



Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, Inc.

1305 N. Shoreline, Suite 205, Corpus Christi, Texas 78401 • 361-885-6202 • 361-883-7801 (fax)

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Monika K. De La Garza (361) 885-6246
Cell: (361) 946-6077

Audubon's WatchList 2002 ***Lists 43 Bird Species from the Coastal Bend***

□ Corpus Christi, November 19, 2002 --- The *Audubon WatchList 2002* is an awareness tool that is used to encourage federal, state, and local governments to focus on declining bird populations before they become endangered or threatened. The recently released WatchList 2002, compiled by field scientists in the U.S. and overseas, sheds light on some disturbing trends - more than one-quarter of America's birds are in trouble or in serious decline. The Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program (CBBEP), Audubon Texas, The Nature Conservancy, the Coastal Bend Land Trust and many other private and governmental organizations are working at the local level to protect these species and the habitats they depend on.

Bird watching has become the fastest-growing nature activity in the U.S. and is at an all-time high according to the *National Survey on Recreation and the Environment*. It surveyed that 71 million Americans participated in 2001, up 250 percent from 1982. Americans spent \$40 billion on wildlife watching, showing an upward trend of \$30 billion in 1996 and \$21 billion in 1991.

The ecological and economical importance of the WatchList 2002 affects both people and bird species in the Texas Coastal Bend. Of the 800 species that are found in the United States and Canada, 210 species have been placed on the WatchList 2002 with 43 species occurring regularly in the Coastal Bend.

In its conservation efforts, the Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program has identified the local bird species from the WatchList for its public education and outreach in the Coastal Bend. WatchList species are determined using a scoring system factoring in population trends, habitat restrictions, and vulnerability to identified pressures. The WatchList species in the Coastal Bend are associated with four major habitat types: wetlands, grasslands, forests, and thorn scrub. Habitat loss and degradation of breeding, migrating, and wintering habitat continue to be a major factor in the decline of bird populations. Please see the list below for Coastal Bend bird species on the WatchList 2002. For more information, log on to www.audubon.org.

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Coastal Bend Red List (in serious trouble; Species in this category of global conservation concern are declining rapidly, have very small populations or limited ranges, and face major conservation threats)

Greater Prairie Chicken (Attwater's) – Endangered sub-species, about 50 wild individuals known in the world, unknown if any remain in Coastal Bend

Black Rail - Very elusive, known resident population, status unclear

Whooping Crane - Endangered, under 500 birds in existence, winters at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

Buff-breasted Sandpiper - Migrant, passes through the Coastal Bend in fall and spring, stopover habitat

Eskimo Curlew - Migrant, bird may be extinct

Long-billed Curlew - Winter resident, population showing sharp decline, a few summer in area
Mountain Plover - Winter resident, loss of prairie habitat, late fall and late winter migrant with some birds wintering in the area, status unclear
Piping Plover - Endangered, migrant and winter resident on beaches and mud flats
Snowy Plover - Threatened, migrant and year-round resident on beaches and mud flats
Green Parakeet - Local population of possibly escaped caged birds, status unclear
Bell's Vireo - Breeds in thorn-scrub, population showing sharp declines in this area
Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow - Winter resident, dependent on wetlands, status unclear, secretive and hard to survey
Sprague's Pipit - Winter resident in mid-grass prairie, formerly common winter resident in Coastal Bend, breeds in the short-grass prairie in the Midwest
Swainson's Warbler - Migrant, utilizes river forest for stopover, has bred locally in northeastern Aransas County
Audubon's Oriole - Breeds in thorn scrub in Jim Wells, Live Oak, and Bee Counties, population declining
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Coastal Bend Yellow List (yellow-list birds are declining, but at slower rates than those in the red category)

Reddish Egret – Year-round resident of coastal shallow lagoons and marshes
Harris's Hawk –Year-round resident of thorn scrub habitats
Swainson's Hawk - Migrant through area and occasional breeder in western Coastal Bend
American Golden Plover - Migrant through area utilizing wetland and prairie stopover habitat
American Oystercatcher – Year-round resident population, apparently stable

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Coastal Bend Yellow List - continued

Hudsonian Godwit - Migrant through area utilizing wetland and beach habitat
Marbled Godwit –Migrant and winter resident utilizing wetlands and prairie habitat
Red Knot - Migrant and winter resident utilizing beach and mudflat habitats
Short-billed Dowitcher - Migrant and winter resident found in beach and wetland habitat
Whimbrel –Migrant and winter resident favoring beach and wetland habitats
Wilson's Phalarope – Migrant favoring shallow, muddy or grassy pools, and mudflats
Wilson's Plover –Breeds in Coastal Bend mudflats
Short-eared Owl – Winter resident found in fallow fields and remnant prairie
Allen's Hummingbird –Migrant and winter resident in low numbers
Buff-bellied Hummingbird –Year-round resident favoring thorn scrub
Rufous Hummingbird - Migrant and winter resident in low numbers
Curve-billed Thrasher –Year-round resident found in thorn scrub
Wood Thrush –Migrant through area utilizing oak mottes and woods
Olive-sided Flycatcher - Migrant through area preferring open perches in wooded areas
Willow Flycatcher - Migrant through area preferring open perches in wooded areas
Blue-winged Warbler –Migrant through area utilizing wooded under story
Canada Warbler –Migrant through area found in wooded areas
Kentucky Warbler - Migrant through area utilizing wooded under story
Prothonotary Warbler –Migrant through area with occasional breeders in western Coastal Bend
Worm-eating Warbler - Migrant through area utilizing wooded under story
Painted Bunting –Migrant and breeder in thorn scrub and under story habitats
Dickcissel –Migrant and breeder found in prairie and brushy habitat
Seaside Sparrow –Year-round resident found in specific marine wetland habitat

The Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program is a local non-profit organization dedicated to protecting and restoring bays and estuaries of the Texas Coastal Bend. The CBBEP supports and develops management solutions with a focus on public health issues, altered freshwater inflow into bays and estuaries, condition of living resources, loss of wetlands and estuarine habitats, degradation of water quality, altered estuarine circulation, and bay debris.

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