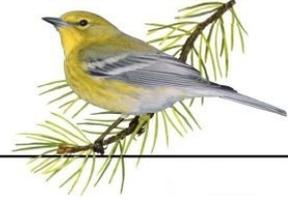


The Pine Warbler



Piney Woods Wildlife Society - March Program

Being a Bee Keeper

by Farrar Stockton



Hobbyist Beekeeper, Farrar Stockton - Smoking his bees

Farrar has been a member of PWWS since 1983 and has volunteered to serve on the PWWS Board, the Outdoor Nature Club, and BEST (Butterfly Enthusiasts of South East Texas) for many years. He retired from Chase in 2002 after 27 years of service and now works part time at the Museum of Natural Science helping with the permanent butterfly and beetle collections. Farrar's main interests are family and friends, nature, and watching Houston's sports.

Farrar will go back to the early 1990's and show how he took care of 2 to 3 hives. He'll share images of getting started, maintaining the hive of bees, extracting the

honey, and helping preserve the bee hive will be shown.

Please join us on Wednesday, March 20, 2019, for a wonderful evening! Farrar Stockton will give his program entitled "Being a Bee Keeper". (Social time with snacks provided is at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7 p.m. at the Big Stone Lodge at Dennis Johnston Park located at 709 Riley Fuzzel Road in Spring, Texas.

We hope to see you there!



"Farrar's bees" - Photo by Farrar Stockton



"Farrar's bees" - Photo by Farrar Stockton



honey bee - Flickr by Seiyu (Oushu) - Mitsu-Bachi

Locating Birds Needed for Your Life List

by Claire Moore

The **Cornell** Lab  of Ornithology

eBird

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If you are one of those people who log all your life birds in eBird.org, this can be a big help in finding locations of potential lifers. eBird has several options for locating lifers and there is also a phone application called BirdsEye that can show you what lifers have been seen nearby. If all your past bird sightings aren't logged in eBird, you can retroactively log them so that eBird knows all the lifers you have.

The free BirdsEye Bird Finding Guide app (available for iPhone & Android) will show you all birds that are nearby your location. Your "Nearby" list can be configured by distance and number of weeks using the filter option. The third tab (at the upper right) is entitled "Needs". This tab shows you any birds from the nearby list that you have not yet seen.

BirdsEye retrieves the bird sightings from those submitted to eBird.org by other birders. You can see when and where the birds were reported by clicking to the right of the bird pictures on the monthly bar charts. Each reported sighting will be shown on a map as red dots. When you click on a red dot, you will see the location and date of the sighting. Clicking on the description, you will see the entire checklist that was submitted.

eBird.org offers the ability to create "Target Lists" which is useful when traveling to new locations and knowing what new birds there might be for you. This functionality can be accessed under the Explore tab, then scroll down and click on "Target Species". You can enter a County, State, or Country where you will be birding. Then select the time of the year and the type of life list. Some people are interested in their county list or state list. I'm the type that is more interested in my (world-wide) life list.

I know this is complicated, but if you have questions, you can email me at cdmoore3i@gmail.com and I'll do my best to help you.

HEART Happenings

by Carole Allen



Kemp Ridley Sea Turtle

(Sea turtle nesting season has not started on the Texas coast or the northeast coast of Mexico, but the following article found on Green Matters on the Internet is especially timely.)

A new study has been published that examined the U.S. Endangered Species Act — an environmental protection policy that was first signed into law in 1973 as part of an effort to protect various species that were at risk of becoming either endangered or possibly even extinct. In the study, published in the academic journal PLOS ONE, researchers out of Tucson, AZ. examined 31 different populations of marine mammals and sea turtles and found that — of the populations they examined — 78 percent of the marine mammals and 75 percent of the sea turtles showed population increases following the legally mandated protections put in place.

In the study, they revealed that only 9 percent of the mammals examined decreased following their status being legally protected, while none of the sea turtles suffered population decreases. In fact, the population of sea turtles increased by about 980 percent following the legal protection they received as part of the law. Hawaiian humpback whales saw another amazing victory in terms of population growth; they increased from just 800 whales in 1979 to more than 10,000 in 2005. In 2016, the species recovered so significantly that they

were removed from the endangered species list — a success that the researchers believe can be duplicated with the proper resources and attention.

“The humpback whales migrating along the West Coast are a success story everyone can appreciate,” Abel Valdivia, one of the study’s coauthors, said in a press release. “We can clearly save endangered species if we make the effort, provide the needed funds, and have strong laws like the Endangered Species Act to guide the work.”



