



Young birds have variably
greenish-yellow legs

Snowy Egret

Active feeder, often crouching
with neck coiled



Western Cattle Egret



Western Cattle Egret

Adult

- Smaller and shorter than Snowy
- Thick neck
- Short yellow bill
- Legs yellow in breeding plumage, dark in nonbreeding



Western Cattle Egret



Juvenile

- Dark bill and legs

Western Cattle Egret

- Struts with head-bobbing action
- Usually in short grass field



Little Blue Heron



Little Blue Heron

Adult

- Dark blue gray overall
- Greenish legs and feet
- Pale base to bill



Little Blue Heron



Little Blue Heron

Juvenile

- Same size as Snowy
- Thicker, tapered, bicolored bill, gray lores
- Dull greenish legs



Little Blue Heron



- Subtle dark tips on primaries

Little Blue Heron



- Year-old birds mottled with gray

Little Blue Heron



Stalks slowly with neck forward and bill angled down

Reddish Egret



Reddish Egret



Adult

- Shaggy plumes
- Rufous head and neck
- Long dark legs, long neck
- Bicolored bill is long and heavy

Reddish Egret



Reddish Egret



Adult

- Shaggy plumes
- Long dark legs, long neck
- Bicolored bill is long and heavy

Reddish Egret



Juvenile

- Dark bill

Reddish Egret

Juvenile

- Dark bill



Reddish Egret



Active, dancing foraging style

Tricolored Heron



Tricolored Heron



Adult

- Very long, slender bill
- Dark breast with clean white belly

Tricolored Heron



Active, dashing foraging style

Tricolored Heron



Juvenile

- Reddish neck and body highlights

Green Heron



Green Heron

Adult

- Very small and stocky, short legs
- Dark rufous neck
- Dark blue green body



Green Heron

Crouches when foraging



Green Heron



Juvenile

- Streaked neck

Green Heron

Short, rounded wings



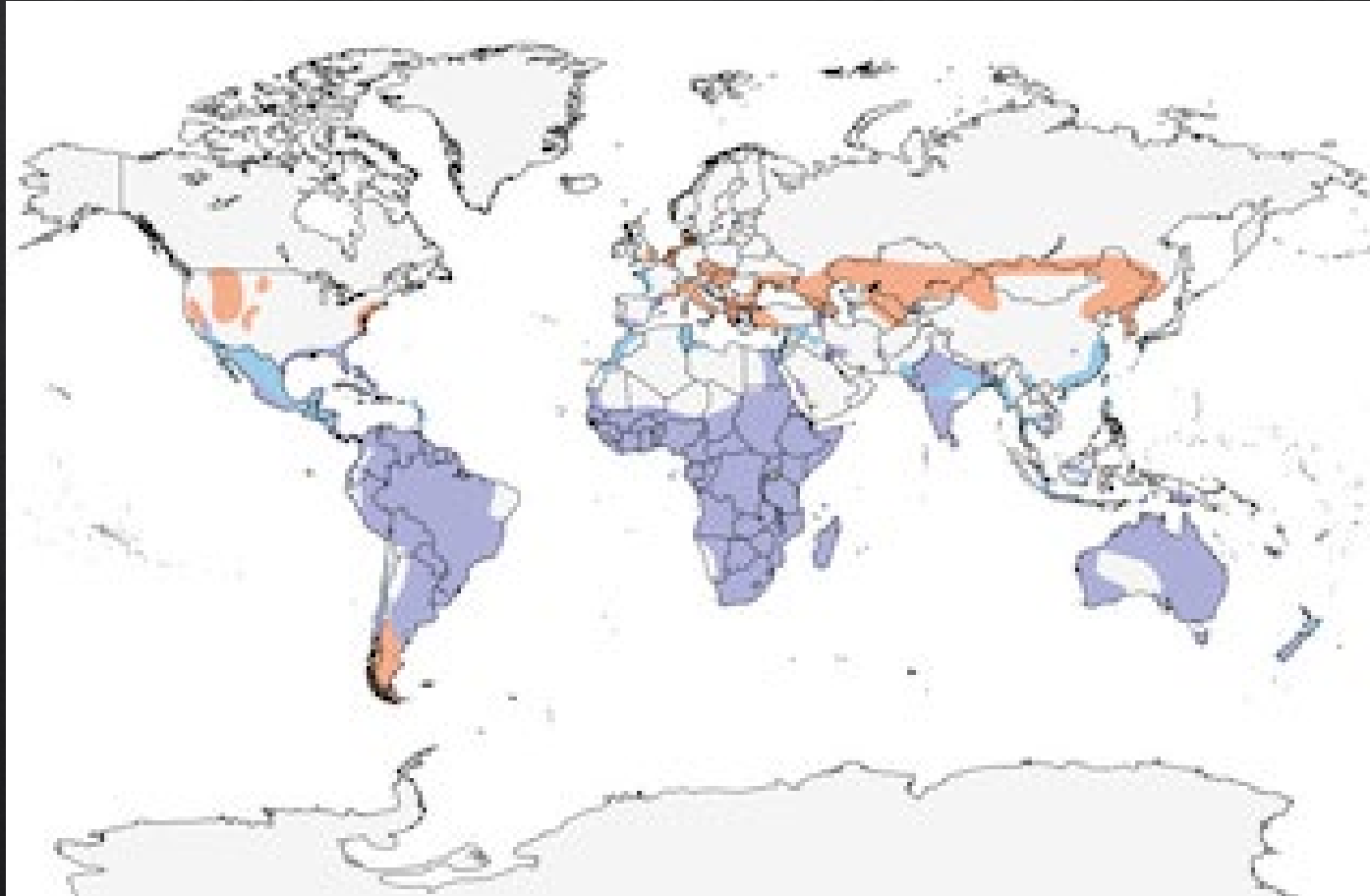
Ibises



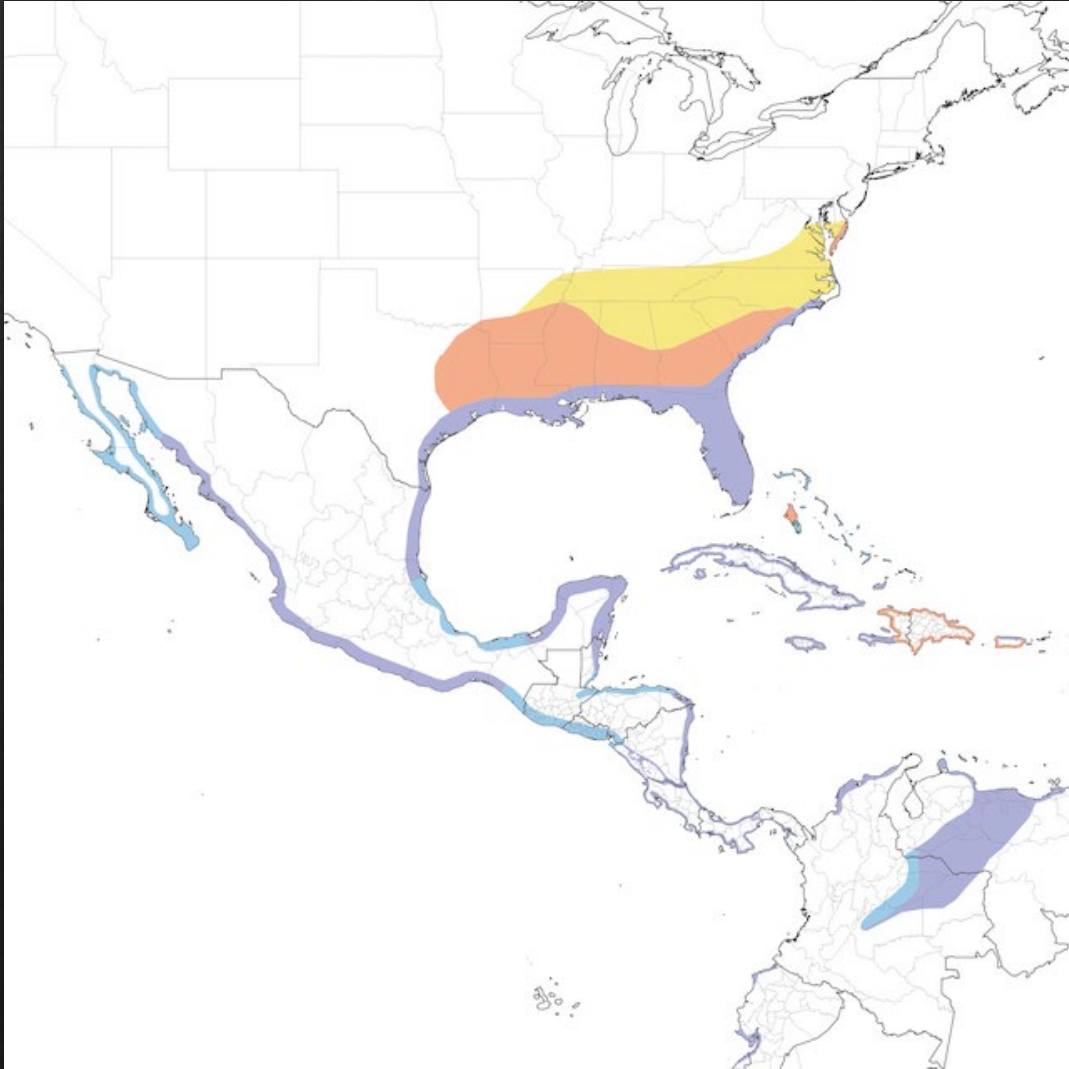
Photos by Greg Lavaty

Order: Pelecaniformes

Family: Threskiornithidae (Ibises and Spoonbills) – 13 genera, 36 species worldwide,
4 species regular in ABA area



