



GULF CROSSINGS

THE COASTAL PROGRAM AND BIRD CONSERVATION

By **WOODY WOODROW**

The Coastal Program is one of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's most effective resources for restoring and protecting fish and wildlife habitat on public and privately-owned lands. We play an important role in promoting the Service's mission and priorities, delivering landscape-scale conservation, and implementing strategic habitat conservation.

We are located in 24 priority coastal areas, along the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, Gulf of Mexico, Great Lakes, and in the Caribbean. Working with partners, locally based staff provide technical assistance for habitat conservation design and planning, and financial assistance for habitat restoration and protection projects. In Texas, we work across the coastal plain with a variety of partners on conservation projects ranging from coastal prairie restoration and enhancement to living shoreline projects in the bays and estuaries. Okay, so why are we talking about this in the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory newsletter? Hang on because I am fixing to explain why.

The primary reason is because birds play a huge role in our work and in the lives of people, we work with. While we have a handful of staff across the Texas coast, all the people who care about birds on our coast amplify our number. If it were not for them, our program would serve little purpose. Here is a suite of projects as some examples of our partner's projects:

Bay Harbor Island, Galveston Bay – We are working with the Galveston Bay Foundation to enhance and protect Bay Harbor Island Rookery Island. The nesting island has suffered from severe erosion and needs restoration to get it back into shape so it can continue to support the colonial waterbirds that use this island.

Aplomado Falcon Enhancement Project, Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge – We are working with working with Peregrine Fund and The Friends of Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge to restore grassland prairie to support Northern Aplomado Falcon foraging and nesting habitat. This will also benefit Northern Bobwhite, Chihuahuan Ravens and other grassland dependent birds.

Coastal Prairie Conservation Initiative, Middle Texas Coast – We are working with the Coastal Bend Bay and Estuaries Program and four other partners implementing projects with local private and public landowners to benefit several high profile species including the Attwater's Prairie Chicken, Northern Aplomado falcon, Whooping Crane, LeConte's Sparrow, several waterfowl species, the Loggerhead Shrike, and Seaside Sparrow.

Clay's Hill, City of Port Aransas – We are working with the city to develop Clay's Hill as a neotropical migratory stopover site. The City is working to remove invasive exotic vegetation and replace it with native species that will benefit neotropical songbirds. Located in Charlie's pasture, the site will be accessible by the birding community.

Texas Shorebird Stewardship Project, Texas Coast – We are working with GCBO, American Bird Conservancy, Houston Audubon, and Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program to conserve nesting and wintering shorebirds at various sites throughout the Texas coast. This project works with local site managers to protect species like the Wilson's and Piping Plovers from disturbance by the beach-going public. GCBO is a major partner in this effort covering hotspots in Brazoria and Matagorda counties.

Continued on page 5



An Aplomado Falcon chick captured from an artificial nest structure banded by Peregrine Fund staff.

Photo by Woody Woodrow



Susan Heath (GCBO) and Jennifer Wilson (USFWS) place bands, flags, and a geotag on an Eastern Willet to determine its wintering habitat location.

Photo by Woody Woodrow

Masthead photo: GCBO's new UTV working hard on Matagorda Peninsula.

Photo by Martin Hagne

DIRECTOR'S VIEW

MARTIN HAGNE

A wise person once said... "Save the forest for the beautiful birds, and you save it for all. All will thrive, and man will prosper". I agree, and I think it goes without saying that if we save a habitat for any particular species, it also is saved for many other living things. And those healthy habitats are in turn healthy for us as humans. Birds are often keystone species, which basically means that if a bird can survive in a habitat, that habitat is probably healthy in general. Goes back to the old canary in the coalmine effect.

Of course one has to be careful not just to see a bird in a forest and say... well that forest is healthy, I saw a bird! Birds can be resilient, some species more than others. And we definitely can see in our work here at GCBO that in-depth study needs to be done to make sure that species that are present in a habitat are not declining, or just hanging on. Two species stand out in my mind right now, the American Oystercatcher and the Black Skimmer. Both species are seen fairly easily along the entire Texas coast. Yet, both species have a great chance of totally disappearing from the Texas coast, maybe within 15 years. Most folks have no idea when they see these birds along our beaches.

I am hopeful that dedicated organizations and individuals will be able to halt that prediction. I know our full staff and volunteers here at GCBO certainly are working hard to help find solutions. We have been studying both species for years, and as a result feel that we know at least some of the issues that need to be solved. That is what we do, that is our mission, our job. Partnering with other organizations and agencies that can deal with the issues will hopefully lead to solutions. It's not a small task at hand. A species (several actually), is at the brink of disappearing from a large part of their range. We don't take that lightly!

