

A BIRDWATCHER'S GUIDE TO

Bay Area Houston



WELCOME TO THE UPPER TEXAS GULF COAST

LEAGUE CITY

KEMAH

SEABROOK

NASSAU BAY



Bay Area Houston | A Birder's Paradise



Diverse habitats.
Large migration populations.
High concentrations of desirable birds.

Southern hospitality is for the birds...

Like humans, birds are drawn to areas that are hospitable to their needs. During migration, they trade their wintering grounds for areas rich with food, water, and shelter—important resources during the breeding season. One area they're particularly attracted to? The Upper Texas Gulf Coast.

THE BIRDS ARE FLOCKING TO BAY AREA HOUSTON

You may have heard that everything is bigger in Texas. Well, it's true. Texas's globally unique ecosystem supports an incredible amount of wildlife and boasts the most bird species of any state in the nation. The Lone Star state is home to nearly 650 bird species and some of the most famous birding sites in the country, including High Island, Bolivar Flats, Anahuac, and Big Bend National Park. Texas is blanketed with extensive wildlife and birding trail systems that stretch across a diversity of habitats. Bay Area Houston happens to be situated on one of these world-class birding trails: The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail.



MAGESTIC MIGRATION

THE BAY AREA OF HOUSTON IS LOCATED ON TWO NORTH AMERICAN MIGRATORY FLYWAYS—THE CENTRAL AND MISSISSIPPI FLYWAYS—MAKING IT A TOP MIGRATION HOTSPOT WITH OVER 1.3 MILLION BIRDS COUNTED DURING PEAK PERIODS.

SPRING MIGRATION

During spring migration, radar counted more than 1.3 million birds in the Houston area in recent years. Neotropical songbirds—including indigo and painted buntings, summer and scarlet tanagers, Baltimore and orchard orioles, and hooded and yellow warblers—can be seen throughout the Bay Area, and in especially high numbers during a fallout. These birds are migrating from their homes in Central and South America to breed in the U.S. and Canada, and the upper Texas Gulf Coast is their first stop on land during this lengthy journey. They come here to rest and refuel before completing their migration.

Spring migration begins in early March and runs through mid-May, April being an ideal time to get out and explore. Birders

from around the world gather here every April for the annual Galveston FeatherFest, a four-day event filled with workshops, birding and photography tours, and more—all headquartered on Galveston Island. Birding field trips are hosted in League City, Seabrook, Armand Bayou, and other locations in the Bay Area.

FALL MIGRATION

Fall migration usually takes place from August through November, although some birds begin migrating as early as July. More than 350 bird species make this trip. While migrants returning to South America are seen, the big draw for fall migration in our area are the shorebirds and waterfowl that overwinter here.

THE GREAT TEXAS COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL—UPPER TEXAS COAST

