

President's Message



Christine Turnbull TOS President.

Greetings everyone. I hope you are all safe and healthy. I'd like to thank all of you for your patience as TOS navigates through these uncertain times—making the difficult decision to cancel the spring meeting in Beaumont, monitoring our properties, and trying to look ahead.

I am pleased to be a part of a great team of Board members as we continue to work behind the scenes and assess how we can move forward safely and diligently.

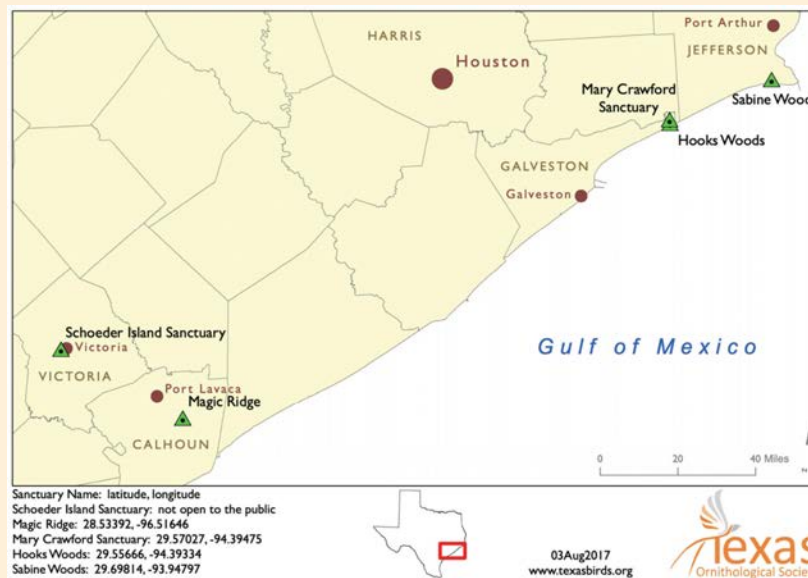
We will continue to communicate with you as we make plans and decisions regarding TOS, bird close to home and share birding information via our web site and facebook page.

Above all I hope you and your family are healthy and safe.

Hope to see you soon, Christine.

—Christine Turnbull, TOS President

Texas Ornithological Society Sanctuaries



Hi TOS family,

I hope everyone is staying safe!

Houston Audubon closed their High Island sanctuaries to abide by the Galveston County shelter-in-place order. We have not officially closed the TOS sanctuaries, but we strongly encourage you to:

- Stay close to home to bird. Don't drive an extended distance to go birding. Explore places near your home.
- If you insist on visiting birding locations in other parts of Texas, research the shelter-in-place orders in effect at those locations and along your route and abide by those orders.
- Follow all recommendations for being around other people—wash your hands long, hard and often; cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing; maintain your distance; etc.

As exciting as the migration season is for us, it's hard to think of not visiting the Texas coast, but I encourage you to do your part to help us all get past this as soon as possible. David Sarkozi's 2020 local patch challenge is looking like a really good way to stay safe and still get our required dosage of birds and nature. Join the Texas Local Patch Challenge group on Facebook.

Take care and we'll see each other on the other side of this!

—Shelia

Sheltering in place in Austin and appreciating my backyard birds even more than normal!

2020 TOS Board of Directors

April 25, 2020 TOS Members,

The 2020 TOS Board of Directors election has now been completed. This year the terms of four of the twelve board positions will expire, and the election was held to fill those four director positions. We are pleased to announce that the votes have been counted, and directors for those four positions have been selected. Those directors elected follow:

Frances Cerbins, Director At-Large
John Berner, Acting Director Region 1 Panhandle
Gailon Brehm, Director Region 2 North Central
D. D. Currie, Director Region 4 Trans Pecos

These four-newly elected Directors join the following eight continuing Directors to form the 2020 TOS Board:

Byron Stone, Director At-Large
Shelia Hargis, Director At-Large
Randy Pinkston, Director At-Large
Laura Wilson, Region 3 Piney Woods
Christine Turnbull, Region 5 Edwards Plateau
Daniel Hodges, Region 6 Central Prairie
Raul Delgado, Region 7 Brushlands
Kendra Kocab, Region 8 Coastal Prairie

We wish to give special thanks to Catherine Winans for her service over the past several years; she has decided not to run again for her At-Large Director position.

Members of the 2020 Board will take office on Thursday April 30 and will elect officers at that time. The current Board will meet by conference call at 6:30 pm, on that date. When that meeting adjourns, the new Board (2020 Board) will convene to elect officers with Shelia Hargis as chair.

Results of the Officer Election will be announced afterwards by email.

We wish to thank Judy Kestner and Bron Rorex for counting the votes and verifying the accuracy of this election. And special thanks go to Byron Stone, Ron Weeks, and Bron Rorex for serving on the Nominating Committee.

Thanks to all of you who voted. Your confidence in our leadership on the TOS Board is humbling. Regards,

—*Gailon Brehm*
TOS Nominating Committee



New TOS President..... Christine Turnbull

Christine grew up in the northeast where nature was always a part of her life. After pursuing her Master's degree, she took a break from nature center work to join the US Peace Corps, where she worked for parks and NGO's in Honduras and El Salvador. Later after working at nature center jobs in various parts of the country, she returned to New England where she worked for Mass Audubon for 12 years before moving to San Antonio, Texas.

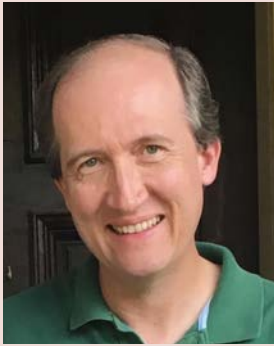
She has served on various boards throughout her career including Town Conservation and Zoning commissions, non-profit boards and town committees.

Since moving to Texas she's been serving on the Board of the San Antonio Audubon Society, was past President, has led field trips, and serves on the Field Trip committee. She looks forward to contributing to TOS in this role.



New At-Large Director: Frances Cerbins

My name is Frances Cerbins. My husband, Oskar, and I retired to Austin in 2006 after 12 years in Maryland and many years in Houston before that. I worked as a software engineer for 35 years, first for NASA in Houston then on other government contracts in the DC area. Since moving to Austin, I have been very involved with Travis Audubon, first with its classes, field trips, committees and volunteer activities. I served as Adult Education chair for several years; then joined the board serving for 6 years with 3 of those as its Board President. In Houston I was an early volunteer at Armand Bayou Nature Center. I have been a life member of TOS for several years and enjoy the annual meetings, sanctuaries and field trips. I have helped with the new online event registration process for the last couple of years. I love the expanding work of TOS and am willing to help.



