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PARKS AND WILDLIFE

ANNUAL **Birding** AND **Nature**
FESTIVALS
OF TEXAS

2002 - 2003

Once again it is our pleasure to present a listing of the nature festivals that occur this year in Texas. Twenty-five 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, eagles or Whooping Cranes, you can find a festival to meet your interests in the Lone Star State. For both visitor and local folk alike, 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.

These festivals offer some real treats, with some groups even seeing things not related to the festival. 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.

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

Government Publications
Texas State Documents

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BROWNSVILLE INTERNATIONAL BIRD FESTIVAL

July 25-28, 2002

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

E-mail: dlee@brownsville.org

DAVIS MOUNTAINS HUMMINGBIRD FESTIVAL

August 15-17, 2002

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: Prude Ranch
Box 1431, Fort Davis, TX 79734
915-426-3202

XTREME HUMMINGBIRD XTRAVAGANZA

September 7, 2002

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 12-15, 2002

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
800-826-6441

E-mail: chamber@dbstech.com



BIRDS OF PREY FESTIVAL

September 14, 2002

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 26-29, 2002

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
361-241-2920

Web site: www.electrotex.com/AOC

E-mail: jsimon@electrotex.com

TEXAS WILDLIFE EXPO

October 5-6, 2002

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 17-20, 2002

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 19, 2002

Grapevine

Educational programs, activities and entertainment for all ages.

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

WILD IN WILLACY 2002 – A NATURE ODYSSEY

October 24-27, 2002

Raymondville & Port Mansfield

A four day festival celebrating the natural bio-diversity of Willacy County, TX, one of the four counties which make up the Rio Grande Valley. Birding field trips include airboat rides into the otherwise inaccessible 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 2-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: Monica Burdette
956-689-3171

E-mail: chamber@vsta.com

FALCONFEST

October 26, 2002

Fairfield Lake SP, near Palestine

Live birds of prey demonstrations, tours of raptor habitat, and much more highlight this fall festival celebrating the return of winter raptors to one of central Texas' state parks. Bald Eagles and Osprey are frequent visitors along this lake nestled in beautiful hardwood forests and rolling hills.

Contact: Fairfield Lake State Park
903-389-4514

BALMORHEA BIRDFEST

October 31 - November 3, 2002

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
915-375-2325

E-mail: birdingbalmorhea@juno.com



9th ANNUAL RIO GRANDE VALLEY BIRDING FESTIVAL

November 6-10, 2002

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

SOUTH TEXAS WILDLIFE AND BIRDING FESTIVAL

November 22-24, 2002

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

EAGLE FEST

January 11-12, 2003

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 prowling and music throughout the festival.

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

Web site: www.eaglefest.org

CELEBRATION OF WHOOPING CRANES & OTHER BIRDS

February 21-23, 2003

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
1-800-45COAST

10th ANNUAL MIGRATION CELEBRATION

March 15-17, 2003

Lake Jackson

This event will have a trade show 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: Southern Brazoria County Visitor and Convention Bureau, 159 Brazosport Blvd., Clute, TX 77531
800-938-4853

TEXAS TROPICS NATURE FESTIVAL

March 27-30, 2003

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
1-877-MCALLEN

Web site: www.mcallencvb.com

E-mail: ttnf@mcallencvb.com

ATTWATER'S PRAIRIE CHICKEN FESTIVAL

April 12, 2003

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 area.

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

10th ANNUAL BLUEBIRD FESTIVAL

April 12, 2003

Wills Point

Home of more bluebirds than any other place in Texas, 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

NATURE QUEST 2003

April 23-27, 2003

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
1-800-210-0380

Web site: www.thcrr.com

BIRDING IN THE BIG THICKET

April 25-27, 2003

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

THE GREAT TEXAS BIRDING CLASSIC

April 26 - May 4, 2003

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)

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

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

3rd ANNUAL TEXAS SONGBIRD FESTIVAL

May 2-4, 2003

Lago Vista

Located 35 miles north west 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
1-888-328-LAGO

E-mail: rannis@quik.com

4th ANNUAL DRAGONFLY DAYS

May 17-18, 2003

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



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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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