



# COASTAL BEND AUDUBON SOCIETY

on the web at [www.coastalbendaudubon.org](http://www.coastalbendaudubon.org)

A Chapter of the National Audubon Society

## CBAS LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE



The Coastal Bend Audubon Society invites members and the public to visit the new website at [www.coastalbendaudubon.org](http://www.coastalbendaudubon.org). CBAS received a grant from Audubon Texas to build a new website to increase outreach and communication. Newsletter Editor, Sally Bickley, worked with Membership Director Laura Cooper, member Diana Calderella, and the CBAS board to determine what should be on the website. We worked with web designer, Carrie Robertson, Third Coast Photo and Web, to design a site that would meet our needs. After many months of work, the site went live in November. It features photography from Harry Grant, Mike Walsh and Liz and David Smith. It provides suggestions for places to go birding, depending on the season, as well as seasonal checklists. Forms for membership & volunteering are available and Board members are listed. A separate page focuses on activities, such as meetings, field trips, kids activities, and other projects. Currently, *Big Day* is featured, with information and a registration form to send in. The email address is: [coastalbendaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:coastalbendaudubon@gmail.com).

Please visit our website and let us know how you like it. Send your comments to [coastalbendaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:coastalbendaudubon@gmail.com). And point your friends and fellow birders to the site as well. We want to thank Patty Beasley and [ccbirding.com](http://ccbirding.com) for hosting our earlier site. Thanks again to Audubon Texas for providing the funds for the site design, domain registration, and web hosting, as well as software to maintain the site.

[www.coastalbendaudubon.org](http://www.coastalbendaudubon.org)

### Monthly Meetings

#### Tuesday, January 6

**Speaker:** Travis Gallo, The Wildflower Center, Austin

**Topic:** Invaders of Texas: Detect and report invasive species

#### Tuesday, February 3

**Speaker:** John Lloyd Reilley, USDA Kika de la Garza Plant Materials Center, Kingsville

**Topic:** South Texas Natives Project: Habitat restoration and its benefits on birds and other wildlife

#### Tuesday, March 3

**Speakers:** Georgean and Paul Kyle, Driftwood Wildlife Association

**Topic:** Chimney Swifts: Why We Should Care

**Location:** Corpus Christi Museum of Science and History  
1900 N Chaparral, Corpus Christi, TX

**Time:** 7:00 pm

*All members and the public are invited!*



# WHAT'S UP AROUND TEXAS

## 13th Annual Celebration of Whooping Cranes and Other Birds

February 26-March 1, 2009

A record number of Whooping Cranes at the Refuge, a new Wetlands Education Center at the Texas University of Marine Science Institute and a great variety of speakers. Registration form online at: <http://www.portaransas.org/download/WhoopingEarlyRegForm09.pdf>. Early Registration deadline is February 13, 2009.

**Contact:** Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Bureau  
403 W. Cotter, Port Aransas, Texas 78373

**Website:** [www.portaransas.org](http://www.portaransas.org), **email:** [info@portaransas.org](mailto:info@portaransas.org)

Directions to  
Sanctuary on  
Page 3.

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## THE NORTH BAY SANCTUARY

The North Bay Sanctuary is a 75-acre wildlife preserve owned and managed by Coastal Bend Audubon Society in San Patricio County. Since the property was acquired it has been managed in favor of native Tamaulipan thornscrub and native southwestern grassland communities.

There are two freshwater (or very mildly brackish) ponds on the property, providing important dietary water for all wildlife - muddy shores for shorebirds, shallow water feeding areas for wading birds, and a variety of cover for waterfowl and marsh birds.

The Tamaulipan thornscrub communities are dominated by honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), granjeno (*Celtis pallida*), and la coma (*Bumelia celastrina*), complemented by agarito (*Berberis trifoliolata*) and tanglewood (*Forestiera angustifolia*). Wildflowers can be showy any time of year dependent on rainfall, with major nectar-producing flowers such as lantana (*Lantana horrida*), scarlet sage (*Salvia coccinea*), mistflowers (*Eupatorium* spp.) and sunflowers (family Compositae), attracting a diversity of butterflies and other insects.

