



We are a group of trained volunteers who share our appreciation and knowledge of nature with the community through outreach, education and conservation/restoration projects

## Kelly Norrid on Endangered Species and Non-game Funding

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Text and Photos  
By Diane Russell

**Kelly began his talk by describing his early influences growing up in the small town of Cut & Shoot near the Sam Houston National Forest. This biodiverse area was his playground, and his grandmother, who experienced the Great Depression, taught him how to forage for food and learn all about edible plants as a boy.**

**He briefly reviewed the funding system in Texas for game and nongame wildlife, or NGW. Game species began to receive conservation funding in 1937 with the Federal Aid to Wildlife Restoration Act, or Pittman-Robertson Act. This act created an excise tax on guns, ammunition, and other hunting-related equipment, which combined with state hunting license fees, serve to protect 59 game species and their habitat. This has been quite effective, as exemplified by the rebound of nearly extinct species like white-tailed deer and wild turkeys.**

**NGW, by contrast, receive little attention or funding for either species or habitat conservation. The Texas Conservation Action Plan, or TCAP, stewarded by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, is raising awareness for the need for conservation of the 1,310 species considered to be “species of greatest conservation need”, including wood storks, Atwater prairie chickens, crawfish frogs and Texas horned lizards. Handbooks are available for land owners, natural resources professionals and the public. In addition, wildlife conservation license plates benefit the NGW threatened and endangered species.**

**Kelly brought two threatened Texas tortoises to give us an example of the problems with these threatened NGS. If construction of any kind imperils them, they must be saved and moved to another location. However, since there is no habitat protection in place, moving them to a different environment is pretty much a death sentence due to their specific habitat requirements.**

**Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (H.R. 5650) was introduced in 2016 to amend the Pittman-Robertson Act and dedicate \$1.3 billion in federal funds for management and restoration of NGW. This was not enacted upon. For those interested in keeping informed about this area, a newsletter can be accessed: *Teaming with Wildlife: True to Texas*. Due to the Texas Master Naturalist laws, any political involvement as an individual is always permissible (and worthy in this case), but never as an organizational representative.**

**Chapter events and nature-related articles, photos, and items of interest to the chapter need to be sent to [Lynn](#) by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. Suggestions for the newsletter are also welcome. Thanks.**

Lynn Trenta,  
Courier Editor



## Pierce Ranch Field Trip in May

*On May 27<sup>th</sup>, we will be going on a Field Trip to Pierce Ranch. If you want to carpool we will meet at 8:30 at the Extension Office parking lot. We will travel to the Ranch from the Pierce Post Office at 9:00 which is located at 18566 Loop 526, Pierce, Texas. Wear appropriate shoes/boots, bring lunch and water and possibly bug spray. We will explore some of the 32,000 acre ranch which contains many native plants. There is a prairie restoration area along with cattle grazing. They will explain the water fowl, deer hunting and dove hunting operations at the ranch. We should get back at 2pm.*

*For information about Pierce Ranch go to <http://www.karankawa.com/history/> and for directions go to [Directions to Pierce, TX Post Office](#)*

## Texas Master Naturalist Specialty License Plate GoFundMe



*One month ago, we had reached donations totaling \$4,705 which had been donated by 10 chapters and 79 individuals. Today, I am happy to report that we have donations that now total \$7,383 which have been donated by 15 chapters and 111 individual Texas Master Naturalists. We now need only \$1,617 to reach the overall goal of \$9,000.*

*Upon receipt of \$9,000, TMN will finally have the option of owning their own license plate celebrating and advertising the great work of all TMN! I want to reach out to you and ask you to consider donating any amount. You can make a donation by visiting [www.gofundme.com/TMNlicenseplate](http://www.gofundme.com/TMNlicenseplate) You have a chance to be a part of history of the Texas Master Naturalist. Don't let this opportunity pass you by!*

