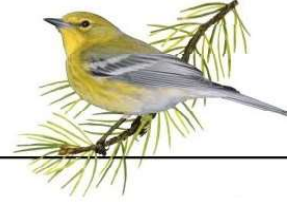
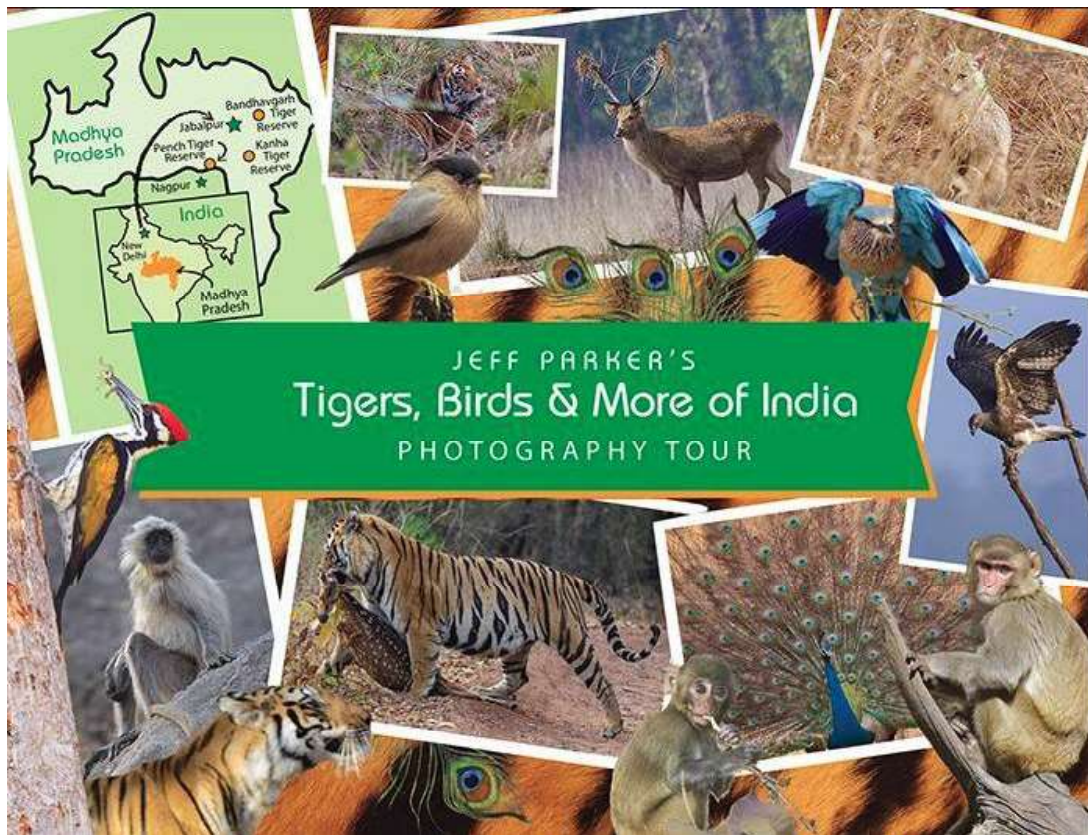


# *The Pine Warbler*



# PINEY WOODS WILDLIFE SOCIETY

## NOVEMBER 14, 2018 PROGRAM



Please join us on Wednesday, November 14th, Jeff Parker will give his program entitled "Tigers, Birds & More of India Photography Tour." (Social time with snacks provided is at 6:30 p.m. and the meeting starts at 7 p.m.) The meeting takes place at the Big Stone Lodge at Dennis Johnston Park located at 709 Riley Fuzzel Road in Spring.

