

The Brown Pelican



RECOVERED

The Newsletter of the Coastal Bend Audubon Society

On the Web at <http://www.coastalbendaudubon.org>

LOOK FOR COLOR, WEB-LINKED VERSION OF NEWSLETTER ON THE WEB AT www.coastalbendaudubon.org

CBAS Monthly Meetings

Tuesday, May 4

Speaker: Rosaleen Baluyot, and Nicole Morgan, TAMUCC graduate students

Topic: Ingleside barrier strandplain peninsulas, and other research

Location:

Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History
1900 N. Chaparral
Corpus Christi, Texas

Time: 7:00 p.m.

All members and the public are invited!

**CBAS does not hold meetings in the summer.
Next meeting September 7, 2010.**



Earth Share
OF TEXAS

One environment.
One simple way
to care for it.

Purple Martin Migration Tracking—Map on Page 3

Nine of the original twenty geolocators placed on martins last year have been retrieved from birds at the colonies of John Barrow, Louise Chambers, and Jeff Webster. This high recovery rate is unprecedented, and is due largely to the excellent colony maintenance and care by the landlords. The geocator devices have been sent off so the data can be downloaded. This year, eleven more geolocators will be placed on martins at one of the colonies to see if there is any significant variation in migration/wintering strategies between years. See page 3 for the migration route of the first recaptured Purple Martin. The CBAS website will post additional maps as they are received.

March Speaker—Prairie Wetlands Program by Craig Giggelman

On Tuesday, March 2, Craig Giggelman explained the development of freshwater wetlands through the Texas Prairie Wetlands Program. He focused on land-based turtle species found in South Texas. Due to multiple reasons, populations of land-based turtles are in decline. The development of freshwater wetlands in South Texas can benefit these species by providing essential aquatic habitat. Mr. Giggelman talked about how members of the Audubon Society can help in monitoring these turtles. Mr. Giggelman is a Senior Environmental Contaminants

Specialist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

April Speakers—Photos by Smiths

Dr. Elizabeth Smith and David Smith presented striking bird images on Tuesday, April 6. Identifying prey of wading birds and shorebirds continues to be the focus of Liz and Dave's photography and video efforts. High-resolution imagery make the task of identifying the prey items easier and interesting to evaluate. They showed results of their recent efforts to document the feeding strategies of several species in the Texas Coastal Bend.



UPCOMING EVENTS! MORE DETAILS INSIDE!

Sunday, May 2—SWAMP THINGS Field Trip (p.2)

Saturday, May 8, 9 am-12 pm— Purple Martin workshop for Teachers (p.2)

Saturday, October 23—Coastal Bend Audubon Society's BIG DAY (p. 2)

WHAT'S UP AROUND TEXAS

UPCOMING EVENTS

GREAT BIRDING CLASSIC

April 25 – May 2 Texas Coast

Birding in teams to raise money for coastal habitat conservation with tournaments for birders of all skill levels and any age.

Costs vary.

(979) 480-0999

Website: www.birdingclassic.org

E-mail: criley@gcbo.org

FESTIVAL ON THE BAYOU 2010

May 1, 2010 Sims Bayou Urban Nature Center, Houston
Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with Houston Audubon. Festival on the Bayou is full of educational bird games and activities, arts and crafts, live bird displays, and fun programs. 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.; \$5 per person.

(713) 640-2407

Website: www.houstonaudubon.org

DRAGONFLY DAYS

May 20-23, 2010 Weslaco

Focusing on the diversity of dragonflies found in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, this event offers field trips, seminars, and opportunities to see birds, butterflies, and other insects. The event is sponsored by the Estero Llano Grande State Park World Birding Center site and the Valley Nature Center.