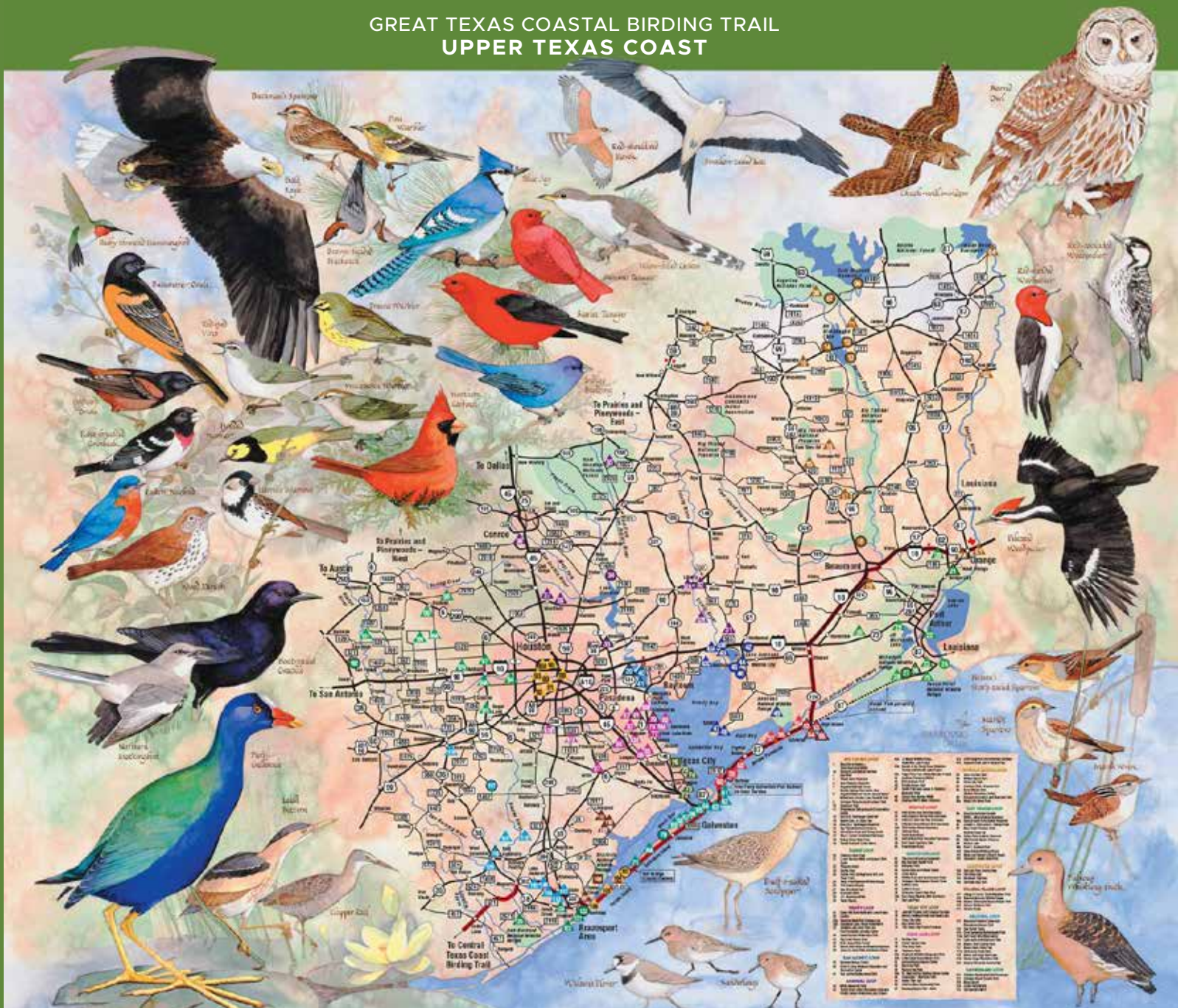
The Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail is split up into three regions and features 308 birding sites spanning the entire Texas coast. Bay Area Houston sits within the Upper Texas Coast region, which has 15 different birding trail “loops,” each with their own distinct sites. These official birding sites are labeled with unique UTC (Upper Texas Coast) numbers.



Bay Area Houston is part of the **Clear Lake Loop** portion of the Upper Texas Coast region. There are 16 UTC sites within this loop, encompassing habitats ranging from coastal wetlands and marshes to woodlands and prairies.

Visit heron rookeries and be wowed by the number of egrets, herons and roseate spoonbills clearly visible from viewing platforms. Several world-class nature centers let you reconnect with nature, view wildlife, and enjoy exploring the great outdoors. Bird the shores of the bay, lush parks, creeks, bayous and woodlands, coastal wetlands, high grass prairies and wildlife refuges.

GREAT TEXAS COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL UPPER TEXAS COAST



This guide covers birding hotspots and Clear Lake Loop Sites in League City, Armand Bayou, Seabrook, Nassau Bay, and other sites in Bay Area Houston.



League City Hotspots

League City is a haven for birders. Along with hosting several official UTC birding sites, League City has a bevy of beautiful parks where birds and other wildlife congregate. These hotspots are also featured in the birding guide to help birders make the most of their birding experience.

- Heritage Park
- Lynn Gripon Park at Countryside
- Hometown Heroes Park
- Rustic Oaks Park

Birders flock to the Clear Lake Loop because of its high saturation of desirable birds. It’s also a great place to get started in birding because of the wide variety of bird species—from wading birds, seabirds, and waterfowl to woodland and songbirds.

