

Dear {Contact_First_Name},

Below is our latest newsletter, Please feel free to share it!



December 2023

Newsletter

friends of
LAGUNA ATASCOSA
national wildlife refuge

IN THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming events

Annual Appeal

Creature Feature

Laguna Bloggona

Happy Holidays

December 2023

EVENTS

- 
- 02 4p Friends Annual Meeting
- 07 2p Friends Science Series
Scat, Tracks, Skins, and Skulls
- 07 6p Christmas Tree Extravaganza
Harlingen Arts & Heritage Museum
- 08 8a Naturally Native Garden Team
- 08 9a Birds & Nature walk with Mark Warner
- 08 11a Wild Friends Storytime (VC)
I Love You, Sun, I Love You, Moon
- 09 9a Birds & Nature walk with Mark Warner
- 09 12:30p Wild Friends Storytime (LVPL)
I Love You, Sun, I Love You, Moon
- 16 8a Bike the Wildlife Drive
- 16 9a Holiday Shopping @ The Nature Store
- 26 Laguna Atascosa Christmas Bird Count
- 30 8a Bike the Bahia

REGISTER: <https://flanwr.org>

Please note events are separated into General, Volunteer or Membership functions. See the home page for a full list and the appropriate link to register. Membership exclusive events require login to view.



Grateful for the

Donors

Members

Volunteers

Sponsors

Partners

Today, as the world comes together in a spirit of generosity, we invite you to make a lasting impact on wildlife conservation. Your gift goes beyond protecting water and land—it safeguards the very heart of the National Wildlife Refuge System, ensuring the survival and thriving of unique endangered species like the Ocelot.

As we approach the start of 2024, your generous contribution will play a pivotal role in our mission to protect, promote, and support the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge.

Whether it's a one-time gift or joining our community of FRIENDS, every dollar contributes to the continued success of our mission.

Warmest Regards, Your Friends

[Donate](#)

The birds are arriving and they are HUNGRY! Can you help us feed them?

view our WISHLIST



Creature Feature

Green Jays: The Tropical Treasures of Texas

If you are looking for a bird that can brighten up your day with its vibrant colors and lively calls, you might want to visit the Rio

Grande Valley in southern Texas and look for the green jay. This bird is a rare sight in the United States, as it is mainly found in Central and South America, where it inhabits a variety of habitats, from dry scrublands to humid rainforests. But in Texas, it is a local specialty that attracts many birdwatchers and photographers.

What makes the green jay so special? First of all, its appearance is stunning. It has a blue and black head, a green back and wings, a yellow belly, and a long blue-green tail. It also has a black throat patch, a yellow or brown eye ring, and a black bill. The green jay is about 27 cm (11 in) long and weighs about 70 g (2.5 oz). It is a member of the corvid family, which includes crows, ravens, magpies, and other jays. Like its relatives, it is a smart and social bird that often travels in family groups or flocks.

Secondly, its behavior is fascinating. The green jay is a very vocal bird that makes a variety of sounds, from harsh screeches to melodious whistles. It communicates with its flock members using different calls, and sometimes mimics the sounds of other birds or animals. It is also a very curious and adaptable bird that can exploit different food sources, such as insects, spiders, small vertebrates, fruits, seeds, and nuts. It can forage in different ways, such as picking, gleaning, pouncing, and even flycatching. It sometimes caches food for later use, and may steal food from other birds.

Thirdly, its breeding biology is intriguing. The green jay is a cooperative breeder, which means that it forms breeding pairs that are assisted by other flock members, usually their offspring from previous years. These helpers help build the nest, incubate the eggs, and feed the young. The nest is a bulky cup made of twigs, grass, and other materials, and is usually placed in a thorny tree or shrub. The female lays 3 to 5 eggs, which are incubated for about 18 days. The chicks fledge after about 23 days, but remain

with their parents and helpers for several months. The green jay is a monogamous bird that mates for life.

The green jay is a bird that deserves our admiration and conservation. It is a species that faces many threats, such as habitat loss, fragmentation, degradation, and invasion by exotic plants and animals. It is also vulnerable to predation, parasitism, disease, and human disturbance. The green jay is currently listed as Least Concern by the IUCN Red List, but its population is declining in some parts of its range. In Texas, it is considered a Species of Greatest Conservation Need by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. To protect the green jay and its habitat, we need to support the efforts of local and international organizations, such as the World Wildlife Fund, the Nature Conservancy, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and the Valley Nature Center. We also need to appreciate the beauty and diversity of this bird and its tropical cousins, and share our knowledge and passion with others.

Laguna Bloggana

Georgia Peanut Farmers Visit the Refuge

David & Marianne Book

view the [BLOG](#)



LANWR has hosted many of the elite of the birding world since its inception in 1946; people like Roger Tory Peterson (six visits), David Sibley (two), and a handful of noted photographers. None created the stir, however, more than did two avid birders who visited in early April, 2004, the late Rosalynn Carter and her husband, none other than the 39th President of the United States. Jimmy and Rosalynn had been fascinated with birds since a trip to Africa in 1988 and had begun their bird list on that trip. They embarked on their first "dedicated to birding" adventure with a whirlwind, four-day tour of the Rio Grande Valley covering 12 stops from Falcon Lake to South Padre Island, a distance of only 60 miles. The couple visited our refuge on Tuesday afternoon, April 6, with a retinue of Secret Service agents, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Department of Public Safety officials, Border Patrol, Coast Guard, Fish and Wildlife Staff and two guides! During their six-hour visit, the Carters observed six life birds: White-tailed Hawk, Reddish Egret, Wilson's Plover, Verdin, Bewick's Wren and Olive Sparrow, as

well as 92 other species. They also adopted an ocelot through the Friends program.

Father Tom Pincilli, a local priest who served as a volunteer guide for LAWWR, had the privilege of guiding the Carters some of the time. In an interview with this blogger several years ago, he fondly recalled his impressions. "Jimmy and Rosalynn were an endearing couple. Often in our time together he would take her by the hand. You could tell quickly that they were a devoted pair. I made one mistake, however. I ask the former president and Nobel Peace Prize winner if he would tell me something about peanut farming. Big mistake!"

The Carters had a very successful trip. The four-day total was 151 species, 57 new American birds and 41 worldwide lifers. Writing in an article for *Birder's Digest* about his trip, President Carter praised local efforts to preserve areas for bird life and welcome birders like himself to visit the area.



Happy
Solstice
TO EVERYONE

OPERATIONAL HOURS

See you at the Refuge!

Visitor's Center
Monday - Saturday
7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Nature Store
Tuesday - Saturday
7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Refuge Access
Sunday - Saturday
Sunrise to Sunset

SUPPORT US

[Save Texas Ocelots](#)
[License Plates](#)



[Get Yours Today!](#)

The Nature Store



[GO SHOPPING!](#)

[Adopt an Ocelot](#)



[Adopt Here!](#)



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22688 Buena Vista Blvd.
Los Fresnos, TX 78578

956-748-3607, ext.112

<http://www.flanwr.org>

friends@flanwr.org