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TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

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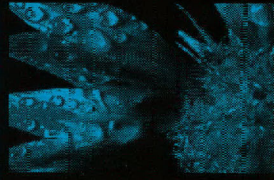


ANNUAL

Birding & Nature

FESTIVALS

OF TEXAS



2003
2004





Once again it is our pleasure to present a listing of the nature festivals that occur this year in Texas. Twenty-eight festivals are listed this year.

Texas has something to offer for everyone interested in wildlife watching. Many of the following festivals are hosted by local communities to salute the unique wildlife features of their region. Whether your interest lies in hummingbirds, butterflies, dragonflies, eagles or Whooping Cranes, you can find a festival to meet your interests in the Lone Star State. These festivals offer educational and entertaining ways to learn more about the great outdoors in Texas.

These activities are fun opportunities for the whole family. Whether you are sitting in on a workshop, viewing birds on a field trip or visiting a vendor's booth, nature festivals offer relaxation and recreation.

Some real treats are found at these festivals, with some groups even seeing things not related to the event. Mission's Butterfly Festival included an opportunity to see Northern Jacana and a bobcat. Not to be out done, Harlingen's Rio Grande Valley Nature Festival had naturalists scrambling to see butterflies in nearby gardens. Rarities like the Green-breasted Mango, Golden-crowned Warbler or Costa's Hummingbird add to the excitement.

So come to Texas and enjoy some of the great wildlife diversity our state has to offer!

Government Publications
Texas State Documents

FEB 2003

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EAGLE FEST

February 14-15, 2004

Emory

Recently proclaimed as the Eagle Capital of Texas, Rains County and the city of Emory host this event. Barge tours will be conducted on Lake Fork to search for Bald Eagles. Opportunities will also be provided to view other local birds and wildlife. Other activities include fine arts and crafts shows, birds of prey demonstrations, a night owl prowl and music throughout the festival.

Contact: Eagle Fest
P.O. Box 695, Emory, TX 75440
903-473-3913

Web site: www.eaglefest.org

NATURE CELEBRATION

February 21, 2004

Lake Jackson

Nature Celebration will feature everything from snakes through fish to birds and gardening for wildlife with something for everyone, including special events for the kids.

Contact: Sea Center Texas
Connie Stolte
979-292-0100



CELEBRATION OF WHOOPING CRANES & OTHER BIRDS

February 27-29, 2004

Port Aransas

Celebrate birds – island style. Seminars, workshops, speakers. Boat tours include trips in bay and harbor, trips to view endangered Whooping Cranes, and nature boat excursions to watch special marine life. Guided tours of birding centers, wetland habitats, art exhibits, trade show and great food make this festival memorable.

Contact: Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce
421 Cotter, Port Aransas, TX 78373
800-45COAST

TEXAS TROPICS NATURE FESTIVAL

March 25-28, 2004

McAllen

Chachalaca, Green and Ringed Kingfishers, Great Kiskadee, Long-billed Thrasher, Altamira Oriole, Green Jay and Olive Sparrow are just a few of the highlights from planned field trips to Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge and Bentsen-Rio Grande State Park. Guided tours, seminars on cultural and natural history and migrating butterflies to boot! Great trade show.

Contact: Texas Tropics Nature Festival
P.O. Box 790, McAllen, TX 78505
877-MCALLEN

Web site: www.mcallencvb.com

E-mail: ttnf@mcallencvb.com

BIRD HABITAT WEEKEND

April 2-4, 2004

Lajitas

Using the combined facilities of the Barton Warnock Environmental Center, Big Bend National Park, Lajitas Bird Sanctuary and other nearby facilities, this weekend of workshops and field trips will focus on bird habitat and rare bird documentation.

Contact: Barton Warnock Environmental Education Center
432/424-3327

ATTWATER'S PRAIRIE CHICKEN FESTIVAL

April 3-4, 2004

Attwater Prairie Chicken
National Wildlife Refuge

Located near the Attwater's Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge, Eagle Lake honors this unique and indigenous bird now on the verge of extinction. Wildlife viewing tours are available throughout the area. Local artists display arts and crafts while information booths focus on natural history of the Coastal Prairie. Tours to the lake can be booked in February.

Contact: Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR
P.O. Box 519, Eagle Lake, TX 77434
979-234-3021



11th ANNUAL MIGRATION CELEBRATION

April 16-18, 2004

Lake Jackson

This event will have info booths and exciting speakers, but the key to this festival is the birding field trips. Haven to over 350 species of birds, the area's diverse habitats include coastal prairie, hardwood forests and southern bayous along the Central Flyway. Field trips include tours to Brazoria, Big Boggy and San Bernard National Wildlife Refuges, Peach Point Wildlife Management Area, five county parks and 20 miles of Gulf Coast Beaches. Potential birds include migratory tanagers, warblers, buntings, hawks, waterfowl and shorebirds all returning from their winter in Latin America.

