

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club



since 1992

Supporting Birding & Nature

History and Impact of the LTVBC

1992-2022

Prepared for the 30th Reunion

Feb. 25, 2023



The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club in the past 30 years has allowed our members and guests to experience wonderful friends, meet interesting people, view amazing birds, increase our appreciation of the outdoors, and to visit magical places.

LTVBC Mission



The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club (LTVBC) is dedicated to the:

- Development and encouragement of birders and birding
- Recreational and educational investigation of birds and nature
- Conservation of birds and their habitats.

The LTVBC and its members strive to be responsible stewards of our natural world and all living creatures.

The Formation of the Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club, 1992

by Pam Milentz, Founding member

Many years ago, Jody Hornbeck, Mary Ann Calhoon, Ellen Pickett and I went to Baytown Sterling Library to hear a special program about birding. Ellen Pickett was the librarian then for the Liberty Municipal Library and one of her best travel friends was the librarian at Sterling Library. We were excited to not only hear the program, but for Ellen to see her friend as well. The speaker for the program was David Dauphin. We had never met him at that point, but we were so impressed with his enthusiasm and love of birding. David did an awesome job!!

On our ride home to Liberty from Baytown, we wondered if David would come to Liberty to speak and then we wondered if there were ANY other birders who would come to HEAR him speak? We really did not know of any other local birders back then. Well, we asked David if he would come and a date was selected with enough time for us to promote through local advertising about this special event. We were all at the Liberty Cultural Center not knowing if anyone would show up to hear our special speaker. We were completely and totally surprised at the HUGE turn-out that night! It was a wonderful standing room only event and we each were amazed at so many “closet” birders in our communities. They were just like us in that most were those who had enjoyed their yard birds and wanted to learn more! The shared enthusiasm and excitement was a pure delight!

About a week after David’s fantastic Liberty Municipal Library evening program, Ellen Pickett, Jody Hornbeck, and Mary Ann Calhoon came to my house for a little coffee and a lot of brainstorming. We wondered if the people who attended the program would like to form a club to continue learning about birding? We called David Dauphin and he said he and Jan would be two of our first members and encouraged us to form the club. He procured by-laws from another organization that we adapted for our newly formed club, and took to local attorney Carl Pickett who donated his legal time to help us become a nonprofit organization. The local newspapers gave us free advertising of our first meeting and , as Paul Harvey would say, “And now, for the REST of the story!”

David and Jan were generous in all ways as they shared their time and talents with all in the Lower Trinity Valley Bird club. David led field trips far and wide, gave programs on a yearly basis and asked other talented birding friends to come and speak to the LTVBC. He was a gentle teacher who never made one feel awkward as they were trying to learn how to use a field guide, adjust a scope or a pair of binoculars. Through his efforts and Jan’s, the Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club was created and has thrived all these years. He will never be forgotten by any in the club!

Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club

1992-93 to 2022-23

note: LTVBC year is September -May

Source: Minutes Archive and Newsletters

Year	Officers	Trip-leader	Highlights		
1992-93	Mary Ann Calhoon, <i>President</i> David Dauphin, <i>Vice-President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Secretary</i> Charles Post, <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze, <i>Newsletter</i>	3-Local field trips David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First meeting at the "Martin House", Liberty, May 9, 1992 • 60 members by end-of-year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • newsletter named "The Bird Brainwave" • triangle on patch represents "trinity" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceal submits patch design- approved
1993-94	Mary Ann Calhoon, <i>President</i> David Dauphin, <i>Vice-President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Secretary</i> Charles Post, <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze, <i>Newsletter</i>	Lower Rio Grande Valley (30 attended) David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin Meeting at Liberty Library • 70 in attendance for John Tveten Presentation • 84 club members • Ordered 75 maroon T-shirts with club logo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletter renamed "The Wood Duck". • First Christmas Nibbles. • Four \$100 grants to seniors at Liberty, Hull-Daisetta, Hardin, and Dayton High Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • begin Adopt-a-Highway program to clean 2- mile strip west of Trinity River bridge • Begin Monthly Field trips (Sept- May) • Ordered 100 club patches
1994-95	Charles Post, <i>President</i> Ellen Picket, <i>Vice-President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Secretary</i> Gary Herrington, <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze, <i>Newsletter</i>	Uvalde (24 attended) Jan & David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting at Humphrey's Cultural Center. • 109 members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urged everyone to contact officials to support the formation of the Trinity River NWR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Sept. BBQ at Mary Ann & Thomas Calhoon home- continue for 10 years
1995-96	Charles Post, <i>President</i> Ellen Picket, <i>Vice-President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Secretary</i> Gary Herrington, <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze, <i>Newsletter</i>	Lower Rio Grande Valley (42 attended) David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsored the Old River Christmas Bird Count • developed Club Rare Bird Alert Telephone list 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for Blue Bird Trail with Volunteers to monitor nest boxes. • received \$1000 Exxon donation to construct nest boxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LTVBC was instrumental in the ID of Texas" First Ruddy Quail Dove - Benson State Park 3/2/1996