New Director of Region 1, Panhandle: John Berner

A strong believer in Citizen Science in birding, I have participated in many local bird monitoring projects. As an early proponent of eBird (since 2004),

I gave talks to Texas birding organizations to promote eBird. As an eBird reviewer for the Houston area and the eBird hotspot editor for Texas I know birders throughout the state. I serve on the Katy Prairie Conservancy (KPC) monitoring committee and have done many ranch birding surveys. I was credited by Dan Brooks and Fred Collins in scientific papers tracking the spread of exotic species in Texas by helping them extract eBird data. I was introduced to birding by Fred Collins and our beloved deceased ex TOS president Steve Gross. I am an avid statewide birder throughout Texas, visiting 240 counties and achieving 100 species in 82 Counties. Amusingly I am also the tall guy with the brimmed hat third from the left in the long-time photo on the events tab on the TOS homepage! I have led multiple field trips for TOS, KPC, Houston's ONC-Ornithology Group, and an Eagle Lake birding festival, have undertaken a number of bird education activities for children, and in partnership with Houston's Lighthouse for the Blind organized a birding listening field trip for blind children matched with sighted guides. Organized a first annual gathering of Harris County birders to vote on the "best birds" at Edith L Moore and in Harris County in 2019 with homemade trophies attended by more than 50 local birders. Lastly, I have attended TOS meetings for many years and would like to lead field trips

and do sanctuary monitoring. Recently retired from BP, I will have more time to devote to TOS. With my finance and accounting background, I am potentially a future Treasurer of TOS.

Raptor Research Foundation honors TOS Member...

Fran and Frederick Hamerstrom Award

The Hamerstrom Award recognizes an individual who has contributed significantly to the understanding of raptor ecology and natural history.



Clint W. Boal

Just getting into bird watching? Here's a handy guide to common urban birds from Texas Parks & Wildlife.

Download at: https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_w7000_0904.pdf

Backyard Birds in Texas

BY MARK KLYM



TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE
Life's better outside.®

Breeding Bird Surveys Cancelled

All people volunteering to conduct breeding bird surveys in 2020 were notified this week that they were canceled. This was not a casual decision. It was made by representatives of 3 countries—U.S. Geological Survey, Canadian Wildlife Service, and Mexican National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity.

I would like to thank those who had committed to do the survey and recognize the birders who have conducted the surveys in Texas since it started in 1967.

Ronald Braun, Susie Lower and Kenneth Seffert have each conducted routes for 42 years. Timothy Gollob and Brent Ortego each 34 years, Lorraine Bartlett and Mary Gustafson each 32 years, Curtis Jordan 31 years, and Peggy Accord and Charles Crabtree, Jr. 30 years each. Forty-seven birders conducted surveys for 20-29 years, 86 for 10-19 years, 114 for 5-9 years, 40 for 4 years, 48 for 3 years, 67 for 2 years, 1 for 20 years.

The Breeding Bird Survey started in the eastern United States in 1966. It expanded to Texas and the rest of the United States in 1967. There initially were 100 routes. The coordinators for Texas were Warren Pulich and Frances Williams. I contacted Warren in 1990 asking if he needed help running routes and he asked me to take over being coordinator. I thought about it for about one year and finally said OK.

Looking at the density of routes in Texas ecosystems, it was obvious that there were not enough routes to accurately estimate trends by ecoregion. We added 95 routes to increase the density.

Most years we will get volunteers to sign up for over 90% of the 195 routes, but for a variety of reasons only about 75% are actually conducted.

—Brent Ortego

Information on Caracaras Requested



Northern Crested Caracara at Brevard Zoo. Photo by MAULI @ Flicker

I am an Assistant Professor at The University of Texas at San Antonio and an avian ecologist by training. Some of my students and I are currently conducting research to evaluate changes in distributions of Crested Caracaras throughout their range over time. My collaborator, Dr James Dwyer, and I have been thinking about doing this research for a long time - we both ran research projects on CRCAs in Florida

between 2006-2012 and much of our research focused on understanding their basic ecology. Following our research, and following conversations with a lot of (e.g., ranchers and birders) it became apparent that the distribution of CRCAs has changed a lot over time. Our research aims to evaluate how and why their distribution has changed over time.

To facilitate our research, we are collating point occurrence data from multiple sources (e.g., USFWS in Florida, GBIF, Ebird, iNat, NatureServe, BBS). We are trying to get as much coverage as possible, both in terms of time and geography and are exploring all potential options. One thought I had was that the birding community of Texas may have lots of sighting data which hasn't been converted into an electronic format yet, and that that would be useful for our project if they were willing to share. Do you think your membership would be interested in contributing data to our project? We would, of course, acknowledge all datasets appropriately and adhere to data sharing rules,

Any help would be much appreciated,

Thanks in advance,

Jen Smith

Jennifer A. Smith, Ph.D.,

Assistant Professor,

Department of Environmental Science & Ecology,

University of Texas at San Antonio,

One UTSA Circle,

San Antonio, TX 78249, USA

Tel: 210-458-7037—Fax: 210-458-5005

Donations

Sanctuary Fund

David Matson
Norman Young
David Matson

General Fund

BP Foundation
Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club
Diane & Michael Wonio
Joanne Boyce
Stanley Casto
Julie Sanders

Letter from Past President

Hi TOS family,

If this was a normal year, I would have announced our new officers during the annual membership meeting in Beaumont this past weekend. As we are all very aware, this is far from a normal year, but the business of TOS continues. The 2019/2020 Board met on April 30 to hold its last Board meeting, and as soon as that meeting was over, the new 2020/2021 Board convened its first meeting. The main order of business was to elect the officers for this year. I am pleased to announce the results.

Christine Turnbull **President**

Daniel Hodges **Vice President**

Kendra Kocob **Secretary**

John Berner **Treasurer**

Thank you to Christine, Daniel, Kendra and John for being willing to step up to these leadership positions!

Thank you also to Catherine Winans. Catherine has served as the Treasurer of TOS since the spring meeting of 2015. That's five years of working hard for TOS! As if keeping our books wasn't enough, Catherine took on a lot of other duties outside of the financial work.

She will help John transition into the Treasurer position and continue with many of her other responsibilities. This is good news for TOS!

In closing, I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as your President for three years. Those years were very rewarding to me! I love you all and look forward to the time when we can be together again. Take care and stay safe my friends!

