

Galveston Island's

Feather Fest 2008

On April 3-6, 2008 Galveston Island will host its fifth annual birding festival, *FeatherFest 2008*. It is scheduled to coincide with Spring migration when the Island sees more than 200 species of birds as they travel through the area moving from their wintering grounds in central and South America to their nesting grounds further north.

The festival headquarters this year will be in the center of the historic downtown area. It will be at the beautifully restored Old Galveston Square building on The Strand between 23rd and 22nd streets. Field trips will load and unload there; seminars, registration, and the birders bazaar will be held there. There will also be a hospitality room with food and beverage.

For those unfamiliar with “birding festivals” : Birding festivals are generally designed to allow birders and other nature lovers to meet and learn from each other and from the more experienced guides who give talks (workshops) or accompany the field trips. In the evenings there are social events to allow people to relax and enjoy the company and other aspects of Galveston. The events at FeatherFest have been selected to provide choices for both expert birders and inexperienced nature lovers. Our keynote dinner on Friday evening features Kenn Kaufman, famous for his best-seller nature and birding guides

For non-birders, or for birders interested in other aspects of nature, we recommend Butterflies, Dragonflies, Moths, Mammals, Nature Photography, and the kayak trips at the state park, East Lagoon or Christmas Bay. The kayak trip at the state park is particularly informative on the subject of wetlands restoration on Galveston Island. The events that include the East End Preserve highlight the area that has been designated for a nature preserve on Galveston.

For non-birders who want to try “birding” we recommend New Birders which gives an introduction to bird watching or the Sunday morning All about birds and Easy Birding trips. The Sunday events are particularly friendly to children. In addition, any of the field trips will be informative and interesting for you, though an all day field trip may be a challenge.

For Galvestonians and visitors who want to get a different view of life on Galveston and find out why birders travel to visit the area, we recommend you start with the Galveston flyway workshop on Thursday. Good trips on the island are the West Galveston trips, the East Lagoon Preserve and Corps Woods/Apfel Beach field trips, the Galveston sampler trips, the kayak trips, and the boat trips.

For the more experienced birder the field trips to High Island, Anahuac, Bluewater, and Bolivar Flats should be of interest, with trip leaders who will help you spot and identify the birds. This year we have re-organized the trip to Anahuac to include an afternoon stop at High Island, so you can get the best of both locations. The Galveston Sampler trips and the trips to East and West Galveston Island should also be on your list, since the expert local guides can often find the same birds that are seen at High Island and Bolivar Flats, but with less time devoted to travel. There is also a trip to see the Attwater's Prairie Chickens in Texas City.

SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS

All Inside Seminars and Workshops will be presented in rooms in or close to, the Old Galveston Square building.

Birding for New Birders Thurs 2:00 -4:00pm; Fri and Sat 9:30 to noon Throughout the festival Dr. Susan Knock will be offering to help Feather Fest 2008 guests with their basic birding skills. The workshops are also being made available to members of the general public who always wanted to try birding but never had the convenient opportunity to do so. No experience is necessary; just bring your binoculars (if you have them, if not, don't worry) and your curiosity. Each session will include a 1 hour indoor workshop. This will be followed by a 1 hour outdoor workshop alongside Pier 21 to practice techniques and identify some common birds.

Galveston, flyway central, birding mecca Thurs 3:00 – 4:45pm Presenter Ted Eubanks is an ecotourism consultant and birding expert. He has a unique knowledge of the island and its natural history. He is also a great speaker. This will be a memorable seminar. He will explain the dynamics of bird appearances in the area during the year, why this barrier island is so important to birds, why the birding in the area is amongst the best in the USA and arguably even the world, and lastly where you should go, what you should do, if you decide to do some local birding on your own.

Birding ID warm up Fri and Sat 7:00 – 8:15am Enjoy this “wake up” birding ID presentation. Presenter Gary Clark, naturalist and Dean of the North Harris County College, writes a weekly column for the Houston Chronicle called The Wonders of Nature. He just loves to help others become more comfortable and knowledgeable about nature and in particular, birds. Grab you coffee and a donut and let Gary get your engine revving for the day.

Nature Photography (The Inside portion) Fri and Sat 7:30 – 9:15am This seminar is the first part of Presenter Kathy Adams Clark's Nature Photography segments. Part two is the field trip that follows this seminar. They will bring all participants to a common point of knowledge on the more technical aspects of the use of equipment in photography. The maximum number of persons for the seminar will be approximately 30, depending on room size. You may choose to participate ONLY in the seminar, but you are required to attend the seminar if you wish to go out on the field trip, which is limited to 12 persons.

