



GUIDE TO USING THE MAP

The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail — Upper Texas Coast includes fifteen separate loops. Each encompasses an array of associated sites and birds. The color-coded loops on the front and back of the map provide easy access to related information. Site symbols on the map are shaped and colored to show access, indicate fees when applicable, and denote the availability of developed overnight facilities at each location. This map also furnishes information about the trail locations, including detailed instructions on how to reach each site and GPS coordinates where available. Using this map, travelers will no longer struggle to locate obscure birding spots that may contain the species they traveled to see.

This publication contains an illustrated highway map of the Upper Texas Coast that shows the 139 designated sites. Each site is marked with a symbol that points to its location, with the shape of the symbol signifying the following:

- The site is open daily, and developed camping is available at the site.
- ▲ The site is open for day use only.
- Call ahead, access to the site is restricted; visitation may be arranged by contacting the managing entity at the address and telephone number provided.

Note: If the symbol is outlined in black, an entrance fee or donation may be required.

In addition, each symbol is colored to distinguish the segment or loop to which the site belongs. Each site has been assigned to one of the eleven loops, and no loop requires more than a long weekend to leisurely traverse.

Descriptions of the sites are on the back of the map, and include directions to each location, examples of the birds to be seen, and contacts for additional information. The text, like the map, is organized by loops. A list of contacts (chambers of commerce, convention and visitors bureaus) begins each section. Information about food, lodging, and local points of interest may be obtained from these organizations. Several also publish maps and guides to the birds and sites in their regions, so visit the local visitor centers when traveling along the coast for additional information.

To aid travelers, each site is marked with a brown sign illustrated with the familiar Black Skimmer logo, as well as a unique site number that corresponds with the map. Just look for the skimmer logo on directional signs when driving along the Trail to confirm your route and location.



Birding Trail Sign Marker Central Texas Coast (CTC)

10 Interstate
(71 (11) State Highway
(1604) State Loop or Spur
(P11) Park Road

71 111 State Highway

(1604) State Loop or Spur

(P11) Park Road

(P11) Park Road

(P11) Farm or Ranch Road

(P11) Road

(P11) Park Road

Texas Travel Information Center

One inch equals approximately 9 miles

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IMPORTANCE OF NATURE TOURISM

The Great Texas Wildlife Trail program was developed in an effort to make it easier for people to find special places throughout the state of Texas to go wildlife watching. TPWD produced these maps to help visitors by connecting nature tourism destinations into easy driving loops while also supporting sustainable economic development in local communities.

Wildlife watching is big business in Texas! With 4.2 million participants (2.5 million of whom are birdwatchers) wildlife watchers have an overall economic impact of \$5.2 billion on the Texas economy. Wildlife watchers spend more money in Texas each year than hunters or anglers! With the help of this map and the entire Great Texas Wildlife Trail series, enjoy this wonderful state and the great diversity of experiences waiting for you along the highways and back roads. As we like to say at TPWD, life's better outside.

TEXAS PADDLING TRAILS

View wildlife from a different vantage point! The Texas Paddling Trails program develops public inland and coastal paddling trails throughout the state and supports these trails with maps, signage, fishing and wildlife-viewing information, and more! These trails provide well-mapped accessible day trips in a variety of settings and for all levels of paddling experience offering wildlife viewers another avenue for exploring the outdoors. www.tpwd.texas.gov/paddling

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Texas Parks and Wildlife Information: (800) 792-1112 www.tpwd.texas.gov

Trail Map Edits and Updates:

(512) 389-4500 www.tpwd.texas.gov/wildlifetrails

North American Rare Bird Alert: www.narba.org

Texas Travel Information:

www.traveltex.com

Livingston-Polk County Chamber of Commerce http://polkchamber.com • (936) 327-4929 or (800) 918-1305

Lumberton Chamber of Commerce www.lumbertoncoc.com • (409) 755-0554 **Newton County Chamber of Commerce**

www.newton-texas.com • (409) 379-5527

Orange Convention and Visitors Bureau www.orangetexas.org • (409) 883-1011 Silsbee Chamber of Commerce

www.silsbeechamber.com • (409) 385-5562 Tyler County Chamber of Commerce (Woodville) www.tylercountychamber.com • (409) 283-2632

▲ UTC 001: BLUE ELBOW SWAMP-TONY HOUSEMAN WILDLIFF MANAGEMENT AREA

The most convenient access to this site is at the TxDOT Travel Information Center located on the north service road of I-10 between the Sabine River and the city of Orange. This site features a 600-foot-long interpretive boardwalk in to the palustrine wetland dominated by bald cypress tupelo, cattail, and various brush species. Visitors may encounter Bald Eagles, Ospi Mississippi and American Swallow-tailed Kites, herons, egrets, woodpeckers, kingfishers, and various neotropical migrants including the Prothonotary Warbler. Additionally, American

alligators and various aquatic turtle species can be spotted from the elevated boardwalk. GPS: 30.12300, -93.71317

▲ UTC 001A: SHANGRI LA BOTANICAL GARDENS Exit 877 on I-10 and travel south on Highway 87 (16th Street) for 1.4 miles to Park Ave. Turn right (east) on Park Ave. and travel .2 mile to entrance of the nature center. Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center is a 262-acre site that includes upland forests, cypress/ tupelo swamps, and Adams Bayou, a lush riparian area. More than 300 species of birds have been seen in Shangri La. The site's heronry includes 15 species of birds with nests starting in late February and going through June. An observation blind is provided and is handicapped accessible and located near restrooms. Alligators are commonly observed in Ruby Lake at Shangri La, During the spring, the garden area is an excellent place to observe migrating songbirds. An Outpost Tour allows visitors to travel to a Beaver Pond where Prothonotary Warblers nest. Common mammals include swamp rabbits and nutria along with a great variety of reptiles and amphibians. Generally, because most of Shangri La has been left in a

▲ UTC 002: BON WIER ontinue west on I-10 to its intersection with TX 87; head north on TX 87 to FM 1416. Travel

GPS: 30.10290, -93.75172

natural state, it is a wonderland of wildlife.

east on FM 1416 to US 190 and Bon Wier. Continue east on US 190 to the state line and the bridge that crosses the Sabine River. About 0.5 mile before the river there is an old section of the highway where parking is available. Swallow-tailed Kites may be seen floating above the woodlands bordering the Sabine River in late spring and summer. GPS: 30.74717, -93.61581 ▲ UTC 004: TOLEDO BEND RESERVOIR

Head west on US 190 to Newton, and then turn north on TX 87 to Burkeville. Next, travel

north on FM 692 to Toledo Bend Reservoir. The forests below the dam are typical of the

riparian woodlands in east Texas, and they may be accessed by driving or walking along the

sand road on the west side of the river GPS: 31.17203, -93.56583 **UTC 006: SAM RAYBURN RESERVOIR** Return south on FM 692 to R255; travel west on R255 to Sam Rayburn Reservoir, Although most of the reservoir is north of the coastal birding trail, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers operates a number of recreational sites along the south shore of the lake, including Twin Dikes

the normal complement of woodland birds, the reservoir attracts impressive flocks of

waterfowl in migration and winter, as well as a scattering of loons, grebes, gulls, and terns. GPS: 31.06986, -94.05542

UTC 007: ANGELINA NATIONAL FOREST -BOYKIN SPRINGS RECREATION AREA Continue west on R255 to TX 63. Travel northwest on TX 63 to this site. Boykin Springs offers a rich diversity of woodland birding possibilities. As you enter along Boykin Springs Rd. (FR 13), you will cross a fire-maintained longleaf pine forest. The bluestem grasslands within the forest are the preferred habitat for Bachman's Sparrows. The wetter grasslands attract a few Henslow's Sparrows in winter. Brown-headed Nuthatches may be seen throughout the year in dense pine stands, and Kentucky Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chats, and Painted Buntings nest in the yaupon thickets. Listen for Chipping Sparrows here in late spring and summer (don't credit all the trilling to Pine Warblers). There are a number of Red-cockaded

Toodpecker groups in this area. One of the accessible groups has been marked, so look for

Bouton Lake offers wonderful opportunities to access a variety of hardwood and mixed pine/

hardwood forests. Louisiana Waterthrushes nest along the tannin-stained streams that

GPS: 31.09414, -94.25906 ▲ UTC 008: ANGELINA NATIONAL FOREST — UPLAND ISLAND WILDERNESS, BOUTON LAKE, AND SAWMILL TRAIL Return to TX 63, and continue northwest (toward Zavalla) to Angelina CR 348. Travel south on CR 348 (also FR 303) to Upland Island Wilderness and Bouton Lake. The drive into

the signs as you enter along FR 313

permeate the bottoms. Sawmill Trail connects Bouton Lake and Boykin Springs; therefore it is possible to bird the forest that extends between these two special sites. GPS: 31.13069, -94.32069 ▲ UTC 009: CORRIGAN TIMBERLANDS WOODLAND TRAIL Return to TX 63, and head north to Zavalla. Turn south on US 69 to FM 256 in Colmesneil. Continue west on FM 256 to US 287, then north on US 287 to FM 62 and Corrigan Timberlands Woodland Trail. The longleaf pines within this forest are among the oldest that will be found along the GTCBT, with some estimated to be in excess of 250 years old. The

trail drops down into an impressive lowland hardwood forest, so a morning's walk here provides an opportunity to view a diverse selection of woodland birds. GPS: 30.94803, -94.69642 ▲ UTC 010: DOGWOOD TRAIL Return south on US 287 to Woodville. Next, travel east on US 190 to Dogwood Trail (the

dogwoods bloom from mid to late March). The Dogwood Trail is a one-mile hiking trail offering great woodland birding that is unique to this part of Texas and offers views of some of the largest pine and beech trees you can find. GPS: 30.79431, -94.37086

▲ UTC 011: PINEYWOODS OUTREACH AND CONSERVATION CENTER Continue east on US 190 to FM 1747, then travel north on FM 1747 to CR 009. Situated within the densely forested Pineywoods, the POCC offers an assortment of aquatic habita that otherwise would not be found here, with ponds that attract an assortment of waterbirds The forests that border the site can be quite good for woodland birding. Look for Eastern Bluebirds perched on power lines and fence posts as you drive through this area. GPS: 30.94653, -94.12583 ■ UTC 012: EAST B.A. STEINHAGEN RESERVOIR

Return to FM 1747, then continue south to US 190. Travel east on US 190 to FM 777, then go

south on FM 777 to CR 155. Go west on CR 155 to Sandy Creek Park and East Steinhagen

Lake. After visiting this area, return to FM 777, and continue south to East End Park/Town

Bluff. The eastern edge of B.A. Steinhagen Reservoir offers a number of opportunities for

woodland birding. These woods often attract numbers of migrants in spring, and most of the Pineywoods breeding birds are present here in the summer. GPS: 30.83272, -94.15042

Return north to US 190, then turn west on US 190 to PR 48 and the park headquarters. This park is divided into three different units (the Hen House Ridge, Walnut Ridge, and Cherokee units), placed both north and south of US 190. Look for Pileated and other woodpeckers throughout the year, and Brown Creepers in winter. There are several rookeries (heron and egret nesting colonies) in and around this reservoir, and Anhingas are commonly seen here. Angelina-Neches/Dam B WMA is situated north of the park only accessible by boat. (409) 384-5231 www.tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/martin-dies-jr GPS: 30.85297, -94.16553

UTC 014: WEST B.A. STEINHAGEN RESERVOIR Continue west on US 190 to Martin Dies, Jr. State Park Cherokee Unit and West B.A. Steinhagen Lake. Listen for Yellow-throated Warblers and Indigo Buntings around the Cherokee Unit in

summer. Continue west on US 190 to FM 92, then travel north on FM 92 to Magnolia Ridge Park. American Redstarts have nested in this park near the Wolf Creek Trail parking area. Return south on FM 92 to US 190, then continue south on FM 92 to CR 4130. Go east on CR 4130 to Camper's Cove Park. All of these sites offer similar birding opportunities, although local birders believe Camper's Cove Park south to Town Bluff to be the best stretch around the lake for finding migrant landbirds in spring and sparrows in winter. GPS: 30.85422, -94.21514 ▲ UTC 015: BIG THICKET NATIONAL PRESERVE

Return to FM 92, then continue south to Spurger and the intersection with FM 1013. Travel

west on FM 1013 to US 69/287, then go south on US 69 to Big Thicket National Preserve (BTNP). However, en route from Warren, you may wish to visit Hickory Creek and the Sundew Trail. The Hickory Creek Savannah Unit is located west of US 69 on FM 2928. Continue south on US 69 to FM 420, then east on FM 420 to the BTNP visitors center. BTNP is divided into a number of widely separated units. A complete list (as well as a detailed map) may be obtained at the visitors center. BTNP locations preferred by birders include Cook's Lake, Hickory Creek Savannah, Kirby Nature Trail, Lance Rosier Unit, McQueen's Landing, Pitcher Plant Trail, Turkey Creek Trail, and Village Creek.

