

Out on the

BOARDWALK



NEWSLETTER OF THE JOHN BUNKER SANDS WETLAND CENTER | FALL 2015

WHOOPING CRANE WORKSHOP

with Mark Klym of Texas Parks & Wildlife. Saturday, November 7th, 2015, 1:00 p.m.- 3:00 p.m. **Reservation Required.** *More information to come.*

Until then, here's a Black-necked Stilt for you.



Saturday, October 17, 2015
John Bunker Sands Wetland Center

JOHN BUNKER SANDS WETLAND CENTER
Saturday, October 17, 2015
SAVE THE DATE!

It's our 5th Anniversary Party!



FIVE WAYS TO CELEBRATE!

PARTY: Saturday, October 17, 2015 9am-5pm



Education and Research Booths, Kids Activities - Bounce House, Face Painting, Crafts, Food Trucks, Live Bluegrass Music, Live Bald Eagle & Bird Presentations, 4-H Animals, Vendor & Craft Booths, Nature Store will be OPEN!

VISIT:



Come Visit the Wetland Center this fall and experience bird migration.

CONSERVE:



Reduce water consumption at home, school or work. Find out how at www.ntmwd.com

RUN/WALK:



Self-guided **FREE** 5K Run/Walk. Arrive between 9:00am - 3:00pm & Run/Walk at YOUR pace. Experience wetland activities & wildlife along a beautiful course. **Finishers Button · Delicious Snacks · Wetland Activities every Kilometer**

DONATE:



Online at www.wetlandcenter.com/donate.html

FREE FAMILY FUN EVENT

- 9:00am Open: Booths · Food · Vendors
Self-Guided 5K Run/Walk BEGINS
- 11:00am Live American Bald Eagles by Last Chance Forever
- 12:00pm Acoustic Sound Hounds
- 1:00pm Live American Bald Eagles by Last Chance Forever
- 2:00pm Animal Adventures - Dallas Zoo
- 3:00pm Acoustic Sound Hounds
Self-Guided 5K Run/Walk ENDS
- 5:00pm Close



Come Celebrate 5 years of education, conservation and research!

~ 20,800 Students participate in Field Studies ~ 11,500 Adults bird watch, explore and learn ~ 85 BILLION gallons of water recycled ~ \$600,000+ raised to support our mission ~ 3,500 Volunteer hours ~ 3 Conservation Research Projects ~ Successful relocation of American Bald Eagle nest - 5 Eaglets over 5 years!

Immerse Yourself®
JOHN BUNKER SANDS WETLAND CENTER
655 Martin Lane, Seagoville, TX 75159
972.474.9100 www.wetlandcenter.com



ON THE EDUCATION FRONT

By Linda Dunn

As our education program continues to grow, we're always looking for ways to improve it so we can better meet the needs of those visiting the Center. We have definitely met that goal by hiring two new individuals who are a perfect fit for us.

Eddie Hilborn comes to us by way of Mesquite ISD. Edie had visited the Center with her 4th-grade class and also participated in our Environmental Education Academy for teachers. After retiring from teaching in June, she was ready for another challenge – being part of the field of environmental education. She realized that kids are losing touch with the earth, and many have little appreciation for all it provides. Working at the Center allows

Eddie to meet goals that matter to her: staying connected to the outdoors and teaching as well as being able to share her love for the environment with people of all ages.

Shannon Love found her way to the Wetland Center via her passions as a master naturalist and master birder. After retiring from a media career, she pursued her interests in native flora and fauna and environmental conservation. Shannon has worked with Rosemont Elementary School and Twelve Hills Nature Center, both in Oak Cliff. She taught 5th graders leadership skills so they could conduct nature walks for the younger kids. Shannon's heart is in creating leaders today so future generations will

be aware of the environment. An avid birder, she is also now our on-site expert.

