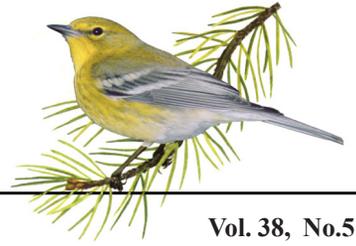


The Pine Warbler



May 2017

Vol. 38, No.5

HEART Happenings by Carole Allen, HEART Committee Chair



Nesting is looking good on the Texas coast. As of May 3, 108 Kemp's Ridley nests had been found on the Texas coast including 3 on Galveston Island, 1 on Bolivar Peninsula, 1 at Matagorda Peninsula, 1 on San Jose Island and 4 on Mustang Island. The rest have been found at the Padre Island National Seashore and far South Padre Island. Let's hope many more are found before nesting begins to taper off in June. I'll have final numbers at the August potluck!

On behalf of the members of Piney Woods, I want to personally thank our newsletter designer, Allison, for the years of wonderful work producing a professional newsletter for all of us to enjoy. She has shown patience with us as well as fantastic talent in her
next page

May Program "Big Cats of the Americas" By Jeff Parker



Jeff Parker will be our guest speaker Wednesday May 17, 2017 - 7:00 p.m. On Cats of the Pantanal, Brazil and Patagonia, Chile. Besides showing those magnificent felines in the wild Jeff will show amazing landscape of the Torre del Paine, Chile.

Jeff Parker is an award-winning wildlife and nature photographer whose
next page



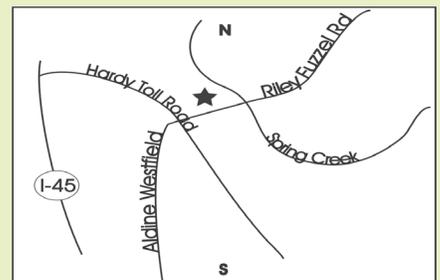
Big Stone Lodge - Dennis Johnston Park 709 Riley Fuzzel Road

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

**Wednesday
May 17, 2017**

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 Old 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 3

work for ten years before announcing that she is retiring. If you have a moment to spare, please send a thank you message to her at Copperhead Publishing (jdfagm@swbell.net)

www.seaturtleinc.org

http://www.nps.gov/pais/

Facebook: Padre Island NS Division of Sea Turtle Science and Recovery

Address for mail:

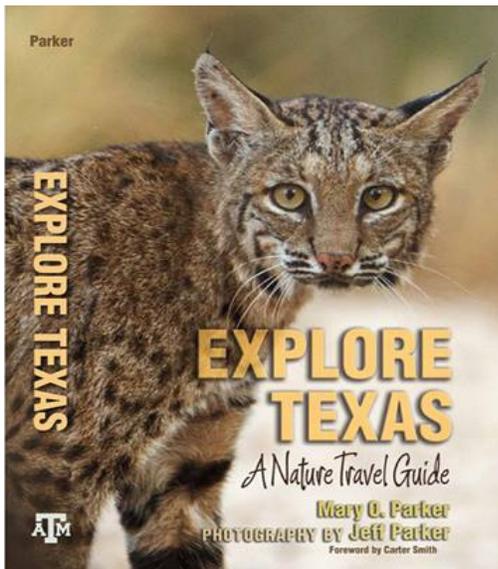
Padre Island National Seashore

P.O. Box 181300

Corpus Christi, TX 78480

May Program from page 1

work has appeared in Audubon, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and American Profile. He leads photo tours and workshops throughout South Texas and the Americas. Jeff and his talented wife Mary O. have authored Explore Texas, A Nature Travel Guide. Their book includes top destinations in the state of Texas.



If you would like to order a copy of Explore Texas, A Nature Travel Guide; call Kathy Coward, 281/288-9019 or email her at justforthebirds@sbcglobal.net.

Please join us on Wednesday May 17, 2017, at the Big Stone Lodge in Dennis Johnston Park, 709 Riley Fuzzel Road, Spring, Texas, for a wonderful evening!

Up-coming Programs

Reminder to Mark Your Calendar for our Pot Luck Supper

Please join us Saturday, August 19, 7 PM at the Olde Oaks MUD building on TC Jester. We will be having a "share photos" session (limit 15) and a plant swap. Please bring plants from your yard to share with other members.

May Horticulture Tips

By Kathy Dodge



Planting - Plant summer blooming perennials and annuals.

Birds - Spring migration continues into mid-May. Clean birdbaths often and keep feeders full and clean them after rainstorms to prevent soggy spoiled seed. Even non-birders can keep fresh water and food out at this time to help our feathered friends.

Vegetable Gardens- Plant okra, cucumbers, pumpkins, basil, garlic chives, peppers and sunflowers from seed.

Weeding - Be vigilant about pulling weeds early, make sure areas are mulched properly to prevent future weeds from germinating and help to retain moisture.

