

20
23

COASTAL BEND BAYS & ESTUARIES PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT



CONTENTS

Letter From Director	2
What We Do	3
Where We Work	4
Delta Discovery Program	5
Outdoor Classrooms	6
Coastal Bird Program	7
Rookery Island Productivity	8
Black Skimmer Study Update	9
ASHNOT Project	10
Land Conservation	11
Mid-Coast Sanctuary Sites	12
Nueces Tidal Segment Stakeholder Group	13
Port Bay Water and Sediment Sampling	14
Monitoring Harmful Algal Blooms	15
OSSF Assistance Program	16
Matagorda Island Restorations	17
Nueces Delta Shoreline Protection	18
Public Access Spotlight	19
Violet Andrews Park Improvements	20
Packery Flats Cleanup	21
UP2U+ Campaign	22
Remembering Dane Ferrel	23
Collaborators	25
Supporters	28
Staff	29
Board of Directors	30



Greetings,

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program (or CBBEP) is pleased to provide you with our 2023 Annual Report. As we look back on the last year, it is clear that 2023 was a year of change and growth for our organization, much like the ever-changing bays and estuaries we strive to protect. Last year saw the hiring of new staff, expansion of programs, and implementation of a record-breaking number of projects.

In the fall of 2023, CBBEP embarked on the implementation of 60 new projects that will be carried forward into 2024. This large number of projects is the result of numerous partnerships and funding entities coming together to address priority issues on the Texas Coast. To ensure that the growing number of projects are running smoothly and meeting objectives, CBBEP hired our sixth project management position. We also hired a volunteer coordinator that will lead our efforts to provide increased opportunities for people to be involved in CBBEP's programs and projects. CBBEP's Coastal Bird Program also saw a significant expansion, adding two new staff that are focused on monitoring and managing habitat, primarily on private lands, for upland shorebirds.

There were several other notable accomplishments in 2023, including the construction of just under 4,000 linear feet of breakwater at the edge of the Nueces Delta Preserve and the repair of culverts and levees on Matagorda Island that had been damaged almost six years earlier by Hurricane Harvey. Our focus on water quality continued with funding provided for numerous monitoring projects, some addressing new concerns like PFAS and others continuing to add to long-term water quality datasets. We also continued our efforts to ensure that residents and visitors have high-quality experiences as they venture into the outdoors to enjoy our bays and estuaries – in 2023 this took the form of new park infrastructure, educational signs, and anti-litter programs. Perhaps one of the most exciting things to watch this last year was the regrowth of our environmental education program, as we completely transitioned away from virtual learning environments and saw schools and teachers returning to the Nueces Delta Preserve in large numbers to experience hands-on learning opportunities.

Last year also marked the completion of my first full year as CBBEP's Executive Director, and I continue to be incredibly humbled and honored to be leading the next chapter of our efforts to protect the bays and estuaries of the Coastal Bend. There are both opportunities and challenges facing our coastal resources and the communities that rely on them, and as CBBEP looks to adapt and respond to the changing needs of our region, I am optimistic knowing that we can count on our numerous partners to join us in developing new and diverse strategies that drive innovation, strengthen our collective missions, and lead to significant conservation outcomes.

Kiersten Stanzel
Executive Director, Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program

WHAT WE DO

The Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, or CBBEP, is dedicated to protecting and restoring the health and productivity of the bays and estuaries in the Texas Coastal Bend, while supporting continued economic growth and public use of the bays.

Since 1999, CBBEP has been working to create a Texas Coastal Bend with cleaner water and sediment, healthier habitats, greater public access, and a more aware and engaged public. With the help of numerous partners, the CBBEP has restored thousands of acres of marsh habitat, funded dozens of projects designed to improve water quality, and installed infrastructure to enhance public access opportunities. In addition to implementing projects that address priority issues like water quality, habitat restoration, and nature tourism, CBBEP has created organizational programs to conserve coastal birds and their habitats, conduct environmental education programs, and acquire coastal habitats for the purposes of conservation.



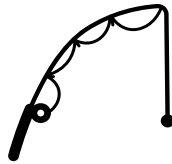
Water Quality and Freshwater Inflows

Water and sediment quality and freshwater inflows are important to coastal habitats, wildlife, and the economic vitality of the Coastal Bend. CBBEP works with partners to implement projects, programs, and planning efforts that respond to water quality and sediment problems that may pose a risk to people or the environment. We also seek to optimize freshwater inflows to meet the needs of both the environment and people.



