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South Padre Island Welcomes the 30th Annual Winter Outdoor Wildlife Festival

SOUTH PADRE ISLAND, Texas, January 29, 2026 - Bundle your binoculars, lace up your walking shoes, and prepare for an unforgettable celebration of nature—because the [30th Annual Winter Outdoor Wildlife Expo \(WOWE\)](#) is back on South Padre Island! From February 5-7, 2026, the [South Padre Island Birding, Nature Center & Alligator Sanctuary](#) will host this three-day festival dedicated to the wonders of South Texas wildlife and the dynamic ecosystems of the Lower Laguna Madre.

For three decades, WOWE has grown from a modest local nature program into one of the premier winter wildlife events along the Texas Gulf Coast. Whether you're a seasoned birder, passionate naturalist, or nature lover looking to explore the great outdoors, this family-friendly festival offers something for everyone. There's no better time to learn, explore, and be inspired by the breathtaking flora and fauna that make South Padre Island a year-round wildlife magnet.

"With its rich coastal landscapes and incredible diversity of species, South Padre Island is a haven for wildlife enthusiasts," said Cindy Trevino, Director of Marketing and Corporate Sponsorships for Visit South Padre Island. "For 30 years, the Winter Outdoor Wildlife Expo has connected visitors with the natural world—from alligators and sea turtles to butterflies and bay-shore birds—making it one of the Island's most anticipated outdoor experiences."

"Wildlife abounds in the Laguna Madre during the winter months," said Javier Gonzalez, Naturalist Educator for the South Padre Island Birding, Nature Center & Alligator Sanctuary. "WOWE is the perfect opportunity to learn about the area's importance for wildlife through incredible nature excursions and through the people who know it best and are its advocates. WOWE is sure to spike coastal nature appreciation for anyone interested in the outdoors."

Winter Outdoor Wildlife Festival Highlights:

- Three Full Days of Discovery—Engage with expert presenters on topics like native birds, sea turtles, butterflies, dragonflies, coastal plants, and more during informative, bite-sized sessions throughout the festival.
- Pre-Expo Field Trips—Extend your adventure with guided tours to places like the Bahia Grande and other local wildlife hotspots prior to the main festival, February 2-4.
- Live Wildlife Shows—Witness captivating live presentations—including the nationally acclaimed Raptor Project and, for the first time in WOWE's history, thrilling reptile demonstrations from Gator Country's ambassadors.
- Wildlife Photo Contest & Exhibits—Celebrate the art of nature photography and explore displays from environmental and wildlife organizations showcasing conservation work and community engagement.

Founded in the mid-1990s and now in its 30th year, the Winter Outdoor Wildlife Expo has blossomed into a must-attend winter tradition, drawing visitors from across the region to South Padre Island to learn about and appreciate the natural world. Full event schedules, field trip registration, and speaker updates are available through the South Padre Island Birding, Nature Center & Alligator Sanctuary: <https://www.spibirding.org/wowe>

Additional information, including things to do, restaurants, and accommodation information on South Padre Island, can be found at www.visitsouthpadreisland.com

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About South Padre Island

With miles of pristine shoreline and clear emerald water, South Padre Island is Texas' only tropical island paradise. Calm weather and more than 300 days of sunshine make South Padre Island a year-round destination offering a variety of nature tourism attractions, water sports, and activities for the entire family. For more information, visit www.visitsouthpadreisland.com.