

Nature Notes

3rd Quarter 2025

Volume 65 No. 3



Welcome New Members!

✂ ✂ ✂ Nearly 50% of Annual Members Are New in 2025 ✂ ✂ ✂

Outdoor Nature Club wishes to extend a heartfelt welcome to the following new members:

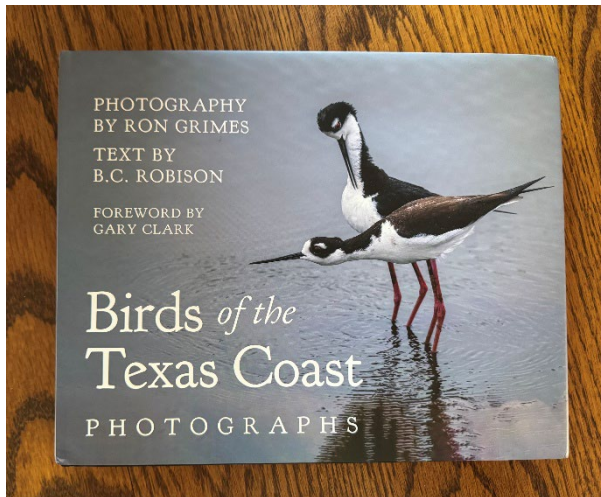
Joseph A. ✂ Wren B. ✂ Carter C. ✂ Debbie C. ✂ Will C. ✂ Daniel F.
John G. ✂ George & Jeri G. ✂ Ari H. ✂ Tania & Charles J. ✂ Dawn L.
Todd M. & Shaila P. ✂ Craig & Jill M. ✂ George M. & Annette R. ✂ Brandy M.
Tina M. ✂ Gabe & Ginny R. ✂ Charles & Jenny S. ✂ Elisabeth T. ✂ Jianna W. &
Rolando S. Scott W. ✂ David & Joan W. ✂ Martin W. ✂ Stephen W. & Cynthia Z.

Outdoor Nature Club also wishes to thank our members for their donations in 2025, which come to nearly \$1,000 so far. ONC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity so your donations are tax deductible.

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Past President and Life Member **Ron Grimes** shares exciting news:



4½ years in the making, ***Birds of the Texas Coast: Photographs*** has just been published by Texas Tech University Press (TTUP). The photography was done by me, Ron Grimes (ONC life member), and the text was done by B. C. Robison. Gary Clark wrote the foreword, and Linda Feltner provided the coastal map illustration.

According to TTUP, ***Birds of the Texas Coast: Photographs*** is the first large-format photography work covering the entire Lone

Star coast and its representative bird life. Through photography of more than 200 coastal species, this book encompasses a deep and wide natural history of the region.

There are plenty of field guides in the world to aid in identification, range, seasons, and other details about a bird. This coffee table book is meant for more casual reading, enjoyment, and sparking an interest in coastal birding and photography.

B.C. Robison suggested we do this book - he would write most of the text and the captions, I would do the photography. As a result, I spent two years cruising up and down the Texas Coast from Sabine Pass to Brownsville to get the photos. We started off expecting to have about 125 species in the book. We wound up with 215.

The book is organized according to the natural habitats that make up the coastal zone, the 367-mile reach from Louisiana to Mexico. Each chapter deals with one habitat and presents color photographs of prominent species that occur there. All the major families of Texas coastal birds are depicted in the book. In addition, the book also includes information on birding locations, maps, clubs, and events.

Birds of the Texas Coast: Photographs is available to order now from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and Texas Tech University Press.

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Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary hosts Texas A&M Forest Service

On 8/12/2025, Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary received two special visitors. Mickey Merritt of Texas A&M Forest Service's *Big Tree Registry Program* and Sam Hill, a Water Resources Woodland Ecologist with Texas A&M Forest Service, came to LTNS to measure some of our large trees.

Of special interest was a Swamp Chestnut Oak tree (*Quercus michauxii* Nutt.) located along the aptly-named Big Tree Trail in the northwest portion of the sanctuary. The tree was last measured in 2011 and it ranked third in size in the state of Texas according to the *Texas Big Tree Registry*.

ONC president Mike Zuchowski, his wife Sue and Luna the cattle dog escorted our distinguished visitors to the site of the Swamp Chestnut Oak. The group also visited several other of the sanctuary's largest trees.

Mr. Merritt and Ms. Hill report that ONC's sanctuary champion Swamp Chestnut Oak has maintained its ranking as the **third largest in Texas**.

2011 measurements:

155 inches in circumference

103 feet in height

112 feet of average crown spread

Tree Index: 286 points

2025 measurements:

165 inches in circumference

107 feet in height

104 feet of average crown spread

Tree Index: 298 points

A massive limb has fallen, which contributed to the decrease in average crown spread.

Mickey Merritt commented that the tree is "...definitely still in good health and hopefully has many years left to grow."

For more information, visit the Texas Big Tree Registry website:

<https://texasforestinfo.tamu.edu/BigTree/Registry/Search>



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OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB MEMORIES
PHOTOS FROM THE PAST



A work Group - including Edna Miner,
Nance Cunningham and Joe Heiser - putting up fence
at
Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary

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Notes from LTNS

So far in 2025, Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary (LTNS) has hosted youth groups from various organizations, including:

The Woods Project

(introducing inner-city Houston kids to nature)

Scouting America

(encompassing Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts)

YMCA Camp Cullen

(whose group included young people from Texas, New Zealand and the United Kingdom)

Outdoor Nature Club is proud to assist these organizations in introducing young people to the natural world and the unique flora and fauna of the Pineywoods region of Texas.



Mike Zuchowski is coordinating work groups to build a new tractor bridge to replace the one destroyed by a hurricane. This bridge provides passage across Mill Brook, allowing access between Big Meadow and John Halm Cullinan Meadow.

If you can assist in the coming months, please contact Mike Z at info@outdoornatureclub.org or (214) 288-9383. Thank you.



Are you interested in meeting virtually with fellow ONC members?

If you might like to meet via Zoom to discuss nature topics, please contact info@outdoornatureclub.org to be connected to the proposed host, Sergio H.

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**Outdoor Nature Club is
planning some big events
for 2026. Stay tuned!**

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Outdoor Nature Club

Federal Tax ID No. 74-6062060

NEW / RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

ONC PARENT ORGANIZATION – (ENTER AMOUNT ON RIGHT)

\$2 Youth
\$8 Individual
\$15 Family
\$40 Supporting
\$250 Life Member \$ _____

ORNITHOLOGY STUDY GROUP – (OPTIONAL)

\$12 Individual
\$15 Family \$ _____

DONATION – (OPTIONAL)

ONC General Fund \$ _____
Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary \$ _____
Ornithology Group \$ _____

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO OUTDOOR NATURE CLUB... TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

ACCESS TO LITTLE THICKET NATURE SANCTUARY REQUIRES NEW MEMBERS TO RECEIVE AN AREA ORIENTATION. PLEASE EMAIL US AT info@outdoornatureclub.org OR SCHEDULE YOUR ORIENTATION ON OUR WEBSITE. [WWW.OUTDOORNATURECLUB.ORG](http://www.outdoornatureclub.org)

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP _____ EMAIL _____

Outdoor Nature Club P. O. Box 1014 Bellaire, TX 77402-1014

a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity devoted to the study and appreciation of nature