



Bird Calls

Newsletter of the Bastrop County Audubon Society

Announcing This Year's Big Field Trip -- Port Aransas



At the February General Meeting, Stan Wellso, Field Trips chair, announced plans for this year's overnight trip dubbed the "April Coastal Birding Trip." Departing on Friday evening, we'll spend Saturday, April 20, and Sunday, April 21, at birding sites in Port Aransas, hoping to view over 150 species this time of year.

Wellso had handouts of "Birds of Port Aransas & Mustang Island, Texas" (a complete bird list), a Coral Cay pamphlet which shows us luxury beach-front accommodations, and a card of phone numbers listed for dozens of other accommodations in the area.

While each of us is responsible for planning details of transportation and lodging as we prefer, we have an itinerary to follow. We meet both Saturday and Sunday mornings at the Port Aransas Birding Center on Ross Avenue at 7:00 a.m. On Saturday, we'll head for Paradise Pond, the Wetland Park, and the South Jetty.

We'll lunch on fish sandwiches at "the Beach Lodge," a shack Wellso recommends just a stroll from Coral Cay, where Stan and Carol Wellso have a condo.

For the "cocktail hour" back at Coral Cay, the Wellsos plan refreshments, 5-6:00 p.m. Then we're off for dinner at the touted Trout Street Bar and Grill (no reservations).

On Sunday we'll check out other ponds and go down to the beach.

Stan added, "If we have inclement weather in the night or on Friday, then we'll have excellent birding with a fallout!"

Our showing of the film documentary *An Inconvenient Truth* and our entire meeting was iced out in January.



So we're showing it in March! Be there at 7:00 p.m. March 20 at the new meeting room at First National Bank of Bastrop, second floor. We'll have popcorn for the movie. **More:** page 3.

Florida Whooping

Crane Disaster

Seventeen of the 18 juvenile whooping cranes died in their pen at Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge, victims of the violent storms which struck February first and second. These painstakingly-raised juveniles are those which were led last fall from Wisconsin to disperse the endangered Whooping Crane.

The single survivor is doing well in a more inland location and is in the company of adult cranes.

Join or Renew Membership

Benefits include Bird Calls, field trips, social events, continuing education, more clout, good feelings and fun. Membership Chair: Priscilla Jarvis at (512) 281-2762.

Dues are used to support local conservation and education. You may join at our web site www.bastropcountyaudubon.org or use the form below.

BCAS Membership Application

- Individual \$20
- Family \$35
- Supporting \$75

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Please make checks payable to:
Bastrop County Audubon Society
Send to:

Alan Jaeger, Treasurer
117 Kaelepulu Dr.
Bastrop TX 78602

Earth Share

**One Environment
One Simple
Way to care
for it.**

Earth Share of Texas, a financial supporter of State Audubon chapters, has been selected as the first environmental organization to benefit from HEB's check-out tear pad-program.

This means that customers can tear off and add coupons worth \$1, \$3 or \$5 to their total bill.

EST will be featured on the

bird-watcher--note the distinction--chose to say good-bye to the world with a hard-core birding trip to Alaska. Eighteen years and 8,500 species of birds later, Snetsinger further embarrassed her physicians by dying in a road accident while birding in Madagascar.

Now that's a woman we can look up to. Another such woman may not have 8,500 species on her life list, but she does have our admiration, nonetheless. Our previous president, Priscilla Jarvis, was awarded a Bastrop Chamber of Commerce "Point of Light" award last month. This award is for an outstanding volunteer who shines like a point of light over our community.

You are probably aware of Priscilla's efforts for Audubon. She has held Board positions through the years and guided various scout projects, such as the bird blind with Casey Shultz this year. You may not be aware of her other volunteer efforts. She shines on the board of Pines and Prairies Land Trust. She is an active member of Neighbors for Neighbors and Friends of the Lost Pines State Park. I have a photo of her standing for peace before it was the in-thing to do. The list goes on and on.

Our Chamber rep Mary Ellen Branan and I accompanied Priscilla and Jeramiah Jarvis to the Hyatt for the banquet last month. The chandeliers were gorgeous, the service excellent and the food delicious. All that paled beside the stellar company. Lloyd Doggett was there with his wife. I was fortunate enough to tell him how proud I was to be in his district and to be able to vote for him. Reid Sharp,

president of the First National Bank, introduced the ten Points of Light.

Deana Spellman of Bastrop Gardens, another BCAS member, received the first award for her volunteer gardens. All in all we enjoyed a very satisfying evening.

The others nominated were hard working, exemplary members of the chamber working to keep Bastrop prosperous. The Point of Light awards this year reminded our community how a clean, bountiful environment is not a given, but an ongoing project worked on by dedicated members of both the business and the environmental communities.