Sea Turtle

HOUSTON , WE HAVE A PROBLEM

by Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center



The Houston toad was discovered in the late 1940's but wasn't named until 1953. John Wottring, an amateur herpetologist, heard an unfamiliar, high-pitched trill-sounding nighttime call in South Houston and it was discovered that the toad belonged to an undescribed species and it was then named the Houston toad.

The Houston toad is a native Texan and it was thriving in the Houston area before a severe drought in the 1950's and urbanization destroyed much of its habitat. Sadly, the toad is no longer a resident of the city and what's especially disturbing is that it's now listed as critically endangered by both the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife.

So, what exactly does the classification of endangered mean? Endangered means the species is on the brink of extinction. The few that are left in the wild are scattered across nine Texas counties but Bastrop County seems to have the highest concentration of them. So just how many are left? No one knows for sure but according to the Houston Toad Association, there are only 300 left. E & E News estimates the population to be around 2,000.

So why should you care if they become extinct? Because they are part of an

ecosystem. The dictionary's definition of an ecosystem is "all the living things, from plants and animals to microscopic organisms that share an environment." They all play an important role. Think of an ecosystem as a spider web. If one part of the web gets destroyed, it weakens the rest of the web.

The Houston Zoo is on a mission to save the Houston toad from extinction. They maintain a facility for captive breeding of the toad. Just last year 1,082,000 toad eggs were released into the wild.

Another important measure being taken to save the toad from extinction is the Houston Toad Safe Harbor Agreement. The agreement encourages landowners within the area where toads are known to live to take specific steps to benefit the toad. Some of these actions include pond management, invasive species control and reintroducing the toad on their property.

In addition to the Houston toad, the state of Texas and the US government list an additional 200+ Texas species as threatened or endangered. By listing them as threatened or endangered, this legally protects the animal and its habitat and hopefully will prevent the animal from becoming extinct.

TWRC Wildlife Center understands the devastating impact that human interactions, urban sprawl and weather events have on wildlife. That's why the work we do is so important. We are here for the animals that get injured from dogs and cat bites, get hit by cars, or have their nests destroyed from cutting down trees. These are just a few of the many types of injuries we see.

We care for about 4,000 animals every year. If you'd like to help give these animals a second chance at life, go to our website at www.twrcwildlifecenter.org and click on "Volunteer". We need you and they need you.

Cheryl Conley President TWRC Wildlife Center
10801 Hammerly Blvd., Suite 200
Houston, TX 77043



Rockport Beach Park

Beautiful Bird Photos from Hank

by H.M. Arnold

[FYI from editor Diane Wedgeworth: Nancy and Hank Arnold are friends of mine that live in Rockport and have the opportunity to go birding at some of the most beautiful places on the Texas Coast. They put their pictures on a free photo sharing website called SmugMug for anyone to view and/or download. I'm excited to share some of their story and their photos below.

Below are some comments from Hank Arnold as well as some links to his Smugmug photo sharing site... The photos are free to everyone to view & download with no registration needed.]

It's fine with me if you download the pictures or tell anyone that likes one, they can download as many as they want.

My highest award is when someone uses one of my pictures as a screen saver.

You might warn people that if they try to download them, they are in full resolution, so they are huge files. If anyone wants a size that easier to use, all they have to do is tell me which folder and which picture, and I'll send them back a smaller file.

[Here is a link to pictures of] [Nesting Season in Rockport Little Bay](https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20180508-Little-Bay) (DOWNTOWN Rockport!)...<https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20180508-Little-Bay>

"The sun came out" for the first time today in quite a while, and the locals were all over it.

We have more Black Skimmers at the Rockport Beach Park than I've ever seen before, and they used the beautiful weather to the fullest.

Here is a link to images and a video of what I saw...

[Bath Time in Skimmerville](https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20190221-Rockport-Beach-Park)

<https://hmarnold.smugmug.com/20190221-Rockport-Beach-Park>

At first I thought it was just bathing, but then I realized that there was a significantly higher infestation of fun that would normally be expected of personal hygiene.

The only thing I can relate to in my personal experience would be the kiddie pool during the heat of the summer. Our mothers were glad to be rid of us and the lifeguard was tired of yelling "HEY YOU KID – QUIT THAT!!!" over and over and over again.

It was usually around October before I realized that my name wasn't "HEY YOU KID".

The concept of flying at 25 miles an hour with your lower jaw in the water seems dangerous enough, but doing it through water that is only and inch and a half deep seems dangerous.

Dangerous on a level of riding our bikes with no hands or running with scissors.

All in all, though, it was a wonderful afternoon, and all involved survived without injury.

