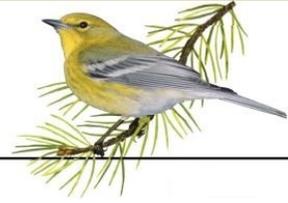


The Pine Warbler



Discovering Texas Native Bees

October Piney Woods Wildlife Society Program



Bee - grooming - arlon - Photo by Suzy Briseno

Suzy Briseño will give the October PWWS program on the topic of "Discovering Texas Native Bees." The program will be on Wednesday, October 17th, at 7 P.M., arrive at 6:30 P.M. for snacks and social.

After moving to Spring, Texas. Suzy became immersed in gardening and soon became fascinated with the local bird and pollinator fauna with a particular interest in hummingbirds, butterflies and bees. Her sense of aesthetics changed after her research led

her from concentrating on ornamental gardening to "wildscaping," planting mostly native vegetation used by local animals. Incrementally, she transformed most of her suburban yard in Spring into a wild bird and pollinator habitat, building five pollinator gardens. Her home became both a Certified Wildlife Habitat and a

Monarch Waystation, and soon thereafter Suzy received her Texas Master Gardener, Master Naturalist and Master Volunteer Entomology Specialist certificates. She is a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas and has recently joined the Piney Woods Wildlife Society.

To promote education about wildlife conservation, Suzy writes articles for master gardener and naturalist newsletters and in community newspapers. She also edits the Facebook pages, “Texas Bumblebees” and “Native Bee Allies” and gives presentations on pollinators, especially the ~1,100 or so Texas native bees, to master gardeners and naturalists, garden clubs and elementary schools. In 2016, she taught the native bee segment of the Texas Master Volunteer Entomology Specialists course.

Gardeners and naturalists may be well acquainted with bumble bees, honey bees and large carpenter bees, but what about squash bees, cactus bees, sunflower bees, leafcutters and green metallic bees? These are just a few of the ~1,100 bees native to Texas that many folks don't even know exist. At October 17th meeting, new member, Suzy Briseño, Texas Master Gardener, Naturalist and Volunteer Entomology Specialist, will give us an overview of some of the bees who excel at pollinating not only agricultural and garden plants but hundreds of wildflowers, grasses and other plants native to Texas. Landscaping tips and plant list will be given.