Jeff Parker is an award-winning wildlife and nature photographer whose work appeared in Audubon, Texas Parks and Wildlife, American Profile and Outdoor Photographer. He leads photo tours and workshops throughout South Texas,

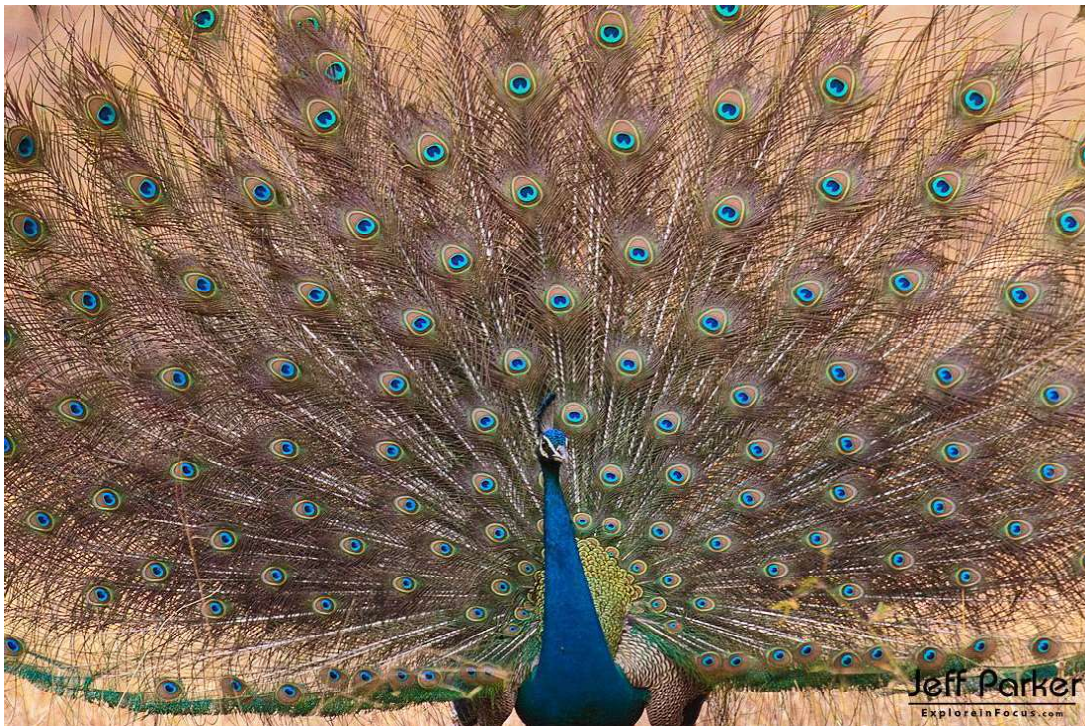


## Colorado and the Americas

Jeff and his wife, Mary O, has authored "Explore Texas, A Nature Travel Guide" published by Texas A&M University Press, College Station.



