

## **Welcome to the 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Birding Festival!**

If you want to add 30-plus new birds to your life list, memory card, or just your memory, come join us for the 2022 Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival in Harlingen, TX. The dates are Nov 9-13.

There are many field trip offerings to choose from, with trips going to the traditional spots, and as always, some new trips added for our return visitors. Special trips in the field with our featured speakers to further enhance their presentations will be super exciting. With the coast about 30 miles away, hints of the Chihuahuan Desert only 2 hours to the west, and the ribbon of the Rio Grande to our south, we have lots of habitat and a huge diversity of birds to offer!

We offer field trips, keynote speakers, workshops, fun socials, and lots of birds. Plan to join us in 2022!

### **REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

**Event registration is required for all participants wishing to sign up for field trips, keynote speakers or seminars. It is not necessary to attend the Birder's Bazaar Tradeshow or family and children's activities.**

Registration is \$50. The \$30 *Kiskadee Pass* can be added to provide entrance to all Keynotes and Seminars. It is a huge savings over individually priced admission. You can purchase the Kiskadee Pass only during online registration. During the Festival, tickets for individual events will be sold, providing there are openings available.

**Note: Field trips, PhotoTrack and Workshops are not included in the Kiskadee Pass.**

### **RGVBF COVID19 POLICY**

An inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 and variants exists in any public place where people are present. Please help us to ensure a safe environment by following all posted instructions and instructions by festival guides and volunteers. According to the Centers for Disease Control and prevention, COVID-19 (and variants) is an extremely contagious disease that can lead to severe illness and death. By visiting the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival, you voluntarily assume all risks related to exposure to COVID-19 and its variants.

During the 2022 Festival, we will be following all current COVID-19 Safe Protocols which may include:

- Common Areas will be sanitized regularly, based on Harlingen Convention Center protocols.
- Vans and buses will be cleaned after each use.
- Face masks are encouraged throughout the Festival and required when in vans and buses where social distancing cannot be maintained.
- Hand sanitizer will be available, however we encourage frequent handwashing and keeping personal sanitizer with you during Festival activities.

**NOTE: Updated information will be posted as needed.**

## RGVBF Refund Policy

### **Registration Fee**

100% Refund if cancellation occurs before Sept, 30 2022 - 11:59 PM

50% refund if cancellation occurs before Oct 12, 2022 - 5 PM

No refunds - if cancellation occurs after Oct 12, 2022 - 5:01 PM

### **All Other Fees**

Full refund if cancellation occurs before Oct 12, 2022 - 5 PM

50% refund if cancellation occurs before Oct 19, 2022 - 5 PM

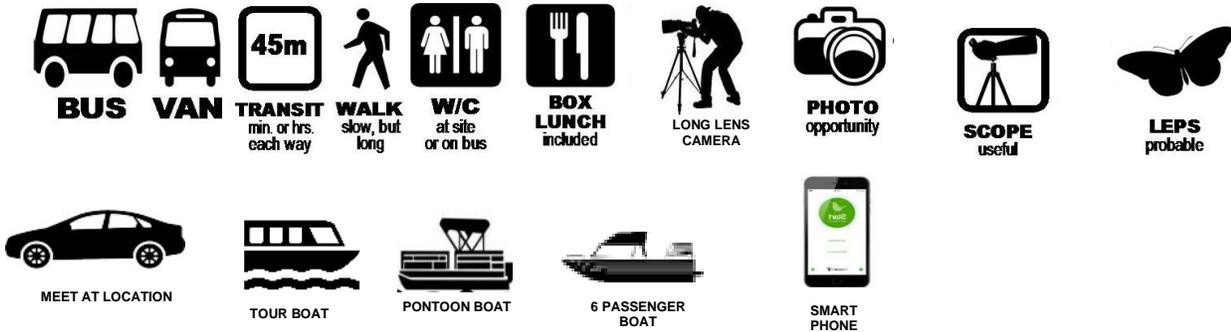
No refunds if cancellation occurs after Oct 19, 2022 - 5:01 PM

Online registration closes - Oct 28, 2022 - 5 PM

\* A 5% processing will be applied to all above refunds

# FIELD TRIPS

## FIELD GUIDE TO THE ICONS



The RGVBF has long been known for its low ratio of participants to guides and for the quality of its leaders. Check out the Trip Leaders section on the webpage for a summary of this year's guides. We have an outstanding group of talent this year to guide our field trips. Also expanded this year is the Young Birders track plus a series of trips for mobility- or visually- challenged birders and photographers.

While we have kept the classic field trips that define our Festival, we have also added a few new locations, and a few twists on old favorites. Click on Trip Worksheet on the webpage for a simple overview of the daily trips. Below is a more detailed daily description of the activities offered.

### **IMPORTANT NOTES ON TRIPS:**

***We encourage you to find overnight accommodations in Harlingen during the Festival – trips leave early!***

***For special trips for photographers, see the PhotoTrack section.  
Most PhotoTrack trips meet at the destination site***

***Vegetarian box lunches available when lunch is provided – choose when registering online.***

***\*Designates a special trip – new offering or distinctive leader  
or just one scheduled this year.***

***Be prepared for South Texas sun and bugs on all trips. Chiggers live here,  
so stay on paths when on field trips and avoid tall grasses.  
Bring appropriate remedies if chiggers love you.***

***Water is provided. Bring your water bottles & fill'em up in the lobby.***

***Check with driver to be sure your scope and tripod will fit on vans.  
On bus trips, tripods may need to be stored in luggage area of bus.***

***Hand-held cameras are fine on most trips; icons designate trips that offer a  
better opportunity for photography.***

***Cameras requiring tripods cannot be accommodated on van trips  
other than PhotoTrack. For special trips for photographers,  
see the PhotoTrack section.***

***Bus / Van designation may change.  
We reserve the right to make adjustments to anything and everything as needed.***

***Join our Facebook page for updates and latest information.***

**ALERT: for Palmito Hill & Rocket Ranch, Battlefields and Kleberg Wetlands trips:** Participants without proper ID will not be permitted to board vehicles. **U.S. Customs and Border Patrol Check Stations** are involved with these trips. Each vehicle is subject to a quick inspection and basic questions. The process is routine, most stops are brief. All passengers need to carry one piece of proper identification (Driver's License, Passport, Student ID card) to verify U.S. Citizenship. Foreign nationals must have all appropriate documentation to avoid delay or detainment. Border Patrol agents are required to determine the immigration status of every traveler.

