



GULF CROSSINGS

TAKING A SPLASH

By Kelly Martin, American Bird Conservancy
Texas Coastal Outreach Coordinator

Just over one year ago, an amazing team came together to tackle one of the biggest challenges facing the planet. This might sound like the plot of the latest Avengers movie, but it's actually the origin story of SPLASH, or Stopping Plastics and Litter Along Shorelines. In August 2020, American Bird Conservancy, Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, and Black Cat GIS partnered up to form SPLASH in an effort to tackle the issue of trash pollution across the upper Texas coast due to the impact that litter, particularly plastic, can have on birds in our coastal habitat.

It's no secret that we have a plastic pollution problem – an estimated 330 billion tons of plastic have accumulated in our ocean as of 2015, and an additional 17.6 billion pounds of plastic enter the ocean each year. However, the problem isn't just contained to the marine environment, as 80% of this ocean trash comes from land where litter is also abundant. All of this waste in our environment takes a toll on wildlife. Impacts from plastic pollution have been documented in more than 700 species of both land and aquatic life, and microplastics, tiny bits of plastic less than 5 millimeters in length, have been found in more than 100 aquatic species. A quick internet search returns scores of pictures and videos showing sea turtles, whales, birds, and more entangled in trash or washed up on beaches with stomachs full of plastic. Plastics can also carry harmful chemicals and bacteria, which can cause hormonal changes or other physiological disruptions when consumed by wildlife. In addition to these impacts on wildlife, the average human could be consuming as much as 5 grams of plastic a week - about the equivalent of a credit card. Microplastics are found in everything from the air we breathe to the water we drink and the salt we use to season our food.

Continues on page 2



Volunteers at a cleanup in the Montrose neighborhood of Houston.

Photo by Kelly Martin/ABC



Volunteers and staff celebrating a huge haul of trash removed from San Luis Pass, an area with important bird habitat on the west end of Galveston Island.

Photo by Amanda Hackney/Black Cat GIS



SPLASH and Port Houston staff with volunteers at Morgan's Point for a cleanup in collaboration with Port Houston. Photo by Amanda Hackney/Black Cat GIS

*Masthead photo:
An adult skimmer in an apparent disagreement with its offspring.*

Photo by Alan Wilde

DIRECTOR'S VIEW

MARTIN HAGNE

Let's celebrate GCBO's 25th! 25 years of avian research, land conservation, and environmental education! 25 years of working to save birds and their habitats. 25 years of studying how birds and their environment are faring, and how we can best help them. Much of that is done with our many partners, and of course could never have been done without your support. Looking back over the many projects and programs over the years, and their outcome, I am personally amazed at the amount of conservation work that has been accomplished in those years by so many people. The importance, and how it has helped the avian world, is immeasurable. I think we can all be proud and celebrate our 25th year!

I truly appreciate your continued belief in our mission and work over these many years. And I hope you will continue to support our conservation projects. Thank you for making this all possible with your donations. You truly make the difference!

Please join us at Brew on the Bayou to celebrate our anniversary. We would love to see you there on Saturday, November 6. See page 3 in this newsletter.

TAKING A SPLASH

(continued from page 1)

Given the scale of this problem, an array of solutions are needed to address it, which informs SPLASH's multi-pronged approach. We host monthly trash cleanups where we engage students, community members, and other local organizations while also collecting data that can be used to better understand the trash pollution problem in our region. These cleanups help address the trash already in our environment, while our education and outreach efforts work to prevent additional trash from becoming pollution. We offer educational programming for local schools to empower the next generation of leaders with the knowledge and tools to tackle this problem, while our outreach efforts aim to engage local communities and municipalities in efforts to improve waste management and encourage reusable alternatives to plastic products.

