

"ART IS FOR THE BIRDS"

Birdhouse Contest worth waiting out the rain... creative BIRDIEST FESTIVAL IN AMERICA venture is new summer exhibit!

> Seventy colorful, original birdhouse designs were "hatched" when board member Joe Schenk watched a similar idea on national news one evening, suggesting we submit a proposal to the City's Arts & Cultural Commission H.O.T. Funded Grant Program, and the excitement took flight!

3 TOP WINNERS - "Decorate Ours"













Kimmi Norvell Moake

Julie Crow

Noemi Valle

Morgan Knight

Tyra Dorman

Nick Moncada

Carpenter / birdhouse builder Clifford Mann crafted three styles of bare wood "Decorate Ours" models which artisans checked out for a \$25 deposit. Others opted to "Build Your Own." All contestants received a materials stipend. The top three in each category would win cash prizes! Deadlines came and 70 amazing design concepts filled administrative offices! Rain delayed display, viewing and judging, then postponed Birding Festival "Community Day," scheduled for April 29! (see article, p. 12)

MORE JUDGES' FAVORITES



Anita Diebel







Candace Tidmore



Joanne & Dan Phillips





The Birds of the Sixth Annual "Birdiest Festival in America" | by Joel Simon, Program Coordinator

The one thing making this festival so outstanding was the sheer numbers of individuals of each species so easy to find and see up close! Two rainy fronts (luckily mostly at night) grounded the neo tropic migrants up and down the coast.

Of 233 birders from 27 states, 134 were Texans, 58 local!

Warblers, warblers everywhere, anywhere you look!

- Thirty-one species of warblers, a new record
- Palm Warbler

Shorebird enthusiasts

- Thirty-four species seen
- Hudsonian Godwit, Buff-breasted Sandpiper

Raptors

- Twenty-two species seen
- Swallow-tailed Kite
- Aplomado Falcon, nesting near Port Aransas



TIFFANY KERSTEN

Ninja Nature Birding Tours **Keynote Speaker** "BIRDIE BIG YEAR Elevating Women Birders" **Festival Field Trip Guide**

DENISE HOUSLER

Festival Chair, 6th year **Botanical Gardens President** Owner, Aquaria Services, Inc.

Two BEST BIRDS

- Black-Capped Vireo seen at Packery Channel Park
- Two Black Rails at Guadalupe Delta Preserve

How Good Was the Birding?

Clay Taylor's 10-hour "BIG DAY" set a record 156 species!

Possibly even more exciting...

 Festival host South Texas Botanical Gardens had a one-day "Bird Walk" of 92 species in three hours!!!

IN SUMMARY, "Birdiest Festival of America's"

- 2023 total was 268 species, adding five new species, bringing its SIX-YEAR total to 317 species!
- Adding Pre and Post Trips, BFIA's GRAND TOTAL now stands at 341 species!



Presented by:





























erfect weather, better traffic flow and Mayor Paulette Guajardo escorting the Easter Bunny seemed to encourage many smiles and plants in plant wagons!

Thanks to \$2 admission made possible by Presenting Sponsor Corpus Christi Medical Center, April 1 BIG BLOOM drew at least 4500 guests spending over \$52,500 on plants & orchids and \$8000 on new memberships!

Record-setting sponsorships led the way to a \$50,000 net fundraiser—and plenty of fun with butterfly & ladybug releases, parrot & reptile events.