Clear Lake Loop UTC Sites

8	UTC 077	McHale Park	400 Todville Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586
5	UTC 078	Hester Garden Park	3029 Todville Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586
2	UTC 079	Pine Gully Park	605 Pine Gully Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586
3	UTC 080	Robinson Park	4617 Todville Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586
4	UTC 080A	Seabrook Wildlife Refuge & Park	700 Red Bluff Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586
1	UTC 080B	Little Cedar Bayou Nature Trail	600 Little Cedar Bayou Dr. La Porte, TX 77571
6	UTC 081	Armand Bayou Nature Center	8500 Bay Area Blvd. Pasadena, TX 77507
7	UTC 082	Bay Area Park	7500 Bay Area Blvd. Houston, TX 77058
10	UTC 083A	Dr. Ned & Fay Dudney Nature Center	1220 Egret Bay Blvd. League City, TX 77573
9	UTC 083	Nassau Bay Park	18900 Upper Bay Rd. Houston, TX 77058
12	UTC 084	Challenger 7 Memorial Park	2301 W Nasa Blvd. Webster, TX 77598
11	UTC 085	Walter Hall Park	807 SH 3 N. League City, TX 77573
13	UTC 086	Paul Hopkins Community Park	1000 FM517 Dickinson, TX 77539
14	UTC 087	Mustang Bayou Trail	200 Depot Centre Blvd. Alvin, TX 77511
15	UTC 087A	John Hargrove Environmental Complex	5800 Magnolia St. Pearland, TX 77584
16	UTC 087B	Shadow Creek Ranch Nature Park	1801 Kingsley Dr. Pearland, TX 77584

CLEAR CREEK NATURE CENTER

Latitude: 29.52895 | Longitude: -95.09014



UTC 083A

Dr. Ned & Fay Dudney Nature Center

1220 Egret Bay Blvd. League City, TX

Park Hours

7:00 am - 7:00 pm, Monday- Sunday

Dr. Ned and Fay Dudney Nature Center is also known as the Clear Creek Nature Center. This 148-acre hidden gem of a park includes well-maintained trails, bird blinds, and a variety of habitats attractive to birds. The site is excellent for birds such as sandhill cranes, herons, ibises, egrets, raptors, and various songbirds. Ducks, pelicans, shore birds, and wading birds all enjoy the large isolated pond along Clear Creek. The park grounds are often quite wet after rain showers, providing a great source of fresh water for wildlife in addition to birds. White-tailed deer, eastern cottontail, raccoons, opossums, and snakes can be seen along the trail.

As you follow the short entrance road, check the dense understory on your left for insectivores busily foraging in the brush and leaf litter. White-eyed vireo, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, and blue-gray gnatcatcher are present year-round; in winter, they are joined by large flocks of yellow-rumped warbler and ruby-crowned kinglet. Watch for little blue heron and yellow-crowned night-heron foraging in the small pond and perching on the chained-link fence in the parking area. In winter, listen for cedar waxwing high in the trees overhead.

The trail winds on a short loop through several habitat types. Check the flowering bushes and pollinator garden for ruby-throated hummingbird from spring through fall. In late evening, watch for chimney swift coming in to roost in the tower. Watch for raptors flying over and perched along the perimeter of the newly restored pocket prairie. Red-shouldered hawk, Cooper's hawk, and white-tailed kite may be seen year-round. In winter, red-tailed hawk, osprey, American kestrel, and merlin are also in the area.

The bird blinds provide views of nearby Clear Creek. Scan the banks for waders, including great and little blue heron, green heron, yellow-crowned night-heron, and great and snowy egret. Brown pelican may be seen on the creek year-round, and white pelican is often present in winter. Waterfowl are also common in winter, with blue-winged and green-winged teal foraging in shallow water along the edges, and lesser scaup and ring-necked duck diving in the deeper areas.

Spring migrants may be seen throughout the park, including painted and indigo bunting, Baltimore oriole, gray catbird, black-and-white and hooded warbler, summer tanager, and many others. Check areas with clear understory for Eastern bluebird year-round, and American robin in the winter. In fall, loggerhead shrike and Eastern phoebe are common.



Photo by John Steelman



Dedicated in April, 2008 by the City of League City, The Dr. Ned and Fay Dudney Clear Creek Nature Center offers the opportunity to view wildlife and habitat native to the greater Houston area. Once known as the "Davis" tract, this 148-acre park gives visitors a glimpse of habitats that historically existed along Clear Creek.

Within the park, visitors can find examples of coastal prairie, coastal saltmarsh wetlands, and coastal flatwood wetlands. These habitats are important for plants and animals, but humans depend on them, too! Urban development of surrounding areas make the park habitat critical to birds and other wildlife seeking refuge. These natural areas sustain the birds and wildlife we like to watch. These natural areas also help provide humans with clean water to drink, fresh air to breathe, and areas for recreational or commercial activities like hunting and fishing.