In the last year since our partnership began, our team has removed over 7,000 pounds of trash from local coastlines, parks, and bayous while directly engaging almost 2,000 students and community-members with our education and outreach activities. We at American Bird Conservancy are grateful for Gulf Coast Bird Observatory's support in this endeavor, and we look forward to more success in the coming years as we work to create a cleaner environment for people, birds, and other wildlife in our region. If you are interested in getting involved with SPLASH, check out our website at www.splashtx.org and follow us on social media @SPLASHTrashTX!

1. <https://oceanconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/full-report-stemming-the.pdf>
2. <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/347/6223/768.full>
3. <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/plastic-pollution>
4. http://awsassets.panda.org/downloads/plastic_ingestion_press_singles.pdf

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Newsletter Editors: Martin Hagne, Denise Stephens
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25th Anniversary – 2021

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Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
invites you to

Brew on the Bayou



Saturday November 6, 2021 4:00 PM-8:00PM

Preorder tickets now: 979-480-0999
WWW.GCBO.ORG

Specialty Brew and Wine Tasting

Live Music

Silent Auction

\$20 presale, \$25 at the door.

Birds of Prey Show

Bayou Pontoon Rides

979-480-0999

299 Hwy 332 West,
Lake Jackson, TX 77566
www.gcbo.org



FLIGHT FOREVER LEGACY CIRCLE

LEAVE A LEGACY...FOR THE BIRDS!

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory formed the "Flight Forever Legacy Circle" to ensure the long-term conservation of our migratory birds and their habitats. Perpetuate your love of birds and the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory beyond your lifetime. By making a planned gift – through your will or estate plan, a bequest, a trust, a retirement plan, or an insurance policy – you can create a personal legacy that will have a strong and lasting impact for birds and conservation into the future.

If you have already included Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in your estate plans, we hope you will let us know so that we may honor you in our Legacy Circle membership. Your willingness to be listed as a member encourages others. However, if you wish to remain anonymous please let us know of your plans on a confidential basis.

Legacy Circle members receive exclusive invitations to special events and trips. If you are considering a Legacy gift, please email or call Martin at GCBO to discuss your plans. 979-480-0999 • mhagne@gcbo.org

OYSTERCATCHERS HAVE LONGEST SEASON EVER

BY SUSAN HEATH

Our oystercatcher nesting season lasted longer than ever with the first nests in January (3) and the last chick fledging on September 1. We monitored birds in West Galveston, Bastrop, Drum and East Matagorda Bays this season and found 46 pairs of which 38 nested. A total of 18 chicks fledged giving an overall productivity of 47 percent. That's about average but not the 50 percent needed to maintain the population.

There are always some interesting stories to tell and this year is no exception. We had a few nests and chicks that survived against the odds. In February, one nest hatched during the freeze and the chicks survived to fledging. Four others were being incubated and three of them fledged chicks too. Based on the shape of the vegetation out there, it was well below freezing for an extended period. These are some hard working and hardy parents!

Although J6 & UF did not produce any surprise chicks this year, their island continues to erode and they decided to nest in some unorthodox places this year. First, they tried some thick vegetation on the backside of a large island. No oystercatcher has ever nested there before because, well, they don't nest in thick vegetation! That didn't go well when the pelicans began nesting in the same location so they moved to the breakwater that surrounds North Deer. They laid a single egg and we spotted a chick hiding in the rocks a few weeks later. Sadly, that one didn't make it either, probably because of all the gulls there. J6 & UF's island is slated for restoration through our project with the Galveston Bay Foundation so if they can hang on another year they won't have any more nesting woes.

Then there is the tale of X1W, a chick that fledged in April. X1W was doing fine until the end of May when we saw that it had fishing line wrapped tightly around the right foot. We tried and tried to catch it but it wouldn't let us get close enough. We watched it through the summer until finally on our last day out, we found it too weak to fly but still full of enough spunk to swim to try to get away from us. I took it to a rehabber and as of this writing, the report is that it is eating like a pig and doing great. I hope by the time you are reading this, we will have released it back to its home in the bay where it can live a good oystercatcher life!