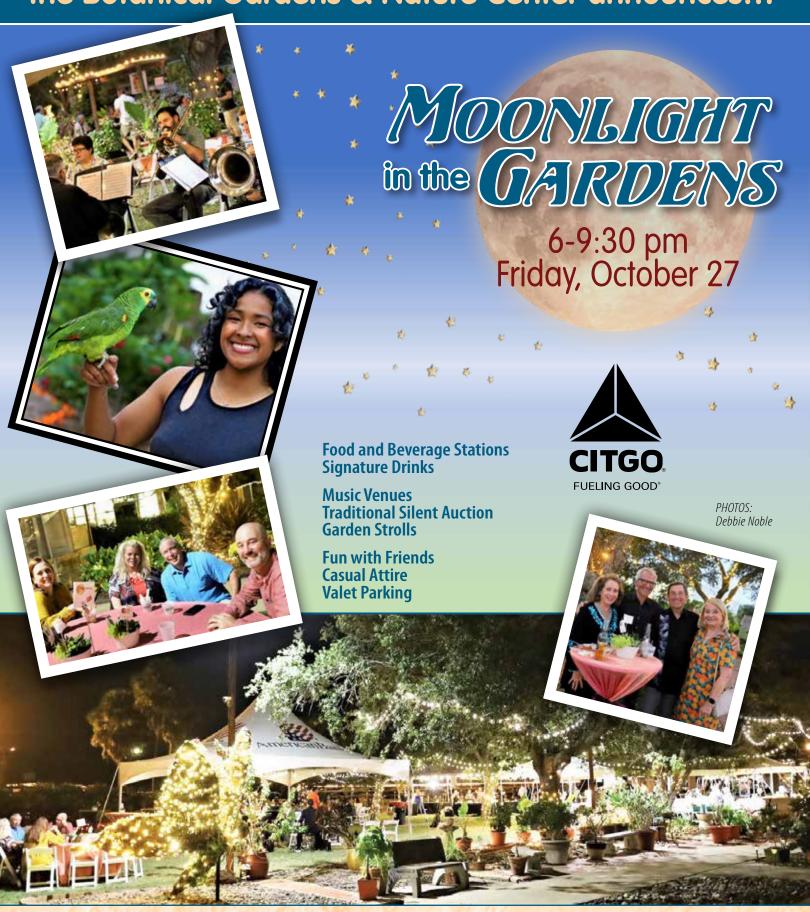








SAVE THE DATE for another perfect starry night, the Botanical Gardens & Nature Center announces...



Sponsorships available now!

Contact Michael Womack, wmwomack@stxbot.org, 361-852-2100, for more Information

Latest BOULIGNY MATCH met, surpassed!

By May 17, we had exceeded our January 1 Eugene Bouligny \$25,000 challenge match, raising more than \$40,600 for new projects or from new donors. We thank him for continuing support by generous matches making a huge difference, especially during pandemic years.





New section of S. Oso Parkway now open

Our section of S. Oso Parkway has opened, soon to be the new Botanical Gardens entrance road! Between the Gardens and Botanical Gardens subdivision, it connects S. Staples St. to a residential section of S. Oso Parkway, with a right turn to visitor parking, and left through the subdivision joining Country Creek Drive.

Moving our entrance roughly 400 feet west greatly has improved sight distance from the blind curve on Oso Creek bridge, making both left and right exits safer. Once new gates and fencing are installed at the new entrance to visitor parking; and directional signage placed at S. Staples/S. Oso Parkway, the current entrance will close except for emergencies or special events.

Also new is a paved parking area behind Education Station for school bus field trip drop-off and chaperone parking, as well as for evening meetings. Street and parking were built by City Bond Issue 2018 with major support led by Mayor Paulette Guajardo, along with Council members At Large Michael Hunter, District 3 Roland Barrera, District 5 Gil Hernandez, former Council members Joe McComb and Ben Molina.





PAPER

Mail, notebook paper, magazines Empty, flattened cardboard



Metal

Empty aluminum cans, steel cans



PLASTIC

Empty plastic bottles & containers with numbers 1, 2, 5

*Plastic bags of any kind should not be placed in your recycling cart.



Scan this QR code for more information right on your smartphone.

www.cctexas.com/howtorecycle

f) ccwasteplace

Plumeria in bountiful bloom, color

Annual Plumeria Sale, 10am-1pm, July 29!

April rains brought outstanding May plumeria blooms with help from Plumeria Society of South Texas volunteers! Remember the **Plumeria Society of South Texas** sale, this year at the Jewish Community Center, 750 Everhart Road!