Contact: Brazosport Convention and Visitors Council
888-477-2505

THE GREAT TEXAS BIRDING CLASSIC

April 17-25, 2004

Texas Coast

This week-long birding tournament has a \$50,000 first place Conservation Cash Grand Prize to benefit bird habitat protection; 400 species possible including Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl and Green Kingfisher. Who will be birding's "top gun?"

Contact: Birding Classic, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744
888-TX-BIRDS (892-4737) ext. 2

Web site: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/gtbc/

E-mail: shelly.scroggs@tpwd.state.tx.us

NATURE QUEST 2004

April 20-25, 2004

Concan

In the heart of the Texas Hill Country, the Texas River Regions offer great birding and outdoor opportunities. Excellent programs, guided field trips and great fun highlight this weekend. Some of the possibilities include Golden-cheeked Warbler, Black-capped Vireo, Black Phoebe, Scott's Oriole. The area is also rich in butterfly life.

Contact: Texas Hill Country River Region
800-210-0380

Web site: www.thcrr.com

11th ANNUAL BLUEBIRD FESTIVAL

April 24-25, 2004

Wills Point

Wills Point celebrates its birds with special educational and entertaining programs. Driving tours afford festival attendees access to hundreds of bluebirds and nesting boxes lining the roads into town. Arts and crafts, games and food and educational booths are set up throughout the brick-lined streets of downtown.

Contact: Wills Point Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 217, Wills Point, TX 75169
903-873-3111 800-WPBLUBI

Web site: www.flash.net/~junction/festival.htm



BIRDING IN THE BIG THICKET

April 23-25, 2004

Kountze

A birding celebration with workshops on beginning birding, photographing birds, birding on the net and more. Tours offered to surrounding areas, Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, High Island, The Big Thicket. Children's workshop with hands on projects, workshops on field guides and binoculars.

Contact: Kountze Chamber of Commerce
866-456-8689

Web site: www.kountzecoc.org

GALVESTON FEATHERFEST

TBA - April 2004

Galveston

A birding festival combining birding field trips and nature seminars with the art and history that makes Galveston Island one of the leading Texas destinations. Festival participants will enjoy excursions to a variety of the top birding spots in the country during spring migration, a time of year that the island abounds with 300+ species of birds.

Contact: Galveston Island Nature Tourism Council
Renee Adame
409-945-6302

E-mail: radame@houston.rr.com

4th ANNUAL TEXAS SONGBIRD FESTIVAL

April 30 - May 3, 2004

Lago Vista

Located 35 miles northwest of Austin, the "Gateway to the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuges" offers excellent habitat for two Texas endemic endangered birds – the Golden-cheeked Warbler and the Black-capped Vireo. The festival includes opportunities to view both of these species on birding walks as well as programs, a trade show and other events.

Contact: Lago Vista Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 4946, Lago Vista, TX 78645
888-328-LAGO

Web site: www.lagovista.org

E-mail: info@lagovista.org

FIRST ANNUAL BIRDFEST

April 30 - May 2

Chappell Hill

This new Central Texas festival features renowned speakers, birding field trips in the beautiful heart of Texas.

Contact: Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau
1-888-Brenham



5th ANNUAL DRAGONFLY DAYS

May 14-16, 2004

Weslaco

Focusing on the diversity of these flying wonders found in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, this event offers field trips, seminars and lots of opportunities to see birds, butterflies and of course, dragonflies, in one of North America's most diverse regions.

Contact: Valley Nature Center, Weslaco, TX
956-969-2475

BROWNSVILLE INTERNATIONAL BIRD FESTIVAL

July 15-18, 2004

Brownsville

Pelagic trips, Laguna Madre, thornscrub and butterfly trips, as well as a field trip into Mexico highlight this international event. The only Rio Grande festival to feature summer birding, the field trips offer Leache's Storm Petrel, Masked Booby, Magnificent Frigatebird, Reddish Egrets, White-tailed Kites, Aplomado Falcon and Botteri's Sparrow. Daily seminars, a marketplace and evening activities round out the program.

Contact: David Lee, Brownsville Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Web site: www.brownsville.org

E-mail: dlee@brownsville.org

DAVIS MOUNTAINS HUMMINGBIRD FESTIVAL

August 12-15, 2004

Fort Davis

Plans for this year's festival include seminars, workshops, field trips of local birding sights and great hospitality as you look for as many as nine species of hummingbird seen in this area at this time. General birding and bird banding will also be featured.

Contact: Mark Klym
179 Indian Oak Drive
Bastrop, TX 78602
512-321-1256

XTREME HUMMINGBIRD XTRAVAGANZA

September 11, 2004

Lake Jackson

Hundreds of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds make the migratory journey along the Texas coast and across the Gulf. Witness this with other hummingbird enthusiasts while enjoying related activities. Contact the observatory for more information.

Contact: Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Lake Jackson, TX
979-480-0999



HUMMER/BIRD CELEBRATION

September 16-19, 2004

Rockport

Over 14 speakers and programs, outdoor exhibits, a banding site, nature related vendor booths, Hummer Home visits, birding boat excursions, guided field trips and so much more highlight this annual festival along the Central Texas coast.

