

Section III - Acknowledgements

Mike Berger	TPWD Wildlife Division Director
Larry McKinney	TPWD Coastal Fisheries Director
Phil Durocher	TPWD Inland Fisheries Director
Lydia Saldana	TPWD Communications Division Director
Ron George	TPWD Program Director, Science Research and Diversity Program - Wildlife Division (Retired)

Technical Assistance

Andy Price	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Wildlife Division
Bob Gottfried	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Wildlife Division
Cliff Shackelford	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Wildlife Division
Duane Schlitter	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Wildlife Division
Gary Garrett	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Inland Fisheries Division
John Young	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Wildlife Division
Mike Quinn	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Wildlife Division
Paul Hammerschmidt	Texas Parks and Wildlife - Coastal Fisheries Division (Retired)

Wildlife Diversity Policy Advisory Committee

<i>Terry Austin (chair)</i>	<i>Audubon Texas (retired)</i>
Damon Waitt	Brown Center for Environmental Education - Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
David Wolfe	Environmental Defense
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Susan Kaderka	National Wildlife Federation, Gulf States Field Office
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Troy Hibbitts	Texas Herpetological Society
Wallace Rogers	TPWD Private Lands Advisory Board

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy Working Groups

Aquatic Working Group

<i>Gary Garrett (chair)</i>	<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>
<i>Paul Hammerschmidt (chair)</i>	<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>

Carrie Thompson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Celeste Brancel	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Chad Norris	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Cindy Loeffler	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Courtney Cole	
David Abrego	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Forrest Mitchell	Texas A & M University, College Station
Jim Kennedy	University of North Texas
John Karges	The Nature Conservancy
Keith A. Crandall	Brigham Young University
Ken Steigman	The Nature Conservancy
Kirk Winemiller	Texas A & M University, College Station
Marsha Reimer	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Mike Quinn	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Olga Minich	Stephan F. Austin State University
Paul Silva	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Randy Blankinship	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Randy Gibson	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Robert Howells	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Ruben Chavez	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Scott Whiting	Houston Zoo
Tim Bonner	Texas State University

Bird Working Group

<i>Christina Williams (chair)</i>	<i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i>
<i>Cliff Shackelford (chair)</i>	<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>
Beau Hardegree	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bill Eley	Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Bill Holliday	Graduate Student
Bob Richards	Private Individual
Brent Burt	Stephen F. Austin State University
Brent Ortego	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Carroll Cordes	United States Geological Survey
Cecilia Riley	Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Craig Farquhar	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Cyndee Baker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Dave Holdermann	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Dave Morrison	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
David Sierra	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
David Wolfe	Environmental Defense
Derrick Holdstock	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Don Wilhelm	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Duane Schlitter	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Fred Collins	Katy Prairie Conservancy & Houston Audubon Society
Gail Johnson	Houston Zoo
George Veni	Texas Speleological Survey
Gordon LInam	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Heather Whitlaw	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jack Eitnrear	Center for the Study of Tropical Birds, Inc.
Jay Roberson	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Jeff Mundy	Houston Audubon Society
Jeff Raasch	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Attwater's Prairie Chicken Captive Propagation - Houston Zoological Gardens
Jerry Caruviotis	Texas Speleological Survey
Jerry Fant	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jim Gallagher	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Jim Neal	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
John Davis	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
John Hughes	Environmental Defense
John Maresh	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Judit Green	The Conservation Fund
Julie Shackelford	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kathleen Martin	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Keith Crenshaw	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kelly Bender	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Ken Saunders	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kevin Mayes	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Lee Elliot	The Nature Conservancy
Lois Balin	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Marcy Brown Marsden	University of Dallas & Audubon Texas
Marla Bays	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
Marty Underwood	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Melanie Pavlas	Lower Colorado River Authority
Michelle Amador	Environmental Defense Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi & Padre Island National Seashore
Michelle Kolar	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Mike Quinn	Audubon Texas
Ned Wright	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Omar Bocanegra	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Patricia Morton	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Phil Glass	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Richard Heilbrun	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Ricky Maxey	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Robert Perez	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Robyn Cobb	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Roy Kleinsasser	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Sean Smith	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Smiley Nava	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Steve DeMaso	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Sumita Prasad	Fermata, Inc.
Susan Dillon	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Terry Turney	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Tim Jurgensen	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Valerie Collins	Texas Department of Transportation
Wade Harrell	The Nature Conservancy
Wendy Ledbetter	The Nature Conservancy