<i>Year</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Trip-leader</i>	<i>Highlights</i>		
1996-97	Ceal Striling <i>President</i> David Knutson <i>Vice-President</i> Judy Beherns <i>Secretary</i> Ray Milentz <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze <i>Newsletter</i>	Uvalde/Brackettville May7-10 , 1997 David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Post Bluebird Trail Coordinator (160+ boxes) • assembled bluebird boxes at Rubash's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center placing LTVBC minutes & Newsletter in Archives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many members involved in the Friends of Anahuac NWR • Rockport "Whooping Cranes" 2/2/1997
1997-98	David Knutson, <i>President</i> Cindy Moore, <i>Vice-President</i> Judy Behrens, <i>Secretary</i> Ray Milentz, <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze, <i>Newsletter</i>	Fort Davis May 6-10, 1998 David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donated \$1000 to help retire debt to TOS Sabine Woods Sanctuary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Lee Hogan Property donation of 20 acres • Land to be part of a conservation nature/area in Liberty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter member of the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
1998-99	David Knutson, <i>President</i> Cindy Moore, <i>Vice-President</i> Judy Behrens, <i>Secretary</i> Ray Milentz, <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze, <i>Newsletter</i>	No trip due to TOS hosting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hosted Texas Ornithological Society Annual Meeting (TOS)in Beaumont April 15-17, 1999 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supplied information for the Trinity Loop of the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • many members involved in the Friends of Trinity River Refuge
1999-00	David Knutson, <i>President</i> Cindy Moore, <i>Vice-President</i> Judy Behrens, <i>Secretary</i> Ray Milentz, <i>Treasurer</i> Mary Hinze, <i>Newsletter</i>	Big Bend NP 3/28-31/2000 David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributed \$250 to TOS to help purchase Magic Ridge. • Oscar Garies designs web site • Bill Mabe Memorial Donation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swallow-tailed Kite Monitoring • received \$1000 Exxon Grant to build nest boxes for Blue Birds, Wood Ducks, Screech & Barn Owls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BBQ at Mary Ann & Thomas Calhoon- Sept 9, 2000 • Approved four reflective LTVBC plaques with logo for Liberty Highway Sign
2000-01	Cindy Moore, <i>President</i> Stuart Marcus, <i>Vice-President</i> Sue Davison, <i>Secretary</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	Rio Grande Valley David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting at Community Room at First Liberty National Bank 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants to NWR Friends Groups. four Libraries, & Houston Audubon Society- total \$3,500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sponsor Houston Audubon Fall Birdathon Team (\$350 donation)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Trip-leader</i>	<i>Highlights</i>		
2001-02	Cindy Moore, <i>President</i> Stuart Marcus, <i>Vice-President</i> Sue Davison, <i>Secretary</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	Uvalde May 2002 David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteered and donated \$500 to Youth Waterfowl Expo ANWR. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> awarded grants of \$1725- including \$500 to Champion Lake Pier Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memorial donation for Bubba Van Deventer
2002-03	Stuart Marcus, <i>President</i> Jody Hornback, <i>Vice-President</i> Paul Newton, <i>Secretary</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman <i>Newsletter</i>	Davis Mountains May 7-11,2003 David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joshua O'Banion scholarship (\$1,575) to Victor Emmanuel ,Camp Chiricahua summer camp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTVBC team wins first place at HAS Bird-a-thon collected \$,1600 identified 151 species in 24-hour period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five \$100 scholarships to Baytown Wetlands Center Birding Camp Donated \$300 to Team LTVBC
2003-04	Stuart Marcus, <i>President</i> Jody Hornback, <i>Vice-President</i> Paul Newton, <i>Secretary</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman <i>Newsletter</i>	Southeast Arizona Carlton Collier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited to Dedication of HAS Horseshoe Marsh Bird Sanctuary at Bolivar Lighthouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donated \$250 to Anahuac Levee benches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donated \$100 to Bat Conservation International
2004-05	Stuart Marcus, <i>President</i> Sue Davison, <i>Vice-President</i> Paul Newton, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	Canadian, Texas (5 attended) Bernice Jackson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue annual Sept BBQ lunch with Jerel Davison (meat), Jackie Post (beans) and others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> awarded Mary Ann Calhoon a life membership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donation. \$300 to Team LTVBC
2005-06	Stuart Marcus, <i>President</i> Sue Davison, <i>Vice-President</i> Paul Newton, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	Costa Rica (15 attended) David Sarkozi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LTVBC Team Birdathon- 2nd place in birds (153). first place most pledged \$2,708 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Donated \$200 to Gulf Coast Bird Observatory for East Texas Ivory Bill Search 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hummer Festival. Rockport 9/15-18.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Trip-leader</i>	<i>Highlights</i>		
2006-07	Stuart Marcus, <i>President</i> Gary Holmes, <i>Vice-President</i> Sue Davison, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	Guadalupe Mts NP Ed & Bernice Jackson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary Ann Calhoon memorial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100 donation to Armand Bayou Nature Center • \$100 donation Texas City Prairie Preserve 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donation. \$300 to Team LTVBC
2007 -08	Stuart Marcus, <i>President</i> Gary Holmes, <i>Vice-President</i> Sue Davison, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	Rio Grande Valley David Dauphin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • purchased projector for presentation-\$568.98 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Summer Thursday Swift-night out count at Rice Dryer. • counted 550 Chimney Swifts on one night in September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$300 Donation to Team LTVBC for HAS Birdathon
2008-09	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Brian Baird, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	MaGee Marsh club guided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LYVBC Facebook page opens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Dayton Swift count 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • article in Houston Chronicle about LTVBC Swift night-out
2009-10	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Brian Baird, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	Frio River & Lost Maples Bob Rossa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continued summer Swift count. • Only 181 Swifts this year-due to Hurricane Ike? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • donated \$200 to Katy Prairie Conservancy, • Donated \$200 to Wildlife Rehab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • picnic - Lisa & Gary Holmes
2010-11	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman, <i>Newsletter</i>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dayton swift Night-Out • \$200 donation to Big Thicket Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submit update for Texas Birding Map-Trinity Loop with Champion Lake and HWY 90 River bottom as new sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • picnic -Odell Casey