Pruning - Pinch tips of coleus to prevent flowering and encourage bushier, fuller plants. Remove spent blooms on spring and summer annuals to promote new blooms.

Fertilizing - Fertilize flower beds and vegetable gardens. Try slow release organic fertilizers like Micro-Life.

Water- Deep root watering on trees, lawns and shrubs is best. It encourages roots to move down into the soil where they will be less susceptible to moisture changes. Avoid short periods of shallow watering. Use asoaker hose to aid in slow, deep watering.

Pests - Keep an eye out for pests as well as beneficial insects in your vegetable garden. Pick off pests by hand, check for slugs and snails early in the morning or in the evenings when they are active. Check your garden regularly.

Lawn - Continue to water between rains.

Yellow, Blue and Indigo Too, in the Sabine Woods

By Paul Gregg

During April in the Sabine Woods outside of Port Arthur, we were on the way to a warbler count where in one tall tree a group of birders saw approximately 22 different species in that one tree in only one hour! We were running late and it was cloudy, windy, and getting darker. We didn't see a lot of variety we could photograph, but at the west end of the slough (pond) two prothonotary warblers showed up and interacted quite well together. The light wasn't great, so ISO set on "auto"

Bird Fight



veery

Summer Tanager



Rose-breasted Grosbeak

Scarlet Tanager



Baltimore Oriole

Yellow Green Vireo



Indigo Bunting



Black-throated Blue Warbler

Prothonotary Warblers



Black-throated Blue Warbler

yielded some fair photos of the two at ISO 6400. Lightroom helped salvage them a bit. A heavy rain came near the end of the day and we left the woods.

The next day an Indigo Bunting showed up at the water drip and offered some nice poses. The highlight of the two days was the Black-throated Blue Warbler! All day long, we had been asked if we had seen it. Almost every trail we walked down, we would come across someone who was either looking for it, or someone who said, "the black-throated blue was seen over near such and such trail section." We would then go there and see nothing! I finally gave up and returned to the "photographer's" water drip that has benches closer to two drips. Other birds showed up and it was getting late and we losing the light. So we convinced ourselves, "wait just 30 more minutes". (we did that two or three times, not wanting to give up.) Suddenly, someone spotted the black-throated blue warbler coming in and heading toward the drip. What a joy it was to see this guy and photograph him as well as video him taking a bath.

The "Field Guide to Warblers" (Stokes, p. 136) indicates these warblers are 'rare on the Gulf Coast' and are mostly found on the eastern section of the United States. We wish the photos were sharper, but I'm happy to have taken some fairly nice ones in spite of darker light conditions.



You always know when an animal has met an untimely and unfortunate death when you see Black Vultures or Turkey Vultures. So how can you tell the difference? The Black Vulture has a featherless black-grey head while the Turkey Vulture has a featherless red head. In flight, the Black Vulture is distinguishable by white-tipped wings whereas the majority of the



underside of the Turkey Vulture is pale in color.

Both species of vultures feed primarily on carrion. Most of what vultures eat would make any other animal very sick but they are strong animals with an incredible digestive system and a very strong immune system. Their stomachs are extremely acidic. They can usually survive eating carcasses infected with botulism, anthrax, cholera and salmonella. Some believe that vultures spread disease because they eat dead meat. Actually, the opposite is true. They rid our environment of what could potentially cause the spread of diseases.

Turkey Vultures use their eyesight and keen sense of smell to find their food. By flying low, they are able to see dead animals and detect the gases produced when an animal begins to decay. They prefer to feed on animals that are recently dead. Black Vultures can't smell but will often follow Turkey Vultures to find food.

The breeding season of the turkey vulture starts in March, peaks

Upcoming Nature Events:

Below is the link to the Zebra Swallowtail video from Sunday's Count Sandylands (one doesn't need a Facebook account to view it).

<https://www.facebook.com/sandy.crystal.9/videos/1352865238123547/?l=4325894813222193506> - Sandy-Crystal

BEST (Butterfly Enthusiasts of SE Texas)/NABA			
Chapter Meeting			
Meeting	Presenter(s)	Topic and location	
June 06 7 p.m.	Don Dubois	American Butterfly Magazine Lower floor Cockrell Butterfly Center, Houston	
Please call contact for details, we would love for you to join us!			
Butterfly Counts for 2017			
Date	Count	Contact	
Sun. May 07	Spring Cypress Parklands	Steve Abbey	281/744-0225
Sat. May 13	San Jacinto County	Michael Eckenfels	713/899-1724
Sat. June 03	Raven	Hugh Wedgeworth	936/648-9550
Sat. July 01	Houston	Wally Ward	713/869-6856
Sat. Aug 26	Katy Prairie	Wally Ward	713/869-6856
Sat. Oct 07	Baytown	Sally Sherman	713/553-9706
Sun. Oct 01	Brazos Bend	Rich Jespersion	832/454-2127
Sat. Oct 21	Trinity	Stuart Marcus	936/334-5075
Sun. Oct 22	Magnolia	Don Dubois	936/ 524-8169

in April to May, and continues into June. Interestingly, vultures **don't** make nests. In most cases, females lay two eggs but have been known to lay one and rarely three. The eggs are whitish/cream colored and heavily marked with dark brown or lavender spots around the larger end. Eggs are generally laid on a bare surface in a protected location. TWRC receives many calls from the public reporting that a vulture took up residence in their atrium or on their front porch.

