

For two decades, Corpus Christi has been recognized as the "Birdiest City in America." Thanks to the presence of protected environments encompassing saltwater lagoons, marshes, and coastal grasslands, Corpus Christi offers a year-round haven for hundreds of bird species.

Every year, bird enthusiasts from around the world flock to Corpus Christi to witness the nesting, feeding, wading, and flight of some of the country's most interesting birds, creating a rich and ever-changing tapestry of birdlife in the heart of the Gulf Coast Capital.



CONTRIBUTORS

Thank you to all the contributors who made this birding field guide possible. Your collaboration has transformed this project into a valuable resource for all who share a passion for birdwatching.

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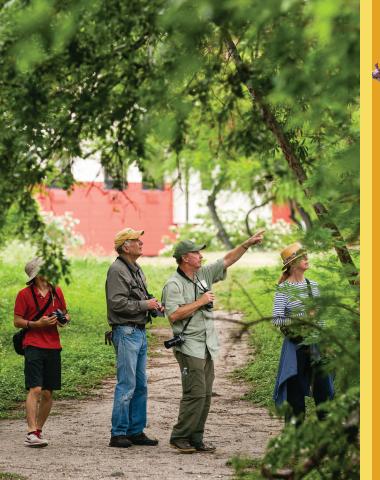


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DID YOU KNOW?

Human food can lead to long-term health issues for seagulls. To deter them from swooping in for a snack, make eye contact to encourage them to keep their distance.



BIRDING BASICS

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL BIRDWATCHING

ou've come to the "Birdiest City in America" where your avian adventure is about to take flight with an abundance of bird species. Grab your binoculars and camera and get ready to explore.

SEEK OUT DIFFERENT LOCATIONS

Remember that different seasons call for different birds on the coast, but with the variety of prime birding locations in Corpus Christi, you'll have plenty to choose from.

BE PATIENT AND HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE

Birds don't always cooperate, even for an experienced birder. There are many birds to explore, but you won't get them all in one run. We are in their home, after all. Keep practicing and don't give up.

RESPONSIBILITY IS KEY

Avoid approaching or disturbing nesting birds, their eggs, or their nests. If you find juvenile birds out of the nest, leave them alone. Nature knows best, and their parents are nearby.

START A BIRD LIST



Even if you aren't a birder, creating this list will help you identify and categorize birds easily, making your adventure more interactive. As you become more experienced, you'll find yourself recognizing birds you may have only seen in books or magazines.





RESCUING INJURED BIRDS

If you come across an injured bird, approach the situation with caution and care. If it's safe to do so, carefully pick up the injured bird with a cloth or towel and place it in a well-ventilated, dark, and quiet container, like a cardboard box, with a lid or cover to reduce stress. Then, contact a local wildlife rehabilitation center or a wildlife rescue organization for guidance and assistance, as they have the expertise to provide the injured bird with the appropriate care and treatment it needs for a better chance of recovery.

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BIRDING FOR EVERY SEASON

BIRDING THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Corpus Christi offers an unforgettable year-round birding experience with over 200 bird species enjoying the diverse gulf beaches, marshes, woodlands, and grasslands, ensuring a fantastic experience no matter the season.



FALL

Fall shorebirds pick up in pace when the cooler winds begin to blow in, and although fall migration brings in fewer birds, the duration of visiting warblers, orioles, and buntings more than makes up for it. Look for hawks, ducks, and Whooping Cranes – more than a million hawks have been spotted from the Hawk Watch Platform at Hazel Bazemore County Park.

SPRING

Spring has sprung, so get your binoculars and cameras ready for shorebirds - like the American Plover and the Upland Sandpiperand migrant songbirds to make an appearance. The songbirds linger until May, but if you swing by Blucher Park and the Packery Channel Oak Motte Sanctuary, you'll catch sight of warblers, orioles, are sheeks and buttings

SUMMER

South Texas specialty birds like the Groove-Billed Ani, Green Jay, and Audubon's Oriole flock to our warmer, tropical climate and can be found at Hazel Bazemore and Corpus Christi State Parks. For water-type birds, check out Tule Lake and Wright's Pond, where the Wood Stork has been spotted.





MINTE

Since we have the perfect tropical climate, even during colder months, birds love to stay around and hang out. Catch sight of whooping and sandhill cranes feeding in pastures and agricultural fields, as well as flocks of snow, Ross's, and white-fronted geese. Don't forget about the half-day Winter Birding Tours at **King Ranch** for the perfect winter birding activity.

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SPECIES CHECKLIST

GET TO KNOW THE BIRDS OF CORPUS CHRISTI

Stay organized on your birding adventure with our species identifier checklist - just mark the box when you spot a feathered friend, and let your birding journey take flight!