*Have a beautiful month of May!*

*Sincerely,*

*Allison Copony*

*TMN/Heartwood Chapter*

*April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017*



## Meet Chapter President, Amber Leung

*Before becoming a Texas Master Naturalist, I volunteered at a number of different places including the Houston Zoo, the Wildlife Center of Texas, and the National Resource Center for Cephalopods. With each, I enjoyed the opportunity to interact with members of the public and get hands-on with different types of animals. At the Houston Zoo, I did most of my volunteering in the Bird Department. It was a wonderful opportunity to help keepers raise the next generation of critically-endangered Attwater's prairie chickens. At the Wildlife Center of Texas, I tried my hand at a few areas such as baby bird feeding, opossum care, and squirrel nursing. Did you know that doves produce a liquid in their crops called "dove milk" that they feed to their young? As a student at A&M in Galveston, I worked as an intern at the National Resource Center for Cephalopods, or as I liked to call it: the "Squid Lab." It was a well-known facility that was among the first to manage the feat of breeding different species of squid and cuttlefish through multiple generations. They also kept octopus and nautilus. The facility was strictly limited to supplying these exotic animals only to research and educational facilities and NOT the aquarium trade.*

*My special interests as a Master Naturalist include building an appreciation for wild plants by teaching about the edible and medicinal properties of many of the "weeds" that people usually disregard. Many people don't realize that dandelion greens are a nutritional powerhouse! I have been able to find them for sale during the spring months at Whole Foods Market or year-round at the Korean supermarket Super H Mart. To facilitate future edible plant walks, I am slowly adding native fruit trees to Seabourne Creek Nature Park.*

*Another cause close to my heart is my self-declared mission to spread understanding and knowledge in hopes to improve the public image (and survival rate) of some of my long-time scaly favorites: snakes! Thanks to my dad and brother, I never developed a fear of these animals when I was young. We kept a rough green snake and later a Baird's rat snake as kids. Currently I'm monitoring a wild Texas rat snake for suitability as an educational outreach animal in the future. Texas rat snakes are rumored to be more ill-tempered than others but this beautiful 4-ft specimen has not attempted to bite anything except for a previously-frozen mouse that it devoured with relish.*

*If you have visited the chapter website or Facebook page, you have probably seen some of my nature photos. The time I have spent exclusively volunteering has given me the chance to develop my photography skills. I share a lot of my work online at: <https://500px.com/amberleung>*

Amber received a BS in Marine Sciences from Texas A&M University in Galveston. Professionally, she has worked on and offshore for a geotechnical engineering company and more recently as a geophysicist processing marine seismic data.

April Bird Hike at Seabourne Adds 197<sup>th</sup> Species!



*The April Bird Hike participants found a 197<sup>th</sup> species, the Golden Plover!*

**Adult Description**

- **Medium-sized to large shorebird.**
- **Legs moderately long.**
- **Neck short.**
- **Bill short.**
- **Head large and rounded.**
- **Golden and black speckled back.**
- **In breeding plumage, black from face to under tail.**

**Immature Description**

*Juvenile similar to winter adult, but with light barring on chest, sides, and flanks, and more distinct yellow edges and spots on feathers of crown, back, and wings.*

*Leading the bird hike were Wayne and Vicki Poorman and bird experts Mark Scheurman and Bob Schwartz. Several chapter members participated in the hike, along with chapter interns, Pauline Zinn, Carol Hawkins and Garrett Engelhardt.*

*We did find evidence of Barn Owls using a nest box, and a cooperative Texas Rat Snake that allowed close looks & handling (see below). Also, spotted were a Eurasian Collar Dove and a Female Redwing Blackbird seen below.*

© [Dave Inman](#), OH, Conneaut Harbor, August 2013, Audubon website.