*Tiger carrying prey by Jeff Parker*



*Peacock. Photo by Jeff Parker*



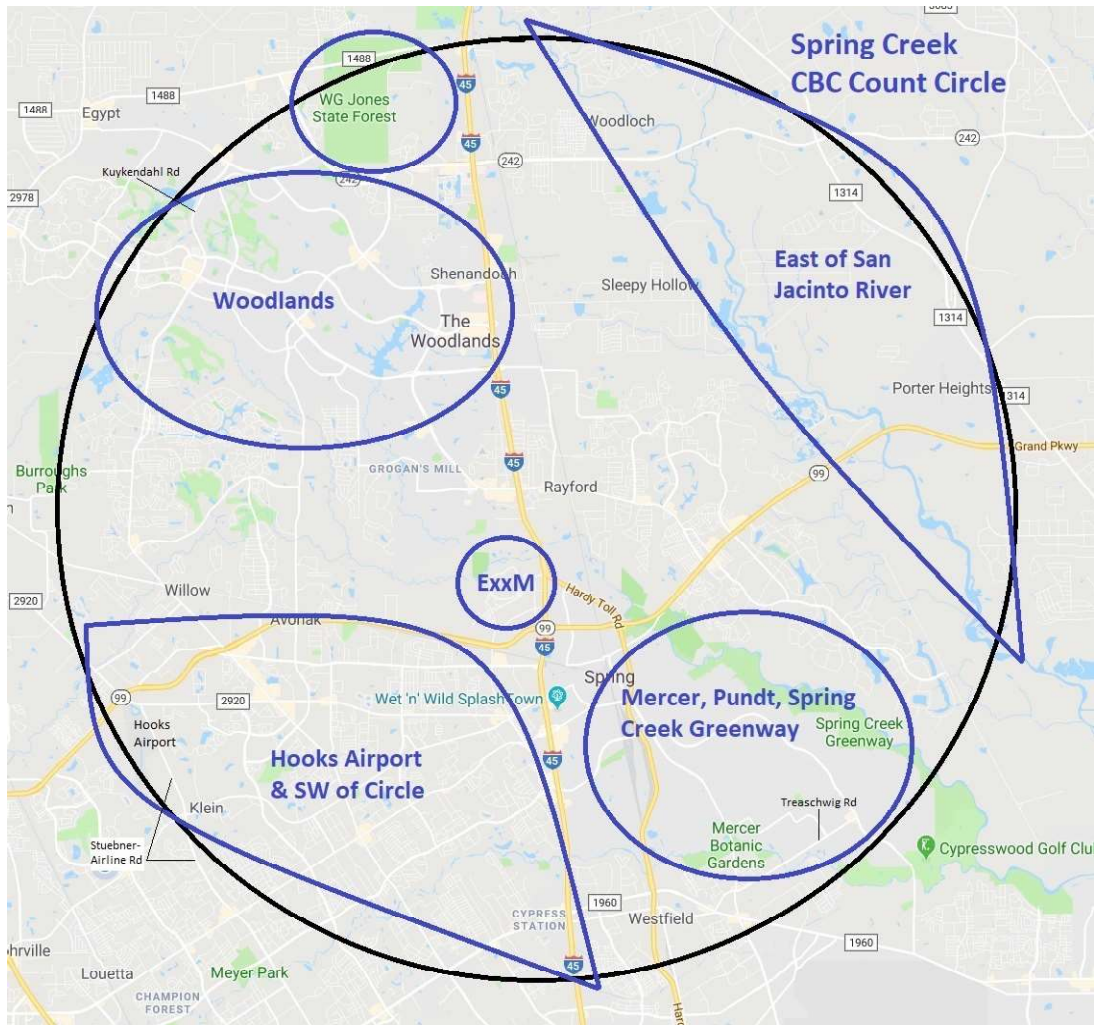


*Safari accommodations in India. Photo by Jeff Parker*



© Jeff Parker / Explore in Focus™

*Indian Roller by Jeff Parker*



## Spring Creek CBC Saturday, December 15th

by Claire Moore

If you will be around on Saturday 12/15, please plan to join PWWS to help survey the birds present in our Spring Creek Christmas Bird Count circle. Several teams of bird watchers will be out in the field on Saturday, December 15th, counting up all the birds that can be found in our 15 mile diameter CBC circle which is roughly centered at I45 at the Rayford Sawdust exit.

If you're not able to go into the field and happen to live inside that circle, you can help out as a "feeder watcher" sending in your observations made on Saturday, December 15th, to be included in the official CBC results.

Regardless, go ahead and highlight that day on your calendars and let Claire know (via email at [cdmoore3i@gmail.com](mailto:cdmoore3i@gmail.com)) if you can help out in either capacity.

Also, anyone is welcome to join in for the "count dinner" that same night. Join us to hear some stories about the day counting birds. We plan on gathering at El



Imperial Mexican Restaurant located at 820 FM 1960 West which less than a mile west of I45 on Cypress Creek Parkway (AKA 1960). Make sure to RSVP to Claire by Dec 12th so she can reserve a table big enough.

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## **THE FOUR FOXES OF TEXAS Part 1: The Kit Fox and the Swift Fox**

**by Pat Wayne**



*Swift Foxes - Photo credit TPWD*



## THE FOUR FOXES OF TEXAS

### Part 1: The Kit Fox and the Swift Fox

Four fox species are native to Texas: the red fox, gray fox, swift fox, and the kit fox. The kit fox and the swift fox are similar in appearance and both are found in the hot, arid parts of North and West Texas. You can remember their names by associating the swift fox with speed, between 30 and 40 mph, and the kit fox with kittens which they strongly resemble.