Contact: Valley Nature Center

(956) 969-2475

Website: <http://www.stxmaps.com/go/dragonfly-days.html>

CBAS BIG DAY IS OCT 23, 2010

Big Day planning is well underway, so get your team together. Registration forms will be in the next newsletter and on the website. Last year's Big Day was wildly fun and wildly successful, thanks to all the participants and excellent planning. We hope to make this year's event even more successful. We will be seeking additional sponsorships, as well as items for the silent auction. If you have anything you'd like to donate for the silent auction, please contact Rosalie Rossi at rosalierr@gmail.com. Rosalie and Emily Williamson are organizing the event, and are looking for volunteers to assist. This event needs diverse types of volunteers to do different tasks, so if you've been wanting to get involved, now is your opportunity.

SUNDAY, MAY 2 - SWAMP THINGS, A KAYAK/CANOE TRIP ON THE MCFADDIN RANCH

You must provide your own kayak or canoe and other equipment (including life jacket), and be able to paddle up to two miles in still water. In addition to paddling gear, don't forget sunscreen, bug spray, and a lunch. A caravan will be leaving Corpus Christi at 6:30 a.m. or you can rendezvous at the old McFaddin store at 7:45.

This is a CBAS members-only field trip, limited to 20 participants. There is no fee, but a recommended minimum \$10 donation per person will go to the ranch for hosting us. If you are not a member, but would like to go on the trip, you can become a member for \$15 by filling out the registration form in the newsletter. To register for the trip, contact David Newstead at 361.885.6203 or davnewst@yahoo.com to get on the roster for this unique opportunity.

PURPLE MARTIN TEACHER WORKSHOP

SCHOOL YARD HABITATS AND PURPLE MARTINS

The Coastal Bend Audubon Society is presenting a workshop for teachers on Saturday, May 8th from 9 a.m. – 12 noon at the Nature Conservancy Office, 205 North Carrizo Street, Corpus Christi. Teachers will learn about the importance of human interaction that is essential to the Purple Martins. They will learn about the latest technology which provides scientists with information on the migratory routes of some of these birds, and how long they stay in one location. This information is brand-new, but researchers are excited about the results they are getting so far. We will also share ideas on how teachers can create a birding habitat in the school yard.

To register for this free workshop email Linda Fuiman at www.linda.fuiman@mail.utexas.edu or 361-728-4635.