Coastal wetlands, such as saltmarsh (left), benefit humans who live near them just as much as plants and animals that live in them.



Coastal prairie (above left) and coastal flatwood wetlands (above right) are just two examples of unique local habitats that are rapidly disappearing.

Map



LEGEND

Flatwood Area

Park Area

Wetlands Area

Trails

This park was made possible by the following organizations:



The nature center's wetlands serve as a nursery for many species of fish, and the wetlands to the east provide homes to mammals such as deer, bobcats, coyotes, and raccoons. The park provides a wonderful opportunity to showcase the value of the rich and diverse habitats found in the Texas Coastal zones.



Photos by John Steelman



UTC 084

CHALLENGER SEVEN MEMORIAL PARK

Photo by Dana Nelson

CHALLENGER SEVEN MEMORIAL PARK

Latitude: 29.51342 | Longitude: -95.14287 2301 W Nasa Blvd. League City

Park Hours: 7:00AM - 9:00PM Summer 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM Winter

This 300-acre park is a designated bird sanctuary nestled along the banks of Clear Creek. With miles of winding tree-lined trails, multiple boardwalks, and swinging benches overlooking the water, it's an ideal location to enjoy hours of birding and nature therapy.

The entrance road (Grissom) goes past a small fishing pond on the right that is worth a check for yellow-crowned night-heron, green heron, snowy egret, and white ibis. Scan the open fields for killdeer year-round, and American pipit and long-billed curlew in winter. Watch on the right for a short road leading to a restored wetland area. In winter, American kestrel, swamp sparrow, and Eastern wood-pewee are possible. Listen for marsh wren year-round.

Further down the road there is a more developed wetland area on the right with a short boardwalk that offers close looks at green heron, pied-billed grebe, and common gallinule. Continuing down Grissom, an almost hidden entrance road on the right leads to the parking area for Challenger Seven Park Loop. This scenic 2.4-mile trail includes

boardwalks through towering cypress trees full of Spanish moss, and observation platforms overlooking Clear Creek. Wildlife is easily seen along this trail, including white-tailed deer, nutria, swamp rabbit, American alligator, and more.

Grissom ends in a loop with access to Clear Creek Paddle Trail, another opportunity to bird by kayak. White-faced and white ibis and many species of herons and egrets are common year-round near the boat ramp and paddle launch. Blue-winged teal, mallard, mottled duck, and other waterfowl are present in winter. Nearby oak trees with clear understory attract Eastern bluebird, American robin, downy and red-bellied woodpecker, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, and blue-gray gnatcatcher year-round.





UTC 085

WALTER HALL PARK

WALTER HALL PARK

Latitude: 29.51319 | Longitude: -95.10036 807 S Highway 3 N. League City

Park Hours: 7:30AM - 10:00PM Daily

This large park, situated directly on Clear Creek, offers riparian habitat with a mature pine/hardwood mix, and both clear and dense understory.

The winding park roads are great for birding by car, and paved walking trails are also available. Follow the entrance road to the public boat ramp area, watching along the way for Eastern bluebird year-round, and American robin in winter. The boardwalk/fishing pier provides a clear view of the creek. Check the bank for herons, egrets, and other waders, including spotted sandpiper. In winter, belted kingfisher and osprey are common, and bald eagle may be seen soaring overhead.

The park road continues parallel to the creek, offering several opportunities to stop and bird along the way. Scan the open fields for killdeer and Eastern meadowlark year-round, and American pipit in winter. Turn right at the stop sign before exiting the park to stay on the park road. Monk parakeet and loggerhead shrike are common near the ballpark area.

Turn right towards the boat ramp again, but this time watch for a road angling to the left that leads into the south side of the park. After crossing the bridge, scan the small wetland area year-round for mottled duck and black-bellied whistling duck; blue-winged teal is common in winter. The large mature trees attract downy and red-bellied woodpecker, blue jay, Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, and white-eyed vireo throughout the year. In winter, pine and yellow-rumped warbler, blue-gray gnatcatcher, Eastern phoebe, and yellow-bellied sapsucker are usually present. Listen for the high-pitched calls of cedar waxwing foraging high in the treetops in winter and early spring.

Clear Creek Paddle Trail is also accessible from this park for birding by kayak.

Walter Hall Park is a multi-use county facility developed for a variety of outdoor activities. Primely positioned along Clear Creek, the birding opportunities here are plentiful.