Shorebirds by Impression-A Different Approach to Field ID for Beginners Fri 8:15am – 9:45am Presenter: Kevin Karlson This fun program starts with an explanation of Birding by Impression, which uses a different approach to enjoy and identify birds, with or without binoculars. By concentrating on non-changeable impressions of size, shape and body language of every bird seen, a familiar set of impressions will eventually be stored in your brain. A similar approach is taken in Kevin's best selling book, *The Shorebird Guide* (Houghton Mifflin Publishers, 2006), which uses real life photographs to illustrate this concept. Photos from this book, along with others, will be used to help explain this exciting new approach for enjoying our natural world. Birders of all levels will benefit from this program

All About Butterflies (The inside portion) Fri and Sat 1:00 – 2:00 pm Presenter: Dr. Nancy Greig This is the first (inside) of a two-part (seminar/field trip) introduction to the fascinating world of another creature of the air...Butterflies. You may learn more about butterflies during this seminar than you may learn in the field, since Nancy's pictures will highlight many details not easily spotted on the wing. Participation in the seminar will convey a priority for attending the field trip that follows, which is limited to 12 participants.

The Night Shift (A birder's-eye view of moths) Fri 10:00- 11:00am Presenter Kenn Kaufman has developed a close interest in moths, to the benefit of the rest of us. Books and guides are very limited for moths, so this

will be your chance to learn about them from an expert nature observer. This will be a perfect complement to the workshops on Butterflies.

Nature Writing Fri 1:30-3:00pm Presenter: Gary Clark Gary Clark, naturalist and Dean of North Harris County College writes a weekly column for the Houston Chronicle called The Wonders of Nature. Gary will give tips on how to use words to describe natural creatures and events. Topics covered will be sentence structure, finding your voice with words, keeping a nature journal, recording your observations, descriptive writing, and capturing identification clues. The workshop will include writing exercises so participants should bring paper and pen.

Reptiles and Amphibians of the Upper Texas Coast Fri 2:00pm-3:30pm Presenters: John and Gloria Tveten John and Gloria Tveten have been writing and educating folks about nature for many years. John authored the Wonders of Nature weekly column in the Houston Chronicle for many years prior to Gary Clark. Texas harbors a wide range of snakes, lizards, turtles and frogs. Many of those species occur in the Galveston area. Meet these fascinating and often misunderstood animals through the Tvetens' color photographs and learn to appreciate their interesting habits and their role in the environment.

Mammals of the Upper Texas Coast and Texas Sat 9:00-10:15am Presenter: John and Gloria Tveten Texas is home to more than 150 species of mammals. Although most people recognize white-tailed deer, raccoons, and armadillos, other Texas mammals are seldom encountered and poorly understood. Many species occur right here in the local Galveston area. See many of these fascinating creatures through the Tvetens' color slides and learn about their amazing diversity and interesting biology.

All about Dragonflies (The Inside portion) Sat 1:15 – 2:15pm Presenter: Robert Honig This seminar is the first (inside) part of a two-part introduction to Dragonflies, the raptors of the insect world. Bob Honig will introduce you to these creatures during the seminar and then lead a field trip to see them in the air. Persons who attend the seminar will be given preference for going out on the field trip, as there will be a limit of 12 persons for the field trip.

Taking Shorebird Identification to the Next Level Sat 8:00-9:30am Presenter: Kevin Karlson This seminar integrates Birding by Impression with detailed field mark analysis to take shorebird ID to new heights of understanding. While Kevin has shared his concept of impression based birding with FeatherFest participants for the last 5 years, it is time to move forward and share a combined approach of impressions and field marks to further our understanding of shorebird identification.. This seminar is somewhat advanced in nature, but beginners are welcome to see what might lie ahead in their own personal ID evolution.

Break on Through Sat 11:30-12:30 Presenters: Kim and Kenn Kaufman This talk is about how to recruit new people to an interest in nature, with special emphasis on mentoring the younger birders. It will be of greatest interest to educators, and to those who lead youth groups etc....but is a subject close to us all

Understanding what you see (The inside portion) Sat 1:15-2:15pm Presenter: Kenn Kaufman This is the inside portion of the indoor/outdoor workshop. You MUST register and attend the inside session in order to register for the outside session but those registering for the inside session do not HAVE to register/attend the outside session. This is a great opportunity to meet one of the world's great naturalists. The content of this program is based on an update that Kenn is doing of his Field Guide to Advanced Birding.

Digiscoping Fri 1:30 – 2:30; Sat 10:15-11:15 Representatives of optics companies will give you some tips about Digiscoping -combining cameras with scopes, for longer distance photography. This demonstration will be held on the outside deck out the window door of the Birders Bazaar.

Landscaping for Birds Sat 3:00 – 4:30pm Presenter : Glenn Olsen Glen has been involved with the Native Plant Society of Texas for 15 years and served as the Houston Chapter President for 2 years and on the State Board for 4 years, one year of which as its President. He co-founded the "Wildscapes Workshop: "Landscaping

to Attract Wildlife”. Glen is also an excellent birder and is teaching an “Introduction to Birding” class at Rice University, Continuing Education Department.

All about Birds for new birders of all ages Sun 10:00-11:15am Presenter: Jeff Bouton This short workshop is designed for school age birders and for adults who are very new to birding. Jeff writes a regular article in Wildbird magazine, called “Adventures with Austin” .. Austin is Jeff’s young son. There is no charge for this event. Immediately after this workshop Jeff will lead a low priced field trip for which one WILL have to register.