(409) 951-6700 www.nps.gov/bith GPS: 30.45711, -94.38775 ▲ UTC 016: GORE STORE RD. AND TURKEY CREEK

Return on FM 420 to US 69, then go north on US 69 approximately 3.5 miles to Gore Store Rd. and Turkey Creek. Travel east on Gore Store Rd. to Firetower Rd. (11.7 miles). The birding along Gore Store Rd. is renowned, and for many years birders have visited this area to find the Pineywoods specialties. Species that prefer early succession growth and dense yaupon thickets, such as Prairie and Swainson's warblers, Yellow-breasted Chat, and Indigo and Painted buntings, have become quite common here (look and listen for Prairie Warblers in young pine plantations). Reaching Firetower Rd., travel south. Camp Waluta Rd. (0.2 mile) is often worth a try (Eastern Towhees apparently nest here). Continue south to FM 418, then east on FM 418 to FM 92. In late spring through early summer, listen for Eastern Screech-Owls, Barred Owls, and Chuck-will's-widows just after dark or immediately before sunrise.

GPS: 30.50925, -94.39950 ▲ UTC 017: ROY E. LARSEN SANDYLAND SANCTUARY Travel south on FM 92 to FM 327 in Silsbee, then go west on FM 327 to The Nature onservancy of Texas Roy E. Larsen Sandyland Sanctuary. The nature trail here offers another excellent opportunity to see a representative selection of eastern woodland birds, as well as to experience the arid pine sandhills that are largely absent in the BTNP.

GPS: 30.34833, -94.23578

GPS: 30.02489, -94.14867

Return east on FM 327 to FM 92, then continue south on FM 92 to US 96. This park is situated along the Neches River, and offers river access to Big Thicket habitats such as cypress/tupelo swamp and baygall. The young pine/hardwood forests within the park host a (409) 755-7322 www.tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/village-creek

GPS: 30.24650, -94.18125 ▲ UTC 019: TYRRELL PARK AND CATTAIL MARSH Continue south on US 96 to I-10 in Beaumont, then travel west on I-10 to Walden Rd. Go south on Walden Rd. (becomes Tyrrell Park Rd.), and continue to Tyrrell Park and Cattail Marsh. Tyrrell Park is a multi-use facility that retains sufficient habitat to support an interesting selection of eastern breeding birds. Perhaps the best spot along the GTCBT to see Fish Crows, however, American Crows are present as well, so be sure to listen for the characteristic

guttural "croaks" of the Fish Crows. Cattail Marsh is part of the Beaumont wastewater

treatment facilities. This 900-acre constructed wetland attracts an incredible diversity of

shorebirds and waterfowl are constantly shifting within this complex. Birder friendly

waterbirds throughout the year. The water levels vary from compartment to compartment, so

apgrades coming soon. Keep an eye out for Least Grebe and Cinnamon Teal, as they have

made frequent appearances in recent years. Visitors must walk (rather than drive) the levees.

SABINE LOOP Port Arthur Convention and Visitors Bureau

the levee roads), grebes, and waterfowl abound in the winter. Shorebirds may be present in

ends of Pleasure Island are productive, so wander the levee roads and scope the

Return on TX 82 to TX 87, then continue south on TX 87 to Sabine Pass. Watch for

cormorants, waterfowl, gulls, and terns as you drive along the south end of Sabine Lake.

Before entering Sabine Pass, you will cross the Sabine Pass marshes. Least Bitterns, White

and White-faced ibis (look for Glossy among the large dark ibis flocks), Roseate Spoonbills,

this expansive wetland. The resident grackle in this marsh is Boat-tailed (be aware that a

From Sabine Pass, continue east on FM 3322 to the Sabine Pass Battleground State Historica

Site, a minor birding destination along the coast (although restrooms are available). The

trees and shrubs within the site may attract a variety of migrants in spring and fall. Continue

east on FM 3322 to South 1st and turn south. Continue to the dead-end at the Pilot Station

the passage of a late cold front in spring, migrant landbirds (vireos, warblers, tanagers,

buntings, grosbeaks, and orioles) are likely. In winter through late spring, the cordgrass

marshes that border the road support impressive numbers of Nelson's and Seaside sparrows.

Return north on South 1st to Quinn, then turn west on Quinn. Continue to the end of Quinn,

and this road provides an excellent spot from which to look and listen for rails, wrens, and

then veer north on South 8th. South 8th is bordered by the marshes of the Texas Point NWR,

sparrows. Continue on South 8th until reaching FM 3322, then turn west and return to Sabine

Pass. From Sabine Pass, travel west (signed south) on TX 87 to the Texas Point NWR nature

trees in this area provide resting habitat for many species during migration. It only takes a

minute to check this location but the return can be substantial. White-tailed Kites, Painted

Buntings, and Orchard Orioles breed in the area, a wonderful stop on your way to Sabine Woods.

▲ UTC 026: TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY SABINE WOODS

(409) 971-2909 www.fws.gov GPS: 29.70869, -93.92133

Continue west on TX 87 to TOS Sabine Woods. This isolated stand of live oaks is among the most

productive migrant stop-over sites (migrant traps) along the entire Texas coast. During spring

and fall migration, the trees and shrubs here attract thousands of migrant landbirds. Hundreds

trail (on the south side of TX 87 about 2.4 miles west of Sabine Pass). The sparsely scattered

and Texas Point (about 3.5 miles). The road to the Pilot Station may offer a rough ride. After

■ UTC 024: SABINE PASS BATTLEGROUND STATE HISTORIC SITE

small percentage of Boat-tailed Grackles in this area have yellow eyes).

▲ UTC 025: TEXAS POINT NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Clapper Rails, Common Yellowthroats, and Seaside Sparrows are all relatively easy to find in

mpressive numbers when suitable habitat (mud flat) is available. Both the north and south

GPS: 30.13097, -93.92089

AND BAILEY'S FISH CAMP

▲ UTC 022: PLEASURE ISLAND

concentrations of ducks, gulls, and terns.

GPS: 29.84664, -93.94647

GPS: 29.73361, -93.89447

AND TEXAS POINT

www.visitsabinepassbattleground.com

▲ UTC 023: SABINE PASS

www.visitportarthurtx.com • (409) 985-7822 or (800) 235-7822 ▲ UTC 020: CLAIBORNE WEST PARK Head west on I-10 from TX 87 to FM 1442 (Exit 869). After exiting, remain on the westbound service road and continue to the entrance to Claiborne West Park which offers the opportunity to see an interesting selection of Big Thicket woodland birds. Check this park in migration for landbirds that have over-flown the coast and settled into the interior forests.

▲ UTC 021: LOWER NECHES WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA Travel south on FM 1442 to TX 73/87 (FM 1442 eventually will swing east before intersecting

with TX 87). Continue south on TX 73/87 to Lake St. Travel south on Lake St. to the Lower Neches WMA observation platform and Bailey's Fish Camp. The TPWD observation platform Return to FM 1960, and continue east on FM 1960 to Kenswick. Go north on Kenswick Dr. is located approximately 1.5 miles from TX 73/87, and overlooks a broad expanse of coastal which dead-ends into the nature center. With over 300 acres of floodplain forest and marsh. Continue south from the observation platform (the road surface will eventually become shell) to Bailey's Fish Camp and Sabine Lake. Herons, egrets, spoonbills, waterfowl, and shorebirds mass in this area, so be sure to bring a scope. GPS: 30.01050, -93.84561

approximately 9 miles of all-weather trails and boardwalks, visitors have a chance to xperience seasonal and resident woodland and shorebird species, including Swainson's Warblers and Bald Eagles. Jones Park is located on the 33-mile-long Spring Creek Greenway Project. The nature center offers live and static displays of local wildlife and educational programs year-round, including naturalist guided walks. This park is located within a 20-minute drive from George Bush International Airport. If you wish to bird the south shore Return on Lake St. to TX 73/87, then travel southwest on TX 73/87 to Groves. Remain on TX of Lake Houston return to FM 1960 and continue east. Then travel south on US 59 and east 73 when the two roads divide in Groves, and continue southwest to the intersection with TX on Beltway 8 to reach Alexander Deussen Park. 82. Travel south on TX 82 across the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway (GIWW). Once across the MLK Bridge, exit on T.B. Ellison Pkwy. for Pleasure Island. Loons (on the Sabine Lake side of www.hcp4.net/jones GPS: 30.02256, -95.29428

SAN JACINTO LOOP

Baytown Chamber of Commerce www.baytownchamber.com • (281) 422-8359

▲ UTC 039: BAYTOWN NATURE CENTER

From the intersection of TX 146 and I-10, go west on I-10 to Crosby-Lynchburg Rd. and Spur 330. Go east on Spur 330 and south on Bayway Dr. to the nature center. This interpretive center is located on over 450 acres of peninsula surrounded by three bays, and the wetlands serve as home to over 300 species of birds and include a nursery area for various aquatic species. The nature center also includes a butterfly garden and a children's nature discovery center. (281) 932-1972 www.baytown.org/content/baytown-nature-center GPS: 29.75485, -95.03547

▲ UTC 040: EDDIE V. GRAY WETLANDS EDUCATION AND RECREATION CENTER Continue south/east 4.2 miles to Market St. and the wetland center. The center's staff is available to direct birders to local areas of interest. Look for Black-crowned Night-Herons and various shorebirds in the wetlands behind the center. (281) 420-7128 www.baytown.org/content/eddie-v-gray-wetlands-center GPS: 29.73225, -94.98481

▲ UTC 041: SAN JACINTO BATTLEGROUND STATE HISTORIC SITE From Baytown, go south on TX 146 to TX 225. Go east on TX 225 to TX 134 (Battleground Rd.), and travel north on TX 134 to PR 1836 and the park. Local birders recommend the south end of the park. Wood Storks are often present in late summer and fall, and Hooded Mergansers and Greater Scaup have been seen during winter. GPS: 29.73356, -95.08922

ANAHUAC LOOP

Anahuac Area Chamber of Commerce www.anahuacchamber.com • (409) 267-4190 **Chambers County Office of Economic Development**

> Winnie Area Chamber of Commerce www.winnietexas.com • (409) 296-2231

■ UTC 042: WHITE MEMORIAL PARK

http://co.chambers.tx.us • (409) 267-2400

From San Jacinto Battleground/Monument SHP, travel north on TX 146 to I-10, then go east on I-10 to TX 61. Traveling from Winnie, go west on I-10 to TX 61 (Exit 813). Go south on Continue west on TX 87 to the park. Enter the Marshlands Unit (north of TX 87) and continue to the boat ramp at the end of the entrance road. Catch a glimpse of Roseate Spoonbills and herons at the boat ramp or along the adjacent Spoonbill Trail. Return to TX 37, and continue west for approximately 0.5 mile to the Sea Rim Beach Unit. The Gambusia Trail boardwalk east of the entrance offers an excellent spot from which to view a variety of marsh and water birds, especially rails, gull and tern flocks. There is beach access at both the eastern and western ends of the unit. The gulf willows, salt cedars, and red mulberries along the southern edge of TX 87 heading west when you leave park headquarters are

GPS: 29.72831, -93.87519

remarkably attractive to migrant landbirds. (409) 971-2559 www.tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/sea-rim GPS: 29.67672, -94.04399

A LITC 098: McFADDIN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE Continue on TX 87 to McFaddin NWR (approximately 12 miles from Sabine Pass), which is managed for waterfowl. Access is seasonally limited; however, the road to Clam Lake offers an opportunity to look for a variety of waterfowl in winter (Masked Duck has appeared on the refuge in the past). In addition, there is an overlook available to view many wading birds. waterfowl, and shorebirds; located on the east side of Clam Lake Rd., just past Clam Lake. TX 87 west of McFaddin is no longer passable (the paved road has been washed out by recurrent storm tides), so there is no longer a direct coastal route to High Island. (409) 971-2909 www.fws.gov GPS: 29.66842, -94.07183

▲ UTC 029: J.D. MURPHREE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA Return on TX 87 to Sabine Pass, then continue north on TX 82 to TX 73. Travel west on TX 73 to J.D. Murphree WMA. Access to this WMA is restricted, although a nature trail has been developed near the headquarters. Boat rides into the WMA can be arranged locally. Late spring and summer are particularly interesting. Least Bitterns are ubiquitous in these marshes. Also look for Roseate Spoonbill, Purple Gallinule and waterfowl.