Thank you for being part of the solution, and supporting our work!
Let's do this! For the Birds!



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.

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

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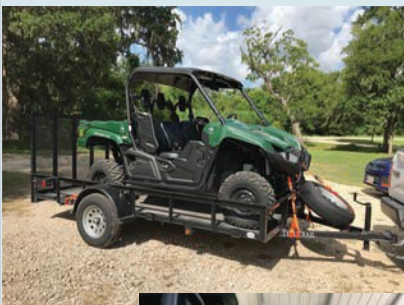
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Irene M. Moore 1985



Kid's Summer Bird Campers



UTV on trailer and with decals

IRENE M. MOORE

BY PEGGY O'NEILL

Irene Moore was a person you would have enjoyed knowing. She wanted to know everyone and everything, and usually did not hesitate to ask. She had a positive outlook on life and enjoyed almost everything. Though she had no children of her own, she loved them and had a way with them. She was known to be somewhat of a prankster and loved a good joke. She was a generous person and would be quite pleased with her contributions to the GCBO missions with a new beach vehicle and especially the scholarships for children to go to camp.

Irene Maude Moore was born October 5, 1923 in Niagara Falls, New York. She attended Catholic schools, worked for a couple of years, then she and a friend quit their jobs and travelled in Europe for several months, quite adventurous for two young girls in that day. Upon return to New York, she went to work for Bell Helicopter Co. and ended up in Hurst, TX near Dallas where she made new friends, among them a medical student, Ozora (Ozzie) Young. When Ozzie started her practice in Houston, Irene moved as well and worked for Metal Goods Company in inside sales where she dealt with people all over the world as only she could do. She enjoyed the many things that the city had to offer – theater, restaurants, music, and she hosted great parties. After retirement, they moved to their home on the San Bernard River where new friends were made and new activities started. She was active in the support groups of the wildlife preserves, Friends of the River and a member of St. Timothy Episcopal Church in Lake Jackson. She continued her hobbies and loved scooting around on her riding lawnmower. She was an excellent cook, and many a great meal was served at her home, especially the leg of lamb or wonderful seafood dishes from fish or crabs caught from her pier. In 2014, the River home was sold, with a move to Plantation Villas in Lake Jackson. In 2016, her companion of 61 years, Ozzie, died, and in 2017, Irene moved to Elmcroft Senior Living, and as you might know, was immediately involved in most of the activities there. She took up knitting again and would not miss a Bingo game for anything, unless it was watching tennis on TV, water aerobics, root beer floats, wine and cheese, or zipping around on her electric scooter. Irene was a very positive person, through good times and not-so-good times, never complaining, and enjoying whatever the moment brought. She made new friends. but she always kept her old friends close. That was one of her great characteristics — she was a good and loyal friend.

Irene M. Moore Legacy Gift

Irene M. Moore was a nature lover. She wanted to make sure wild animals and habitats remained wild and healthy. Through her legacy donation, the GCBO has created the Irene Moore Legacy Scholarship, a long-term endowment, scholarship program for our annual Kid's Summer Bird Camp, allowing two deserving kids free registration each year. Her legacy donation also allowed for the purchase of a new 4x4 UTV and trailer for our Beach Survey projects. We are honored that Irene's legacy will help us help nature! For The Birds!



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.

OYSTERCATCHERS SUFFER FROM HIGH WIND AND BAD WEATHER

BY SUSAN A. HEATH, PH.D.

Our ninth season monitoring nesting American Oystercatchers is in the books, and it wasn't pretty. It started off well when we found our first nest on January 31, but sadly it was overwashed a few weeks later in a strong north wind. That was a harbinger of things to come. We only found five more nests in February. Day after day the wind was strong, the tides were high, and the poor birds could barely get their eggs on the ground before they would get overwashed. Then in mid-May, a line of strong thunderstorms with hail passed through and wiped out most of the nests that had managed to survive the tides. At that point, many of birds gave up and we found very few nests after that. There are still a few stories to tell though. Our spring intern, Kaitie Braddock, said that when Alan Wilde and I talk about oystercatchers it sounds like we are gossiping about the neighbors. So here's the gossip from this year.