<i>Year</i>	<i>Officers</i>	<i>Trip-leader</i>	<i>Highlights</i>		
2011-12	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Sallie Sherman <i>Newsletter</i>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$300 donation to The High Island Crew" HAS Birdathon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting at International Migratory Bird day at ANWR -gave SWTK presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue Thursday Swift Count-presented 4--year picnic - Jim & Joyce Rubash
2012-13	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i>	Southeast Arizona Carlton Collier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louisiana weekend trip, • Hug-a-Tree Event • Begin meeting at new FLNB Corner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Installed three bluebird boxes at TRNWR headquarters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic TRNWR Headquarters • Florian Ruth Chaifant Memorial • Odell Casey Memorial
2013-14	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Barbara Tilton, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i>	Oregon Steve Shunk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schwertner Ranch Field Trip Feb 15, 2014. • Mitchell Lake, San Antonio Weekend Trip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club identified 12 woodpecker species in Oregon. • Margo T got 64 lifers on Oregon Trip. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • picnic -Denise Barkis • Donation to save Patton Birder Haven, AZ • \$200 donation to Baja School Friends
2014-15	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> David Knutson, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Joyce Rubash, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i>	Belize David Sarkozi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin JJ Mayes Summer Birding each Thursday June & July 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Identified 240 species on the Belize Trip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created David Dauphin fund with donations from Club members • Picnic Billie & David Brinkley
2015-16	Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> David Knutson, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i>	Trinidad & Tobago Asa Wright Guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Monthly Meetings on Second Thursday • Rockport Weekend Trip • Introduction to Birding Class in Mont Belvieu #1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big -Sit at Champion Lake Pier, • Trinity River NWR Boardwalk dedication, • 131 species on LTVBC Big Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located three Whooping Cranes in Devers - followed by the tragic and senseless killing of two of the cranes

Year	Officers	Trip-leader	Highlights		
2016-17	<p>Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> David Knutson, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i></p>	<p>McGee Marsh / Kirkland Warbler club guided</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Ranch Weekend Trip • Partnered with TRNWR on Feathered Friends Art Contest- donated \$200 for prizes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team LTVBC saw 153 birds. • Team LTVBC was third for money raised with \$3500. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic-Gary & Lisa Holmes • ebird instruction • Introduction to Birding Class in Mont Belvieu #2 had many master naturalists
2017-18	<p>Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> David Knutson, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i></p>	<p>Maine David Sarkozi</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Web site and Email address • \$200 donation to Blue Bird Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Birding Class in Mont Belvieu #3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic- Shelli & Steve Ellerbe
2018-19	<p>Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> David Knutson, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i></p>	<p>Big Bend NP (23 attended) Carl Poldrack</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nacogdoches Weekend Trip • Steve Shunk Woodpecker presentation-60 in attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellen Picket-memorial and \$100 donation to Liberty Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic- Paul & Colette Micallef
2019-20	<p>Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> David Knutson, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i></p>	<p>Pandemic - no trip</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation in November from Edward Ellerbe. Over Eastern Screech-Owl • Built screech owl boxes • No Picnic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change Fiscal Year from Jan 1 to December 31 . • March 2020 last in-person meeting before covid lock down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Become official consignee of Federal Duck Stamps- will sell at face value all funds go to conservation. • Stamp sales raised over \$300 for conservation
2020-21	<p>Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Stuart Marcus, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i></p>	<p>Pandemic - no trip</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual meetings from Sept 2020 to March 2021 (10-12 in attendance) • Summer activities Limited • No Picnic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$250 donation to TOS. • Sue Davison passed in Sept 2020. • 250th Special edition of Wood Duck 	<p>LTVBC Life-List Certificate vote were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 850- Swallow-tailed Kite • 800 – Wood Duck • 750 – Green Jay

Year	Officers	Trip-leader	Highlights		
2021-22	<p>Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Stuart Marcus, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i></p>	<p>Davis Mountains / Beth McBroom's Hummingbirds (18 attended) club guided</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granger Lake Weekend Trip. • Rice and Rail Festival, Jennings LA • FLNB Corner closes-begin search for new meeting location • ABA life pins awarded at face-to face meeting in October 2021. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resumed in-person meetings October 14 ,2021, • Purchased 14 Kids guides to birds for Junior Rangers Program(\$212) • Begin utilization of Merlin Bird Call identification APP • Bird with Baytown Christian Academy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picnic hosted by Shelli & Steve Ellerbe • Recorded first Liberty County Limpkin on Champion Lake. • \$700 for 12 Binoculars for educational use.
2022-23	<p>Gary Holmes, <i>President</i> Stuart Marcus, <i>Vice-President</i> Maureen O'Connor, <i>Secretary</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Treasurer</i> Shelli Ellerbe, <i>Newsletter</i></p>	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30th Anniversary Reunion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Bird City Texas Initiative focus on cities on Mont Belvieu, Dayton , Anahuac, Liberty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Meeting at Mont Belvieu Methodist Church

Ceal Stirling- Tomlinson has been our artist-in-residence since 1992. She...