Last but not least I have to give a shout out to W5 & JC. Their territory is covered with Laughing Gulls during the heart of the nesting season and though they lay nest after nest, the gulls get their eggs every time. This year they waited until the gulls were done nesting and then laid a single egg which we found in early July (the latest nest ever). It hatched on July 21 and the chick fledged on September 1. Here's to perseverance and flexibility!



W5 & JC with the last chick of the year, Y9Y on September 1.

Photo by Alan Wilde



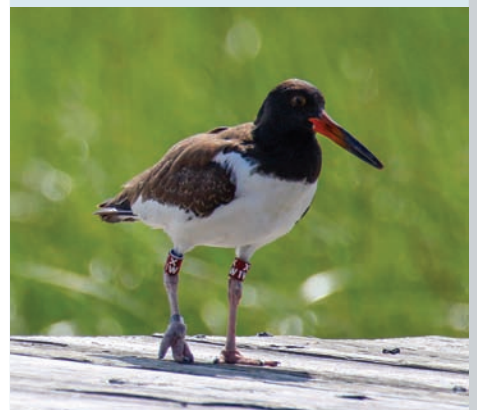
FR's chicks managed to survive the freeze.

Photo by Alan Wilde



J6 & UF's chick hiding in the rocks on a breakwater.

Photo by Alan Wilde



X1W with a fishing line entanglement in June.

Photo by Alan Wilde



GCBO BIRDING TRIPS

BY MARTIN HAGNE

Come birding with GCBO, and our Executive Director Martin Hagne! We are having a great time birding, exploring, enjoying some extraordinary scenery, dining on local cuisine, and of course getting great birds! We always hook up with at least one local guide for the best experience. Here are our upcoming destinations, but hurry, our trips are selling out fast!! You can get more information at www.gcbo.org or or send Martin an email at mhagne@gcbo.org

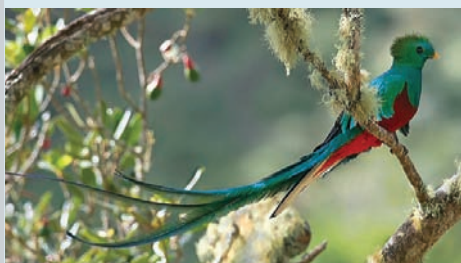
Boreal Winter Birding – Duluth, Minnesota
 February 2-7, 2022 – **SOLD OUT!**

Guatemala Exploration
 March 5-13, 2022 with Tikal Extension March 13-16, 2022
Only Two Spots Left!

Oregon Birding
 June 18-25, 2022 – **SOLD OUT!**

Oaxaca, Mexico Birding Exploration
 November 25-December 4, 2022 – **Now Open!**

Cuba Birding Exploration
 October 12-24, 2023 – **A Few Spaces Left!**



BEACH NESTING BIRDS PROJECT— APRIL-AUGUST 2021

BY TAYLOR BENNETT

Our Beach Nesting Bird Project, led by me, GCBO Coastal Biologist (Taylor Bennett), was assisted this season by Sarah Belles, our biology intern. The program monitors and protects two specific species of beach nesting birds, the Wilson’s Plover and Least Tern. We monitored two sites, at Matagorda Beach and Sargent Beach, both in Matagorda County, Texas.

At Matagorda, we found Wilson’s Plover nesting along the Matagorda Peninsula, Colorado River Mouth Flats (CRMF), and Three-mile cut. We located 23 Wilson’s Plover nests and six mystery broods (pairs with chicks but unable to locate the nests). The Matagorda area ended up with 10 chicks fledged, out of the 19 chicks observed, and they were all from CRMF. This was the only Matagorda area that produced fledged chicks this year. We managed to band 6 of those fledged chicks. Only seven chicks were observed on Matagorda Peninsula and none of them made it to fledging. We also managed to band five Wilson’s Plover adults. Only 15 pairs of Least Terns were observed along Matagorda Peninsula, and sadly, they did not produce any fledglings this year.