Photo by John Steelman



League City has excellent birding year-round. We encourage you to explore and discover all the area has to offer. Enjoy these extra birding hotspots during any season of the year.



HERITAGE PARK

1220 Coryell St. League City, TX 77573

Park in the small lot off Landrum Avenue, which is shared with Butler Longhorn Museum. Check nearby trees year-round for Carolina chickadee, tufted titmouse, white-eyed vireo, and red-bellied and downy woodpecker. In spring, watch for migrants including ruby-throated hummingbird, black-and-white warbler, and red-eyed vireo. In winter, Eastern phoebe, yellow-rumped warbler, ruby-crowned kinglet, and blue-gray gnatcatcher are common. Scan the banks of the pond for a variety of herons and egrets year-round. In summer, watch for green heron, and black- and yellow-crowned night-heron crouching in the vegetation. White ibis actively forage on lawns near the pond. Red-shouldered hawk is present year-round. In winter, belted kingfisher, osprey, and red-tailed hawk are common. Other wildlife is easily seen, including American alligator, nutria, swamp rabbit, and red-eared slider.



Photo by John Steelman



The trails in the park wind through the lushly landscaped grounds of the museum, which are attractive to painted and indigo bunting, Baltimore oriole, pine warbler, rose-breasted grosbeak, and other spring migrants. Killdeer and Eastern meadowlark are common in the open field year-round. Clear Creek Paddle Trail is also accessible from this park for birding by kayak. The Butler Longhorn Museum is worth a visit to learn about the quintessential Texas cattle breed. Visit the gift shop for a variety of books about birding, nature, and Texas history.

To extend your visit, turn left onto Landrum Avenue as you leave the parking lot, and continue to bird along Clear Creek. Common gallinule, pied-billed grebe, black-bellied whistling-duck, and mottled duck are common in the nearby wetlands year-round. Blue- and green-winged teal, Northern shoveler, gadwall, and other waterfowl may also be present in winter.



HOMETOWN HEROES PARK

1001 E. League City Pkwy. League City, TX 77573

This park has well-maintained, paved, accessible trails that are perfect for those with limited mobility. The road around the large parking lot is also good for birding by car. Check the many highline towers carefully for raptors; in winter, red-tailed hawk, American kestrel, and black vulture are common. Killdeer and loggerhead shrike are present in the open areas of the park year-round. In summer, scissor-tailed flycatcher may be seen; watch for Eastern phoebe, Eastern wood-pewee, and other flycatchers in winter.

The dense tree line along the creek behind the community center attracts gray catbird, ruby-crowned kinglet, orange-crowned warbler, and other insectivores in winter. If it has rained just prior to your visit, carefully scan along the drainage ditch for Wilson's snipe.



RUSTIC OAKS PARK

5101 Orange Blvd. League City, TX 77573

Start your tour by walking the looping trail around the densely wooded area and small pond in this secluded park. As you cross the bridge, check the slopes of the reservoir drainage canal for great blue heron, tricolored heron, yellow-crowned night-heron, green heron, and other waders. Red-shouldered hawk and Cooper's hawk are common year-round; in fall and winter osprey, sharp-shinned hawk, and American kestrel may also be seen. The woods are attractive to spring migrants including black-and-white warbler, yellow-throated warbler, Northern parula, white-eyed and red-eyed vireo, and indigo bunting. In fall, look for orange-crowned warbler, blue-gray gnatcatcher, ruby-crowned kinglet, Eastern phoebe, and other insectivores. Red-bellied and downy woodpecker are always present, and yellow-bellied sapsucker can be seen during winter.



LYNN GRIPON PARK AT COUNTRYSIDE

100 Alderwood Dr. League City, TX 77573

Downy and red-bellied woodpecker, Eastern bluebird, and Carolina chickadee are common year-round. The trees near the creek are productive for Couch's kingbird, Eastern wood-pewee, and other migrant flycatchers in spring and fall. Scan the banks for waders including spotted sandpiper and black-crowned night-heron. In winter, osprey and belted kingfisher may be seen perched near the creek and diving for fish.

Check the pine trees near the parking lot for pine warbler in spring before heading down the trail. Killdeer, loggerhead shrike, and Savannah sparrow are common near the ballpark. The well-maintained trail leads through mature hardwood forest that attracts both migrants and breeding species. In spring and summer, watch (and listen) for painted and indigo bunting, Baltimore and orchard oriole, Northern parula, gray catbird, blue-gray gnatcatcher, and other insectivores. Yellow-rumped warbler, ruby-crowned kinglet, orange-crowned warbler, and yellow-bellied sapsucker are common in winter.