Photos by Wayne Poorman



**New Plants of Texas Website is Live!**



*Photos by Lynn Trenta*

**A new Federal/State-listed Plants of Texas website is live!**

*The website was written with a general audience in mind. A Similar Species section can help landowners and naturalists distinguish between listed plants and plants commonly confused with listed species.*

*Please feel free to peruse and share.*

[http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife\\_diversity/nongame/listed-species/plants/](http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/nongame/listed-species/plants/)

*Each species' website has*

- *Texas distribution map*
- *Names*
- *Status/ranks*
- *Global distribution*
- *Description*
- *Similar Species*
- *Habitat*
- *Life Cycle Events/Survey Season*
- *Comments*
- *Citations/Additional Information*

*A big thanks goes out to all the photographers who allowed us to use their photos, to Peter Obering, TPWD Information & Web Specialist, and my volunteer, Aspen Manning, for making this a reality!!*

*Anna W. Strong | Rare Plant Botanist | [Nongame and Rare Species Program](#) | Texas Parks and Wildlife Department | W 512-389-4767 | C 512-709-5502 | 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, TX 78744*

# The New Training Class

*The new training class is progressing well under the guidance and leadership of C.J. McDaniel, CPCTMN New Class Director. They have been to various locations, from Katy Prairie Conservancy to Karl Baumgartner's Richmond property. This week the class went to the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory.*

*We welcome the new class and look forward to having them join us in our many activities! Already, Terri Hurley is helping in the Seabourne Prairie Demo Garden, Garrett Engelhardt is helping at Seabourne with our Prairie Restoration Project and Rhonda Kuykendall was out at the Long Acres Ranch helping with the STARR Project there.*

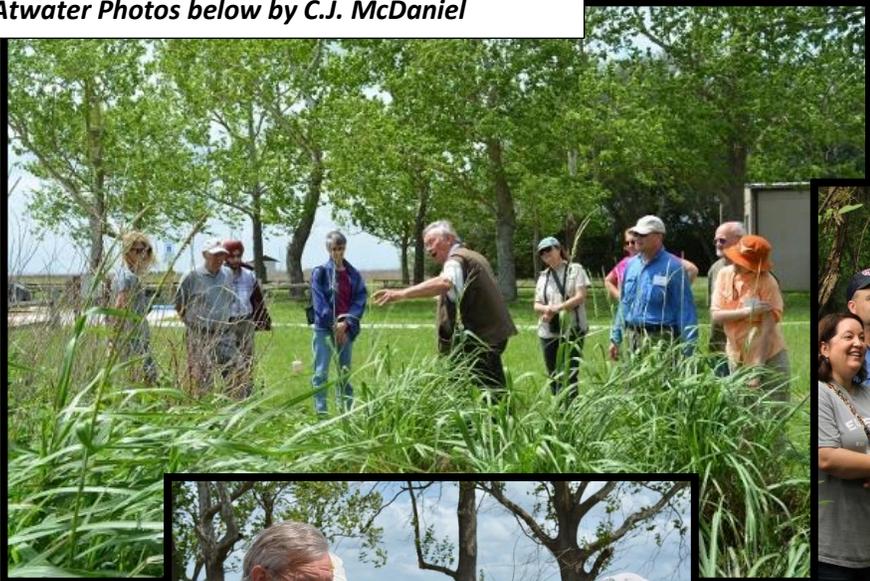
*Below are photos from Attwater Prairie Chicken NWF, KPC to the right and the group being entertained by Jim Butcher and Karl Baumgartner at Karl's Richmond property. Thanks to the chapter members who are helping with the classes and also taking photos.*



KPC Photos by C.J. McDaniel



Atwater Photos below by C.J. McDaniel



Karl's Property below by Diane Russell



**CPCTMN Outreach**

**STAAR at Long Acres Ranch- Amber Leung**



*The STAAR Blitz concluded on Friday April 28th at Long Acres Ranch. Texas Master Naturalist volunteers did a fantastic job and probably pushed the boundaries of comfort zones to help 8th grade students review some of their most challenging topics for their upcoming STAAR tests. In total, we reached approximately 1000 students from some of the schools in Lamar Consolidated ISD that needed the help the most. Chapter volunteers shown in the photos are Carol Schwartz, Rhonda Kuykendall, Debby Wendt, Vince Mannino, and Jim Butcher. Amber Leung and others also volunteered.*

*To the right--Teacher's pet? No, just some real life examples of biological concepts. These days-old bobwhite quail hatchlings were much-loved by all. Photos above by Diane Russell. Photo of quail chicks-Amber Leung.*



