



THE WOOD DUCK



Newsletter #271

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club

March 2024

www.LowerTrinityValleyBirdClub.org

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PO Box 6051 Liberty, Texas 77575

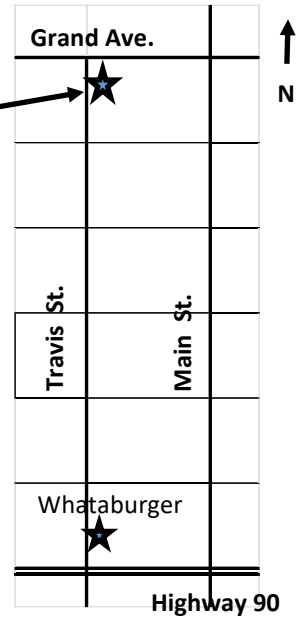
The March meeting of the LOWER TRINITY VALLEY BIRD CLUB will be held on **Thursday, March 14, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.** at the

Liberty Medical Surgical Clinic Lobby
720 Travis Street
Liberty, TX 77575

Enter parking lot from
Grand Street.

All meetings include: a short business meeting, review of club activities, interesting bird encounters from the past month, and a program over a nature/birding topic. Our March presentation will be by Carl Poldrack over the *Identification of Shorebirds*.

Be sure to come early for our "Birder's Chat" time. If you have any questions call President Gary Holmes at 713-366-1722 or e-mail him at geholfmes52@gmail.com.



The March meeting is your *last chance* to get the 23-24 season Duck Stamp!
Tundra Swan



Have you bought your 2023-2024 Duck Stamp?
Support wetland conservation, get your
Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp.

Host needed for the LTVBC Picnic in May
Please consider hosting the picnic.

Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2024



Date: January 11, 2024

In-Person Meeting 6:30 pm – Mont Belvieu Methodist Church

Presiding officers: **Gary Holmes**, President

Welcome – Attendance 17

Approved December Minutes

Motion by Stuart Marcus, Seconded by Lisa Holmes, motion approved

Treasurer's report approved

Motion by Barbara Tilton, Seconded by Paul Fagala, motion approved

Old Business:

Duck stamps – *sold at the meeting to support conversation*

LTVBC secretary – Joan Risinger

Nominated by Barbara Tilton, Seconded by Lisa Holmes, motion approved

Bird City, Texas

New BCT criteria – you must select a total of 19 actions (10 required + 9 additional) for Bird City (basic, not high flyer)

Need to schedule a meeting with Mont Belvieu Parks in February (Paul Fagala, Barbara Tilton, Gary Holmes)

Hackberry Gully Park – we have identified 88 species – the two eBird pins have been combined

Bird walk Thursday, January 25, 2024 at 4pm

New Business:

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club Costa Rican adventure, Friday, June 7, 2024 (Sunday) – Sunday, June 16, 2024, 9 night – 10 day privately guided package. We have 10 participants, and we have all paid our down payment and received final itinerary

LTVBC January activities

Friends of Trinity River Refuge Appreciation Dinner. Saturday, January 20, 2024 at 5:30pm, Liberty Center, Liberty, TX

Hackberry Gully Evening Bird Walk – Thursday, January 25, 2024

Anahuac NWR field trip – Saturday, January 27, 2024

Bird Tales / Chasers - Christmas Bird Counts

-Old River CBC – Thursday, December 28, 2023, *Paul Fagala*

Species: 137 (usually 140-150)

-Trinity River CBC – 2023 *Stuart Marcus*

Reported 83 species. 2 had not been written up yet so were not counted: White faced ibis and Royal tern

3 new species seen: Brewer's sparrow, Gallinule, Limpkin

Usually report 60-70 species, so count was up this year

Reported close to a dozen bald eagles

-Houston CBC (Baytown) – *led by David Sarkozi. Report by Stuart Marcus*

Species: 131 (including 3 limpkins)