UTC 081

ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER

Latitude: 29.52895 | Longitude: -95.09014

ARMAND BAYOU NATURE CENTER

8500 Bay Area Blvd. Pasadena, TX 77507 | 281-474-2551 | abnc.org

Home to more than 370 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and thousands of native plants, the Armand Bayou Nature Center is recognized as one of the area's top birding locations and attracts visitors from all over the world.

The 2,500-acre wildlife preserve encompasses three distinct ecosystems: wetlands, woodlands, and tall-grass prairie. A system of nature trails honeycombs the property, and the center operates a pontoon boat that plies the waters of Armand Bayou every Saturday (reservations required). Staff and volunteers have spent countless hours restoring several hundred acres of coastal prairie, and grassland species such as sedge wren, Le Conte's sparrow, Northern harrier, American kestrel (winter), scissor-tailed flycatcher (summer), white-tailed kite, and loggerhead shrike (resident) are likely here. The forestlands can produce good numbers of warblers, grosbeaks, tanagers, buntings, vireos, and other migrants in the spring and fall.



Expected forest species in winter include white-throated sparrow, brown thrasher, ruby-crowned kinglet, American goldfinch, cedar waxwing, and Eastern phoebe with residents such as the red-bellied, pileated, and downy woodpeckers, Northern cardinal, and red-shouldered hawk. In summer, the forest should also produce great-crested flycatcher and, commonly, white-eyed vireo. Osprey, numerous herons, belted kingfisher, anhinga, plus gulls and terns are commonly seen on Armand Bayou, which is accessible by the nature center trail.



Photo by John Steelman

The Armand Bayou Nature Center is one of the largest urban wilderness preserves in the U.S., protecting 2,500 acres of natural wetlands, forests, prairie, and marsh habitats.

Kayak Tours

Enjoy a guided tour of Armand Bayou to explore the wetlands, see local wildlife, relax, and have fun. You'll have a chance to see numerous birds, reptiles, and deer who are starting their day at the water's edge. Beginner and experienced kayakers are welcome. Knowledgeable guides are ACA certified and will give a brief orientation on kayaking before the trip. Price: \$50 per person.

Family Night Hikes

Enjoy the sights and sounds of the prairie, forest, and bayou at night. Some nocturnal creatures you may see or hear are owls, bats, fireflies, raccoons, spiders, armadillos, deer, frogs, and more. Price: \$15 per person (4 person/ \$60 minimum). Reservations are required.

Boat Cruises

Pontoon boat cruises give you unique opportunities to see bayou wildlife up close. The "Bayou Ranger II" will take you on an adventure through the heart of the nature center along the Armand and Horsepen Bayous where wildlife gather to find food, water, and shelter.

Morning Bayou Cruise

Start your Saturday morning watching wildlife seeking their breakfast at the water's edge as you leisurely drift down the bayou. Pricing: \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members. Morning cruises are on Saturday mornings from 8-9:30 am.

Sunset Cruise

Twilight is the most active time of day for many animals. Sunset on the water is a peaceful experience with amazing opportunities to glimpse an abundance of wildlife. Pricing: \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members. Sunset cruises are on Saturday evenings, times vary with sunset. Cruise length is 1.5 hours.



SEABROOK



Photo by John Steelman



Seabrook, bordering Galveston Bay, offers a variety of habitats including shoreline, marsh, small prairie, and riparian forest with well-maintained trails meandering throughout. A survey team with Houston Audubon conducts regular counts in Seabrook at Pine Gully Park (UTC 079), which is an eBird hotspot on the Upper Texas Coastal Birding Trail.

**UTC 077 MCHALE PARK**

400 Todville Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586

Latitude: 29.55273 | Longitude: -95.02219

McHale Park is a lovely spot from which to view the western shore of Galveston Bay. Flotillas of American white pelicans fish the nearshore waters in winter, and the adjacent marshes pull in scads of herons and egrets. Brown pelicans may be seen during any season.

**UTC 079 PINE GULLY PARK**

605 Pine Gully Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586

Latitude: 29.59133 | Longitude: -94.99994

This multi-use facility offers another view of Galveston Bay, including from its 1,000 foot-long fishing pier, and the trees along the wooded trails within the park are worth inspecting for migrant landbirds. The wetlands attract wading birds, and there are resident rails.