*Shelia Hargis
Past President*

Birding in Place, Shelia Hargis Style

Like many of you, spring 2020 was drastically different for me due to COVID-19 and efforts to keep us all safe. Usually I am completing Golden-cheeked Warbler surveys (suspended for a time); competing with my Birdathon team, Gone Fishing, in the Travis Audubon annual fundraiser that usually means a weekend on the coast somewhere and raises a lot of money for Travis Audubon (postponed); competing in the Great Texas Birding Classic in my region, Heart of Texas East (postponed); leading tours for Songbird Festival at Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge (canceled); and attending the spring TOS meeting which was scheduled for the Beaumont area (canceled). Not being able to do these things, observe these traditions, had me feeling sad and anxious and wondering what the new normal was going to be.

Thankfully, I have a great remedy when I am feeling sad and anxious. I go birding! There have been numerous articles in the media recently about how watching birds is entertaining and restorative. This is nothing new to us, right, but I'm very happy the word is getting out to many others! I made the best of the situation while following stay-at-home orders and social distancing. Here's how it looked.

A Big Sit in my backyard in southwest Austin. TOS Region 4 Director, D. D. Currie, challenged birders to do a Big Sit in their yard over the weekend of April 4. I sat on April 5 from 6:17 am to 5:00 pm and ended the day with 43 species. These were mostly the birds that breed in my neighborhood, but I had a few migrants (Upland Sandpiper, Swainson's Hawk and Nashville Warbler). I included breeding activity in my eBird checklists, and it ranged from "Singing Birds" (many species including a Lincoln's Sparrow that challenged my identification skills for a while!) to "Courtship, Display and Copulation" (Ruby-throated or Black-chinned Hummingbird doing his "U" dive, a male Northern Cardinal feeding a female, and a titmouse feeding his mate) to "Feeding Young" (a male Lesser Goldfinch feeding a noisy fledgling). I kept separate checklists for each half hour. I wanted to see how



In addition to singing throughout the day, the Lincoln's Sparrow took numerous baths.

the lineup of species changed over time, and this worked well to keep me engaged and looking closely throughout the day.

Many more trips to my neighborhood park, Bauerle Ranch Park. Annelia Williams, fellow TOS member

and neighbor, alerted me to Least Grebes nesting in the small pond in the park. My first trip occurred on March 28, and as of May 31, I have made 14 trips to check on their status. This endeavor has not been for the faint of heart! I have observed four different nesting attempts and none have been successful yet. One promising nest with four eggs didn't survive a large rain event. The other nests have failed for unknown reasons. I plan to do more research on this species in hopes of learning more. I have a much deeper appreciation for what it takes for a bird to get from building a nest to fledging babies!



First Least Grebe nest April 4.



Second nest on April 22.



Third nest on May 6 with four eggs. I'll stop the photos on a happy note...

More Bastrop County birding. Between March and May, I added 15 new species to my Bastrop County list, bringing my total to 222. Many of the birds I added are not unusual in Bastrop County, you just have to be in the county at the right time—during migration! The species that I added, in the order I added them, are Egyptian Goose, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Grasshopper Sparrow, Zone-tailed Hawk, Clay-colored Sparrow, Tennessee Warbler, Yellow-breasted Chat, Swainson's Thrush, Gray Catbird, Wilson's Phalarope, Cassin's Sparrow, Bronzed Cowbird, White-rumped Sandpiper, Dunlin, and Hudsonian Godwit. Special thanks to fellow TOS members Jason Leifester for helping me locate many of these birds and to Ron and Susan Martin for the Smithville Bronzed Cowbird! Thanks to all birders who enter their data into eBird. I relied heavily on this great resource for knowing where to go and when to be there.

More Caldwell County birding. As with Bastrop County, being in Caldwell County during migration paid off. During April, I added 18 new species to my eBird list, bringing my total to 138. In the order added: Clay-colored Sparrow,

Grasshopper Sparrow, Peregrine Falcon, Swainson's Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Snowy Egret, Solitary Sandpiper, Upland Sandpiper, Blue Grosbeak, Swainson's Thrush, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Black-throated Green Warbler, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Orchard Oriole, Red-eyed Vireo, Great Crested Flycatcher, Egyptian Goose, and Franklin's Gull.

More Hays County birding. Same story here. In May, I added five species to my Hays County list, bringing my total to 208. New species were Cassin's Sparrow, Bell's Vireo, Vermilion Flycatcher, Scott's Oriole and Black-throated Sparrow.

Travis Audubon's Birding Brawl Big Day Competition. This was a friendly competition among four current and past Travis Audubon Board members to raise money for Travis Audubon and see who could find the most species on May 24. I won the competition with 91 species from Blanco, Hays, Bastrop and Travis counties, but the best part was that we raised over \$7,000 for Travis Audubon during a time when income has taken a major hit! Highlights of the day included a Red-headed Woodpecker poking her head out of a nest cavity and a pair of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks with eight ducklings in tow. Having done many Big Days with a team, this solo adventure added a fun, new twist to it.



Red-headed Woodpecker taking a quick break from brooding her eggs.



Black-bellied Whistling-Duck pair with their brood in tow.

Birding Cow Creek Road in western Travis County with my buddies and fellow TOS members Cheryl McGrath and Wendy Harte. Birding by bike is a great way to get to bird together and naturally practice social distancing. Highlights from our May 10th outing were 39 Painted Buntings (I never get tired of seeing and hearing them) and many other singing birds such as Canyon Wren, Field Sparrow, Lark Sparrow, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, Yellow-breasted Chat, Golden-cheeked Warbler, and Blue Grosbeak.



Shelia, Wendy and Cheryl early in the day.



Painted Bunting singing and putting on a show for us.

All of these outings have made for a fun and rejuvenating spring even in the midst of a pandemic. I am so thankful to have birds and birding buddies in my life! I look forward to the time when we can get together safely and hope that time is soon. Until then, stay safe and enjoy your local birds!

Shelia Hargis

(All photo credits: Shelia Hargis)



TOS Sponsorship of the Birding Classic



- Makes sponsorship of more than a dozen teams annually around the state!
- TOS registration fee funding makes it possible for the mentors to pay for other costs such as transportation, food, etc. that they wouldn't be able to afford otherwise.








Youth Mentors and Their Teams Truly Value their Birding Experience and TOS's Support

- “We had a blast competing last weekend and the kiddos are already talking about where they want to bird next year”
- “Thank you again for going the extra mile to help our birding club in being able participate in the GTBC. It is the highlight of our birding club events.”
- “Thank you for this awesome opportunity for young birders! We are so excited that this year we can participate in the GTBC!”
- “We couldn't have made our year of studying nature more rewarding without the help from TOS! The lives of these kids have been forever impacted in such a positive way! Thank you!
- “A HUGE thank you to Texas Ornithological Society for sponsoring the entry fees for this wonderful group of young adults to participate in the Classic again.”