Lower parts of the property containing slightly alkaline soils support dense stands of sacahuiste (*Spartina spartinae*) mixing in with other native grasses towards the edge of the brush lines.

The combination of aquatic habitats, grasslands, and brushy areas makes the sanctuary a haven for a diversity of bird species year-round. During the summer, the air is alive with the colors and calls of the many painted buntings, golden-fronted woodpeckers, white-eyed vireos, northern mockingbirds, long-billed thrashers, northern cardinals, yellow-billed cuckoos and groove-billed anis that breed

there. Roadrunners can be seen darting in and out of the trails, while eastern meadowlarks sit up on small brushy twigs and claim the prairie. Mottled ducks, least grebes and black-bellied whistling-ducks dabble about in the wetlands. Fall and spring migration periods are exciting, you never know what shorebirds might show up at along the shoreline. Among many others, dowitchers, stilt sandpipers, least sandpipers and American avocets are likely to be found passing through or spending the winter there. The sanctuary also provides a winter home to many of the more northerly-breeding songbirds such as wrens, wood-warblers, and a variety of sparrows. Hawks can be seen in migration, and accipiters spend the winter chasing around the songbirds and shorebirds.

For several years CBAS has been working to improve the habitat quality of the sanctuary. Recent projects include exotic grass control, installation of boxes for cavity-nesting birds, and the creation of a 7-acre shallow water wetland through the Prairie Wetland Program (<http://www.ducks.org/Texas/TexasConservation/1536/TexasPrairieWetlandsProject.html>) – a collaboration with Ducks Unlimited, US Fish & Wildlife Service and the Natural Resource Conservation Service. The levees were later seeded, with help from the USDA Plant Materials Center's South Texas Project (<http://www.southtexasnatives.org/>), with a mixture of native grass seed that will provide erosion protection and food for grassland birds as well as waterfowl.

Besides the trails, there is an elevated viewing platform that lets you check out who's using the new prairie wetland project, and look across the fence at the larger wetlands and occasional cattle egret/ neotropic cormorant rookery.

# UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

**Saturday, January 24** - The Carl Ranch, a private 1000 acre ranch in Bee County, includes portions of Medio Creek; habitat: low Tamaulipan scrub with live oaks and dry riparian with live oaks. Trip starts at junction of 101/302 no later than 6:45 am; Gene Blacklock & Mary Kay Skoruppa (USGS), leaders. Registration Required/No Fee. Deadline for Reservations: Jan. 1, send reservations to Gene Blacklock: geneb@cbbep.org or phone 884-6247.

**Saturday, March 7** - Potluck lunch after birding at the Nueces Delta Preserve No Fee. Meet at 7:00 am at the gate. Directions: From Corpus Christi, take Highway 77 North past IH 37. The gate is up the hill immediately past Katz Rock Yard. Bring a covered dish or snack for a get-together under the pavilion after the birding.

**Overnight Field Trip to the Big Thicket - Thursday April 16 - Sunday, April 19.** Registration Fee Required: \$260.00 per person includes \$25.00 donation to the Coastal Bend Audubon Society. Deadline for reservations April 1. Mail registration fee to Gene Blacklock, 1007 County Road 391, Mathis, TX 78368-3208.

**Sunday, May 3** - Migrant Hot Spots on Mustang Island. Registration Required/No Fee. Register with Leader Linda Fuiman at Linda.fuiman@mail.utexas.edu or 361-728-4635.

**ALASKA Trip** - Friday May 29 through Friday June 19. Leader: Gene Blacklock. Proposed Itinerary: Anchorage, St. Lawrence's Island, Nome, Barrow, Seward Peninsula, Denali. Contact Gene Blacklock for more information including cost and registration: geneb@cbbep.org or phone 884-6247.