Herpetofauna Working Group

<i>Andy Price (chair)</i>	<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>
<i>Richard Kazmaier (chair)</i>	<i>West Texas A & M University</i>
<i>Andy Gluesenkamp</i>	<i>Zara Environmental</i>

Bob Rogers	
Carl Lieb	University of Texas, El Paso
Charles Smith	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Clarence Wright	Texas Zoo
Craig Rudolph	United States Forest Service
Crystal S. Nelson	
Dan Saenz	United States Forest Service
David Haynes	Texas Herpetological Society
David Hillis	University of Texas, Austin
Donald Ruthven	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Donna Shaver	National Parks Service
Francis Rose	Texas State University
Jim Dixon	Texas A&M University, College Station
John Himes	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
John Karges	The Nature Conservancy
Johnny Binder	
Jonathan Campbell	University of Texas, Arlington
Julie Wicker	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kathryn Vaughan	Texas A&M University, College Station
Kelly McCoy	Angelo State University
Kevin Herriman	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Lance McBrayer	Stephan F. Austin State University
Lee Fitzgerald	Texas A&M University, College Station
Leeann Linam	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Michael McCord	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Mike Duran	The Nature Conservancy
Mike Forstner	Texas State University
Mike Howlett	East Texas Herpetological Society
Mike Miller	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Mitch Sternberg	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Neil Ford	
Paige Najvar	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Pat Burchfield	Gladys Porter Zoo
Pat Connor	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Robyn Cobb	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Scott Lerich	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Stan Mays	Houston Zoo
Steve Levey	Private Individual
Terri Cox	Cameron Park Zoo
Travis Laduc	University of Texas, Austin
Troy Hibbitts	Texas Herpetological Society
Vernon Dye	Texas Herpetological Society

Mammal Working Group

<i>John Young (chair)</i>	<i>Texas Parks and Wildlife Department</i>
<i>Evelyn Merz (chair)</i>	<i>Sierra Club, Lone Star Chapter</i>
Alisa Shull	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Amy Sugeno	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Bill Adams	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Butch Weckerly	Texas State University

Clarence Wright	The Texas Zoo
Cynthia Bennett	
Dave Cook	
Duane Schlitter	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Earl G. Zimmerman	University of North Texas
Jane Packard	Texas A&M University, College Station
John Baccus	Texas State University
Kathy Gaughan	Houston Zoo
Lisa Williams	The Nature Conservancy
Loren K. Ammerman	Angelo State University
Meg Goodman	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Michael Tewes	Texas A&M University, Kingsville-CKWRI
Paige Najvar	United State Fish and Wildlife Service
Pat Clements	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Corpus Christi Ecological Services
Pete Riger	Houston Zoo
Raymond S. Matlack	West Texas A&M University
Robert Dowler	Angelo State University
Scott P. Lerich	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Tinker Boyd	Houston Zoo

Contributors and Editorial Assistance

Beau Hardegree	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bill Eley	Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Bob Petersen	Private Landowner
Bobby Cochran	Defenders of Wildlife
Brandt Mannchen	Sierra Club - Houston Regional Group
Brent Ortego	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Brett Johnson	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Brian Sullivan	Playa Lakes Joint Venture
Butch Fralia	Texas Speleological Survey
Carroll Cordes	U.S. Geological Survey
Cecilia Riley	Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Christina Williams	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Cindy Loeffler	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Cliff Shackelford	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Craig Farquhar	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Dave Holdermann	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Dave Morrison	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
David Bezanson	Natural Area Preservation Association
David Sierra	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
David Wolfe	Environmental Defense
Derrick Holdstock	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Diana Foss	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Don Wilhelm	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Doyle Mosier	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Duane Schlitter	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Fred Collins	Katy Prairie Conservancy & Houston Audubon Society
George Veni	Texas Speleological Survey
Gordon Linam	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Greg Kerouac	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Heather Whitlaw	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jack Eitniew	Center for the Study of Tropical Birds, Inc.
Jackie Poole	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jay Roberson	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jeff Mundy	Houston Audubon Society
Jeff Raasch	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jerry Fant	Texas Speleological Survey
Jim Gallagher	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jim Neal	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
John Davis	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
John Hughes	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Judit Green	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Julie Shackelford	The Conservation Fund
Kathleen Martin	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Keith Crenshaw	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kelly Bender	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Ken Saunders	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kevin Mayes	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Lee Elliot	The Nature Conservancy
Lois Balin	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Marcy Brown Marsden	University of Dallas & Audubon Texas
Marla Bays	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Marty Underwood	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Melanie Pavlas	Lower Colorado River Authority
Michelle Amador	Environmental Defense
	Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi & Padre Island National
Michelle Kolar	Seashore
Mike Quinn	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Omar Bocanegra	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Patricia Morton	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Phil Glass	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Richard Heilbrun	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Ricky Maxey	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Robert Perez	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Roy Kleinsasser	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Smiley Nava	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Steve DeMaso	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Sumita Prasad	Fermata, Inc.
Susan Dillon	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Terry Turney	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Tim Jurgensen	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Valerie Collins	Texas Dept of Transportation
Wade Harrell	The Nature Conservancy
Wendy Ledbetter	The Nature Conservancy