(409) 736-2551 GPS: 29.88914, -94.03442 ▲ UTC 030: TAYLOR BAYOU

Continue west on TX 73 to Jap Rd. The rice fields along TX 73 hold thousands of shorebirds in spring, so look for those fields that have been recently flooded. Travel north on Jap Rd. to the South Fork of Taylor Bayou, ALL PROPERTY BORDERING TAYLOR BAYOU IS PRIVATE, PLEASE DO NOT TRESPASS. BIRD ONLY ALONG THE MAIN RIGHTS-OF-WAY. Taylor Bayou, and th riparian woodlands that border the stream, represent an isolated sliver of the Big Thicket that has inched toward the coast. Many of the eastern woodland birds that inhabit the Pineywoods are present along the bayou. Swallow-tailed Kites have been seen during summer, and Northern Parulas and Yellow-throated, Prothonotary, Swainson's, Kentucky, and Hooded warblers all breed in the general vicinity. Go north on Jap Rd. to the North Fork of Taylor Bayou, then continue north to Patterson Rd. Travel west on Patterson Rd. to Craigen Rd., continuing west back to the North Fork of Taylor Bayou. Continue north on Craigen Rd. to TX 124. GPS: 29.82894, -94.22489

TRINITY LOOP

www.conroecvb.net • (936) 522-3500

Dayton Chamber of Commerce www.daytontxchamber.com • (936) 257-2393 Greater Conroe/Lake Conroe Area Chamber of Commerce www.conroe.org • (936) 756-6644

Lake Houston Area Chamber of Commerce www.humbleareachamber.org • (281) 446-2128 Liberty-Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce www.libertydaytonchamber.com • (936) 336-5736

▲ UTC 031: CEDAR HILL PARK – WALLISVILLE LAKE PROJECT From I-10 east of Houston, take exit 810 and head north on FM 563 for 2.9 miles to Lake Charlotte Rd. Turn left/west on Lake Charlotte Rd. and travel 1.2 miles to park entrance on the left. Located on a bluff, the trails, boardwalk and observation points overlooking Lake Charlotte and the cypress swamp that encircles the lake are excellent for observing Bald Eagles, Osprey, and cormorants fishing during the winter months. Migratory songbirds are abundant throughout the heavily wooded areas. Picnic facilities and restrooms are available in the park. The adventuresome may also want to launch their canoe or kayak into the lake for a closer view of the wildlife of the cypress swamp.

www.swg.usace.army.mil/Locations/WallisvilleLakeProjectOffice.aspx GPS: 29.87753, -94.71475

Return to FM 563 heading north to US 90 and Liberty (15 miles). Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge has an office at 601 FM 1011 in Liberty (936-336-9786) and can provide local information on birding and trails. The Liberty City Park located at the end of Cook St. has a small pond that attracts herons and egrets and a large field to the north is home to eastern bluebirds. Liberty is situated on the banks of the Trinity River with a nice view of the river at the historic bridge on US 90.

▲ UTC 032A: SWALLOW-TAILED KITE VIEWING AREA

From Liberty, head west on US 90 to Dayton. Swallow-tailed Kites are seen daily along this river bottom section of US 90 from April to August, with July and August being best. Carefully pull off onto the highway shoulder when you see the kites: it is not uncommon to see groups of kites leisurely soaring over the trees (scan the skies - the kites are most often seen foraging over the treetops). Mid-morning or later is the best time to search as these kites wait for thermals which make soaring a lot easier. GPS: 30.05691, -94.83398

▲ UTC 032B: CHAMPION LAKE – TRINITY RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE Continue west on US 90 until you enter Dayton and turn left onto FM 1409. Head south 10 miles to Trinity River NWR sign, turn left on CR 417 and travel east for two miles to the Champion Lake Public Use Area. Enjoy wildlife viewing from the pier and two small boat ramps on Champion Lake and Picket's Bayou. Bird the levee trail or butterfly garden trail. This 5,500-acre tract (part of the 25,000-acre refuge) is open daylight hours only. Champion Lake is home to thousands of nesting herons and egrets, wintering waterfowl, and numerous species of migrating warblers during spring and fall migration. In the spring/summer, find resident Black-bellied Whistling-ducks, Swallow-tailed Kites, Prothonotary Warbler, and Northern Parula

(936) 336-9786 www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/texas/trinityriver/ GPS: 29.91903, -94.80066

GPS: 30.5057, -95.08856

▲ UTC 033: SHELDON LAKE STATE PARK AND ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER

Return to FM 1409 and head south. Turn left onto FM 565 to I-10. Take I-10 west into Houston, taking exit 781A for TX 8 Beltway. Head north on TX 8 Beltway, exit Garrett Rd., and turn right onto Garrett Rd. to reach this park. This site is most productive in winter, with flocks of waterfowl blanketing the various lakes and ponds. The surrounding weedy fields may hold a variety of sparrows, including Le Conte's. Buckhorn Lake (located further east on Garrett Rd.) is an excellent spot for Anhingas and Ospreys. GPS: 29.88322, -95.18531 ● UTC 034: LAKE HOUSTON WILDERNESS PARK

Head north on TX 8 Beltway to the US 59 exit. Dive north on US 59 to FM 1485, then head east to the park entrance. Situated in the San Jacinto River bottomlands along the upper reach of the lake, many of the typical eastern woodland birds may be seen along the nature trails that meander through the dense bottomland forests of this park. $(281)\ 354\text{-}6881 \quad www.houstontx.gov/parks/ourparks/lakehoustonpark.html}$ GPS: 30.14776, -95.16885

▲ UTC 035: BIG CREEK SCENIC AREA Return west on FM 1485 to US 59. Go north on US 59 to Cleveland and FM 2025, and continue north on FM 2025 to FM 2666. The Sam Houston National Park has developed an interpretive site in a Red-cockaded Woodpecker group approximately 0.2 mile south of the intersection of FM 2025 and FM 2666. Travel east on FM 2666, north on FR 221, and then east on FR 217 to Big Creek Scenic Area. Louisiana Waterthrush nest along Big Creek, and Worm-eating Warblers have been found along the nature trails in summer. If you enjoy dragonflies, look for Gray Petaltail near the parking area.

▲ UTC 036 W.G. JONES STATE FOREST

From Cleveland, go west on TX 105 to Loop 336 near Conroe. Go south on Loop 336 to 1-45, then continue south on I-45 to FM 1488. Travel west on FM 1488 to W.G. Jones State Forest. The office of the Texas Forest Service is open daily, and an information packet containing a bird checklist and a detailed map of the Red-cockaded Woodpecker clusters within the forest may be obtained there. NOTE: do not disturb these birds by playing tapes or knocking on the painted cavity trees. GPS: 30.23439, -95.48389

▲ UTC 037: MERCER ARBORETUM AND BOTANICAL GARDENS Return to I-45, and continue south to FM 1960/Cypress Creek Pkwy. Go east on FM 1960 to Aldine-Westfield Rd., then north on Aldine-Westfield to this site. Although primarily an urban nature center and botanical garden, Mercer Arboretum offers an opportunity to see many of the eastern woodland birds fairly close to Houston. GPS: 30.03669, -95.38167 ▲ UTC 038: JESSE H. JONES PARK AND NATURE CENTER

> ▲ UTC 053: HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY EUBANKS WOODS BIRD SANCTUARY entrance to Smith Oaks Bird Sanctuary. GPS: 29.56664, -94.39156

on the western edge of High Island and offers both woodland birding and a view of the coastal prairie that surrounds the salt dome. Rather than an actual island, High Island is a habitat island atop a salt dome. The modest 28-foot elevation above the coastal marsh enables the woodlands and freshwater ponds to persist. The small willow-lined pond at the entrance to this sanctuary is a wonderful spot to look for migrants.

BIRD SANCTUARY

day passes may be purchased here. Interesting migrants may show anywhere in these woods so be sure to review the sighting sheet that is kept at the information booth. Remember that fall migration (from late August through October) is also an excellent time to bird High GPS: 29.56200, -94.39033 SANCTUARY

Take TX 124 south into High Island. Turn west at 1st St. to the sanctuary entrance This small sanctuary features a boardwalk and large live oaks facing the Gulf. Warblers, vireos and flycatchers frequent the site in spring and fall. GPS: 29.55663, -94.39345

From the intersection of TX 124 and TX 87, continue southwest on TX 87 to Rollover Pass. Scaup, mergansers, and occasionally scoters and Oldsquaw are seen in the nearshore waters along this stretch of the coast. Rollover Pass is a man-made channel across Bolivar Peninsula, and this "fish cut" has caused the formation of an extensive tidal flat on the bay (north) side of the peninsula. At low tide, tens of thousands of shorebirds, gulls, and terns will feed and roost here. In addition, the spoil islands in East Bay support significant colonial

▲ UTC 057: YACHT BASIN ROAD

Continue southwest on TX 87 to Yacht Basin Rd. (0.5 mile west of Rollover Pass). Yacht Basin dead-ends at the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW), but this short drive crosses an nteresting coastal marsh. Whimbrels and Long-billed Curlews are often seen on the sand flats in migration, and Clapper Rails, Willets, and Seaside Sparrows breed in the cordgrass marsh. As you drive southwest TX 87 toward Bolivar Flats, there are several roads that cut back toward the GIWW that are worth checking. Among these are Tuna Dr., Bob's Rd., and Crystal Beach Rd. Remember, however, that the land bordering these roads is private. BIRD ONLY FROM THE SHOULDER, AND PLEASE DO NOT TRESPASS. GPS: 29.50606, -94.50728

TX 61 a short distance to White Memorial Park. White Memorial Park, located on Turtle Bayou. SHOREBIRD SANCTUARY hosts an impressive selection of eastern woodland birds. This is an excellent place to find Redheaded Woodpeckers, and Pine, Swainson's and Hooded warblers nest here as well as in the surrounding forests. Prothonotary Warblers are often seen along Turtle Bayou in the summer. ▲ UTC 043: TRINITY RIVER ISLAND RECREATION AREA AND VISITOR CENTER – WALLISVILLE LAKE PROJECT Return to I-10 and head west. Take exit 807 off of I-10 and follow the west bound service road until you U-turn before the Trinity River. Follow the east bound service road until you reach the sign identifying the entrance to the recreation area. Located 2.5 miles south of I-10 along the east bank of the Trinity River, the this recreation area and center is also the location of the administrative office for the Wallisville Lake Project. This site has numerous facilities including picnic areas, an observation tower, boat ramps, a fishing pier, and

Brown Pelicans. Latest bird sightings available at the visitor center. (409) 389-2285 ▲ UTC 043A: JJ MAYES WILDLIFE TRACE – WALLISVILLE LAKE PROJECT Return to I-10 and head west. Take exit 803 at FM 565 and U-turn to re-enter I-10 going east. Exit at the Trinity River Turnaround and watch for the entrance on the right. A 4-mile. long driving and walking nature trail complex located along the west bank of the Trinity River, this site places you right in the middle of the brackish marshes and riparian habitats of the Wallisville Lake Project. The Trace offers a variety of ways to view the wildlife of the area. The driving trail along the top of a leave allows you to look down on the marsh, the

boardwalks place you at eye level with the marsh, while the trail along the Trinity River in the

restrooms. The area is an ideal location to see gulls, terns, swallows, wading birds and

riparian habitat allows you to be in close proximity with a large variety of songbirds. Picnic facilities, observation platforms, and restrooms are available. Wading birds and waterfowl can always be found along the Trace. In the spring and fall the Sawmill Trail along the Trinity River is an ideal location to observe migratory songbirds. www.swg.usace.army.mil/Locations/WallisvilleLakeProjectOffice.aspx GPS: 29.83584, -94.77167

▲ UTC 043B: MOUTH OF THE TRINITY RIVER WATERBIRD ROOKERY -WALLISVILLE LAKE PROJECT Head east on I-10 and take Exit 807 off of I-10. Follow the service road to the intersection of Wallisville-Liberty Rd. U-turn under the interstate at Wallisville-Liberty Rd. and proceed west

on the service road. Il-turn again under the Trinity River bridge and watch for the parking lot on the right. Located just east of the Trinity River and south of I-10, as many as 12 species of colonial waterbirds nest and raise their young at the rookery. In addition to the colonial waterbirds, the rookery is a great location to observe seasonal waterfowl and alligators. In order to protect the wildlife of the area fishing is prohibited and we ask that you do not feed the alligators.

www.swg.usace.army.mil/Locations/WallisvilleLakeProjectOffice.aspx GPS: 29.83804, -94.75622

▲ UTC 043C: HUGO POINT PARK – WALLISVILLE LAKE PROJECT Return to I-10 and head west (toward Houston). Take exit 803 and go south on FM 565 for approximately 1 mile to Gou Hole Rd. Turn left and travel approximately 1.7 miles to the entrance of Hugo Point Park on the left. The boat ramps located in the park are a great jumping off point for boat trips into the marsh where a large variety of raptors and shorebirds can be viewed. In addition to the trails and an observation tower overlooking brackish marshes and Old River Lake, the park also contains picnic facilities and restrooms. www.swg.usace.army.mil/Locations/WallisvilleLakeProjectOffice.aspx GPS: 29.81268, -94.79952

Return to I-10 and take exit 807, turning right on Levee Rd. and then left onto Wallisville-Turtle Bayou Rd. (the woods along Wallisville-Turtle Bayou Rd. can be excellent in spring).