P3, a male that has nested in Jones Bay since 2011, disappeared one stormy weekend when he and his mate had a small chick. I can only assume he was trying to defend the chick in some way and was a victim of his effort. We never saw him or the chick again. Since his mate was unbanded, there's no way to tell if she remained or was replaced by another female when FR (known as Fred) took over P3's territory. P3 deserves high honors as he fledged seven chicks in nine years. We will miss you P3! About a month after that, it happened again when WY and his small chick both disappeared. WY's mate, 23 hung around a while but then she too disappeared and Y5, a male I banded as a chick in 2011 took over the territory with an unbanded mate.

The saga of territory feuds and mate switching was never as dramatic as what we saw this year with R5 and L5, two males with adjoining territories. R5 had a nice territory with a high island, while L5 had only a low vegetated area. R5 and his mate X3 fledged several chicks over the years. L5 has never fledged a chick to my knowledge. This situation has existed for at least seven years and yet for some reason this year L5 took action. For weeks on end we witnessed L5 and his unbanded mate dive bombing R5 & X3 and chasing them. In late March, suddenly R5 & X3 were gone and L5 & unbanded were proudly hanging out on the high spot. R5 & X3 were seen on the Texas City Dike several times throughout the spring and then in late June we saw L5 with X3 so I thought she'd switched mates. But then in August we saw R5 and X3 each with an unbanded mate and no sign of L5. It will be very interesting to see who is paired with who in what territory next February.

No story of the 2019 nesting season would be complete without acknowledging the heroic efforts of YM & JH and an unbanded pair in West Galveston Bay to fledge their chicks which took over 60 days instead of the normal 35-40 days. I can only assume it was because food resources were so limited from the high tides that the chicks couldn't grow at a normal rate. The adults never gave up though and both chicks fledged successfully in late June!



Overall this nesting season had the lowest productivity (14%) of any season so far with only six chicks fledging from 44 nesting pairs. Average productivity over nine years is 43% but that number is slowly creeping downward due to island erosion, high tides, and extreme weather events.



Elizabeth Cornwell studies C9A during banding.

Photo by Alan Wilde



P3 in better days.

Photo by Alan Wilde

YM & JH's chick U5Y was the last to fledge this year.

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. You can get more information at www.gcbo.org or email at mhagne@gcbo.org

SE Arizona in August 2020

Southeast Arizona is legendary in the birding world as one of the must visit places for some very special birds and scenery! Elegant Trogons, Montezuma Quail, Arizona Woodpecker. Red-faced Warbler, Abert's Towhee, Bridled Titmouse, Buff-breasted Flycatcher, Gilded Flicker, a dozen or more hummingbirds, not to mention the night birds! Just a very small sampling of the diverse birdlife living in the desert and mountainous canyons. Bird such famous sites as the Chiricahua Mountains, Patagonia, and Madera Canyon.

August 16-22, 2020

\$2,350.00 Double - \$2,550.00 Single

Cuba in October 2020—Only a few openings left!

The GCBO has been working with partners in Cuba since 2005 on various avian research projects such as a hawk watch and a neotropic migratory bird research station. Travel with GCBO staff and our Cuban ornithological partners to visits research sites, and bird the fabulous Cuban avian diversity. This trip is designed to be able to get as many endemics as possible.

October 15 - 26, 2020

\$5340.00 Double - \$5705.00 Single



THE COASTAL PROGRAM AND BIRD CONSERVATION

(continued from page 1)

What is important to note is that our bird partners like GCBO are crucial to conserving our feathered folk. The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. In simple words, we cannot do this alone. It could be a regional partner like GCBO, an international partner like the Peregrine Fund, or a single landowner partner on the Texas coast who all are making a difference for birds every day. Our program in Texas started in 1992 and in 2018, our program had existing agreements with over 53 conservation partners. While all of these projects may not directly benefit birds, most of our projects do. Our program has made a difference because of people like we have at GCBO, who strive to make a difference not only for birds but for the people who care about them.



Staff members from GCBO and ABC have just captured two Wilson's Plover chicks that will be banded to help track their movements.

Photo by Woody Woodrow

BEACH NESTING BIRDS UPDATE

BY TAYLOR BENNETT

It's been a tough season filled with storms and ridiculously wind driven high tides, but breeding season has officially ended for Wilson's Plovers and Least Terns. Black Skimmers are still nesting (as of this writing), so they will not be done till mid-September. Breeding season began April 17th when we spotted the first Wilson's Plover nest on Bryan Beach, and ended July 31st when the last two banded Wilson's Plover chicks fledged at Matagorda Beach. The nesting areas we focused the most on this year were Bryan Beach, Matagorda Beach, and DOW Chemical Plant A. The main species monitored were Wilson's Plover, Least Tern, and Black Skimmer.