Botanical Gardens Animal Care honors four spring graduates!



Acadia Tamez

Acadia received a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science with emphasis in Marine & Coastal Resources from TAMU-CC. After interning with STBGNC, she accepted a full-time Animal Care Specialist position! Most of her time is invested in animal nutrition, safety & health, husbandry, charting, research, training, enrichment & cleaning.



Clarissa Trainer

Clarissa received a bachelor's degree in Bio-Medicine with a minor in Chemistry from TAMU-CC. Clarissa has volunteered and interned at STGBNC several years while taking classes, working in Education with school tours & camps, as well as consulting with the Animal Care medical team. We cannot wait to see what her future holds.



Ren Almanza

Ren graduated from Richard King High School with honors. Attending Jr. Volunteer camp five years ago, then volunteering throughout high school, Ren accepted a part-time Animal Care position this spring. Planning to attend TAMU-Kingsville for a degree in Animal Science, Ren's goal is the understaffed field of Veterinary Medicine.



Avery Casanova

Avery graduated from Flour Bluff High School with Academic Honors. She was a Kids Nature Camper, going on to Jr. Volunteer camp, helping camp instructors & finally volunteering in Animal Care. Avery plans to attend Texas A&M University this fall pursuing a degree in Bio-Medical Science.

Meet newest Animal Ambassadors



PEACHES, an 11 year-old Citron Cockatoo on the fast track already appears in the Reptile Room and has been sponsored. She was rescued, then entrusted to Gardens for care.

AJ & CHILI are Green Cheek Conures whose family moved to colder climes, but wanted birds to stay in Texas warmth!



HARLEY & JOKER are Gargoyle Geckos, our two newest reptiles.





www.cctexas.com/conserve

For water-saving tips, visit

for tomorrow

MEMBERSHIP: What you get • how to join!

- Free General Admission (12 months)
- American Horticulture Society RECIPROCAL ADMISSION PROGRAM (FREE admission to 350 Gardens in US) listing at www.ahsgardening.org/rap
- 10% Discount at: Turner's Gardenland (with valid STBGNC Member Card & ID) (excludes labor, sale items) Feathered Friends & Co. (excludes birds)
- FREE Better Homes & Gardens OR

 Martha Stewart Living Magazine Subscription
- **10%** Discount at *Nature's Boutique* year-round (STBGNC Gift Shop)
- **✓** 10% Discount at *BIG BLOOM* Plant Sale
- Substancial Class & Kids Camp Discounts (most Saturday seminars free for members)
- ✓ Facilities Rental Privileges
- ✓ Newsletter Event Invitations Window Decal



ALSO JOIN ONLINE, WWW.STXBOT.ORG

□ Renewal or Former Member
□ New Member

Membership Category MARK SELECTION				
□ Individual		\$ 35		
□ Couple *		\$ 50		
☐ Family *		\$ 75		
☐ Grandparent **		\$ 75		
Sustaining	(Family or GP + 2 guests)	\$ 100		
□ Supporting	(Family or GP + 4 guests)	\$ 250		
☐ Patron	(Family or GP + 6 guests)	\$ 500		
■ Benefactor	(Family or GP + 10 guests)	\$1000		

*(Couple, Family: Must be Same Household)

**(Grandparents: Includes grandchildren/ greatgrandchildren under age 18)

Age 60+/Active Military may take 10% off the membership level of their choice

PHOTOGRAPHER MEMBERSHIP, for you & clients-\$150/year!