White Ibis



- *Eudocimus albus*
- Coastal marshes
- Freshwater marshes and ponds
- Nests in colonies in trees, mangroves and swamps
- Central TX – Uncommon to fairly common July-Oct
- Texas Coast – Common all year

White Ibis

Adult

- All white with black wingtips
- Orange-red bill and legs



White Ibis



White Ibis



Juvenile

- Brown and dingy white
- Orange-pink bill and legs

White Ibis



Juvenile

- White rump

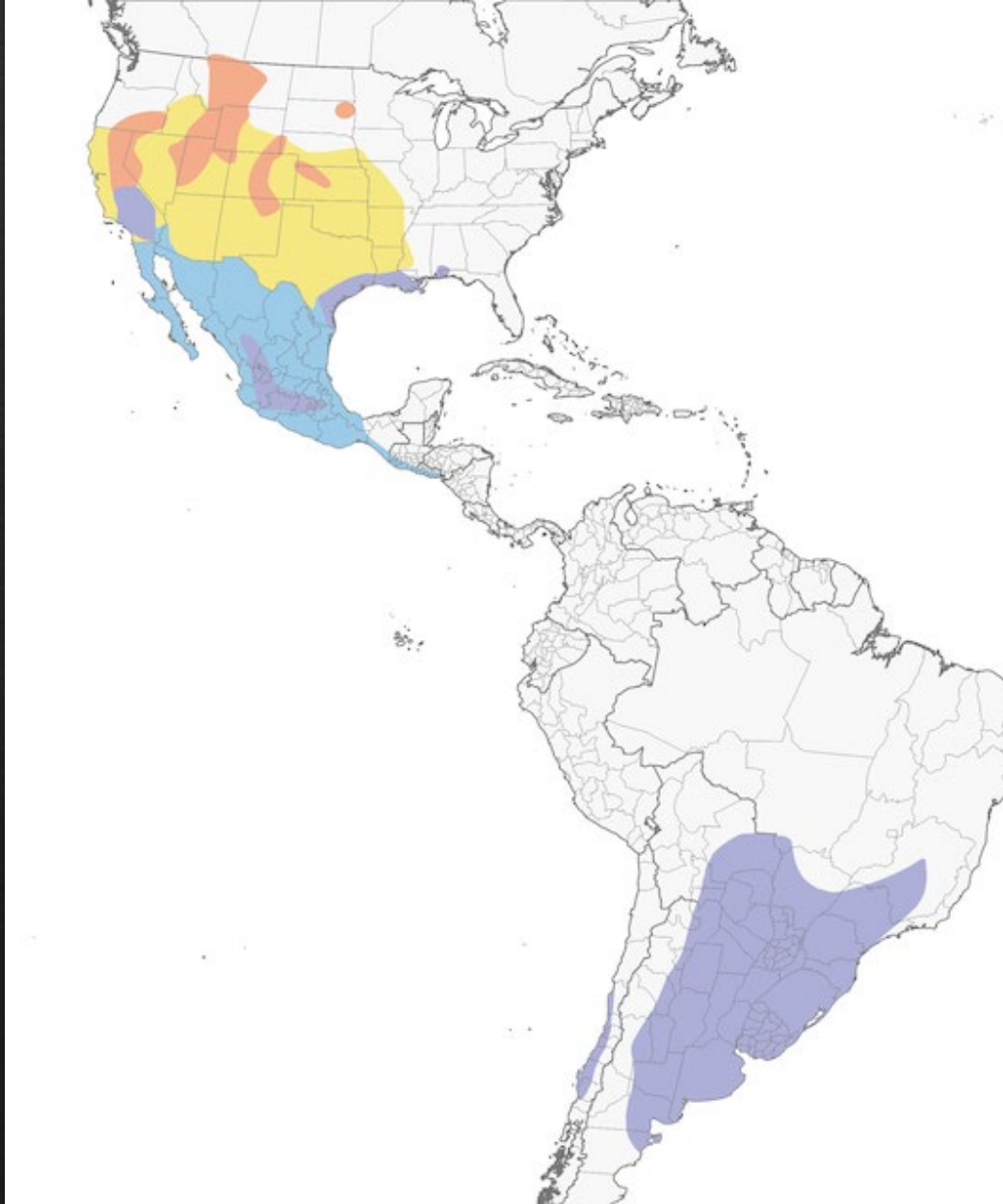
White Ibis



1st Summer

- Gradually molt to adult plumage

White-faced Ibis



- *Plegadis chihi*
- Fresh and salt marshes
- Flooded fields, pastures
- Very social, roosts in large numbers
- Central TX – Uncommon spring migrant, fairly common in fall
- Texas Coast – Common summer resident, uncommon in winter