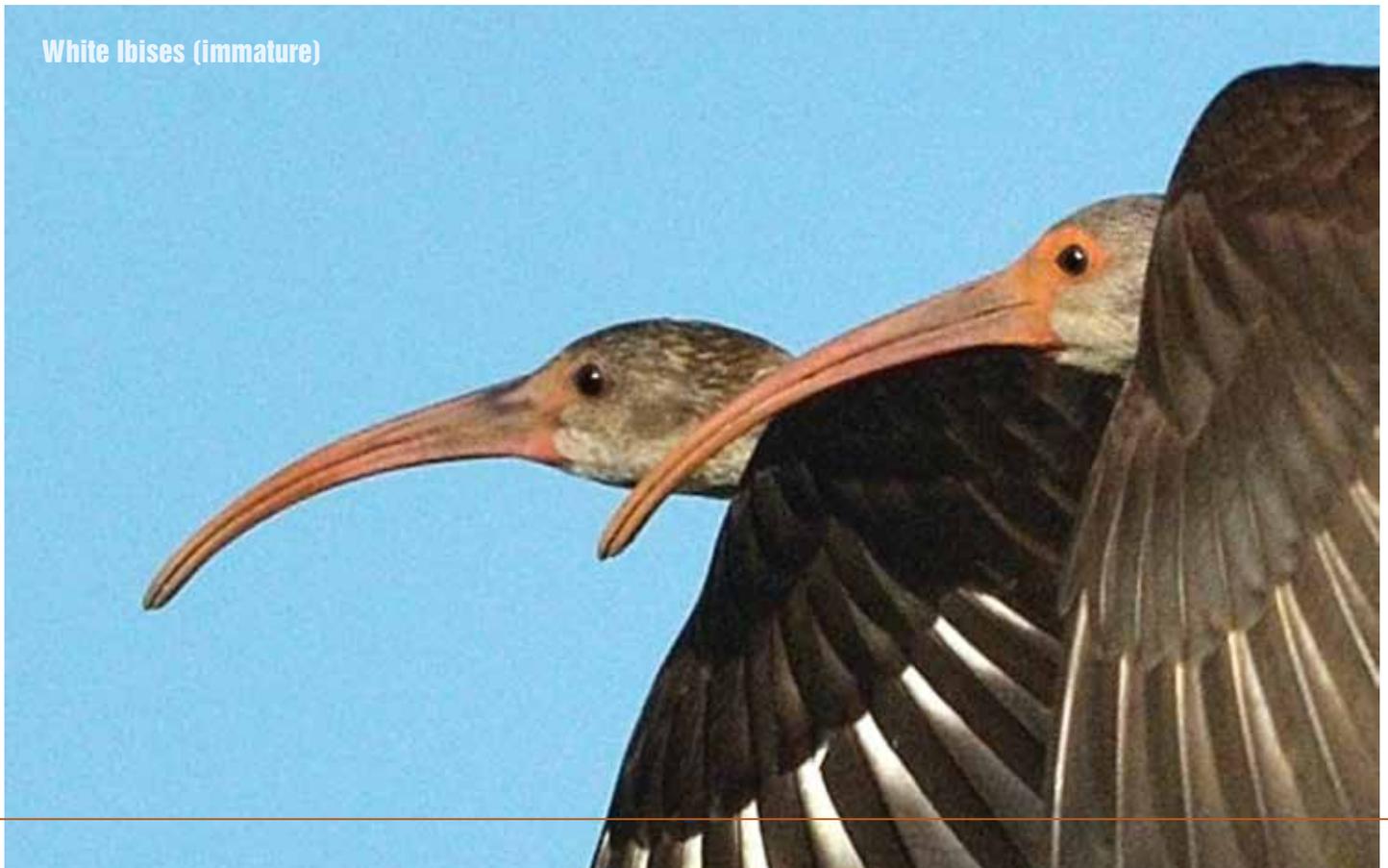
We welcome Shannon and Edie to the Wetland Center



family. Next time you're here, please say hello.



White Ibises (immature)



© Jim West

NOTES

from the field

By Linda Dunn

A turtle survey was conducted in late May at the Wet-

land Center, with the focus on the western chicken turtle. This turtle (*Deirochelys reticularia miaria*) is thought to be rare and declining throughout its range. To detect turtles, the

Texas A&M Institute of Natural Renewable Resources used hoop nets and crayfish traps as well as visual surveys. Although the targeted turtle was not seen, many turtle species and other reptiles were observed, as the list below shows. 

Common Name	Number	Scientific Name
Red Eared Slider Turtle	221	<i>Trachemys scripta elegans</i>
Common Snapping Turtle	13	<i>Chelydra serpentina</i>
Eastern Mud Turtle	6	<i>Kinosternon subrubrum</i>
Eastern River Cooter Turtle	12	<i>Pseudemys concinna</i>
False Map Turtle	4	<i>Graptemys pseudogeographica</i>
Spiny Softshell Turtle	2	<i>Apalone spinifera</i>
Eastern Box Turtle	1	<i>Terrapene carolina</i>
Copperhead Snake	1	<i>Agkistrodon contortrix</i>
Eastern Racer Snake	4	<i>Coluber constrictor</i>
Mud Snake	1	<i>Farancia abacura</i>
Speckled Kingsnake	1	<i>Lampropeltis getula</i>
Coachwhip Snake	1	<i>Masticophis flagellum</i>
Plain-Bellied Water Snake	9	<i>Nerodia erythrogaster</i>
Broad-Banded Water Snake	3	<i>Nerodia fasciata</i>
Diamondback Water Snake	5	<i>Nerodia rhombifer</i>
Rough Green Snake	2	<i>Opheodrys aestivus</i>
Texas Rat Snake	12	<i>Pantherophis obsoleta</i>
Western Ribbon Snake	3	<i>Thamnophis proximus</i>
Broadhead Skink	1	<i>Plestiodon laticeps</i>