Sargent Beach was divided into two areas: Sargent East and Sargent West. Wilson’s Plover and Least Tern were observed nesting on both sides, and a total of 25 pairs of Wilson’s Plover and 73 pairs of Least Tern were observed. We located 17 Wilson’s Plover nests and eight mystery broods. Only two out of 14 Wilson’s Plover chicks fledged this season, and we banded both. Also, six adult Wilson’s Plovers were banded this year. We located 53 Least Tern nests, but unfortunately, we only saw three chicks, and none made it to fledglings.



Sarah Belles holding three banded Wilson’s Plover chicks. Photo by Taylor Bennett on June 2nd, 2021 on Matagorda Peninsula at Matagorda Beach, TX.



The last banded Wilson’s Plover chick to fledge on Sargent Beach. Photo by Taylor Bennett on July 30th, 2021 at Sargent Beach, TX.

SKIMMERS FARE WELL IN 2021

BY SUSAN HEATH

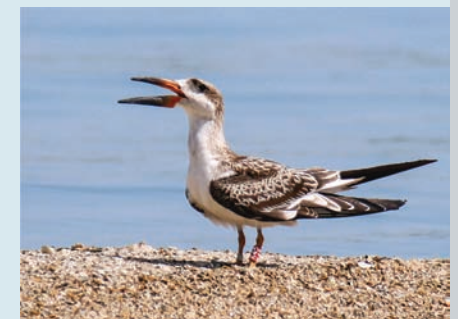
The Black Skimmers had a fantastic year but it didn’t start out well. We found the first nests in West Galveston Bay in late April but a high spring tide overwashed the island and all the eggs were lost. Then over Memorial Day weekend fishermen apparently stayed on the island for an extended period and about half the adults left. The half that did stay started over, and we started seeing chicks in early July. By the end of August about 50 chicks had fledged compared to only 30 last year.

The news started out even better in East Matagorda Bay. We found the first nests in early June but didn’t see any chicks until early August. In early September we counted 158 chicks! Sadly most of those chicks were lost to Hurricane Nicholas but we estimate at least 30 fledged before the storm hit.



We weren’t allowed to count the colony at Dow because of covid-19 but an employee checked on them periodically and we estimate 300 chicks fledged. This was the best year for skimmers in many years. We’re still working out the issues but there seems to be a connection between skimmers doing well in wet years and doing poorly in drought years. More research needed!

A just hatched skimmer nest in East Matagorda Bay. Photo by Susan Heath



A two week old skimmer chick in West Galveston Bay.

Skimmer K45 shortly after fledging.

Photos by Alan Wilde

FAMILY DAYS

BY CELESTE SILLING

GULF COAST BIRD OBSERVATORY'S Family Days

11/20, 11/27, AND 12/4
FROM 9-NOON

Bring your family to GCBO to learn about birds, do fun activities and explore the outdoors!

\$50 for one person and \$10 for each additional family member.

Register your family now!



Email csilling@gcbo.org or info@gcbo.org for more information

Family Days at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory is our new program focused on getting families out in nature together. We hope to get families outside, exploring and learning together while also having fun! If you're looking to get your children interested in environmental science, or just wanting to have a nice day outside with your family, these events are for you!

Each Saturday Family Day event will feature a different curriculum designed to teach kids and adults about birds, their environment, and how we can better protect them. Celeste, GCBO's Education Manager, will lead the events and tailor the lessons to the audience. Curriculums include

"Protecting Birds," "Birds in Ecosystems" and "Introduction to Birding." Each day, we will play games, do fun activities, and learn about the world around us. For example, when learning about birding, we will learn how to identify birds, play an identification game, then go out on the forest trails and try to spot some birds in the wild.

Family Days will take place on November 20, November 27, and December 4, 2021 from 9:00 to noon. Each day costs \$50 for one person and \$10 for each additional family member. There are no age limits or family size limits. Bring your whole family to GCBO to learn about birds, do fun activities and explore the outdoors! To ask questions about Family Days or to register your family now, email Celeste at csilling@gcbo.org or call us at 979-480-0999. We hope to see you and your family there!