Go south on FM 563 and turn right on TX 61/Miller St. to the Anahuac Pumping Station. The Chambers-Liberty Counties Navigation District has developed a nature trail along the levee that impounds Lake Anahuac. Public parking is available at the beginning of the levee, and foot traffic is allowed during daylight hours. The trail is bordered by woodlands, fresh and brackish marshes, and the open waters of Trinity Bay and Lake Anahuac. GPS: 29.77289, -94.68503

■ UTC 045: FORT ANAHUAC PARK Return east on TX 61 to S. Main, then go south on S. Main to Fort Anahuac Park. The trees in this city park, bordering Lake Anahuac, should be checked during migration for landbirds. GPS: 29.75717, -94.68408

UTC 046: DOUBLE BAYOU PARK Head south on FM 563 to Eagle Ferry Rd., and go east on Eagle Ferry Rd. to Double Bayou Park. During migrations (particularly during the spring), no park or sanctuary is too insignificant to discount in a search for migrant landbirds. Migrants can occur ANYWHERE, so take a chance! GPS: 29.68208, -94.62911

▲ UTC 047: SMITH POINT AND JAMES H. ROBBINS MEMORIAL PARK Continue east on Eagle Ferry Rd. to FM 562. Go south on FM 562 to its intersection with FM 1985, then veer right/west to continue on FM 562 to Smith Point Rd. Smith Point is one of the most isolated and undeveloped coastal peninsulas left along the Texas coast. The marshes and open grasslands along FM 562 are productive throughout the year. Travel west on Smith Point Rd. to Hawkins Camp Rd., then go north on Hawkins Camp to James H. Robbins Memorial Park. Robbins Park offers an unobstructed view of Trinity Bay. Look for Magnificent Frigatebirds in summer and fall, both species of pelican, and an assortment of gulls and terns. Many species of shorebirds can be seen in the grassy fields, especially after a rain. The oak mottes along Hawkins Camp Rd. attract migrant landbirds in spring and fall.

▲ UTC 048: CANDY CAIN ABSHIER WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA Return on Hawkins Camp Rd. to Smith Point Rd., then head west to Plummer Camp Rd. and turn right toward the WMA. This WMA is famous for the daily hawk watches that are conducted here from August 15 to November 15. These watches are sponsored by the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory and Hawk Watch International (contact GCBO at 979-480-0999 for information) No autumn trip to the Texas coast is complete without joining one of these coastal hawk watches for a day. In addition to the tens of thousands of Mississippi Kites, Broad-winged Hawks, Swainson's Hawks, falcons, and accipiters that are seen annually, species such as Swallow-tailed Kite are seen in small numbers. In addition the Smith Point Hawk Watch has tallied many unusual species including Hook-billed Kite, Harris's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, and Golden Eagle. The oaks here attract many migrant landbirds after a fall cold front. The numbers of Blue-gray Gnatcatchers can be staggering. It is an excellent place to see fall migration in action.

GPS: 29.52871, -94.75950

▲ UTC 049: ANAHUAC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (MAIN ENTRANCE) Return east on Smith Point Rd./FM 562 to the intersection of FM 562 and FM 1985. Continue east on FM 1985 to Anahuac NWR (Main Entrance). Anahuac NWR is one of the premier waterfowl refuges on the Texas coast. Greater White-fronted and Snow goose flocks (with a few Ross' mixed in) crowd the marshes and wet fields throughout the winter. After entering the refuge, travel the first road to the west toward Shoveler Pond Auto-Tour Loop. Least Bitterns (in summer), American Bitterns (in winter and migration), and Marsh Wrens (in summer) are common in these cattail marshes. Check the open waters of Shoveler Pond for Canvasbacks and Redheads (Masked Ducks have bred here in the past). Common and Purple gallinules are abundant breeders in the marshes that border the tour loop. American alligators and an occasional river otter can also be found here, swimming and sunbathing. After returning to the main entrance road, continue south toward East Bay. Short-eared Owls patrol these coastal prairies in the winter and spring (look around sunset). Sprague's Pipits winter along the road east of Crossover Rd. Finally, the seemingly endless marshes in Anahuac are home to all of the regular rails in the U.S. - Clappers, Kings, Virginias, and Soras are all regularly seen here in spring. Continue east on FM 1985 to TX 124. The rice fields along FM 1985 and on Anahuac

morning spent in this area (to see the freshwater shorebirds), combined with an afternoon at Bolivar Flats (to see the saltwater species), should yield between 30 and 35 different GPS: 29.65844, -94.54689 www.fws.gov/refuge/anahuac

NWR's Skillern Tract often teem with shorebirds during spring migration. A late spring

BOLIVAR LOOP Bolivar Peninsula Chamber of Commerce www.bolivarchamber.org • (409) 684-5940 **UTC 070: GALVESTON ISLAND STATE PARK**

the beach side to obtain permits.

GPS: 29.19600, -94.95564

GPS: 29.14480, -95.04065

GPS: 29.09489, -95.10839

GPS: 29.31192, -94.91000

GPS: 29.34707, -94.97142

GPS: 29.35439, -94.92369

GPS: 29.39228, -94.89353

▲ UTC 075: BAY ST. PARK

Return south on I-45 to reach TX 146 and the next site.

▲ UTC 073: AMOCO SETTLING PONDS AND SWAN LAKE

Red-throated rarely) may be seen during a leisurely drive out the dike.

▲ UTC 071: SAN LUIS PASS

Continue west on Stewart Rd. to its merger with 13-Mile-Rd. and the intersection with FM

3005. Continue west on FM 3005 to PR 66 and Galveston Island SP. This park extends from

the beach to the bay. The bay section of the park (take park road north from FM 3005)

at Interpretive Trail Rd., and park near the observation tower. The nature trail is worth

walking, and the trees across the road should be checked for migrants. The marshes that

Northern Harriers have nested in the park, and Black Rails often call in the dead of night. A

patrols. Use the self-pay station in the bay section or check in at the park headquarters on

(409) 737-1222 www.tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/galveston-island

Continue west on FM 3005 to Seabird Dr. (just before Sea Isle) and turn north/right. Do

Vacas Muertas will be on your right. This 6-acre migratory bird stopover on the bayside of

Continue west on FM 3005 to San Luis Pass. You may access the flats by exiting FM 3005

amediately before the toll bridge. THE SAND HERE CAN BE EXTREMELY SOFT, SO PLEASE

BE CAREFUL WHEN DRIVING ON THE FLATS. Only Bolivar Flats can rival the wildlife spectacle

that is San Luis Pass. Countless waterbirds pack the sand flats that extend into the bay. Both

species of pelican, Red-breasted Mergansers, and Bonaparte's Gulls feed in the swift waters

that course through the pass in winter, and staggering numbers of shorebirds may feed on

Piping plovers winter commonly. Least Terns and Black Skimmers often attempt to nest on

Black Terns stage here in late summer (August through early September), and Magnificent

TEXAS CITY LOOP

Texas City-La Marque Chamber of Commerce

Travel north from Galveston Island on I-45 to TX 146, exiting on TX 146 for Texas City and

the John M. O'Quinn I-45 Estuarial Corridor. The marshes that extend from Galveston Bay

(Virginia Point) north to TX 146 are part of an estuarial corridor being developed by Scenic

Galveston. There is an observation station near the intersection of I-45 and TX 146, and the

Herons, egrets, spoonbills, and rails may be seen feeding within a few feet of the highway.

marshes themselves can be birded from the service road bordering both sides of I-45.

Before heading north, plan to visit La Marque Highland Bayou Park in La Marque. To

get to the park, take the Main St, exit from I-45 and follow the southbound feeder road

approximately 0.25 mile. Turn right at the park sign, This 100-acre city park contains a lake

and wetlands that attract a wide variety of birds. The park has trails and a viewing platform.

Travel north on TX 146 to Loop 197, then continue north on Loop 197 approximately 1.3

miles to the Amoco Settling Ponds and Swan Lake. The settling ponds to the west may be

viewed from the shoulder of Loop 197. The ponds attract waterfowl in the winter, and several

species of diving ducks such as Bufflehead, Canvasback, and Redhead are regularly seen here.

ontinue north on Loop 197 to 2nd Ave. in Texas City, then go east on 2nd Ave. to Bay St.

the Texas City Dike is always worthwhile in winter. Loons (Common regularly, Pacific and

Return to the base of the Texas City Dike, and go north on Skyline Dr. Sprague's Pipits winter

in the closely cropped grass on the shoulders of this hurricane levee. Notice the observation

be viewed from this platform often attracts several species of ducks in the winter, including

to Bay St. and Bay St. Park (Bay St. will eventually circle back to the south, and the park will

be located to the east). An extensive hummingbird garden has been developed at this location.

Several species of hummingbirds regularly winter along the coast, and this garden should be

checked throughout the winter months. A series of nature trails wind through the park.

Return south on Bay St. to 9th Ave., then turn west on 9th Ave. (FM 1764) and continue to

TX 146. Go north on TX 146 to the preserve, This 2.303-acre preserve features rare coastal

prairie habitat and is home to a variety of wintering, breeding, and migratory grassland and

CLEAR LAKE LOOP

Alvin Convention and Visitors Center Bureau

www.alvintexas.org • (281) 585-3359

Bay Area Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau

www.visitbayareahouston.com • (281) 474-9700

Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

www.clearlakearea.com • (281) 488-7676

www.seabrooktourism.com • (281) 291-5777

crossing. Circle back south on 10 St./Waterfront Dr., across Todville, and into McHale Park.

McHale Park is a lovely spot from which to view the western shore of Galveston Bay. Flotillas

of American White Pelicans fish the nearshore waters in winter, and the adjacent marshes

Exit McHale Park, and go north on Todville to Hester Garden Park. The park, a former

many of these plants are evergreen and therefore attractive to lingering insectivores.

nursery, is an undiscovered gem and consists of an impressive variety of trees and shrubs

Continue north on Todville to Pine Gully Rd. and then turn east to Pine Gully Park. This

multi-use facility offers another view of Galveston Bay, including from a long pier, and the

trees along the wooded trails within the park are worth inspecting for migrant landbirds.

As you leave Pine Gully Park, return south on Todville to Red Bluff Rd. and enter Robinson Park

near that intersection. Robinson Park contains approximately 20 acres of old oaks, and a trail

connects these woodlands with Pine Gully Park, Hester Garden Park, and the Seabrook Wildlife

Head west on Red Bluff Rd. a few hundred yards and the Seabrook Wildlife Refuge entrance

perimeter trail. The trail runs north from Red Bluff Rd. and divides into a western spur and

one going east to Robinson Park. Because the trail parallels the upper course of Pine Gully

throughout the trails as well. Turtles, alligators, deer, and swamp rabbits frequent the refuge.

Bayou, it usually offers opportunities to see egrets and herons. Woodland birds possible

Drive west on Red Bluff Rd. and head north on Hwy 146. Turn right onto State Loop 410/

Wharton Weems Blyd, and then left onto Broadway St. Parking lot to the nature trail will be

on the right before crossing Little Cedar Bayou Bridge. A short hike down this Nature Trail

follows along Little Cedar Bayou leading to two birdwatching platforms with views of wading

Head south on Broadway St. to Shoreacres Blvd. and turn right. Cross Hwy 146 continuing

onto Choate Rd. Turn left onto Bay Area Blvd. and follow it to Armand Bayou Nature Center

wildlife preserve encompassing three distinct ecosystems: wetlands, woodlands, and tall-

(ABNC). Sandwiched between NASA and the Bayport Industrial District, ABNC is a 2,500-acre

A system of nature trails honeycombs the property, and the center operates a pontoor

boat that plies the waters of Armand Bayou every Saturday (reservations required). Staff and

and grassland species such as Sedge Wren, Le Conte's Sparrow, Northern Harrier, American

volunteers have spent countless hours restoring several hundred acres of coastal prairie,

Kestrel (winter), Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (summer), White-tailed Kite, and Loggerhead

Shrike (resident) are likely here. The forestlands can produce good numbers of warblers

grosbeaks, tanagers, buntings, vireos and other migrants in the spring and fall. Expected

Kinglet, American Goldfinch, Cedar Waxwing and Eastern Phoebe with residents such as

Pileated, Red-bellied and Downy woodpecker, Northern Cardinal, and Red-shouldered

are commonly seen on Armand Bayou, which is accessible by nature center trail.

forest species in winter include White-throated Sparrow, Brown Thrasher, Ruby-crowned

Hawk. In summer, the forest should also produce Great-crested Flycatcher and, commonly,

White-eyed Vireo. Osprey, numerous herons, Belted Kingfisher, Anhinga, plus gulls and terns

(281) 474-2551 www.abnc.org GPS: 29.59958, -95.07492

Continue west on Bay Area Blvd. to Bay Area Park. This Harris County park is situated on

Armand Bayou, and the parking area near the water offers an unobstructed view. Look for

Continue west on Bay Area Blvd. to Middlebrook Dr., then east on Middlebrook Dr. to Space

both located along NASA Road One. Go south on Upper Bay Rd. to the park to enjoy wildlife

Return to NASA Road One, and continue west to Egret Bay Pkwy., and then turn left and head

south 1.5 miles to the entrance of the nature center which is on the left just south of Clear

egrets, raptors and various songbirds. Occasionally the endangered Whooping Cranes have

isolated pond along Clear Creek, and this park offers paved trails that lead to several bird

Return to NASA Road One, and continue west to I-45 (Take the Nasa Pkwy. exit toward TX 3/

Go south on West NASA Blvd. to Challenger 7 Memorial Park. An extensive nature trail and

boardwalk has been developed in this park along Clear Creek. Many of the eastern woodland

Sarah Deel Dr.). At I-45 NASA Pkwy. becomes FM 528; continue west to West NASA Blvd.

birds can be found here, and White-tailed Hawks nest in the general area.

been known to visit as well. Ducks, pelicans, shorebirds, and wading birds all enjoy the large

Creek. This 148-acre site is excellent for birds such as Sandhill Cranes, herons, ibises,

Center Blvd. Go south on Space Center Blvd. to NASA Road One, then west on NASA Road

One to Upper Bay Rd. The Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center and Space Center Houston are

▲ UTC 083A: DR. NED AND FAY DUDNEY NATURE CENTER

▲ UTC 084: CHALLENGER 7 MEMORIAL PARK

and parking are on the right (north side of the road). The 40-acre refuge is a unit of the

Refuge. Robinson Park has a lot of edge habitat and is another woodlot to check for migrants.