## Grands and Kids at Gathering—Diane Russell



*Many churches have a "Gathering Place" once a month where seniors with short term memory loss can come for the morning for themed entertainment and lunch provided by volunteers. Diane Russell attends these in the spring with her collection of Monarch butterflies, caterpillars and eggs for everyone to see, and also shows videos and talks about the cool things most people don't know about these marvelous insects. The event shown here was at Grace Presbyterian Church. Also included in the fun were 3 classes of second graders, who come to do crafts with their "grand-friends".*

## Pinecone Birdfeeders Fun Activity at Take Me Fishing Hutsell—Lynn Trenta

*It was a windy day on April 29<sup>th</sup>, but the Take Me Fishing Hutsell Event in Katy, was going full blast! This family-oriented event put on by the Hutsell Elementary School, brought out many families to fish and look at some nature-related activities. "Take Me Fishing Hutsell (TMFH) is the largest aquatic education event in the state of Texas run through a public school. We had over 350 participants and 100 volunteers last year, totaling more than 450 people at (Mary Jo) Peckham Park. Texas Parks and Wildlife is a sponsor and supporter of our event and constantly refers to Hutsell as the prime example of how to institute a fishing program at school."*

<http://www.katyisd.org/campus/HE/Pages/Take-Me-Fishing.aspx>

*Master Naturalists Diane Russell, Jeff Wellman, and Lynn Trenta were at this fun event helping kids to make pinecone bird feeders. This was a fun day volunteering and a good outreach activity!*

*Photos by Diane Russell (and a helpful parent)*



# Seabourne Creek Nature Park Happenings

## Rat Snake Finds Amber

*We were at the prairie area out at Seabourne, when Amber spied a friend! She pulled on a glove and introduced herself to a fair-sized rat snake!*

*Here she is enjoying this rat snake's company*

*Photo by Jimmie Brannon*



## Seabourne Site of iNaturalist Challenge

*We had a great bunch out at Seabourne Creek Nature Park participating in the iNaturalist City Challenge! Headed up by chapter members Jessica Jubin and Michelle Sullivan, the event took place on April 15<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 4pm. Other chapter participants included John Donaho, Cheryl Garcia, Terri Hurley, Amber Leung, Linda Rippert, Michelle Sullivan, Lynn Trenta, and Debby Wendt.*



Photos by John Donaho (L) and Jessica Jubin (R)



## Houston nets the most Species in iNaturalist City Nature Challenge !

*This year's City Nature Challenge was AMAZING! 16 cities across the country, all mobilizing their residents and visitors to go out and find and document their local nature. The energy and enthusiasm for the City Nature Challenge was truly inspiring - watching observations flow in from across the US was great to see. Our collective impact was obvious and incredible - we also gave iNaturalist its biggest 5 days in a row EVER!*

*Here are the results of the City Nature Challenge (as of 9 am Pacific / 12 pm Eastern on April 22): All 16 cities together: 124,092 observations / 8557 species / 4051 participants  
We also added 3077 new species that had not previously been recorded on iNaturalist in these 16 cities, and 5689 new iNaturalist observers who had not previously made observations in these 16 cities!*

*Congratulations to our top observers and top species-finders across ALL the City Nature Challenge cities - you can see the top 5 above in the event stats. We'd also like to recognize the top 5 people who added \*unique\* taxa to the whole City Nature Challenge - taxa that were not found by anyone else in all 16 cities!:*

*[@anewman](#) with 141 unique taxon contributions*

*[@eelprogramderm](#) with 90 unique taxon contributions*

*[@gcwarbler](#) with 84 unique taxon contributions*

*[@dlbowls](#) with 69 unique taxon contributions*

*[@neontetraploid](#) with 66 unique taxon contributions*

*--City with the most observations: Dallas/Fort Worth with 23,957*

*--City with the most species: Houston with 2419*

*--City with the most participants: Los Angeles with 1034 (also includes people who submitted via*

*social media)*

*--City with highest percentage of verifiable observations: Dallas/Fort Worth with 96.3%*