Both parents incubate, and the young hatch after 30 to 40 days. Chicks are altricial, or helpless at birth. Both adults feed the chicks by regurgitating food for them, and care for them for 10 to 11 weeks. When adults are threatened while nesting, they may flee, or they may regurgitate on the intruder or feign death. If the chicks are threatened in the nest, they defend themselves by hissing and regurgitating. Family groups will remain together until fall.

Although not endangered, vultures have been impacted by the use of lead bullets and buckshot used by hunters. If the shot animal is not removed or covered, vultures will consume the contaminated meat and become ill or die.

Because of their eating habits and appearance, vultures would probably never win a "My Favorite Bird" contest or "Most Beautiful Bird" award but they play an important role in keeping our environment cleaner and definitely smelling better. Have you thanked a vulture today?

If you'd like to learn more about TWRC Wildlife Center, what we do and how you can help, please visit our website at www.twrcwildlifecenter.org. Opportunities are available at our wildlife center and include baby bird and opossum feeders. We also provide training for in-home rehabilitators. TWRC Wildlife Center, 10801 Hammerly Boulevard, Houston, TX 77043. 713-468-TWRC.

From our membership:



John Jones

Nature at Your Fingertips

iNaturalist App Helps Identify, Monitor Flora and Fauna



Users of the app can snap a photo of wildlife, like this small-mouth buffalo fish, to share with the iNaturalist community

Need to identify a plant, animal, or fungus? There's an app for that! Download the iNaturalist app and take a walk through Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center. Is there a hopping critter along the path? Or maybe a flower you've never seen before? Snap a photo and share your observation with the iNaturalist community. The app includes a search function to help you identify your observation and the option to share details and additional photos.

"Users can actually see what others have recorded in Jones Park," says Matt Abernathy, naturalist at Jones Park. And there's no need to provide location details on your observation. When you snap a photo, the app automatically records the date, time, and location.

Jones Park started using iNaturalist to monitor wildlife populations and document plant and wildlife species throughout the park. "With thousands of visitors to the park each year, there are limitless observations possible. And making these discoveries is truly effortless," he says.

Abernathy explains that three graduate students from the University of California at Berkeley developed the app as part of a master's project. The California Academy of Sciences acquired the app in 2014, and it quickly became a global phenomenon.

"The app gives every person the ability to be a citizen scientist," Abernathy notes. Data from findings can be viewed and used for research and population studies. Students from Quest Early College High School are helping to regularly survey areas of Jones Park, and the park is hosting a one-day biological survey April 22 using iNaturalist to report sightings of plants and wildlife (see page 6). "iNaturalist is a fantastic program that will greatly enhance our ability to track and monitor plant and wildlife activities at Jones Park and ultimately help in park management activities," Abernathy says. He adds that additional park programs will eventually incorporate the app. "iNaturalist is a very powerful educational tool and so easy to use. I encourage you to download the app, get out into nature, and begin making observations!"

Adapted from Update, Spring/Summer 2017.

*Written by Susan Diemont-Conwell, Torma Communications
Harris County Precinct 4, www.hcp4.net/jones - Updated 4/6/2017*

Piney Woods Wildlife Membership Form

Last Name(s):		First Name of Member(s):	
Street Address:	City:	State and Zip:	
Home Phone No:	Work Phone No:	Email Address(s):	

Pine Warbler will be delivered by E-mail Only

Annual Membership Fee \$15.00*
Additional Contribution \$ _____
Total \$ _____

*Per Household – Includes *The Pine Warbler* newsletter

New _____ Renewal _____ Rejoining _____

Mail this form and check made payable to PWWS to:

Piney Woods Wildlife Society
P.O. Box 189
Spring, TX 77383-0189

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PWWS web site is at <http://www.pineywoodsnauresociety.org>
PWWS Facebook site is at
<https://www.facebook.com/Piney-Woods-Wildlife-Society-125891867423>



The Pine Warbler is published monthly, September through May, by The Piney Woods Wildlife Society, Inc.

For membership information write to us at P.O. Box 189, Spring Texas 77383-0189. Annual Dues: \$15.00 per household.

Please submit any articles you'd like considered for the PWWS Newsletter, The Pine Warbler, to Kathy Coward, justforthebirds@sbcglobal.net.

Please send all new address changes and any corrections to cdmoore3@gmail.com (Claire Moore) and add PWWS to the subject line. Thank you.

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