The wetlands attract wading birds, and there are resident rails.

▲ UTC 080A: SEABROOK WILDLIFE REFUGE AND PARK

▲ UTC 080B: LITTLE CEDAR BAYOU NATURE TRAIL

▲ UTC 081: ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER

with a pleasing trail and butterfly garden. Check these woods in late fall and winter, since

Proceed north on TX 146 to the Kemah/Seabrook Bridge, and immediately exit after

pull in scads of herons and egrets. Brown Pelicans may be seen at any season.

waterbird species including Seaside Sparrow, Least Bittern, Clapper Rail, Bobolink,

Sprague's Pipit, and Upland Sandpiper. Access is restricted; call well in advance for

UTC 076: TNC TEXAS CITY PRAIRIE PRESERVE

individual trips or to learn about scheduled tours.

(409) 941-9114 http://nature.org/texas

▲ UTC 077: MCHALE PARK

GPS: 29.55273, -95.02219

GPS: 29.57289. -95.01058

GPS: 29.59133, -94.99994

GPS: 29.58456, -95.00456

GPS: 29.58423, -95.01015

birds and waterbirds of the area.

GPS: 29.64476, -95.01885

Osprey in migration and winter.

▲ UTC 083: NASSAU BAY PARK

viewing over Lake Nassau and Clear Creek.

GPS: 29.53594, -95.08644

blinds along the creek.

GPS: 29.52895, -95.09014

GPS: 29.51342, -95.14287

GPS: 29.59734, -95.08801

UTC 080: ROBINSON PARK

A UTC 079: PINE GULLY PARK

▲ UTC 078: HESTER GARDEN PARK

tower approximately 0.5 mile north of the base of the dike on Skyline Dr. The lake that may

large flocks of Ruddy Ducks. Reaching the northern end of Skyline Dr., turn west and continue

Travel north on Bay St. to 8th Ave. and the Texas City Dike. The 5-mile drive to the end of

▲ UTC 072: JOHN M O'QUINN I-45 ESTUARIAL CORRIDOR

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the driest sand (please, avoid disturbing the birds during nesting season). Over 25,000

Frigatebirds roost on the pilings in West Bay from late April through late September.

the flats during a tidal shift. Horned Larks and Wilson's Plovers nest in the dunes. Snowy and

West Galveston Island contains a pond, small marsh, live oak motte, and mudflats. Birding is

▲ UTC 070A: DOS VACAS MUERTAS BIRD SANCTUARY

great year-round, especially at the drip located in the oak motte.

border the bay abound with ibis, herons, egrets, gulls, and terns. White-tailed Kites and

wait until sunset will be rewarded with the sight of Barn Owls beginning their grassland

offers the most birding opportunities, as well as the fewest visitors. Turn west off park road

▲ UTC 052: HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY SMITH OAKS BIRD SANCTUARY Take TX 124 south into High Island. Turn south on Weeks Ave. to Winnie St. (look for the Smith Oaks Bird Sanctuary sign). Go east on Winnie St. to the sanctuary. A second entrance on Old Mexico Rd. has additional parking closer to the rookery and is open March 15-May 15. To reach this entrance, continue south on Weeks Ave. and turn east on Old Mexico Rd. Please purchase an annual or day pass before entering (funds help maintain HAS's 3,400acre sanctuary system). Spring migration in Smith Oaks is one of the most remarkable wildlife spectacles in the world. Vireos, warblers, tanagers, orioles, and buntings swarm these trees as they complete their non-stop journey across the Gulf of Mexico. Be sure to check the heron rookery in Claybottom Pond on the north side of Smith Oaks for close looks at egrets, herons, and spoonbills as well as American alligators in the water below. GPS: 29.57014, -94.39864

This sanctuary is located just east of Weeks Ave. on Old Mexico Rd. A boardwalk allows access to the woods in wet weather. The oaks in Eubanks Woods are rather young, and therefore migrants are often seen here at eye level (a welcome break from the neck stretching at Smith Oaks). You may continue east on Old Mexico Rd. to reach the east

▲ UTC 054: HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY S.E. GAST RED BAY SANCTUAR Turn west on 7th St. off of TX 124 to S.E. Gast Red Bay Sanctuary. This sanctuary is perched GPS: 29.56239, -94.39492

▲ UTC 055: HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY BOY SCOUT WOODS Turn east on 5th St. from TX 124 and proceed to Boy Scout Woods Bird Sanctuary. HAS staffs an information booth and shop in this sanctuary during the spring. Annual and

Island. The crowds are sparse (compared to spring), and the birding is just as entertaining ▲ UTC 055A: TEXAS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY HOOKS WOODS

GPS: 29.50883, -94.49975

▲ UTC 058: HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY BOLIVAR FLATS Continue southwest on TX 87 to Loop 108/Rettilon Rd. Go south on Rettilon Rd. to the beach, then turn west and parallel the shoreline (try to stay on the wet, packed sand) to Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary. Park near the vehicular barrier. Bolivar Flats sits at the base of the North Jetty, which protects the entrance to Galveston Bay. The jetty traps the longshore sediments that are carried along the coast, and the result is an extensive tidal fla Tens of thousands of gulls, terns, and shorebirds feed here at low tide, and immense flocks roost here when the tide is high. Several thousand American Avocets spend the winter on the flats, joined by dozens of Piping Plovers, Willets, Wilson's Plovers, Least Terns, and Horned Larks are among the breeders here. Nelson's Sparrows winter in the cordgrass, and Peregrine Falcons frequently stoop on the shorebird flocks out on the flats. Do not miss visiting this site. Continue southwest on TX 87 and turn right on 17th St. to the North Jetty (1.8 miles from Ferry Landing). A walk along the jetty at low tide will offer good looks at many of the birds feeding on Bolivar Flats.

GPS: 29.39203, -94.73081 GPS: 29.81182, -94.73148 UTC 059: FORT TRAVIS SEASHORE PARK Continue southwest on TX 87 to Fort Travis Seashore Park. The trees and shrubs at this location may hold migrants that you have otherwise missed along the coast. Remember that each woodlot along the coast is unique in its physical and vegetative makeup. Migrants that occur along the upper coast in low densities (such as Cape May and Black-throated Blue warblers) are just as likely to appear in one of the minor sites as in the woods at High Island. In addition, species such as Nashville and Yellow warblers prefer scrubbier habitat and are not frequently seen in the more mature mottes. GPS: 29.36822, -94.75833

> ▲ UTC 060: FRENCHTOWN ROAD Continue southwest on TX87 to Frenchtown Rd. (just before you reach the Bolivar ferry landing). Turn north and continue toward Port Bolivar, American Oystercatchers, Willets and Clapper Rails are often seen along this road at low tide. Continue southwest on TX 87 to the Bolivar ferry landing, and cross to Galveston (the ferry ride is free compliments of the Texas Highway Department) GPS: 29.36453, -94.77544

GALVESTON LOOP

▲ UTC 061: THE CORPS WOODS AT GALVESTON After exiting the ferry on the Galveston side of the bay, continue south on TX 87 to TX 168 (0.6 mile). Go north on TX 168 to the Corps Woods at Galveston. Park along the north side of the road. This woodlot includes a nature trail with two observation platforms and some water and is particularly good for migrant songbirds.

Galveston Island Convention and Visitors Bureau

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GPS: 29.32897, -94.76980 Return to TX 87 (Ferry Rd.), and continue south to Seawall Blvd. Travel northeast on Seawall Blvd. to the dead-end at the east end of Galveston Island. Turn southeast on Bodekker Dr. to reach Big Reef and Appfel Park (also known as East Beach). Big Reef, an extensive sand spit isolated by the entrance to Galveston Bay, may be reached by foot after parking in designated area. Thousands of shorebirds, gulls, and terns roost on this bar. Continue east on Bodekker Dr. to Appfel Park (there is a fee to park here), and scope the Gulf near the South Jetty for

GPS: 29.33075, -94.73565 Return to Seawall Blvd., and continue southwest to Broadway. Go west on Broadway t 27th St., then south on 27th St. to Ave. O. Turn west on Ave. O to reach Kempner Park. When the weather conditions are right in spring, migrant landbirds often sweep through these oaks. American Robins have nested here, and White-winged Doves are common in

the surrounding neighborhood. GPS: 29.29245, -94.79539 ▲ UTC 064: HARBORSIDE AND PELICAN ISLAND From Kempner Park, go north on 29th St. to Broadway. Go west on Broadway to 51st St., then turn right/north on 51st St. Before proceeding over the bridge to Pelican Island, keep right and park under the bridge. Cave, Cliff, and Barn swallows nest here and there are large freshwater ponds in sight that harbor wintering waterfowl, gulls, terns, cormorants, and rails. To continue on to Pelican Island, head north, crossing Harborside Dr. and take the

draw bridge onto the island. There is a loop trail (once part of a research activity) offering various habitats and freshwater swales which is excellent for birding year-round, especially neotropical migrants during spring migration and wintering sparrow species. GPS: 29.29497, -94.82506 ▲ UTC 065: OFFATT BAYOU Return to Broadway; continue west to 61st St. (Spur 342). Go south on 61st St. to Offatt Bayou. Offatt Bayou may be viewed from the parking areas on the west side of 61st St. Loons, grebes, and diving ducks often crowd into this bayou in winter. Look for Common and Pacific loons

(rare), Eared Grebes, and Red-breasted Mergansers from late winter through late spring. GPS: 29.28397, -94.83550 ▲ UTC 066: 8-MILE ROAD AND SPORTSMEN'S ROAD Continue south on 61st St. to Stewart Rd.; travel west on Stewart Rd. to 81st St. Moody Gardens (butterfly gardens, IMAX theatre) may be reached off 81st St. The rain water retention areas in the parking lot of Moody Gardens offers excellent views of shorebirds Continue west on Stewart Rd. to 8-Mile Rd. Inspect the ponds along Stewart Rd. and then along 8-Mile Rd. to its end at West Galveston Bay and Sportsmen's Rd. The fields along 8-Mile Rd. are good in late spring for American Golden-Plovers and Upland Sandpipers. G west on Sportsmen's Rd. until it ends. The marshes along Sportmen's Rd. extend to the edge of the pavement, and waterbirds (White Ibis, Roseate Spoonbill, Clapper Rail) may wander to within a few feet of your vehicle. Check West Galveston Bay for Common Loons, Common Goldeneyes, and American Oystercatchers on the shell reefs. You can view North Deer Island from the end of 8-Mile Rd. The National and Houston Audubon Societies jointly own this island. North Deer Island supports one of the most significant colonial waterbird rookeries along the upper Texas coast. GPS: 29.24097, -94.88636

▲ UTC 067: SETTEGAST (NOTTINGHAM RANCH) ROAD Continue west on Stewart Rd. to Settegast Rd. (also known as Nottingham Ranch Rd.). The road cuts across old dune lines and inter-dune brackish water swales. The grassy fields along Settegast Rd. draw American Golden-Plovers, Whimbrels, Long-billed Curlews, and Upland Sandpipers during spring migration and Sandhill Cranes in winter. The ridge provided the last documented sighting of the Eskimo Curlew. GPS: 29.21936, -94.92369

Continue west on Stewart Rd. to Lafitte's Cove neighborhood and turn right/north on. Eckert Dr. There is a parking lot for the Nature Preserve just 0.2 mile on the right. The preserve extends both west and east of Eckert Dr. and the sloughs and ponds host flocks of waterfowl and shorebirds in winter, plus year-round waders. Enter east and use the boardwalk and concrete path to cross through prairie before entering the woods on the elevated ridge. In spring and fall look for buntings, Dicksissels, and other seedeating birds at the edge of the woods. The path loops around the compactly wooded ridge providing various view lines. There are three water drip locations and the woods are a magnet for migrant landbirds and can rival High Island. There are two drips that attract songbirds during spring and fall migration and Ladder-backed Woodpeckers are frequently seen here as well. ▲ UTC 069: LAFITTE'S GROVE Continue west on Stewart Rd. to Lafitte's Grove (about 0.1 mile west of the entrance to

Lafitte's Cove). Park on the pavement near the historical marker. The oaks here were badly

fresh water pond often holds water later than other areas during the drought. Be aware that

mottes and bordering ponds, should be checked throughout the fall and early winter months.

damaged by Hurricane Ike but what remains are attractive to migrant landbirds, and the

fall migrants often linger along the immediate coast through Christmas. These small oak

GPS: 29.21297, -94.93544

▲ UTC 085: WALTER HALL PARK

opportunities do exist along Clear Creek GPS: 29.51319, -95.10036 ▲ UTC 086: PAUL HOPKINS COMMUNITY PARK Continue south on TX 3 to FM 517, then west on FM 517 to Paul Hopkins Community Park. This pocket park has a nature trail along the bayou, and migrant landbirds often pass along this waterway in spring. A number of eastern woodland birds, including Red-shouldered Hawk, nest in this woodland. GPS: 29.45528, -95.06719

Return to the intersection of TX 3 and NASA Pkwy., and go south on TX 3 to Walter Hall Park.