Purple Martin with geolocator. Photo by Juan Bahamon

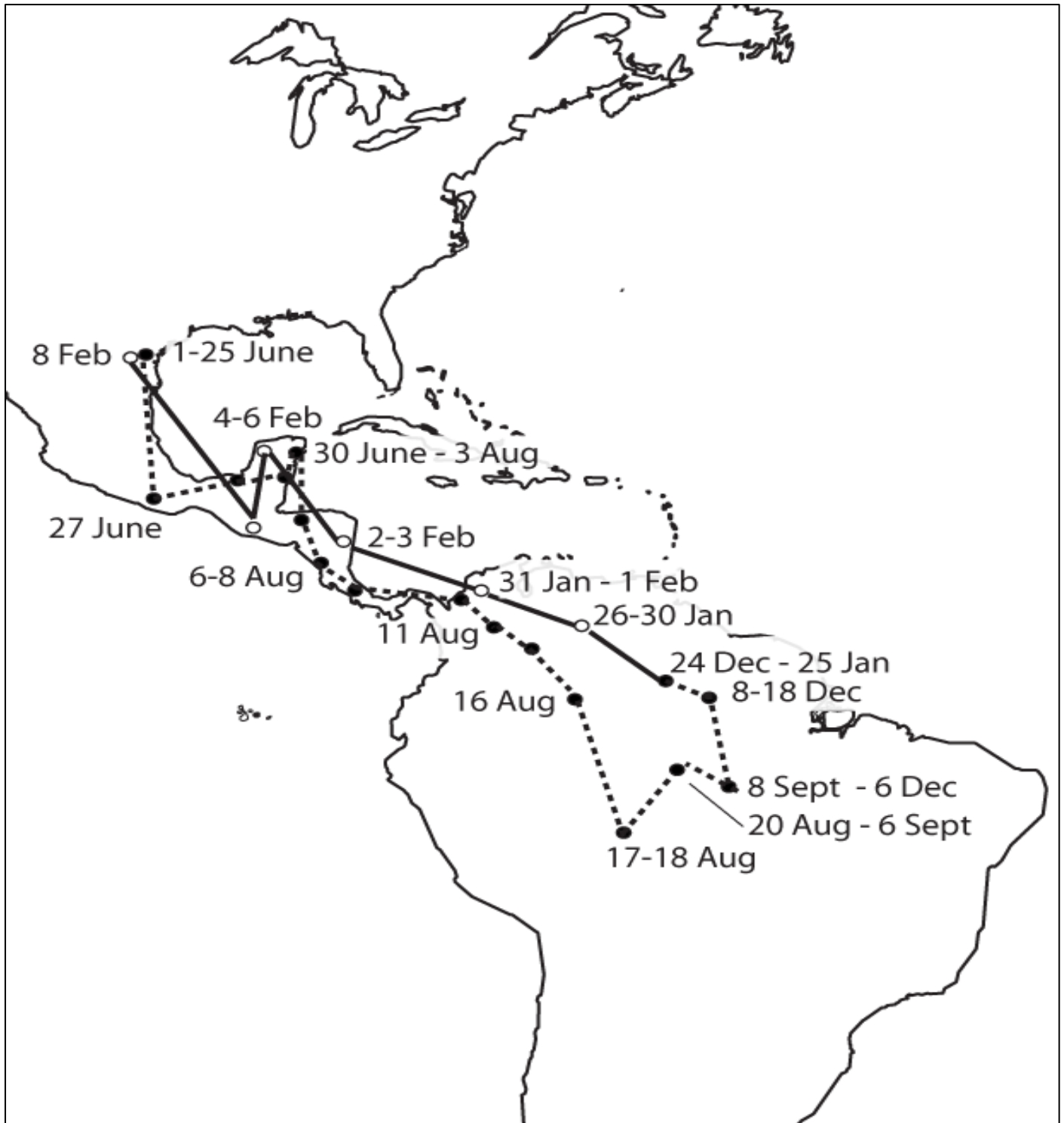
PURPLE MARTIN GEOLOCATOR MIGRATION ROUTE

2009-10 MIGRATION FROM CORPUS CHRISTI, TX (LOCATIONS APPROXIMATE)

PUMA 1232-94511 (number identifying individual bird)

fall migration (dashed lines, solid circles): 26 June – 20 August (56 days)

spring migration (solid lines, open circles): 26 January – 8 February (14 days)



CBAS BIRD CONSERVATION RESEARCH AWARD

CBAS is pleased to announce that we are establishing an annual \$500 award available to a student at TAMU-Kingsville or TAMU-Corpus Christi conducting a research project with relevance to the conservation of the rich bird life of the Coastal Bend. The award will be open to all disciplines - i.e. biology, ecology, sociology, economics, or any other with an appropriate conservation objective. This award will be funded by an endowment held through Coastal Bend Community Foundation - initiated by a \$5,000 gift from an anonymous donor, plus \$2,000 from CBAS funds. In order for the endowment to ensure \$500 in interest to fund the award, we need to raise the endowment by at least another **\$3,000**. Please consider making a gift to CBAS to put towards this endowment. There are relatively few funding opportunities available for students working on bird conservation projects in this area, so the award will encourage students to consider bird conservation projects, and improve the quality of their research. We will be providing a more detailed announcement in the next newsletter. If you are considering making a gift and have any questions about the award, please don't hesitate to contact David Newstead at 361.885.6203.

