



OCTOBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

friends of
LAGUNA ATASCOSA
national wildlife refuge

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Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week, October 8-15! Join us on our mission to make sure wildlife and humans thrive. Move a distance of 5K (3.1 miles) in nature. It's up to you how you move —walking, jogging, hiking, strolling, or whatever you choose—either manually, or using your favorite fitness tracker. The goal? To get thousands of people moving a distance of 5K on behalf of national wildlife refuges during National Wildlife Refuge Week.

How to Participate in 'Walk for the Wild'?

- Visit: [OUR PAGE](#)
- Join Team Laguna Atascosa
- *Registration is FREE*
- Select mode of participation: On-site or Virtual
- Attend an event on-site or virtually.
- Move on our pre-mapped 5K at the Refuge
- Register for a guided run on Oct 15
- Share your challenge experiences on social media with the hashtags:

#WalkForTheWild and #WildlifeRefuge



OCTOBER EVENTS



WILD FRIENDS STORYTIME/FEED THE BIRDS

10/1/22 AND 10/14/22 AT 9 AM (VISITOR CENTER)

NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WEEK

10/8 - 9AM FEED THE BIRDS/DOCENT WALK
10/10- 9AM NATURALLY NATIVE GARDEN TEAM
10/12 - 9AM/5:30PM MESQUITE TRAIL HIKE
10/13 - 9 AM BIRDS 101
10/14 - 9AM WILD FRIENDS STORYTIME
10/15 - WALK FOR THE WILD/KISKADEE CRUISERS RUN



FEED THE BIRDS/DOCENT WALK

10/1/22, 10/8/22, AND 10/14/22 AT 9 AM (VISITOR CENTER)

WALK FOR THE WILD/KISKADEE CRUISERS RUN CLUB KICKOFF

10/15/22 AT 8 AM (VISITOR CENTER)



FOR MORE INFO VISIT US AT
[HTTPS://FLANWR.ORG/EVENTCALENDAR](https://flanwr.org/eventcalendar)





OAK CREEK ELEMENTARY

Did you know that Ocelots were endangered? A once thriving Texas Ocelot community has lost its home due to habitat loss! Did you also know that Oak Creek is the only elementary school with Ocelots for a mascot? Help their Student PTA adopt an Ocelot den from Viva the Ocelot, Friends of Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge! The students will have the opportunity to help them thrive as we make a positive Change for Ocelots!

Go to the link below and donate today! #OCESStrong
#OcelotPride

<https://oak-creek-elementary-pta.square.site/student-pta>



Friends in September

Friends was busy last month!

On September 8, we had another showing of the documentary "Bahia Grande: The Largest Coastal Wetland Restoration in Texas" at Quinta Mazatlan. Richard Moore was present to answer questions and sign copies of the Blue-ray DVDs that the Friends had available at their booth, and there was a substantial turnout of dedicated supporters that were thrilled to see the compilation of Richard's amazing work on the refuge. We hope to raise more awareness for the hidden gem of Laguna Atascosa. Miss the event? Check it out on the [Friends YouTube](#) page.

On September 23, we hosted a Family Fish Camp as the kickoff to the Friends Science Series. Thanks to the help of Fishing's Future, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and Friends, we were able to host a great event for 20 youth and parents. We caught some great fish (catch and release only) and learned how to be informed and respectful anglers!

On September 24, we helped the Refuge host the National Public Lands Day. Approximately 40 youth from the Marine Military Academy helped pick up approximately 2,000 lbs of trash!

Check out our website <https://flanwr.org/eventCalendar> for upcoming events!



Creature Feature: Four-Lined Skink



One of the more secretive of our native reptile species, the Four-lined skink is a rarely seen but attractive lizard, inhabiting areas of heavy leaf litter and vegetation. Their range extends from northern Mexico, to the gulf coast of Mexico, and central and western Texas. While there are two subspecies, the Long-lined skink and the Short-lined skink, they may be differentiated based on the length of the stripes that extend from the eyes. The Short-lined subspecies also appears darker in color than its Long-lined counterpart. The infamous brilliant blue tail that characterizes many species of skinks is present in juveniles; however, this becomes increasingly dull as the lizards reach maturity. Although they may appear slimy, their skin is shiny, smooth, and dry, similar to that of a snake. Reaching an adult length of approximately 7 inches, these small reptiles are agile and difficult to spot, preferring to retreat under logs, rocks, and leaf litter. Their diet consists of spiders as well as small insects such as crickets, beetles, and grubs. In early spring, the male begins to adopt a red to orange hue, signaling the breeding season. The female deposits up to 12 eggs just underneath the surface of the soil and proceeds to guard them throughout the incubation period. A bucket-list species for many reptile enthusiasts, the Four-lined skink is a beautiful reptile and very much at home in the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge.

Recent Wildlife and Plant Sightings



It is finally the start of migratory bird season and our avian travelers have been arriving in full force here at the refuge. Some of the most recent sightings have included Black-chinned hummingbirds and Northern Pin-tails. The Chachalacas have been brooding chicks and the tiny balls of fuzz are a sight to behold. An Aplomado Falcon was also photographed by some visitors this month.

Reptile enthusiasts would be thrilled to hear that we spotted a Taumalipan Hooknose Snake at the Visitor Center. With the recent rain the Texas Tortoises have been active and can be seen crossing the road.

The rains have caused a flush of new growth on the native plants and with the growth comes new blooms. The Kidneywood, Cenizo, and Scarlet Sage are among the few that have been putting out a show.

Have you spotted any unusual wildlife? Let us know!

WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!



Are you passionate about gardening or are you an avid runner? Maybe you love working with kids or have a knack for retail. We have something for everyone and are looking for enthusiastic and friendly volunteers to help us expand our outreach programs and maintain our nature store. Even if you don't see an opportunity that catches your eye, contact us and we can help place you in a role that matches your skills and interests. If you are interested in volunteering at one of the most incredible wildlife areas in North America, please go to <https://flanwr.org/volunteer>. We look forward to meeting you!

OPERATIONAL HOURS

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

Nature Store
Wednesday - Friday
8:00am-4:00pm

Refuge Hours
Sunrise-Sunset Daily

SUPPORT US

Save Texas Ocelots
License Plates

The Nature Store @
Laguna Atascosa

Adopt an Ocelot



GO SHOPPING!



We accept donations of citrus fruit and bird food! Help us feed our feathered friends and provide incredible viewing at our bird blinds! Check out our wish list at: <https://flanwr.org/wish-list>

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