



BIRDING IN TEXAS

A FIELD GUIDE TO THE LONE STAR STATE

660+ Species ★ More Than Any Other U.S. State



1 TEXAS GULF COAST

HUB: ROCKPORT-FULTON / ARANSAS BAY

KEY HOTSPOTS:
Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, Goose Island State Park, Connie Hagar Wildlife Sanctuary, Bolivar Flats (Houston), High Island (Houston Audubon), Padre Island National Seashore

BIRDS:
Whooping Crane, Roseate Spoonbill, Reddish Egret, Brown Pelican, Black Skimmer, Long-billed Curlew, Marbled Godwit, American Avocet, Willet, Snowy Plover, Piping Plover, Magnificent Frigatebird, Least Tern, Seaside Sparrow

SEASON PEAK:
Nov-Apr (winter shorebirds & cranes); Aug-Sep (southbound shorebirds + Hummingbird Festival at Rockport); Oct (Monarch migration)

WHY IT MATTERS:
The Central Flyway funnels millions of birds onto the Texas coast each spring and fall. Rockport sits at the narrowest pinch point.

560+ WHOOPING CRANES WINTER AT ANWR - LARGEST WILD FLOCK ON EARTH!

2 RIO GRANDE VALLEY

HUB: MCALLEN / HARLINGEN / BROWNSVILLE

KEY HOTSPOTS:
Santa Ana NWR, Bentsen-Rio Grande Valley State Park (World Birding Center HQ), Estero Llano Grande SP, Sabal Palm Sanctuary, South Padre Island Convention Centre (migrant trap)

BIRDS:
Green Jay, Plain Chachalaca, Altamira Oriole, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Great Kiskadee, Tropical Kingbird, Clay-colored Thrush, Hook-billed Kite, Gray Hawk, White-tipped Dove, Ringed Kingfisher, Ferruginous Pygmy-Owl, Audubon's Oriole

SEASON PEAK: Year-round, peak spring migration Apr-May

WHY IT MATTERS:
The only place in the U.S. to find nearly 50 species found nowhere else north of the Mexican border. ABA lists consider it mandatory. Over 500 species recorded in the Valley.

50 SPECIES FOUND NOWHERE ELSE NORTH OF THE MEXICAN BORDER!

3 TEXAS HILL COUNTRY

HUB: KERRVILLE / FREDERICKSBURG / UVALDE

KEY HOTSPOTS:
Garner State Park, Lost Maples State Natural Area, Kickapoo Cavern State Park, Neal's Lodges (Concan), Balcones Canyonlands NWR

BIRDS:
Golden-cheeked Warbler, Black-capped Vireo, Green Kingfisher, Zone-tailed Hawk, Painted Bunting, Vermilion Flycatcher, Common Black Hawk, Elf Owl, Black-chinned Hummingbird, Cave Swallow, Acorn Woodpecker

SEASON PEAK:
Apr-Jun (breeding warblers & vireos); Oct-Nov (Lost Maples fall color + mixed warbler flocks)

WHY IT MATTERS:
The only breeding range in the world for the Golden-cheeked Warbler. Hill Country juniper-oak woodland is irreplaceable habitat for two endangered species.

GOLDEN-CHEEKED WARBLER BREEDS ONLY IN THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY - FEDERALLY ENDANGERED

4 EAST TEXAS / PINEY WOODS

HUB: NACOGDOCHES / LUFKIN / JASPER

KEY HOTSPOTS:
Caddo Lake State Park, Big Thicket National Preserve, Angelina National Forest, W.G. Jones State Forest (endangered woodpecker site)

BIRDS:
Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Bachman's Sparrow, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Wood Duck, Prothonotary Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, American Woodcock, Kentucky Warbler, Chuck-will's-widow, Anhinga, Pileated Woodpecker, Swallow-tailed Kite (spring migrant)

SEASON PEAK: Apr-Jun (breeding forest birds); Mar (American Woodcock display flights at dusk)

WHY IT MATTERS:
The westernmost extension of southeastern pine-hardwood forest. Caddo Lake is the only natural lake in Texas and one of the largest cypress swamps in North America.

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER - ENDANGERED, ACTIVE COLONIES IN ANGELINA NF

5 PRAIRIES, GRASSLANDS & CROSS TIMBERS

(NORTH-CENTRAL TEXAS)
HUB: FORT WORTH / WICHITA FALLS / ABILENE

KEY HOTSPOTS:
Hagerman NWR (Red River), Attwater's Prairie Chicken NWR, Buffalo Lake NWR (Panhandle edge), Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area

BIRDS:
Attwater's Prairie Chicken, Greater Prairie-Chicken, Upland Sandpiper, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher (Texas state bird), Loggerhead Shrike, Sprague's Pipit, Ferruginous Hawk, Mountain Plover, Burrowing Owl, Swainson's Hawk (massive fall migration flocks)

SEASON PEAK: Mar-Apr (prairie chicken booming grounds); Sep-Oct (Swainson's Hawk migration - kettles of thousands)

WHY IT MATTERS:
Texas holds the last remnant native tallgrass and shortgrass prairies in the central U.S. Grassland birds are the fastest-declining bird group in North America.

ATTWATER'S PRAIRIE CHICKEN - CRITICALLY ENDANGERED, <100 WILD BIRDS

6 TRANS-PECOS / BIG BEND / WEST TEXAS

HUB: ALPINE / MARFA / TERLINGUA

KEY HOTSPOTS:
Big Bend National Park, Davis Mountains State Park / Fort Davis, Balmorhea State Park (desert spring), Guadalupe Mountains National Park

BIRDS:
Colima Warbler, Lucifer Hummingbird, Varied Bunting, Painted Redstart, Montezuma Quail, Elf Owl, Common Poorwill, Peregrine Falcon (nests on canyon walls), Black-throated Sparrow, Scott's Oriole, Crissal Thrasher, Gray Vireo, Zone-tailed Hawk

SEASON PEAK: Apr-Jun (Colima Warbler on Emory Peak trail, hummingbirds at Chisos Basin); Jul-Aug (monsoon season brings rare Mexican strays)

WHY IT MATTERS:
The only U.S. breeding site for Colima Warbler. The Chihuahuan Desert and Sky Island mountains create habitat found nowhere else in the country. Mexican strays appear with monsoon moisture every summer.

COLIMA WARBLER BREEDS ONLY AT BIG BEND IN THE U.S.

WHERE TO START YOUR TEXAS BIRDING JOURNEY

ROCKPORT / ARANSAS BAY
Central Flyway Pinch Point

HIGH ISLAND
Fall Migration Spectacular

SANTA ANA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Rio Grande Valley Birding Gateway

BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK
Desert Birds & Mountain Magic

TEXAS: THE ULTIMATE BIRDING STATE

- ★ 6 Incredible Birding Regions
- ★ Diverse Habitats from Coast to Desert
- ★ Year-Round Birding Opportunities
- ★ More Species Than Any Other U.S. State

Come for the Birds. Stay for the Adventure.

SCAN TO EXPLORE TEXAS BIRDING

RockportBirdingHQ.com /birding-in-texas

[f](#) [e](#) [p](#)