



Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest

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Photo Opportunity: Monday, April 24th

2:00 pm

Perez Elementary

1111 E. Ailsie Ave, Kingsville

School Contact: Linda Wilson

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Science Class at Perez Elementary School Gets a little WILD...with the help of Kritters 4 Kids!

Students at Perez Elementary will receive the Kritters 4 Kids Science Curriculum Resource Guide thanks to the generous support of the Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program. Join us, Monday, April 24th at Perez Elementary as representatives from the Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest present a classroom set of 25 books to students. The new curriculum, funded by the Harvey Weil Sportsman Conservation Fund helps teachers prepare the students for the TAKs test by using local interactive activities with Wildlife in Focus II Photography Books. The lessons challenge the students in physical and environmental sciences by building food chains, living terrariums, and school yard conservation projects. Perez Elementary is among 12 schools selected by the Environmental Education and Outreach Implementation Team to receive the Kritters 4 Kids program.

“Ours is a visual culture- we need to see it to believe it. Creating compelling images of both Texas Wildlife and the critical habitat on which it depends is a powerful way to let all Texans know what we have and of the desperate need to preserve it.”

–Sean Fitzgerald, Professional Photographer

Kritters 4 Kids teaches students about the vastness and variety of habitat being threatened by urbanization. Our *Wildlife in Focus II* Photo book is accompanied by a fun yet educational activity guide, and leads the student thru the varied species of plants and animals native to the Coastal Bend of Texas. The *Kritters 4 Kids* curriculum targets the 7th grade Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills (TEKS) guidelines which specifically require students to study the relationships of organisms to the environment. *Kritters 4 Kids* teaches students about ecological regions, native plants, and ecosystems and the importance of stewardship and conservation.

A local Science teacher says, “The beautiful photos and the activities which are targeted specifically for this age group will be invaluable in piquing their interest and starting them on their way to awareness of how valuable and fragile this beautiful land we coexist on is.”

About us:

The **Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest** was created in 2000 to expand awareness of the various and important eco-systems in the Coastal Bend region of Texas. The 501(c)(3) organization supports 4 Programs:

Wildlife Photo Contest- The 2nd Richest wildlife photography contest in the world in which private landowner's team up with photographers to capture winning images. In 2005, \$75,000 in prize money was awarded.

Wildlife In Focus I & II Photography books- These books showcase all 150 winning images from the previous photo contest in 2001 and 2003. The books capture an intimate and artistic view of Coastal Bend Wildlife as seen thru the eyes of the landowner and photographer.

Kritters 4 Kids- This program brings awareness to youth about the vastness and variety of habitat in the Coastal Bend that are being threatened by urbanization. Wildlife in Focus is supplemented by a fun and educational activity guide and leads the student thru the varied species of plants and animals native to the Coastal Bend. The goal of Kritters 4 Kids is to plant seeds of passion for a new generation of naturalists, biologists, and nature lovers to protect and preserve our local ecosystems.

Traveling Benefactors Photo Exhibit- The sponsor funded traveling exhibit showcases the winning images and our proud sponsors. The exhibit travels throughout 11 counties of the Coastal Bend. To date, our exhibit has visited more than 80 venues including libraries, museums, banks, schools, and art centers.

Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program- The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (CBBEP) was established in 1994 with the goal of developing and implementing a plan to protect and restore the bays and estuaries of the Texas Coastal Bend. The estuary system of the Coastal Bend is one of 28 estuaries of "National Significance" nominated by the State Governor and approved by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The CBBEP includes representatives from local governments, state, and federal resource agencies, industry and business, environmental organizations, and citizens who have developed and are implementing the 50 action items of the *Coastal Bend Bays Plan*. The CBBEP implements management solutions and supports research with a focus on *Water and Sediment Quality, Freshwater Inflows, Maritime Commerce, Habitat Loss, Human Uses of Coastal Resources, and Public Education and Outreach*. The CBBEP's Education and Outreach action items feature resources and programs for teachers and students with a focus on Coastal Bend history, local ecology, and general science.

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