FIELD TRIPS

Registrants should meet for ALL field trips (including those that use the boat, Seagull II) at the front of the Old Galveston Square building, and WILL DEPART ON TIME. Guests are advised to arrive 15 minutes AHEAD of the listed departure times. There will be no refunds for trips for which guests missed departures. The listed times relate to departure FROM and arrival BACK TO, the Old Galveston Square venue.

Guests will be permitted on the trips according to the final sign up records, which will be posted in the Registration area.

For trips extending beyond mid day, guests should arrange for their own snack or lunch needs. Options will be provided for guests to purchase food including purchase in the Birders' Café (more details in your gift tote bag on arrival).

Please note that for all water based trips (by boat or kayak) weather condition will dictate whether the trip will occur as planned. These decisions may not be able to be made until close to the time of the event.

In general the FF 2008 Committee reserves the right to cancel any activity or substitute qualified presenters when necessary. If we cancel an event for any reason we will offer alternatives where practical.

Festival opening “sampler” Thurs 8:00am -2:30pm Field Trip leader: Dick Peake(Registrants supply own snacks/lunch box etc) Explore the entire island on a fast paced trip with Dick Peake. Dick is a retired English professor and a life long and semi-pro birder. He is a seasonal resident of the island. He will take into account the weather, tides and what he has seen just prior to the festival to decide what to view and where to go. In that regard, the tour is not fixed rigidly in advance, but is more a birding adventure.

Harbor and Pelican Island Thur, Fri, and Sat 10:30am to 12:30pm Field trip leader: Sid Steffens, plus others For those who don't have the opportunity to take the longer boat trip to North Deer Island this shorter trip aboard Seagull II, will provide a view of Galveston from the water, provide some interesting facts about the Port, see the dolphins, many seabirds and then if conditions are right, land by ramp on the sandy north east tip of Pelican Island. With a short walk on Pelican island there is an opportunity to spot a wide variety of birds due to the numerous habitats. Cut off from Pelican Island by the Intracoastal canal is Little Pelican Island. Use you scopes and binoculars to get some good views of the small rookery there.

East End Lagoon Preserve Site Thurs 11:30am. – 2:30pm Field Trip Leader: Kevin Karlson The City of Galveston owns 686 acres of land at the eastern tip of the island and the intent is to transform it into a world class natural recreational area and nature preserve with an interpretive center. All the habitats associated with a barrier island, eg beach, uplands, fresh water ponds, brackish lagoons and wetlands etc, are present. On this easy paced field trip with Kevin Karlson, an expert in shorebird identification, birders will enjoy a large number and variety of birds at rest.. Sandy beach areas are favorites for Black Skimmers, gulls and terns and shallow pool waders. Wetland areas usually show cormorants, egrets, ibis, ducks and the occasional American Bittern, Clapper Rail and Sora.

Explore East End Lagoon by Kayak Thurs 1:45 – 4:45pm Field Trip Leaders: Staff from the Artist Boat Inc. The East End Lagoon is an exciting feature of the planned East End Lagoon Preserve. Uniquely located on the Gulf of Mexico side of the seawall and trapped by the accumulation of sand to its south, it was once the site of cabins for some of Galveston's prominent families. Discover more about its history and its natural stands of smooth cord grass, wading and diving birds, and all other wildlife that abounds in the area. Take in the views of the urban, and the wild side of Galveston Island..

With all kayaking trips, guests are advised that getting the kayak out into the water may require them to get their feet wet and muddy and are advised to wear lace up sneakers or equivalent.

Sampling Pelican Island Thurs and Fri 1:30-4:30pm Field Trip Leaders: Jim Stevenson (Thurs) and TBD (Fri) Originally a small shifting sand bar which protected Galveston's fledgling port, Pelican Island is now an enlarged area of maturing, vegetated dredge spoil. It provides a wide range of habitats including extensive mud flats for sandpipers, avocets, stilts etc; bushy areas for neo-tropic songbirds, sparrows etc; fresh water ponds for waterfowl, and open grassy areas for prairie birds and raptors. The mud flats offer particularly good viewing at the end of the afternoon. Use of the area is not well controlled, parts of it are not too "tidy" and one road will be bumpy, but the birding is usually fine.

Birding for new birders Thurs 2:00- 3:00pm Inside talk, 3:00pm to 4:30pm Outside walk; Fri and Sat 9:30-10:30am Inside, 10:30-12:00noon Outside walk Field trip leader: Dr Susan Knock These inside and outside workshop are for those attending who may be pretty new to birding and who will benefit from a few tips in simple English, on binoculars and watching and identifying birds. Dr Knock will also help you decide what other trips offered by the festival, would suit you best etc. After an hour in one of the assigned meeting rooms, you will take a leisurely walk (about 2 city blocks) over to the docks, where numerous species of bird hang around the shrimp boat fleet and offer an hour of easy viewing.