*--City with highest percentage of verifiable observations making it to Research Grade: Chicago with 64.4%*

*--City that added the most new species to their region through the City Nature Challenge: Houston with 594 new species*

*--City that added the most new iNaturalist participants to their region through the City Nature Challenge: Los Angeles with 436 new observers*

*Thanks again to everyone who participated in the City Nature Challenge this year! And stay tuned for next year, when the City Nature Challenge goes INTERNATIONAL!!!*

Posted by  [kestral](#), April 23, 2017 05:45 AM

**Houston Leaders:** For entire results, see [https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?project\\_id=10769&place\\_id=any&verifiable=any&captive=any&view=observers](https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?project_id=10769&place_id=any&verifiable=any&captive=any&view=observers)

*--Kelly Walker got most observations at 797*

*--Andy Newman was second with 780*

*--Andy Newman won the species count for Houston at 653*

*--Jed Aplaca was second with 305*

*--Andy Newman made the most ID's for our project with 1912*

*--iNaturalist ID of corvid81 came in second with 1064*

**What species** have people been posting for our project in Greater Houston? Go to

[https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?captive=any&place\\_id=any&project\\_id=10769&verifiable=any&view=species](https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?captive=any&place_id=any&project_id=10769&verifiable=any&view=species)

**See Leaderboard on next page----->**

Houston nets the most Species in iNaturalist City Nature Challenge ! (continued)

City	Observations	City	Species	City	People
Dallas/Fort Worth	23957	Houston	2419	Los Angeles	1,034
San Francisco Bay Area	23024	Austin	2401	San Francisco Bay Area	651
Los Angeles	18152	San Francisco Bay Area	2313	Dallas/Fort Worth	495
Austin	15807	Dallas/Fort Worth	2299	Houston	417
Houston	15276	Los Angeles	2017	Austin	373
Raleigh (Triangle Area)	7441	Raleigh (Triangle Area)	1310	Boston (and surrounding areas)	250
DC	4843	DC	901	Raleigh (Triangle Area)	186
Boston (and surrounding areas)	3909	Boston (and surrounding areas)	743	Salt Lake City (Wasatch Front)	178
New York (5 boroughs)	3792	New York (5 boroughs)	657	DC	167
Chicago (Cook County)	2511	Chicago (Cook County)	527	New York (5 boroughs)	146
Salt Lake City (Wasatch Front)	2373	Miami (Miami-Dade County)	496	Chicago (Cook County)	142
Seattle	1542	Salt Lake City (Wasatch Front)	428	Seattle	64
Miami (Miami-Dade County)	1437	Seattle	415	Miami (Miami-Dade County)	52
Nashville	970	Nashville	319	Nashville	48
Minneapolis/St. Paul	955	Minneapolis/St. Paul	257	Minneapolis/St. Paul	48
Duluth (Twin Ports)	236	Duluth (Twin Ports)	85	Duluth (Twin Ports)	46
ALL 16 CITIES	124092	ALL 16 CITIES	8557	ALL 16 CITIES	4051

Susie's Plant Study Group at Cullinan Park

**April 8<sup>th</sup>, Susie Doe and the CPCTMN Study Group went to Cullinan Park for their monthly plant walk. Karl Baumgartner, Susie Doe, Ted Donaho, Cheryl Garcia, Margo Johnson, Jessica and Ted Jubin, Wayne and Vicki Poorman, Lynn Trenta and Gloria Scheel enjoyed plants from forested and wetland areas and added new plants to our list.**

**Jessica's son, Ted, found many things to fascinate him and added a fun dimension to our walk, investigating as only a little boy can do.**

*Photos by Wayne Poorman*



Wildlife Activities and Practices Workshop

April 6, 2017

Nature and Education Center at Cooper Farm

Fayette County

By Carol Schwartz



*Ever wonder why several of our Coastal Prairie Chapter members get invited to traipse around on some of our area's best private properties with the blessing of Texas Parks & Wildlife's and others haven't? Well, it comes about at the request of our TPW Sponsor, David Lobpries. Property owners seeking a wildlife valuation must develop a comprehensive plan for their property which meets several qualifying criteria. The plan must then be submitted to the county's Central Appraisal District. If their plan is approved by the CAD, then a property tax reduction is earned. That is just one of the details learned by chapter members, Bob & Carol Schwartz, Natalya Crawford and Kristi Johnson, who attended this workshop. Additionally, the property must have first qualified for agriculture valuation. Only then can it be converted to a wildlife valuation. Such a designation benefits wildlife, the land and the property owner.*