Cactus - Bee - Diadasia - spp - Photo by Suzy Briseno

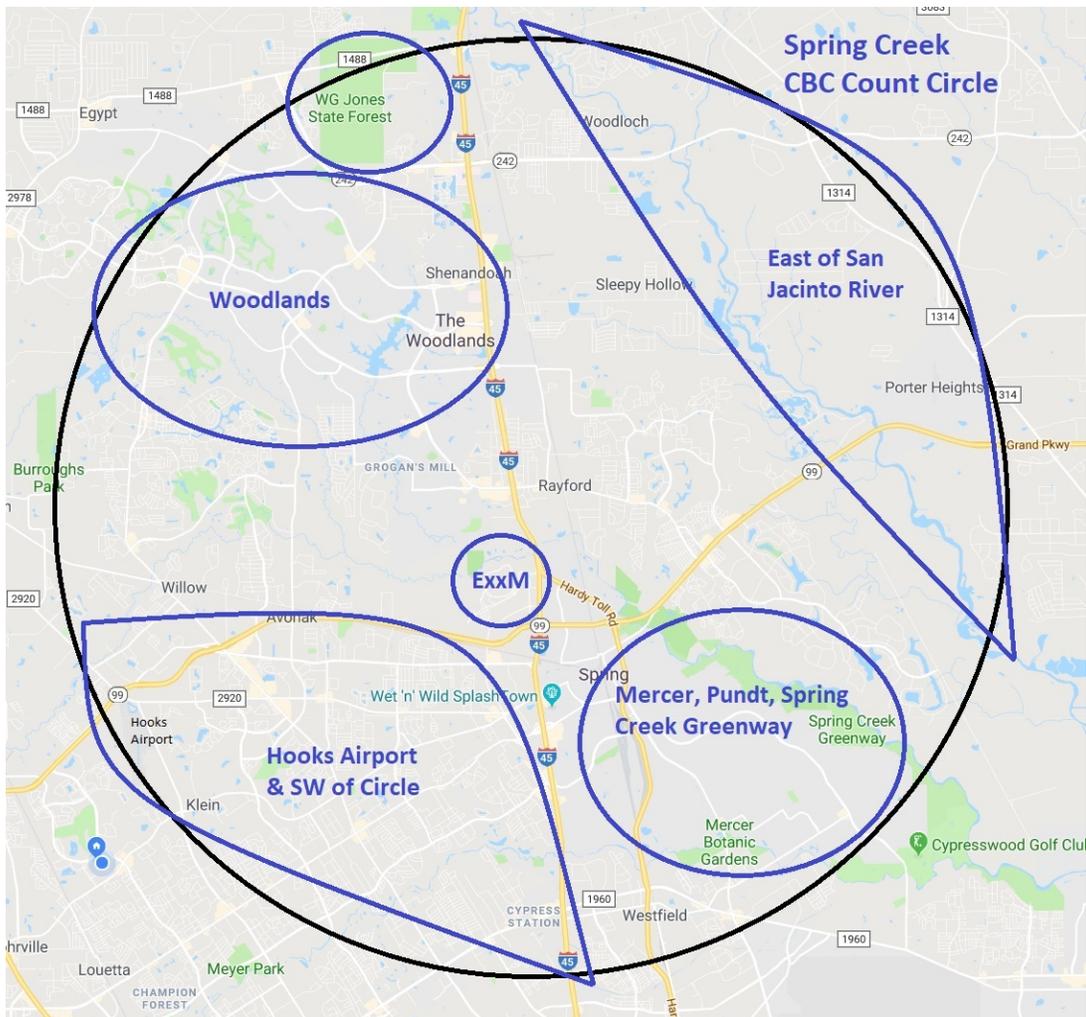


Bee- halictidae - sweat - Photo by Suzy Briseno



Purple coneflower - Bombus - pensylvanicus - Photo by Suzy Briseno

**Our November 20th meeting has
been changed to Nov 14th
Wednesday, the week before.
We are still looking for a
speaker for November meeting.**



Save the Date

Spring Creek CBC

Saturday 12-15-18

By Claire Moore

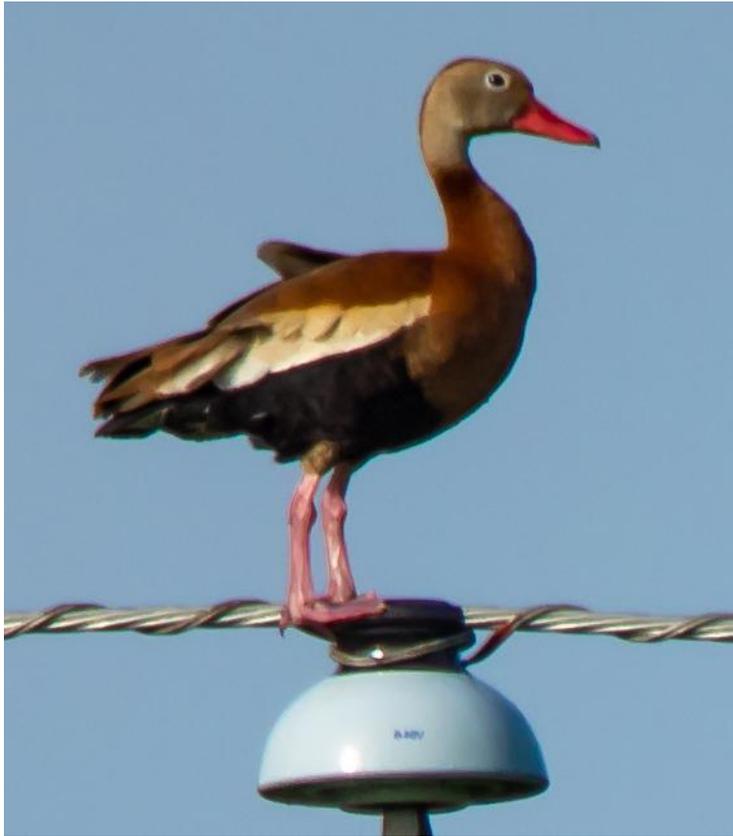
Save the date! Saturday, December 15th, will be the Spring Creek Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Our count circle is a 15 mile diameter area roughly centered at I45 at the Rayford Sawdust exit (see map).