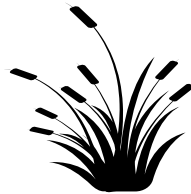
Habitat & Wildlife

Healthy coastal habitats help maintain wildlife and plant populations, improve water quality, enhance local tourism, and reduce the impacts of flooding and storm surge. CBBEP seeks to preserve, restore, enhance, and create coastal habitats and ensure the long-term sustainability of native living resources.



Nature Tourism & Recreation

The bays and estuaries of the Coastal Bend contain a wealth of resources for people to enjoy and appreciate, and they also support an enormous segment of the local economy. CBBEP works with partners to ensure that people continue to benefit from a safe, clean bay system and to promote stewardship of bay resources.



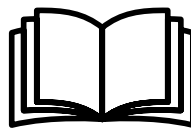
Land Conservation

CBBEP's Land Conservation Program is working with partners to conserve valuable habitats within the Coastal Bend. To date, CBBEP has conserved over 14,000 acres, and we manage these lands responsibly and sustainably for the long-term benefit of both wildlife and people.



Coastal Bird Program

CBBEP's Coastal Bird Program works to conserve coastal birds and their habitats, identifying and addressing conservation needs through on-the-ground management actions, research, and education and outreach. We bring innovative management, diversified partnerships, and science-based decision-making to bird conservation in the Coastal Bend.



Delta Discovery Program

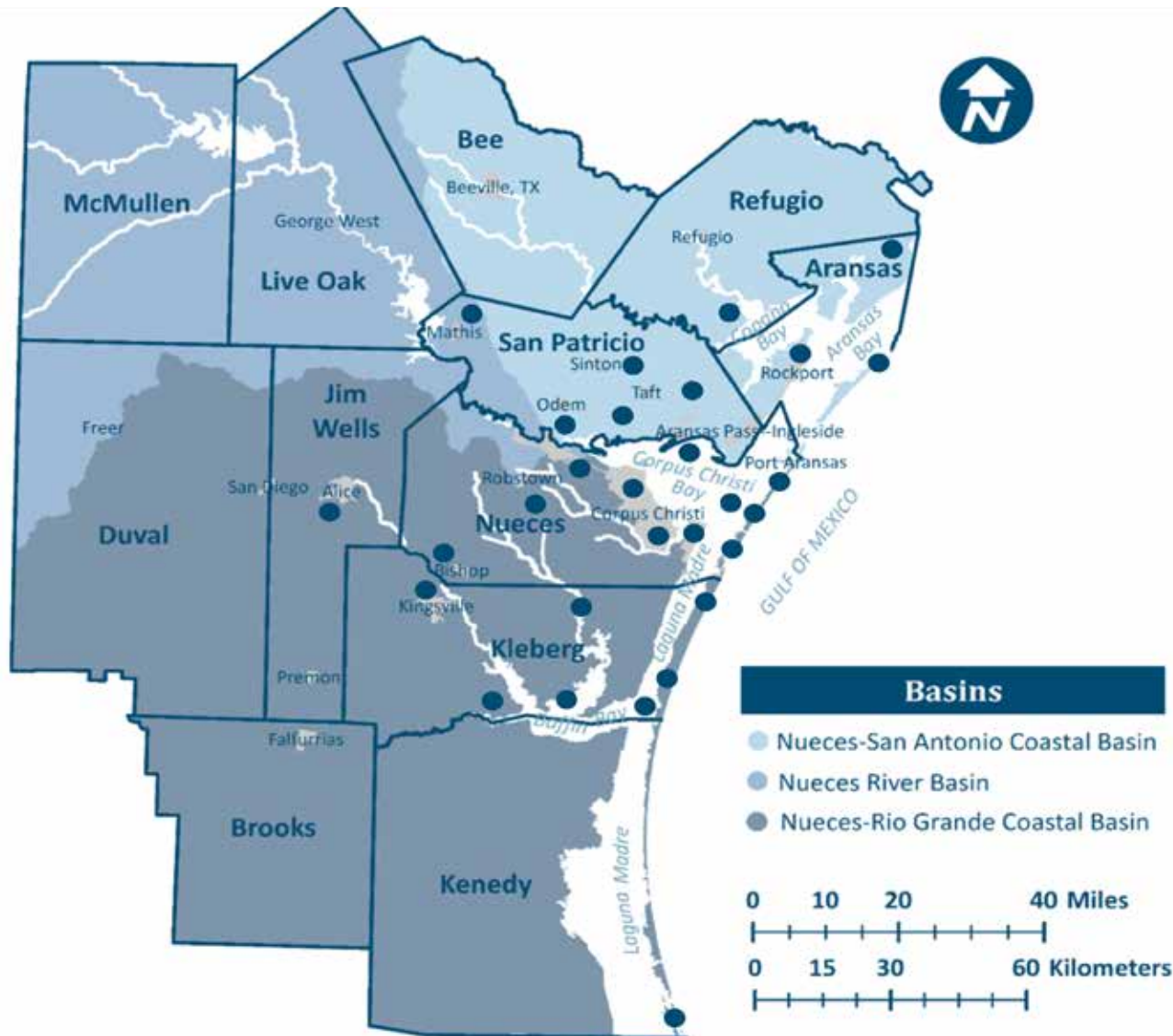
CBBEP created the Delta Discovery Program to provide opportunities for classrooms and families to connect with nature, and to plant the seeds of stewardship in individuals whose decisions affect our estuaries. We provide field trips for thousands of students each year, train teachers on how to connect classrooms to outdoor experiences, and help families to discover the estuary in their own backyard.