*Presenters at this workshop included the Texas State Ornithologist, Fayette County CAD personnel, TPWD Biologists, a Texas A&M Professor, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Monarch Specialist and a Wildlife Habitat Federation Program Director. David Lobpries is requesting that a similar workshop be conducted closer to our area.*

*So how do Coastal Prairie Chapter members fit into all of this process? Well, Susie Doe with her plant study folks and Bob Schwartz with his Bird ID team members take the lead in this effort by conducting plant and bird surveys, respectively, on the properties of homeowners who are developing their plans. The data they collect is documented, sent to the landowner and then included in the plan for submission to the CAD. This is a service we perform that truly fulfills our Master Naturalist mission which states,*

*We are a group of trained volunteers who share our appreciation and knowledge of nature with the community through outreach, education and conservation/restoration projects.*

*Everybody wins! Our members get to do what they love on properties they wouldn't otherwise have access to and see some really great wonders of nature. Property owners gain the data they need for tax purposes and also learn a lot more about their property that they otherwise would not. If you have a strong interest and some skill in plant study and bird identification, consider contacting Susie Doe or Bob Schwartz and you too can get involved.*

**In Our Own Backyards and Other Places**

*Attracting Orioles & Tanagers* By Diane Eismont

*With Spring, here come the migrating birds, right on schedule. My first Ruby throated Hummingbird sighting was March 17 this year & March 19 last year.*

*Did you know that in addition to attracting hummingbirds to your yard, you can also attract Orioles & Tanagers? These birds may check out the hummer feeders but need their own larger size feeders.*

*Orioles & Tanagers will both use oriole feeders with sugar syrup. (6:1 sugar to water is recommended - hummers 4:1) Oriole feeders also have larger feeding ports & depressions for fruit preserves. (I use cherry, grape is popular). An orange slice can be slipped onto the center pole. Success will be more likely with fruit trees or bushes nearby. We have loquats & mulberry trees that fruit around that time.*



*Yellow-bellied Sapsucker* By Jimmie Brannon



**Build a Planting Table** *By Rick Adams*

*I thought I would share a simple planting table design in case someone wants a simpler table than the one at SCNP. While I like the design at SCNP (built by an Eagle Scout from Mark M. plans), it is bigger and heavier than I needed.*

*My table is based on the plastic stackable shelves available at Home Depot or Lowe's. The tubing to the masters is supported on 1/2 inch PVC and is fed by a pressure regulator and a timer. Instead of shade cloth, the location of the table limits direct sunlight exposure to about 6 hours per day.*



**Paddling Trails in Texas**

*Enjoy improved and maintained fishing and paddling access to rivers, creeks, lakes, ponds, bayous, and bays on any of the 72 official Texas Paddling Trails available throughout the state!!*

*These trails provide well-mapped accessible day trips in a variety of settings and for all levels of paddling experience. With more than 3,700 named streams, 15 major rivers and some 3,300 miles of tidal shoreline along the Gulf Coast, Texas offers unlimited possibilities for paddling adventures and angling opportunities of all types.*

*TPWD continues to seek partnerships with communities interested in developing a paddling trail in their area. Please see the [Future Trails](#) section on this site to learn more.*

*The [Mission Reach Paddling Trail](#) in San Antonio is now an official Texas Paddling Trail! Our 72nd trail offers 8 miles of scenic views along the San Antonio River, minutes from downtown San Antonio.*

*There are new trails being developed throughout the state, so check back often for more information*