Both are grayish blond with a black tipped tail, and noticeably larger ears than gray and red foxes. The swift fox matures to a size about half that of a red fox while the kit fox is the smallest Texas fox, only about half the size of a gray fox. The eyes of the swift fox are more slanted giving it a wise, serene expression, while the kit fox has rounder, more broadly spaced eyes giving it a cat-like face. There are other subtle differences, but to the novice they look pretty much the same. Only an expert can tell the difference, while some naturalists still argue the two species are one and the same. Kit foxes are native to West Texas while swift foxes are found mostly in the Panhandle. Wherever their territories overlap the two species interbreed producing hybrids.

I saw what I think was a kit fox in Garner State Park back in the 80's when they were still using the old park entrance road. Like the green gringos we were, my family drove out to Garner without a reservation in July, thinking we would have our pick of campsites in the middle of the week. We were directed into the overflow campground, which is why I ended up hiking the park entrance road at dawn.

I saw the fox before it saw me. It walked towards me with a bounce in its step looking from side to side for breakfast, and dropping its nose to the ground with each pass to try and pick up a scent trail. I was struck by how large its ears were in proportion to its small body, and when it looked in the direction of the morning sun its eyes appeared amber. When it saw me, it disappeared off the road into the tall dry grasses where it was safely camouflaged. I ran to the spot where it vanished, but saw no sign of it and no movement in the grass. It could have been watching me from the opening of its den, but because I long ago learned to associate tall grass with rattle snakes the animal was safe from any further pursuit by me.

I could not find anyone who could put a name to what I saw. The park rangers told me it was probably a camper's dog. Perhaps I described it inaccurately since I only saw it briefly. I was not even sure whether it was canine or feline since it had

features of both. I could not find it featured in any book about Texas wildlife.

Eventually “Texas Parks and Wildlife” series on PBS began to feature as part of their regular opening a brief clip of the exact animal I saw at Garner, but it was not identified. At least someone besides me had seen one.

Decades passed and computers eventually made their way into our homes. Information on nearly every subject eventually made its way into computers. Now I can identify, read about, and see numerous photos of any mystery critter I see out in the wild, including my Garner State Park kit fox.

Both kit foxes and swift foxes are omnivores consuming rabbits, squirrels, prairie dogs, mice, birds, lizards, frogs, and insects, as well as berries and seeds. This extensive palette insures they have a better chance of survival in the desert environments they inhabit. The bottoms of their paws are covered with fur to protect their feet from hot sand, and their ears are large to help them regulate body heat.

Both species are preyed upon by a variety of larger mammals, coyotes being their most dangerous threat. Both species live in dens all year, but may move to different dens several times during the year to escape predators or an infestation of fleas. A couple will stay together for a whole breeding season, but may not necessarily stay together longer than one season. They give birth to up to 6 pups in the spring.

While swift foxes are being studied in several states, little is known about kit foxes, and kit foxes are often conveniently lumped into the same category with swift foxes. Texas Parks and Wildlife has only recently begun to trap, count, tag, and release swift foxes to learn more about them, in particular, how many remain in the state. We already know the number of swift foxes in other states has drastically declined due to predation and loss of habitat.

Both species prefer to forage in short grasses, so they are often found on cattle ranches that have been overgrazed. They build dens under fence posts, cactuses, small scrub trees, and brush piles. They tend to travel up and down fence lines. Both species are basically nocturnal but can also be seen in the early morning and at dusk.

If you get a chance to see either a swift fox or a kit fox in the Texas wild, you are asked to contact Texas Parks and Wildlife Department at [tpwd.texas.gov](http://tpwd.texas.gov) and/or cite it on [iNaturalist.com](http://iNaturalist.com) to help them keep a tally. And try to get a photo or two if you can.

Irresistibly cute young foxes can be called either kits, pups, or cubs.