Additional Birding Classic Sponsor Recognition

- Press release sponsor recognition
- Logo on Birding Classic website
- Logo in email marketing
- Logo on tournament t-shirts
- Recognition in all team listings, at Awards Ceremonies, and in local press from those teams

Sponsor recognition in press release distributed statewide and picked up in several media outlets

Ten Grants Awarded by Winners of Great Texas Birding Classic

Classic

July 12, 2019

Media Contact: [IPWD News](#), Business Hours, 512-389-8030

[News Image](#) [Share on Facebook](#) [Share Release URL](#)

Note: This item is more than six months old. Please take the publication date into consideration.

AUSTIN— The 23rd annual Great Texas Birding Classic (GTBC) has wrapped up another year. The longest bird-watching competition in the United States have chosen 10 conservation projects to award \$1,000 to \$10,000.

The Birding Classic continues to grow in popularity year after year, and it's been thrilling to connect with nature through the event," said Shelly Plante, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

This year, 850 participants statewide participated in this event that spanned a full month during the final half of the tournament, teams saw a wide variety of bird species during the monthlong competition. Among those were 19 youth (younger) and Gliders (ages 14-18). Thirteen of the youth teams were sponsored by the Texas Ornithological Society.

Since its inception, the winners of the GTBC have been able to award \$993,000 in on-the-ground conservation projects. This year, team registrations and sponsorships to the monthlong, the GTBC to award \$39,000 in conservation grants to projects throughout the state.

For many participants, the GTBC offers more than just a chance to check off birds on a list, it's a chance to connect with nature and appreciate the diversity of birds around them.

"I was introduced to birding last year through this competition and loved it so much," said a participant. "I started to go birding with my dad over the summer and was thrilled when I got to go with him."

"In addition to the hundreds of people participating each year, the real winner is the birds and the conservation grants here in Texas," said Plante.

Grants chosen by the winners to receive funding from the GTBC include:

\$10,000 Weeklong Conservation Grant- Selected by Colluding Curlews/Baker Barges

\$1,000 Central Texas Coast Big Sit! Conservation Grant- Selected by Swarovski Optik Sitting Hawks/Swarovski Optik North America

Project: Pollywog Pond – Submitted by Audubon Outdoor Club of Corpus Christi. This grant will fund the creation of permanent signage, including a property map with the location of trails, with images and descriptions of common wildlife that uses Pollywog Pond Bird Sanctuary.

Project Location: Pollywog Pond, Corpus Christi

\$1,000 Heart of Texas East Big Sit! Conservation Grant- Selected by The Peli-cans!/Mitchell Lake Audubon Center

Project: Coastal Wetland and Migratory Stop-over Interpretation Signage – Submitted by South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center. This grant will fund the creation of interpretative signage about the ecology and wildlife that utilize coastal wetlands for wintering, nesting and rest-stops during migration. Signage would be placed along boardwalks and around migratory songbird gardens surrounding the visitor center.

Project Location: South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center, South Padre Island

\$1,000 Upper Texas Coast Big Sit! Conservation Grant- Selected by CenterPoint Energy Wirebirds/CenterPoint Energy

Project: Chimney Swift Towers and Interpretive Sign for Seabrook – Submitted by Seabrook Open Space and Trails Committee. This grant will fund the creation of two towers with accompanying interpretive signage. One tower will be installed in Pine Gully Park and the other tower will be installed adjacent to that park on land owned by the Port of Houston.

Project Location: Pine Gully Park, Seabrook

This event is made possible by sponsorship and registration fees, donations from event sponsors Toyota, Texas Ornithological Society, and awards ceremony sponsor Audubon Texas.

For more information about the GTBC, visit the [IPWD Great Texas Birding Classic page](#).

2019-07-12

Recognition on the Great Texas Birding Classic website

The Great Texas Birding Classic

How to Participate!
Dates and Deadlines
Team Listings
Tournament Categories
Rules and Registration
Tournament Advice
Team Sponsorship Tips
Event Sponsorship
Bird Checklist Submission
Awards Ceremonies
Conservation Grant Projects
Birding Ethics
Contact Us
Past Years' Highlights
Other Links of Interest

The Great Texas Birding Classic
by Scott Hayden - last modified Dec 02, 2019 08:38 AM - History

Great Texas Birding Classic

23rd Annual Birding Classic
The biggest, longest, wildest birdwatching tournament in the U.S!
2019 Tournament Dates: April 15 - May 15, 2019

2019 Birding Classic Final Results
Photos from the Field - 2019 Teams

Mark Your Calendar for the 24th Annual Birding Classic: April 15-May15, 2020

What Is It?

- Birders of all ages and levels of experience are welcome to join this Texas birdwatching event during the amazing spring migration.
- There's a tournament category for everyone - from the beginning backyard birder to the competitive lister!
- Registration fees raise money for Texas bird and birding conservation project grants.
- Gather your team, register, and go birding - it's truly that simple!

How to Participate gives you a step-by-step guide to help your team during the tournament.
Visit [Tournament Advice](#) tips on mentoring youth teams, advice from former winners on how to run a successful Big Day or the Weeklong tournament, and pointers on birding with blind or visually impaired birders.

This event is made possible by donations from event sponsors Toyota and the Texas Ornithological Society. Awards Ceremony sponsor Audubon Texas, and team registration fees and corporate and community team sponsorship. Habitat conservation grants awarded are funded through event sponsorship and registration fees. The birds are counting on you!

Thanks to our sponsors:

Sponsor recognition in email blasts sent to all tournament participants



GREAT TEXAS BIRDING CLASSIC
2019

Birding Classic: Important Team Information!

This Sunday is the first official day of the Birding Classic tournament!

Important Next Steps to help guarantee a great tournament experience for your team:

Choose your tournament date: All teams must **email me** no later than within 24 hours of your team's selected tournament day. Your tournament date must fall within April 15-May 15.

Review your team listing online and email me if any edits are needed. For teams whose team members change during the tournament (or sponsored Big 50! teams who get final rosters later), please email me your updates as soon as you have them.

Review the Official Tournament Rules and Tournament Advice.

Review the checklist submission guidelines and the **printable field checklist** (NOTE: electronic checklist submission is still required - this printable field list is for teams who want to have a hard copy checklist in eBird order with them in the field).

Save the date: Awards Ceremonies will be Saturday, June 1, 2019. Thanks to Audubon Texas for again sponsoring these ceremonies!

Birding Classic event t-shirts were shipped Wednesday.


- Check your front porch, gate, door, etc. for this package and let me know if you do not receive them by April 17th so that I can research where they are.

Please call or email me at any time with questions about the tournament. I am here to help and make this a fun event for all.