WHERE WE WORK

The Program area encompasses 75 miles of estuarine environment along the south-central Texas coastline and includes 12 counties of the region known as the Coastal Bend, and includes all bays, estuaries and bayous in the San Antonio, Copano, Aransas, Corpus Christi, Nueces, Baffin and upper Laguna Madre bay systems

The mission of the CBBEP is the implementation of the Coastal Bend Bays Plan, which is to protect and restore the health and productivity of the bays and estuaries while supporting continued economic growth and public use of the bays.

The dots on the map represent areas impacted by projects implemented in the 2023 work plan.



DELTA DISCOVERY PROGRAM

The Delta Discovery Program continues to bridge the gap between the natural world and students and instructors throughout the Coastal Bend. Students returning to their classrooms in January of 2023 marked the first full academic year since the pandemic closures, and in turn, two full semesters of field trips. Improvements such as ADA accessible pathways and railings were added to the facilities to make experience-based learning opportunities more accessible.

While many Delta Discovery Program guests are just beginning their walk in stewardship, lifelong learning is woven into the nature of the Program. This is exemplified by longtime volunteers sharing knowledge of local flora and fauna and teachers attending field workshops in the heat of the summer to understand the bays and estuaries and bring a piece of what they have learned back to the classroom.



OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS

CBBEP has long recognized the value of understanding the natural resources of the Coastal Bend and how to interact with them. While the Nueces Delta Preserve is a wonderful place to talk about topics like native habitats and water quality, getting there can present challenges. To further bridge the gap between classrooms and the outdoors, initiatives like CBBEP's Outdoor Classroom Program allow students to engage with the natural resources in their region without leaving campus. In 2023, CBBEP partnered with Tulo-so-Midway ISD, West Oso ISD, and St. Patrick Catholic School to install outdoor classrooms.

The Outdoor Classroom Program was made possible with funding from U.S Fish and Wildlife, which emphasizes connecting with the natural scapes that lie nearby. By providing students an even more accesible pathway to outdoor experiences, the impact of this program will continue to spread throughout the Coastal Bend and beyond.



HABITAT MANAGEMENT SEASON

The Coastal Bird Program did not miss a wingbeat coming into 2023 as they continued their monitoring and habitat management efforts on rookery islands from San Antonio Bay to the Lower Laguna Madre. While birds of a feather do in fact flock together, they've also been known to share space with those donning different plumages. CBBEP is doing our part to make sure that they all have the safe habitat they need in which to build a nest and raise their young.

Over the course of the 2023 habitat management season, the Coastal Bird Program worked on 67 islands across 6 bay systems. In some cases this involved vegetation clearing for the ground nesters who like a shelly on-shore nest, eradicating fire ants, and planting taller shrubby vegetation for those who prefer a higher point of view. Over the course of the management season, they planted 389 native species and continued to care for plants from previous years.



ROOKERY ISLAND PRODUCTIVITY

Islands that have been historic hot spots for nesting birds have been waning, with many island footprints shrinking as shorelines retreat from ship traffic, storms, and rising seas. The annual Texas Colonial Waterbird Survey provides insights, but has historically been very time and labor-intensive, requiring biologists to travel to remote areas and glass from afar. The time and effort it requires limits the opportunities to make multiple trips to islands and gather information on nest productivity. CBBEP partnered with researchers at Harte Research Institute to utilize innovative techniques to monitor several islands in the Coastal Bend and determine how these islands are used and which are most productive.

Researchers at HRI utilized drone technology to get a bird's eye view of the rookery islands to create orthomosaic images of several islands around the Coastal Bend to monitor activity, count birds, and observe nesting pairs, without disturbing the colonies. By determining which characteristics create the most desirable habitat and lead to nesting success, managers can prioritize islands that will best support populations and adapt management techniques to increase the chances of nesting success.