**UTC 078 HESTER GARDEN PARK**

3029 Todville Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586

Latitude: 29.57289 | Longitude: -95.01058

The park, a former nursery, is an undiscovered gem with an impressive variety of trees and shrubs, and a pleasing trail and butterfly garden. Check these woods in late fall and winter, since many of these plants are evergreen and therefore attractive to lingering insectivores.

**UTC 080 ROBINSON PARK**

4617 Todville Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586

Latitude: 29.58456 | Longitude: -95.00456

Robinson Park contains approximately 20 acres of old oaks, and a trail connects these woodlands with Pine Gully Park, Hester Garden Park, and the Seabrook Wildlife Refuge. Robinson Park has a lot of edge habitat and is another woodlot to check for migrants.



UTC 080A SEABROOK WILDLIFE REFUGE & PARK

700 Red Bluff Rd. Seabrook, TX 77586
Latitude: 29.58423 | Longitude: -95.01015

This 40-acre refuge is a unit of the city park system that is being maintained in a natural condition, undeveloped except for a perimeter trail. The trail runs north from Red Bluff Rd. and divides into a western spur and one going east to Robinson Park. Because the trail parallels the upper course of Pine Gully Bayou, it usually offers opportunities to see egrets and herons. Woodland birds are possible throughout the trails as well. Turtles, alligators, deer, and swamp rabbits frequent the refuge.



Photo by John Steelman



NASSAU BAY



UTC 082 BAY AREA PARK

7500 Bay Area Blvd. Houston, TX 77058
Latitude: 29.59734 | Longitude: -95.08801

This Harris County park is situated on Armand Bayou, and the parking area near the water offers an unobstructed view. Look for osprey in migration and winter.



UTC 083 NASSAU BAY PARK

18900 Upper Bay Rd. Houston, TX 77058
Latitude: 29.53594 | Longitude: -95.08644

Enjoy wildlife viewing over Lake Nassau and Clear Creek. The Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center and Space Center Houston are also located nearby along NASA Road One.





UTC 080B LITTLE CEDAR BAYOU

600 Little Cedar Bayou Dr. La Porte, TX 77571
Latitude: 29.64476 | Longitude: -95.01885

A short hike down this nature trail follows along Little Cedar Bayou leading to two birdwatching platforms with views of wading birds and waterbirds of the area.



UTC 086 PAUL HOPKINS COMMUNITY PARK

1000 FM517 Dickinson, TX 77539
Latitude: 29.45528 | Longitude: -95.06719

This pocket park has a nature trail along the bayou, and migrant landbirds often pass along this waterway in spring. A number of Eastern woodland birds, including red-shouldered hawk, nest in this woodland.



UTC 087 MUSTANG BAYOU TRAIL

200 Depot Centre Blvd. Alvin, TX 77511
Latitude: 29.42475 | Longitude: -95.24389

The Mustang Bayou Trailhead in Alvin is located at the historic railroad depot (now being restored). While in the area, check the woodlands along the trail.



UTC 087A JOHN HARGROVE ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLEX

5800 Magnolia St. Pearland, TX 77584
Latitude: 29.54588 | Longitude: -95.31159

Situated on a 108-acre retention pond protected on two sides with a light tree line, this site offers viewing opportunities year-round. With waterways and green space allocated for water run-off and detention, these open spaces are permanently protected for use by wildlife and birders. Worth a visit to see a variety of wading birds and songbirds.



UTC 087B SHADOW CREEK RANCH NATURE PARK

1801 Kingsley Dr, Pearland, TX 77584
Latitude: 29.58086 | Longitude: -95.41732



This 29.5-acre park borders Clear Creek with paved trails and interpretive signage. The site offers views of raptors, herons, egrets, ibis, spoonbills and songbirds.

DURING YOUR VISIT

EXPLORE THE BAY AREA OF HOUSTON

The birding in Bay Area Houston is world class, and so are the attractions. This charming bayside region is nestled midway between the big-city allure of Houston and the wide-open beaches of Galveston. Encompassing four distinct cities, the area touches more than 35 miles of scenic waterfront, including Clear Creek, Clear Lake, and Galveston Bay.