The only place left for Wilson's Plovers to nest at Bryan Beach is an area called Big Flats. We only recorded one nest for this area and unfortunately it did not make it. We believe the failure was due to a coyote. We noticed a high increase in the amount of coyote and feral pig tracks in the nesting area compared to past years which resulted in 0% productivity for this area.

For Matagorda Beach, we monitored Matagorda Peninsula (up to 18km), Colorado River Mouth Flats (CRMF), Three-mile Cut, and Dunes Drive.

The Wilson's Plovers nested along Matagorda Peninsula and CRMF. At CRMF, we managed to find 7 nests and 2 mystery broods for which we did not find the nests. Two nests ended up hatching while the other 5 failed. We observed 7 chicks, but only the mystery broods made it to fledging which resulted in 4 chicks total for that area. We were able to band 3 out of 4 of the chicks. We found 14 nests and 2 mystery broods on the Matagorda Peninsula. 5 nests ended up hatching, but 9 nests failed due to over wash, predators, and disturbance. We observed 14 chicks and banded six of them. Only 2 chicks from the original nests and 4 chicks from the mystery broods survived. Matagorda ended up with a total of 10 fledged chicks. We banded 5 adults and 12 chicks and half of the chicks we banded ended up fledging.

The Least Tern colony at Matagorda flooded three times due to strong storms. We counted up to 42 nests but they only fledged 9 chicks. The DOW Least Tern colony only fledged 6 chicks with the highest nest count at 14.

So, the Wilson's Plovers and Least Terns had a pretty bad year, but the heroes of this season were the Black Skimmers at DOW. It appears that they are making a comeback from the past two years when the colony failed due to a malfunction with the protective electric



fence. The highest adult count was 1220 adults with 167 nests observed. The highest chick count so far has been 217 with 90 of them already fledged. There were still 70 nests that were being incubated and 478 adults around, as of the writing of this article in mid-August. We banded 22 chicks with the help of some volunteers from ABC, USFWS, and DOW. I'd like to give a huge thank you to Amelia Grider, Sue Heath, and my very dedicated DOW escorts, Willem DeGroot and Ron Weeks, for helping me out this season.



The first banded Wilson's Plover adult of the season VH aka Van Halen.

Photo by former GCBO intern Kaitie Braddock



The first couple of Wilson's Plover chicks that were banded.

Photo by Sue Heath

The first Wilson's Plover nests found on Mat Pen by our summer technician Amelia Grider.

Photo by Taylor Bennett

THE BARK OF A SKIMMER

BY SUSAN A. HEATH



Skimmer chick J37 resting up in Rockport after a long flight down the coast.

Photo by Cissy Beasley

I've always loved Black Skimmers and I often joke that they must be bad boys because they look like they're wearing a black leather jacket and they have that switch blade bill. After spending the summer monitoring them, I've become even more fond of them and their endearing bark. We are working with partners trying to determine why the number of breeding pairs in Texas is declining. To accomplish this, we started banding chicks last summer, so we can track their movements. Although they nest in similar locations to oystercatchers their breeding season can last into September, whereas oystercatchers are pretty much done by the end of June so monitoring them at the same time as oystercatchers could only go so far. This year the Trull Foundation stepped in to help out with additional funding so I could monitor their entire breeding season.

Since late April, I've monitored three colonies in West Galveston Bay and two colonies in East Matagorda Bay. The largest colony in West Galveston Bay is on Struve Luci Island. If you happen to know where that name came from, let me know! It had 350 breeding pairs this year and they did very well with over 150 fledged chicks. Last year I saw some abnormal primary growth in chicks which I think was attributed to the drought affecting their food resource. Fortunately, this year I saw no signs of that when banding chicks. The other two colonies in West Galveston Bay didn't fare as well. Both had about 30 breeding pairs. In Carancahua Bay (Galveston Island State Park) we discovered all the chicks had suddenly died in late July. We collected some of the bodies and gave them to the Kills and Spills department at TPWD. Hopefully they can figure out what happened. Although there were nests at the other colony, Bay Harbor, I never saw any chicks and in early August they abandoned the area.