Each December since 1986, Piney Woods Wildlife Society has sponsored the Spring Creek CBC. This year is no exception. If you can help either by birding in the field with one of the teams or by being a "feeder watcher" (if you live in the count circle), please contact Claire Moore at cdmoore3i@gmail.com.

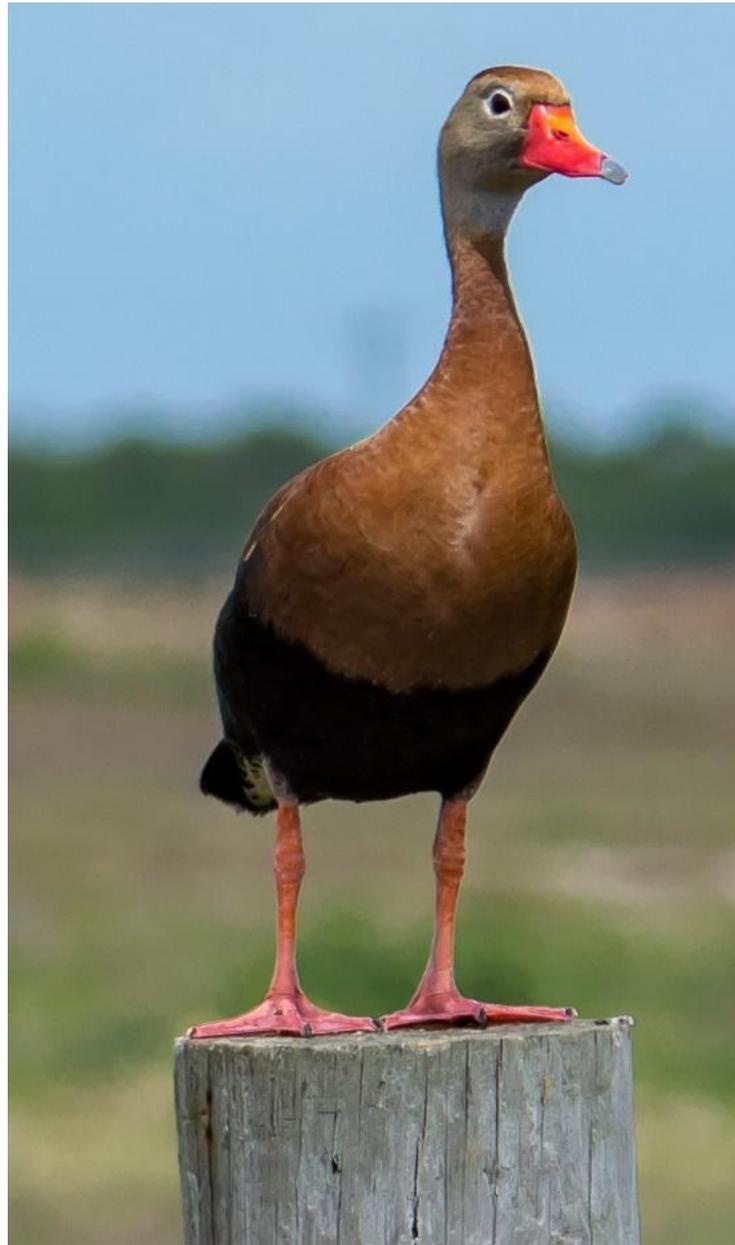
The CBC season (December 14 - January 5) is a great time to bird all over. Check out all the information about Texas CBCs at the Houston Audubon Society's web page [<https://houstonaudubon.org/birding/christmas-bird-counts/>]. Birders of all levels are encouraged to join in. Just contact the compiler of any areas that interest you and ask if you can help.

**SO LONG, BLACK BELLIED WHISTLING DUCKS, UNTIL
NEXT SUMMER**

By Pat Wayne - All photos by Gary Wayne



"Black Bellied Whistling Duck on wire - Photo by Gary Wayne"



"Black Bellied Whistling Duck on pole - Photo by Gary Wayne"



"Couple Black Bellied Whistling Ducks - Photo by Gary Wayne"



"Black Bellied Whistling Duck Swimming - Photo By Gary Wayne"

Actually, some BBW ducks do stay in our area all year, but they are hard to find, and it is risky for them. They are so thin and delicate, a lengthy cold snap like we had last winter can easily kill them. That is why the majority spend their winters in South and Central America.

