

THANK YOU!

Thank you for all the support you have shown GCBO. It is because of you that we have been able to continue positively affecting multiple issues facing the avifauna of the Americas.

Already in 2016:

- We contributed funds for an acquisition in the Sierra Gorda of Mexico
- Paid off the remaining debt from the construction of our Avian Conservation Science Center
- Held a special puppet workshop for youth with Heather Henson (daughter of Jim Henson of Muppet fame) and two of her staff members in February

However, there continue to be many challenges facing all conservation organizations, including GCBO. Weather and tidal patterns are negatively impacting beach nesting birds, the health and productivity of coastal estuaries are under constant pressure and the growing global population reduces available space where historical wildlife habitat once existed. There is much that needs to be done. Last week the North American Bird Conservation Initiative (NABCI) published The State of North America's Birds 2016, the first comprehensive report assessing the conservation status of all bird species that occur in Canada, the continental United States and Mexico. Of the 1,154 native



This time of year we hear Northern Parula singing around our sanctuary almost every day. Photo by Mike Williams.

species, 432 qualified for the Watch List, indicating they are species of highest conservation concern. It's not all bad though - the report reveals some success stories which we are all delighted to hear. This helps us understand that conservation action can and does work and motivates us to work harder towards our goals.

With our mission as the focus and our determination to move forward for the birds we all love, GCBO is on track and running smoothly. In this appeal, we are providing the opportunity for you to support your favorite GCBO project or our general operating budget. Raising operating funds continues to be challenging since grants only cover on the ground salary work, not the day to day work that must be accomplished back in the office to keep things running well.



Here are some of the very worthwhile projects you may choose to support:

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER

▶ Over the course of our six year project monitoring American Oystercatchers in Texas, we have learned much about their habitat needs. Bad weather, eroding islands, and high tides plague their reproductive efforts every year. Due to extreme and long lasting high tides, 2016 is shaping up to have the lowest productivity of all six years of our study. With increasingly turbulent weather patterns, oystercatchers are struggling to maintain their foothold on the Texas coast. It is important that we continue to monitor their productivity each year so that we can begin restoration efforts on their behalf. Designate your donation for the American Oystercatcher and help us continue to monitor this unique and amazing shorebird.

BEACH NESTING BIRDS

▶ GCBO has worked with American Bird Conservancy on a Beach Nesting Birds project since 2012. Over the course of this project we have contributed to signage on nesting islands, a public service announcement, public education programs, and much more. In 2014 we began monitoring the Black Skimmer colony at the Dow plant in Freeport which is one of the largest colonies on the entire Texas coast. Now in 2016, in addition to the skimmers, we have begun monitoring nesting



Wilson's and Snowy Plovers and Least Terns at two sites, one in Brazoria County and one in Matagorda County. These birds struggle to raise their young every year while dealing with mammalian predation, human disturbance, and over wash on our very public beaches. This project is helping to determine what parameters are most important for their nesting success and what we can do to help them in their quest to raise their young. Designate your donation for beach nesting birds and help us help these birds raise their young on the beach.

SMITH POINT HAWK WATCH

▶ Each year we run the Smith Point Hawk Watch on a shoestring budget in order to keep this important raptor monitoring project alive. 2016 will mark the 20th season GCBO has managed the hawk watch and means there will be an incredible 20 year dataset for raptor migration on

the upper Texas coast. Datasets of this length are very rare which illustrates the importance of continuing this monitoring project. Plans are underway to make the 20th season the best so far! Help us keep this project alive by designating your donation for the Smith Point Hawk Watch.

GCBO FLOOD RECOVERY

▶ As I write this letter, we are evacuated from our headquarters facility due to a historic flood of the Brazos River. Recovery will require an unprecedented amount of effort from our incredible volunteer force. We do not know the extent of the damage yet but cleanup and replacement of some items will surely be necessary. Designate your donation for flood recovery to help GCBO continue running smoothly!



During the historic flood of the Brazos River, Buffalo Camp Bayou came out of its banks and flooded GCBO. Here is a shot from our front porch looking out to the pavilion where 18 inches of water covered our property.

SUMMER BIRD CAMP

▶ Because of the flood, we had to postpone Summer Bird Camp as it was to be held the week we were evacuated. We are working on rescheduling it. If you would like to donate a scholarship or help with program supplies, we will certainly make good use of your donation.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

▶ Running a business is expensive. We are always in need of funds to help maintain and operate our beautiful, new Avian Conservation Science Center as well as pay our dedicated staff. You may choose to support GCBO ongoing efforts by contributing to our general operations budget.

Thank you for the continued support. Your confidence in us and ongoing support truly does fuel our passion for the mission of GCBO.

Cassie Peba See

Please count me in to help GCBO and bird protection programs!

For more information, contact us at
www.gcbo.org • 979-480-0999
299 Hwy 332 West
Lake Jackson, TX

Name _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

_____ American Oystercatcher Stewardship

_____ Beach Nesting Birds

_____ Smith Point Hawk Watch

_____ GCBO Flood Recovery

_____ Summer Bird Camp

_____ General Operations

_____ Other



Eastern-Bluebirds stay at GCBO year round. There are pairs working on their second clutch for this breeding season. Photo by Mike Williams.

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 Other _____

My check is enclosed.

Please charge my credit card (We accept Visa, Master Card & Discover)

Card # _____ Exp date _____

Signature _____

Or donate online at: www.gcbo.org. Click on the **DONATE** button in the lower right corner.

Mail to: Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
299 Hwy 332 West
Lake Jackson, TX 77566

The Gulf Coast Bird Observatory is a 501c(3) organization, and contributions to it are tax deductible to the extent allowed by federal law. This acknowledgment is confirmation that the organization provided either no goods or services, or only token items of insubstantial value, in return for your contribution.



An adult Black Skimmer skimming for food. Photo by Margaret Sloan.



Excitement runs high when Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are caught and banded at the Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza in September. Photo by Pete Romfh.



An American Oystercatcher with a hermit crab. This bird is one of Dr. Susan Heath's study population and nests in West Galveston Bay. Photo by Alan Wilde.

Land protection for birds is not just about land in Brazoria County or Texas, even. The GCBO works with partners to preserve habitats all through the Western Hemisphere because birds migrate.

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
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299 W. Hwy 332 • Lake Jackson • 979-480-0999 • gcbo.org
Office & Sanctuary hours: 8:30a to 4:30p Monday — Friday
Open third Saturday of every month for bird banding



GCBO's Avian Conservation Science Center