Attwater's Prairie-chicken Preserve, plus Cave Swallows, Monk Parakeets etc. Fri, Sat, and Sun 5:00am – 10:45am: Field Trip leaders: Gordon Nunn, Gay York Travel by van to the Nature Conservancy's Preserve at Texas City for an opportunity to see the Attwater's Prairie-chicken, one of the rarest birds in North America. This Preserve is one of just two dedicated to trying to keep this species alive in the wild. For many birder visitors to the Upper Texas Coast this will be a must see life bird. Watching the prairie chickens perform their mating ritual is a sight to behold. The males emerge into an open area referred to as a "lek", extend their tail feathers, stomp their feet, make a noise called "booming" and chase off competing males to defend their area and attract the attention of the females.

The reason for the early start is that visitors MUST be in the blind before sunrise and before the birds arrive on the lek. Be sure not to drink too much coffee since there is no potty in the blind !.

If time permits, the tour will continue with additional interesting bird watching, either on the Preserve or locally to see Cave and Cliff swallows, naturalized Monk parakeets etc.

Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge Option 1 Fri and Sat 5:30a.m.– 2:30pm.(Registrants supply own snacks/lunch box etc) Field Trip leaders: TBD and David Sarkozi Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge is located along East Galveston Bay. With 25,000 acres of brackish and freshwater marsh, treed areas and a sandy East bay shoreline the refuge offers the full range of bird species. New trails and boardwalks will provide good viewing of several varieties of herons, egrets, waterfowl, likely views of Anhinga, some raptors, and alligators. But the reason this trip leaves so early is so that those who have never seen a Yellow Rail might get to add it to their life lists. Guests must get to the refuge no later than sunrise (which is about 7am).

Yellow rails are regulars in winter and spring, and a guide will be onsite to conduct a Yellow Rail search for those who wish to do it. The search will be quite strenuous and requires moving through marshy areas. Those wishing to add this bird to their life list stand a good chance to do so if willing to put in the effort. Participants are strongly advised to bring and to wear waders or knee length rubber boots.

The refuge does have about a dozen pairs of rubber boots (various sizes) loaned on a first come first served basis. Also Academy and other similar stores sell light plastic waders that have "feet" and therefore are waterproof. Being lightweight, they need to be worn inside some kind of boot. The inside of low top boots will get wet but the feet etc will stay dry. The price is \$5 to \$6 ..and they pack very flat and small.

After Anahuac, the tour will return via High Island and at High Island the group will make a brief stop at the Smith Woods rookery and Boy Scout woods to look for migrating songbirds. Note: The stop at HI will not be as extensive as the High Island trips. Time permitting, stops will be made to check the shorebirds etc at Rollover Pass and Bolivar.

Anahuac Wildlife Refuge Option 2 Sat 7:30am-3:00pm This trip leaves Galveston later than for Anahuac Option 1 and does NOT include the search for Yellow Rails. As with Option 1, after leaving the ANWR the bus will stop at High Island but will not spent as much time there as the High Island trip does. Other sites will be visited on the return journey as time permits. Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge is located along East Galveston Bay. With 25,000 acres of brackish and freshwater marsh, treed areas and a sandy East bay shoreline the refuge offers the full range of bird species. New trails and boardwalks will provide good viewing of several varieties of herons, egrets, waterfowl, likely views of Anhinga, some raptors, and alligators.

Bluewater Highway and Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge Fri 6:15am-1:00pm Field trip leader: Jim ODonnell Explore the mainland beyond the western tip of Galveston Island, along Bluewater Highway, and en-route to Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge. This is a very pleasant trip. Snooze for the first part, then leave Galveston Island by way of the San Luis Pass toll bridge as the sun comes up behind you. If the tide is low, take a quick look for shorebirds on the sand flats of Follets Island, on the W&N side of the bridge, (or make a note to stop there on the way back), then move west along Bluewater Highway where there are small lagoons on the beach side of the road, with salt cedar brush and nesting herons and usually some remnant wintering waterfowl. The land is flat and you can see from beach to bay. Keep an eye open for raptors, harriers, osprey, caracaras, and hawks. Then make tracks for Brazoria NWR and a broader range of birding. Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge is a 40,000 acre refuge famous for its spectacular birding. In winter, thousands of migrating ducks and geese stop over, relishing the freshwater marsh habitats and some are likely to still be present. Neotropical migrants will also be on view, plus late wintering raptors. It is also a place to see alligators and many marsh animals. A number of rare bird sightings have been reported from this refuge. The trip leaders will have some discretion as to where to go and how long to stay depending on latest bird sighting reports. The return journey, along the coastal highway, close to the sea and bay in the afternoon will again be spectacular under a different light, with some predictably birdy stops along the way as time permits..

Bluewater Highway and Quintana Preserve Sat 7:00am to 12:30 Trip leader: Jim ODonnell This short coastal trip will be easy paced and the first part is similar to the trip to Brazoria NWR. It will head west over the San Luis Pass bridge and off Galveston Island, it will stop on Follets Island to check out the beach and a favorite road side pond with Salt Cedar. There is little distance between Gulf and the Bay and the views are excellent. The trip will continue over the Intra Coastal canal, checking out the road-side marshes. Hence to Quintana Neotropical migrant refuge, a good example of how even a small plot is valuable for Trans-gulf migrants. The beach and jetty at Quintana provide other opportunities to bird before wending home, stopping as you wish.