I'll never forget the first time I saw one. A few years ago, I was floating on my back in the neighborhood swimming pool in the late afternoon, and saw a duck perched in an 80-foot tall pine tree looking down at me. I had never seen a duck in a tree, and I called everyone's attention to it. The lifeguard said they were there all the time. I was hooked.

After that day Gary and I were in our subdivision park nearly every afternoon before 8 p.m. waiting for the BBW ducks to fly in. We would always hear them

before we saw them, a chorus of what to me sounds more like soft, high-pitched wind chimes than whistling, more like the sound of a songbird than a duck. Then they would approach in formation, but vanish behind tree foliage. I was always afraid they had continued on to another lake, but Gary would point up, then signal to me to keep quiet. True to habit, there they were in the trees right over our heads, a dozen or so all over the branches of the loblolly pine trees. They were so high all we could see that late in the day were beautiful black silhouettes of skinny necked ducks with their beaks parted as they communicated back and forth to each other in their distinctive melodic language. I still can't get over awkward duck bodies with webbed feet gripping thin tree limbs at such high altitudes. It was not something I saw or ever expected to see growing up in rural middle Georgia.

It was not until I went online and found Greg Lavaty's beautiful photos of BBW ducks that I saw how brightly and distinctly colored they are, and how graceful and sublime they stand. Their necks and backs are as beautiful a shade of rust as you will ever see on any of God's creatures, while their bellies are the darkest brown, giving them their name. Their heads are a neutral gray with a rust mohawk that extends down the backs of their necks to join the rust on their backs. Their legs and feet are pink, and their bills a color of orange rarely found anywhere else in nature, vivid bright orange with a coral bias. There is no part of them that is not splendid!

They seem to travel in communities, and they mate for life. We have been able to find several bodies of shallow water where communities of BBW ducks fly in at the end of the day to forage. The spillway beside South Shore Park on Lake Woodlands is a place where several communities of BBW ducks often congregate during the summer, along with many other species of shore birds. I have a little bird call that sounds a lot like the tinkling whistles they make. I like to stand on the Woodlands Parkway Bridge at night overlooking the spillway and rotate the handle of my little bird call. They are already whistling softly and contentedly, but my little bird call really gets them going! I pretend I am conducting a bird orchestra!

They haven't been with us that long; only in the last few years did they cross the border and begin to make their summer homes in Florida and south Texas. They are gradually moving farther north, until now some of them are even spending their summers nesting and breeding in Oklahoma. I suppose there are some advantages to global warming.

This summer I first noticed three different broods of BBW ducklings on Pine Lake in the Auburn Lakes subdivision on the first day of July. One single parent nurtured one duckling, another single parent was protecting three ducklings, and a couple were the proud parents of nine ducklings.

Gary and I spent a good part of our summer taking photos and watching the yellow and black striped ducklings grow up. Three days after I first discovered them we noticed both single parents were gone, and the couple were now hovering protectively over 14 ducklings. We assumed the single parents put their young up for adoption, so all the ducklings on that pond could grow up as one family. Since BBW ducks may produce two broods in one season, the single parents probably went right to work on their second brood.

The ducklings seem to spend as much time on shore as they do in the water, but always close to the water's edge when on land so they can take to the water if anyone or anything gets too close. If the parents think their ducklings are in danger, they do the 'killdeer thing', flopping around some distance from the shoreline with a wing hanging limp, whistling to beat the band, as if they have just been shot and are in the throes of death. Very impressive performance. (Don't ask me how I know.) Meanwhile the ducklings take to the water in tight formation paddling for all they are worth towards the center of the pond where their parents fly in to join them. Those tiny little ducklings have so much speed, their little feet must be nothing but a whirl beneath the surface. It is easy to understand why there is a LOT of smug pride on the faces of BBW duck parents.