## DIRECTIONS TO NORTH BAY SANCTUARY

From Corpus Christi, take US 181/35 north through Portland, take 35 east towards Aransas Pass. Turn left on County Road 93 (with conflicting signs stating McCampbell Road or County Road 4343), and go 4 miles. Turn right onto County Road 1432 (Johanson Rd) for 1 mile. The Sanctuary is on the left at the end of the road. (Directions from "Birding Corpus Christi", A Falcon Guide, 2007, written by CBAS member Jamie Ritter.

## WHEN DO I NEED TO

### RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP?

Now you can easily keep up as to when your membership is due.

Check the label on your newsletter and you will see the due date on the first line of your mailing label as shown below.



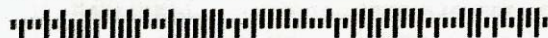
*MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE 01-JUL-08*

*2\*1 \*\*\*\*\*3-DIGIT 784*

*SALLY BICKLEY*

*325 CANTERBURY DR*

*CORPUS CHRISTI TX 78412-2877*



Any questions about your membership should be directed to the Membership Director, Laura Cooper, at lgcooper@earthlink.net

The Brown Pelican has a new look, to coordinate with the CBAS website. It will continue to be improved over the next few months. Please contact us at coastal-bendaudubon@gmail.com, if you have a comment about the newsletter. We look forward to your feedback.

Coastal Bend Audubon Society

## **BIG DAY 2009 BIRDING EVENT**

**Saturday, February 7, 2009**

The Coastal Bend Audubon Society invites you to participate in their annual BIG DAY event, Saturday, February 7, 2009. BIG DAY is an annual fundraising event that incorporates celebrating the fun and fellowship of birding and the great outdoors. It is a "no rules" fun-filled day spent outdoors with friends, family, and loved ones doing something that you really enjoy – watching birds. You can participate for a couple of hours, or you can bird from dawn to dusk – you decide what suits your schedule. The object is to have fun while enjoying the wonderful natural habitats that this area has to offer within the Coastal Bend, develop your interests in nature, and maybe even recruit a 'non-believer' into the world of wildlife conservation. Although BIG DAY centers around bird life in the Coastal Bend, you will want to observe the plants, reptiles, mammals and even insects that you see that day - we want to hear about everything that you see!

Participants will form teams of 3-5 people and count bird species during the day. Invite a non-birder, family member, grandparent, grandchild or friend to join your team and show them how much fun birding can be – teams are encouraged to take this opportunity to introduce newcomers to nature and birding. We can even place you on a team if you like. Although birding does not begin until after midnight on the 6th, you can start whenever you want. So get up early or sleep in late. The idea is to have fun! Bird as long as you want, but remember, "official" bird counts end at 5:00pm. At that time, we will all meet at Portabellas Restaurant in Corpus Christi to share our sightings, eat dinner, and enjoy festivities, including a silent auction.

In a nutshell, BIG DAY is an opportunity to set aside an entire day to do nothing but have fun and enjoy nature with those folks you enjoy being with. And that is something that we rarely get to do! Finally, BIG DAY is topped off with a fantastic countdown dinner at Portabellas Restaurant shared with members, friends, and family. There will be prizes, awards, and a silent auction. What a way to wrap up the day!

Registration Fee: \$25 per person (\$15 for children 12 and under), includes a BIG DAY t-shirt and dinner at Portabellas Restaurant in Corpus Christi

Registration forms are attached to this announcement. Print the form & mail in with registration fee

For more information contact Mary Ellen Vega at 361-877-1543 or Txvega@aol.com

**COASTAL BEND AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
**BIG DAY Registration Form**  
**BIG DAY is Saturday, February 7, 2009**

Mail Registration To:  
 CBAS Big Day  
 P.O. Box 3604  
 Corpus Christi, TX 78463

**REGISTRATION IS: \$25.00 PER PERSON**  
**\$15.00 FOR CHILDREN 12 AND UNDER**

TEAMS – PLEASE SEND ALL REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOGETHER – Remember, teams can consist of 3-5 individuals