BLACK SKIMMER STUDY UPDATE

The Black Skimmer is one of the most iconic waterbirds of the Texas coast, a treat to watch as it flies along shorelines dragging its knife-like lower bill in shallow water hoping to encounter an unlucky fish. It is also one of the most severely declining waterbird species, having lost over 70% of its population in the past 40 years. The Coastal Bird Program has identified low nesting success as one of the problems most likely contributing to that decline. Over the past two breeding seasons, the Program has been looking closely at factors that may be causing nesting failures, such as tidal flooding, predation, and disturbance from human intruders on their nesting sites. They have also been tracking Black Skimmer adults using GPS tags that are helping identify primary foraging areas so that these can be better protected, and distances they will travel from the nest site in order to inform the prioritization of island nest site restoration and management.

We are in the process of synthesizing multiple types of data – from tracking devices, water level loggers, game cameras on nest sites, and weekly productivity checks – in order to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the environment the birds utilize and the factors that are causing decline so that they can be addressed in the future. This project is unique in that it will also integrate a Human Dimensions study being conducted by Texas State University to understand the knowledge and opinions held by bay users so that outreach efforts to raise awareness and reduce the frequency of human disturbance can be targeted more effectively. We are looking forward to sharing the results of this study in late 2024!





ASSESSMENT OF SHOREBIRD HABITAT NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES IN TEXAS

The Gulf Coast of Texas is one of the most critical links in the chain that sustains the epic migrations of many shorebird species, and land managers that provide great habitat for them are their unsung heroes. CBBEP's Coastal Bird Program is working to better understand what practices are providing the most benefits to these declining populations, many of which travel from breeding grounds in the Arctic down to wintering areas in grasslands of South America, such as Black-Necked Stilts, Buff-Breasted Sandpipers, and Lesser Yellowlegs.

In 2023, the Coastal Bird Program kicked off migration season with a new migratory shorebird project called Assessment of Shorebird Habitat Needs & Opportunities in Texas (ASHNOT). This project was made possible by a grant from the Knobloch Family Foundation and the landowners who we have partnered with for avian monitoring. The objectives of the project are to gain an understanding of managed wetland unit productivity for avian species, with an interest in migrating species like waterfowl and shorebirds. Biologists are monitoring avian usage on a variety of wetlands to understand how management practices influence and support migratory bird usage.

During the fall migration season, Program staff monitored 34 wetlands across four counties on a 6-10-day cycle, tallying 73,140 birds from 86 species. Many of these species will spend this winter in South America and will pass through the Texas mid-coast again in the spring on their northward migration to their breeding grounds in the Arctic. CBBEP also plans to look at how prescribed fire techniques can be used to benefit these highly migratory birds.

FLOUR BLUFF CONSERVATION EASEMENT

In a south-eastern corner of the Cayo del Oso shoreline, hidden behind thickets of salt cedar and huisache from the water and newly developed subdivisions from just about every other side, lay a piece of land that has always existed on the edge. Sloped coastal prairie stopped by a sliver of muddy shoreline separating green growth from chocolate waters. Neighboring landmarks have come and gone, built by man and removed by nature as hurricanes and time can derail even the best laid plans.

Now under the protection of a conservation easement, this land can finally rest and begin the journey back to its natural state. Reversing 50 years of use is the next phase of life for this range of oaks looking down on the Oso Bay shoreline, still standing on the edge. On the edge of the bay, the edge of development, the edge of being lost, and now the edge of return.



MID-COAST BIRD SANCTUARY PROGRAM

In partnership with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, CBBEP's Land Conservation Program started a four-year Bird Sanctuary Program along the mid-Texas Coast that set out to give migrating birds a safe spot to land and roost. Wetlands along the Texas coast have been impacted by development and changes in water supply, leaving less usable habitat for staging, migrating, or breeding while birds are in the area. Between decreasing available habitat and increasing pressure on usable habitats, the ability to fully support populations for their return migrations is continuing to decline.

In the first year of the program, landowners from three counties created over 1,140 acres of non-huntable wetland habitat by leaving 10 - 18 inches of water on their fallow fields through March. Three landowners submitted proposals to be considered for the inaugural year, before being awarded payouts funded by TPWD and USFWS to leave their fields flooded from November to April and restrict any hunting on the sites. Many species of waterfowl, sandhill cranes, wading birds, and shorebirds were already soaking up the sanctuaries during the peak pressure of the 2023 waterfowl season.

NUECES TIDAL SEGMENT STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Citizens along the Nueces River tidal segment have been noticing more water quality concerns along their stretch of river. In 2022, these concerns were brought to the CBBEP and our partners in hopes of receiving attention and action to help address the situation. It became clear that resolving the water quality ailments was going to take time and a large collaborative effort.