## ARROYO COLORADO UNIT

*with Ernesto Garcia-Ortega*

**Fee \$90 / Wednesday, Thursday 6:30am – 12pm**



This is a rare opportunity to visit the Arroyo Colorado Unit of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. This Wildlife Management Area is closed to visitors, but we've arranged a special tour for the Festival. In recent years, this area of thornscrub near the Arroyo Colorado has had a variety of rarities including Blue Bunting and Rose-throated Becard.

**Targets:** White-tipped Dove, Golden-fronted and Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Great Kiskadee, Carolina Wren, Long-billed Thrasher, Orange-crowned Warbler, Olive Sparrow.

## LAGUNA MADRE ISLANDS AND WATERBIRD CONSERVATION

*with Justin LeClaire*

**Fee \$110 / Wednesday, Friday 6:30am – 12:30pm**



This is a wonderful opportunity for a small group to explore the world-class Laguna Madre and Arroyo Colorado by boat and get close, intimate views of birds utilizing this coastal ecosystem. The Laguna Madre encompasses vital breeding, foraging, and roosting habitat for dozens of species of waterbirds and shorebirds in the form of dense rookery spoil islands, extensive prey-rich tidal mudflats, and complex black mangrove marshes among many other habitat features. Justin is an Avian Conservation Biologist with the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, which has researched, monitored, and managed important spoil islands and mudflats for waterbirds throughout the Central and Lower Texas Coast for decades.

**Note:** Although there will be excellent photo opportunities, please only bring hand-held cameras for the boat trip. Much of the trip will be spent standing or sitting on an outboard boat in potentially windy conditions. A restroom will only be available at the start and end of the boat tour. It can be cool on the boat, so bring an extra layer! Life jackets will be provided.

**Targets:** Close views of herons and egrets, gulls and terns and, with luck, the striking 'Mangrove' Yellow Warbler.

## BAHIA GRANDE UNIT

**Fee \$90 / Wednesday, Saturday 6:30am – 12:30pm**



The ongoing restoration of the Bahia Grande is the most significant environmental success in South Texas in recent years. Over 21,000 acres were acquired as part of Laguna Atascosa NWR in 2000. At that time, because construction of the Intracoastal Waterway had severed its connections to the Bay, Bahia Grande was an arid wasteland with only ephemeral wet areas. New channels have now been excavated, restoring a more natural tidal flow. On this trip, we'll have an opportunity of witnessing the dramatic results and the privilege of birding an area not generally open to the public.

**Note:** There are no on-site restroom facilities. We will have a restroom stop before and after our birding.

**Targets:** Herons, egrets, shorebirds, gulls and terns, Aplomado Falcon, White-tailed Hawk, wintering sparrows.

## BENTSEN-RGV STATE PARK

*Fee \$85 / Wednesday, Friday, Sunday 6:30am – 12:30pm*



With its nearly 800 acres of land and bird list of some 360 species, it's not surprising that this oldest of the South Texas state parks was chosen as the headquarters of the World Birding Center complex. The woodlands are home to many Valley specialties; the hawk tower gives uninterrupted views of the skies; and the gardens surrounding the green-designed Visitor Center are a magnet for butterflies and hummingbirds.

**Targets:** Plain Chachalaca, Hook-billed Kite (rare), Gray Hawk, Green Kingfisher, White-tipped Dove, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Green Jay, Clay-colored Thrush, Long-billed Thrasher, Olive Sparrow, Altamira Oriole.

## BIG DAY VANS

*Fee \$135 / Saturday 6am – 4:30pm*



Ever hear about Big Days and wonder what one would be like? Here's your chance to get in on the action! Our most talked-about trips, some call it 'whirlbirding' – it's fast and furious fun. Prepare to be flexible, as routes will be chosen by your skilled leaders. Exercise those quick get-on-it skills – and wear your speedy shoes! Several vans will be involved for lots of birds and for friendly competition. This is a great choice for Festival returnees or listers. A prize will be given to the participants in the van with the longest bird species list!

**Goal:** Racking up an impressive day list – Valley specialties, anything, everything!

## BIRD BANDING

*with Mark Conway*

*Fee \$90 / Sunday 7am - 11:30am*



Join biologist and educator Mark Conway for some close encounters with Valley specialties in the picturesque grounds of Quinta Mazatlan. Mark will be demonstrating the skills of bird banding in the context of the key role it plays in his long-term studies of bird populations in the Valley.

**Targets (both in hand and in field):** White-tipped Dove, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Great Kiskadee, Green Jay, Clay-colored Thrush, Altamira Oriole, Olive Sparrow.

## BIRDING FOR NEW BIRDERS

*with Hannah Buschert & Erik Ostrander*

*Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Sunday*

*Fee \$90 / Thursday 7am – 1pm*



Whether you're just discovering the joys of birding, seeking to develop your birding skills or wanting to share your love of birding with your family, these trips with experienced mentors Hannah and Erik are for you! Each day there will be a different site and a different theme to help you develop your birding skills and enjoyment.

Wednesday: Frontera Audubon / Valley Nature Center – birding basics & ethics

Thursday: Bentsen RGV State Park – identification & record keeping

Friday: Estero Llano Grande State Park – bird lives & behavior

Sunday: South Padre Island Bird and Nature Center – migration, habitat & distribution

**Goals:** Developing basic birding skills, learning bird identification and good practice in reporting sightings, progressing beyond bird listing, and above all enjoying time in the field.

## BOCA CHICA & ROCKET RANCH

*Fee \$100 / Thursday, Saturday, Sunday 6:30am – 12noon*



We'll explore Boca Chica Road all the way to the Gulf of Mexico, access allowing (the road is sometimes closed for SpaceX testing). If we cannot access Boca Chica Road we will explore coastal prairie habitat on other roads. This area of coastal prairie has interesting areas of salt flats, grasslands and thornscrub habitats. We will visit a new site in the Boca Chica area - Rocket Ranch, where we can bird along the Rio Grande River and take a snack and restroom break!

**Important!** There is a U.S. Border Patrol Check Station on Boca Chica Road. Make sure you have your driver's license or other official photographic ID with you; participants without proper identification will not be permitted to board. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please notify the festival at (956) 423-5565.

**Targets:** Snowy Plover, Reddish Egret, White-tailed Kite, Harris's and White-tailed Hawks, Gull-billed Tern, Aplomado Falcon, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds, Cassin's Sparrow.

## BUTTERFLIES – RGV JEWELS

*Fee \$90 / Wednesday, Friday, Sunday 9am – 2pm*



Over 300 species of butterflies have been recorded in the Lower RioGrande Valley, making it by far the richest butterfly area in the U.S. This tour, led by lepidoptera experts, explores our most productive sites. On Wednesday and Friday we'll go to the National Butterfly Center in Mission, the flagship of the North American Butterfly Association. On Sunday we'll go to Resaca de la Palma State Park for a chance at some Cameron County specialties.