**REGISTRATION DUE BY JANUARY 31, 2009**

- Need to be placed on a team?       Yes     No
- Room for more on your team?       Yes     No

TEAM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM MEMBER NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
1.(Team Leader)	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____

T-shirt is free with registration (indicate numbers for each size)

Child     Small     Medium     Large     XLarge     XXLLarge

Your registration also includes dinner @ Portabellas Italian Restaurant – Choices Include:

- Fettuccini Alfredo (Served in a rich, creamy parmesan sauce)      No. \_\_\_\_\_
- Baked Lasagne (Layers of pasta, cheese, meats, and marinara sauce)      No. \_\_\_\_\_
- Ziti & Greens (Ziti pasta with tomatoes, zucchini, portabella mushrooms, broccoli & roasted garlic butter sauce) No. \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED .....\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: **CBAS Big Day, P.O. Box 3604, Corpus Christi, TX 78463**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT MARY ELLEN VEGA AT**  
**361-877-1543, OR EMAIL [txvega@aol.com](mailto:txvega@aol.com)**

# RED KNOT SHOULD BE LISTED AS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has released its revised list of species that are candidates for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Designation as a candidate species is not a requirement for listing under the ESA, and FWS can, and regularly does, list animals and plants without first placing them on the Candidate List. As a result, the Candidate List is regarded by many conservationists as a stall tactic by FWS.

Candidate species are assigned a listing priority from 1 to 12 based on the magnitude of threats they face, the immediacy of the threats, and their taxonomic uniqueness (for example, full species have higher priority than subspecies). The species' listing priority dictates the relative order in which proposed listing rules are prepared, with the species at greatest risk (listing priority 1 through 3) being proposed first. Significantly, in the 2008 list, FWS determined that the ranking for the Red Knot should be raised from 6 to 3.

The rufa Red Knot, a reddish-brown shorebird slightly larger than an American Robin, migrates annually from Tierra del Fuego to its arctic breeding grounds, stopping to rebuild critical energy reserves by feasting on horseshoe crab eggs in Delaware Bay.

Only 14,800 Red Knots were counted in 2007 at the species' primary wintering areas, a 15% decline from 2006, and a 75% decline from 1985. The results of several scientific studies have shown that a major reason behind this decline is a fall in the number of available horseshoe crab eggs due to overfishing of the crabs themselves, which are used as bait in conch and eel fisheries. This led FWS to conclude in their candidate review that, "The primary factor threatening the Red Knot is destruction and modification of its habitat, particularly the reduction in key food resources resulting from reductions in horseshoe crabs..."

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has once again confirmed that the Red Knot is increasingly threatened with extinction and deserving of heightened conservation measures, particularly immediate reductions in the commercial harvest of horseshoe crabs, whose eggs comprise the knot's primary food source," said Darin Schroeder, American Bird Conservancy's Vice President of Conservation Advocacy.

The increased priority ranking for the species from 6 to 3 may speed its listing, but this could still be years off. "Too often species languish on the candidate species list and are not afforded the protections of the Endangered Species Act that we know work very well," said Schroeder. "We urge the incoming administration to expeditiously act to list the species as the scientific research warrants." For more information, visit <http://www.abcbirds.org/newsandreports/stories/081212.html>.



*Red Knot at Delaware Bay Photo: Mike Parr*

## LOCAL COMMENT FROM CBAS PRESIDENT NEWSTEAD

The Texas coast is host to thousands of Red knots during fall and spring migration. Typically they can be seen on our local gulf beaches from September through November, and on their return from late March through early May. There are a few scattered records of Red knots during the winter months, with most of these reported from the difficult-to-access eastern shore of the Laguna Madre. The extent to which Red knots use the Texas coast through the winter months remains something of a mystery. Are they moving further south, into the Laguna Madre de Tamaulipas in Mexico? Going further than that, possibly on to South America? Or are they using bay shores instead of gulf beaches, and we are just not surveying those areas very thoroughly?