■ ROSEATE SPOONBILL

A flamboyant wading bird with light pink wings, bright pink fringe, long pink legs, white head and chest, and giant spoon-shaped bill. Flies with neck outstretched.



A large showy white waterbird with yellow-orange legs and a massive bill. They have thick bodies, short legs, and short, square tails. Their wings display black feathers when spread.





RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD

A tiny, iridescent bird, with emerald-green plumage, golden green back and crown, and a vibrant ruby-red throat patch. Known for agility and rapid wingbeats.

BUFF-BELLIED HUMMINGBIRD □ ▶

A small bronzy green bird characterized by its buff belly, dark-tipped bright red bill, and blue-green throat and breast.



BELTED KINGFISHER ☐ ▶

A charismatic bird with striking blue-gray plumage, stocky, large head, bold white collar, and straight, dagger-like bill.





Your Pocket Guide To: Birding

PAINTED BUNTING -

A small songbird with a vibrant palette of blue, green, and red plumage. Males have blue heads, red underparts, and green backs. Females are bright yellow-green overall.



■ SNOWY EGRET

A large snowy white waterbird with yellow-orange legs and massive bill. They have thick bodies, short legs, and short, square tails. Their wings display black feathers when spread.



Eye color in red-shouldered hawks changes from gray to brown to red as they age.

RED-SHOULDERED HAWK

Medium sized raptor with striking reddish-brown plumage and a barred, rusty-red tail. Known for emitting piercing calls as they hunt prey.



WHITE IBIS □ ▶

A striking wader bird with all-white plumage, long red legs, and long, curved red bill with dark tip. It has a football shaped body and bare patch of red skin around its eyes.



◆ HOODED ORIOLE

A striking songbird featuring a black tail, throat, and wings, vibrant yellow plumage, white wingbars, and a black "hood" around its face.

SUMMER TANAGER ☐ ▶

A male songbird with a vibrant, all-red plumage. Females are rare, and bright yellow-green with a short pale bill. Both have a chuckling call note.



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BLACK SKIMMER

A long-winged bird with black upperparts, white underparts, and a black-tipped orange bill with a lower mandible longer than the upper.



YELLOW WARBLER

A small, cheerful songbird with egg yolk yellow plumage, reddish streaks in its chest, large black eyes, and a short black bill.

GREAT EGRET

A large, white wading bird with long, black legs and a long, orange-yellow bill. During breeding season, they develop long plumes on their back and lime-green skin around their eyes.

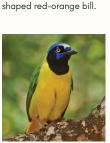


BROWN PELICAN ☐ ▶

A coastal icon with a large, stocky, graybrown body, yellow head, white neck, and a throat pouch used for catching fish. During breeding, neck turns reddish-brown.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER

A distinctive shorebird with black and white feathers, and a long, knife-shaped red-orange bill.



■ GREEN JAY

A vibrant, tropical bird with a rich green top, pale yellow underparts, blue crown, black eyepatch, and yellow outer tail feathers



Scan the QR Code to learn more about bird species in the Gulf Coastal Capital and fly on over to our extended species checklist.

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WHERE THE BIRDS THRIVE

EXPLORE PRIME BIRDWATCHING SPOTS & TOURS FOR YOUR NEXT AVIAN ADVENTURE



PADRE ISLAND NATIONAL SEASHORE

20420 Park Road 22 Corpus Christi, TX 78418
Birds love the miles of sandy shores at
Padre Island. Here, you'll find gallinules
and waders, but watch for Peregrine
Falcons during the winter.



8545 S Staples St, Corpus Christi, TX 78413
Find shorebirds, ducks, hummingbirds, grebes, and other bird species in over 180 acres of native habitat, natural wetlands, and floral exhibits.



OSO BAY WETLANDS 2446 N Oso Pkwy.

From the marsh platform at Oso Bay, you'll find many native sea birds along with a variety of other bird species, such as cranes, herons, spoonbills, and more during the seasonal migration.



HAZEL BAZEMORE PARK

4343 Co Rd 69

Find Olive Sparrow and Long-billed Thrashers on the trail, check ponds for rails and waterfowl, and look for Doves, Green Jays, and more from the Hawk



GO AT YOUR OWN PACE



GUIDED TOUR AVAILABLE

AKE COPPLIS CHRISTI STATE PARI

23194 Park Road 25, Mathis, TX

Join the birdwatching tour for a chance to see neotropical migrants like the black-bellied whistling duck, purple gallinule, white winged dove, and more. The area, known for its mixture of brushland, open waters, and woodlands is great for attracting diverse species.





NATURE TRAILS KAYAKING

4401 Gulfbreeze Blvd.

Take a guided kayak tour and get a package that includes more than just paddling on the water. On your journey, learn about the bird species that inhabit the area, and depending on your location, spot Ospreys, Magnificent Frigatebirds, and other species as they navigate their habitats.