This multi-use facility has been developed for a variety of outdoor activities, but birding

▲ UTC 087: MUSTANG BAYOU TRAIL – ALVIN Proceed west on FM 517 to I-45, then continue west across I-45 to TX 35 in Alvin. Go outh on TX 35 to TX 6, then west on TX 6 to BUS 35. Go south on BUS 35 to the Mustang Bayou Trail in Alvin (a trail head is located at the historic railroad depot that is now being restored). While in the area, check the woodlands along the Mustang Bayou Trail. GPS: 29.42475, -95.24389

▲ UTC 087A: JOHN HARGROVE ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEX Head north on TX 35 to Pearland, exiting at Magnolia St. Turn left onto Magnolia and the entrance to JHEC will be about 2 miles down on the left. Situated on a 108-acre retention pond protected on two sides with a light tree line, this site offers viewing opportunities year-round. With waterways and green space allocated for water run-off and detention, these open spaces are permanently protected for use by wildlife and birders. Worth a visit to see a variety of wading birds and songbirds. GPS: 29.54588, -95.31159

▲ UTC 087B: SHADOW CREEK RANCH NATURE PARK Continue west on Magnolia St. to TX 288 and head north. Exit FM 2234/McHard Rd. and turn left following McHard Rd. west to Kingley Dr. Turn right on Kingley Dr. and the park will be on the right. This 29.5-acre park borders Clear Creek and has paved hiking/biking trails throughout that are enhanced with interpretive signage. The site offers views of raptors, herons, egrets, ibis, spoonbills, and songbirds. GPS: 29.58086, -95.41732

BUFFALO BAYOU LOOP

Greater Houston Convention and Visitors Bureau www.visithoustontexas.com • (713) 437-5200

▲ UTC 088: SAM HOUSTON PARK

The intention of the following loop is to offer several birding sites to visitors who may have traveled to Houston on business. These locations are within walking distance, or a short drive, of downtown Houston and the Texas Medical Center.

Enjoy downtown Houston birding at Sam Houston Park (across from the Texaco Heritage Plaza at 1100 Bagby). During migration, many landbirds become disoriented as they pass in and around the tall buildings in the downtown area. These confused migrants search out pockets of suitable habitat. This 19-acre urban park, with its mature oaks and pecans, native plant gardens, and freshwater wetlands offers refuge among the skyscrapers. The oaks around city hall are also worth checking during the spring. GPS: 29.75953, -95.37086 ▲ UTC 089: BUFFALO BAYOU PARK

From Sam Houston Park, go west on Allen Pkwy. Buffalo Bayou Park extends from lowntown Houston west to Shepherd Dr. Houston is renovating the downtown section of Buffalo Bayou around Allen's Landing, and this entire stretch of the bayou should be increasingly hospitable. A hike-and-bike trail borders the bayou, and the riparian woodlands along the bayou attract migrants. GPS: 29.76000, -95.37683 **MUTC 090: WHITE OAK PARK**

LUTC 091: HERMANN PARK / HOUSTON ZOO

among the domestic waterfowl.

From the intersection of Allen Pkwy, and Shepherd, return east toward downtown Houston on Memorial Dr. Exit to Houston Ave., and go north to White Oak Dr. Proceed north on White Oak Dr. to White Oak Park. Citizens in this community have cleaned portions of White Oak Bayou here, and in doing so restored a swamp where Yellow-crowned Night-Herons and Green Herons nest. A number of eastern woodland species reside in the park. Stude and Woodland parks (both adjacent to White Oak Park) are also worth a brief visit. GPS: 29.78022, -95.37250

Return on Houston Ave. to Memorial Dr. Go east on Memorial Dr. to downtown Houston (Memorial will become Rusk Ave.) and Fannin St. Proceed southwest on Fannin St. to Hermann Park and the Houston Zoological Gardens (1513 N. MacGregor in Hermann Park). The Houston Museum of Natural Science, the Burke Baker Planetarium, the Wortham IMAX Theatre, and the Cockrell Butterfly Center are all located in this complex. Hermann Park borders Rice University and the Texas Medical Center, and is within a short walking distance of both. The Houston Zoological Gardens contain a "tropical bird house resembling Asian jungle with more than 200 exotic birds flying freely through aviary rain forest." More importantly, this zoo supports a world-famous captive-breeding program for endangered birds. In recent years, Attwater Prairie-Chickens have been reared at this location. A number of eastern woodland birds, including Red-headed Woodpecker, may be seen in Hermann Park (particularly around Miller Theatre). During winter, check the lakes

GPS: 29.72231, -95.39153 ▲ UTC 092: RUSS PITMAN PARK (NATURE DISCOVERY CENTER) Continue southwest on Fannin to Holcombe, then west on Holcombe (which becomes llaire) to Newcastle. Go south on Newcastle to Evergreen and Russ Pitman Park. This urban oasis attracts migrant landbirds during migration, and the hummingbird feeder maintained by the nature center staff are magnets for wintering hummingbirds. Buff-bellied Ruby-throated, Black-chinned, Broad-tailed and Rufous are among the species that have been seen here during the winter months. GPS: 29.69878, -95.45122 (713) 667-6550

in the park for Canvasbacks, Redheads, Ring-necked Ducks, and Greater and Lesser Scaup

▲ UTC 093: HOUSTON ARBORETUM AND MEMORIAL PARK Continue west on Evergreen to Loop 610, then go north on Loop 610 to the Woodway exit. Proceed east on Woodway to the Houston Arboretum and Memorial Park, Nature trails that originate at the Arboretum center eventually reach the banks of Buffalo Bayou. These mixed pine/oak woodlands, fenced in by urban sprawl from all directions, still support a diverse population of eastern woodland birds. Pine, Swainson's, Kentucky, and Hooded warblers breed within this park. In late winter, American Woodcocks (a rare breeder on the upper coast) have displayed here. Watch for Mississippi Kites feeding on dragonflies as they skim the treetops along Buffalo Bayou in late August and early September. GPS: 29.76661, -95.45503

▲ UTC 093A: WEST 11TH STREET PARK Head north on the I-610 service road and take I-10 to the east. Exit 765A off of I-10 onto TC Jester Blvd. Head north on TC Jester to West 11th St. and turn left. Take a right onto Shirkmere Rd. and the park trail head will be on your right. This beautiful 20.2-acre wilderness is the largest remaining native Texas forest inside the 610 Loop. With over 1,800 mature trees, a rapidly growing and diverse understory, and 1.5 miles of wooded trails, the park is a haven for wildlife for those seeking a break from the urban landscape. Six species of woodpecker can be found here, as well as many nesting birds. The butterfly garden is a great spot to view wildlife. GPS: 29.79062, -95.42542

KATY PRAIRIE LOOP

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www.katychamber.com • (281) 391-5289 ▲ UTC 094: HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY EDITH L. MOORE NATURE SANCTUARY From Memorial Dr. between Wilcrest Dr. and the Sam Houston Tollway, head south on

Wilchester Blvd. to the entrance of the sanctuary. This urban nature center contains the 1932 Moore Cabin and the HAS headquarters where information about their many sanctuaries (including High Island and Bolivar Flats) may be obtained. Situated along Rummel Creek, within a suburban neighborhood, the 17.5 acres of mixed oaks and pines attracts an interesting selection of woodland birds, particularly during spring migration. The variety of species varies widely from day to day and includes warblers, thrushes, vireos, woodpeckers, flycatchers, tanagers, orioles, and more.

(713) 932-1639 www.houstonaudubon.org GPS: 29.77167, -95.57077 ▲ UTC 094A: GEORGE BUSH PARK – BARKER RESERVOIR Head west on Memorial Dr. 4.9 miles to where it ends at TX 6. Go left/south on TX 6. The levee for Barker Reservoir will be paralleling you on your drive south. Barker Reservoir contains George Bush Park and a number of good birding locations over its approximate 3- by 5-mile expanse. First stop at the preserve is at Briar Forest Dr. (1.4 miles south of Memorial; GPS: 29.75598, -95.64542). Park in the lot on the west side of TX 6 and enter by walking along the road up and over the levee. 8,000 acres of improved and unimproved trails, restored wetlands, and more offer visitors viewing opportunities for a variety of

waterbirds (herons, egrets, waterfowl, shorebirds) and also woodland species.

west. After rainstorms low areas can retain water and often yield various shorebirds, herons, egrets, ibis, dabbling ducks and possibly spoonbills. Just east of levee is a parking area on south side of Westheimer Pkwy. (GPS: 29.734441, -95.660015) Head 2.3 miles west of levee to field at SE corner of Westheimer Pkwy. and S. Barker Cypress. Field is best viewed from parking area reached by turning left/south at the S. Barker Cypress stoplight (GPS: 29.721600, -95.686655). Continue on Westheimer Pkwy. 0.4 miles past S. Barker Cypress light and then head north to the end of the road and look to the west to view fields northwest of the Scobee model airplane area (GPS: 29.727362 -95.694335). For more woodland birds return to the light at S. Barker-Cypress Rd. and turn left/ north for 1 mile to George Bush Park Equestrian Area. This trailhead area will provide access to many miles of trails located throughout the park. Hike west of the parking area for about a mile for a boardwalk over wetlands and a great tree canopy where songbirds can be heard and waders viewed. Painted Buntings sometimes nest along this trail (GPS: 29.73479,

Drive south 1.4 miles on TX 6 to FM 1093/Westheimer Rd. and head west. After

climbing over the levee you will drop down into a large open grassy area as you continue

www.swg.usace.army.mil/Missions/DamSafetyProgram.aspx www.pct3.hctx.net/parks/georgebush.aspx ▲ UTC 095: JOSEPH S. AND LUCIE H. CULLINAN PARK

Return on Westheimer to TX 6 and head south 7.0 miles to this park (located on the right/ west side of TX 6 just before you reach the Sugar Land Airport). Enter the park, and proceed to the parking area at the end of the road near the boardwalk. The observation platform at the end of the boardwalk offers an excellent view of the lake. Anhinga, Red-shouldered Hawk, Osprey, Pied-billed Grebes, Common Gallinule, coots, Black-bellied Whistling and Wood ducks, plus Blue-winged Teal are year-round residents along with other waterbirds. Great place to bring a scope if you have one. GPS: 29.63617, -95.65164 ▲ UTC 097: BEAR CREEK PIONEERS PARK – ADDICKS RESERVOIR

Leaving Cullinan Park turn right and make U-turn at the Sugar Land Airport. Continue north 12.8 miles on TX 6 (stay left to cross I-10), and then turn right at stoplight at Patterson Rd. Take second left onto Bear Creek Dr. This 2,500-acre facility offers mature pine/oak woodlands along Bear Creek that are home to a number of eastern woodland birds at their western limit on the Trail. Specialty birds include Red-headed (in pines especially on Golbow Rd.) and five other species of woodpeckers, Merlins and Golden-crowned Kinglets (winter) and declining Rusty Blackbirds (winter on Fox Lane). In invasion years, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Purple Finches can also be found. Good birding areas include the Equestrian Trail, Bear Creek crossing at Bear Creek Dr., Fox Lane, S. Golbow between Kunze and Brant, Sullins Way Loop. www.pct3.hctx.net/parks/bearcreekpioneers.aspx GPS: 29.82009, -95.61075 ▲ UTC 097A: CULLEN PARK – ADDICKS RESERVOIR

northeast on FM 2004 to this trail. The grasslands in this area (along CR 227 and FM 2004) Exit Bear Creek Park at Clay Rd. on the north side of the park and go west on Clay Rd. for support an impressive diversity of raptors. In addition, be sure to inspect the flooded rice 3.4 miles to Barker-Cypress Rd. Turn south on Barker-Cypress Rd. for 2.1 miles to Saums fields in spring for American Golden-Plovers, Whimbrels, and Buff-breasted Sandpipers. Rd. and Cullen Park. This 8,000-acre facility has three different units in the area with access White-tailed Hawks have nested in previous years in the prairie across FM 2004 from the to a variety of habitats. The trails and roads of the park offer the visitor access to a large Amoco plant. To access the nature trail, park on the west side of FM 2004 near the Mustang variety of habitat types and birds and wildlife species. Bayou bridge. Amoco has developed this area for wildlife watching, and the woods here www.swg.usace.army.mil/Missions/DamSafetyProgram.aspx (along Mustang Bayou) attract landbirds during migration. GPS: 29.80039, -95.68989 GPS: 29.24432, -95.17396

▲ UTC 098: KLEB WOODS NATURE PRESERVE

▲ UTC 110: AMOCO WETLANDS TRAIL Head east on Clay Rd. to Eldridge Pkwy. and then head north (turn right). At US 290, turn tinue northeast on FM 2004 to FM 2917, then go northwest on FM 2917 to the Amoco left to head north. Exit Mueschke Rd. and turn right onto Mueschke. Turn left on Draper Rd. Wetlands trail (1.1 miles from FM 2004). The ponds may be reached by walking the road and the park will be on the right. This wildlife habitat park includes an early 20th century (look for the GTCBT sign) to an observation platform. The road first passes through a sizable historic farm and nature center. The land is dominated by pines over 50 years old and has prairie (listen for Sedge Wrens in spring), eventually reaching the wetlands and pond. several ephemeral wetlands that attract waders and occasionally ducks. Woodland species are American Bitterns and Green Herons are often seen here, and migrant shorebirds often the main attraction, including seven species of woodpeckers, Great Crested Flycatcher, Browndrop into the shallow wetlands during migrations. headed nuthatch, Eastern Bluebird, Pine Warbler, and other songbirds. Trail maps and GPS: 29.26094, -95.18111 checklists are available for Paul Rushing Park and Kleb Woods at the nature center. Gardens attract butterflies and dragonflies and host a number of hummingbirds during migration. ▲ UTC 111: SOLUTIA PRAIRIE (281) 357-5324 www.pct3.hctx.net/parks/klebwoodsnaturepres.aspx Before leaving Chocolate Bayou, continue northwest on FM 2917 to the Solutia Prairie (2 miles from FM 2004). Solutia has restored a significant tract of coastal prairie at this

GPS: 29.26986, -95.19239

(formerly the bed of the Brazos River)

▲ UTC 113: SEA CENTER TEXAS

(979) 292-0100

GPS: 29.01767, -95.44489

GPS: 29.02799, -95.45672

GPS: 29.04908, -95.47847

calls of Pileated Woodpeckers.