**Targets:** Silver-banded Hairstreak, Red-bordered Pixie, Zebra Heliconian, Malachite, Band-celled Sister, Mexican Bluewing, Guava Skipper, Potrillo Skipper, rarities.

## CACTUS CREEK RANCH

*Fee \$120 / Thursday, Friday 6am - 12:30pm*



This private ranch is adjacent to Laguna Atascosa. The ranch has nesting Aplomado Falcons, well stocked feeders, and ranch roads to explore. In a wet year (like this one) there are wetlands for waterfowl and shorebirds. The ranch has hosted researchers, birders, and students.

**Target:** Sandhill Crane, Long-billed Curlew, raptors, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, Great Kiskadee, Couch's Kingbird, Green Jay, wintering sparrows

## COLLEY'S "PRIVATE" ISLAND

*with Scarlet and George Colley*

*Fee \$125 / Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday 6am – 1pm*



A special version of the South Padre Island trip made famous by Island naturalists Scarlet and George Colley. Scarlet is well-known for her dolphin research and for many years both she and George have been leading advocates for Gulf Coast conservation. Enjoy being out on the bay in their pontoon boats (weather permitting) and exploring the unique ecosystems of the Laguna Madre.

**Note:** Although there will be photo opportunities, please only bring hand-held cameras. Most of the morning will be on a small pontoon boat without restroom facilities. Restrooms near the dock. It may be cool on the boat – don't forget your jacket. The boat portion of the trip might have to be canceled if the weather is not cooperative.

**Targets:** Brown Pelican, Reddish Egret, Roseate Spoonbill, Clapper Rail, Sora, Snowy and Piping Plovers, American Oystercatcher, Marbled Godwit, Peregrine Falcon, 'Mangrove' Yellow Warbler; and, of course, dolphins!

## EASY (BUT NOT LESS!) BIRDING TOUR



**Fee \$90 / Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday 7am – 1pm**

Prefer less walking? These are the trips for you. *Bird from electric carts at State parks, and vans at other sites* that leisurely loop the wildlife drives and back roads of famous Valley refuges. These are small trips, each to one destination.

**Wednesday** – Estero Llano Grande State Park – OR – South Padre Island sites

**Thursday** – Bentsen-Rio Grande State Park – OR – South Padre Island sites

**Friday** – Estero Llano Grande State Park - OR – Resaca de la Palma State Park

**Saturday** – Bentsen Rio Grande Valley State Park - OR - Resaca de la Palma State Park

**Sunday** – Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge

**Note:** Getting on and off vehicles and some walking is necessary. Restrooms are available at each site, but not on vehicles.

**Targets:** See target listing for each of the destination sites.

## EDINBURG AND QUINTA MAZATLAN



**Fee \$85 / Wednesday, Friday 7am – 1pm**

Edinburg Scenic Wetlands and Quinta Mazatlan are World Birding Center sites as well as inspiring examples of how enlightened local communities can conserve and enhance urban and suburban areas for the benefit of wildlife and the environment. Edinburg Scenic Wetlands has large ponds, smaller water features, birding trails, feeding areas, butterfly gardens, observation platforms and a modern interpretative center set in some 40 acres of native vegetation and wetlands. Quinta Mazatlan is a wonderfully restored adobe hacienda set in 15 acres of sub-tropical gardens and native woodlands with birding trails, feeding stations and water features.

**Targets:** Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Plain Chachalaca, White-tipped Dove, Eastern Screech-Owl, Common Pauraque, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Green Kingfisher, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Green Parakeet, Great Kiskadee, Green Jay, Clay-colored Thrush, Long-billed Thrasher, Olive Sparrow, Altamira Oriole.

## ESTERO LLANO GRANDE GRAND TOUR



**Fee \$85 / Thursday, Saturday, Sunday 6:30am – 12:30pm**

An in-depth exploration of one of the World Birding Center network's most productive sites. Reclaimed wetlands, marshes and ponds, all contiguous to the Arroyo Colorado, are ideal habitats for shorebirds, waders, waterfowl – and alligators! Add boardwalks, birding trails through woodlands and thornscrub, butterfly gardens and a green-design visitor center and you'll see why Estero Llano Grande SP has skyrocketed to deserved fame!

**Targets:** Cinnamon Teal, Least Grebe, Anhinga, Roseate Spoonbill, Common Pauraque, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Green Kingfisher, 'McCall's' Eastern Screech-Owl, Vermilion Flycatcher, wintering warblers and sparrows.

## KING RANCH NORIAS with Tom Langschied



**Fee \$130 / Thursday, Friday, Sunday 6am – 1pm**

Join us for an exciting excursion to the famed King Ranch, one of the largest ranches in the world (larger than Rhode Island!). The Norias division is the second largest section of this ranch and is the most southeastern of the four divisions. The sandy soils of Norias support extensive areas of grasslands, thornscrub and live oak woodlands – and more Ferruginous Pygmy-Owls than anywhere else in the U.S.!

**Targets:** Wild Turkey, Harris's Hawk, White-tailed Hawk, Crested Caracara, Greater Roadrunner, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Vermilion Flycatcher, Sprague's Pipit, Audubon's Oriole (rare).

## KLEBERG WETLANDS



**Fee \$130 / Wednesday, Friday, 6am – 4:30pm**

One of the delights of Kleberg County, particularly in years of above average rainfall such as this, is its myriad of fresh and brackish wetlands. On this trip we'll be visiting the most productive sites and, after a picnic lunch we will visit the headquarters of the King Ranch and if time allows we'll also bird some of Kingsville's hotspots. The trip will be limited to eight participants.

**Important!** : There is a U.S. Border Patrol Check Station on U.S. 77. Make sure you have your driver's license or other official photo ID with you: participants without proper identification will not be permitted to board. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please notify the RGVBF at [info@rgvbf.org](mailto:info@rgvbf.org) or (956)423-5565.

**Targets:** Waterfowl, waders, shorebirds, sparrows.

## LAGUNA ATASCOSA STEVE THOMPSON WILDLIFE DRIVE



**Fee \$90 / Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, 6:30am – 12:30pm**

We're bringing back an old favorite with a new twist! The Steve Thompson Wildlife Drive has been closed to the public since 2013 as portions of the road are relocated and wildlife crossings added to help protect the federally endangered Ocelot. We will have the privilege of exploring portions of the drive (depending on construction progress). This will allow us to access locations like Redhead Ridge, a vista over the Laguna Madre where 70% of the world's Redhead population winter – and known to birders as a good place to look for Groove-billed Anis in winter. An Aplomado Falcon nest platform is visible from the drive, and we'll look for this species which has been reintroduced in south Texas in part thanks to the work of former refuge manager Steve Thompson.