During 2023, a stakeholder group comprised of residents and researchers was established to create a space for discussion and collaboration between everyone involved. Representatives from Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Kills and Spills Team, City of Corpus Christi Waterworks, water quality experts from the Harte Research Institute, staff from the Nueces River Authority, CBBEP project managers, and several residents gathered to share perspectives, experiences, research results, and historical data from that stretch of the river.

Fresh water inflows are often cited by residents as an area of concern, where data collection points towards nutrient overloading as a source of the problem. Moving into 2024, two data collection projects will look at what compounds are in the water. Researchers at the Harte Research Institute at Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi (TAMUCC) will be conducting a bioassay study to determine what nutrients are driving the algal blooms, while the Center for Coastal Studies at TAMUCC will be working to characterize the water quality along the tidal segment by taking samples at five locations on the river. These studies will start in early 2024 to understand pollution sources and inform the best approach towards a resolution.



PORT BAY WATER & SEDIMENT SAMPLING

Nestled between Copano and Corpus Christi Bay, a smaller bay system stretches west between booming refineries and port industry, duly dubbed 'Port Bay'. The land surrounding the bay to the north was once used by the Sherwin Alumina plant as a site to deposit waste generated by producing aluminum from bauxite. These deposit sites, commonly referred to as tailing ponds, have been a concern for residents for many years, their red dust tailings visible on windy days and from satellite. In 2017, Hurricane Harvey stirred things up all along the Texas coast, closing bay passes and reshaping rookery islands. The storm surge and wind driven disturbances raised further concern that the elements in the tailing ponds had been moved across the levees and into the open bay and are now posing ecological and human risks to the area.

Sampling efforts of this multi-year project came to a close in 2023, and the results were not as dire as some speculated. After sampling soil, groundwater, bay water, bay sediment, and oyster tissue from several sites in Port Bay, the level of contaminants was found to fall below critical levels of concern.

Interestingly, various chemicals were found higher in the water column than in neighboring bay systems, perhaps due to high wind events resuspending chemicals across the shallow bay. This set the stage for future monitoring and underscores the necessity for further investigation.





MONITORING HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS

With Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) becoming more common in Texas bay systems, the need for more proactive monitoring measures has become salient in recent years. These HAB events have wide felt impacts, affecting tourism, mariculture economies, and posing human health problems. With only two HAB monitoring stations previously on the Texas Gulf Coast, the blooms are often in full swing by the time they are recognized, leaving little time to warn coastal communities.

In 2023, HRI added four new sampling stations in Port and Copano bays that monitor salinity, temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH levels, as well as inorganic nutrients, organic carbon and dissolved nitrogen, chlorophyll, and other HAB identifiers. As the sampling stations are established, citizen scientists are invited to get involved and trained to conduct sample collections themselves, allowing them to understand and preserve the natural resources in their own backyards. There has been interest from Rockport-Fulton High School to implement a citizen-science sampling program that will allow aquatic science students to get first hand experience in the field before graduation.

Sampling at these stations will continue in 2024.

OSSF ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

We're all part of a watershed, whether you're next to a river, in a downtown apartment, among the discs and sprayers of agriculture country, or anywhere in between. With water quality concerns cropping up along the entire Texas coast, increased monitoring has begun to point toward potential pollution sources. High levels of bacteria and nutrients found along the rural tributaries of Baffin Bay has pushed On-Site Sewage Facilities (OSSFs) into the spotlight as a culprit. Many of the septic systems in place in these areas rely on outdated designs and failing infrastructure to process their waste water on-site, which is problematic for water quality as these nutrients make their way into ditches, creeks, and eventually running off into the bays.

In partnership with the Nueces River Authority, CBBEP began an OSSF Assistance Program that allows residents to apply to have their system inspected and repaired/replaced for free. In the first year, over 100 applications were submitted before being ranked and scored to prioritize sites based on urgency and funding availability.

OSSF inspections are scheduled to begin at approximately 40 sites during the start of 2024, and based on the results, systems will either be repaired or replaced at no cost to the homeowner.




MATAGORDA ISLAND RESTORATION

When Hurricane Harvey passed over Matagorda Island in 2017, it reorganized the marsh and the infrastructure on the Island was destroyed. The infrastructure that was destroyed did not just include buildings, but also water control structures and levees used by staff at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge to manage the “West Marsh”. In 2023, construction crews made their way out to the Island to start working on repairs, but tough conditions on the Island brought logistical difficulties and delays. Crews laid the levee road before them as they followed the crumbling path deeper into the marsh. Utilizing recycled road material from the Island’s retired WWII infrastructure from its tenure as an Air Force training base and bombing range, construction crews sourced road material from old runways and taxiways. Construction on the Island wrapped up just in time for the Whooping Cranes to return for the winter, but crews will return in 2024 to continue their efforts to repair as many of the damaged culverts and levees as possible. Funding for this project was provided by the USFWS, Matagorda Bay Mitigation Trust, and the Texas General Land Office - Coastal Erosion Planning and Response Act Program.