2205 W Highway 141, Kingsville, TX

Experience guided wildlife and birdwatching tours at King Ranch and discover an incredibly diverse landscape where you'll find Northern Bobwhite Quail, Wild Turkey, Ferruginous pygmyowls, and more.



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AVIAN ADVENTUDES

Experience the beauty of nature's feathered wonders at some of the most popular birding locations along the shores of the Gulf Coast.

SOUTHSIDE

- Oso Bay Wetlands Preserve 2446 N. Oso Pkwy.
- 4 South Texas Botanical Gardens and Nature Center 8545 S. Staples St.
- 5 Hans & Pat Suter Wildlife Refuge 909 Ennis Joslin

DOWNTOW

- 6 **Downtown Marina** 400A N. Shoreline Blvd
- 7 Blucher Park 209 S. Tancahua

ISI AND

- Bird Island Basin
- Packery Channel Oak Motte Sanctuary 14220 S. Padre Island Dr.

CALALLEN

Hazel Bazemore Park
4343 County Road 69

LET'S TALK BIRDING

Q&A WITH LOCAL POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, DAVID ESSIAN, PH.D.



Q: WHAT MAKES THIS AREA NOTEWORTHY FOR BIRDING?

A: This is one of the most impressive areas in the country for birding, especially in the springtime where you'll see neo tropic migrants like warblers, tanagers, and orioles who fly north to their breeding sites over the Gulf of Mexico and use our parks as stopover habitats.

Q: ARE THERE ANY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OR INITIATIVES FOR BIRDERS TO LEARN MORE?

A: Something to keep an eye out for are the monthly field trips for birding through the **Coastal**

Bend Audubon Society. They're led by expert birders who have been birding in Nueces County for decades.

Q: WHAT ARE SOME SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES FOR BIRDING?

A: Be mindful of bird breeding habitats like nesting islands for colonial waterbirds. These are good places to fish, but disturbances can cause the birds to abandon their nests. Also, be aware of improperly discarded fishing lines so birds don't become entangled and end up at rehabilitation centers.

Q: WHAT SHOULD PHOTOGRAPHERS LOOK OUT FOR WHEN TRYING TO AIM FOR THE PERFECT PHOTO?

A: This isn't really a problem in this area, but often photographers want the perfect



picture of an owl, so they'll try to bait the bird. However, this can be harmful, so they should be mindful that they're spending time in the bird's habitat.

Q: WHAT ADVICE CAN YOU GIVE NOVICE BIRDERS?

A: There's a perception that birding is about seeing as many species as you can, but as a beginner, try to observe birds in whatever way allows you to connect with them the best and have fun with it.



Q: YOU WERE THE FIRST TO SPOT THE CATTLE TYRANT, CORRECT? A: Yes, I spotted the Cattle Tyrant downtown at the intersection of Chaparral and Schatzell. It is a medium sized fly catcher native to South America and the first and only one of its species seen in the United States. Birders from around the state traveled to Corpus Christi to catch a glimpse and a photo.



Scan the QR Code to read the full interview



FEATHERED FESTIVALS

BIRDING FESTIVALS OF THE GULF COAST CAPITAL Celebrate the beauty of nature and the thrill of birdwatching at annual birding festivals in Corpus Christi.

CELEBRATION OF FLIGHT

Hazel Bazemore Park

Gather for the raptor migration at Corpus Christi HawkWatch during peak Broad-Winged Hawk migration in **September**. The event offers free public activities, including hawk identification assistance by volunteers, and features vendors, merchandise, and food trucks.





WHOODING CDANE FESTIVAL

Port Aransa

Enjoy the annual return of the cranes to their wintering habitat in **February** with four days of tours, education, and the unique opportunity to see the last naturally occurring population of Whooping Cranes in the Coastal Bend.

BIRDIEST FESTIVAL IN AMERICA

South Texas Botanical Gardens
Celebrate spring migration
every April with birdwatching
trips, presentations, speakers,
and the chance to see various
bird species. Enjoy wildlife
shows, BBQ, trade shows,
artisan booths, and more for
your coastal adventure.





VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER

309 N Water St. D, Corpus Christi, TX 78401 | (361) 561-2000

The Corpus Christi Visitor Information Center is the information hub for locals and visitors in search of creating memorable experiences in the Gulf Coast Capital. If you have any questions about birding, need help booking your birding tour, or just seeking some local advice, stop by the Visitor Information Center – our knowledgeable staff is here to assist you with all your avian adventures and more. While you're there, meet our friendly Gulf Coasters, shop for locally made goods and souvenirs, and enjoy some vibrant and colorful instagrammable moments in the shop. Don't forget to pick up pamphlets with information, coupons, and discounts to enjoy everything Corpus Christi has to offer.

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