FIRST STATS FROM THE 2010 BIG SHELL CLEAN-UP

By Capt. Billy Sandifer

103 TONS of trash removed. Estimates are between 400-500 people participated. Mansfield group got 5 miles of beach cleaned. Near as I can tell we got 10 1/2 miles on this end. So, that's 15 1/2 miles. The most distance ever. Mr. David Ainsworth and his crew are by far the Most Valuable Players of the Year. That man has got to be one of the best tractor operators alive. We would have been in a bad way without their trailers, front end loaders, expertise and gung ho attitudes. Kip definitely earned Section Leader of the year. We picked up trash on our knees when we could no longer bend over, we ran along side trash trailers loading them in heavy, cold, hard winds and rain. My God, this was an awesome event and that is due totally to the wonderful people who worked harder than anyone would for daily wages to get it done. You have always been my heroes, but this year I stand in utter awe of you all and the good you have done.

Hoorraaaa. Your Brother in the Sand, Billy
If we don't leave any there won't be any.

For more of Billy's story of this year's clean-up visit his site at <http://www.billysandifer.com/cleanup.htm>.

BYRD AND BEA HARRIS MEMORIAL GARDEN



On Saturday, March 20, the Byrd and Bea Harris Memorial Butterfly Garden got its start with 41 native plants, chosen to attract butterflies with nectar or as larval hosts. The Butterfly Garden is behind the Blucher House at 205 North Carrizo Street, right across from Blucher Park. The Nature Conservancy is housed in the historic mansion. Buddy McDowell, Sally Bickley, and Mary Bridges planted the 41 plants just before a well-timed downpour arrived.

The Harrises were members of CBAS and bequeathed funds to the club to create this memorial. Plants such as cenizo, Texas & velvet lantana, bush sunflowers, Cortez croton, passion vine, skeleton leaf goldeneye, snake herb, salvias, along with some little bluestem and inland sea oats grasses will attract butterflies to the garden.

Mary Bridges, working toward her Master Naturalist designation, has adopted the garden as her volunteer project. There are still projects to be completed before the garden is finished, so if you'd like to assist, please call David Newstead at 361-885-6203.



Summer Program 2010

BIRDING 101 FOR KIDS



Sponsored by
The Coastal Bend Audubon Society
and

The University of Texas Marine Science Institute & Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve

Birding 101 classes are being offered this summer for kids aged 7 -16 years. These introductory classes are designed to help children identify birds, as well as giving kids a greater understanding of the environment. Kids will learn how to use binoculars, identify birds using field marks, make a bird feeder, and sketch a bird or a plant just like the famous ornithologist, James Audubon. It's all fun, fun, fun!!

Dress for the weather: wear a hat, sunscreen, etc.

Participants are asked to bring their own binoculars, if possible, and for those that don't, we have some available on a first come basis.

Register for 1, 2 or 3 classes: Registration is required - Bring Binoculars - Classes Free

To register and get more information, call instructor Linda Fuiman: 361-728-4635 or email: linda.fuiman@mail.utexas.edu.

Where: Hans Suter Wildlife area, Ennis Joslin Dr, Corpus Christi
When: Thursday, June 10, 2010
Time: 9 am – 11 am
Cost: Free

Where: Indian Point, Hwy 181 Causeway, near Portland
When: Thursday, June 17, 2010
Time: 9 am – 11 am
Cost: Free

Where: Birding Center, Ross Ave, Port Aransas
When: Thursday, June 24, 2010
Time: 9 am – 11 am
Cost: Free

Classes are Free
Registration Required



RESIGHTING BANDED SHOREBIRDS

A new website for reporting the resighting of tagged shorebirds has been created. Over the last 15 years scientists have been banding shorebirds to study hemispheric journeys of migratory shorebirds. Various species have been marked with leg flags bearing three-character codes (for example, ABC, A1C) allowing identification of individuals with spotting scopes. To date, New Jersey and Delaware Divisions of Fish and Wildlife and New Jersey Audubon Society have marked over 35,000 red knots, ruddy turnstones, sanderlings, and semipalmated sandpipers with coded leg flags. The above organizations, with financial support from [Clear into the Future: a DuPont Delaware Estuary Initiative](#) and US Fish and Wildlife Service, developed a web-based relational database (www.bandedbirds.org) to improve reporting and management of resighting, especially data from the bird-watching public.