In East Matagorda Bay, the tide was too high to support skimmer nesting until late June. When the time was right they got after it though and in early August we found many chicks among the 150 or so breeding pairs in two separate colonies. Sadly, later that month, we found the Oyster Farm colony completely abandoned. There had been a Great Blue Heron nest on this island earlier in the year and the young herons were still hanging around despite being fledged. I suspect they may have been eating the skimmer chicks which caused the adults to abandon the area. As of this writing, the colony at Old Gulf Cut is doing very well and I expect it to fledge 50 to 75 chicks.



Susan Heath, Kay Heath and Amanda Hackney banding Black Skimmers in West Galveston Bay.

Photo by Alan Wilde

The most exciting thing happened on August 16th though. I got an email that J37, one of the chicks I banded on Struve Luci in West Galveston Bay, was re-sighted by Cissy Beasley at the Rockport Beach Park. How exciting! That youngster had already flown all the way down the coast to Rockport making its way in the world. Go for it J37 and may many others spot you on our journeys.

SUMMER BIRD CAMP 2019

By JENNIFER HORTON

Over five fun filled days this past June, eleven curious campers spent their week at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory learning, exploring, asking questions, and just straight up having a good time. This year marked GCBO's eighth year of summer bird camp, and since many of the campers were repeats (indicating we must be doing something right!), we tried to mix things up a little bit this time around to keep them on their toes. Many of the standby favorites were there of course – what is bird camp without a private bird banding session courtesy of the Lookingbills or a visit to Dana Simon's wildlife rehabilitation facility? – but we also threw in some new activities. A crowd favorite was a field trip to Quintana beach, where Brazoria County Park Interpreter Mike Mullenweg led the kids in exploratory activities out on the beach. We cast nets, hunted for crabs, and learned why the water is such a big draw for so many bird species.



Bird banding at GCBO is always a hit at camp!



The rain threatened to wash many of our plans out early in the week, but we got lucky and only had to improvise some indoor activities for one particularly wet day. As the rain came down, we played a bird migration game, tried to guess what bird we were in a mystery matchup, and learned how to track animals followed by a hike through the building to test our skills. Who knew bears, cougars and Canada geese traipsed these halls?

Far Left: Anti bird strike window decals made by campers.

It may sound like all we did was have fun, but there was lots of learning packed in. (Just don't tell that to the kids). This year's group of campers was incredibly curious, full of knowledge, and eager to help. On days one and two, we talked about threats birds face throughout the course of their lives and decided to do our part to help by writing a group letter to the editor (later published in area newspapers!) about what we learned so that others might also increase their awareness. And we didn't stop there. The kids also made their own window decals, which you can now see gracing our front door, to help deter window strikes by birds – a major killer of these wonderful creatures. Other activities included daily bird walks, learning about wetlands and examining insects caught in the bayou, an introduction to nature journaling, and a special presentation on shorebird monitoring from GCBO's very own shorebird technician Taylor Bennett and intern Amelia Grider.

The week culminated in a cheerful graduation where the children earned elite "official birdwatcher" status, complete with a diploma ceremony, Sue McMillan's special punch (kid-friendly, of course), and lots of other goodies. It was a great way to kick off the summer and we're already looking ahead to how we can top it next year.

A special thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make this year's camp a success: Susan McMillan, Carol Jones, Andy Dietrich, Anne Bettinger, Timisha Young, Roy Morgan, Kristine Rivers, Jasiah Wilkenson, Kay Lookingbill, Sue Heath, Taylor Bennett, Amelia Grider, Dana Simon, Mike Mullenweg, Lisa Myers, Madi Reed, and Emma McMillan.



Happy campers attending graduation.

And a final special thank you to Peggy O'Neill, whose generous donation for her friend Irene Moore will enable us to reach even more campers in the future through the provision of two full scholarships for qualifying families each year.



Rita Burke



Cindy Freeman

FAREWELL

Amelia Grider – Shorebird Tech

From May through mid-July, Amelia Grider joined us as a short term Shorebird Tech to help with research projects. Amelia is a recent graduate from Auburn University with a degree in Marine Biology, but has a great interest in the bird world. Amelia helped with monitoring shorebirds along our beaches, our intertidal reefs study, Black Skimmer colony monitoring, and the American Oystercatcher project. She has been a wonderful asset and friend here at GCBO, and we wish her well in her future biology work.



GCBO MIGRATIONS—STAFF & BOARD UPDATES

WELCOME

Rita Burke – Board Member

Rita has always been fascinated with ecosystem health and recovery, which led to an education in biology and environmental engineering. She has enjoyed a twenty year career with ExxonMobil, serving in a variety of positions, focusing on strategic planning, marketing, and project and business venture management. She volunteers at several human interest groups, as well as animal welfare organizations, and enjoys good wine, live music, conservation related travel, and the San Antonio Spurs. Rita resides in Houston Heights with her husband, James Koski, and 2 rescue cats (Puma and Second Chance). She is thrilled to be part of the GCBO and looks forward to advancing its mission and its success!