NUECES DELTA BREAKWATER



High tides and low winds provided many days of ideal conditions for barging 35,000 tons of rock from White's Point to the Nueces Delta shoreline, where it was placed on geotextile materials. The positioning of the breakwater was specifically set to block the wind driven waves coming across the bay before they meet the marsh. By the end of construction, 3,600 linear feet of breakwater stands between the bay and the marsh system, keeping erosion out and sediment in. The breakwater represents the first phase of a larger restoration of the Nueces Delta, which will see dredge material placed beneficially within the marsh in fall of 2024.



PUBLIC ACCESS SPOTLIGHT

In striving to improve public access to our bays and estuaries, several public parks saw improvements during 2023.

Guests who visit Hans & Pat Suter, West Guth, and Lakeview Parks around Corpus Christi can now connect deeper with the natural world around them with the installation of educational signage. These signs educate visitors on the flora and fauna nearby and the appropriate way to interact with wildlife.

The City of Austwell lies on Hynes Bay and had its only bay access point destroyed by Hurricane Harvey in 2017. Over the past year, four covered steel pavilions and solid core recycled picnic tables were added to the Austwell Boat Ramp facilities. With these structures in place, public use of the bays and estuaries is improved and encouraged.

Padre Island National Seashore (PINS), the longest stretch of undeveloped barrier island in the world lies just south of Corpus Christi and stretches to the Mansfield cut. Welcoming nearly 500,000 guests annually brings many opportunities to clean the beach of litter and debris during their visits. By offering free UP2U litter bags at every beach access point and along the shoreline, PINS and their guests are battling marine debris one bag at a time.

VIOLET ANDREWS PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Violet Andrews Park, ten acres tucked into the northern shoreline of Corpus Christi Bay, has grown to be known as one of the premier wind surfing destinations around the globe, drawing kite boarding enthusiasts from far and wide. The shallow water sand flat provides easy access but getting to the water's edge means tiptoeing across eroded and exposed rip-rap at the single entrance point. As part of the city of Portland's Leisure and Entertainment District project, improvements are slotted to take place at the park to not only make life easier for wind surfing, but for the local community as well by improving the trail systems, upgrading the playground, adding educational signage, and beach access points.

With funding support from CBBEP, a feasibility study for Violet Andrews Park was completed and approved by the Portland City Council in the Fall of 2023. Additionally, three potential designs were proposed, each catering to different levels of recreation and restoration needs of the land and the users. This green space and bay access point will help bring environmental awareness into the overall development of the Leisure and Entertainment District.

PACKERY FLATS CLEAN UP

Packery Flats is well known for its recreational access to both Packery Channel and our intertidal and estuarine habitats, but unfortunately a great deal of trash gets left behind, as well as trash that comes from Highway 361. To address this issue, CBBEP began hosting the Packery Flats Cleanup in 2018 with a grant received from the CITGO Caring for our Coast Initiative. CITGO has continued to provide annual grant funding for the event, which is now held twice a year. This large-scale cleanup removes trash and harmful debris from the Packery Channel bridge to the Island In the Son Methodist Church. Cleaning the roadside and marsh helps protect the fish and wildlife that utilize the 1,000-acre Packery Flats Coastal Habitat on Mustang Island, including the endangered Piping Plover that nests here.

While hosting two clean-ups in 2023, over 380 volunteers gave a combined total of 1,143 hours to help rid the roadsides and marsh of trash. Volunteers were able to collect over 9,000 pounds of litter and debris out of the four miles of sensitive habitat.



UP2U+ CAMPAIGN

Building on the successful Up2U campaign and a first year of full dumpsters, Up2U+ began its second year in the Coastal Bend with a busy schedule lined up. Up2U+ continued its mission to clean the watershed of trash and bulk debris by rolling out large dumpsters that rotate from one community to another. Each dumpster is left for over a week, allowing members of the community several opportunities to bring their debris for disposal. Items like old refrigerators, tires, wires, construction debris, delapidated furnitures, or landscaping waste are all eligible for free disposal.



By eliminating barriers that lead to illegal dumping like cost and accessibility, cleaning popular dumping sites, and improving community awareness of the impacts of illegal dumping, the campaign brought 116 tons of bulk debris and 800 tires out of five counties. By the end of 2023, the Up2U+ program has brought a total of 569 tons of debris and over 5,000 tires out of the ecosystem through two years of operation.