Member Information PLEASE PRINT NAMES (S) STREET ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP PHONE (S) E-MAIL AMT\$_ CASH. CK# \square MC □ Visa □ DISCOVER □ AMX ACCT# NAME ON ACCT **EXPIRATION 3 DIGIT SECURITY CODE**

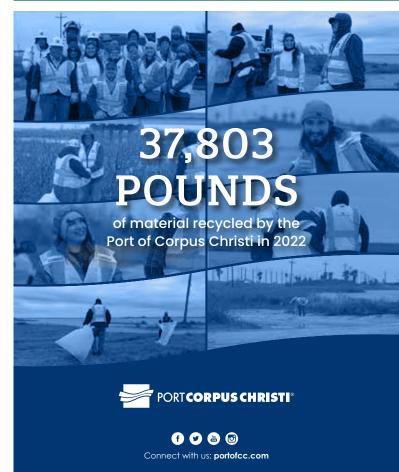
NEW ANIMAL AMBASSADOI

JELLY BEAN Severe Macaw Marla Owens & Family
SARGE Military Macaw " "
FRED Double-Head Amazon
BUDDY & MAXWELL African Greys " "
OLIVER Monk Quaker " "



Riley Owens with OLIVER, three year old Monk Quaker Parrot.

	UB00	Sun Conure	Ann Suggs
	PEACHES TEQUILA	Citron Cockatoo Blue-Gold Macaw	Jason, Camille, Adelyn Ahern
	SHELDON COOPER MICHAEL ANGELO	Indoor Box Turtle Indoor Box Turtle	Hudson Davis
	HERNANDO COCOA	Honduran Milk Snake Brown Texas Tarantula	Jeremiah & Samantha Hall
	CRUSH	Large Red-Eared Slider	Norm Hedrick
	IVAN	'Senior' Iguana	Lon & Cher Lowery
	CARLA	Ciban Knight Anole UVB Bulbs annually	Riley Alcala & parents



SIGNATURE

EDUCATION, EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

WEEKEND VISITOR / ANIMAL EVENTS

(Included in general admission, Members free)

REP-TALES

Saturdays, Sundays, 10:30 am

Meet, pet, learn about, purchase food to feed Resident Reptiles. With trainers, usually on Festival Lawn.





SEE GREAT PARROT NEWS, p. 10!

ADULT CLASS PROTOCOL!

RESERVATIONS, Zoom Links, 361-852-2100.
Classes free with Membership, Admission – or \$5.
(ALL SATURDAY CLASSES, 9:30-10:30 AM.)

ORCHID-OLOGY, a FREE monthly discussion group, orchid enthusiasts of all levels, 7 pm, first Thursday of each month, Education Station. Questions, tips; bring a problem orchid for diagnosis. Enter at Staples and S. Oso Parkway, parking behind Education Station.



June 17: RESCHEDULED \$2 "Community Day"!

Insufficient Parking during BIRDIEST FESTIVAL in AMERICA, this Community Day, sponsored by FLINT HILLS Resources includes: Artisan Vendors, Live Music, Kids Activities, Gift Shop and All Exhibits open. NEW SUMMER EXHIBIT: See 70 amazing BIRDHOUSES designed by local artists. 9 am-6 pm.

June 17/18: FATHERS' DAY FREE WEEKEND.

Just say, "Lizards & Snakes" and Dad gets in free! Be "buds" with Dad, enjoy REP-TALES, 10:30; gardens, resident reptiles, Gator Lake, trails, other guy stuff! Only dads are free—other non-members pay general admission. Buy Dad a membership this weekend, at 20% off for year of free admission, 350 Reciprocal Gardens!

July 4: FOURTH- OFF FOR 4TH!

Celebrate AMERICA'S NATURAL BEAUTY at the Botanical Gardens with 25% off admission on Independence Day, a "big bang" for your bucks! Just \$6.75 ages 13-59; \$5.25 Sr / Active Military / College; \$3.75 ages 3-12. Under 3 and Members free! Bring a picnic; dogs on leash; but NO FIREWORKS allowed.

July 22: CHOOSING, GROWING, WINTERING PLUMERIA.

A week before the big sale, Plumeria Society's Renee Brown will discuss tips on purchasing and raising these exotic, tropical beauties, and lead a tour of the Gardens & Nature Center's impressive Plumeria Garden and Willoughby Viewing Platform.

Annual Flumeria Sale!

Saturday, July 29, 10-1, Jewish Community Center, 750 Everhart Rd.