I was worried about snapping turtles eating the ducklings when they were small, so I threw dry cat food into the pond initially, hoping the turtles would fill up on cat food and be too full to go after the ducklings. The fishermen both teased and encouraged me. Because the fish were eating it too, they told me I was helping to increase the size of their catch.

By the end of August, we could no longer tell the parents from their brood. The group moved around to other nearby lakes as they learned to fly and were often seen perched on the rooftops of homes in Auburn Lakes. On the day before our September PWWS Meeting they were all lined up on the shore of another smaller lake in Auburn Lakes less than a mile from Pines Lake. They seemed to be craning their necks toward the south as if they were listening to something. The day after our September meeting I could not find them anywhere, and I have not seen them since. But I so-o-o look forward to their return next summer, and the first sounds of their melodic whistling.

Next summer I plan to find out where they are laying their eggs and exactly when they hatch. They prefer to nest in tree cavities or nesting boxes, but there are so few tree cavities in this predominantly hardwood region I strongly suspect their nests are on the shoreline beneath the shelter of cypress trees where they are not as hidden from predators as they might think, and where the rising flood waters could wash away the eggs. We are thinking of constructing and erecting nesting boxes for their safety. They often use the same nesting boxes as wood

ducks. Wood ducks nest in April and early May and are out and done with the boxes before migrating BBW ducks return from Central and South America in late May and early June.

According to online resources BBW ducklings only stay in the nest one full day after hatching. The net also says adult females often lay eggs in a communal nest. So, it sounds like the parents may put their young up for adoption even before they hatch.

They are protected in most areas, but because they do so much damage to grain crops and are multiplying so rapidly, hunting is now allowed in some parts of Texas. While there are many predators of the eggs, especially if they are laid on the ground, the only natural predators of adult BBW ducks are Great Horned Owls and rarely but occasionally Bald Eagles.

For further research:

http://www.pbase.com/dadas115/blackbellied_whistlingduck

<https://www.thespruce.com/black-bellied-whistling-duck-386362>

https://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Black-bellied_Whistling-Duck/lifehistory

<https://70birds.com/birdhouses/black-bellied-whistling-duck/>



"Mamma duck with her babies - Photo by Gary Wayne"



"Baby Black Bellied Whistling Ducks lineup - Photo by Gary Wayne"

HEART Happenings

by Carole Allen



Victory at Sea: Governor Signs Bill to End Driftnets in California September 27th, 2018

San Francisco Bay Area (September 27, 2018) – Today, California Governor Jerry Brown signed a bill (SB 1017) that will phase out the use of large-scale driftnets, also known as ‘walls of death,’ that are used to catch swordfish but also trap a myriad of ocean animals.

Turtle Island Restoration Network has led a coalition of concerned citizens and partner organizations working for nearly 20 years to stop the devastating impact of this driftnet fishery on sea turtles, whales, dolphins, and other ocean animals. This effort began with litigation in 2000 that led to a 250,000 square mile closure to protect endangered sea turtles.

“This is an historic victory for sea turtles, whales, sharks and dolphins. Today marks the end of driftnets in US waters, a barbaric and antiquated fishing technology that has largely operated in secrecy off our coasts for decades and unbeknownst to most Californians,” said Todd Steiner, a marine ecologist and Executive Director of Turtle Island Restoration Network.

Donate to Protect Ocean Wildlife Today

Help protect sea turtles, whales, salmon, and other marine species from extinction and suffering with a gift to Turtle Island Restoration Network.

If you would like to donate by phone or have other inquiries, please call us at 1-800-859-7283. Thank you!