Several birds that have been "flagged" in Florida have been resighted in Texas, but we don't know if that means ALL knots from Florida come through Texas, or it's just one route that some birds choose.

Current and ongoing research funded by US Fish & Wildlife Service in conjunction with Dr Larry Niles aims to answer some of these questions, in an area that could be vital to the survival of the Red knot. Any sightings of Red knots during the winter months could be extremely important in helping us understand what needs to be done to help protect them in the future. If you see any Red knots during winter, please send your reports to David Newstead at [dnewstead@cbbep.org](mailto:dnewstead@cbbep.org).

## CBAS TREASURER'S REPORT

**OCTOBER 1 - NOVEMBER 30, 2008**

Beginning balance.....	\$13,959.80	
Income.....	\$2,022.45	
Expenses.....	\$1,127.69	894.76
Ending balance.....	\$14,854.56	
Less reserved fund.....	1,590.00	
Less website development grant.....	130.71	
Less sanctuary improvement donation		2,000.00
Operating fund.....	\$11,133.85	

## CANVAS SHOPPING BAGS

CBAS is selling two styles of shopping bags in very sturdy canvas fabric with wide gussets. One is solid beige (13" x 15.5" x 7"), while the other features forest green straps and bottom with an outside pocket (dimensions 14" x 14.5" x 5.5"). Both are perfect for birding, toting stuff to the beach, or saving bags at the grocery store.

One bag: \$10; 2 bags: \$19; 3 bags: \$27, 4+ bags: \$8. Add \$5.00 for mailing. To order contact David Newstead at 885-6203 or [davnewst@yahoo.com](mailto:davnewst@yahoo.com). Checks should be made payable to: Coastal Bend Audubon Society, P.O. Box 3604, CC TX 78463.



**New Member**

**Renewing Member**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Email (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate Membership Preference: I would like to become a

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.**

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.**

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	\$ 50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Osprey	One year	\$100.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Pelican	One year	\$500.00

Designate specific area of support (Optional).

General Fund  Education Program  Sanctuary Maintenance  Newsletter Fund

**AMOUNT Enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL TO: COASTAL BEND AUDUBON SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 3604, Corpus Christi, TX 78463**

The Brown Pelican  
 Newsletter of the  
 Coastal Bend Audubon Society



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361-885-6203  
 coastalbendaudubon@gmail.com  
 www.coastalbendaudubon.org

Regular CBAS meetings  
 First Tuesday of the  
 Month  
 September through May  
 at the Corpus Christi  
 Museum of Science and  
 History

## Coastal Bend Audubon Society Board of Directors

<p><b>PRESIDENT</b>  <i>David Newstead</i>          361-885-6203          davnewst@yahoo.com</p> <p><b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>  <i>Mary Ellen Vega</i>          txvega@aol.com</p> <p><b>SECRETARY</b>  <i>Cherie McCollough</i>          cherie.mccollough@tamucc.edu</p> <p><b>TREASURER</b>  <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><b><i>Your CHAPTER needs you!</i></b> 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><b>DIRECTORS</b></p> <p><b>Education</b>    <b>Linda Fuiman</b>, Linda.Fuiman@mail.utexas.edu</p> <p><b>Sanctuary</b>         <b>Dick DuBois</b>, papadubois@yahoo.com</p> <p><b>Conservation</b>                 <b>Scott Large</b>, largesi@gmail.com</p> <p><b>Membership</b>                 <b>Laura Cooper</b>, lgcooper@earthlink.net</p> <p><b>Newsletter</b>                 <b>Sally Bickley</b>, s8bickley@yahoo.com</p> <p><b>At-Large</b>                         <b>Gene Blacklock</b>, geneb@cbbep.org</p> <p><b>At-Large</b>                         <b>Ray Sutton</b>, wsutton1@stx.rr.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.