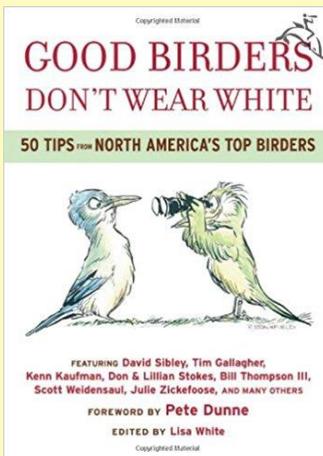
## Book Corner



**The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature, and Fowl Obsession**

By Mark Obmascik

*Every January 1, a quirky crowd storms out across North America for a spectacularly competitive event called a Big Year—a grand, expensive, and occasionally vicious 365-day marathon of birdwatching. For three men in particular, 1998 would become a grueling battle for a new North American birding record. Bouncing from coast to coast on frenetic pilgrimages for once-in-a-lifetime rarities, they brave broiling deserts, bug-infested swamps, and some of the lumpiest motel mattresses known to man. This unprecedented year of beat-the-clock adventures ultimately leads one man to a record so gigantic that it is unlikely ever to be bested. Here, prizewinning journalist Mark Obmascik creates a dazzling, fun narrative of the 275,000-mile odyssey of these three obsessives as they fight to win the greatest— or maybe worst—birding contest of all time.*



**Good Birders Don't Wear White**

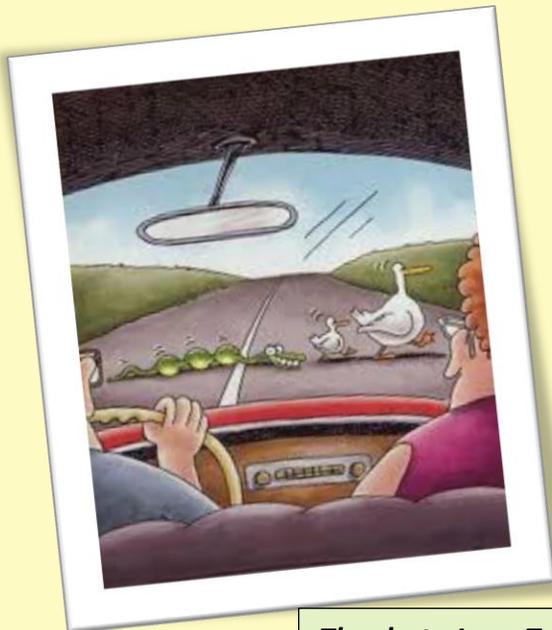
By David Sibley and others

*In these 50 light and fun original essays, the biggest names in birding dispense advice to birders of every level, on topics ranging from feeding birds and cleaning binoculars to pishing and pelagic birding. Whether satirizing bird snobs or relating the traditions and taboos of the birding culture, each essay is as chock-full of helpful information as it is entertaining.*

The Lighter Side



Thanks to John Donaho (from Facebook)



Thanks to Lynn Trenta (via internet)

Next Month—GCBO at Quintana

CPTMN 2017 Board Members

2016 Officers

- President [Amber Leung](#)
- Vice President [Debby Wendt](#)
- Secretary [Jamie Fairchild](#)
- Treasurer [Doug Simons](#)

2016 Committee Directors

- Past-President [Diane Russell](#)
- Programs [Debby Wendt](#)
- Communication [Lynn Trenta](#)
- Volunteer Service Projects [Margo "Mac" McDowell](#) (interim)
- Membership [Michelle Sullivan](#)
- New Class [C.J. McDaniel](#)
- Advanced Training [Margo Johnson](#)
- Publicity [Teresa Bailey](#)
- New Class Representative--Open
- State Representative [Carol Schwartz](#)

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://txmn.org/coastal>



*Jean Greenhalgh and Debby Wendt are seen here at Quintana, volunteering for the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory's Spring Fling this April. Bill and Margo Johnson also volunteered, as in the previous year. More info on this next month.....*

Check out our Facebook Page at [TXMN Coastal Prairie Chapter Facebook](#)

To post photos and information, email [John Donaho](#) or [Lynn Trenta](#)

*Also, share our chapter Facebook entries with your friends on your Facebook Page*

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