



MISSION STATEMENT

The Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival, Harlingen, Texas, is an annual event designed to utilize the area's unparalleled natural resources and bird watching opportunities to create a significant impact and a positive enhancement on the economic systems, conservation goals, and environmental education for the residents of Harlingen and the Rio Grande Valley.

Greetings!

Preparations are in full swing for the 26th annual Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival. The dates are November 6-10, 2019. With field trips, seminars, trade show, and worldwide participants the Festival will be as exciting and rewarding as ever. Our non-profit organization needs your help to attract some of the birders of the U.S. and the world to Harlingen this November.

A 2011 study by Texas A&M University concluded that nature tourism—dominated by bird watching—brings in over \$300 million a year to the Rio Grande Valley economy. This direct economic contribution led to a total county-level economic output of \$344.4 million and 4,407 full and part-time jobs annually.* A separate study found the immediate economic impact of the 5-day Festival itself on Harlingen is well over five million dollars.

The RGV Birding Festival is often used as a birder's first visit to the Valley, most return time and again for multiple visits. Harlingen is well-located as a central 'birding base' for the Valley, and having Southwest Airlines, United Airlines and American Airlines, at Valley International Airport is a big asset. Not only do birders visit but they come to live in the area after retirement in order to be in the middle of the best birding in the U.S.A. Many of these people volunteer their time and efforts for the benefit of the community and the Birding Festival.

There are 45 million birdwatchers in the U.S., according to a 2016 USFW Study.** Many of these birders 'list' the birds they see and travel to see new species. The Valley boasts the highest concentration of unique species in the U.S. with as many as 30 species appearing only in the Rio Grande Valley.

After reviewing the information in this newsletter, we hope you will want to help support our annual festival goals. With tax deductible donations we can continue to utilize our natural resources and enhance the environmental integrity of the Rio Grande Valley.

This newsletter contains information about the levels of sponsorship available. Call or email us and we will be happy to help you put together a package including cash, in-kind items or services, swaps or silent auction items.



Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival Leadership

Sue Griffin, Chair, 956-357-3457

David Schibi, President, 956-244-4600

Phil Nelson, Vice President, 636-448-0110

Wanda Greenhill, Treasurer, 956-369-6792

Registration, 956-423-5565, registration@rgvbf.org

Lizee Cavazos, publicity@rgvbf.org

Marilyn Vincent, 956-367-2800, tradeshows@rgvbf.org

Alicia Cavazos, 956-244-2347, education@rgvbf.org

Irma Pye Gavito, 956-341-9881, sponsorships@rgvbf.org

*<https://www.fws.gov/birds/bird-enthusiasts/bird-watching/valuing-birds.php>

**https://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/NationalSurvey/nat_survey2016.pdf

Rio Grande Valley *Birding* Festival

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS (Non-vendor)

Levels for sponsorship by cash, silent auction and/or in-kind will receive:

APLOMADO FALCON \$10,000+

- Prominent recognition throughout the festival
- Home Page *rgvbf.org* top prominent Banner listing with Logo
- Prominent Logo listing in Brochure (if commit by May 15)
- Website Listing with Logo and Link to your web site under Sponsors tab
- Recognition on RGVBF Facebook page and at the Festival Roost Cafe
- Festival Poster (in poster frame if requested)
- Festival T-shirts or Caps (4)
- Kiskadee Passes (4)
- Invite to Kick-Off Reception and Sunday Eve Survivor's Dinner
- Ability to place Insert in Registrants Packets (if delivered to festival by early October)

GREAT KISKADEE \$5,500-\$9,999

- Home Page *rgvbf.org* top prominent Banner listing with Logo
- Prominent Logo listing in Brochure (if commit by May 15)
- Website Listing with Logo and Link to your web site under Sponsors tab
- Recognition on RGVBF Facebook page and at the Festival Roost Cafe
- Festival Poster (in poster frame if requested)
- Festival T-shirts or Caps (4)
- Kiskadee Passes (4)
- Invite to Kick-Off Reception and Sunday Eve Survivor's Dinner
- Ability to place Insert in Registrants Packets (if delivered to festival by early October)

RED-CROWNED PARROT \$3,000 - \$5,499

- Prominent Logo listing in brochure (if commit by May 15)
- Website listing with Logo and Link to your web site under Sponsors tab
- Recognition on RGVBF Facebook page and at the Festival Roost Cafe
- Festival T-shirts or Caps (2)
- Kiskadee Passes (2)
- Invite to Kick-Off Reception and Sunday Eve Survivor's Dinner
- Ability to place Insert in Registrants Packets (if delivered by early October)

RINGED KINGFISHER \$1,000 - \$2,999

- Listing in Brochure (ask about deadline)
- Website listing with Link to your website under Sponsors tab
- Recognition on RGVBF Facebook page and at the Festival Roost Cafe
- Kiskadee Pass (2)
- Invite to Kick-Off Reception
- Ability to place Insert in Registrants Packets (if delivered by early October)

CHACHALACA \$300- \$999

- Website listing with Link under Sponsors tab
- Recognition on RGVBF Facebook page and at the Festival Roost Cafe
- Invite to Kick-Off Reception
- Ability to place Insert in Registrants Packets (if delivered by early October)

GOALS of the RIO GRANDE VALLEY BIRDING FESTIVAL

To impact Harlingen and Rio Grande Valley economic development through wildlife-related tourism in the form of the organization and implementation of an annual international festival which focuses on the area's unique and natural ecological attractions.

To encourage the overall growth of nature tourism in the Rio Grande Valley by increasing travelers and therefore bringing new dollars into the local economy.

To educate the local population regarding both the economic and quality of life values offered by the natural resources of South Texas.

To foster a climate of cooperation and understanding between varying groups and individuals in order to prove that conservation, traditional economic development, and quality of life can all walk hand-in-hand in the Rio Grande Valley.

History of the RIO GRANDE VALLEY BIRDING FESTIVAL

The Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival began in 1994 when the Harlingen Area Chamber of Commerce began to realize the potential economic benefits of promoting birding and ecotourism. A committee of citizens was established in March 1994 and the first Festival was scheduled for 3-6 November 1994. The Festival was comprised of field trips to birding hotspots throughout the Valley, seminars and keynote lectures by internationally renowned birding experts, a trade show, and educational programs for children. The Festival was an immediate success with 750 participants from throughout the nation and abroad. Festival attendance has remained vibrant, reaching several thousand adults and children, both local and visiting, during its yearly four- to five-day span.

The Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival, Inc. is now a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation organized under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act. The Festival has part time staff, and receives significant staff support from the Harlingen Area Cof C, and the Harlingen CVB. In addition, planning and implementing the five-day Festival each November involves approximately 200 dedicated volunteers.

The Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival has maintained a significant monetary force for Harlingen and the Rio Grande Valley. A birding tourism economic impact study in 2011 by Texas A&M showed a Valley input of \$463 million dollars. In addition, the Festival and the national attention it has garnered for the Rio Grande Valley has helped develop Harlingen and the Valley as a year-round birding destination.