GPS: 29.20062, -95.56161

(979) 553-5101

GPS: 29.37050, -95.64131

Wildscape demonstration area is located adjacent to the boardwalk.

▲ UTC 114: DOW CENTENNIAL BOTTOMLANDS PARK

▲ UTC 114A: GULF COAST BIRD OBSERVATORY

and over 2 miles of trails. Hours are 8:30 – 4:30 Monday – Saturday.

forests of Central and South America, stay on in these insect-rich woods.

▲ UTC 115: LAKE JACKSON WILDERNESS PARK

▲ UTC 116: BRAZOS RIVER COUNTY PARK

UTC 117: BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK

woodlands each spring as they complete their trans-Gulf migratory journeys.

and resident avifauna, and sponsors numerous events such as Xtreme Hummingbird

road penetrates the dense thickets and allows entry into this fascinating bottomland forest.

Wood Ducks are often seen feeding on duckweed in the stagnant pools. These evergreen

bottomlands remain lush throughout the winter (it rarely freezes here), and each winter a

Go west on TX 332 to TX 521, then continue north on TX 521 to CR 30 (approximately 5

miles north of TX 35), and go west on CR 30 to Planter's Point Subdivision. Enter Planter's

Point, and follow Colony Lane to Brazos River County Park. The ponds along Colony Lane

Night-Herons usually hunt for frogs and snakes along the shoreline. Enter the park, and walk

the boardwalk along the river. Mississippi Kites nest around this park, so keep watching the

treetops during the summer. Early mornings here are often punctuated with the staccato

attract numbers of Wood Ducks (these ponds are often in duckweed), and Yellow-crowned

number of neotropical migrants, birds that otherwise would have continued to the tropical

BRAZORIA LOOP

Brazosport Visitor and Convention Council

GPS: 30.07258, -95.73880 ▲ UTC 099: WARREN LAKE

Head east on Draper Rd. to Mueschke Rd. and turn left. Turn left onto FM 2920. Continue on FM 2920 for about 6.5 miles to Hegar Rd. and turn left. Follow Hegar Rd. and continue straight as it becomes Warren Ranch Rd. to Warren Lake where the Katy Prairie Conservance (KPC) has erected a viewing platform (open 7 a.m. to dusk) affording great views of the lake. Warren Lake is a major waterfowl roosting site, with large numbers possible in winter. Sunrise and sunset are especially favorable viewing times as waders and wintering waterfowl flocks may be seen departing or arriving. The lake and the surrounding upland habitat attract a variety of migrants; Wood Storks may be present in mid- to late summer, waders any time of year. Be sure to scope the trees at the edges of the lake for Bald Eagles (especially in winter) and the shorelines for shorebirds. (713) 523-6135 http://katyprairie.org/ GPS: 29.978777, -95.847350

▲ UTC 099A: PAUL D. RUSHING PARK

Head south on Warren Ranch Rd. and take first left onto Jack Rd. and then right onto Kar Hockley Rd. Continue south on Katy Hockley Rd. for about 4.4 miles, then turn right to stay on Katy Hockley. Paul Rushing Park will be on your left. Paul Rushing Park's Chain-of-Lake is a storm-water enhancement project in the heart of the Katy Prairie maintained for wildlife and wildlife viewing opportunities by Harris County Precinct 3. With interconnected lakes of varying depths, some are suitable for diving ducks while others provide habitat for dabbler and waders. Summer draw-down provides abundant shorebird habitat in two of the lakes. There are 2 miles of trails in this 100-plus-acre area with a boardwalk and six observation blinds. Summer birds include Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks, Mottled Ducks, and Blacknecked Stilts. Fall is good for shorebirds and returning waterfowl, hawks, pipits, and sparrows. Winter provides opportunities for waterfowl, Sprague's Pipit, LeConte's and Grasshopper sparrow, as well as Bald Eagle. Horned Lark are year-round residents, and Long-billed Curlews are present in most months except June. American Golden Plover and Upland Sandpiper are possible in the open ball field areas in spring. (281) 357-5324 www.pct3.hctx.net/parks/pauldrushing.aspx

GPS: 29.90392, -95.81515 ▲ UTC 100: SHARP/HEBERT/PATTISON ROADS

Turn left out of Paul Rushing Park onto Katy Hockley Rd.; at first stop sign, continue straight on Sharp Rd. westbound. The next stretch of this loop (including UTC 101) will wind you through some of the most productive fields, pastures, wetlands, and brushy fence lines in this region. Much of the land that you will pass on Sharp, Hebert, and Pattison roads has been protected by the Katy Prairie Conservancy. Be on the lookout for waterfowl, wading birds, and shorebirds in wet fields, and spring migrant American Golden Plover and Upland Sandpiper in pastures. Scan the skies and tall perches for raptors (Red-tailed and White-tailed hawks and Crested Caracara; in winter Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, Merlin, and accipiters). Look/listen for Northern Bobwhite and wintering Long-billed Curlew and Brewer's Blackbird in grasslands, and many kinds of wintering sparrows such as Harris's in hedgerows and Grasshopper and LeConte's in fields. Nesting songbirds include Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Loggerhead Shrike; Painted Bunting, Blue Grosbeak, Dickcissel, and Eastern Meadowlark. Rarer species include Common Ground-Dove, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Couch's Kingbird, and (in winter) Ferruginous Hawk, Palm Warbler and Spotted and Eastern towhees. The first bridge you reach on Sharp Rd. crosses Cypress Creek, a good stopping point. Soon after you'll pass an isolated stand of trees which may hold a number of interesting winter species (such as Red-breasted Nuthatch and Golden-crowned Kinglet). If the fields just beyond this on the south side of Sharp Rd. are flooded (as when rice is being grown), numerous shorebirds and rails are possible As you leave Harris County into Waller County, the pavement ends and the road

becomes Hebert Rd. As you pass through a more forested area near a second crossing of Cypress Creek, look/listen for woodland species such as Red-shouldered Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, and Tufted Titmouse. When you reach pavement again, turn left and head south on Pattison Rd. (unmarked (You may wish to take a detour, heading straight/west on Hebert for a mile or so to the intersection with Penick Rd., where you will see yet another creek crossing, more fields [possibly flooded], and hedgerows; you can double back to Pattison from there.) Heading

south on Pattison, you will shortly cross Live Oak Creek (Cave Swallows in summer) and then more fields where you may find an abundance of the aforementioned species. At sunrise and sunset look for flocks of water birds departing from and returning to roost sites, Great Horned Owls perched on roadside wires or in treetops, displaying Common Nighthawks (summer), and Short-eared Owl (winter) patrolling low over the grasslands GPS: 29.920976, -95.840436 ▲ UTC 101: BULLER AND HARPER'S CHURCH ROADS For this site, the journey may be as birdy as the destination! From the south end of Pattison

Rd., turn right/west on Morrison Rd. (unmarked) for 3 miles to FM 529/362, keeping an eve out for shorebirds when fields are flooded. Go right/north at end of Morrison Rd. onto TX 362/529 for 2 miles. Then head left/west on FM529 for 4.5 miles (crossing TX 359). Look for small power substation on right and take the first right/north onto Kerr Rd. Take Kerr Rd. 1.5 miles north while checking the Huisache trees here and on Harper's Church Rd. for rare birds like Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Bewick's Wren, towhees and Palm Warbler in winter. Take second left onto small dirt road (Harper's Church Rd.) and continue 4 miles to end. The furthest east portion is a narrow untraveled dirt road that is ideal for walking or driving slowly. In winter, check brushy areas for some of the eleven sparrow species that have been previously reported here. Look for Eastern Bluebirds on the power lines, and a variety of woodland birds (Eastern Phoebe, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Hermit Thrush, Northern Flicker, Pine Siskin, various sparrows). Next you come to a large easily viewed sod farm on your left (south). During migration, check for Buff-breasted and Upland Sandpipers. Just west of the sod farm Couch's Kingbirds have been reported. The road ends short of the river but has more wooded habitat. Upon reaching the end of Harper's Church Rd. backtrack and return 4 miles east to Kerr Rd., turn south, and then take a left/east onto FM 529.

Go 1.0 mile on FM 529 and look for a sign on the right to Repka's Crawfish and Buller Rd. Go right/south on Buller Rd. and drive slowly 1.4 miles to Zadelsky Rd., looking on both sides of road; when flooded you may find many ducks, various shorebirds (specialties include American Golden-Plover and Baird's Sandpiper in April, Hudsonian Godwit in early May, and sometimes huge flocks of Snow, Ross's, and White-fronted geese and an occasional Bald Eagle or Peregrine Falcon in winter). When a flock of 5,000 geese loudly lifts off pursued by a raptor it is a spectacle not to be missed. Take a left at Zaelsky and head east to FM 359. GPS: 29.93553, -96.07194 **UTC 102: STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE PARK**

Head south on FM 359 into Pattison. Turn right/west onto FM 1458 and follow it 7.7 miles to ▲ UTC 117A: SEABOURNE CREEK PARK Park Road 38. Turn right onto PR 38 just after the Brazos River Bridge and follow it to the park. Return to FM 1462 and turn right, heading west toward TX 36. Turn north on TX 36 to The trees and roads near the Overnight Group Hall offer some good woodland birding during Rosenberg. The park is located just east of TX 36 just south of the intersection with US 59. spring migration. On the portion of the Brazos Bottom Trail closest to the river can be great Designed for nature enthusiasts, this 164-acre city park includes a variety of trails, wetlands during spring and fall migration yielding warblers, empids, and Indigo Buntings. In spring and coastal prairie and riparian forest, butterfly garden, and a 4-acre lake that attracts a diversity summer look/listen for Norther Parula, Prothonotary Warbler, Acadian Flycatcher, Greatcrested Flycather, Yellow-bellied Cuckoo, Red-eved Vireo, Summer Tanager, and Pileated http://txmn.org/coastal/signature/seabourne-creek-park Woodpecker in the park. A good place to check in drought periods is the hill below the water GPS: 29.52477, -95.80808 treatment facility as a small creek crosses the Barred Owl Trail here and holds water when everything else is dry. In the winter, this area can have Winter Wrens as well. (979) 885-3613 www.tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/stephen-f-austin

BLUEWATER LOOP

Brazosport Convention & Visitors Council www.visitbrazosport.com • 888-477-2505 or 979-285-2501

UTC 103: SAN LUIS PASS COUNTY PARK From Galveston, cross San Luis Pass on the toll bridge and continue southwest on the Bluewater Highway (Brazoria CR 257). Immediately after crossing the bridge, exit west for San Luis Pass County Park. This county park offers another view of San Luis Pass, and the sand flats here are often littered with small flocks of gulls and terns. Northern Gannets often venture into swift waters of San Luis Pass to fish. Scope the nearshore waters in summer and fall for Magnificent Frigatebirds. Please stay clear of the dunes as they represent a fragile ecosystem (and home to many rattlesnakes). GPS: 29.07567, -95.12858

Continue southwest on the Bluewater Highway to Christmas Bay and the Christmas Bay Scenic View (3.2 miles from San Luis Pass across from The Peregrine Resort). Rafts of Redheads often crowd this bay in winter, and Wilson's Plovers and Horned Larks nest in the dunes along the shore. This is a good spot to scope for winter ducks in the Bay and Marbled Godwit flocks on the reefs. It is possible to drive the beach the entire distance between l and Surfside (although a beach pass is required in Surfside), and gulls, terns, and shorebirds congregate in this area (Red Knots are often seen along this beach in migration). The near-

LUTC 104: CHRISTMAS BAY

GPS: 29.81443, -96.1086

and rafts of seaducks may drift close enough to the shore to allow a close inspection. In winter. Northern Gannets can sometimes be seen fishing offshore from the beach. GPS: 29.04556, -95.16136

▲ UTC 106: SURFSIDE JETTY PARK

GPS: 28.93903, -95.29592

UTC 105: BLUEWATER HIGHWAY Continue southwest on Bluewater Highway to TX 332 in Surfside. The bay may be accessed by driving to the kayak launch on Drum Bay. In summer, Willets light on the power lines along this stretch of the Bluewater Highway. Falcons (Peregrine, Merlin, and American Kestrel) are commonly seen along the beach in migration and winter. Look for Yellowheaded Blackbird among the blackbird flocks along this road during migration. Bobolinks have also been seen in late spring in fields of spiderwort. White-tailed Kites often perch on the powerlines along the Road during winter and Crested Caracaras can be found in this area. GPS: 28.97397, -95.26011

shore waters are often jammed with Brown Pelicans diving amongst the schools of menhade

Park. The jetty has been expanded, and the walk to the end can now be accomplished with secure footing. Northern Gannets may be seen in winter from the jetty, and scoters and mergansers may drift into these relatively calm waters to feed (the scoters are rare). Inspect the flocks of gulls that feed behind the shrimp boats for jaegers and check the rocks for rare shorebirds. Purple Sandpiper is always possible in winter.