Presentation: Paul Fagala, *Sparrow Identification*

Joan Risinger, Secretary

Meeting Minutes February 8, 2024



LTVBC Minutes Date: February 8, 2024

In-Person Meeting 6:30 pm – Mont Belvieu Methodist Church

Presiding officers: **Gary Holmes**, President

Welcome – Total Attendance = 18 (Members: 17, visitors: 1 - Kegan Hall)

Video presentation – *Human threats to Birds*

Discussed Habitat loss and degradation, Human population is up 4 times what it was, Building collisions, Stickers on windows, Acopian bird savers: [Make Your Own \(DIY\) \(birdsavers.com\)](http://www.birdsavers.com/make-your-own) (www.birdsavers.com/make-your-own)

Approval of January Minutes was postponed until March, 2024 meeting

Treasurer's report and approved

Checking account is unchanged from December 31, 2023: \$2,931.50

Savings account earned .09 interest in January bringing the balance to \$1,069.16 as of February 8, 2024

Motion and approval of donation of \$100 to Mont Belvieu Methodist church for use of their building

Motion by: Stuart Marcus, Seconded by: Shelli Ellerbe

Motion and approval of donation of \$300 to Lady Twitchers

Motion by: Denise Barker, Seconded by: Barbara Tilton

Old Business:

Taking money for Dues for 2024

Duck stamps – *sold at the meeting to support conversation*

Bird City, Texas

New BCT criteria – must select a total of 19 actions (10 required + 9 additional) for Bird City (basic)

Need to schedule a meeting with Mont Belvieu Parks in February (Paul Falala, Barbara Tilton, Gary Holmes)

Hackberry Gully Park – we have identified 89 species – the next walk is Thursday, February 22, 2024

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club Costa Rican adventure, Friday, June 7th, 2024 – Sunday, June 16th, 2024, 9 night – 10 day privately guided package. We have 10 participants, and we have all paid our downpayment and booked flights

New Business:

LTVBC February activities

LTVBC February meeting - Thursday, February 8, 2024

Great Backyard Bird Count – Friday, February 16th to Monday, February 19th

Cattail Marsh, Beaumont – Saturday, February 17, 2024 at 7:30am

Hackberry Gully Evening Bird Walk – Thursday, February 22, 2024

Bird Tales / Chasers

Barbara Tilton reported on her trip to Big Bend National Park area: 79 different species (round trip). Bald eagle has been spotted on Highway 90 river bottom

Presentation: How to make Acopian Birdsavers. Each member was allowed to make a small “model” of an Acopian Birdsaver and discussed various alternatives for hanging them.

Joan Risinger, Secretary

President's Message

By Gary Holmes

Hello Bird Club,

February was an outstanding month for the LTVBC!

We had a **wonderful club meeting** and discussion concerning threats to birds and learned to make Acopian Birdsavers to reduce bird window collisions and had a **fantastic field trip to Cattail Marsh** in Beaumont. Our Hackberry Gully Bird Walk was enjoyable and, thanks to Billie Brinkley, we made **frontpage news in the Baytown Sun** with a nice article and three pictures of our group. To end this exciting month, we met with the city officials in Mont Belvieu and will be **moving ahead with Bird City Texas certification**.

Click this link or Scan QR to view the article:
[Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club Visits Hackberry Park In Mont Belvieu.](#)

In March, we will focus on shorebirds with a presentation by an excellent birder and friend, **Carl Poldrack**, and a field trip to the world famous **Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary** to see the amazing shorebirds. The Mont Belvieu Methodist Church will not be available on March 14; however, Shelli & Steven Ellerbe will graciously allow us to meet in the lobby of the Liberty Medical Surgical Clinic. Of course, we will continue our **Hackberry Gully Bird Walk** and ebird survey. We have an exciting opportunity to partner with the City of Mont Belvieu as the city seeks **Bird City Texas Certification**. Our March activities are:

LTVBC March Meeting in the Liberty Medical Surgical Clinic lobby
Carl Poldrack, *Identification of Shorebirds*
Thursday, March 14, 2024

Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary, Bolivar TX
Saturday, March 16, 2024

Hackberry Gully Evening Bird Walk
Thursday, March 21, 2024

Mont Belvieu City Council Meeting we will present Bird City Texas for council approval
Monday, March 25, 2024