- Designed the original LTVBC Wood Duck Patch and logo in 1992
- Created our amazing collection of name tags- each with a unique whimsical bird
- Drew the cartoon on the right depicting LTVBC members identifying the little bird on the limb (top right) during the Valley Trip in 1993



The Impact of the Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club

1992-2022

“Jim and I joined LTVBC early on, about 1995, but are not founding members. One thing David Dauphin said many times that is imbedded in my mind is to ALWAYS remember that LTVBC is a serious bird club and to not fall into one of those MANY clubs that become a social club that meet only to have coffee and chat. So far, I think we have heeded that Dauphinism. He was a good, no-nonsense leader.”

Joyce Rubash, 2015

The Lower Trinity Valley Bird Club has continued to be a serious Bird Club. We have maintained our focus and have had a tremendous impact on Liberty County and our area through:

- recreational birding opportunities,
- funding, volunteering and assuming leadership roles in local conservation organizations,
- providing birding and nature education and public outreach, and
- keeping current with birding innovations

The LTVBC and its members strive to be responsible stewards of our natural world and all living creatures. Our commitment to volunteering and funding to reach this goal is exceptional for such a small organization!

I. Birding Opportunities

The LTVBC has provided hundreds of birding opportunities for our members and guests. Our outings have taken us to beautiful natural areas, allowed us to observe an amazing number of birds, and develop wonderful friendships.

- **Monthly Saturday Field Trips** to local Birding Hotspots including Anahuac NWR, Houston Audubon High Island and Bolivar Sanctuaries, and Sabine Woods (TOS)
- **Weekend Trips (2-3 days)** to Rockport, King Ranch, Rio Grande Valley, Granger Lake, Mitchell Lake, and other locations
- **Annual 4–6-day Birding Adventures** both nationally and internationally.
 - Texas Trips: Rio Grande Valley (4), Frio River (3), Davis Mountains (2), Guadalupe Mountains(1)
 - National Trips: Arizona (2) , Maine, Oregon, McGee Marsh (2)
 - International Trips: Costa Rico, Belize, Trinidad & Tobago

LTVBC annually participates in

- The Big Sit- we have staffed a circle at Champion Lake for 20+ years.
- Great Backyard Bird Count annually on ebird
- LTVBC Big Day- we visit Anahuac and High Island and Bolivar and identify 110-130 species during the day.

LTVBC Projects

- Bluebird Trail (1995-2000)- a Bluebird nest boxes were constructed by the club. A Bluebird trail was established and monitored by our members.
- Dayton Swift Count (2007-2012) – A summer project in which we weekly monitored the number of Chimney Swifts roosting in the old rice dryer in Dayton for four years.
- JJ Mays Summer Bird Survey (2014- 2018)- weekly bird survey at JJ Mays Wildlife Trace for five summers
- Nest Box Construction (1996, 1999, 2019- the club has built and installed Bluebird, Wood Duck and Screech Owl nest boxes.