IN MEMORY OF DANE FERREL

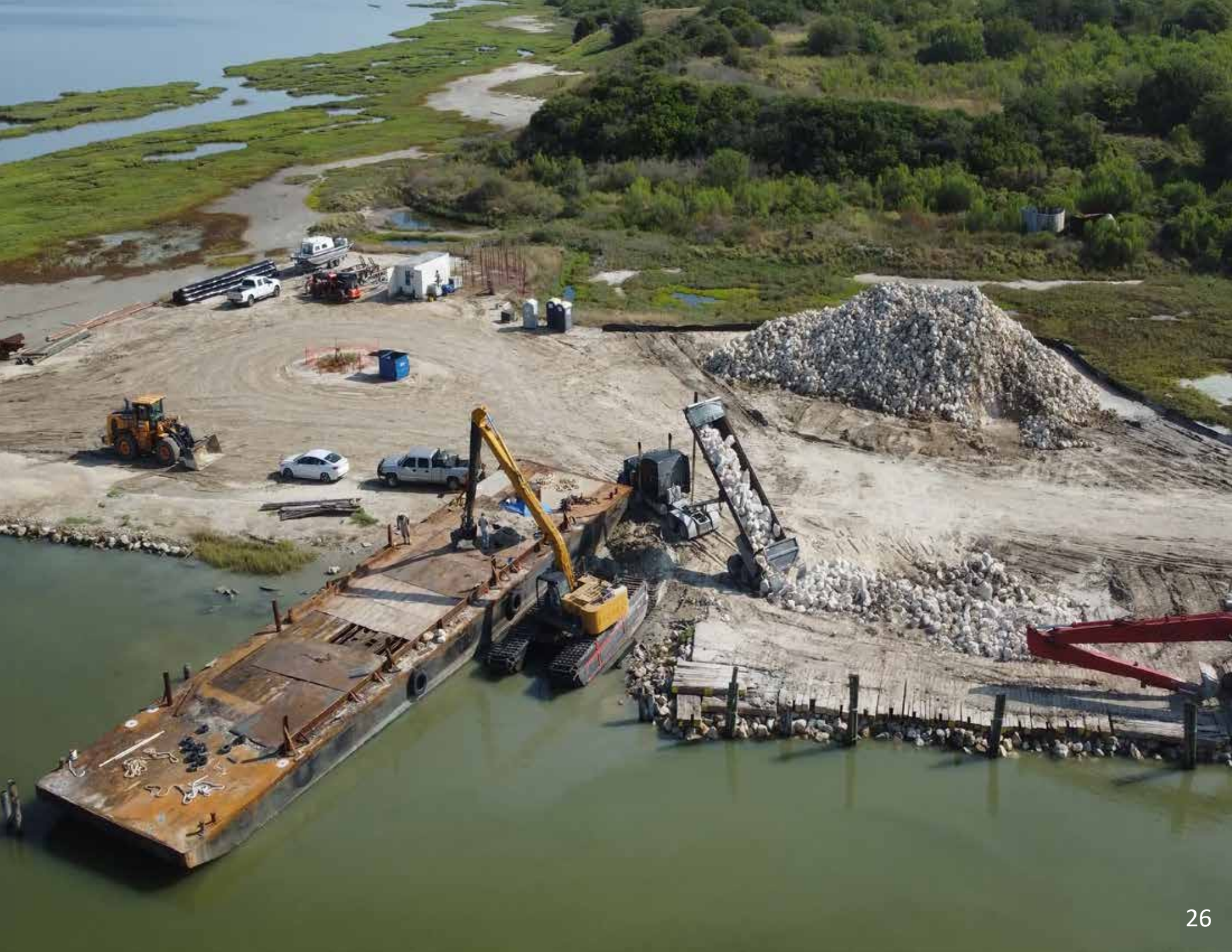
In 2023, our CBBEP Education program at the Nueces Delta Preserve lost a very dear team member, gracious volunteer, and hawkwatch extraordinaire, Dane Ferrell.

Dane was kind, knowledgeable, humble, engaging, passionate, and a natural educator. He was built for environmental education. Dane treated every wild organism, student, teacher, and colleague with absolute respect, and he won over hearts and minds that way. We will miss Dane and all his amazing gifts at the Preserve; his compassion, splendid sense of humor, and the amazing resource that he was, a birding guru. His guidance, kind demeanor, and friendship will be deeply missed.