East Galveston Island Hot spots Fri 6:30am-11:30 Trip Leader: Richard (Dick) Peake Dick Peake is a seasonal resident of Galveston and an accomplished lifetime US and International birder. On this bus based trip he will introduce you to all the bird species he can muster in the various habitats he knows well, on the part of the island behind the seawall..

West Galveston Island Hot Spots: Shorebirds Fri and Sat 7:15 – 11:45 am. Field Trip leader: Jim Stevenson This morning field trip is conducted by bus with frequent stops for shorebirds, waders and other surprises, all over the productive west end of Galveston Island. At least seventy species should be seen, comprised of sandpipers and some plovers, herons & egrets, ibis, spoonbills, gulls & terns, ducks, and much more. In a few places, guests will pile out of the van and “scope” out large flocks.

Nature Photography Field Trip Fri and Sat 9:30am – 12:30pm Kathy Adams Clark, an accomplished Texas nature photographer, will conduct a workshop from 7:30 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. at Old Galveston Square and then lead a field trip to help guests improve their nature picture taking skills. She will demonstrate with both digital and film based equipment. Guests will photograph birds, compose landscapes, and capture stunning images of insects. Participants should bring their own camera, lenses, flash, tripod, several rolls of film, and their camera manual. Waterproof boots could be useful. You may attend ONLY the inside workshop portion, but you may ONLY sign up for the field trip IF you have attended the prior inside workshop portion.

Birding by kayak in Galveston Island State Park's Restored Wetlands Fri and Sat 8:00am.– noon and 12:30-4:30pm Field Trip Leaders: Staff from the Artist Boat Inc. Enjoy aerobic activity while experiencing bird watching at eye level and witnessing the success of the Gulf Coast's first large wetland reclamation effort. Each 2.5 hour session on the water will have a pair of experienced kayak leaders and/or environmental specialists associated with the Artist Boat, Inc. Trip leaders have first hand knowledge of the restoration project and the biology of the wetlands. Guests will visit man-made terraces, the 30-ft. circumference textile tubes protecting the shoreline from wave action, and view the rapidly expanding acreage of sea grasses. Along the way guests will learn about the unique plants and animals of the inter-tidal zone, view a mixed gull/tern rookery, likely see singing Seaside Sparrows, American Oystercatchers, Black Skimmers, and other more common waders, shorebirds, cormorants, and raptors overhead.

All kayaking participants should be aware that launching and landing can be a bit muddy, especially at low tide. Guests are advised to wear footwear that will not come off easily. Guests will be supplied and required to wear a life jacket and are advised to keep their gear to a minimum. Heavy duty zip lock bags may keep binoculars, cameras, birding books etc dry, but special kayaking plastic bags are better and they come in various sizes. Guests should be sure to protect themselves from the sun's direct and reflected rays. An Artist Boat waiver of liability form will need to be completed by each guest prior to embarkation, this is a requirement of their insurance carrier.

High Island (Boy Scout and Smith Woods, The Rookery, etc), World famous birding location Fri and Sat 8:30am – 4:00pm. (Registrants supply own snacks/lunch box etc)

Field Trip Leaders:

Friday, Winnie Burkett, and TBD,

Saturday, Ted Eubanks and TBD

High Island is the surface expression of a salt dome on the edge of the Gulf of Mexico. Due to its elevation above the saltwater table, it supports wooded habitat that supplies food, water and place to rest for tired trans-Gulf migrants. It is known world wide for its spectacular variety of spring migrants. It is also famous for an easily viewed rookery. On the lower levels off the "island" there are producing oil fields and the roads through the marshes there can also provide some good views of sandpipers and rails including one recent Black rail.

The Houston Audubon Society (HAS) has two large sanctuaries in the area: Boy Scout Woods and Smith Oaks. Smith Oaks contains the spectacular heron rookery, safely located on an island within a lake, where visitors may get close views of nesting herons, ibis, egrets, and spoonbills. Winnie Burkett is the sanctuary manager and a fountain of knowledge about all aspect of the area. A third, smaller HAS sanctuary, Eubanks Woods, near Smith Oaks, was named for Galvestonian Ted Eubanks, who will lead the Saturday trip. A fourth sanctuary is named after Steve Gast. Songbird migrants may also be found there.

The "island" and the sanctuary took a heavy hit during hurricane Rita in 2004 and most recently during hurricane Humberto, but the birding will still be good. For more information about all the High Island sanctuaries, those owned by Houston Audubon and those owned by the Texas Ornithological Society, please click on the following web links.

Easy Birding –East End Lagoon Preserve Site

A few binoculars will be available for those without them.

