



Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival

2020 Virtual Event Schedule

Wednesday

9 am – 11 am - Take a Virtual Tour of RGV Special Birding Sites including a Pre-Trip to Beaumont, TX

Join us for 20-30-minute pre-recorded segments at our famous RGV birding sites. Participate in live discussions and learn what is being seen in and around these favorite birding spots. Join us for the door prize giveaways in between sessions.

9 am – 9:30 am – Beaumont Virtual Pre-Trip

Come experience a virtual road pre-trip with exceptional birding along the upper Gulf Coast. Located on two migratory flyways near the Gulf of Mexico, there are twenty-eight Great Texas Coastal Birding trails within a 40- mile radius of Beaumont.

9:30 am – 10 am – Bentsen Rio Grande Valley State Park and World Birding Center

Welcome to Bentsen State Park, the oldest state park in the area. Bentsen has hosted many rarities through the years as well as the usual flocks of Green Jay, Great Kiskadee, Plain Chachalaca, Altamira Orioles and more.

10 am – 10:30 am – Quinta Mazatlan World Birding Center

Quinta Mazatlan is an urban jewel in McAllen, Texas. We will take a walk around the trails and the many water features. Clay-colored Thrush are easier to see here as they come in from the surrounding neighborhood to drink and bathe. Hummingbirds abound with the resident Buff-bellied Hummingbird regular at the many feeders.

10:30 am – 11am – Edinburg Scenic Wetlands World Birding Center

The Edinburg Scenic Wetlands is a series of ponds connected by trails with viewpoints for birders to explore. Resident Green and Ringed Kingfisher can be seen along with the wintering Belted Kingfisher. Neotropic Cormorants, Anhinga, herons and egrets abound. Small flocking birds can be impressive in winter with warblers, sparrows, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Black-crested Titmouse regular in the flocks.



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11:30 am – 12:30 pm - Reunion at the Roost

Whether you are new to birding or you have attended 1 or all 26 RGV Birding Festivals, this is an opportunity to make new friends or get together with old friends and former attendees. Each break-out room will be hosted by a former guide or Festival staff ready to talk birdwatching in the Rio Grande Valley. Topic of the day is “Your favorite field trip at RGVBF”

Wear your favorite Festival T-shirt/cap and be ready to show your Festival swag. Door prizes will be awarded.

To sign-up for this event send an email to info@rgvbf.org with the word reunion in the text.

1 pm – 3 pm - Digiscoping Workshop

with Jeff Bouton and Clay Taylor

Zoom Meeting

https://kowa.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hMORVJR5TsaA5KFnpBFFg

Join us for a strategic overview of digiscoping, where Jeff and Clay will discuss capturing bird images in the field using a spotting scope with a cell phone or a DSLR camera.

3:30 pm – 5 pm Seminar - 24/7 Where the Birds of the Rio Grande Valley Work and Play

Join Tony Henehan, wildlife biologist for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in the Rio Grande Valley, in an engaging PowerPoint presentation. Tony’s show will feature different habitats of the Rio Grande Valley and the birds that call these areas home. After viewing this pre-recorded presentation, Tony will be available to answer questions from audience members.



Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival

2020 Virtual Event Schedule

Thursday

9 am – 11 am - Virtual Tour of RGV Birding Sites (Part 2)

Continue your journey to our famous RGV birding sites. Join us for 20-30-minute pre-recorded segments with live discussions. Learn what makes the RGV a not-to-be-missed birding destination and join us for door prize giveaways in between sessions.

9 am – 9:30 am – Estero Llano Grande State Park and World Birding Center

We will start our day at Estero Llano Grande State Park in Weslaco, Texas. Estero is a relatively new park but is well known among birders for the elusive Common Pauraque. Sora, waterfowl and shorebirds are abundant in the ponds. The feeders and water features attract a host of local specialty birds from Green Jay and White-tipped Dove to Olive Sparrow.

9:30 am – 10 am – South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center

The South Padre Island Bird and Nature Center is another newer birding area in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The extensive boardwalks allow close approach to the birds of the mangroves, salt flats and freshwater ponds. We'll look for the frantic dance of the Reddish Egret, shorebirds on the beaches and Sora and other rails in the wetlands.

10 am – 10:30 am – Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge

Laguna Atascosa NWR is a traditional favorite birding area among visitors to the Lower Rio Grande Valley. The refuge has the longest bird list of any NWR in the United States. The feeding stations are well stocked. It's likely we'll see Green Jay, Great Kiskadee and Plain Chachalaca

10:30 am – 11 am – King Ranch

The King Ranch is a massive ranch located north of Raymondville, Texas. The four tracts of the ranch are larger than the state of Rhode Island. The southernmost tract, Norias, is home to the largest population of Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl in Texas. The oak mottes that shelter the diminutive pygmy-owls also provide habitat for Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet and Tropical Parula while White-tailed Hawk soar overhead.



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1 pm – 3 pm - The Optics Show with Land Sea & Sky

Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95961088498>

Birding is best enjoyed with a crisp, clear view through binoculars or a spotting scope. Join us any time between noon and 3:00 to learn more about birding optics. Talk to the pros at Land Sea & Sky, Swarovski, Kowa, Zeiss, Leica, Meopta, Opticron and Vortex.

NOTE: special discounts will be offered to all attendees!

3:30 pm – 5 pm - Raptors of the Rio Grande Valley.

Join a Live Zoom presentation with William S. (Bill) Clark. Many species of Neotropical raptors just reach the U.S. in south Texas, where Bill now lives. Additionally, there are passages of large numbers of migrating raptors through the RGV, both in spring and autumn, many of which also winter here. In this illustrated talk Bill will show and discuss all of these raptors, with more extensive coverage of Aplomado Falcons and studies on Gray Hawks, White-tailed Hawks, Harris’s Hawks and Hook-billed Kites. Many raptors will be shown in-hand up close, vocalizations will be played, and aspects of their biology will be discussed. Five Mexican raptors that have occurred as vagrants will also be shown.



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6:30 pm – 8 pm - Harlingen Arroyo Colorado Audubon Society Zoom meeting

Join the local birding club for their monthly meeting and hear speaker Robin Gelston's talk ***Perils of the Brown Pelicans at Highway 48*** After medians were placed on Highway 48 weather conditions created Brown Pelican kills when the winds were blowing from the north and the pelicans were crossing to the night roosts at Bahia Grande, a wetland of the Laguna Atascosa Wildlife Refuge. This required TEXDOT to redesign the bridge railings at the crossing into Bahia Grande. Robin has been working on this project and will update us.



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Friday

9 am – 11 am - Live Bird Banding and Worldwide Birding

Banders Bill Clark, Tony Henehan and Stephanie Bilodeau will set up to band local birds with an emphasis on raptors, Green Jays, Buff-bellied Hummingbirds and Black-crested Titmouse. We all know that bird banding is a wait and see proposition, so while we are waiting participants will have an opportunity to join our festival Worldwide Birding vendors representing birding destinations around the world. Be assured as soon as a bird is ready for processing, we will break away from our tour around the world to capture the live action banding.

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1 pm – 3 pm - Worldwide Birding

Rejoin us for a virtual tour of the special destinations represented by previous RGV Festival trade show vendors. Whatever your choice, you will love the birding and local flavor featured in these presentations.

4 pm – 5 pm - Harlingen Squares

Join our quizmaster ABA President Jeffery Gordon in a TV-style game show format, a multimedia production of birding trivia and friendly competition. You'll be laughing, cheering, learning, and seeing a different side of some of your favorite birding personalities and leaders. Contestants will be playing for their favorite *Giving Back Project*.