Good birding,
Shelly Plante
Nature Tourism Manager, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department,
shelly.plante@tpwd.texas.gov office: 512-389-4500, cell: 512-241-9163

Thanks to our sponsors:





GREAT TEXAS BIRDING CLASSIC
2019

Welcome 2019 Great Texas Birding Classic Teams

This email verifies that TPWD has officially received your team registration form for the 2019 Birding Classic. Please read below for next steps.

Next Steps:

Pay your team entry fees: If you have not already done so, please pay your team entry fees through the [online registration payment website](#) by the end of this week.

T-shirts available for any non-competing team members: Drivers, chaperones, mentors, or general support people can pay an "Independent Team - Non-competing Team Members (T-shirt only)" registration fee of \$15 at the [registration payment website](#) to secure their shirt. You must place all orders by the end of this week ([emailing the shirt size and team name to me](#)) so that I am able to send to the correct team captain.



Choose your tournament date: All teams must **email me** no later than within 24 hours of your team's selected tournament day.

Make plans to attend one of the Awards Ceremonies: Teams and their families are invited to join the fun in either Houston or San Antonio on Saturday, June 1 to celebrate another great year! Invitation will be coming out soon.

I will send periodic emails with timely tournament information in the coming weeks. Please feel free to [email](#) or call me if you have any questions at any time. I am here to help!

Good birding,
Shelly Plante
Phone: 512-389-4500, Cell: 512-241-9163

Thanks to our sponsors:

Sponsor recognition in all team listings

Youth: Roughwings Regional Tournament

Central Texas Coast

1. Mile 533 Marine Ways Freaky Frigates
Sponsor: Mile 533 Marine Ways (part of Brown Water Marine)
Kam Alson
Adyson Burton
Noble Chapman
Jaxon Keown
Chaperones: Martha McLeod, Bron Rorex Carrier
Date: April 30
Number of species: 108

2. ABNC Outstanding Ospreys
Sponsor: Aransas Bird & Nature Club, Rockport
Anthony Diaz DeLeon
Cash Phillips
Ty Self
Chase Waggoner
Chaperones: Martha McLeod, Bron Rorex Carrier
Date: April 16
Number of species: 103

3. ABNC Spectacular Spoonbills
Sponsor: Aransas Bird & Nature Club
Ryan Brewington
Mercedes Esparza
Juliet Flores
Brayden Tran
Riley Waggoner
Chaperones: Martha McLeod, Bron Rorex Carrier
Date: April 18
Number of species: 81

3. TOS Southern Sandpipers
Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society
Ty Blankenship
Laurin Monson
Kathryn Jones
Jake Self
Chaperones: Martha McLeod, Bron Rorex Carrier
Date: April 24
Number of species: 81

4. TOS Crested Cormorants (FBE Bird Club)
Sponsor: The Texas Ornithological Society
Lara Davis
Gloria Harris
Hailey Biggerstaff
Chaperone: Nicole Biggerstaff, Chad Huckaby, Cindy Frank
Date: April 27
Number of species: 80

5. TOS-preys
Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society
Madrox Alexander
Tyler Hoffmans
Colton Taylor
Chaperones: Julie Findley, Joan Holt
Date: May 5
Number of species: 76

6. TOS Red Tail Hawks (FBE Bird Club)
Sponsor: The Texas Ornithological Society
Savannah Lemoncristi
Sorpreso Hardeman
Ashton Sheehan
Chaperone: Nicole Biggerstaff, Chad Huckaby, Cindy Frank
Date: April 27
Number of species: 66

7. TOS Great Blue Herons (FBE Bird Club)
Sponsor: The Texas Ornithological Society
Davis Partnoy
Aubrey Wagoner
Phoebe Whiting
Chaperone: Nicole Biggerstaff, Chad Huckaby, Cindy Frank
Date: April 27
Number of species: 60

8. TOS Focus on the Birds
Sponsor: Texas Ornithological Society
Ben Azopardi
Savannah Azopardi
Gabby Phelps
Bella Sanchez
Chaperones: Wade Phelps, Jennifer Azopardi
Date: May 11
Number of species: 23



Serving Port Aransas and Mustang Island

Front Page | Opinion | Island Life | Fishing | Island Focus | Youth | Sports | Outdoors | Island Agenda | Events | Calendar

Classifieds | Public Notices | Subscribers | Archives | Find Edition | Links | Subscriptions | Contact Us | Pickup Locations | My Account

Feather Finders compete
1 May 08 2019



Recent Print Editions

SOUTH JETTY Update
Life begins on the water
Milina services set Thursday
2020-01-02 8-Edition

Local Webcams

Port Aransas Ferry Camera
Channel 416

Experience the Taste of Port A

Feather Finders competed in the Great Texas Birding Classic on Sunday, May 5. The team was part of the Southern Osprey team, made up of a mix of ages of birders. The TOS Feather Finders and the TOSpreys teams are sponsored by the Texas Ornithological Society, which paid the teams' registration into the classic. The Port Aransas Recreation Foundation purchased caps for the teams and the Alter school Centers in Education (ACE) program at Port Aransas ISD sponsored the birding class. The Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Bureau supplied food for the youth teams. The TOS Feather Finders team members from left, Julie Findley, Emma Hoffmans, Madeline Stutz, Gabe Littleton and Christie Stutz.

Event T-Shirt featured well-known artist's work on front and sponsor logos on back



Thank you for your support!



TOS Presents 2020 Kincaid and McNeese Awards¹

This year marks the second year TOS has awarded the Kincaid and McNeese Awards.

The CHARLES MCNEESE AWARD goes to someone who has significantly furthered the goals of birding through leadership in a Texas non-profit organization. Serving on the TOS board for many years and work with the Rockport HummerBird Celebration, the awards committee decided **Bron Rorex** is more than deserving of this award.

The EDGAR B. KINCAID, JR. AWARD is awarded annually to someone that has made a significant contribution to the documentation and conservation of birdlife in Texas. By unanimous agreement the committee decided that no one is more qualified for this award than **Greg Lasley**. In 1983, Chuck Sexton and Greg Lasley took over the editorship of

the Texas Region for *American Birds*, later known as *Field Notes*, and now known as *North American Birds*, a publication of the American Birding Association. Greg continued to be the Texas co-editor of that publication through the year 2000 and was the Secretary of the Texas Bird Records Committee of the Texas Ornithological Society from 1986 until 2000. Greg also served on the Bird Records Committee of the American Birding Association for two terms, ending in 2005. In these various capacities he became heavily involved with rarity records in Texas and the rest of North America. His contribution to the documentation of Texas birds is incalculable.



Bron Rorex.