Children who spend time in nature are more connected with the world around them.



Above: Rio Grande Valley Winter Raptor Banding with Bill Clark

Cape Cod Condo Vacation

EXPERIENCE AUCTION

BY CELESTE SILLING

GCBO's Experience Auction is one of our biggest fundraisers of the year, helping us raise money for our research, land conservation, and education efforts. Bidders can support our conservation efforts while also getting to have some truly amazing experiences! This year, we have forty awesome items up for bid on our website, all of which have been graciously donated by GCBO supporters. Many of the experiences include live encounters with birds, travelling to new places with expert guides, or stays at beautiful venues.

For example, "Rio Grande Valley Winter Raptor Banding with Bill Clark" will allow the winning bidders to go out to the valley and capture wild hawks with a researcher. With "Big Bend National Park Bird Photography Workshop," the winners will be guided to where the best birds are in the park and taught how to photograph them. Other items, like "Cape Cod Condo Vacation," give you and your family an awesome place to stay while you create your own adventures. There are a wide variety of auction items, so there's something for everyone!

Our Experience Auction will open on November 19th and end on December 12th, just in time for Christmas shopping! Get your loved one a present they will never forget...or treat yourself! Go online now to our website, www.gcbo.org, to view the items, and log on during the auction to bid. Thanks for supporting our conservation work, and good luck in the bidding!

A GCBO INTERNSHIP STORY

BY SARAH BELLES

While serving as an intern at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory this past year, I had so many amazing experiences and was able to learn a great deal about avian research and conservation. My internship period was originally only supposed to last for a few months, but I am grateful that I had the opportunity to stay for a full year and gain experience with many different projects, research methods, and species.

Much of my time as an intern was spent working on the non-breeding shorebirds and beach nesting birds projects. For non-breeding shorebirds, my main duties included helping to sight target species, recording data, taking weather measurements, counting people and dogs, picking up balloons, and helping to maintain fencing and symbolic signs around resting bird areas. As we progressed through the non-breeding season, my observational skills grew immensely, and I became much more confident with shorebird identification.

For beach nesting birds, I kept track of much of the same information, along with recording details about the number of pairs, adults, chicks, and nests of Wilson's Plovers and Least Terns. One of the most important things I learned was how to observe the behavior of these two species to help determine if they had a mate, nest, and/or chicks. During the breeding season, I also helped trap Wilson's Plovers and American Oystercatchers. I learned how to set up and operate various traps, such as box traps, and helped capture, band, and release adults and chicks.

Aside from working on these research efforts, I had the opportunity to participate with several other projects as well. I helped with an endangered species monitoring job, extracted birds during monthly banding sessions, and took part in several Christmas bird counts. Also, I learned how to use radio telemetry equipment in combination with visual observation to track and resight banded birds with radio transmitters during the Loggerhead Shrike study.

When I wasn't in the field, I spent my time working in the office and helping with outreach and education efforts. Aside from data entry, I entered volunteer hours, inventoried the nature store, packaged and sent out online orders, and helped with any other tasks that needed done. For our education and outreach program, I assisted with virtual and in person events such as monthly bird banding, Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza, and Bird Bash. I also had opportunities to talk about our projects and events with the public during beach surveys, at the office, and at a few small events.



Not only did I improve and build on skills that will support me as I work towards my future career goals, but I also gained so much more confidence in my knowledge and abilities. The field training and data management experience I received here will no doubt be useful as I work towards obtaining a Master's degree in the future. Most importantly for me, this experience has given me a clearer direction for my

future endeavors by further solidifying my interest in avian conservation and research.



After helping to capture and band this female Wilson's Plover, Sarah prepares to release her back on the beach to continue incubating her nest.

Photo by Taylor Bennett.



Sarah holds two freshly banded Wilson's Plover chicks before releasing them back to their parents.

Photo by Taylor Bennett.

Left: Sue shows Sarah the process of setting up a box trap during an American Oystercatcher survey.