Cindy Freeman – Board Member

Cindy is a native Houstonian and a fifth-generation Texan. After graduating from CU-Boulder, she spent her corporate career managing investment portfolios for high net worth clients, most recently at JP Morgan. After retiring early from the bank, she has enjoyed grading the CFA (Chartered Financial Analysts) exam for many years, as a way to stay in touch with the investment industry, and written two books. One is a heritage tourism book called *Historic Houston: How to See It*. The other is a cookbook called *Colorful Food for the Soul*. She has recently become interested in learning about birds, after seeing several different species along White Oak Bayou near downtown, a favorite walking route.

Amanda Linford – Board Member

Amanda Linford grew up in Lake Jackson, Texas. She attended Brazoswood High School – where she was the Editor-in-Chief of the school newspaper. She carried her love for writing into her collegiate career and graduated from the University of Missouri with a Bachelor of Journalism. Amanda currently works as the Communication & Public Affairs Advisor for Phillips 66. Her favorite part of her job is managing the philanthropic efforts of the Phillips 66 Sweeny Refinery, and she has a passion for developing strategic partnerships between industry and local organizations. Previously, she interned with Chevron Phillips Chemical, United Way of Brazoria County, and The Facts Newspaper. Amanda is a member of several local community organizations. She enjoys reading, cycling, going to the beach, and spending time with her family.

**Lauren Perry**

Lauren is a recent Baytown high school graduate, and now going on to Brazosport College. Lauren worked for us as a Workforce Solutions job trainee over the summer, working closely with Tricia in the office, and also helping out with some nursery activity. We all enjoyed her friendliness and appreciate getting to know her. Good luck in the future Lauren!



Our Vision is a healthy ecosystem with abundant space for birds to survive and thrive around the Gulf of Mexico.

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 January 31, 2019 and July 31, 2019.

Thank you for your vital support.

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 Rainer Hanisch • Babette & Tod Harding • Shelia Hargis • Lisa Harrison • Bea & Jim Harrison
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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, 2019 to June 30, 2019 volunteers contributed an amazing 3525 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!

Chandler Baures • Brigid & Allan Berger
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BIRD WINDOW STRIKES

BY MARTIN HAGNE

The GCBO headquarters building in Lake Jackson, TX is a wonderfully set building on 34 acres of Brazoria bottomland forest along the Camp Buffalo Bayou. We enjoy the many birds visible from our office windows!

But all those windows have come with a cost...bird strikes. Although not a huge number of birds have struck our windows, any bird strike is one too many. Millions of birds are said to die from window strikes annually in the US! This is a huge problem! So we have taken steps to stop bird fatalities or injuries! Through an initial donation of BirdTape from American Bird Conservancy, and an additional purchase, we have now become bird strike free! Thank you ABC! And thank you Harold and Sheryl, our awesome RV volunteers, for taking on this job!

You too can help by going to the American Bird Conservancy web site, purchasing and installing your very own BirdTape! www.abcbirds.org. Eventually, we hope to sell it in our GCBO gift shop!



Harold applying BirdTape

NEW FRONT PORCH

Thanks to the wonderful members of our Board Infrastructure Committee we now have a beautiful new front porch at our headquarters! Complete with wooden rocking chairs to sit and enjoy the beautiful grounds. Thank you Tom Taroni, Oron Atkins, and Mike Heather for working non-stop for a week to build it!

Mike, Tom and Oron
hard at work!



Sheryl and Harold Travis, our most wonderful RV volunteers this summer, along with grandson Bryson and Lilly the dog.

Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Inc.

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

Visit our web site at <http://www.gcbo.org>



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UPCOMING GCBO EVENTS

“Hold The Date” for upcoming GCBO Events, be sure to check our website and/or social media for details and any changes. www.gcbo.org.

Bird Banding at GCBO

Come join us every 3rd Saturday 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.
Upcoming dates: October 19th, November 16th, December 21st, January 18th, February 15th, March 21st.

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 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.



Smith Point Hawk Watch – Kettle of Broad-winged Hawks soaring above

Our Mission

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

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 in mid-November.

Brew on the Bayou

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.

\$20 in advance
or \$25 at the door.



Brew On The Bayou brew tasting



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



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