II. Conservation

In the past 30 years, the LTVBC and our members have provided almost \$20,000 in funds, thousands of workhours, and assumed key leadership roles in our local nature /wildlife organizations. We have had long-term support for the:

- Houston Audubon Society(HAS) High Island Sanctuaries
- Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge (TRNWR)
- Anahuac National Wildlife Refuges (ANWR)
- Texas Ornithological Society (TOS)

Houston Audubon Society(HAS) High Island Sanctuaries

Donations from LTVBC= \$6,000+

Birdathon Team Donations (with a LTVBC representative) = \$25,000+

Our support of the HAS begun in 1992, Lu Skillern asked at the bird club meeting for folks that might help Miss Bessie out in Boy Scout Woods collecting admissions. Sue Davison & Barbara Tilton started volunteering there in 1994 and Lu was already volunteering. Lu & Judy Behrens worked Mondays for lots of years. Sue & Barbara worked a few years then started working Thursdays & Fridays for many years. Sue continued Thursdays and Fridays until she could no longer do it.

Celeste Newton was active with Houston Audubon for many years before they moved to Liberty. She worked at the Chickadee Nature Store. She worked two years doing the ordering and lining-up volunteers for High Island.

Volunteer Duties included.

- Workdays – trail clearing – planting – privet pulling – tallow whacking.
- Admissions & Sales at High Island
- Inner City Kids Fishing at Smith Pond
- Beach Clean-ups
- Birdathons- Team LTVBC typically raises \$1,500- 2,000 each year from sponsors with LTVBC contributing about \$300. Since Fall of 2000

Barbra Tilton received the Laura Singleton Exceptional Volunteer Award in 2007 and is in her 29th year with HAS.

LTVBC Members – volunteers for Houston Audubon	
Barbara Tilton	Lu Skillern
Sue Davison	Judy Behrens
Ed Jackson	Shirley Garies
Bernice Jackson	Ricci Deibert
Paul Newton	David Knutson
Celeste Newton	Betsy Harwood
Ceal (Stirling)Tomlinson	Marilyn McGill
Jim Tomlinson	Billie Strickland
Lisa Holmes	Mary Hannigan
Renie O'Connor	Annie Benzon
Shelli Ellerbe	Mindee Poldrack
Carlton Collier	

Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR)

Donations from LTVBC= \$2,000+

David Dauphin, Grady and Lu Skillern were involved in the formation of the Friends of ANWR. Grady and Lu Skillern were active for many years on the Friends Board of Directors. The Skillern Tract on the ANWR is named in honor of Grady.

Our club has supported ANWR with volunteers/memberships and \$2,000+ in grants/ donations. Most of the funds were to support environmental education activities for children and adults .

Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge (TRNWR)

Grants /Donations from LTVBC= \$2,500+

Our club members have supported the **TRNWR** with volunteers, memberships, and donations. Stuart Marcus was the founding manager of the refuge. The LTVBC members were instrumental in the founding of the Friends of the Trinity River Refuge (FOTTR) and have assumed leadership roles since its founding.

LTVBC Members – volunteers for TRNWR	
Stuart Marcus- Refuge Manager (retired)	
David Dauphin	Barbara Tilton
Sue Davison	Renie O'Connor
Paul Newton	Shelli Ellerbe
Celeste Newton	David Knutson
Lisa Holmes	Ceal Stirling-Tomlinson
Gary Holmes	

Texas Ornithological Society (TOS)

Donations from LTVBC= \$5,000+

David Dauphin was one of the founders of the TOS. Our club has supported TOS with volunteers/memberships and \$3,000+ in grants/ donations. Most of the funds were to help purchase wildlife habitat including Sabine Woods and the TOS High Island Sanctuary.

In 1999, we were the host for the Annual TOS convention in Beaumont. We help coordinate/plan/staff the event. Cindy Moore, David Knutson, David Dauphin led the LTVBC efforts. Many other club members participated. We solicited over \$2,000 in donations from local business for the convention.

Lower Trinity Basin- Texas Master Naturalist (LTB-TMN).