Photo by Taylor Bennett.

GCBO MIGRATIONS—STAFF & BOARD UPDATES

FAREWELLS

Amanda Linford

Amanda Linford served as a Board Member for a three-year term before she was promoted by Phillips 66, where she worked at the Sweeney facility, and had to move on up to the Houston headquarters! We want to sincerely thank Amanda for her service to the GCBO. She also served on the Board's Outreach and Advertisement Committee, and she helped GCBO build a closer relationship with P66 by establishing staff workdays at our headquarters. We wish her all the best!

Sarah Belles

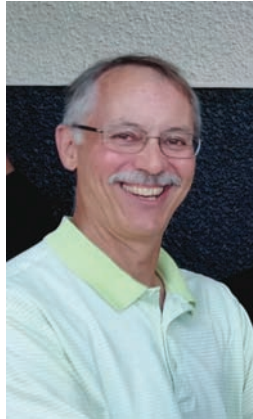
We want to thank Sarah who spent one year as our intern. Due to Covid she stayed two extra terms with us and we are very thankful for all her work! She worked in all facets at GCBO, from shorebird monitoring, bird banding, AMOY work, to events, office work, data reporting and so much more. Sarah has secured an Avian Science Technician position at AmeriCorps' Ecostudies Institute in Olympia, WA! She related that most importantly for her, this experience gave her a clearer direction for her future endeavors by further solidifying her interest in avian conservation and research.

SAVE A TREE AND SOME \$!

We are trying to go as paperless as we can to save some trees and quite a bit on printing and mailing costs. We would love if you would let us email you instead of slow mailing a hard copy! That includes your future copies of the Gulf Crossings.

Please email or call Tricia to say: "Hey, GCBO, please start emailing me things! Here is my email..."
Thanks! tpatton@gcbo.org

WELCOME



Brian Kolthammer – Board Member

We welcome Brian Kolthammer to our Board of Directors. Brian, is an avid outdoorsperson, hiking, sightseeing, and birding. A native of British Columbia, Brian often birds the Northwest and all over Texas. Retired as an industrial scientist with 35 years at Dow Chemical Company, he developed new technologies and implemented them in commercial practice, and did issue resolution of laboratory discoveries to complex industrial processes. His research resulted in a dozen new processes and products, gained IR100 Awards and recognition of Dr. Kolthammer as one of the American Chemical Society's Heroes of Chemistry in 2015. A co-author on 40 publications and a co-inventor on 39 US patents, Dr. Kolthammer earned his BSc (Hons) and PhD from the University of British Columbia. Brian spent 2 years as a NATO Science Fellow at Texas A&M University. Since retirement in 2016, Brian volunteered with the National Academy of Sciences in D.C., and helped support several organizations in locally. For the past six years, Brian has supported numerous projects at GCBO, and is a standing member of the Maintenance Committee.

Marissa Zamora – Biology Intern

Welcome to our new intern Marissa Zamora. Originally from Conroe, Marissa graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a degree in Biology (with a concentration in Ecology, Evolution and Behavior). During her undergraduate career, her interest was in entomology and spent much time at the insect collection and field lab. After graduating, she worked as an Animal Care Technician at Austin Wildlife Rescue, where she had the opportunity to work with birds. The amazing experience made her fall in love with birds. She worked as an Environmental Inspector at an environmental consulting company, conducting environmental inspections for large development projects. She was devastated to see bird habitat lost to ever-increasing development, and decided work with birds. She spent the past few months bird banding in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Her passion for birds brought her to GCBO where she is enjoying her time monitoring threatened shorebirds. She plans to attend graduate school and pursue a career in avian conservation.



Now When You Shop At Kroger, You Can Support GCBO!