2023 COLLABORATORS

Amos Rehabilitation Keep
Aransas County
Aransas County Independent School District
Aransas County Navigation District
Aransas First
Aransas National Wildlife Refuge
Audubon Outdoor Club of Corpus Christi
Audubon Texas
Baffin Bay Stakeholder Group
Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program
Calallen Independent School District
City of Austwell
City of Bayside
City of Corpus Christi
City of Ingleside
City of Port Aransas
City of Portland
City of Rockport
Coastal Bend Bays Foundation
Coastal Bend Council of Governments
Coastal Conservation Association
Conrad Blucher Institute
Corpus Christi Astronomical Society
Corpus Christi Independent School District
Delta Land Services
Ducks Unlimited
Flour Bluff Independent School District
Friends of Redhead Pond
Gregory-Portland Independent School District
Guadalupe Blanco River Trust
Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies
International Crane Foundation
Kleberg County
Keep Aransas County Beautiful
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Nueces County

Nueces County AgriLife Extension
Nueces River Authority
Odem Independent School District
Oso Bay Wetlands Preserve & Learning Center
Padre Island National Seashore
Port of Corpus Christi
Project Learning Tree Texas
Refugio County
San Antonio Bay Partnership
San Patricio County
Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center
South Texas Botanical Gardens
Taft Independent School District
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
Texas A&M University Corpus Christi
Texas A&M University Kingsville
Texas Children in Nature
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Texas General Land Office
Texas Gulf Region Cooperative Weed Management Area
Texas Master Naturalists
Texas Nature Trackers - City Nature Challenge
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Texas Sea Grant
Texas State Aquarium
Texas State University
Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board
Texas Water Development Board
Texas Water Resource Institute
The Nature Conservancy
Tuloso-Midway Independent School District
University of Texas Marine Science Institute
US Environmental Protection Agency
US Fish & Wildlife Service
US Geological Survey
Voices of the Colonias
West Oso Independent School District
Wildlife In Focus
Youth Odyssey





DANGER

BREAKWATER
STAY CLEAR
KEEP OFF

2023 SUPPORTERS

GOVERNMENT

City of Corpus Christi
City of Port Aransas
City of Portland
City of Ingleside
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Nueces County
Port of Corpus Christi
San Patricio County
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
Texas General Land Office
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
US Environmental Protection Agency
US Fish & Wildlife Service

CORPORATIONS & BUSINESSES

Brite Star Uniforms
Buckeye Partners
Celanese
Cheniere Energy
CITGO
Coastal Bend Industry Association
Conoco Phillips
Enbridge
Flint Hills Resources
Gulf Coast Growth Venture
LyondellBasell
Port Industries of Corpus Christi
Valero

INDIVIDUALS

Melissa Almaguer (In Memory of Wayne Collins)
Baan Alsinawi (In Memory of Wayne Collins)
DFPS (In Memory of Wayne Collins)
John Barrow
Karen Cannady (In Memory of Wayne Collins)
Lynn Collier
Gretchen Evans
Ray Frisbie
Fred Hurley
Ted & Shirley Madden
Donna Marler (In Memory of Wayne Collins)
Gene Mikulka
Ryan O'Malley
Mary Jo O'Rear
Cameron Perry
Skila Ramirez (In Memory of Ron Raddler)
Mary Tracy (In Memory of Wayne Collins)

FOUNDATIONS & NONPROFITS

American Bird Conservancy
Ed Rachal Foundation
Jacob and Terese Hershey Foundation
Kathryn Nell Harrison Foundation
Knobloch Family Foundation
Matagorda Bay Mitigation Trust
Robert J. Kleberg, Jr. and Helen C. Kleberg Foundation
Tegna Foundation

2023 STAFF

KIERSTEN STANZEL	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ALICE SANCHEZ	DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS
MELISSA BARNES	ACCOUNTANT
MICHELLE CORTINAS	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
LISA HAVEL	GRANTS DIRECTOR
JAKE HERRING	DIRECTOR OF LAND CONSERVATION
TRAVIS MUCKLEROY	CONSERVATION SPECIALIST
ROSARIO MARTINEZ	SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER
ADRIEN HILMY	PROJECT MANAGER
LEIGH PERRY	PROJECT MANAGER
KATHRYN TUNNELL	PROJECT MANAGER
AARON BAXTER	PROJECT MANAGER
MARY KRAMER	PROJECT MANAGER
DAVID NEWSTEAD	DIRECTOR OF COASTAL BIRD PROGRAM
BROOKE HILL	AVIAN CONSERVATION ECOLOGIST
MATTI BARON	AVIAN CONSERVATION ECOLOGIST
JUSTIN LECLAIRE	AVIAN CONSERVATION BIOLOGIST
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