A relatively new nature service organization. Our members have been active in the formation of the organization and its activities. LTVBC members include Carl Poldrack, Shelli Ellerbe, Margo Taylor, Ceal Stirling-Tomlinson, Jim Tomlinson, Billie Brinkley, Stuart Marcus, Gary Holmes, and Lisa Holmes

Other Organizations

Donations from LTVBC= \$3,000+

The club has supported many other nature organizations. Including Katy Prairie Conservation, Wildlife Rehabilitators, Nature books for local libraries, American Birding Association, and other nature organizations

Federal Duck Stamps

Duck Stamps sale = \$1,000+

The LTVBC has been a consignee of **Federal Duck Stamps** since 2019 with stamps sales of over \$1,000. The duck stamp proceeds are used to purchase and protect habitat for wildlife.

III. Citizen Science and Life Lists

Over the past two decades, eBird has become the go-to online platform for scientists and hobbyists alike to upload and share bird observations. Through ebirding our members sightings contribute to science and conservation that protects birds.

LTVBC has awarded **American Birding Association Life-List Pins** to our members. The ABA Area (sometimes referred to as the ABA Checklist Area) is essentially North America north of Mexico plus the Hawaiian Islands with 1,104 recognized species.

Paul Micallef is our top ABA birder with 802 species; an amazing 72% of ABA birds; This number is so difficult to reach that the ABA does not have an 800 pin, Paul has received a 700 pin plus an 800 species certificate. **Carlton Collier**. has 776 ABA species (70%) and has received the ABA 700 Pin.

LTVBC top world-wide birders are **Carlton Collier– 3,296, species; Carl Poldrack- 1,880 species; Beth McBroom- 991 species;** and **Paul Micallef – 814 species.** Carlton has had many birding adventures in some very remote areas of the world and Carl was able to bird in many countries during his time working internationally.

<i>Member</i>	<i>ABA # (1,104)</i>	<i>ABA %</i>
Paul M	802	73%
Carlton C	776	70%
Judy B	698	63%
Collette M	667	60%
Beth M	658	60%
Shelli E	627	57%
Celeste N	600	54%
Stuart	525	48%
Carl P	514	47%
Lisa H	502	45%
Annie B	475	43%
Margo T	455	41%
Gary H	454	41%
Paul F	423	38%
Renie O	300	27%
Billie B	300	27%
Denise B.	200	18%
Terri F	180	16%
life counts on Oct 2021		

IV. Birding Innovations

The LTVBC has kept pace with the birding innovations of the past 30 years, we have moved beyond paper field guides and a notebook. Our current tools include:

- Smart phones with birding apps and GPS
- Binoculars and spotting scopes with amazing optics
- Light weight super-zoom digital cameras
- ebird for documenting our sightings and searching for birding hotspots
- Merlin Bird Song ID which is remarkable at identifying bird song

V. Education and Public Outreach

The LTVBC has a long-standing commitment to education and public outreach in both adults and youth. We have contributed hundreds of hours and over \$4,000 to education.

Adult education

- Our meeting presentations have included.
 - Nationally known speakers: John Tveten, Steve Shunk, Dr. Brian Caine, and Gary Clark & Kathy Adams-Clark
 - Well-known Texas Birders; Winnie Burkett, David Dauphin, Glen Olsen, David Sarkozi, and David Bradford
 - Interesting nature/birding travel presentations: Collette Micallef, Carl Poldrack, Paul Gregg, Paul & Madeline McNealy
 - Outstanding presentations by our members Including: Ed & Bernice Jackson, Paul Fagala, Shelli Ellerbee, Gary Holmes, and Carlton Collier
 - Many representatives from refuges/parks and nature organizations
- Introduction to Birding Classes have been taught by the Club.

Youth Education

- Youth Scholarships
- Partnered with TRNWR on Feathered Friends Art Contest and the Junior Ranger Program
- Funded Equipment & Supplies- field guides, awards, binoculars
- Assistance to the Baytown Christian Academy Environmental Science Students
 - Binoculars
 - Field trips to ANWR & BNC
 - Support in the Baytown Birding Challenge

Public Outreach through festivals and celebrations

- Liberty Jubilee
- Mont Belvieu Outdoor Fest
- Migratory Bird Day at ANWR
- And other local festivals

Facebook and website have been incorporated to share our birds photos and news.