Public Comment Support and Assistance

Adam Krueger	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Brett Johnson	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Dave Holderman	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Devon Courtney	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Heather Whitlaw	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jay Whiteside	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
John Davis	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Karen Pianka	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Keith Crenshaw	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kelly Bender	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Kristal Cain	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Lance Robinson	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Marla Bays	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Maria Araujo	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Mike Miller	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Nancy Gallacher	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Ricky Maxey	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Russell Kyle	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Terry Turney	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Tom Harvey	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

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Abilene Zoo	Abilene, Texas
Cameron Park Zoo	Waco, Texas
Dallas Zoo	Dallas Texas
Ellen Trout Zoo	Lufkin, Texas
Gladys Porter Zoo	Brownsville, Texas
Hornsby Bend Center of Environmental Research	Austin, Texas
Houston Zoo	Houston, Texas
Kerr Wildlife Management Area	Hunt, Texas
LCRA's McKinney Roughs	Bastrop, Texas
Magoffin Home State Historical Site	El Paso, Texas
San Antonio Zoo	San Antonio, Texas
Science Spectrum	Lubbock, Texas
Texas State Aquarium	Corpus Christi, Texas
Texas State University	San Marcos, Texas
USFWS - Austin Ecological Services Office	Austin, Texas

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- Crandall, K.A., and J.W. Fetzner, Jr. 2003. State of Texas – Crayfish species list *Procambarus (Ortmannicus) nechesae* Hobbs, 1990.
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Glossary

Word	Definition
Abiotic Factor	The non-living part of an ecosystem; consists of soil, water, air, sunlight, and climate.
Acidic	The condition of water or soil that contains a sufficient amount of acid substances to lower the pH below 7.0.
Agariciid	Family of stony corals.
Alcyonarians	Anthozoans having eight branched tentacles and eight mesenteries.
Allocthanous	Lake sediments which are external to the lake system itself.
Alluvial	Pertaining to material carried or laid down by running water. Alluvium is the material deposited by streams. It includes gravel, sand, silt, and clay.
Anthropogenic	Originating from the activity of humans.
Anticyclonic	Having a sense of rotation about the local vertical opposite to that of the earth's rotation; that is, clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere, counterclockwise in the Southern Hemisphere, undefined at the equator. It is the opposite of cyclonic.
Aquatic	Pertaining to water; an animal that lives in the water (fresh, brackish, or salt).
Bajadas	Shallow slopes that lie at the base of rocky hills, where materials accumulate from the weathering of the rocks.
Baygall	A strongly acidic wetland forest.
Benthic	Pertaining to areas of water (and organisms) at the bottom of a water body, like the bottom of a lake.
Berm-crest	The seaward limit of the nearly horizontal portion of a beach formed by the deposition of sediment by receding waves. A beach may have more than one berm.
Biotic Factor	The living part of an ecosystem; consists of predator-prey relationships, competition, and the living organisms themselves.
Bog	A wetland that accumulates acidic peat.
Bottomland	Lowlands along streams and rivers, usually on alluvial floodplains that are periodically flooded.
Brackish	Brackish water is water that is saltier than fresh water, but not as salty as sea water. It may result from mixing of seawater with fresh water, as in estuaries, or it may occur naturally, as in brackish fossil aquifers. Technically, brackish water contains between 0.5 and 30 grams of salt per litre—more often expressed as 0.5 to 30 parts per thousand (ppt or ‰). Thus, brackish covers a range of salinity regimes and is not considered a precisely defined condition.
Calcareous	Consisting of or containing calcium carbonate; a soil rich in calcium salts, derived from limestone or chalk. Also, an organism which has an affinity for such an alkaline or basic soil.
Cienega	Permanently saturated seep wetland.