GCBO is a registered charity through Kroger's Community Rewards Program. This means that you can register your Kroger Plus Card online and select GCBO as the organization of your choice. Every time you use your Kroger Plus Card, Kroger will donate a portion back to GCBO! This is an easy way to support GCBO while you shop – your donations help us continue to protect birds and birding habitat around the Gulf Coast and beyond. To register your Plus Card go to:

<https://www.kroger.com/account/enrollCommunityRewardsNow>

Our charity number is DN782.

OUR DEEPEST THANKS TO OUR INDIVIDUAL DONORS, CONTRIBUTORS, AS WELL AS NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

We would like to give special recognition to the following individuals who donated to our programs or gave towards memberships between February 1, 2021 and July 31, 2021.

Thank you for your vital support.

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Cynthia & Donald Stevenson • Julia Suchman • Romey & Erin Swanson • Martha Sylvester
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WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE CORPORATE, FOUNDATION & GOVERNMENT GRANTS

We are privileged to acknowledge generous support received between February 1, 2021 and July 31, 2021.

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GCBO VOLUNTEERS: Your Help and Support are Invaluable!

Our volunteers continue to amaze and impress us with their dedication to GCBO and our shared mission. Whatever our needs, there always seem to be someone willing and able to step up and make it happen. From February 1, 2021 to July 31, 2021, volunteers contributed an amazing 4043.75 hours to the conservation of birds and habitat and to increasing public awareness of the value and need for conservation.

Thank you for all you do for birds on behalf of GCBO!

Baiyinah Abdullah • Vicky Adams
Monica Berry & Bill Ahlstrom
Oron Atkins • Donna Bailey
Sarah Belles • Nathan Belles
Brigid & Allan Berger
Carmen Blumberg • Michelle Bradford
Sonny Brannon • Scott Buckel
Davis Clay • Andy Dietrich
Mickey & Sam Dufilho • Tad Finnell
Cindy Freeman • Bob Friedrichs
Cindy Goodrum • Alexander Gracia
Jean Greenhalgh • Amanda Hackney
Peggy Hall • Kay Heath • Michael Heather
Elizabeth Hehir • Elisha Hehir
David & Linda Heinicke • Sandy Henderson
Tristan Henderson • Jackie & Jim Hicks
Cadence Hinojosa • Phil Huxford
Bill & Margo Johnson • Carol Jones
Paula Kennedy • Vicki & Larry Kirby
Chris Kneupper • Jan & Kevin Kolk
Brian Kolthammer • Rich Kostecke
Clayton Leopold • Heather Lewis
Glen Lindeman • Brad Lirette
Marilyn Long • Robert & Kay Lookingbill
Brenda Martin • Betty Martinez
Susan McMillian • Emma McMillian
Stennie Meadours • Georgia Monnerat
Karen & Malcolm Mosis • Lisa & Heardy Myers
Debbie & Jim Nance • Sandra Parker
Kathy Pittman • Russell Pope • Janet Price
Kyle & Kathy Purvis • Madi Reed
Aesha Remsburg • Jimmy & Luanne Salinas
Richard & Donna Schaffhausen
Tom & Karyn Schmitz • Mary Schwartz
Darrell Schwebel • Jeff Sexton
Brooks & Sciobhan Short • Joellen Snow
Dwight & Janet Steffler • Denise Stephens
Brenda Stitt • Alexandria Suon
Thomas Taroni • Allen (AJ) Timmer
Regina Tippet • Janet Townsend • Linda Ulmer
George Valadez • Cindy Vincent
Beverly Walton • Ron Weeks
Bob Whitmarsh • Maureen & Alan Wilde
Mike Williams • Jennifer Wilson
Robin & Keith Wise • Janey Woodley
John & Lynn Wright • Barbara Yoder

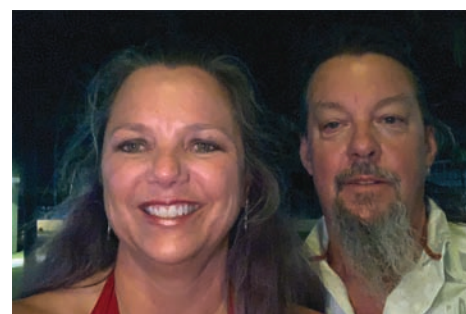
GCBO's RV VOLUNTEERS ARE WONDERFUL!