In April, we will concentrate on the **spring migration** with our Big Day to **High Island, Bolivar, Anahuac NWR**. We will remember our dear, departed friend, **Marvin Masters**, with a “wobbler” trip to Sabine Woods. Our last meeting of the year will be our **LTVBC Picnic** in May. At the meeting, we will recount this year’s successes and reveal our plans for 2024-25. Our April & May activities are:

No Thursday Night Meeting in April

LTVBC Big Day- High Island, Bolivar, Anahuac NWR
Saturday, April 13, 2024

The Baytown Sun

Vol. 104, No. 23 812-670-6100 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024 www.baytownsun.com \$2.00

SUNNEWS

Mane Event benefit sets new record, raising \$165,000 for the homeless



The event was the most successful yet for the program. The man in the photo is one of the many volunteers who helped make the event a success. Photo by [Name]

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club visits Hackberry Park in Mont Belvieu



From left to right: [Names of people in the photo]. Photo by [Name]

The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club recently visited Hackberry Park in Mont Belvieu for their monthly field walk. The club was established in 1962 and they have been in the area since then. The club is open to all who are interested in birds. The club meets on the second Saturday of each month at the Park. For more information, contact the club at [Phone Number].



(continued next page)

“**Wobbler Day**” -Sabine Woods
 TBD (will time with a cold front)

LTVBC Picnic in May
 host and time TBD

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club



Click here

Hope you can participate...

Gary

New LTVBC Officers for 2024- 2026

The terms of the current LTVBC officers end in September 2024 (except, Joan whose term ends in 2026). A **nominating committee** will be appointed to inquire which officers will continue for another term and nominate members to fill any vacancies.

We hope to create a new club position - **Bird City Texas (BCT) Coordinator** to work with the City of Mont Belvieu to meet BCT criteria. Gary Holmes has volunteered to be the **BCT Coordinator**.

two-year terms	2022-2024	2024-2026
	Year 1: Sept. 2022- May 2023 Year 2: Sept. 2023- May 2024	Year 1: Sept. 2024- May 2025 Year 2: Sept. 2025- May 2026
President	Gary Holmes	
Vice-president	Stuart Marcus	
Secretary	Joan Risinger	Joan Risinger
Treasurer	Shell Ellerbe	
Newsletter	Shell Ellerbe	
Chronicler	Margo Taylor	
BCT Coordinator	none	Gary Holmes

**Please consider filling one of these important positions-
 the LTVBC needs your leadership!**

Day/Date	Time	Event	Location	Speaker	Notes
Thursday, March 14, 2024	6:30 PM	Meeting	Methodist Church Mont Belvieu		Shorebird ID
Saturday, March 16, 2024		Field Trip	Bolivar Peninsula		
April		Meeting	during field trip on 4/13/24 if needed		
Saturday, April 13, 2024		Field Trip	High Island, Bolivar, Anahuac		Big Day
April cold front		Field Trip	Sabine Woods		Warbler Day
Saturday, May 18, 2024		Picnic Meeting	Host for picnic needed		

Cattail Marsh Field Trip Feb. 22, 2024

Braving the painful windchill, the LTVBC visited Cattail Marsh in Beaumont on Saturday, Feb. 22 for an enjoyable field trip which included a guided van tour and great experiences with Bald Eagles.

We birded from the boardwalk for the first hour and the windchill became unbearable for many of the group and they retreated to the cars. We did see many **Blue-winged Teals**, a few **Northern Shovelers**, hundreds of **White-faced Ibis**, and a **Cinnamon Teal**. Also, we observed several distant **Bald Eagles**.



By 9:00am, we all sought shelter in the visitor's center and met our guides **John Beaver** and **Kenyan Guidry**. On the tour, we traveled the 5-mile perimeter of the ponds and discovered: **Ruddy Ducks**, **Ring-necked Ducks**, numerous **Shovelers**, **Canvasbacks**, and another **Cinnamon Teal**. The marsh was patrolled by 10-15 **Northern Harriers**. John and Kenyon answered our questions concerning the facility and were good at identifying the birds. We eventually made it to the marsh outflow pipe and falls.