Although researchers conduct regular resighting efforts for shorebirds at key breeding, migratory, and wintering locations, resightings by recreational birdwatchers contribute significantly to this effort. More than 7000 resightings have been reported by birdwatchers since last May. Use of www.bandedbirds.org allows visitors to learn resighting techniques, easily report their resightings of banded birds, and add photos to share with others. A major feature on the website is the "Map Your Resighting" page. After an easy, one-time registration, a participant can see a map of an individual bird's banding and resighting history, and view any photos that have been uploaded.

The combination of banding and resighting data allows greater understanding of the habitat uses and needs of shorebirds, many of which are imperiled. Your resightings count! Go to www.bandedbirds.org to learn resighting techniques and then click on Report Resighting to enter your data. These reports are added directly to an active database maintained by a consortium of research groups. Obtain immediate feedback about the known journey of the specific bird(s) you have resighted. Whether yours is the first report or one of many for a single individual, each resighting contributes to our ability to conserve these species.

If you have further questions about this project, please contact the database administrator, Jeannine Parvin at banded-birds@comcast.net.

Contributed by:

David S. Mizrahi, Ph.D., Vice-president, Research and Monitoring, New Jersey Audubon Society

Lawrence J. Niles, Ph.D., Conserve Wildlife Foundation of NJ

Jeannine Parvin
Database Administrator: bandedbirds.org, 609-465-3056

ATTWATER'S PRAIRIE CHICKEN FESTIVAL

By Sally Bickley

The Attwater's Prairie Chicken Festival was held on April 10 and 11. Excellent weather, exceptional wildflowers, and booming and nesting Attwater prairie chickens made the trip to Eagle Lake worthwhile (approx. 170 miles from Corpus Christi).

We stopped at the Visitor's Center on Saturday afternoon and viewed a video recounting the decline in coastal prairie habitat and the population of the Attwater's Prairie Chicken, a subspecies of the Greater Prairie Chicken. We walked both of the walking trails, which intersect with creeks or rivers and drove the auto tour, which borders several marshes. Northern Harriers, Turkey Vultures, Crested Caracaras, and American Crows were constantly flying over the prairie. We saw several Sprague's Piptits on the ground. A small herd of American Bison is maintained at the Refuge.

Very early Sunday morning, we boarded the van to a booming ground, or lek, of the prairie chickens. Males come to this area to display and attract females. We saw 4 males and 2 or 3 females in and around the lek. From the lek site, we saw a White-tailed Hawk perched on a fence post, and some Bob-white quail near the road.



After the lek, we had a staff-led van tour of the Refuge. It took us to the large part of the refuge that is closed to the public. We saw a demonstration of how the staff track the prairie chickens by radio, and viewed a protective fence around one nest. We also saw staging areas for releasing captive-bred chicks.

Only 1 percent of the Attwater's Prairie Chickens' original coastal prairie habitat is left. Flooding and wet years in the early 90's wiped out 3 years of nest production for the prairie chickens. The Refuge staff are working to stabilize the population. With only 90 birds left, on 3 refuges, it is a daunting task, as prairie chickens are at the bottom of the food chain.

Learn about the creation of the Attwater's Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge at the Handbook of Texas Online: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/AA/gka4.html>. Visit the Refuge website at: <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/refuges/texas/attwater/>. Next year's festival will be the first or second week in April. If you haven't seen these interesting birds, you may not get another chance.

TREASURER'S REPORT

SANCTUARY NOTES

By Leatrice Koch

By John Keller

February 1—March 31, 2010

Beginning balance.....	\$20,580.73
Income.....	\$ 395.05
Expenses	<u>690.64</u>
.....	<u>(\$295.59)</u>
Ending balance.....	\$20,285.14
Less grants, donations & reserved fund..	<u>6,102.81</u>
Operating fund	\$14,182.33

I'd like to thank all who participated in our most recent sanctuary work day, March 27. We accomplished a good deal, mostly trail maintenance and guinea grass management. The wildflowers are really putting on a show. There are martins at the martin habitat, hopefully to spend the spring at the sanctuary. As the weather has been warming up, so has the activity of our resident reptiles. Several sightings have been noted, so keep their presence in mind if you venture out to the end of the road. That being said it's not a bad idea to wear boots and long pants if you plan on enjoying the sanctuary as the weather warms. Questions or comments? Call John Keller @361-728-8587.