Judy Ing, President



check-out tear pad in April, as one of HEB's efforts to celebrate Earth Day.

The Ing Sing- Letter from the President

Can birding save your life? Apparently so. I found this story by Bruno Maddox in *Discovery* magazine and want to share it with you.

"It must be acknowledged up front that the greatest birder of all time, the improbably named Phoebe Snetsinger, was a woman – moreover, the kind of woman who puts men to shame. Diagnosed with terminal cancer in 1981, Snetsinger, at the time only a casual

March Calendar

Mar. 18: Board Meeting
4:00 p.m., Jarvis, 281-2762

Mar. 20: General Meeting,
7:00 p.m., 1st Nat'l Bank

Mar. 24: Field trip to Nails
Creek State Park, Giddings,
meet at Park gate, 8:30 a.m.

Mar. 28: Lunchtime birding,
Central Mkt. pond, Austin,
12 noon, Travis Audubon..

Mar. 29--Apr. 1: Galveston's
5th annual Feather Fest



Gleaning in the Field

A CALIFORNIA BIRDER stood amazed at the edge of a scraped field on December 30. "Not only was the **hooded warbler** there, but so were hundreds of Townsend's warblers, yellow-rumped warblers, Ruby-crowned kinglets, killdeers, black-



birds and several types of sparrows chirping, hopping and feeding themselves silly on thick mounds of decomposing Brussels sprouts. The birds, some of which are nearly as rare as the hooded warbler, have been surviving the cold snap by feeding on an unexpected banquet of fly eggs laid inside the warm piles of excess Brussels sprouts composting along the edges of the sunny field."

Alameda (CA) Times Star, Jan, 2007.

FROM TRAVIS AUDUBON--Paul and Georgian Kyle donated their "Chaetura Canyon" to Travis Audubon Society on December 28, 2006. Dwelling more than 20 years on their property, the Kyles eventually have built 15 towers for their beloved Chimney Swifts. They will continue to live on the site, and the unique workshops and special events will continue. Before their efforts, little was known about the erstwhile mysterious Chaeturas. The Kyles gave BCAS a memorable program on Chimney Swifts back in 2000.



"GOT METHANE" From a news story in February's issue of Bluebonnet Electric's *Texas Co-Op Power*, "The Lower Colorado River Authority which provides power to many electric cooperatives and municipal utilities in Texas, recently announced it will buy natural gas produced from cow manure, called biogas, with plans to convert manure into pipeline-quality renewable natural gas." The plant producing the biogas beginning in April is located in Stephenville.

In England, massive numbers of fish were found to be "intersexed," which means they were neither typical male nor female but had both types of sex organs. The cause was thought to be detergents that degraded into estrogen or other feminizing alkyl-phenols or bisphenols released in the water from plastics and pesticides. From *Our Toxic World* by Doris J. Rapp, M.D., 2004.



Field Trip Reports

Birding notes from Feb. 10, 2007 field trip to Hornsby Bend and Western Tahitian Village.

Four BCAS members birded from 7:00 to noon on a gray cool windy day. It was dark enough to see owls when we began, and Judy Ing spotted one on the east side of Tractor Supply. Anyone wishing to see a non-feathered Great Horned Owl can probably still find it there, even at midday.

At Hornsby we had looks at Eared Grebes, Ruddy Ducks, Bufflehead, Green winged and Cinnamon Teals. We met Eric Carpenter and birders from Austin doing the monthly survey of Hornsby Bend. We had great looks at many birds including Wilson Snipe, Spotted Sandpiper, Song and Swamp Sparrows, and Common Yellowthroat. Later, we drove to the Hornsby Environmental Building, and found an early Purple Martin sitting near some gourds used for nesting. I am certain that bird was 'wondering' why he and we were out in the cold without any flying insects in sight.

March refreshments: Sharon Finlay and Maggie Lambert

Continuing in Western Tahitian Village, we saw many smaller birds bringing our trip total to 7 species of native sparrows, three species of doves, two species woodpeckers, etc. Our daily total of 57 species was satisfying to all. **We hope to see you on the next** outing on March 24 where we may go to Nails Creek, Lake Somerville State Recreation Area. **Stan Wellso**

More: A Two Oscar Night for "An Inconvenient Truth"

On the Motion Picture Academy's big evening February 25 Al Gore's message and medium broke through to a yet higher level of prestige and influence.

The director Davis Guggenheim won the Oscar for Best Documentary Film, and Melissa Etheridge won for Best Original Song. Listen to "I Need to Wake Up" at Melissaetheridge.com.

In an interview Guggenheim noted his initial doubt: "I thought it was a terrible idea--a film about a slide show, starring a former politician." When Guggenheim attended one of Gore's slide shows, "It blew my mind. I was shaken to the core."