**Targets:** Redhead, Harris's Hawk, Aplomado Falcon (fingers crossed), Groove-billed Ani (rare), Clay-colored Thrush

## LEARNING TO LISTEN

**with Michael O'Brien and Louise Zemaitis**

**Fee \$85 / Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, 6:30am - 12pm**



The ability to recognize bird songs and calls is critical to becoming a proficient birder. Yet many of us do have difficulty mastering the skill, often because we approach it in the wrong way. These workshops will help get us on the right path. And we will be learning from the best - Michael O'Brien (*Flight Calls of Migratory Birds* and *Larkwire*, an app for learning bird sounds) and Louise Zemaitis, who also happens to be this year's Festival artist!

## OLD PORT ISABEL ROAD – APLOMADO ALLEY



**Fee \$100 / Thursday, Friday, Sunday 7am - 1pm**

Aplomado Falcons disappeared from South Texas in the 1950s, but a successful Peregrine Fund reintroduction program was begun in earnest in 1993. Now over 30 breeding pairs grace the coastal prairies, and Old Port Isabel Road cuts right through this area. Join the search to see this beautiful species, with often a good variety of sparrows as a bonus!

**Note:** If the road is impassable because of wet weather, we'll seek the falcons elsewhere. Restrooms are limited.

**Targets:** Aplomado Falcon, Long-billed Curlew, White-tailed Kite, White-tailed and Harris's Hawks, Crested Caracara, Cactus Wren, Cassin's Sparrow, Sprague's Pipit, wintering sparrows.

## PARROTS OF THE AREA

**Fee \$40 / Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 4pm – 6pm**



With the nesting season concluded, parrots and parakeets play hide-and-seek with us. Use your eyes and ears and join the search, while these colorful and countable tropical icons choose their nightly roost around our local urban areas.

**Note:** Guides will not keep an eBird list for this trip, but you are welcome to keep your own.

## PORT MANSFIELD

**Fee \$95 / Wednesday, Thursday 6:30am – 3 pm**



This trip will be an exploration of parts of Willacy County – the least birded county in the Lower Rio Grande Valley – as well as an opportunity to learn a little of its history and culture. We'll bird through the Sacahuistale Flats for a picnic lunch by the bay in Port Mansfield and take advantage of their newly improved birding boardwalks and viewing platforms. On the way back in the afternoon, we'll concentrate particularly on the many freshwater wetlands in the area. Stops will be made at public restrooms.

**Targets:** Waterfowl, herons and egrets, shorebirds, raptors, Cassin's Sparrow, wintering sparrows.

## RAPTOR BANDING

**with Bill Clark**

**Fee \$100 /Saturday 7:30am – 12pm**



The vans will meet raptor guru Bill Clark, author of the *Peterson Guide to Raptors* and the *Raptors of Mexico and Central America*, in the field where he will be banding local raptors, weather permitting. In case of adverse and unsafe conditions for trapping, we will spend our time observing raptors.

**Targets:** White-tailed Hawk, Harris's Hawk, American Kestrel, who knows what we will see in the hand and in the field on this unique trip!

## RESACA DE LA PALMA STATE PARK & UNIVERSITY RESACAS

**with Dave Irons & Shawneen Finnegan**

**Fee \$95 / Wednesday, Thursday 7am – 1pm**



Join birding luminaries Dave and Shawneen on this visit to Resaca de la Palma State Park with its 1200 acres of protected land, including the largest tract of native thornscrub and woodlands in the World Birding Center network. It's one of the less birded reserves in the Valley and every visit still has the feel of an adventure. We'll also visit a very different area in Brownsville – the resacas on the attractive campus of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, which have hosted some extraordinary rarities in recent years.

**Targets:** Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Least Grebe, White-tailed Kite, Groove-billed Ani (rare), Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Green Kingfisher, Green Parakeet, Great Kiskadee, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds, Black Phoebe, Bewick's Wren, wintering passerines.

## RIVER PONTOON & ANZALDUAS

**Fee \$90 / Thursday, Saturday 6am – 1pm**



Step aboard the large and comfortable *Riverside Dreamer* and see the Rio Grande River in a new way. The wooded banks on either side can yield many of our area's exceptional species and other exciting possibilities. A visit to Anzalduas County Park will show the river from another perspective and you'll understand why this riverside area's fame goes beyond its county park status. The mature ash and Live Oak trees can hold a wide variety of species, both resident and rare. If, as sometimes happens at short notice, Anzalduas is closed, we shall instead visit the World Birding site at Hidalgo Pumphouse.

**Note:** Can be cool on the boat in the mornings. Don't forget your jacket.

**Targets:** Hook-billed Kite (rare), Gray Hawk, Ringed and Green Kingfishers, Black Phoebe, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds, Green Jay, Clay-colored Thrush, Long-billed and Curve-billed Thrashers, Olive Sparrow, Northern Beardless-Tyrannulet, Altamira Oriole, wintering warblers.

## SABAL PALM SANCTUARY

*Fee \$95 / Friday, Saturday 6:30am – 12:30pm*



The Sabal Palm Sanctuary is now managed by the Gorgas Science Foundation. They have done a wonderful job of enhancing the already outstanding habitats and restoring the historic Rabb Plantation House, now the Sanctuary's impressive headquarters. The forest of native Sabal Palms is the last major remnant of an ecosystem once much more widespread in the Valley, and is unique in the U.S. Its shady depths and managed waterways shelter a remarkable diversity of wildlife. There's a bird-feeding area that's great for photo-ops and active enough to support a live cam! If time permits, we shall visit a local wetland on our way back to Harlingen.

**Targets:** Least Grebe, Plain Chachalaca, Groove-billed Ani (rare), Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Ringed and Green Kingfishers, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds, Clay-colored Thrush, Hooded and Altamira Orioles, Olive Sparrow, wintering warblers.

## SANTA ANA NWR

*Fee \$85 / Thursday, Saturday, Sunday 6:30am – 12:30pm*



Widely famous and justly so, Santa Ana NWR has one of the highest bird counts in the entire U.S. NWR system. The riparian woodlands and cattail-lined waterways of Santa Ana are a great place to experience many of the Valley's compelling species. Added attractions are the 40' hawk-watch tower and the suspended walkway, offering rare views of birds and their habitat from above the forest canopy.