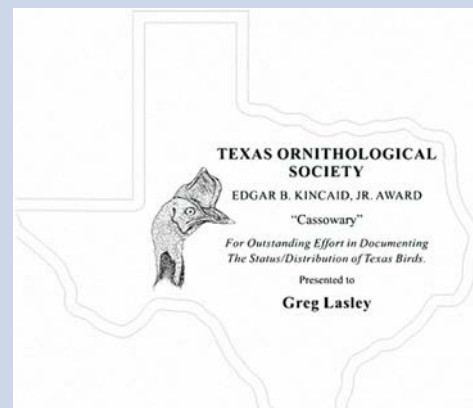
Greg Lasley



CHARLES MCNEESE AWARD

In 1952, Charles McNeese contacted a few friends and placed an “advertisement” in *The Spoonbill* of the Ornithology Group, Houston Outdoor Nature Club. On February 14, 1953, McNeese and a group that responded to his ad met in Austin and formed the Texas Ornithological Society. McNeese and his efforts established TOS so it seems fitting that we name our new award after him “For significantly furthering the goals of birding through leadership in a Texas non-profit organization”.

TOS is proud to present the 2020 Charles McNeese Award to Bron Rorex.



EDGAR B. KINCAID, JR. AWARD

Without Kincaid’s herculean effort editing Oberholser’s *The Bird Life of Texas* the tome would never had seen the light of day. Edgar kept meticulous records of species expansions and retractions and continually expressed concern over the future of his feathered friends. Birds were so much of this native Texan’s life he often gave his friends “bird names”. As an early editor of the TOS Newsletter and *Bird life of Texas* it is only fitting that we honor Edgar by naming an award after him. Given to individuals or organizations that document and conservation of bird life.

It is with great pleasure that TOS presents the 2020 Edgar B Kincaid, Jr Award to Greg Lasley.

¹A more expanded article on the awards and the 2020 recipients will appear in the next issue of *Texas Birds Annual*.

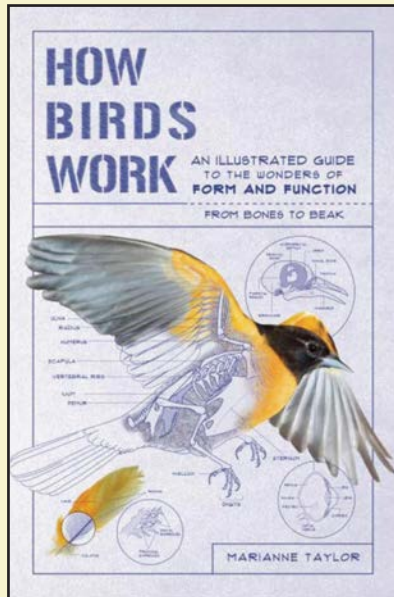
From the editor's bookshelf...

How Birds Work: An Illustrated Guide to the Wonders of Form and Function—from Bones to Beak

by Taylor, Marianne

ISBN: 9781615196470, Publisher: Experiment, Year of

Publication: 2020, Page Count: 224



Engineered by evolution to thrive in the wild. A tiny textbook to learn on your own,

How Birds Work goes beyond the typical field guide to show us not only what birds look like but why. Why do many owls have asymmetrical ear openings? (Hint: It helps them pinpoint prey; see page 40.) And why does the Grey Heron rest on one leg at a time? (Hint: Not because

it's tired; see page 66!) Birds boast a spectacular array of adaptations suited to their incredibly diverse diets and habitats. In this in-depth handbook, discover the ways they are even more astounding than you know—inside and out. Detailed analysis and illustrations illuminate:

Skeleton, Muscles, Circulation, Digestion, Respiration, Reproduction, Feathers, Colors and Patterns, And much, much more!

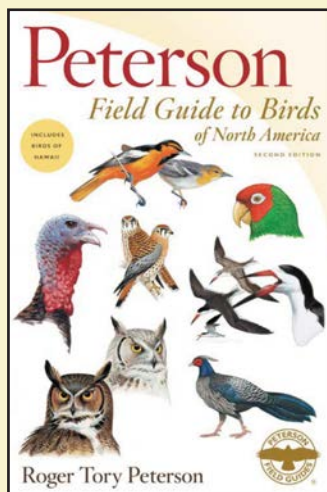
Peterson Field Guide to Birds of North America, Second edition

by Peterson, Roger Tory

ISBN: 9781328771445, Publisher: Houghton

Mifflin, Year of Publication: 2020, Page Count: 520,

Series: Peterson Field Guides



A new edition of the best-selling field guide with 25 all-new plates covering the birds of Hawaii.

For decades, the Peterson Field Guide to Birds has been a popular and trusted guide for birders of all levels, thanks to its famous system of identification and unparalleled illustrations. Now that the American Birding Association has expanded its species Checklist to include Hawaii, the Peterson Guide is the

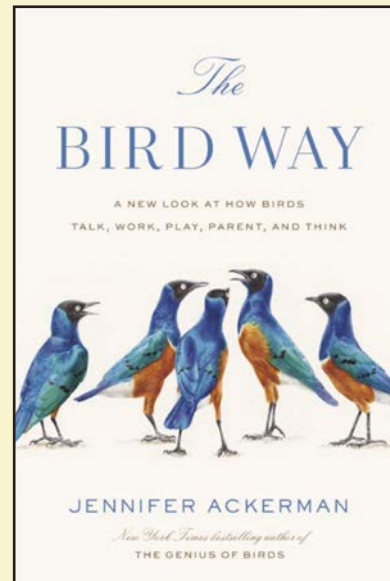
first edition to include the wonderful and exotic species of our fiftieth state. In addition, the text and range maps have been updated, and much of the art has been touched up to reflect current knowledge.

The Bird Way: A New Look at How Birds Talk, Work, Play, Parent, and Think

by Ackerman, Jennifer

Publisher: Penguin Press, Year of Publication: 2020,

Page Count: 368



From the New York Times bestselling author of *The Genius of Birds*, a radical investigation into the bird way of being, and the recent scientific research that is dramatically shifting our understanding of birds—how they live and how they think.

'There is the mammal way and there is the bird way.' This is one scientist's pithy distinction between mammal brains and bird brains: two ways to

make a highly intelligent mind. But the bird way is much more than a unique pattern of brain wiring, and lately, scientists have taken a new look at bird behaviors they have, for years, dismissed as anomalies or mysteries. What they are finding is upending the traditional view of how birds conduct their lives, how they communicate, forage, court, breed, survive. They're also revealing the remarkable intelligence underlying these activities, abilities we once considered uniquely our own—deception, manipulation, cheating, kidnapping, infanticide, but also, ingenious communication between species, cooperation, collaboration, altruism, culture, and play.