One of the trip highlights were the two **juvenile Bald Eagles** that flew and landed close to us on the last part of the tour. The bus was enjoyable and allowed us to survive the windchill and visit areas we had never seen. Participants were **Barbara Tilton, Joan Risinger, Susan & Lester Sloan, Ceal & Jim Tomlinson, Bruce Nelson, Gary Holmes and Joe Hall**.



Our guides: John Beaver (far left) and Kenyan Guidry (far right)

LTVBC Meets with Mont Belvieu Officials Concerning Bird City Texas

Feb. 22, 2024

On February 22, **Paul Fagala** and **Gary Holmes** met with **Dustin Schubert**, Director of Parks & Recreation, **Jason Galloway**, Parks & Recreation Assistant Director and **Mike Pomykal**, MB City Councilman to discuss the **2024 Bird City Texas** criteria. The criteria required to attain certification are designed to be impactful and efficient against habitat loss and other harmful factors impacting birds. Our discussion focused on creating the collaborative team, meeting the 19 BCT Actions and submitting the intent to apply. The initial Bird City Texas designation is for 3-years and requires recertification every three years.

Dustin and Jason, parks directors, are eager to move ahead with BCT and are confident that the city can meet all criteria. Mike Pomykal was enthusiastic about the program, sees no problems and many benefits in becoming a BCT. Paul and Gary confirmed that **The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club** and the **Lower Trinity Basin- Texas Master Naturalist** are committed to partnering with the city in attaining and maintaining BCT designation.

Our next goal will be to attain the **approval of the Mont Belvieu City Council**. Paul will develop a PowerPoint highlighting the birds in our area and the importance of bird preservation. We will meet with the Parks Department in early March to finalize our presentation. At the March 25 council meeting, we will give a 10- minute presentation to the city council and hopefully gain their approval to pursue BCT certification. All applications are due by June 1, 2024.

We request all LTVBC, TMN members and others interested in the project to attend the council meeting to show support for BCT Certification for the City of Mont Belvieu,

Support our Bird City Texas Initiative!

Attend our presentation at the Mont Belvieu City Council Meeting



**BIRD
CITY
TEXAS**



Monday:

March 25, 2024

Time:

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Location:

Council Chambers

Address:

11607 Eagle Drive
Mont Belvieu, TX 77580

Bird City Texas (BCT) Actions

The 2024 criteria require a total of 19 actions (10 required + 9 additional). In the 2023 column, marked actions are ones in which we are currently engaged. Current partners in the project are the **City of Mont Belvieu, Lower Trinity Basin Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists** and the **LTVBC**.



		BCT Required Actions- 10	2023	2024
REQ-1	1.1.7 Habitat	(REQUIRED) Community forms/maintains a collaborative body that supports the application development and management of their Bird City enrollment.† (Attach a contact list of your collaborative body with affiliations.)	x	x
REQ-2	1.3.1 Habitat	(REQUIRED) Promote the use of native plants in landscaping through community websites, social media, public events and refer the public to the National Audubon Society's <i>PLANTS FOR BIRDS</i> program and Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's native plant database.**		x
REQ-3	1.4.1 Habitat	(REQUIRED) Provide and promote information on the importance of controlling invasive species (both plant and animal).		x
REQ-4	2.1.1 Threats to Birds	(REQUIRED) Promote the American Bird Conservancy's <i>Cats Indoors</i> program through education/ outreach to residents.		x
REQ-5	2.2.1 Threats to Birds	(REQUIRED) Provide businesses and residents with education/ outreach and/or a communications campaign about reducing bird collisions with buildings.		x
REQ-6	2.3.2 Threats to Birds	(REQUIRED) Provide businesses and residents with education/ outreach and/or a communications campaign about Lights Out Texas which includes dark sky lighting solutions.		x
REQ-7	3.1.1 Education & Engagement	(REQUIRED) Community creates one proclamation that recognizes World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) and holds or participates in a public event to celebrate WMBD on an annual basis.†		x
REQ-8	3.2.4 Education & Engagement	(REQUIRED) Include noticeable information on a main page of a website of your choosing that would be visited often by residents and visitors (ie, municipal tourism and/or Chamber of Commerce, Audubon, or Native Plant Society websites).		x
REQ-9	3.2.9 Education & Engagement	(REQUIRED) Create and maintain a bird-friendly, native landscape for demonstration. The landscape must include at least 80% native plants on at least one highly visited community property.**†		x
REQ-10	3.7.1 Education & Engagement	(REQUIRED) Community creates one officially-enacted resolution (proclamations not accepted) passed by their appropriate municipal council/board that recognizes and supports their community's designation as a Bird City in Texas. The resolution must be passed every three years or the municipal council/ board must provide a letter of support recognizing the past resolution.†		x