(Note: If you have gone out on the Corps Woods/Big Reef/East Beach trip this would partly duplicate the experience.) Fri 9:00-11:15am; Sun 11:30am to 1:30pm Field trip leaders: Alice Ann O'Donell (Fri), Jeff Bouton (Sun)

This is designed to be a really slow paced trip for beginners to novice who might be with us on Friday or Sunday. You will be taken directly to the wide open sandy beaches at the east end of Galveston Island, where there will be many species of shore birds, gulls, terns, skimmers, sandpipers, plovers, avocets, black necked stilts etc. Stops along the way will highlight birds preferring marsh habitats.

The City of Galveston owns 686 acres of land at the eastern tip of the island and the intent is to transform it into a world class natural recreational area and nature preserve with an interpretive center. All the habitats associated with a barrier island, eg beach, uplands, fresh water ponds, brackish lagoons and wetlands etc, are present

Birding Bolivar Peninsular with Kevin Karlson Fri 10:00am-4:00pm Field trip leader: Kevin Karlson. Join Kevin Karlson at his favorite birding location in North America, the south end of the Bolivar peninsula. This is truly “one of the finest migratory locations in N. America”, with shorebirds, terns, herons/egrets and other waterbirds combining to give birders an unforgettable field experience. A limited number of spaces is available for this trip to allow for more personal contact with Kevin and the other participants.

West Galveston Island Hot Spots: Songbirds (with Banding) Fri and Sat 12:45 – 4:45pm. Field Trip leader: Jim Stevenson This afternoon field trip searches for the spring songbird richness found on the Upper Texas Coast, with a special emphasis on colorful songbirds such as warblers, tanagers, orioles, grosbeaks and buntings. A brief stop will be made at the banding station to see if any songbirds are being banded, then short walks will be made at the Laffite's Cove Nature Preserve, Dos Vacas, and several isolated oak motts. There will be a potty stop at Jim Stevenson's Heartbreak Hammock. Several dozen species of land migrants should be recorded, and likely many neat waterbirds seen incidentally.

All About Butterflies Field Trip Fri and Sat 2:15pm – 4:30pm Field Trip leader: Dr. Nancy Greig Each of these days an “All About Butterflies” inside workshop is scheduled at Old Galveston Square from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. You may choose to JUST attend this inside workshop, but you MUST attend the inside workshop IF you plan to sign up for the field trip. The field trip people count is limited. Participants will learn about a variety of butterflies that are found in this part of the Texas Gulf Coast and then identify them in the field. Their symbiotic relationship to flowers will be explained. The field trip will take you to the lush gardens of Moody Gardens and if time permits, will include a free visit to see the butterflies in the Rain Forest and learn a little about how they are maintained.

North Deer Island Rookeries by Boat Fri and Sat 1:00 – 5:00 pm; Sun 7:30 –11:30am Field Trip leaders: Knock (Fri), Burkett (Sat), Kenn Kaufman (Sun) On this fabulous trip to the rookery on North Deer Island, in West Bay, everyone will witness herons, reddish egrets, roseate spoonbills, and other wading birds in their full breeding plumage. Birders can also hone their skills by identifying the many other species found gathering at this time of year in and over the waters of the bay. Participants will ride on the SS Seagull II, a 50-passenger catamaran hulled boat.

Corps Woods, East End Lagoon and Appfel Beach. Fri 1:45 – 4:30 pm Field Trip leader: Ted Eubanks Bird with Ted Eubanks, who has spent many years birding this area and trying to save local habitats from development. Corps Woods is a small wooded area bounded by a fresh water slough that has been dedicated to nature viewing by the Coast Guard. Ted was very instrumental in the creation of Corps Woods. It provides yet

one more opportunity short distance from downtown to locate migrating neo-tropicals. Permission will be sought to go up on the levee that surrounds the dredge spoil holding area.

The East End Lagoon is a tidal lagoon parallel to and enclosed by the seawall to its north and sand accumulations to its south. It is part of the 686 acres owned by the City and the intent is to transform it into a world class natural recreational area and nature preserve with an interpretive center. All the habitats associated with a barrier island, eg beach, uplands, fresh water ponds, brackish lagoons and wetlands etc, are present. Along the extensive lagoon and surrounding marshes, there are almost always cormorants, egrets, herons, ibis and waterfowl, plus the occasional American Bittern, Clapper Rail and Sora. The existing Big Reef Park and Apffel Beach sandy areas are great feeding, resting and breeding area for shorebirds and waders. Black Skimmers, several varieties of gulls and terns including nesting Least Terns, sandpipers and plovers, etc. are predictable.

Understanding what you see (Field trip portion of workshop) Sat 2:30-4:30pm Trip leader: Kenn Kaufman
This is the outside field work portion of the inside workshop of the same name. You will have to have registered and attended the inside session in order to register for the outside session but those registering for the inside session do not have to register for the outside session. You will be taken by bus to the East End Lagoon Preserve site area, where Kenn will help you practice the techniques. This is a great opportunity to meet one of the worlds great naturalists. The content of this program is based on an update Kenn is doing of his Field Guide to Advanced Birding (first published in 1990)

Tour of Turtle Research facilities - Administration/National Marine Fisheries Service Galveston Laboratory Fri and Sat 2:45-4:15pm Trip leader: Susan Lewis This is the only research facility of its kind dedicated to rearing threatened and endangered sea turtles in captivity. Currently, approximately 450 sea turtles are reared in this facility each year. These turtles are involved in research on new tagging methods before they are used in the field, as well as growth and feeding studies. Most Importantly, these turtles are used to test fishing gear designed specifically to prevent sea turtles from drowning in fish trawls and becoming entangled or hooked in long-line fishing gear.