Some of these extraordinary behaviors are biological conundrums that seem to push the edges of--well--birdness: A mother bird that kills her own infant sons, and another that selflessly tends to the young of other birds as if they were her own. Young birds that devote themselves to feeding their siblings and others so competitive they'll stab their nestmates to death. Birds that give gifts and birds that steal, birds that dance or drum, that paint their creations or paint themselves, birds that build walls of sound to keep out intruders and birds that summon playmates with a special call--and may hold the secret to our own penchant for playfulness and the evolution of laughter.

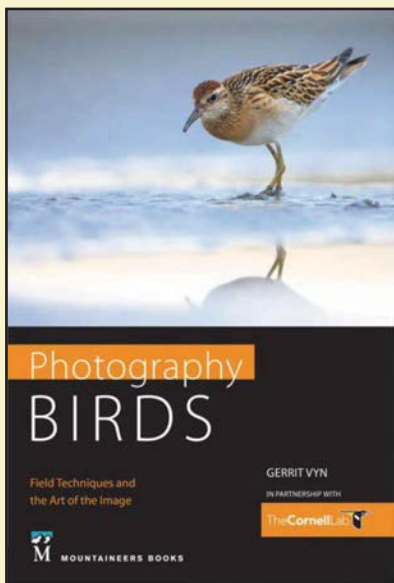
Drawing on personal observations, the latest science, and her bird-related travel around the world, from the tropical rainforests of eastern Australia and the remote woodlands of northern Japan, to the rolling hills of lower Austria and the islands of Alaska's Kachemak Bay, Ackerman shows there is clearly no single bird way of being. In every respect, in plumage, form, song, flight, lifestyle, niche, and behavior,

birds vary. It's what we love about them. As E.O Wilson once said, when you have seen one bird, you have not seen them all.

Photography: Birds. Field Techniques and the Art of the Image

by Vyn, Gerrit

ISBN: 9781680510997, **Publisher:** Mountaineers Books, **Year of Publication:** 2020, **Page Count:** 256



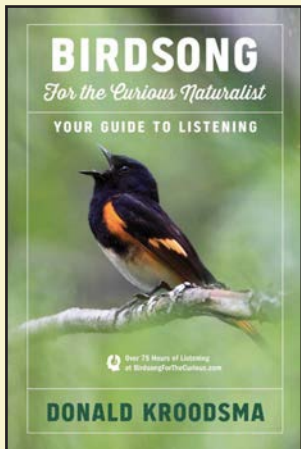
Published in partnership with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Gerrit Vyn, an award-winning bird photographer, videographer, and sound recorder, has become renowned for his ability to capture birds, especially for the prestigious Cornell Lab of Ornithology. In this new guide, he reveals his methods and shares how to photograph birds based on location, behavior, identification, and storytelling. Vyn details the range of

technical considerations, giving clear instruction and advice, as well as the creative decisions a photographer must make on lighting, framing, timing, and motion. He also discusses situations unique to bird photographers: dealing with habituated or tame birds, approaching feeders, utilizing blinds, and more. Once captured, digital images can be digitally refined, so Vyn delves into the procedures that elevate an image from mundane to striking, using Adobe Lightroom. Throughout, Vyn emphasizes an ethical approach to observing and interacting with the birds around us.

Birdsong for the Curious Naturalist: Your Guide to Listening

by Kroodsma, Donald

ISBN: 9781328919113, **Publisher:** Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, **Year of Publication:** 2020, **Page Count:** 198



Birdsong made easy to understand, lavishly illustrated with color photos, and accompanied by more than 700 online recordings.

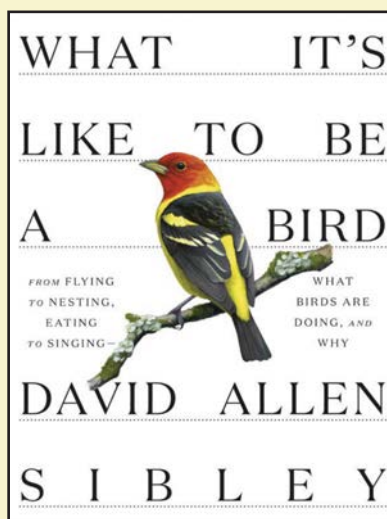
From a leading expert, Birdsong for the Curious Naturalist is a basic, how-to guide that teaches anyone - from beginner to advanced birder—how to listen. In understandable and appealing language, Kroodsma explains why and how birds sing, what

various calls mean, and what to listen for from the birds around us. The descriptions are accompanied by color photos of the birds, as well as QR codes that link to an online collection of more than 700 recordings. With these resources, readers are prepared to recognize bird sounds and the birds that make them. Kroodsma encourages readers to find the joy of birdsong and curiosity—to observe, listen intently, be curious, ask questions, and realize that many unanswered questions about birdsong don't have to rely on scientists for answers but can be answered by any curious naturalist

What It's Like to Be a Bird: From Flying to Nesting, Eating to Singing-What Birds Are Doing, and Why

by Sibley, David Allen

ISBN: 9780307957894, **Publisher:** Knopf, **Year of Publication:** 2020, **Page Count:** 240



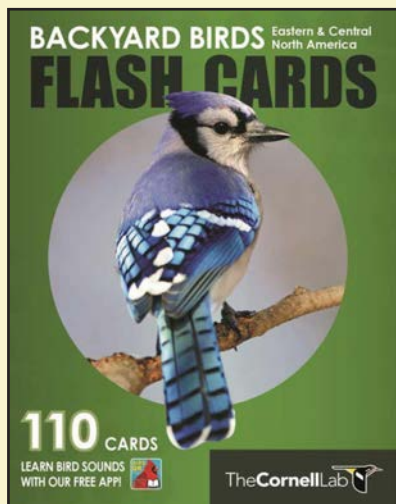
The bird book for birders and nonbirders alike that will excite and inspire by providing a new and deeper understanding of what common, mostly backyard, birds are doing--and why 'Can birds smell?' 'Is this the same cardinal that was at my feeder last year?' 'Do robins 'hear' worms?' In What It's Like to Be a Bird, David Sibley answers the

most frequently asked questions about the birds we see most often. This special, large-format volume is geared as much to nonbirders as it is to the out-and-out obsessed, covering more than two hundred species and including more than 330 new illustrations by the author. While its focus is on familiar backyard birds--blue jays, nuthatches, chickadees--it also examines certain species that can be fairly easily observed, such as the seashore-dwelling Atlantic puffin. David Sibley's exacting artwork and wide-ranging expertise bring observed behaviors vividly to life. (For most species, the primary illustration is reproduced life-sized.) And while the text is aimed at adults--including fascinating new scientific research on the myriad ways birds have adapted to environmental changes--it is nontechnical, making it the perfect occasion for parents and grandparents to share their love of birds with young children, who will delight in the big, full-color illustrations of birds in action. Unlike any other book he has written, What It's Like to Be a Bird is poised to bring a whole new audience to David Sibley's world of birds.

