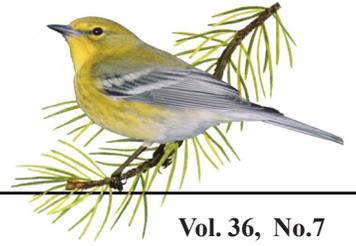


# The Pine Warbler



October 2016

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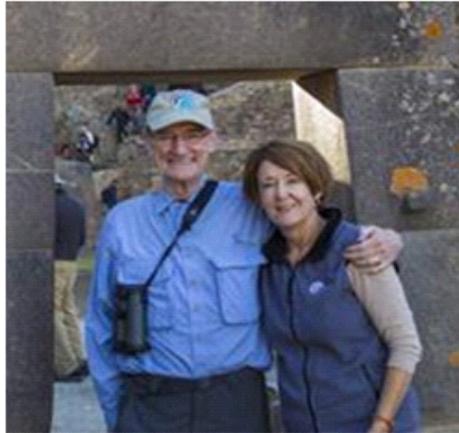
## Heart Happenings

Sometimes dreams come true and our PWWS officers again have helped get one of my dreams off the ground. I have dreamed about a turtle sculpture on the Galveston seawall for a long time to join the dolphin statue and another statue which is a tribute to all the people who drowned in the 1900 hurricane. The sculpture would recognize all the thousands of people including children who have worked to save the Kemp's ridleys. And to recognize Galveston for being the site of critical sea turtle research and work for the ridleys. I had mentioned it at a PWWS board meeting some time ago and we discussed the fact that it is an expensive dream for me to have. Not long after that, both Kathy and Deb Wilson suggested some ways to reach the dream perhaps quicker and maybe at less cost.



cont. on page 3

**October Presentation**  
**What Birds Can Tell us**  
*Presented by Gary Clark, Nature Writer*  
*featuring photos by Kathy Adams,*  
*Wildlife Photographer*



Green jay (photo by Roy Woodward)

We have another wonderful opportunity to hear Gary and see Kathy's photos. Noted naturalist and nature writer, Gary Clark explores the amazing connection between birds and humans. From a lifetime of observing, documenting and enjoying birds, Gary weaves a story that is both informative and inspirational. Discover what birds tell us about seasons, the environment and ourselves. The program features the photography of Kathy Adams Clark and they will also discuss the new release of *Book of Texas Birds*.

Please join us on Wednesday October 19 at the Big Stone Lodge in Dennis Johnston Park, 709 Riley Fuzzel Road, Spring, TX, for a wonderful evening! Social time starts at 6:30 PM and the meeting starts at 7 PM.



## Big Stone Lodge - Dennis Johnston Park

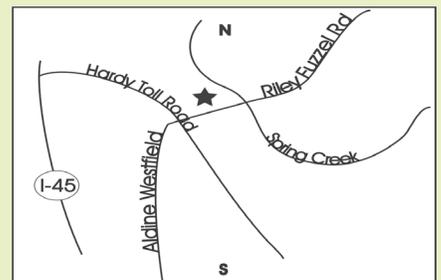
709 Riley Fuzzel Road

PWWS meetings are held at the Big Stone Lodge at the new Dennis Johnston County Park at 709 Riley Fuzzel Road.

**October 21**  
**Social 6:30pm**

The directions to get there are much the same as to the Nature Center. Aldine-Westfield turns into Riley Fuzzel Road just northeast of Spring so there are several ways to get there.

1. Take the Rayford/Sawdust exit and go East (right) on Rayford Rd. It dead ends at Riley Fuzzel, then turn South (right) and drive to the Dennis Johnston Park past Spring Creek and on the right.
- or, 2. take Spring-Cypress east to Aldine Westfield through Olde Town Spring, turn left and then on to Riley Fuzzel for a short distance and turn left;
- or, 3. Take Aldine Westfield north from Mercer Arboretum until it turns into Riley Fuzzel. Turn right and watch for the Dennis Johnston Park on the left.



*HEART from page 1*

They mentioned that there is a Kemp's ridley sea turtle sculpture at Rockport which I had forgotten about and suggested there might be an opportunity to talk with the sculptor, etc. I got his name and contacted him. From then on, I can hardly keep track of the progress. By coincidence, the sculptor knows a gentleman from Galveston (Mr. Robert Lynch) who owns a home on the Washington (state) island where the sculptor has his studio.

But perhaps even more important is that Mr. Lynch knows Galveston people, the mayor, the art commission, etc. etc., and they are making things happen. I met with him and Mayor Yarborough two weeks ago. They are very interested in the project and will help raise funds! Our treasurer, Jim Lacey, is always willing to help when funds start to come in and hopefully that will begin to happen.

Keep your fingers crossed that we don't have a hurricane this year which would definitely slow things down! Maybe next fall, Galveston will celebrate a Sea Turtle Day we will never forget!

## **SQUIRREL BABIES – ROUND 2** *By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center*

It's not easy being a squirrel Mom. Can you imagine giving birth twice in the same year to an average of 2 to 4 babies with each pregnancy? Talk about no time for yourself! Born furless and blind, they gain their sight at 5 weeks but don't leave the nest until around 10



weeks of age. By 3 months, Mom can breathe a sigh of relief because they are on their own. We are now dealing with the second round of squirrel babies in 2016.

