

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.C.R. 30
By: Huffman
Administration
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Designating Matagorda County as the official Birding Capital of Texas for a 10-year period ending in 2035.

Situated on the Texas coast, Matagorda County provides a diverse set of habitats that welcome hundreds of bird species each year.

The county's shoreline and marshes attract birds such as ospreys, pelicans, and egrets, while inland terrains are home to hawks, hummingbirds, blackbirds, and more; along the area's bays and rivers, loons, cormorants, and mergansers can be found, and the county is also on the pathway for numerous migratory species, including flycatchers, vireos, and orioles.

Since 1993, the county has participated in the Audubon Christmas Bird Count, and it has consistently earned a top ranking for its rich diversity of species; during the 2023-2024 count, the county had 225 types of birds in its tally, taking first place for locations north of the U.S.-Mexico border; in addition, it had the only examples of such rare birds as the surf scoter and the blue grosbeak.

Matagorda County features many conservation areas that help protect bird habitats; these include the Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge, the Mad Island Wildlife Management Area, The Nature Conservancy's Clive Runnells Family Mad Island Marsh Preserve, the Matagorda Peninsula Coastal Management Area, and the Dog Island Preserve, which together encompass more than 26,000 acres. In addition, residents and visitors can enjoy the region's biodiversity at the Matagorda County Birding Nature Center and the Matagorda Bay Nature Park, and Palacios is the site of the annual Matagorda Bay Birdfest, where attendees can enjoy bird tours, a parade, a youth art contest, and other activities.

Matagorda County has demonstrated a notable commitment to preserving its abundant natural resources, ensuring that it will continue to host myriad bird species, and the county's status as a premier location to appreciate avian wildlife is indeed deserving of recognition.

RESOLVED

That the 89th Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate Matagorda County as the official Birding Capital of Texas.

That, in accordance with the provisions of Section 391.003(e) (relating to providing that a place designation expires on the 10th anniversary of its designation), Government Code, this designation remain in effect until the 10th anniversary of the date this resolution is finally passed by the legislature.