I'm sure the mother Skimmers were relieved.

Hank

email: HMArnold@msn.com

Backyard Beauties - Sunday February 3, 2019 - Set 1

by Paul Gregg

Happy Super Bowl Sunday! . . . er. . . .ummmmm. . . . how about a bird or two to brighten your day?

Since the first of the year we have been watching our feeders we have out for any birds to photograph. The goldfinches finally showed up and have been trying to cut deeply into our checkbook! The numbers of goldfinches have tapered off a bit, but they are still coming. The Carolina Chickadee likes to come get a drink from the water in the middle of our hummingbird feeder. Pine warblers have been very consistent and I've almost gotten to the point where I just look at them instead of photographing them. Each morning around 7:30 or 8, I put seed out as well as put "bark butter" in the holes I've drilled into a branch I specially made to hang up. Well, just after I come back into the house, the starlings arrive (maybe 4 to 6) and eat some of the bark butter. Yellow-rumped warblers are apparently everywhere and we hear their calls all day long, no matter where we go.

I know European Starlings are an invasive species and I know they are not welcome in our yards very much, and I know they can be detrimental to other birds. BUT, when the sun is shining on them, they can really show some pretty colors.

Enjoy the photos. . . . and the game!

Paul Gregg, SMSGT, USAF (Ret.)

(H) 281.441.9083; (Cell) 281.536.2304

Gen. 1:20: And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.

Enjoy!

Paul



© Paul Gregg

American Goldfinch



© Paul Gregg

American Goldfinch



© Paul Gregg

European Starling



© Paul Gregg

European Starling



© Paul Gregg

Yellow-rumped Warbler



© Paul Gregg

Pine Warbler



© Paul Gregg

Carolina Chickadee



© Paul Gregg

European Starling

Backyard Beauties - Sunday February 3, 2019 - Set 2

by Paul Gregg

Carol and I have been birding to a couple other places than Cattail Marsh and have even returned to Cattail Marsh for a 2nd time this year. Since the weather just doesn't want to yield to a lot of going places, we have been watching the backyard a lot. Even when the weather has been bad I've been able to get some interesting "challenges" to take to my digital darkroom. Case in point is the Cooper's Hawk we had on the 31st. It stayed, and stayed, . . . and stayed. It was dark and sprinkling rain and I almost didn't take any photos. BUT decided to photograph it and see what I could do in Lightroom CC Classic. You can see the result in the before and after shots, one as it was taken, and one as cropped and

digitally processed. For photographers out there who use Lightroom CC Classic, there's a "dehaze" slider that has helped me a lot on a number of photos that were in need of a little boost. Try it and let me know what you think.

The ruby-crowned kinglet was just outside our back door in the rose bush. Though looking mostly away, at least I got a little of its ruby crown. The Downy Woodpecker makes its rounds in the neighborhood and was just above where I was sitting the other day. The Carolina Wren likes the bark butter at my newly constructed hanging feeder. We haven't seen many red-winged blackbirds yet, but had this female come to the feeder on the 1st. As in the previous e-mail, the goldfinches are still coming around and I attached one more photo of one.

Enjoy!

Paul Gregg, SMSGT, USAF (Ret.)

(H) 281.441.9083; (Cell) 281.536.2304

Gen. 1:20: And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.



Coopers Hawk before editing



© Paul Gregg

Coopers Hawk



© Paul Gregg

Coopers Hawk



American Goldfinch



Red winged Blackbird - female



Ruby crowned Kinglet



© Paul Gregg

Carolina Wren



© Paul Gregg

Downy Woodpecker

Happy Texas Independence Day, March 2, 1836.



Photos by Sandy Crystal Vaughn



Yellow-rumped Warbler (aka Butter-Butt)! Backyard Clear Lake City (Houston) Texas 02-13-2019.



I think this is a non-breeding male Indigo Bunting. Garden visitor eating seed heads. Backyard Clear Lake City (Houston) Texas 02-07-2019.



Best image from counting birds for the Great Backyard Bird Count. Adult Red-tailed Hawk! Clear Lake City (Houston) Texas 02-18-2019

Great Back Yard Bird Count

Experience of Sandy Crystal Vaughn

Following in a link to the eBird checklist with pictures of Sandy's bird sightings for the recent Back Yard Bird Count. She reports:

Greetings,

The size range was from a Black-chinned Hummingbird to a Red-tailed Hawk. Started doing this event in 2013; this is the seventh year submitting a checklist! It is always amazing what is seen when you start looking up!!! Clear Lake City (Houston) Texas 02-18-2019:

<https://ebird.org/gbbc/view/checklist/S52934564>

Until Next Time,

Sandy Crystal Vaughn



Photo by Anita Wren



Cedar Waxwings - by Anita Wren

Every February The Woodlands is blessed with a visit from hundreds of Robins and Cedar Waxwings. There are a lot of Yaupon trees on my street full of berries and these beautiful birds arrive to feast on them. They only stay a short while and then move on to other areas. I have had them twice this year and love every minute of watching and photographing them.