What will you see on your visit? You will see up to 450 live sea turtles housed in saltwater tanks. There is no glass or fence between you and the turtles. You can get fact to face if you wish as long as you don't touch!! Your tour will include a little sea turtle biology and ecology, treats to sea turtles, on-going research and conservation and protection measures being employed to save sea turtles from extinction.

Birding just across the Causeway. Sat 8:15am to 12:30pm Just over the Causeway, on the mainland, there are several colonies of Cave and Cliff swallows. A few miles further there are catchment ponds for the refineries which could still hold some Eared Grebes plus late wintering waterfowl and usually Roseatte Spoonbills and herons. A bit further takes guests to the Texas City Dike which is a manmade granite block peninsular that was built to protect the port of Texas City. It projects way out into East Galveston bay, almost to Pelican Island, and is an excellent vantage point to see birds that prefer a true marine environment. Hopefully some late wintering loons, gulls and terns will likely be present, plus some bay ducks, mergansers etc. Afterwards drive along Skyline highway on the top of a levee, for an outside chance to spot a Great Blue Heron white morph.

Shorebirds (and Others too) by Impression at Bolivar Sat 10:15am-3:30pm Field trip leader: Kevin Karlson This field trip/workshop will allow birders to practice their *Birding by Impression* field skills with shorebirds of the Bolivar peninsula. Using basic impressions of size, shape and body language, a surprising effective field ID may be formed. Other birds will be observed as well, but shorebirds will be the main focus of this trip. It is recommended that each participant read the recent article "Birding by Impression: A Different Approach to Field Identification" in Birding Magazine (July/August, 2007) before attending this trip. You can find this article on Kevin's website (kevinkarlsonphotography.com).

All About Dragonflies Field Trip(The outside portion of the workshop) Sat 2:30– 4:45pm. Field Trip leader: R. Honig For just this one day there will be an inside workshop from 1:15 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. at Old Galveston Square, followed by a field trip by van. You may choose to JUST attend the inside workshop, but you MUST attend the seminar if you wish to sign up for the field trip. Bob Honig is an expert on dragonflies and he will explain the basics in the workshop and then search for examples in the field. Bob is also a great birder and his guests will often see birds that no others do.

Festival closing “sampler” Sun 7:45am-2:15pm Field Trip leader: Dick Peake(Registrants supply own snacks/lunch box etc) Explore the entire island on a fast paced trip with Dick Peake. Dick is a retired English professor and a life long and semi-pro birder. He is a seasonal resident of the island. He will take into account the weather, tides and what he has seen just prior to the festival to decide what to view and where to go. In that regard, the tour is not fixed rigidly in advance, but is more a birding adventure.

Explore Christmas Bay by Kayak Sun 8:00am – 12:30pm Field Trip leader: Staff of Artist Boat Inc. Birds, birds, birds! Paddle around Christmas Bay ‘s beautiful island water bird colonies and shallow flats. Paddlers will hear the sounds of active nesting birds, float over natural stands of seas grasses, and experience the feeding habits and habitats of small and large wading birds in a very isolated and undeveloped part of Galveston Bay.

All kayaking participants should be aware that launching and landing can be a bit muddy, especially at low tide. Guests are advised to wear footwear that will not come off easily and can get muddy.

Real easy birding8 mile Rd to Laffittes Sun 11:30am-2:30pm Field trip leader: Alice Ann O’Donell This is a new trip especially for beginner and novice birders who may only have Sunday to be with us but who want the complete birding experience covering a variety of birds in a “comfortable” environment. Set on Sunday and not too early, it is designed to attract the more locally derived guests. The trip will cover the mid segment of the island from 8 Mile Rd to Laffittes Cove Nature Preserve and see many types of waterfowl, waders and songbirds

KEYNOTE SPEAKER DINNER

Location

Fisherman's Wharf Restaurant
Pier 22 (22nd Street and Harborside Drive)

Silent Auction, Book signings, Cash Bar

5:30pm to 6:45pm

Seating, Welcome and Introductions

6:45pm to 7:00pm

Dinner

7:00pm to 8:00pm

Keynote Presentation by Kenn Kaufman

8:00pm-8:45pm

Kenn Kaufman did not really focus on birds until the age of six, but since then he has tried to make up for lost time, pursuing birds in all fifty states and on all seven continents. He is a field editor for Audubon magazine and a regular contributor to several birding magazines; but most of his time goes into book projects, including his own field guide series, the Kaufman Field Guides, with volumes on North American birds, butterflies, mammals, and insects. His other books include the Field Guide to Advanced Birding, Lives of North American Birds, and Kingbird Highway. A new memoir, Flights Against The Sunset, is scheduled to be published in early April 2008. Kenn lives with his wife Kim in northwestern Ohio.

