

Birders flock to Port Aransas to see variety of bird species

Visitors to Port Aransas during the migration seasons are well aware that the city is becoming a birding destination. With three birding areas, the city makes it easy for visitors and residents alike to enjoy both migratory birds and year-round residents.

The Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center, the Joan and Scott Holt Paradise Pond Birding

Center, and the State Hwy. 361 Wetland Overlook feature ADA-compliant boardwalks and areas of shallow water that attract both resident and migrating birds. Brochures that list the birds to see in Port Aransas are available at each site.

The Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center is off Ross Street behind the wastewater treatment plant and adjacent to the Corpus Christi Ship Channel. The Joan

and Scott Holt Paradise Pond Birding Center is off Cut-off Road near Avenue C. The State Hwy. 361 Wetland Overlook is on Highway 361 south of Avenue G and is a tidal flat habitat for shorebirds. These locations are sites on the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail, a \$1.5 million trail that ties together birding sites from Beaumont to Brownsville.

Weekly guided nature tours, called Birding on the Boardwalk,



Birders gather on the boardwalk at the Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center in Port Aransas.

are held each Wednesday at 9 a.m. at the Leonabelle Turnbull

Center. Longtime birding expert Ray Little narrates the walks. Two free viewing scopes are available - one on the tower and a second ADA-compliant scope at a viewing stand along the boardwalk.

Landscaping at the entrance of the center was originally designed by the Port Aransas Garden Club, under the direction of Carolyn Chancellor, to attract birds, specifically hummingbirds. Recently reconfigured, the area still attracts birds and butterflies and provides a chance for visitors to see a wide variety of plants up close.

Besides the birds that flock to the center, two resident alligators call the place home. Boots is the larger of the two, and Bags is the smaller alligator with a missing eye. They appear to live



A tern looks for dinner.

in harmony with the birding population and apparently help keep the population of nutria under control. The nutria are rodent-like animals that were brought to this country in the 1800s to supplement the mink industry. As it turned out, they multiplied faster than rabbits, and parts of the country were soon over-run with the critters. They're not a real plus for the center because they like to eat the roots of the grasses that grow out of the shallows and offer habitat for many birds.

The Birding Center can be reached from Cut-off Road by turning onto Ross Avenue (about where Cut-off Road curves sharply). The center is adjacent to the wastewater treatment plant that features a birding mural painted on the tanks. Brochures that list the birds to see in Port Aransas are also available at the Port Aransas Tourist Bureau Office on Cotter Avenue.

Specializing in furnishing Island Homes & Condominiums



Outdoor Wicker

Coastal
Accessories

Seating

Dining

Sleepers

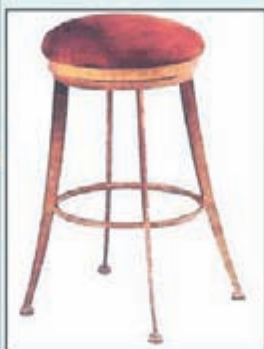
Rattan

Wicker

Bedroom

Barstools

Patio



PATIO & Interiors



Corpus Christi 4130 SPID
(between Everhart & Weber) 361-853-8493