**Targets:** Mottled Duck, Plain Chachalaca, Least Grebe, Long-billed Dowitcher, Groove-billed Ani (rare), Ringed and Green Kingfishers, Northern Beardless -Tyrannulet, Green Jay, Clay-colored Thrush, Olive Sparrow.

## SHOREBIRD FIELD WORKSHOP

*Fee \$100 / Thursday, Friday, Sunday 6am – 1pm*



Many birders profess difficulty in identifying shorebirds, but it is a skill that can readily be acquired. Once mastered, it is both a pleasure in itself and a potential tool to aid shorebird conservation - shorebird numbers can, after all, only be accurately monitored if they can be identified with confidence. The emphasis of these workshops will be on identification, but we are fortunate that Manomet, the global leader in shorebird conservation, has a booth at the Festival this year and we will learn about their work in addressing the threats to shorebirds and unravelling the mysteries of shorebird migration.

## SOUTH PADRE ISLAND and BAY CRUISE

*Fee \$120 / Friday, Saturday 6am – 1pm*



Sure, spring breakers migrate here in mid-March, but birds make full use of this sub-tropical paradise all year round. Explore boardwalks over coastal marshes, check out the concentrated woodlots and enjoy a cruise on the lovely Laguna Madre. Always a popular trip, so sign up early.

**Note:** It can be cool on the boat – don't forget your jacket.

**Targets:** Brown Pelican, Least Bittern, Reddish Egret, Roseate Spoonbill, Peregrine Falcon, Clapper Rail, Sora, Snowy and Piping Plovers, American Oystercatcher, Marbled Godwit, Forster's, Royal, and Sandwich Terns, Black Skimmer, Marsh Wren, lingering migrant songbirds.

## SOUTH PADRE ISLAND BIRDING AND NATURE CENTER

*Fee \$85 /Wednesday, Thursday 6:30am – 1:00pm*



The South Padre Island Birding and Nature Center (and Alligator Sanctuary) was built as a part of the World Birding Center and has over 3300 feet of boardwalk! The boardwalk spans salt and freshwater marsh and lagoons, and often yields surprising sightings. Rails can be quite accommodating, and resident alligators are often visible on warm days. Once we've finished at the Birding and Nature Center we'll make a stop at the Valley Land Fund Sheepshead lots to see what might be present. Late fall has turned up a number of surprises here!

**Targets:** Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Redhead, Neotropic Cormorant, Reddish Egret, Roseate Spoonbill, Clapper Rail, Sora, Royal Tern, Peregrine Falcon, Tropical Kingbird, Great Kiskadee, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Marsh Wren and so much more!

## SUNSET SHENANIGANS AT RESACA DE LA PALMA STATE PARK

*With Land Sea and Sky & Kowa Optics*

*Fee \$85 / Thursday 5:30pm – 9:00pm*



We will travel just down the road to Resaca de la Palma State Park and World Birding Center for an evening of activities! We will arrive about sunset, and we will spend the evening star gazing, black lighting, and looking for creatures of the night. This is a unique opportunity to join Land Sea and Sky for a look through their astronomical telescopes, local lepidopterists for moths, and a chance to look for nocturnal critters. Bark scorpions, tarantulas, and owls (Eastern Screech, Barn, and Great Horned) are possible as are lingering nighthawks. Snack provided.

## UPPER RIO GRANDE

*Fee \$110 / Wednesday, Saturday 5am – 2pm*



Luckily for us, birds don't recognize our international borders. The river's wooded edges and the arid uplands of Starr County are rich with both riparian sub-tropical and desert southwest species. The feeding station at Salineño is always a highlight with a colorful frenzy of orioles, kiskadees, and Green Jays! Some rare specialty birds are found along the Rio Grande in this area, and we'll look for them while recognizing that our chances of success are slight. After we've enjoyed the beautiful view of the Rio, we'll move on to Falcon State Park where we'll look for desert specialties.

**Targets:** Gray Hawk, Zone-tailed Hawk (rare), Red-billed Pigeon (rare), Common Ground-Dove, White-tipped Dove, Greater Roadrunner, Green and Ringed Kingfishers, Cactus Wren, Verdin, White-collared Seedeater (rare), Black-throated Sparrow, Pyrrhuloxia, Hooded (rare), Altamira and Audubon's Orioles.

## VALLEY RAPTORS

*with Bill Clark*

*Fee \$95 /Wednesday 6:30am – 4pm*



Many birders have a special fondness for raptors. Judging by the number of species nesting in, migrating through, or wintering in the Valley, raptors seem to have a similar feeling for the Valley! On this trip, led by Harlingen resident and raptor world-authority Bill Clark (author of *Peterson Guide to Hawks*, *A Photographic Guide to North American Raptors*, and *Raptors of Mexico and Central America*), we'll try our best to see as wide a variety of species as possible in the time available.

**Targets:** White-tailed Hawk, Hook-billed Kite (very rare in recent years), Gray Hawk, Harris's Hawk, Crested Caracara, Aplomado Falcon.

## WESLACO'S URBAN OASES

*with Jon Dunn*

**Fee \$65/ Wednesday, Thursday 7:30am to 1pm**



This is a wonderful opportunity to bird in a small group with birding icon Jon Dunn, co-author of the National Geographic Society's *Field Guide to the Birds of North America*, and *Peterson Field Guides to Warblers and Gulls of the Americas*. On this leisurely tour we'll visit two urban gems in Weslaco – the 15 acres of Frontera Audubon thicket and the 6 acres of Valley Nature Center. Don't be misled by their size – both have attracted an impressive array of Mexican vagrants, including Crimson-collared Grosbeak and Golden-crowned Warbler on previous Festival tours. With their mix of thornbrush, wetlands and butterfly gardens, they provide nesting habitat for many of our Valley specialties and a haven for wintering passerines. Conditions permitting, we will stop at a local sod farm on the way back.

**Targets:** Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Plain Chachalaca, Common Ground-Dove, White-tipped Dove, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Green Kingfisher, Golden-fronted Woodpecker, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds, Green Jay, Clay-colored Thrush, Long-billed and Curve-billed Thrashers, Olive Sparrow, Altamira Oriole, Lesser Goldfinch.

## WHERE THE LOCALS BIRD

**Fee \$110/ Wednesday, Friday, Sunday– Cameron County 6:30am – 1pm**

**Thursday, Saturday – Hidalgo County 6:30am – 1pm**



Every birder has those out of the way locations, known only to a few, that are close to home and sure to yield a productive day of birding. If you are lucky enough to live in the Rio Grande Valley, these secret jewels become as familiar as your own backyard. Join some of our leading local birders as they share with you a super opportunity to bird the less traveled roads of Hidalgo or Cameron County. Ideal for county listers.