Backyard Birds Flash Cards: Eastern & Central North America

by Cornell Lab of Ornithology

ISBN: 9780691194707, **Publisher:** Princeton University Press, **Year of Publication:** 2020



Backyard Birds Flash Cards, designed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, makes bird watching even more fun! This lavish boxed set focuses on the birds in eastern and central North America, helping you to maximize your chances of identifying species particular to your region, neighborhood, and backyard. The cards come with detailed

information for 110 species, including useful range maps, photos of female birds when plumage differs, and QR codes (compatible with the free downloadable Bird QR app) that link to birdsong vocalizations. All identification information is organized by the following keys: size and shape, color pattern, behavior, and habitat. Based on vetted ornithological content from a trusted and leading authority, Backyard Birds Flash Cards is an exciting, handy tool for bird watchers of all ages.

Identification information for 110 bird species in western North America; QR codes that access birdsong samples; Range maps; Gorgeous photos of male and female species (if plumage is different)

Bird Love: The Family Life of Birds

by Tong, Wenfei

ISBN: 9780691188843, Publisher: Princeton University Press, Year of Publication: 2020, Page Count: 192



A stunningly illustrated look at the mating and parenting lives of the world's birds. Bird Love looks at the extraordinary range of mating systems in the avian world, exploring all the stages from courtship and nest-building to protecting eggs and raising chicks. It delves into the reasons why some species, such as the wattled jacana,

rely on males to do all the childcare, while others, such as cuckoos and honeyguides, dump their eggs in the nests of others to raise. For some birds, reciprocal promiscuity pays off: both male and female dunnocks will rear the most chicks by mating with as many partners as possible. For others, long-term monogamy is the only way to ensure their offspring survive.

The book explores the wide variety of ways birds make

sure they find a mate in the first place, including how many male birds employ elaborate tactics to show how sexy they are. Gathering in leks to display to females, they dance, pose, or parade to sell their suitability as a mate. Other birds attract a partner with their building skills: female bowerbirds rate brains above beauty, so males construct elaborate bowers with twig avenues and cleared courtyards to impress them.

Looking at the differing levels of parenting skills across species around the world, we see why a tenth of bird species, including the fairy-wrens of Australia, have helpers at the nest who forgo their own reproduction to assist the breeding pair; how brood parasites and their hosts have engaged in evolutionary arms races; and how monogamous pairs share-or relinquish-their responsibilities.

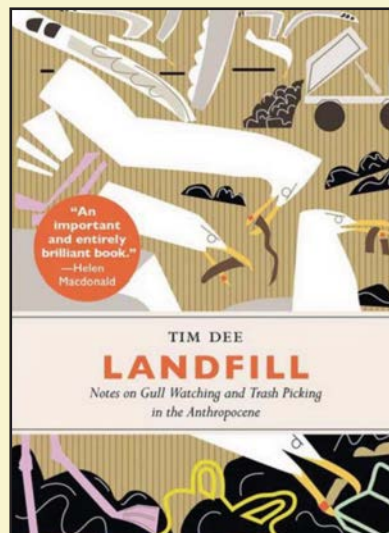
Illustrated throughout with beautiful photographs, Bird Love is a celebration of the global diversity of avian reproductive strategies.

Landfill: Notes on Gull Watching and Trash Picking in the Anthropocene

by Dee, Tim

ISBN: 9781603589093, Publisher: Chelsea Green

Publishing, Year of Publication: 2019, Page Count: 240



Over the past hundred years, gulls have been brought ashore by modernity. They now live not only on the coasts but in our slipstream following trawlers, barges, and garbage trucks. They are more our contemporaries than most birds, living their wild lives among us in towns and cities. In many ways they live as we do, walking the built-up world and grabbing a bite where

they can. Yet this disturbs us. We've started fearing gulls for getting good at being among us. We see them as scavengers, not entrepreneurs; ocean-going aliens, not refugees. They are too big for the world they have entered. Their story is our story too.

Landfill is the original and compelling story of how in the Anthropocene we have learned about the natural world, named and catalogued it, and then colonized it, planted it, or filled it with our junk. While most other birds have gone in the opposite direction, hiding away from us, some vanishing forever, gulls continue to tell us how the wild can share our world. For these reasons Landfill is the nature book for our times, groundbreaking and genre-bending. Without nostalgia or eulogy, it kicks beneath the littered surface of the things to discover stranger truths.

Excerpts from





Permission for Ethnear to use cartoon in print/electronic.



Alamo Inn

B&B  Gear & Tours

- * Stay at our famous **Alamo Inn B&B** close to Santa Ana NWR
- * Order optics, birding books, and gear from our **Alamo Outdoor Store** with free packing & shipping for TOS members
- * Take a custom tour for 3 or more with our **Green Jay Tours** company

We support TOS and Texas birding
Alamo Birding Services
Tel. (956) 782-9912
Email: alamoinn@gmail.com
Web: www.AlamoInnBnB.com



Electric Ostrich
Brac Buffa (age 10)



Owl Dreaming
Kai Choat (Age 7)



Cayla Rosenhagen
Golden Eagle (Age 13)

Taking Flight

An International Juried Bird Art Exhibition
For Youth Ages 4 to 18

The Taking Flight Exhibition aims to create greater awareness and appreciation for birds, support the development of young artists, and share their art with the public at a professional museum.

Submissions will be accepted between January 15 and June 15, 2020.
Juried art will be exhibited at the museum September 2020 - March, 2021



963 Washington Street
Canton, MA 02021


Learn more: www.massaudubon.org/youthart
skent@massaudubon.org

HummerBird Celebration.

www.rockporthummingbird.com



Bus and boat trips, guided field trips, lectures and programs,
self-guided Hummer home tours, vendor malls and more!

 [RockportFultonHummerBirdCelebration](https://www.facebook.com/RockportFultonHummerBirdCelebration)

1-800-242-0071




**Rockport
Fulton**
Charm of the Texas Coast

Photography by Juan Bahamon



Moore
WildBirdsTM

 **Thomas Moore Feed**TM

Proud to be Official Sponsors of the
Texas Ornithological Society

MooreWildBirds.com

Facebook.com/MooreWildBirds

ThomasMooreFeed.com

Facebook.com/ThomasMooreFeed

YOUR NEXT VACATION, SIMPLIFIED.
STAY. PLAY. BIRD.



Texas.
Island Style.™
Port Aransas®
& MUSTANG ISLAND

www.PORTARANSAS.ORG | 800-45-COAST