So, what do you call a baby kit fox? A “kit-kit”?

FOR IMAGES AND FURTHER RESEARCH:

[Kit Fox Images on Bing](#)

[Swift Fox Images on Bing](#)

[Swift Fox Research movie on YouTube](#)

[TPW Magazine Fox Article about Swift and Kit Foxes in Texas](#)

[Kit & Swift Foxes Descriptions](#)

[Mammals of Texas: Swift or Kit Fox](#)



*Kit Fox - Microsoft Word Clip Art*





*Two Kit Foxes - Microsoft Word Clip Art*

## **HEART Happenings**

**by Carole Allen**



*Kemp Ridley Sea Turtle - NPS Photo*

**On October 20, the Houston Chronicle published an article about the sea turtle program in Galveston. It read**

“NOAA announced its intentions to Congress in July to end the rescues in an email to members of the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources, calling the change a matter of “recent budget constraints.” The agency said it also has notified its partner organizations along the Texas coast — including Moody Gardens, Texas A&M University at Galveston and the Turtle Island Restoration Network — to talk about “transferring responsibility” of the sea turtle hospital and rescue system.”

Most sea turtle conservationists are not surprised since drastic cuts are being made in national parks, forests and other programs we all value. This suggestion has been made before and e-mails, phone calls and petitions reversed the decision. The work done at Galveston to rescue sea turtles is certainly needed to find nestings and stranded and injured turtles that need help to survive.

People employed by institutions that receive federal money are always afraid to comment about actions being promoted that will hurt endangered species. This is another example of the need for you and me to speak up for endangered sea turtles and the work that must continue to save them from extinction.

A staff member at the Texas Aquarium said: “Rescue programs like the NOAA operation are “critical” to keeping the sea turtle population on the rise. It’s uncertain whether NOAA’s partner organizations can seamlessly fill the holes after the agency scales back its turtle rescue efforts.”

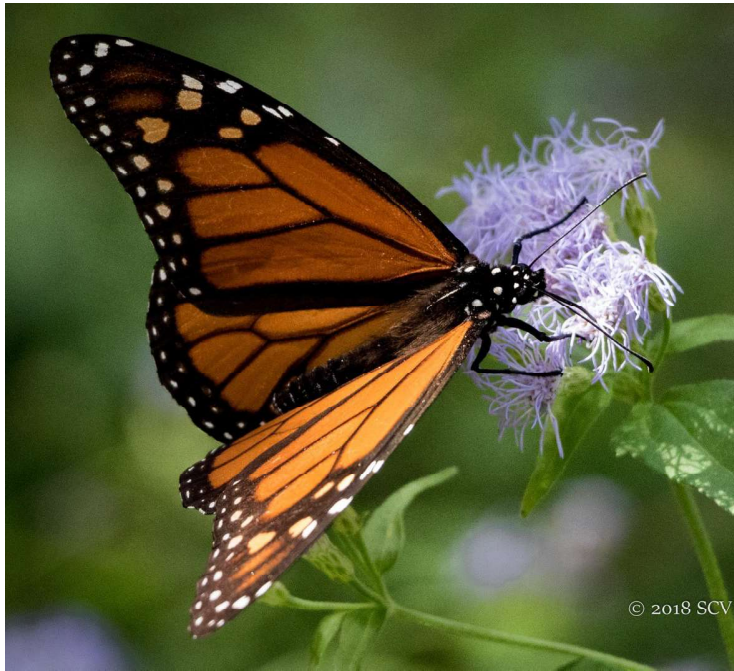
The Galveston Laboratory provides financial aid to the city through staff salaries to the city’s budget itself and brings thousands of tourists as well as students to see the turtles and learn about conservation. The Galveston Lab offers the most and best medical treatment and care for the endangered Kemp’s ridleys on the entire Texas coast. The staff is made up of sea turtle experts. We have fought this battle before and we will need organized action to protect the Galveston Lab again. Check the website postings of Turtle Island Restoration Network (TIRN) and the website of the TIRN office of the Gulf of Mexico to watch for petitions to sign and e-mails to send. We will need everyone working together!