All actions are focused on three areas that will benefit birds and the community: **Habitat, Threats to Birds, and Education & Engagement**. In the required actions, five are to **provide and promote information** concerning: use of native plants in landscaping, importance of controlling

invasive species, reducing bird collisions with buildings, and Lights Out Texas /dark sky lighting solutions.

There are 23 possible optional activities and cities must select ten. Below are the ones that may be the best for Mont Belvieu and the LTVBC. Notice, we and the city are **currently participating in 6 of the 10!**



		<u>BCT Optional Actions- 9</u>	2023	2024
Option 1	3.6.1 Education & Engagement	Initiate community participation in at least one community science program annually: Audubon Climate Watch, Christmas Bird Count, eBird, Globe at Night, Great Backyard Bird Count, Hummingbirds at Home, Invaders of Texas, Swifts Night Out, City Nature Challenge, Texas Nature Trackers.**	x	x
Option 2	3.6.2 Education & Engagement	Engage community and partners in long-term (greater than 5 years) local bird monitoring programs, habitat monitoring, or other similar nature-based surveys that incorporate eBird and/or iNaturalist on select properties.	x	x
Option 3	3.2.8 Education & Engagement	Public Park system has interpretive/educational signage in natural areas that are open to the public that prioritizes bird identification and native bird ecology in their message.		x
Option 4	1.2.2 Habitat	Manage natural areas in public parks to encourage the growth of native plants that provide important wildlife habitat including managed "No Mow" areas for native grasses and plants.	x	x
Option 5	3.2.7 Education & Engagement	Install bird watching amenities in public parks and/or trail systems, such as bird blinds, observation decks, interpretive signs, binocular loan out programs, and birding/trail guides.†		x
Option 6	Education & Engagement	Implement an annual communications campaign about issues and actions related to Bird City Texas, creating Bird Friendly Communities, and the criteria that the city adopts to encourage community engagement and support.		x
Option 7	3.2.1 Education & Engagement	Sponsor an annual bird festival that promotes community stewardship and appreciation of native birds and their local habitats.	x	x
Option 8	1.7.1 Habitat	Community stormwater management plan implements actions from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's NATIONAL MENU OF BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR STORMWATER.	x	x
Option 9	1.5.2 Habitat	On existing protected properties, actively manage or improve existing habitat for birds, wildlife, and native plant communities representative of the local ecosystem.**	x	x

LTVBC March Field Trip

Saturday, March 16, 2024

Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary & Horseshoe Marsh Sanctuary

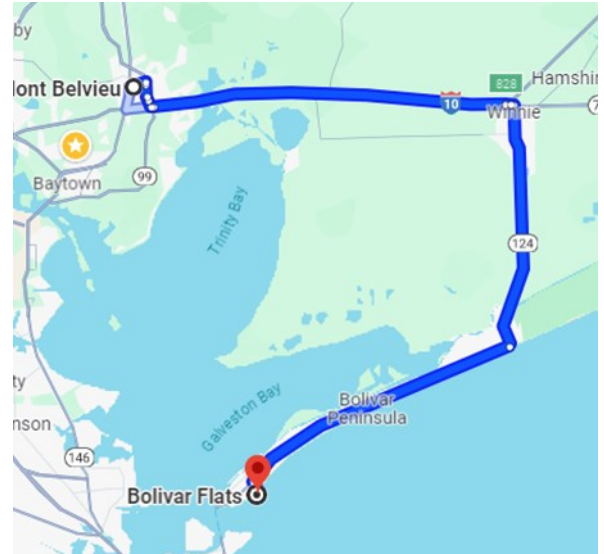
From: Mont Belvieu to Winnie to High Island to Bolivar Flats: 76 miles - 1 hr, 19 min

Bring: a hat, sunscreen, binoculars, spotting scopes, mosquito repellent, water, and snacks.