Our area is home to three species of squirrels—the Eastern gray squirrel, the fox squirrel and the flying squirrel. About 90% of our squirrel population is made up of gray squirrels. As the name implies, these squirrels are predominantly gray with a white underside.

The fox squirrel is the largest of the three species found here and gets its name from its coloring which resembles the coloring of a fox. Their underbellies are orangy-brown. The flying squirrel is the smallest squirrel and is nocturnal (most active at night). It doesn't actually fly but is able to glide from tree to tree because of a membrane connecting its front and hind legs, much like a bat. Few people are ever lucky enough to see one of these small critters.

An interesting fact about squirrels is that their teeth never stop growing and must continually gnaw on hard surfaces to keep

them filed down.

Squirrels are very busy animals and can be seen running from yard to yard. It is not uncommon for them to have 2 or 3 nests. The additional nests



can be used to hide from predators, to store extra food, or for moms to move their young when their main nest is destroyed. We get many calls from homeowners when nests with babies are found in trees that have been cut down or blown down after storms. If you put the babies in a box/container near the downed tree, but off the ground so they are safe from ants and other animals, in most cases Mom will come and rescue her babies, one at a time, and take them to one of her secondary nests. If you find yourself in this situation and need help, call us. We'll help you reunite Mom and babies.

TWRC Wildlife Center is entering the fall baby season and we need your help. If you'd like to learn how to care for baby squirrels either at our Center or in your home, check our website for upcoming classes or give us a call at 713.468.8972. [www.twrcwildlifecenter.org](http://www.twrcwildlifecenter.org)

## **Save the Date for Christmas Bird Count**

The Piney Woods Wildlife Society sponsored Spring Creek Christmas Bird Count is coming up on Saturday, December 17th, 2016. Make sure and save the date if you can either help to count the birds in the field with one of the five groups, or volunteer as a feeder watcher if you live in the CBC circle. Specifics on the meeting times and locations for the field teams will be in next month's newsletter.

This Piney Woods CBC is just one of thousands of CBCs completed each year between December 14th and January 5th and reported to the National Audubon Society. The goal is to capture a snapshot of bird populations during the early winter. Comparing this data with snapshots from scores of previous years helps scientists understand fluctuations in bird populations that can show which species are thriving and which are struggling. Our Spring Creek CBC is on the north side of Houston and sponsored each year by volunteers from the Piney Woods Wildlife Society. This count is centered roughly at I45 and the Rayford / Sawdust exit and extends 7.5 miles in all directions — see map. This 15-mile diameter circle makes up the Spring Creek CBC. (You can see this and many more CBCs at <http://www.houstonaudubon.org/cbc>.)

There are two components to counting birds for a CBC. The first consists of teams of bird watchers that go outside and count all the birds that they find in the count circle. The second consists of people who live within the circle watching their backyard feeders and counting those birds. All this information is



**Boo To You From Our Crew**  
**By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center**



It's hard to believe that Halloween is just around the corner. One of my favorite things to do is to carve pumpkins into Jack-o-lanterns. I've never given any thought to why we do that or how this custom started until I began writing this article.

There are many tales about the practice of carving pumpkins. One comes from Irish folklore. A man named Jack, who was a blacksmith, didn't want to go to hell for his many sins so he tricked the devil into guaranteeing that he wouldn't. When Jack died, little did he know that although he was spared from going to hell, he was also denied entrance into heaven. God did not want him. Legend has it that the devil gave Jack a burning coal which Jack put into a carved-out turnip to use as light while he roamed aimlessly somewhere between heaven and hell. Thus the name Jack-o-lantern was born.

Legends aside, we all love carving pumpkins but isn't it a shame that most of them end up in the trash when the holiday is over?

Well, this year, don't trash them! Feed our wildlife. Please keep in mind that these suggestions only apply to pumpkins that haven't been painted or decorated which can be toxic to wildlife.

1. Make a bird feeder (see photo). Use wooden dowels and strong twine. It's a good idea to punch holes in the bottom of the pumpkin to let water drain. You can also cover the holes you made to make the face so the seed doesn't spill out.
2. Save the pumpkin seeds for large birds and small mammals. Let the seeds dry out and then place them in a shallow bowl or flat tray. If the seeds aren't being eaten, mix them with a small amount of black oil sunflower seeds.
3. You can place small pumpkins around your yard. For larger pumpkins, cut into smaller pieces. Be sure to place some of the pieces in secluded areas of your yard.

There is magic in the night when pumpkins glow by moonlight.  
**HAPPY HALLOWEEN!**

TWRC Wildlife Center admits over 5,000 injured and orphaned animals every year. We don't receive any City, State or Federal funding and we need your help. As you begin thinking about the holidays, please remember to include TWRC Wildlife Center in your gift-giving. Donate through our website at [www.twrcwildlifecenter.org](http://www.twrcwildlifecenter.org).



**Please join Houston Wilderness**

for a reception and artist meet and greet

celebrating *A Walk in the Woods*

a new exhibition by landscape artist, Harold Joiner.

**Thursday, October 20, 2016**

**6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.**

**Light Refreshments served.**

Moved by the landscape of the coastal Texas plains, Harold Joiner finds solace and inspiration from solitary walks in the local woodlands. His paintings seek to capture the essential spirit of those woods. We will be auctioning off a painting donated by the artist.

R.S.V.P. to Holly Thorson: [holly@houstonwilderness.org](mailto:holly@houstonwilderness.org)

Archway Gallery  
2305 Dunlavy  
Houston, Texas 77006