Choose Joy,

ANITA

Photos by Randy Scott



Randy in Texas

Cedar Waxwings in a feeding frenzy this morning in my backyard. At least 100 birds in the flock and one Robin. 2-22-2019



Randy in Texas

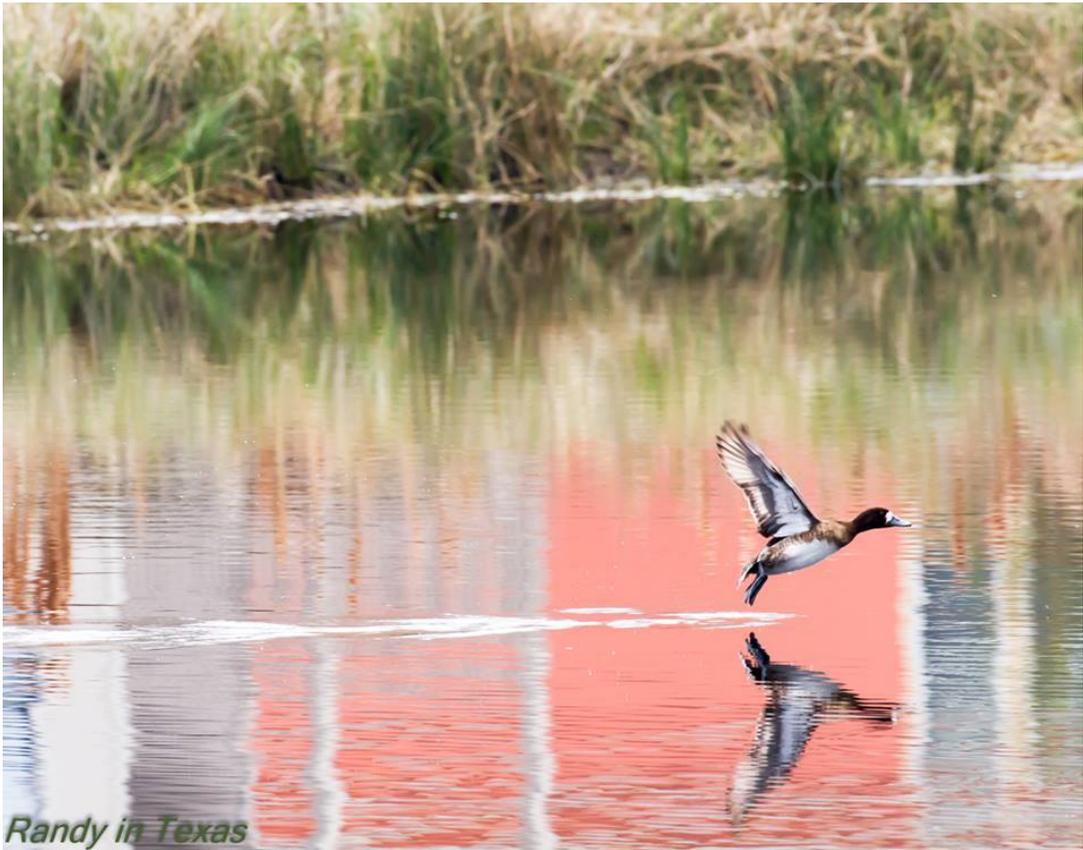
Bald Head Eagles - Family life in the nest. One baby cannot be seen... taking a nap. Calm and no drama yesterday while I was there. You could feel the love within the family. 02-06-2019



Eaglets now seven weeks old - 02-12-2019



Nutria at Galveston a few days ago. He stood there for us to photograph for quite some time. I thought it was a Beaver at first but it had a rat's tail. Pretty animal. At LaFitte's sanctuary. 02-21-2019



Randy in Texas

Blue-Winged Teal - One of my favorite photos from birding in Galveston on Saturday 02-19-2019



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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Please join us!

PWWS web site is www.pineywoodswildlifesociety.org

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

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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.





*Wishing you a rainbow
For sunlight after showers-
Miles and miles of Irish smiles
For golden happy hours-
Shamrocks at your doorway
For luck and laughter too,
And a host of friends that never ends
Each day your whole life through!*

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