

Rio Grande Valley of Texas– The Mecca of Birding

Nov 15-20, 2025



Join GCBO's Board President Mike Williams and Executive Director Martin Hagne for a sub-tropical birding extravaganza to one of the most bio diverse locations north of Mexico... the Rio Grande Valley of Texas! This is a true birding mecca, and we will spend 4 ½ days exploring many of the hotspots.

Tour Description:

The RGV is located in the middle between east and west of the US, a major fly going through it, it borders the sub-tropics to the south, and temperate to the north, it has 12 biotic community within 4 counties, and 4 major habitat layers from the river and north. This creates a rich biodiversity rarely found elsewhere. Well over 500 bird species have been recorded here! That is more than all states except for 3 or 4. There are many species found only here within the US... so a must place to bird.

We will chase Green Jays, Great Kiskadees, Black-crested Titmice, Gray Hawks, White-tipped Doves, Olive Sparrows, Harris's Hawk, Green Kingfishers, Ringed Kingfishers, Hook-billed Kite, Aplomado Falcons, Morelet's Seed eaters... and so much more!

To get as many bird species as possible on our trip, we will explore many of these areas and habitats. We will do quite a bit of traveling across the valley, especially east to west, to be able to accomplish this. Martin lived in the RGV for over 30 years, and heavily birded all of its fascinating locations. He also enjoys exploring the food scene... so be prepared to eat "local"!

We enjoy being based out of the same hotel for the whole trip, and we will ride in a 12 passenger van.

Itinerary:

1st Day – Saturday, 15th

- Arrive in McAllen Airport – 11:00am
- *Lunch – Maria Cruz Plant Based Bistro, McAllen*
- Quinta Mazatlán WBC - McAllen
- Check in – Alamo, TX - 3:00pm
- *Dinner - Arturo's, Weslaco*

2nd Day – Sunday, 16th

- Estero Llano Grande SP, Weslaco
- *Lunch - Nana's Taqueria, Weslaco*
- Hwy 100 for Aplomado Falcon
- South Padre Island - Convention center board walks and flats, SPI Birding Nature Center, Valley Landfund Lots, Bridge flats
- *Dinner – Pirates Landing, PI*

3rd Day – Monday, 17th

- Bentsen SP - Mission
- NABA Butterfly Park - Mission
- *Lunch - Taco Express. 105 E Veterans Dr, Palmview*
- Pontoon Boat on the Rio Grande - Mission
- *Dinner – Blue Onion, Weslaco*

4th Day – Tuesday 18th

- *Breakfast at Laredo Taco Co/Gas station on the way, RGC*
- Salineno – DeWends feeders, upstream trail
- Falcon SP
- *Lunch – Pic Nic*
- County Park
- Fronton
- *Dinner on way - Barquito's Oyster Ba, Roma*

5th Day – Wednesday 19th

- Sabal Palm Sanctuary - Brownsville
- UTB Campus – Brownsville
- *Lunch – The Vermillion, Brownsville*
- Resaca de La Palma SP – Brownsville
- Oliveira Park for parrots - Brownsville 4:30-5:00pm (Sunset 5:40pm)
- *Dinner – Cobbleheads, Brownsville*

6th Day – Thursday 20th

- Check out of hotel
- Leave – McAllen Airport

Trip Logistics and Info:

Trip Fee:

Single - \$2,175.00
Double - \$1,925.00

Max Participants: 8

Travel: One 12 passenger van

Arriving and Departing Airport: McAllen International Airport (MFE)

Included in Fee:

- Bird guides
- Hotel room
- Hotel breakfast (except on the road not paid for)
- Van & fuel during trip
- Driver for vans
- Entry fees & parking fees to parks
- Water in vans
- Some snacks in vans

- Insect spray in vans

Does Not Include:

- Flights to and from destination
- Meals (other than hotel breakfast and sack lunches)
- Tips for guide, meals
- Drinks & snacks (other than listed above)
- Alcoholic drinks
- Personal items

Our Guides:

Mike Williams, Board President of GCBO

Mike originates from the UK and has been birding for over 50 years throughout Europe North and Central America and South-East Asia. For the last 20 years he has combined this with photography and has had his photographs published in many articles, newspapers and magazines. Since moving to Tx in 20023 he has seen over 550 birds in Texas and in 2022 his big year reached 500 species. He is a former and the current president of GCBO and a regular visitor to the Rio Grande Valley and indeed all over Texas and guides bird and photographers alike for GCBO. He is married with 3 kids and a graduate in Earth Sciences from Birmingham University



Martin Hagne, Executive Director of GCBO,

Martin Hagne was born and raised on the Swedish west coast, where His grandfather instilled a love for nature at an early age. He moved to the United States, and the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, in 1979 and turned his focus towards wildlife viewing and conservation concerns. Martin serves as the Executive Director of the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in Lake Jackson, TX. Previously he served as the Executive Director of the Valley Nature Center in Weslaco, Texas, a non-profit environmental education facility, for 13 years. He has also worked as a Field Biologist doing base-line studies for many years, including avian (bird), reptile and amphibian, mammal, threatened and endangered species, and habitat studies. Martin has served on several national, state, regional and local environmental appointments, committees, and boards. He also leads birding field trips both in the U.S. and foreign locations. Birding, nature viewing, native plants, conservation issues and environmental education are great passions for Martin.