**Note:** There are no target lists but a variety of habitats will be visited on each trip and participants (no more than eight on each trip) will see many Valley specialties and perhaps a surprise or two.

## YOUNG BIRDERS

**Fee \$60 / Wednesday, Thursday, Sunday 6:30am – 2pm**

**\$130 Friday (King Ranch)**

**\$110 Saturday (Upper Rio Grande)**



Lucky young birders aged 12-20 will join expert guides for exclusive field trips limited to 8 participants. Destinations vary each day as do target species, but sign up every day for a valley-wide experience! On the bus with the main group for King Ranch and Upper Rio Grande Valley, in a van for Estero, Santa Ana, and the clean up trip!

**Wednesday** – to Estero Llano Grande State Park

**Thursday** – to Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge

**Friday** – to King Ranch on the bus

**Saturday** – to the Upper Rio Grande Valley on the bus

**Sunday** – a “clean up” trip to various locations looking for desired targets!

**Target:** See target lists for each site.

**The following trips will meet at the site.**

## HUGH RAMSEY PARK (HARLINGEN ARROYO COLORADO WBC)

*with local volunteers*

**Free / Saturday, Sunday 9am & 11am**

The 55 acres of this World Birding Center are a microcosm of South Texas habitats enhanced by trails, water features, bird-feeding areas, photographic blinds and extensive plantings of native vegetation. They truly are a birding oasis close to the center of Harlingen, with over 270 recorded species. .

The Park will be open for birding from dusk to dawn throughout the Festival. There are no tours from the Festival itself, but local birders will lead walks for Festival registrants at the Park each morning at 8 & 10 am. Each will last about 90 minutes. You can reserve a place on one of the walks through the Festival's website in the normal way.

## SAN BENITO WETLANDS

*with local volunteers*

*Free / Thursday, Friday 8am & 10am*

The restoration of wetlands and riparian habitat on some 65 acres at the San Benito Wetlands is one of the most exciting on-going environmental projects in the area. It's spearheaded by Jaime Flores, the Program Coordinator of the Arroyo Colorado Watershed Partnership, and actively supported by the City of San Benito, the owners of the land.

For the time being, the site can only be entered with specific permission from the City of San Benito. During the Festival, however, there will be guided walks led by local birders at 8am and 10am each morning. Reservations should be made in the usual way through the Festival's website. In addition, anyone attending the Festival will be allowed entry to walk the trails between 2pm and 5pm each afternoon from the 9th to the 13th. Just take a little care when walking, particularly after wet weather.

The site is well worth visiting. Almost 200 species have been seen to date (it is an eBird hotspot), and at times the sheer numbers of cormorants, herons, egrets and wildfowl can be overwhelming.

## RGVBF PHOTOTRACK

Our 2022 PhotoTrack is sure to generate excitement with opportunities for all experience levels no matter what type of camera you have. We offer something for every interest level and ability. Indoor classroom topics on digiscoping, in-the-field excursions to get hands-on experience, guidance from professionals, action shots, and demystifying those settings are some highlights. If you are new to digiscoping, you can learn from the master, Clay Taylor. If you're looking to get those crushing Crested Caracara photos, try the Martin Refuge for fantastic photo ops in natural settings or Laguna Seca Ranch for a fabulous reflective shot of Green Jays.

**Note:** All trips (*other than Sunsets, Birds and More*) meet on site – directions to PhotoTrack destinations will be provided in your registration packets.

### \*DIGISCOPING DEMYSTIFIED

*With Clay Taylor, Swarovski Optik Ltd.*

*Fee \$20 / Thursday 3:30-5pm*

This indoor workshop held at the Harlingen Convention Center and sponsored by Swarovski Optik, will explain digiscoping – the process of attaching a digital camera or phone to a spotting scope. The workshop will be conducted by Clay Taylor, the Naturalist Market Manager with Swarovski Optik Ltd and a pioneer of digiscoping in the U.S. Clay will cover scope and camera equipment, attachment devices, and tips for success. This class can be taken in conjunction with Digiscoping from the Deck as a field experience or it can be a stand-alone class. Meet at the Harlingen Convention Center assigned breakout room.

**Goals:** Understand the best ways to use your scope as a long lens to get the best up-close shots from a basic camera.

### DIGISCOPING FROM THE DECK

*With Clay Taylor, Swarovski Optik Ltd.*

*Fee \$20 / Saturday 2:00pm -5pm*



This workshop, sponsored by Swarovski Optik, is designed to help digiscopers with all levels of experience but will be particularly valuable for struggling beginners. It will be conducted by Clay Taylor, the Naturalist Market Manager with Swarovski Optik Ltd and a pioneer of digiscoping in the U.S. **Meet onsite** at the deck at Estero Llano Grande State Park Visitor Center. Clay will cover setups, camera settings, field-shooting techniques and reviews of images. Please bring all your equipment including spotting scope, tripod, camera and adapter, fully charged batteries and empty memory cards. If you do not have a spotting scope, let Clay know in advance at [Clay.Taylor@swarovskioptik.us](mailto:Clay.Taylor@swarovskioptik.us). Clay will also have digiscoping adapters for DSLR cameras and smart phones available.

## LAGUNA SECA RANCH

*with Ruth Hoyt*

*Fee \$150 per session, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 6:15-10:30am or 2:30-6pm, Sunday, 6:15am-10:30am only*



Laguna Seca Ranch is open for special opportunities for a small number of festival participants in morning and afternoon sessions. Morning participants meet at 6:00am at Love's Truck Stop, Exit 12 on highway 281/69C. Afternoon participants meet at 3:00pm at the ranch gate; driving directions to the ranch are provided and the ranch owner will meet afternoon participants at the gate.

Once on the property, you will be escorted to a shared photo blind to photograph songbirds attracted to the water feature or food near the blind. Modern bathroom on the premises. Photo opportunities for all hand-held cameras and those requiring tripods. Lenses equivalent to 300mm and longer are recommended.

## MARTIN REFUGE

*Fee \$165 / Thursday, Saturday 7am – 12:45pm*



The Martin Refuge, owned by John and Audrey Martin, has hosted wildlife photographers since 2003 on its 300 acres of thorn scrub enhanced by water features and professionally designed photo-blinds. It is particularly renowned for the opportunities it affords to photographers for close views of Crested Caracaras, Harris's Hawks and other raptors. This trip is an excellent opportunity for behavioral observation and study as well. Patty Raney of Martin Refuge will guide us to the blinds for this unique chance to get great shots of wildlife at this private ranch. After a morning of photography with the raptors, the Refuge will be providing us with lunch at an open air palapa.