From the intersection of the Bluewater Highway and TX 332 in Surfside, continue southwest

across TX 332 on Fort Velasco Dr. to Parkview Rd. Go south on Parkview Rd. to Surfside Jetty

COASTAL PLAINS LOOP

Alvin Convention and Visitors Center Bureau

www.alvintexas.org • (281) 585-3359

▲ UTC 107: VILLAGE OF OYSTER CREEK MUNICIPAL PARK From Surfside travel west on TX 332 to FM 523, then go north on FM 523 to Village of Oyster Creek Municipal Park. These woodlands, situated along Oyster Creek, are worth checking for migrants as you travel toward Brazoria NWR. Red-shouldered Hawks are often seen perchec on the power poles around the parking area. Look for Belted Kingfishers along Oyster Creek. GPS: 29.01397, -95.32839

UTC 108: BRAZORIA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE Travel north on FM 523 to CR 227, then east on CR 227 to Brazoria NWR. The refuge consists of nearly 50,000 acres of coastal grassland, bluestem prairie, mud flats, fresh and salt water marshes, and a bewildering assortment of potholes, lakes, and streams. The observation platform overlooking Teal Pond allows close views of the waterfowl (geese, Sandhill Cranes) congregations there. Also, walk the nature trail across Big Slough, behind the visitor's pavilion. Wood Storks are common during the late summer and fall in the impoundments along the driving loop. In addition to the remarkable diversity of waterbirds prairie. In this grassland look for Sedge Wrens and Le Conte's, Henslow's, and Grasshopper sparrows. White-tailed Kites and White-tailed Hawks frequent the prairies in winter. In wet years, Black Rails can be heard calling along the road to Salt Lake and Seaside Sparrows are common here. The tidal flats at low tide often overflow with shorebirds. (979) 964-4011 www.fws.gov/southwest/ GPS: 29.06511, -95.31889 ▲ UTC 109: AMOCO (CHOCOLATE BAYOU) NATURE TRAIL

Continue northeast on CR 227 to FM 2004 (look for Crested Caracaras along this road). Go

▲ UTC 118: MANOR AND EAGLE NEST LAKE Head south 20 miles on TX 36, turning left/east on CR 18. Continue east on CR 18 to CR 25 and turn right/south to the lakes. This pleasant route carries you through miles of grazing seen in the fields along CR 25. Of the two lakes, Manor Lake is the most interesting to birders. The extensive marshes here draw an impressive diversity of waterbirds include Least Bitterns, Yellow-crowned Night-Herons, and Purple and Common gallinules. Listen for the gurgling sounds of Marsh Wrens in late spring and summer. Bald Eagles nest in the area and often drift over these lakes in search of dead fish. Departing Manor Lake, check CR 27 to the east. Eastern Bluebirds are often seen in the pecan woodlands along this gravel road, and Pileated Woodpeckers are unusually common near the river. GPS: 29.21858. -95.59183 Continue south on CR 25 to TX 35, then go west on TX 35 to FM 2852. Travel north on FM 2852 to the site. Chiefly managed as a historical site, this park offers limited birding

opportunities. However, the park supports a healthy population of Eastern Bluebirds

Continue west on TX 35 through West Columbia and then south on TX 35 to Hanson Riverside

SAN BERNARD LOOP

From the intersection of TX 332 and FM 523 near Oyster Creek go west on FM 523 to FM

1495. Go south on FM 1495 across the GIWW to CR 723 (Lamar St.). Turn left on CR 723

and proceed 2.1 miles to the sanctuary. This small grove of salt cedars has become a birding

hotspot. During spring migration warblers, orioles, tanagers, grosbeaks and other migrant

songbirds can be abundant in the trees here. Western strays are common including Yellow

headed Blackbird, Lark Sparrow, and Western Kingbird. The sanctuary has two water drips

southwest along the beach until reaching the mouth of the Brazos River and the Bryan Beach

Unit of the Justin Hurst (Peach Point) WMA. Flocks of waterbirds crowd the sand flats at the

mouth of the river, and gangs of American Avocets often swirl through the shallow waters

County Park. Check the woodlands in spring for migrants and eastern woodland birds.

www.visitvarnerhoggplantation.com

and the woodlands here should be inspected in spring for migrants.

▲ UTC 121: QUINTANA NEOTROPICAL BIRD SANCTUARY

▲ UTC 120: HANSON RIVERSIDE COUNTY PARK

(979) 345-4656

GPS: 29.16164, -95.64217

GPS: 29.11378, -95.67588

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Far West Texas Wildlife Trail Prairies and Pineywoods Wildlife Trail - West Prairies and Pineywoods Wildlife Trail - East Panhandle Plains Wildlife Trail Heart of Texas Wildlife Trail - West Heart of Texas Wildlife Trail - East

that attract birds and a photography blind is set up at one of the drips. GPS: 28.93396, -95.3090 ■ UTC 122: QUINTANA BEACH COUNTY PARK Continue east on CR 723 and turn right onto 5th St. Quintana Beach County Park will be straight ahead. The salt cedars along the beach can contain migrant songbirds and the grassy fields often have American Pipits and more rarely Upland Sandpipers. To reach the Quintana Jetty, exit the park and turn right on Burnet St., then right again on 2nd St. Large flocks of gulls and terns roost at the jetty and should be searched for rarities. The jetty itself makes a good walk and provides an opportunity to watch for rare gulls in winter and Magnificent rigatebirds in summer. Return to Burnet St. and turn left. Go two blocks and take 8th St. down to the beach. There is a pier here which provides another view of the Gulf. Drive

here. Piping and Snowy ployers chase the water's edge, and Merlins eve them while perched on the driftwood that litters the dunes. GPS: 28.93525, -95.30594 **▲ UTC 123: BRYAN BEACH**

resident Barred Owls.

Return to FM 1495, and turn south on CR 750/Bryan Beach Rd. Proceed south to the beach, and drive southwest along the beach until reaching the mouth of the Brazos River and Justin Hurst WMA. This city beach is undeveloped, yet this unspoiled condition adds to the appeal of the location. Flocks of waterbirds crowd the sand flats at the mouth of the river, and American Avocets often swirl through the shallow waters here. Piping and Snowy plovers chase the water's edge, and Merlins eye them while perched on the driftwood that litters the dunes. GPS: 28.91231, -95.33547 ▲ UTC 124: JUSTIN HURST WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

Return to the intersection of FM 1495 and TX 36, and continue northwest on TX 36 to the TPWD Justin Hurst WMA (formerly Peach Point WMA). Most of this 15,612-acre nanagement area consists of either coastal prairie or coastal marshes that are inaccessible to the public. However, nature trails have been developed that provide visitors with the opportunity to explore an oak/hackberry motte and adjacent grasslands. The Live Oak Loop (half-mile improved trail) and the Jones Creek Trail (2.5-mile unimproved trail) may be accessed 0.2 mile from TX 36 at a trailhead situated in a small picnic area. Occasionally the Jones Creek Trail floods, so rubber boots may be necessary in wet times. Visitors are advised to bring mosquito spray and drinking water. GPS: 28.96925, -95.44403 (979) 244-7697

▲ UTC 125: SAN BERNARD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE Continue northwest on TX 36 to FM 2611, then west on FM 2611 to FM 2918. Proceed south on FM 2918 to CR 306, then west on CR 306 to San Bernard NWR. The 27.414-acre refuge is located in Brazoria and Matagorda counties, 12 miles west of Freeport. The refuge includes coastal prairie, both salt and fresh-water marshes, freshwater lakes, and scattered woodlands. Although all of the refuge is worth exploring (at least the parts that are accessible), try the 3-mile Moccasin Pond auto loop and Scissor-tail Trail if pressed for time. In wet years Moccasin Pond loop will have abundant waterfowl and herons. The grassy edges host a few Sprague's Pipits in winter and the grasslands have LeConte's and Grasshopper sparrows. Ash-throated Flycatchers frequently inhabit the woods on the Scissor-

migrants and in winter can have Brown Creeper and Ash-throated Flycatcher. Watch for the

(979) 964-4011 www.fws.gov/southwest/ GPS: 28.91503, -95.57906

location, and Sedge Wrens and Le Conte's Sparrows may be seen (or at least heard) here www.visitbrazosport.com • (888) 477 2505 and (979) 285-2501 The Brazosport area, consisting of the communities of Clute, Freeport, Lake Jackson, and Surfside Beach, is situated along the Texas coast at the mouth of the Brazos River. The Freeport Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is one of the top counts in the nation for the number ▲ UTC 112: BRAZOSPORT NATURE CENTER AND PLANETARIUM (NCAP) From the intersection of TX 332 and BUS 288 go north on BUS 288 to College Blvd., then west on College Blvd. to Brazosport College. Enter the first (east) entrance, and park at the Brazosport Arts and Sciences Center (where the NCAP is housed). The trail, which begins across from the NCAP, traverses a river bottom woodland community that is typical of the woodlands in this area. This particular woodland is now on the banks of Oyster Creek (979) 265-7661 www.bcfas.org GPS: 29.04558, -95.40500 Continue west on TX 332 to Plantation Dr. in Lake Jackson, then go south on Plantation Dr. to Sea Center Texas, a marine aquarium, fish hatchery and education center operated by TPWD in partnership with the Coastal Conservation Association and The Dow Chemical Company. Although the focus of the center is upon the marine ecosystem, a freshwater marsh and saltwater marsh have been created and can be accessed by an elevated boardwalk. A BIRDING TRAIL Continue west on TX 332 to Oak Dr., then go south on Oak Dr. to MacLean Park and the GREAT TEXAS COASTAL entrance to this 240-acre park. The nature sanctuary includes extensive bottomland forests along the Brazos River (known as the Columbia bottomlands), one of the most important migratory vectors for landbirds in the United States. Millions of migrants pass through these **TSAO2** Take Lake Rd. north to TX 332 and then turn left/west on TX 332, following it to the GCBO entrance. This research and education facility is one of several such observatories operated **TEXAS** throughout the Western Hemisphere. Regionally, GCBO coordinates research on migrating Xtravaganza, a popular fall birding festival. This site hosts many native woodland birds migrants in spring/fall, and is great in winter. Habitat found includes riparian woodlands lying adjacent to freshwater impoundment and Columbian bottomlands hardwood forest. Site includes boardwalk to photography blind overlooking wetland, native flora and flauna, UPPER (979) 480-0999 www.gcbo.org GPS: 29.04914, -95.47621 Continue west on TX 332 across the bayou to Lake Jackson Wilderness Park. An unpaved



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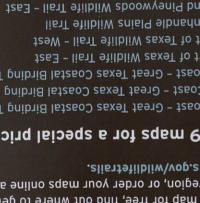
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tailed Trail during winter. Also try walking the Bobcat Woods Trail, an elevated boardwalk that offers an excellent view of Cocklebur Slough. Bobcat Woods often has spring and fall

Return to FM 521, and continue north to its merge with SH 288. Continue north on SH 288 to FM 1462. Go west on FM 1462 to TX 762, then north on TX 762 to PR 72 and Brazos Bend SP (28 miles south of Houston). The park covers 4,897 acres, with an eastern boundary of 3.2 miles fronting on the Brazos River, Although dominated by the Brazo River floodplain, Brazos Bend is a hodge-podge of coastal prairies, swales, oxbow lakes freshwater marshes, and dense riparian woodlands. Big Creek cuts diagonally across the park, and Elm, Pilant, and 40-Acre lakes offer extensive open-water habitat. From the parking area at Elm Lake (look for Vermilion Flycatcher in winter in the rattlebean thicke along the shore), hike to the observation platform located between Pilant and 40-Acre lakes. Purple Gallinules and Least Bitterns nest in the marshes here, and Prothonotary Warblers breed in the willows along the levee. Acadian Flycatchers breed in the forest here. Few dusks pass without a raucous chorus of Barred Owls shattering the evening's quiet. Leaving Brazos Bend SP, continue north on TX 762 to Davis Estates Rd. (approximately 2.1 miles from PR 72). This road, much of it unpayed, is favored by local birders for its tendency to lure unusual species. Golden Eagles and Tundra Swans have occurred here in the past, and Wood Storks are often seen in the shallow ponds that border the road. TEXAS www.tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/brazos-bend Life's better outside. **SWAROVSKI**