Photo by John Steelman



LEAGUE CITY is marked by towering oaks, meandering bayous, and thriving locally owned shops and eateries. Enjoy lakeside sunsets, gorgeous sailboats, amazing birding, fresh seafood, lush subtropical beauty, fascinating history, and all the laid-back leisure of life along the creek. Downtown, take a stroll beneath League City's majestic oak trees in the heart of the city's **Historic District**. Find your way to **Founder's Square** and enjoy shopping for treasures within this historic cluster of boutiques. Experience the lush beauty of **Helen's Garden**, one of League City's most breathtaking and serene public gardens. Discover the incredible story of how the iconic Texas Longhorn was preserved from extinction at the **Butler Longhorn Museum**. Enjoy a waterside retreat at the **South Shore Harbour Resort**, a four-star hotel located next to **South Shore Harbour Marina** on Clear Lake.

NASSAU BAY was established to accommodate employees of Johnson Space Center and provide a community for astronauts, space professionals, and their families. Today, more than 60 Nassau Bay residents have visited space, and a few have walked the moon. In 2005, the city dedicated a serpentine wall of black granite featuring the flags of the nations participating in the International Space Station. The striking monument is on NASA Parkway in the median between NASA and the city.

Located across the street from **Johnson Space Center** and **Space Center Houston**, Nassau Bay has it all: space and science adventure, fun, sun, and water. Nassau Bay has numerous marinas with pleasure boats docked along its waterfront, in addition to yacht clubs, piers, and boat ramps. The city's hotels offer a variety of accommodations with more than 600 rooms. October brings the annual **Wings over Houston Airshow** at nearby **Ellington Field**, and the City of Nassau Bay hosts many events throughout the year in their Town Square.



Space Center Houston and the Johnson Space Center is the home of manned space flight in the United States. Explore exhibits chronicling the history of our space program, including the tram tour that takes visitors to historic Mission Control.



The Kemah Boardwalk | Enjoy restaurants, shops, amusements, live music, and entertainment with views of Galveston Bay. Sightseeing & dinner cruises are available onboard the **Boardwalk Fantasea**. Hop on the **Boardwalk Beast** for an exhilarating 20 min. ride on Galveston Bay. Dine at the **Aquarium Restaurant** next to a giant fish tank with sharks, rays, and eels. kemahboardwalk.com

KEMAH gets its name from an Indian word meaning "wind in my face." With near constant breezes from Galveston Bay, Kemah's breezy-going culture has been long associated with waterside fun and boardwalk views. The spectacular **Kemah Boardwalk** and **Kemah Lighthouse District** have shops of every description, fine restaurants, and marinas offering just about any kind of water-related fun.

SEABROOK provides endless enjoyment with a **small-town waterfront atmosphere**. The **dining scene** offers spectacular options and stunning views of **Galveston Bay**. Find everything from fine seafood restaurants overlooking the water to Mexican, Italian, Thai, barbeque, fast food, and more. This thriving community has 17 parks and nationally renowned hiking and birding trails. Seabrook is also known for its quaint and comfortable bed and breakfasts and four new hotels.



Where to Eat

No matter what your tastebuds are in the mood for, you will find it in Houston's Bay Area.

If Thai food is your thing, check out **Merlion** for a fine dining experience in the heart of **Seabrook**. Live music and BBQ more your speed? Head over to **T-Bone Tom's** in **Kemah** and dine like a local under the giant palapa while enjoying cold drinks, hot food, and live music.

Mediterraneo Market & Café in **Nassau Bay** offers up a variety of classics to enjoy on their patio with live music and belly dancers on the weekends. In **League City**, try **Craft 96** and **Main Street Bistro**. Some favorite local spots to dine by the water include **Cabo, Barge 296, Schafer's, Pier 6**, and **Boondoggle's**.



Where to Stay

Birder friendly hotels in the Bay Area offer up a variety of options and amenities with close proximity to incredible birding locations in the Bay Area, Galveston, Anahuac, and High Island.

BIRDING PACKAGES Special birding package and birding bag at check in!

South Shore Harbour Resort 2500 South Shore Blvd. League City, TX 77573 (281) 334-1000 sshr.com	Hampton Inn & Suites 2320 Gulf Freeway S. League City, TX 77573 (281) 614-5437	Fairfield Inn & Suites 1144 Pinnacle Park Dr. League City, TX 77573 (281) 967-8490
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BIRDING TOUR GUIDE



KRISTINE RIVERS
832-372-8236
BIRDINGFORFUN.COM

visitleaguecitytx.com/birding
visitbayareahouston.com/hotels

UPPER TEXAS GULF COAST | BAY AREA OF HOUSTON
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Photo by John Steelman