The trip will be limited to eight participants and is suitable for photographers of all levels. Bring lots of batteries – there is no electricity on site. Restroom available.

## SUNSETS, BIRDS, AND MORE!

*With Clay Taylor, Swarovski Inc.*

*Fee \$60 / Wednesday, Friday 3:30pm – 9pm*



We will depart the Convention Center in the late afternoon and head to South Padre Island, where we will scout locations and discuss settings and equipment. As the sun sets, we will try to silhouette birds in front of the sun for spectacular images! We will head to the South Padre Island Brewing Company for dinner before heading back to the Harlingen Convention Center.

**Goals:** Learning how to plan for sunset silhouettes of birds and rewarding ourselves with some great food!

## KEYNOTES, and SEMINARS

Entrance to all keynotes, seminars and socials is being offered for one flat price during the online registration period. This *Kiskadee Pass* is \$30 and allows you entry to all those offerings in the auditorium. A huge savings from individually priced admissions, you can purchase the *Kiskadee Pass* only during open registration. During the Festival, individual tickets will be sold for admission.

Field trips are not included in the *Kiskadee Pass*.

### Keynote Speaker

#### Young, Broke, and Birding: Why Fledging as a Birder is the Best



*with Christina Baal*

*Fee \$20 or Free with Kiskadee Pass / Saturday 4pm*

We've all done crazy things for the sake of watching birds. Whether it's dropping more than a mortgage payment on optics, skipping work to go chase a rare bird, or filling a pantry with more birdseed than human food, birders go all-out. Want to put crazy into perspective? Join artist Christina Baal as she recounts the outrageous lengths she has gone to for the sake of finding birds. When you are a twenty-something wandering bird artist, low budgets but relentless creativity make for some questionable decisions and hilarious adventures while finding your way in the world. Spoiler alert: there will be raccoons. And alligators. BONUS

tutorial: Flirting for Birders 101.

**Christina Baal** is a wandering bird artist whose dream is to meet and paint 10,000 different species of birds. She discovered the world of birding as a student at Bard College in the Hudson Valley. After graduating with a BA in Studio Art in 2014, she started her own art business, "Drawing 10,000 Birds," and set out to find birds. Christina's adventures have taken her across the country and around the globe to places like Costa Rica, Alaska, the Galápagos, and Japan. Her art has been featured at a number of birding festivals and events, including *The Biggest Week in American Birding*, *Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival*, and New Jersey Audubon's *World Series of Birding*. Most recently, she painted the 2022 Bird of the Year, the Burrowing Owl, for the American Birding Association. While not painting and chasing birds, Christina works as an environmental educator, bird guide, and art instructor so that she can share her love of birds and art. Christina lives in Pinnacles National Park with her partner and their adorable golden retrievers and enjoys having California Condors (her favorite bird) as yard birds!

### Seminars

#### The Mystery of Sociality in South Texas Harris's Hawks: Is Cooperative Hunting Adaptive?



*With Jim Bednarz & Brooke Poplin*

*Fee \$15 or Free with Kiskadee Pass / Thursday 2pm*

Harris's Hawks, perhaps the coolest birds of prey in the south Texas region, exhibit both cooperative breeding (where more than two hawks are associated with a nest) and sophisticated cooperative hunting behavior. These behaviors have been mostly studied in Arizona and New Mexico and the reported benefits have been disputed and debated.

Recent research by the University of North Texas (UNT) Harris's Hawk research team have documented that over half of all Harris's Hawk nesting groups in south Texas include 3 or more hawks and that groups actively participate in dramatic cooperative hunts. With this project, we intend to document the frequency and sophistication of cooperative hunting and sociality in Harris' Hawks by conducting intensive focal behavioral observations on radio-tagged hawks.

Questions we plan to address include: 1) How often and when do the hawks cooperatively hunt? 2) How large are the hunting parties? 3) How successful is cooperative hunting? 4) What factors favor cooperative hunting? 5) What prey are taken by cooperative hunting? And more! These data are vital in helping to finally solve the mystery of “helper” Harris’s Hawks at the nest! Importantly, also understanding this mystery will provide key information in formulating conservation measures to ensure that the unique social system of this very cool raptor is not disturbed by alteration of habitat or other human activities. Any contribution to this project will be greatly appreciated!

**Jim Bednarz** received his BS degree in Wildlife Biology from New Mexico State University, completed a M.S. degree Iowa State University studying Red-shouldered Hawks, and his Ph.D. degree working on Harris’s Hawks at the University of New Mexico. Jim has conducted research on six continents for four decades emphasizing avian population ecology, behavioral ecology, and conservation. Although most of this work has been focused on birds of prey and Neotropical migratory songbirds, he has also conducted research on shorebirds, colonial waterbirds, waterfowl, woodpeckers, quail, and wild turkeys. Jim is probably most recognized for his long-term research on Harris’s Hawks in New Mexico and current work in south Texas. He is currently a Principal Lecturer at the University of North Texas (UNT) and works closely mentoring graduate and undergraduate students conducting a variety of research on amazing birds!

**Brooke Poplin** is a graduate student at UNT currently pursuing her Biology M.S. She will co-lead the study on the social behavior of Harris’s Hawks which entails using VHF radio telemetry in conjunction with direct behavioral observations on social groups. Brooke has been interested in ornithology since her early undergrad program and participated in an American Kestrel behavioral study and field research on the breeding ecology of the Painted Bunting. Beginning in the senior year of Brooke’s undergraduate program, her passion for raptors was ignited when she participated in a Red-tailed Hawk genetics project in addition to helping band American Kestrels in Denton County, Texas. Her ultimate career goal is to become a raptor biologist, one day becoming a professor to help inspire diversity and accessibility in the world of ecology. When Brooke is not pursuing her research interests, she loves to go hiking with her dog Axyl and expanding her “life list” by birding in new places.

## **Bird Rescue, Rehabilitation, and Release**



***With Dr. Tomas deMaar***

***Fee \$15 or Free with Kiskadee Pass / Thursday 4pm***

Both the Bible and the Quran instruct that baby birds should be returned to safety and care of their mother. In the last 50 years the science and practice of wildlife rehabilitation has developed into a discipline of its own. As man’s footprint on the land becomes ever larger, interactions and conflicts between man and bird species become more frequent, more serious, and cause greater impacts on the future. Dr. deMaar will introduce the process of bird rescue, rehabilitation, and release; describe actual cases; and discuss ethical considerations, legal requirements, public interactions, and humane euthanasia. What can you do in the field to triage a bird-in-distress situation, secure an injured bird, and locate a wildlife rehabilitator?