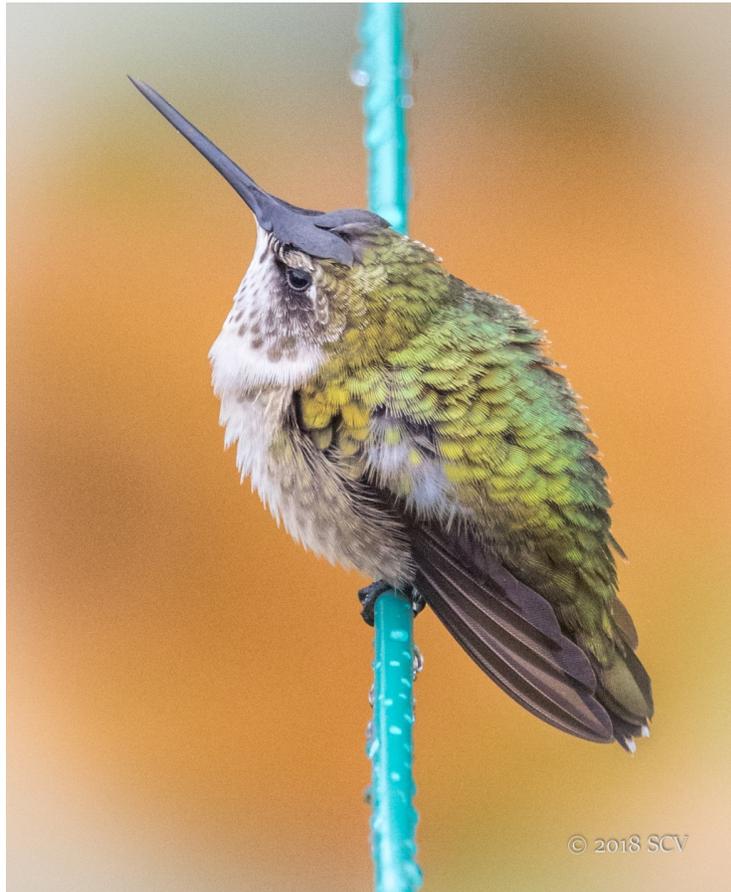
Turtle Island Restoration Network • PO Box 370 • Forest Knolls, CA 94933 •
Phone: (415) 663-8590 • info@seaturtles.org



© 2018 SCV

Old Red Eared Slider turtle, carapace was over 12 inches in length, Nassau Lake in Nassau Bay. Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn

Photos by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn



Not happy with my new 'do from all the rain! Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Backyard Clear Lake City, (Houston) Texas. Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn



This is Ferris, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird. He luv's to ride the seven foot tall wind spinner sculpture in the backyard! Clear Lake City (Houston) Texas. Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn



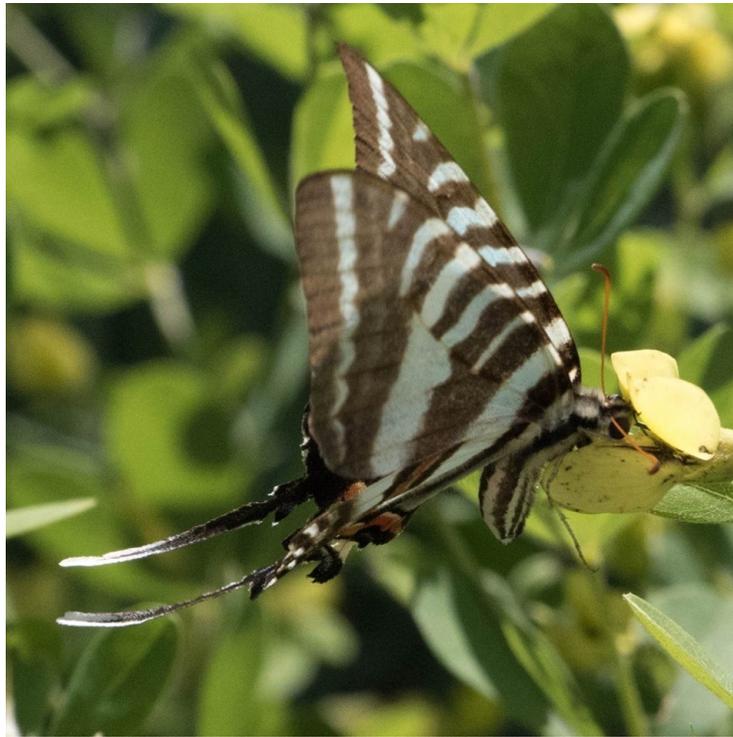
This was an insane angle, but a very rewarding shot! Adult Male Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Looking right up at me!!! Backyard Clearlake City, (Houston) Texas. Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn



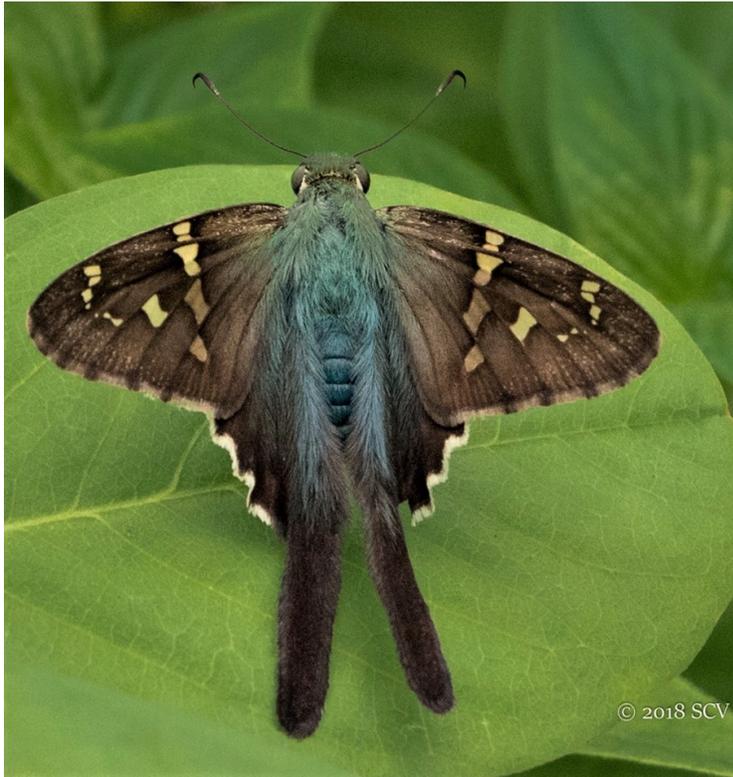
The hummingbird Stretch! Adult Male Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Backyard Clear Lake City, (Houston) Texas. Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn



*The Spicebush Swallowtail Caterpillar Gang! Early instars on right, 4th instars center, 5th instars left and front. Clear Lake City (Houston) Texas.
Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn*



Zebra Swallowtail - Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn



Long-tailed Skipper in the garden today! Backyard Clear Lake City (Houston) Texas. Photo by Sandy Crystal-Vaughn

Photos by Jim Snyder



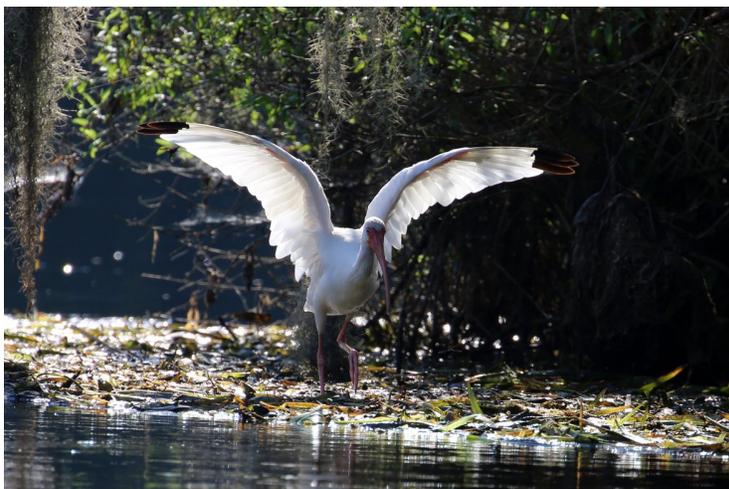
Anhinga male, Wakulla Springs S.P., Wakulla County, FL, at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park 15SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



Anahinga with basking turtles, Wakulla Springs S.P., Wakulla County, FL, at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, 15SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



Little Blue Heron, Wakulla Springs S.P., Wakulla County, FL, at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, 15SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



*White Ibis, Wakulla Springs S.P., Wakulla County, FL , Edward Ball
Wakulla Springs State Park - 15SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder*



*Baby Alligators, Wakulla Springs, S.P., Wakulla County, FL - at Edward
Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, 15SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder*



*Florida Panhandle - American Alligator, Wakulla Springs S.P., Wakulla
County, FL, at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, 22SEP2018 .
Photo by Jim Snyder*



American Alligator - Wakulla Springs, S.P., Wakulla County, FL, at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park, 15SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