By MARTIN HAGNE

We are very grateful for the special group of folks that travel the country to volunteer along the way. There have been some great volunteers staying here at GCBO in our RV spot, helping us with the grounds, maintenance, events, and so much more.

Tom and Karyn Schmitz spent January through April with us, and Sonny Brannon and Peggy Hall were here from May through September. They were all a huge help and we are so thankful to them! Harold and Sheryl Travis, who have spent a few stints with us already, returned in October and will be with us through December. Thank you all so very much!!

I know they all appreciate the new concrete RV pad they park on now, and the RV Cover that shade the site! Thanks to Freeport LNG and their grant for the addition!



Above: Tom & Karyn

Right: Sonny & Peggy

Below: Harold & Sheryl, with Lily

Below: New RV parking site pad & cover



Now you can support GCBO through your Amazon shopping and it doesn't cost you a thing. All you have to do is sign up GCBO as your Amazon Smile recipient. Just go to www.smile.amazon.com and enter Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in the charity box. On the next screen click Select next to our name and you're all set.

AmazonSmile offers the same shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate part of the purchase price to GCBO. You can use your existing Amazon.com account on AmazonSmile if you have one, or create a new account if you don't.

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Inc.

299 West Highway 332
Lake Jackson, Texas 77566
(979) 480-0999

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Upcoming GCBO Events

Save the date for these upcoming GCBO events and check our website and social media for details and changes. www.gcbo.org

Bird Banding at GCBO

Come join us every 3rd Saturday of every month from 8:00 am to 12:00 noon at the GCBO headquarters to watch as we band birds on site. This is a long term research project that collects data about local and migratory birds, and an excellent opportunity to see birds up close and learn about the birds of our community. This is a great experience for the whole family!

Smith Point Hawk Watch

The Hawk Watch at Smith Point continues through November 30th at the Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area in Smith Point, Texas. Come see 20+ species of raptors swirling through the sky and learn about their southward migrations. This is one of the great spectacles of the natural world – come help us count some awesome birds! It's free to attend and volunteers are on site daily from 8 am to 4 pm.

GCBO Experiences Auction

Our online auctions are a fun way to support our mission and programs, while you get to go on awesome nature experiences or enjoy some fine items! Bid early and often for the chance to shadow our researchers out in the bay, go on birding tours with experts, spend the weekend at peaceful nature resorts, and more. Bidding begins November 19 and runs until December 12, but you can view all of the items now on our website.

An American Oystercatcher entangled in fishing line.

Photo by Sue Heath/GCBO



Funding for this newsletter has been generously provided by Phillips 66.



Our Mission

Protect birds and their habitats
around the Gulf of Mexico and beyond.

Brew on the Bayou

On November 6 from 4:00 to 8:00 PM, come sample and enjoy specialty brews from local breweries as well as wines. Listen to live music, grab a bite to eat from local food trucks and check out some hot items at our silent auction. Our beautiful wooded grounds will be lit by torchlight making it a perfect spot to enjoy the brews, the food and the music! Additional highlights include a birds of prey show with live raptors and pontoon rides on the bayou. Tickets are \$20 in advance on our website or \$25 at the door. We hope to see you there!

Family Days

Come join us for Family Days at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory on November 20, November 27, and December 4 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Each Saturday Family Day event will feature a different curriculum designed to teach kids and adults about birds, their environment, and how we can better protect them. We will learn through short lessons, games and fun activities! If you're looking to get your children interested in environmental science, or just wanting to have a nice day outside with your family, these events are for you! Contact csilling@gcbo.org to reserve your spot now.



You Can Reach Us By Email:

mhagne@gcbo.org
sheath@gcbo.org
tpatton@gcbo.org
tbenett@gcbo.org
csilling@gcbo.org
nekstrom@gcbo.org