Cuttings and rooted plants, named and unnamed varieties, will be sold, with proceeds benefitting the Botanical Gardens Plumeria exhibit. Free Admission to Sale.



September 2: PREPARING FOR FALL GARDENS

Nueces Master Gardener Mary Sherwood gives lectures on growing a bountiful harvest—varieties, fertilizing, care tips to maximize crops.

September 9: FALL GROOMING FOR ROSE BEDS

Nueces Master Gardeners Renee Brown and Huxley Smith show you fall pruning, fertilizing, pest control techniques to reenergize roses for spectacular fall and winter bloom cycle.

September 16: COOL WEATHER HERBS

Learn which herbs thrive in fall/winter months, for tasty seasonings in holiday feasts from Nueces Master Gardener Deb Holliday.

September 23: TEXAS SUPERSTARS IN THE LANDSCAPE.

Nueces Country Horticulture Extension Agent Kevin Gibbs shows you landscape plants tested throughout Texas, given Texas A&M "Superstar" seal of approval!

September 30: PREPARING YOUR LAWN FOR WINTER

Proper fall lawn care will help your grass through winter dormancy to green up faster in spring, with Renee Brown, a TDA-certified Lawn and Garden Applicator.

October 7: NEED A TREE IN YOUR YARD? SELECT & PLANT NOW!Certified Arborist, owner of Tree Amigos Jon Wood helps with characteristics to select the best tree for your yard meet your needs, proven Coastal Bend varieties, and planting techniques.

October 14: FALL FLOWERING PERENNIALS & ORNAMENTAL

GRASS Discover new ideas to brighten your landscape and container gardens this fall, using proven perennial favorites, and elegant ornamental grass varieties, with STBGNC horticulturist Carol Krank.

MOONLIGHT IN THE GARDENS

Friday, October 27, 6-9:30 pm

Last year, "Moonlight" patrons enjoyed a hugely successful evening of food, drink, music; silent auction; garden strolls, lots of mingling and fun. Once again, presented by CITGO, Corpus Christi Refinery—with dozens of Gardens Stewardship sponsors supporting Gardens maintenance and upgrades throughout this year! (see page 5). Watch for more details . . .

HOLLY DAYS at the GARDENS

November 24/25 • December 1/2 • 8/9 • 15/16

4 special holiday weekends celebrating the joys of the season around a beautiful 20' fresh-cut lighted fir tree, and recycled ECO CHRISTMAS TREE made from green plastic bottles in 2022 by Shelia Rogers! FRIDAY EVENINGS—open 6-7:30 pm to view lighting displays and trees; hayrides, cocoa, cider, s'mores over fire pits—and SANTA! SATURDAYS, Noon-7:30 pm—See SANTA, holiday photo ops, hay rides, kids' crafts, petting zoo, animal ambassadors. Most activities covered by general admission. Presented by VALERO. More details TBA.

EDUCATION, EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT (continued)

KIDS SUMMER NATURE GAMPS

NEED-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS still available, sponsored by Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. All Campers must pre-register 7 days before camp session. For registration and scholarship forms, contact Brendae@stxbot.org.

June 19-23 Ages 6-8 TINY CRITTERS 9am-noon Campers explore digging, crawling, flying insects and other tiny creatures using science lab tools.

June 26-30 Ages 6-8 Nature Buddies, New Friends 9am-noon Campers explore birds, reptiles, tiny critters and plants. Meet our new Animal Friends! Fun nature investigations using binoculars, cameras, and other science tools.

July 10-14 Ages 9-13 NATURE SHUTTERBUGS 9am-noon Youth use cameras and various artistic techniques to express nature. Cameras available or use yours. (\$150 all campers).

July 10-14 Ages 9-13 MAMMAL CAMP 1-4pm Campers investigate the world of mammals with habitat walks, rescue animal interaction, hands-on models, outdoor art and guest speakers. (\$150 all campers)

July 17-21 Daisy/Brownie/Junior GIRL SCOUT ADVENTURE Scouts explore trails, birds, reptiles, gardens and butterflies! Nature Adventure Patch each topic! 9am-Noon



YOUTH FIELD TRIP OPTIONS

Schools & Youth Groups; Self-Directed & Directed Options Visit the Gardens & Nature Center—Learn about Butterflies, Reptiles, Parrots, more!