Contact: Rockport/Fulton Chamber of Commerce
404 Broadway, Rockport, TX 78382
800-242-0071

E-mail: visitor@rockport.org
www.Rockport-Fulton.org

BIRDS OF PREY FESTIVAL

September 18-19, 2004

McKinney

Birds of prey programs by Heard Raptor Center of Texas, Texas Hawking Association and On the Wing Again. Flighted raptor programs by Last Chance Forever. Guided nature walks on the grounds of the Heard Nature Center. The Eagles Nest nature center will be available for children.

Contact: Heard Natural Science Museum
972-562-5566

Web site: www.heardmuseum.org

A CELEBRATION OF FLIGHT

September 23-26, 2004

Corpus Christi

At the peak of raptor migration at Hazel Bazemore Park in Corpus Christi, this event promises thousands of migrating birds of prey – a spectacle unmatched anywhere in the United States. The weekend includes live raptor programs, mini-talks on raptor identification and migration. Surveys of raptor roosting spots add opportunities to enhance your knowledge.

Contact: Joel Simon
361-241-2617

Web site: www.electrotex.com/AOC

E-mail: jsimon@electrotex.com

TEXAS WILDLIFE EXPO

October 2-3, 2004

Austin

Presented by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Expo gives visitors an opportunity to try out and learn about a wide range of outdoor sports and pastimes including angling, rock climbing, mountain biking, camping, shooting and much more. The birding area offers tours, workshops, the Junior Audubon Birdathon for youngsters and information about birding in Texas. Whether you're an old hand or a new backyard birder, you'll love Expo's birding area.

Contact: Texas Wildlife Expo
4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744
800-792-1112

Web site: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/expo/



TEXAS BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL

October 14-17, 2004

Mission

Join us in Mission, Texas as we celebrate the Valley's 280+ species of butterflies. Learn from internationally renowned speakers, explore the areas natural habitats on expert guided field trips. Other activities include the Butterfly Bonanza South Texas BBQ Dinner, and the Nature and Butterfly Expo.

Contact: Greater Mission Chamber of Commerce
800-580-2700

Web site: www.texasbutterfly.com

GRAPEVINE BUTTERFLY FESTIVAL

October 16, 2004

Grapevine

Educational programs, activities and entertainment for all ages.

Contact: Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau
817-410-3185

10th ANNUAL RIO GRANDE VALLEY BIRDING FESTIVAL

November 10-14, 2004

Harlingen

Celebrate the wonder that is South Texas. This festival will focus on field trips, a trade show and special presentations by internationally renowned birders and authors of wildlife biology. Field trips offer glimpses of parrots, Chachalaca, Great Kiskadee, Altamira Oriole and Green Jay among many other birds found in this region.

Contact: Harlingen Chamber of Commerce
311 East Tyler, Harlingen, TX 78550
800-531-7346 956-423-5440

Web site: www.harlingen.com

WILD IN WILLACY 2003 – A NATURE ODYSSEY

TBA - Fall 2003

Raymondville & Port Mansfield

A four-day festival celebrating the natural bio-diversity of Willacy County, Texas, one of the four counties which make up the Rio Grande Valley. Birding field trips include airboat rides into the otherwise inaccessibly sloughs of the Laguna Madre Bay, boating safari across the Laguna Madre to the northern tip of South Padre Island and access to private ranches. Special two-day free children's program featuring participation by USFWS, Gladys Porter Zoo and others. Other events feature butterflies, native Texas plants and history of the area.

Contact: Elma Chavez
956-689-3171

E-mail: chamber@vsta.com



BALMORHEA BIRDFEST

TBA - October 2004

Balmorhea

This festival offers birders the opportunity to explore private ranches and nearby Davis Mountains in search of Montezuma Quail, Mountain Chickadee and Crissal Thrasher as well as other desert, montane, water and wetland species of the Trans-Pecos region. Speakers will be well-known Texas birders who are experts on birds of the area. Evenings will find participants enjoying chuck wagon-style suppers. Sunday morning will provide a cowboy breakfast send-off.

Contact: Ellen Weinacht
P.O. Box 21, Balmorhea, TX 79718
432-375-2325

E-mail: birdingbalmorhea@hotmail.com

SOUTH TEXAS WILDLIFE AND BIRDING FESTIVAL

TBA - November 2004

Kingsville

The festival will include workshops and seminars, birding tours, vendors and exhibitors.

Contact: Kingsville Convention and Visitors Bureau
1501 N. Highway 77, Kingsville, TX 78363
800-333-5032

Web site: www.kingsvilletexas.com



NOTES

NOTICE

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department receives federal financial assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the U.S. Department of the Interior and its bureaus prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex (in educational programs). If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any Texas Parks and Wildlife Department program, activity, or facility, or if you desire further information, please call or write: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office for Diversity and Civil Rights Programs- External Programs, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Webb 300, Arlington, VA 22203, (703) 358-1724.



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