**Dr. Thomas deMaar** has been a wildlife and zoo veterinarian for 30 years embracing this extreme form of multiple species “one medicine”. During his career he worked with several zoos in the United States; operated a wildlife conservation medicine practice in Kenya for 8 years; cared for domestic livestock in Mexico, Uganda, and Pakistan; consulted for federal and state wildlife agencies; taught at Tufts University, the University of Nairobi, and the University of Texas; and mentored students from numerous countries ranging from high school to graduate school. Along the way Dr. deMaar has practiced wildlife rehabilitation for thousands of mammals, birds, and reptiles in many settings. He is currently the attending veterinarian for Sea Turtle, Inc. on South Padre Island, Texas.

## Wintering ecology of the American Kestrel: the behavior, survival, and future of these Winter Texans



**With Kelsey Biles**

**Fee \$15 or Free with Kiskadee Pass / Friday 2pm**

American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) are the smallest raptor species in the US. Unfortunately, kestrel populations have been in a steady decline since the collection of reliable population trend data began in the 1960s. Past research has shown that their survivorship and reproduction have been relatively unchanged during the breeding season, so we have begun to examine their wintering areas and migratory routes. In Texas, we have a large kestrel population that migrates in each winter to take advantage of our milder temperatures and abundance of insect prey. We monitored the survival and behaviors of these kestrels across 5 winters, and began attempting to track their migration more recently. Here, I will present this research, containing our insights into the kestrels' struggles to survive and our attempts to study them.

**Kelsey Biles** is an avian ecologist with a passion for conservation and raptor research. She is currently the Conservation Director at Houston Audubon, where she works towards conserving urban and coastal bird populations across southeast Texas. She has a PhD in Biology from the University of North Texas, where she studied American Kestrel conservation. In her previous years of conservation research, she led teams and mentored undergraduate students in deepening their hands-on experience of bird conservation practices. Kelsey is a native Texan and has lived in many towns, big and small, across the state. She received her Bachelor of Science in Biology from the University of Texas at Arlington and Master of Science in Biology from Baylor University.

## My Big Year – Nature Can Heal



**With Dr. Joe Blanda**

**Fee \$15 or Free with Kiskadee Pass / Friday 4pm**

Joe Blanda is a recently retired orthopedic surgeon from Akron, Ohio who did a big year of birding in 2016 to raise money for cancer research after the death of his son due to brain cancer. A transformational event happened at the Rio Grande Birding Festival. Joe will share some of his exciting bird sightings both with his photographs and some captivating stories. You will learn how he used his passion for nature and birding not only to heal from his loss but also to discover a new desire to help others.

**Dr. Joe Blanda** is a recently retired orthopedic surgeon with a continued passion to help people and nature. By sharing his knowledge on how the outdoors can help us, he hopes people will get more involved in helping nature heal. A member of the Sierra Club since 1989, he now sits on the executive committee for the Portage Trail Group of the Sierra Club promoting inclusion, sustainable living, and political awareness. He is an active board member of the Conservancy for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, leading mindfulness walks in nature. He has made presentations at the Space Coast Birding Festival and the Kachemak Bay Shorebird Festival in addition to multiple Sierra Club chapters and birding clubs. He continues to teach about the health benefits of nature at medical schools and other organizations. Because of his appreciation of the conserved natural beauty of the Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge, this March he helped set up a Wellness Week where he gave the keynote presentation and lead some walks. Visit his website [www.nature-canheal.com](http://www.nature-canheal.com)

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### WELCOME KICK-OFF RECEPTION

**Free with Registration/Tuesday 5:00pm – 7:00 pm**

After you have picked up your credentials at the new Harlingen Convention Center between noon and 5pm, come to the Harlingen Arts & Heritage Museum at 2425 Boxwood Street (on Loop 499, across from the airport) for some camaraderie, music, refreshments and hors d'oeuvres. Enjoy the exhibits, mingle with your friends, meet some new ones!



## **\*DINNER WITH THE GUIDES**

**Fee \$20 BBQ Plate**

**Fee \$17 Vegetarian Plate**

**Wednesday 6:00pm – 9pm**

Dinner with the Guides was so popular last year, we are repeating it in 2022. How would you like an opportunity to have dinner with a guide or two? On Wednesday evening you will be able to do just that. Join us at a local BBQ restaurant for a plate of barbeque and sides or a vegetarian plate consisting of a salad with potato salad and macaroni and cheese. Each table will be hosted by one or more festival guides. Cash Bar available.

## **KISKADEE KORDIALS**

**Free with Registration/Thursday, Friday, Saturday 5:00pm -6:00pm**

You are “kordially” invited to join us at the Birders Bazaar for refreshments during the last hour of the trade show, with some light snacks to hold you over until dinner. Cash bar of beer or wine available to anyone over 21. Festival ID badge required.

## **BIRDERS BAZAAR TRADE SHOW**

**Kiskadee Ballroom/Harlingen Convention Center**

**Free! Open to the Public/Thursday-Sunday (12:00pm- 6:00pm, Sunday until 4:00pm)**

Enjoy all things birds and birdy as you wander through rows of vendors’ booths at the Harlingen Convention Center. With over 70 vendors, there are ideas, information and items to buy, all under one roof. Visit booths from tour companies, local refuges and wildlife areas, tourist attractions, artists, birding optics and other gear, local nature organizations, and much more.

## **SKY KING FALCONRY**

**During Birder Bazaar Trade Show with outdoor presentations at 1pm & 3pm Thursday - Sunday**

Sky Kings Falconry and Wildlife Revealed, a non-profit that travels the US conducting educational presentations with predatory birds and Raptors that specialize in free flight presentations and do take on roughly 20% rescue birds. Their birds consist of Falcons, Hawks, Owls, Vultures, Ravens and even Kookaburras as they are all meat-eating birds. Sky Kings staff presents an educational and at the same time fun show. They are dedicated to education and the preservation of our planet’s wildlife and believe that providing the public with an up close and personal experience is a great way to get them interested in conservation.

## **SILENT AUCTION**

**Thursday-Saturday, Trade Show hours/Bidding closes 4:30pm on Saturday**

One of the most fun satellite events for the Festival is the Silent Auction. With most of our vendors contributing items (from artwork to books, novelties to travel packages), and local merchants contributing to the inventory, it makes an exciting (and sometimes competitive) exercise in shopping.

## **Free Family Activities and Children’s Nature Nook**

**TBA**