Meet at the vehicular barricade at Bolivar Flats at 8:30 am

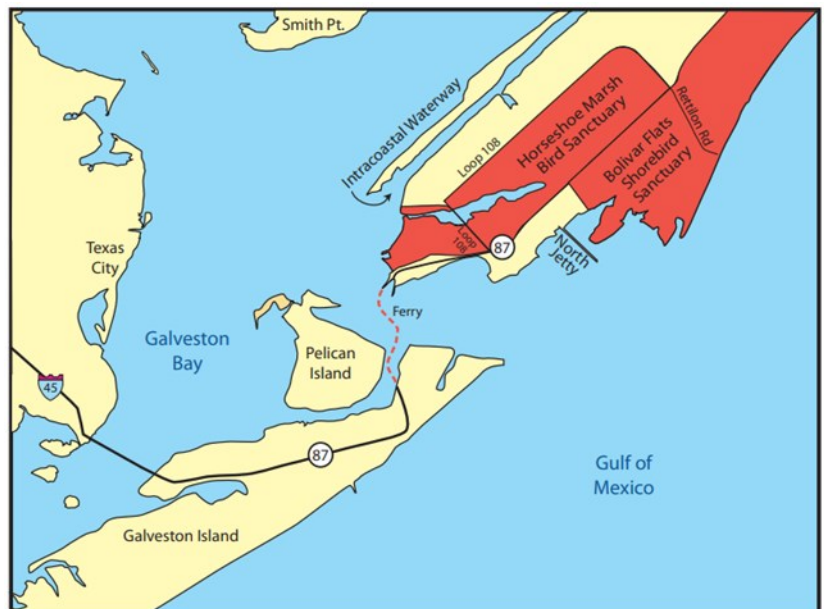
Bolivar Flats is a Globally Important Bird Area, the highest designation, and an International site in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN).

Directions from High Island: Turn right on to Hwy. 87. Rettilon Road is about 25 miles. Turn left on Rettilon and drive to the beach. Turn right on the beach and drive on the beach to the vehicular barricade where you may park.



PARKING PERMITS

Parking stickers are **REQUIRED** for all vehicles to park on Bolivar beaches. They can be purchased locally for \$10. Stop at the gas station in High Island or somewhere along the way. Passes are not available at the beach.



Lunch at La Playita Restaurant in Port Bolivar

Return home via Bolivar Ferry to Galveston to IH 45 to HWY 146 to Seabrook. We will make a stop at **Seabrook McHale Park & Fish Markets** for close looks at the pelicans and herons attracted by the fish markets.



LOWER TRINITY VALLEY BIRD CLUB

Membership Information

Club Dues
Please make checks
payable to LTVBC.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Cell phone number (_____) _____

E-mail _____

_____ Update my information

_____ New Member	_____ Renewing Member	_____ Student Membership	\$10.00
_____ Donation	\$ _____	_____ Individual Membership	\$20.00
_____ Donation to D. Dauphin Memorial Fund		_____ Family Membership	\$35.00
	\$ _____	_____ Sponsor Membership	\$50.00

Dues can be paid on the LTVBC Membership page.

<https://tinyurl.com/y8h8wdnd> (This web address has been updated, checked by the editor, is correct and now works. -Editor)

Or mailed to:

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club
P.O. Box 6051
Liberty, TX 77575

If you have an article or bird tale to contribute to the newsletter, please contact newsletter editor, Shelli Ellerbe, at shellerbe@gmail.com. Comments about the newsletter should be sent to the same address. -Editor, Shelli Ellerbe