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**Monarch Tagging Event at Don & Chris DuBois's  
house, Magnolia, TX**

**Sunday - October 21, 2018**





*Monarch nectaring on Crucita - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*



*Don & Chris DuBois Hosting their  
Annual Monarch Tagging Event.-  
Wedgeworth Photo*



*Amanda, Diane & Hugh Wedgeworth*



*Amanda & Hugh Wedgeworth*





*Lucinda Valdez & Steve Abbey*



*Farrar Stockton & Diane Wedgeworth*  
*- Wedgeworth Photo*



*Farrar Stockton*



*Lets catch some monarchs to tag - Wedgeworth photo*





*Sandy Crystal Vaughn, Diane Wedgeworth and Lucinda Valdez*



*Monarch Tagging Event 10-21-2018*



*Supergirl learning from Don how to tag a Monarch butterfly*





*Amanda Wedgeworth tagging a Monarch butterfly with Don Dubois - Wedgeworth photo*



*Don and Sandy in deep discussion on tagging butterflies*



*Diane tagging Monarch - Wedgeworth Photo*

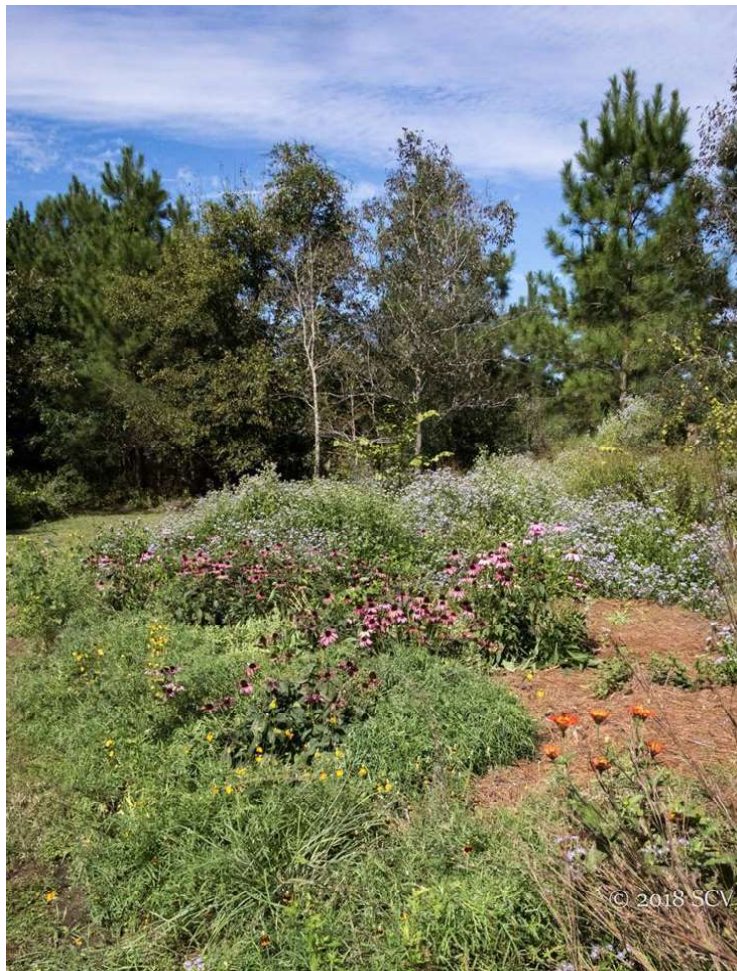


*Don Documenting Butterflies - Wedgeworth photo*





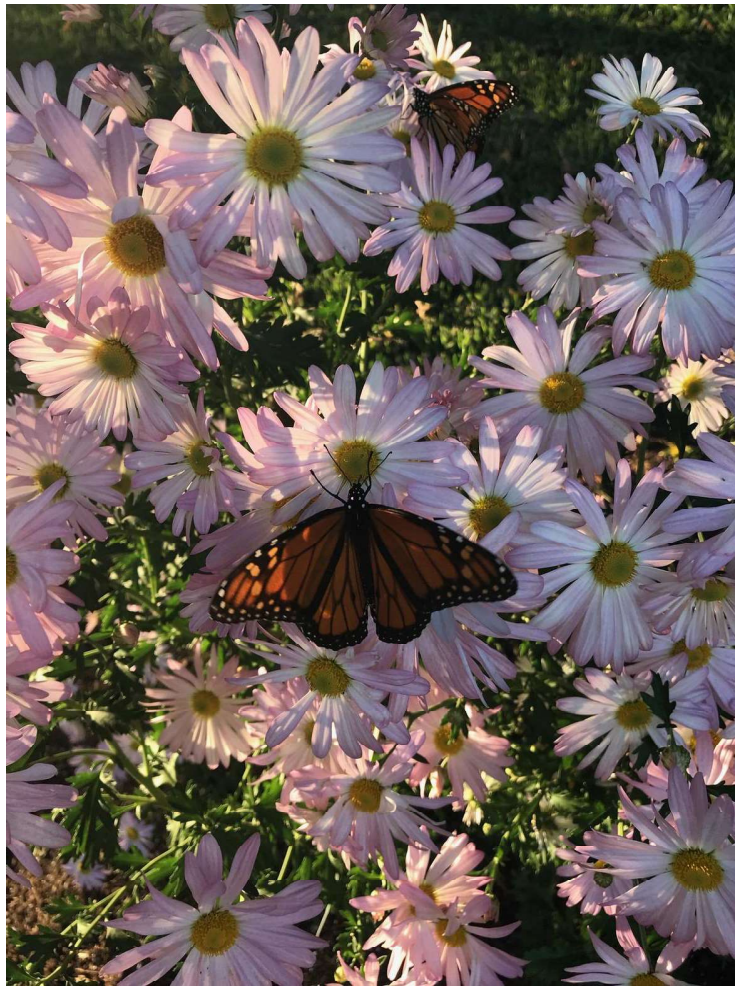
*Diane Wedgeworth & Sandy Crystal Vaughn*



*Don's backyard in Magnolia - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*



*Dubois Garden - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*



*Monarch Butterfly on Country Girl Chrysanthemums - Photo by Bubba Watford*

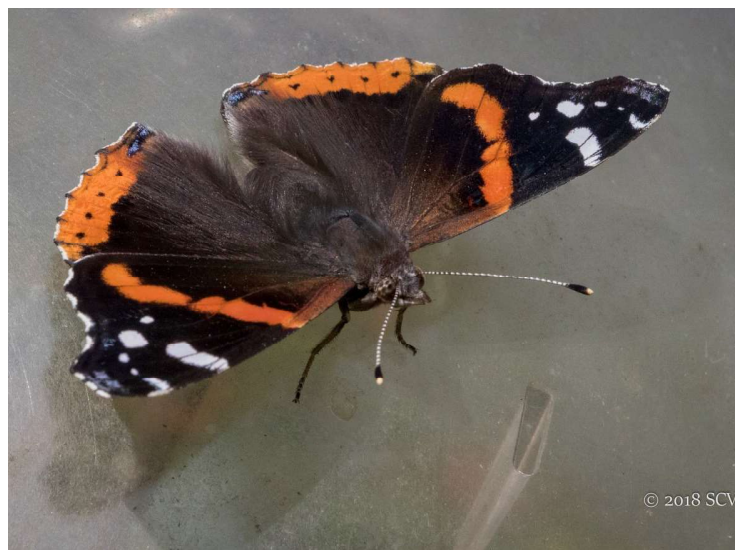




*Late Instar Pipevine Caterpillar munching away on White Veined Pipevine (Aristolochia Fimbriata) - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*