A. SELF-DIRECTED FIELD TRIP:

PRE-K through GRADE 6 \$5 / student GRADES 7 through 12 \$6 / student Start at Visitor Center with map, PICK destinations!

B. DIRECTED FIELD TRIP:

PRE-K through GRADE 6 \$7 / student GRADES 7 through 12 \$8 / student Choose Gardens & Nature Center areas for students' experience. Staff/volunteers available for Q/A.

C. DIRECTED FIELD TRIP with CUSTOMIZED SCIENCE LESSON, NATURE CRAFT, or BOTH!

PRE-K through GRADE 6 Starts \$10 / student GRADES 7 through 12 Starts \$12 / student

OPTIONS: Tiny Critter Investigations; Critter Behavior; Earthworms/Composting; Butterfly Life Cycle; Water Use; Nature Suncatcher; Snake in the Grass; Sun Prints; Water & Plants.

Minimum Field Trip, 12 students. \$5 Adult Chaperones. Info, Reservations: Brendae@stxbot.org.

NEW MINI ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

Fun interactions with 3 Animal Ambassadors! Guests hold each animal, gives them snacks, take photos in a private setting!

Up to 6 people 15 minutes \$40 (plus general admission)

Additional people or animals can be arranged if scheduled in advance, additional fees apply.

- Price is for groups, plus Gardens admissions per person.
- \$5 package discount for Gardens members.
- · Limited spots available each day.
- Hands/arms clean, free of repellants, sunscreens.

Scheduling, questions: dedrab@stxbot.org, 361-852-2100





PARROTS BEGIN RETURN TO OUTDOOR HOMES!

Earlier this month, with Highly Contagious Pathenogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) (Avian Flu) numbers declining as wild bird migration winds down, our parrot animal ambassadors began taking turns returning to their outdoor enclosures for some fun in the sun and much-missed visitor interaction!

June 9-11, from 9 to noon, four to six birds at a time greeted enamored guests. Beginning June 16, birds will be outdoors daily, with a roof above enclosures for sanitation, shade and protection from wild birds which still may be HPAI carriers. This schedule will continue after migration, with more parrots outdoors over time, as long as virus numbers remain at present levels or lower.

An Animal Care employee will attend parrots watching for contamination. Huge thanks to all Animal Care, Maintenance staffs and volunteers for many long hours keeping our parrot collection comfortable and content, through weather extremes since March, 2022.



GRANTS & LARGE DONATIONS

Eugene Bouligny
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City Arts & Cultural
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H-E-B

BIG BLOOM SPONSORS p. 4 Birdiest Festival Sponsors p. 2

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\$**2,000** CITGO

\$1,000

V 1

Valero

\$500

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\$**250** Aquaria Services

PHOTOGRAPHER

Marisol Bynum & Joe Gabriel Urdiales Photography Faithful Witness Photography Crystal Lail Photography Shoocha Photography

CLUB, SOCIETY

Island Gardeners
La Leche League of Corpus Christi
Native Plant Society of TexasSo Texas Chapter
Plumeria Society of South Texas
Port Aransas Garden Club

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(since previous issue)

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

\$2 COMMUNITY DAY Saturday, June 17

FATHER'S FREE WEEKEND Saturday, Sunday, June 17/18 (see below)



MORE SUMMER NATURE CAMP SESSIONS (see p. 10)



PLUMERIA CLASS Saturday, July 22

PLUMERIA SALE Saturday, July 29 (see p. 9)



OPEN DAILY, 9am - 6pm (except Thanksgiving Day, December 24, 25) = 8545 S. Staples St. = Corpus Christi, Texas 78413 = 361-852-2100 = Fax 361-852-7875

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