Directions to North Bay Sanctuary: Take 35 north of Corpus Christi heading to Rockport. Turn left on CR 93 McCampbell Road (there is a fireworks stand and another building on the right). Follow CR93 several miles to a stop sign. Turn right on CR 93A and go all the way to the end. The sanctuary is on the left.



NEW OR RENEWING MEMBERSHIP

<input type="checkbox"/> New Member		<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal		Chapter: C9ZW130Z	
Name:		Address:			
City		State		ZIP	
Phone (optional)		Email (optional)			
Indicate Membership Preference: I would like to become a					
<input type="checkbox"/>	member of National Audubon Society and Coastal Bend Audubon Society . Your membership includes the National Audubon Magazine, chapter membership and other benefits. Your chapter receives part of your dues. Dues: One year \$20 Make checks payable to National Audubon Society				
<input type="checkbox"/>	member of Coastal Bend Audubon Society ONLY . No NAS membership and no National Audubon magazine. Your chapter only membership includes all other Audubon membership benefits. Your chapter receives all of your dues. Dues: One year \$15 Make checks payable to Coastal Bend Audubon Society				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Additional Tax Deductible Contribution Please consider making a tax deductible contribution to the local chapter, Coastal Bend Audubon Society. You may designate the category you would like your contribution applied to. Designate category of support.				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tern	One year	\$50		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Osprey	One year	\$100		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pelican	One year	\$500		
Designate specific area of support (Optional).					
General Fund <input type="checkbox"/>		Education Program <input type="checkbox"/>		Sanctuary Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/>	
				New letter Fund <input type="checkbox"/>	
AMOUNT Enclosed: _____ Date: _____					
MAIL TO: COASTAL BEND AUDUBON SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 3604, Corpus Christi, TX 78463					
10/09					

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<http://www.coastalbendaudubon.org>

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Regular CBAS meetings:
First Tuesday of the month, September through May, 7 p.m. at the CC Museum of Science and History



The Brown Pelican

Coastal Bend Audubon Society Board of Directors

<p>PRESIDENT <i>David Newstead</i> 361-885-6203 davnewst@yahoo.com</p> <p>VICE PRESIDENT <i>vacant</i></p> <p>SECRETARY <i>Cherie McCollough</i> cherie.mccollough@tamucc.edu</p> <p>TREASURER <i>Leatrice Koch</i> leak36@aol.com</p>	<p>The Coastal Bend Audubon Society is a non-profit 501c(3) organization dedicated to the conservation of birds and bird habitat, and to conservation education in the Coastal Bend.</p> <p>The organization is supported by contributions from local memberships and from the National Audubon Society.</p> <p>Your CHAPTER needs you! You can help steer the course of growth and change in our community by working together Please contact us at 361-885-6203 about getting involved!</p>	<p>DIRECTORS</p> <p>Education Linda Fuiman, linda.Fuiman@mail.utexas.edu</p> <p>Sanctuary John Keller, louxgaroux@yahoo.com</p> <p>Conservation Scott Large, largesi@gmail.com</p> <p>Membership Laura Cooper, lgcooper@earthlink.net</p> <p>Newsletter Sally Bickley, s8bickley@yahoo.com</p> <p>At-Large Gene Blacklock, geneb@cbbep.org</p> <p>At-Large Rosalie Rossi, rosalierr@gmail.com</p>
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This newsletter is compiled, written and published every other month. Articles of interest are gathered from various sources and compiled by the editor, volunteers, and/or contributing authors. All contributions and comments are welcomed.

