

Quintana Bird Sanctuary System



MICHAEL L. GRAY

BLACKBURNIAN WARBLER

The island of Quintana is located 16 km (ten miles) south of Lake Jackson on the Gulf of Mexico, between the mouths of the Old Brazos and the New Brazos Rivers. This man-made island (created with the construction of the Intercoastal Waterway in the 1920's) is located directly in the flyway of most neotropical migrant birds. Although wooded vegetation on the island is scarce, a critical sanctuary exists, and more land is being preserved and revegetated by GCBO.

LOCATION: Just south of Freeport, and southwest of Surfside, Brazoria County, Texas.

SIZE: The Sanctuary system is approximately 1.62 ha (4 acres).

The recent addition of a new city nature park added several more acres.

HABITAT: Most of Quintana Island consists of depressional wetlands and prairie, scrub-shrub, and upland habitat that contains toothache tree, saltcedar, and other woody vegetation.

BIRDS: The Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary is approximately six lots, and has been planted with toothache trees and other woody vegetation that can be used by neotropical migrants. During migration, the sanctuary is utilized heavily by migrants as an oasis in a sea of prairie, wetlands, and chemical plants. An additional nine lots on Quintana have been purchased by Gulf Coast Bird Observatory and the Houston Audubon Society with plans to increase the available habitat for birds.

CONSERVATION: While only the existing Neotropical Bird Sanctuary is heavily used by migrants, efforts are underway to vegetate the remaining lots so that wooded habitat is increased on the island. Unfortunately, the area has come under pressure from new industrial development and some of the woody cover will be lost. Gulf Coast Bird Observatory is working with developers to mitigate the loss of habitat associated with the construction.



Site Partner:

The City of Quintana,
Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, and
the Houston Audubon Society

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