Carolina Satyr Wakulla Springs S.P., Wakulla County, FL, at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park. Photo by Jim Snyder



Eastern Tiger Swallowtail male dorsal, Hickory Mount, Unit. Photo by Jim

Snyder



Zebra Heliconian, Wakulla Springs S.P., Wakulla County, FL, at Edward Ball Wakulla Springs State Park. Photo by Jim Snyder



Red spotted purple dorsal Aspalaga Landing Road, Torreya State Park, Gadsden County, FL, 21SEP 2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



Red-banded Hairstreak Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park Tallahassee, Leon County, FL, 22SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



Question Mark dorsal, Aspalago Landing Road, Torreya State Park, Gadsden County, FL, 21SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



'Seminole' Texas Crescent male and female dorsal, Aspalaga Landing

Road, Torreya State Park, Gadsden County, FL, 21SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder



'Seminole' Texan Crescent ventral mating pair, Aspalaga Landing Road, Torreya State Park, Gadsden County, FL, 21SEP2018. Photo by Jim Snyder

Photos by Randy Scott



Wild turkeys in Palo Duro Canyon. Photo by Randy Scott



Prairie Dogs - Caprock Canyons State Park. Photo by Randy Scott



Prairie dogs - Photo by Randy Scott



Loved watching the Prairie Dogs. They do sorta look like a dog. Photo by Randy Scott

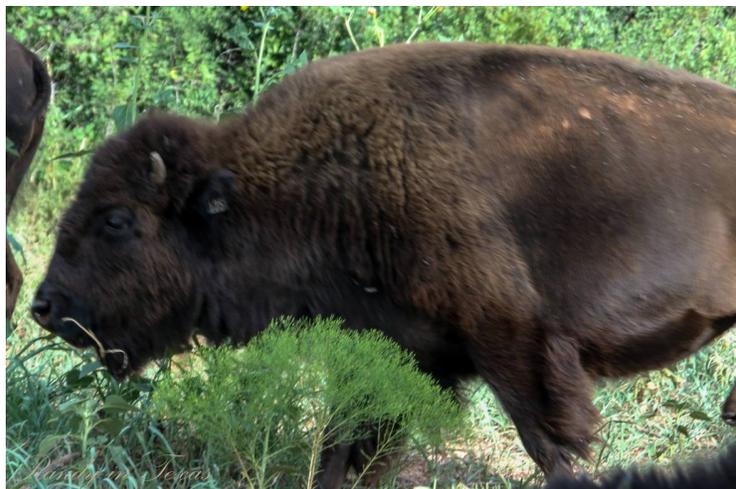


Bison photo by Randy Scott



Randy in Texas

Ahhhhh a dirt bath! Photo by Randy Scott



Bison close-up - Photo by Randy Scott



We got a brochure saying this is an example of how close NOT TO GET! Suddenly we found ourselves right next to these wild beasts. There is a native herd in Caprock Canyons State Park. Photo by Randy Scott



Bison this one got hurt somehow not long ago. Photo by Randy Scott



Sometimes we would stop and just sit in awe of these magnificent scenes. Light was coming from the setting sun to the left in this case. Caprock Canyons State Park. Photo by Randy Scott



Sunset in Panhandle on the way to Canyon Texas on the first day of travel. West Texas Cedar trees on the ground. Photo by Randy Scott



Just after sunset over the lake in the park, behind the canyon wall, at Caprock Canyons State Park. Photo by Randy Scott



Clydesdale Horse Chariot in Western Europe. Photo by Randy Scott



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.

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.

| 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 \$ _____ | | Mail this form and check made payable to PWWS to: Piney Woods Wildlife Society P.O. Box 189 Spring, TX 77383-0189 |
| *Per Household – Includes <i>The Pine Warbler</i> newsletter New _____ Renewal _____ Rejoining _____ | | |

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PWWS web site is www.pineywoodswildlifesociety.org

PWWS Facebook site is at <https://www.facebook.com/Piney-Woods-Wildlife-Society-125891867423250/>

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 our President, Kathy Coward, justforthebirds@sbcglobal.net or Diane Wedgeworth, Editor, milanodi@yahoo.com

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

HAPPY HALLOWEEN



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