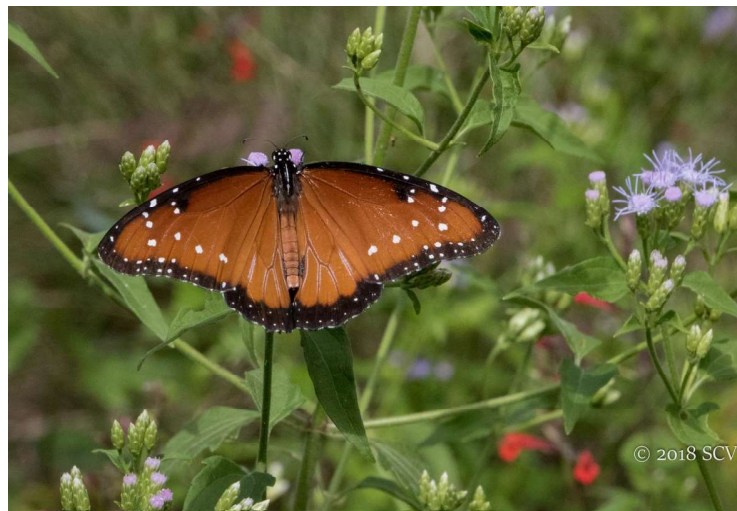
*Common Buckeye - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*



*Red Admiral on top of the butterfly bait dome - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*



*Trinity River Count 10-20-2018 Stuart Marcus Leader and 'the gang.'*



*Queen - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*





*Cloudless Sulphur nectaring on Red/Scarlet Sage - Photo by Sandy Crystal Vaughn*

Following are three FaceBook videos related to this Monarch Tagging event. (No need to have a FaceBook account to view these videos.)

[First Monarch Video](#)

[Second Monarch Video](#)

[Third Monarch Video](#)

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**Photos by Randy Scott**



## Big Stone Lodge - Dennis Johnston Park

**709 Riley Fuzzel Road**

PWWS meetings are held at the Big Stone Lodge at the new Dennis Johnston County

Park at 709 Riley Fuzzel Road.

The directions to get there are much the same as to the Nature Center. Aldine-Westfield turns into Riley Fuzzel Road just northeast of Spring so there are several ways to get there.

1. Take the Rayford/Sawdust exit and go East (right) on Rayford Rd. It dead ends at Riley Fuzzel, then turn South (right) and drive to the Dennis Johnston Park past Spring Creek and on the right; or,
2. take Spring-Cypress east to Aldine Westfield through Old Town Spring, turn left and then on to Riley Fuzzel for a short distance and turn left; or,
3. Take Aldine Westfield north from Mercer Arboretum until it turns into Riley Fuzzel. Turn right and watch for the Dennis Johnston Park on the left.

<b>Piney Woods Wildlife Membership Form</b>		
Last Name(s):		First Name of Member(s):
Street Address:	City:	State and Zip:
Home Phone No:	Work Phone No:	Email Address(s):
Pine Warbler will be delivered by E-mail Only		
Annual Membership Fee \$15.00* Additional Contribution \$ _____ Total \$ _____		Mail this form and check made payable to PWWS to:  <b>Piney Woods Wildlife Society</b> <b>P.O. Box 189</b> <b>Spring, TX 77383-0189</b>
*Per Household – Includes <i>The Pine Warbler</i> newsletter New _____ Renewal _____ Rejoining _____		



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PWWS Facebook site is at <https://www.facebook.com/Piney-Woods-Wildlife-Society-125891867423250/>

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The Pine Warbler is published monthly, September through May, by the Piney Woods Wildlife Society, Inc.

For membership information write to us at P.O. Box 189, Spring, Texas 77383-0189. Annual Dues :\$15.00 per household.

Please submit any articles you'd like considered for the PWWS Newsletter. The Pine Warbler, to our President, Kathy Coward, [justforthebirds@sbcglobal.net](mailto:justforthebirds@sbcglobal.net) or Diane Wedgeworth, Editor, [mlanodi@yahoo.com](mailto:mlanodi@yahoo.com)

Please send all new address changes and any corrections to [cdmoore3@gmail.com](mailto:cdmoore3@gmail.com) (Claire Moore) and add PWWS to the subject line. Thank you.

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