Spiny Softshell Turtle



Texas Rat Snake

Eagles' Roost Update

By John DeFillipo

When the eagles left the property in the middle of June, our partners swung into action to prepare the nest and camera for the fall season. Falcon Steel and Oncor Electric Delivery recently finished much-needed

upgrades on the solar-powered, high-definition camera focused on the nest. We relocated the solar panels to a new steel structure on the ground, purchased a new transmitter-receiver and installed it half-way up the tower, and completely rewired and reprogrammed the system.

We are hopeful the enhancements will maintain the live image from the nest for the entire breeding season. So over the next few weeks, be on the lookout for the return of our American bald eagle family to the wetland property. To view the live eagle camera, go to wetlandcenter.com. 

See You Later, ALLIGATOR!

By John Defillipo

Our resident American alligators, Alli and Snapper, served as great education ambassadors for the Center for almost four years. But the



young gators began to out-grow their enclosure, so it was time to return them to the wild ... or so

we thought.

Our plan was to release Alli and Snapper here at the East Fork Wetland Project. But the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, which had confiscated them from a citizen and released them to us for education, required that they be returned to their habitat of origin or continue to be used for education. Unfortunately, TPWD had no way of knowing where their original habitat was.

That left us only one option: find a new education facility with the capacity to take the gators.

After a month's search, Linda Dunn and Steward Kathy Nance located the East Texas

Gators & Wildlife Park near Grand Saline. With wildlife permit in hand, all five Center staff members took a field excursion into the heart of East Texas to personally deliver Alli and Snapper to their new home.

When we pulled into the parking area, we were greeted by park owners Charlie and Jana Harris and a TPWD game warden for the official handoff. The alligators were immediately put to work with local kids visiting for the afternoon.

The park has designed a natural habitat that provides a healthy alternative for alligators and other wildlife that cannot be returned to the wild. Alli and Snapper will live out their lives educating and providing entertainment at the gator park. Check out their new home at easttexasgators.com. If you visit, wish them well and thank them for a job well done here at the Center.

After while, crocodile! 🐊



A Celebrity in the House!

By Linda Dunn

Wetland Center Director John DeFillipo has received the Outstanding New Leader Award from the Association of Nature Center Administrators. ANCA is an international network of nature and environmental learning center leaders. Its mission is to enhance professionalism, promote best practices and provide the support system critical to innovative and progressive management. This prestigious award recognizes exceptional administrators with less than five years of full-time work.

The award is especially fitting as we prepare to celebrate our 5th year of success. Through John's leadership, the Center has become known within the profession as a cutting-edge facility that has accomplished much in a short

time. From overseeing the construction of the building and development of the board of directors to establishing premier education programming, John's natural ability to watch, listen, listen again and learn allows him to make the best decisions for the Center



and all involved.

John never met John Bunker Sands, the Center's namesake, but from Day One he immersed himself in Bunker's life and principles of conservation and land stewardship, always asking, "What would Bunker do?" John also made it his priority to educate himself about the Rosewood corporate family, and he represents them in the highest regard, carrying on the legacy of a man whose boots were hard to fill.

What John does every day can't be learned from a textbook. His passion for his work and his leadership in the community make him an outstanding professional. We are proud to have him as our director, and all of us at the Center say, "Thank you for who you are!"

For more on John's leadership, see page 6 of the ANCA newsletter: natctr.org/assets/docs/private/directions_summer_2015.pdf. 

September

Saturday, 19th

Open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Bunker's Pond Trail Walk

10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Nature Kids Story Time

10 a.m. – 11 a.m.

October

Saturday, 3rd

Open 7 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Advanced Bird Walk

7 a.m. – 9 a.m.

Walk & Talk Bird Tour

7 a.m. – 9 a.m.

Saturday, 17th
5th-Anniversary
Celebration

9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

November

Saturday, 7th

Open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Advanced Bird Walk

9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Walk & Talk Bird Tour

9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

Whooping Crane Program

1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, 21st

Open 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Bunker's Pond Trail Walk

10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Nature Kids Story Time

10 a.m. – 11 a.m.