Silent Auction, Book signings, continued

8:45pm-9:15pm

Reservations for this multi course dinner, and key note speech can be done in two ways.

1. If you wish to sign up for any other trips and events during FF 2008 you **MUST** use the normal Registration procedures. If you've payed the \$25 registration fee, the price for the dinner is only \$40
2. If you wish to sign up **ONLY** for the Friday evening dinner, at \$60 per person, then [you](#) may do so on the website, www.galvestonfeatherfest.com..

S O C I A L E V E N T S

These events are intended for registered FeatherFest guests, event volunteers, and sponsors.

Opening Guest and Volunteer Appreciation Reception Thur 5:30pm to 7:30pm on the **Tremont House Rooftop** 2300 Mechanic St. Enjoy light hors d'oeuvres and libations, while looking out over the roof tops and spires of Galveston. This event and location has been a favorite of visitors since FF 2004.

Closing Guest and Volunteer Appreciation Reception An Evening of Art and Music Sat 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Galveston County Historical Museum, 2219 Market St. Music Performance begins at 7:00 p.m. Light hors d'oeuvres will be available.

EVENT REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Pre-registration forms may be submitted by mail or fax or online at www.galvestonfeatherfest.com. Full payment must be made at the time of pre-registration. Payment may be made by check, money order, Visa or MasterCard. For a full description of all events, please see the appropriate section of the website.

Children under 10 yrs old cannot be registered for any trip or for any seminar UNLESS the activity is especially designated as "For Families". As birders understand, some trips can be long, tiring and test the stamina for young children.

Pre-registration MUST be received by Tuesday April 1 at 11pm CST to receive a mailed or emailed confirmation. We encourage you to provide an email address so that we may send your confirmation via email. Remember that most events have limited seating and reservations will be filled in the order received.

A "registration" fee is required to attend any birding event or evening social. There is an additional "event" fee for each event.

However no "registration" fee is required if you ONLY wish to attend the Birding for New Birders inside and outside on Saturday April 5, or if you ONLY wish to attend the "All about Birds for new birders" seminar and associated field trip (Easy Birding at East End Lagoon) on Sunday morning....but of course there are fees for each "event".

Registration packets, which include your name badge, MUST be picked up at the Old Galveston Square building registration site before your first field trip. You will be required to sign a standard liability waiver at that time, before going on any field trip. A SEPARATE REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED FOR EACH PARTICIPANT!!

Instructions: We encourage you to register online at www.galvestonfeatherfest.com.

To Register by Mail or Fax, on the registration form check the box corresponding to each event you plan to attend. Complete the form and send with full payment to:

FeatherFest
P. O. Box 1468
Galveston, TX 77553-1468

Make checks payable to FeatherFest. If paying by credit card, you may fax the form, including your credit card information, to (409) 737-2264.

For questions regarding registration please email: orders@galvestonfeatherfest.com

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS:

You may cancel your registration on or before March 26 and receive a full refund. Cancellations received on March 27 through April 1 will receive a 50% refund. No refunds will be issued for cancellation after April 1.

Organizers reserve the right to cancel an event, or to substitute qualified presenters or trip leaders when necessary. If an event is cancelled for any reason, a full refund will be given upon request prior to the end of the festival, at the Registration desk.

FEATHERFEST 2008 REGISTRATION

April 3-6, 2008

Please use a separate registration form for each participant

Name _____
 Address _____

 phone _____
 email _____

Method of Payment Check Visa/MC
 Name on card _____
 Card Number _____
 Expiration date _____
 Signature _____

Please make checks payable
 and mail to:
FeatherFest
P.O. Box 1468
Galveston, TX 77553-1468

EVENT (T:Trip W:Workshop)		Cost	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	cost
8:00am-2:30pm	Opening Sampler	T 45	sold out				sold out
10:30am-12:30pm	Harbor birding	T 25					
11:30-2:30	East Lagoon Preserve	T 35	sold out				sold out
1:30-4:30	Pelican Island	T 30					
1:45-4:45	East Lagoon kayak	T 40					
2:00-4:30	New Birders	W 10					
3:00-4:45	Galveston flyway	W 10	sold out				sold out
5:30-7:30	Reception	0					
5:00-10:45 am	Prairie chickens	T 40					
5:30am-2:30pm	Anahuac NWR Option 1	T 55					
6:15am-1:00 pm	Bluewater and Brazoria NWR	T 45					
6:30-11:30 am	East Galveston	T 40					
7:00-8:15 am	Bird ID warm-up	W 10					
7:15-11:45 am	West Galv-marsh and shore	T 40					
7:30-9:15 am	Nature Photography-inside	W 20					
9:30am-12:30pm	Nature Photography-outside	T 35					
8:00am-noon	Kayak -state park am	T 40					
8:15-9:45 am	Shorebirds by Impression-K.Karlson	W 15	sold out				sold out
subtotal page one							

Continued on Page 2

