



## DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

*friends of*  
LAGUNA ATASCOSA  
national wildlife refuge

### **IN THIS ISSUE**

Upcoming Events

Creature Feature

Annual Meeting Recap



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

## *December Calendar*

12/3 - Wild Friends Storytime/feed  
the birds, 9-11AM

12/8 - Christmas at STEC, 6-9 PM

12/12- Garden Club, 9-11AM

12/15 - Friends Science Series:  
Invasive Species: Hunting and Field  
Techniques, 9AM-12PM

12/27 - Christmas bird count

**REGISTER HERE!**





### **Creature Feature- Silver-banded Hairstreak**

The Silver-banded Hairstreak is a tiny but eye-catching butterfly that can be seen flitting from flower to flower in our butterfly garden this time of year. Maxing out at only 1 ¼ inches, this little pollinator is native only to areas of South Texas, Florida, Arizona, and areas of South America, and is not often seen or noticed. While its wings are folded, the brilliant emerald wings with silver banding stand out, while the upper wings are a shiny purple in males and gray in females. The mature butterflies take nectar from balloon vine, coral vine, lantana, and other plants with small flowers, while the caterpillars hide inside and feed on the seeds of the balloon vine. Their preferred habitat is tropical forest edges and areas of heavy scrub, such as those seen here at the refuge. As their habitat continues to be destroyed, these beautiful butterflies are at high risk, and we can all help by planting pollinator gardens in our own backyards and continuing to protect our native habitats for years to come.



### **Friends Science Series- Pollinators**

Friends hosted their third Friends Science Series on Thursday, November 17. This month, we focused on pollinators found at Laguna Atascosa. Despite the cold, rainy weather, we were able to still have a good time and the kids learned a lot! Participants learned about the different kinds of pollinators through hands-on lessons (such as “Bee a Pollinator”), had pollinator-themed snacks, and identified pollinator plants. In lieu of working in the pollinator garden, the participants created their own native pollinator flower arrangement to take home! Be on the lookout for our next Friends Science Series in December. Check out our calendar at: [www.flanwr.org/eventCalendar](http://www.flanwr.org/eventCalendar) for all our December events!

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## NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

Michelle Cano



Larry Crow




### Friends Annual Meeting

The Friends hosted their annual membership meeting on Saturday, November 19. This year, we had the meeting at the Longhorn Cattle Company in San Benito. At this meeting, we voted in two new board members, Michelle Cano and Larry Crow. Michelle is a Texas Master Naturalist and bird watcher and photographer. She is currently a special education teacher for Brownsville ISD at Stell Middle School, and is in her 21st year as an educator! She is excited to bring awareness about the preservation and conservation of wildlife and our environment to our youth. Larry is a current volunteer for the Friends, diligently making sure the Green Jays and other birds are fed on Saturdays at the six feeding stations around the Visitor's Center. Larry has spent a good deal of time on the Refuge, including a year working on the road and the ocelot crossing on the Steve Thompson Wildlife Drive (STWD). Larry is excited to join our board to help advocate for the reopening of the STWD and to preserve and enhance the public experience on the Refuge and the welfare of the birds and animals living there. We are excited to have these two new board members on our team and look forward to working with them in the upcoming years.

Looking for ways to give this holiday season? The Friends has been busy this year and could sure use your help! There are many ways to give. Check out [www.flanwr.org/ways-to-give](http://www.flanwr.org/ways-to-give) for for more information.

Happy holidays!



#GivingTuesday  
November 29, 2022

WAYS TO GIVE

- Donate
- Wishlist
- AmazonSmile
- Adopt an Ocelot
- Online Store
- Ocelot License Plate
- Volunteer

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### OPERATIONAL HOURS

**Hunt Season is here!** Please check the [Refuge website](#) for closures before heading out.

**Visitor's Center**  
Wednesday - Friday  
7:00am-2:00pm

**Nature Store**  
Wednesday - Saturday  
8:00am-4:00pm

**Refuge Access**  
Sunday - Saturday  
Sunrise to Sunset

### SUPPORT US

Save Texas Ocelots  
License Plates

The Nature Store @  
Laguna Atascosa

Adopt an Ocelot



GO SHOPPING!



Help us keep our birds fed this Christmas season! We accept donations of citrus and bird seed. Check out our wish list at <http://flanwr.org/wish-list>

### Board of Directors 2021 - 2022

#### OFFICERS President

*Robert Severson*

#### Vice President

*Pete Moore*

#### Secretary

*Joyce Hamilton*

#### Treasurer

*Dr. Thomas deMaar*

#### MEMBERS

*Dr. Greg Garcia*

*Dr. Christopher*

*Gabler*

*Dr. Sharon Wilcox*

*David Lohse*

*Shane Wilson*

*Cathy Harrington*

*Larry Crow*

*Michelle Cano*

#### STAFF

#### Executive Director

*Nicole Ekstrom*

#### Bookstore

#### Manager

*Michaela Wiersema*

Photo: Credits  
Greg Lasley, ebird

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