White-faced Ibis



Breeding

- Full white border around red face
- Red iris
- Greenish wings with golden and rose tones

White-faced Ibis



White-faced Ibis



Non-Breeding Adult

- Duller overall than breeding
- Red iris

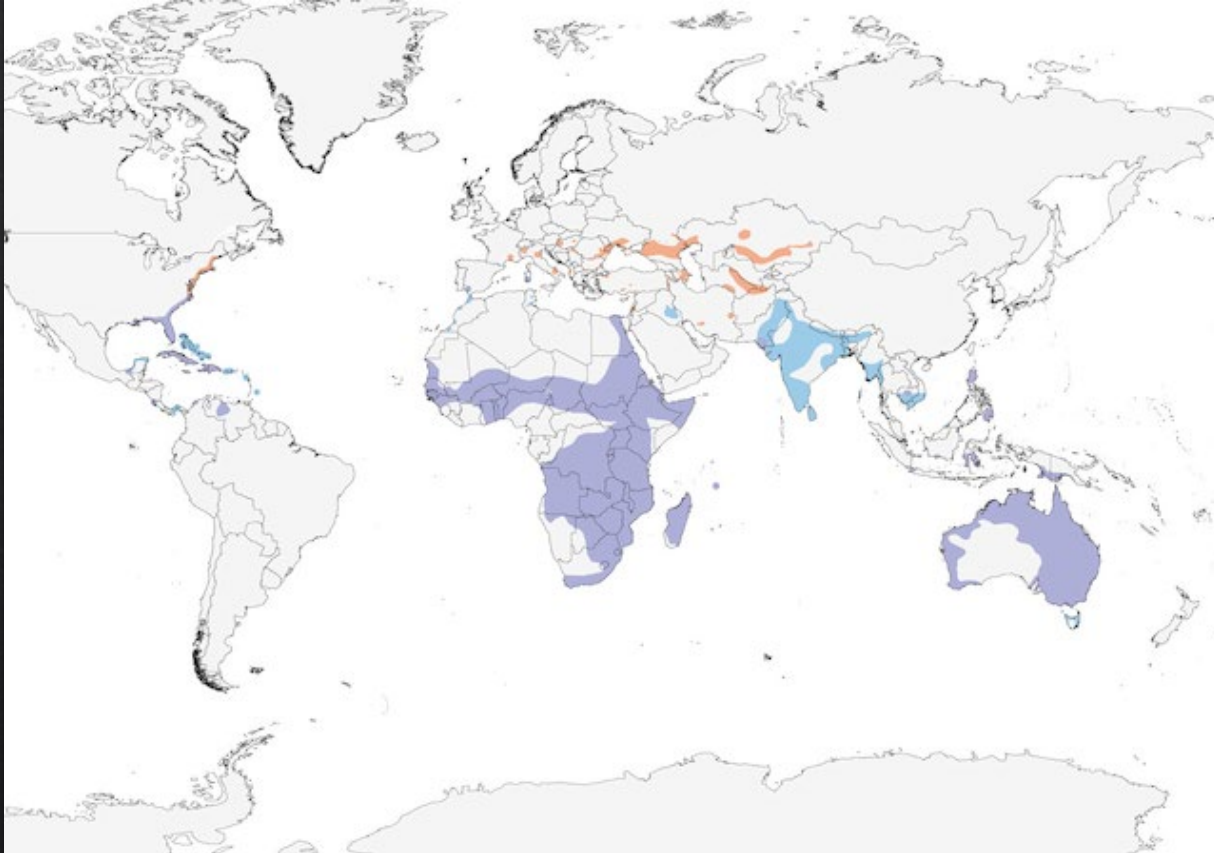
White-faced Ibis



Juvenile

- Duller than adult non-breeding
- Has dark iris until Feb., indistinguishable from Glossy

Glossy Ibis



- *Plegadis falcinellus*
- Fresh and salt marshes
- Primarily coastal
- Very social, roosts in large numbers
- Central TX – A few spring records, rare Aug-Sep
- Texas Coast – Uncommon but increasing summer resident, rare in winter

Glossy Ibis



Breeding

- Narrow pale edge around gray face
- Brown iris
- Darker blue-green sheen

Glossy Ibis

Breeding

- Blue-gray border broken behind eye
- Gray face
- Brown iris



Glossy Ibis



Non-Breeding

- Retains hint of border on face
- Gray face
- Brown iris

Glossy Ibis

Juvenile

- Brown eye
- Indistinguishable from White-faced until about Feb.