Claypan	The layer of clay found beneath the subsoil which limits or slows the downward movement of water through the soil. A claypan is typically found beneath the soils of the Grand Prairie for example.
Comatulid	Feather star: free-swimming stalkless crinoid with ten feathery arms; found on muddy sea bottoms.
Community	The living part of any ecosystem.
Concomitant	Occurring or existing concurrently.
Consocias	Climax community characterized by the dominance of a single species.
Crinoid	A marine invertebrate, usually possessing a cup-shaped body and five or more feathery tentacles. A few hundred species presently exist, but thousands of extinct species have been found in fossil form, particularly in Paleozoic Era limestones. The crinoids' distinctive skeletons make them important Paleozoic index fossils.
Deciduous	Having leaves that fall off or are shed seasonally to avoid adverse weather conditions such as cold or drought.
Demersal	Sinking to or lying on the bottom; living on or near the bottom and feeding on benthic organisms.
Diapiric	Creation of an anticlinal fold in which a mobile core, such as salt or gypsum, has pierced through the more brittle overlying rock.
Downdrip	Water bearing rock layers which 'dip' below other rock layers.
Downcutting	A valley-deepening process caused by erosion of a stream bed.
Ecosystem	A network of living and non-living elements in a manner that sustains life.
Emergent Vegetation	Plants that are partly in water and partly exposed, such as plants that are rooted in water but whose upper parts are aerial or floating.
Eolian	Term describing the process of wind erosion, transport, and deposition, and wind-created deposits and structure such as sand dune.
Epibenthic	Relates to the area on top of the sea floor. Epibenthic organisms may be freely moving or sessile (permanently attached to a surface).
Epifaunal	Organisms that live attached to, but above, the substrate.
Estuarine	Having the qualities of an area where a fresh water body meets a saline water body.
Estuary	Where a fresh water body meets a saline water body.
Euryhaline	Capable of tolerating a wide range of salt water concentrations.
Eutrophic	Having waters rich in mineral and organic nutrients that promote a proliferation of plant life, especially algae, which reduces the dissolved oxygen content and often causes the extinction of other organisms.
Eutrophication	The process of becoming eutrophic.
Evapotranspiration	The water lost from an area through the combined effects of evaporation from the ground surface and transpiration from the vegetation.
Evergreen	A plant which never loses all of its leaves at one time.
Extinction	The ceasing of existence of a species or group of species.

Extirpation	The elimination or disappearance of a species or subspecies from a particular area, but not from its entire range.
Facultative	Literally means "optional"; an adjective used to describe that an environmental factor is optionally (not necessarily) required for an organism to survive.
Flocculation	A condition in which clays, polymers or other small charged particles become attached and form a fragile structure, a floc or a coagulated mass of particles in a liquid.
Floodplain	An area of relatively level land that is inundated by water from time to time (i.e. banks of streams or rivers).
Fluvial	Term used to describe river or stream-related features or processes. Fluvial deposits are sediments deposited by the flowing water of a stream.
Forb	Any herbaceous plant other than those in the grass, sedge, and rush families.
Georeference	To establish the relationship between page coordinates on a planar map and known real-world coordinates.
Geotaxic	The movement of a motile organism using the earth's gravity for orientation.
Gravelly	Containing appreciable amounts of rock fragments.
Ground-truthing	Strict validation with respect to reference data.
Halophytic	Salt tolerant.
Hydric	Relating to, marked by, or requiring considerable moisture.
Hydromodification	Alteration of the hydrologic characteristics of surface waters, which in turn could cause degradation of water resources.
Hydroperiod	The seasonal level of water in a wetland, including the frequency, timing, duration, and amount of flooding.
Hydrophytic	Refers to plants whose habitat is water or very wet places.
Imperiled	Imperiled in the nation or state/province because of rarity due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the nation or state/province.
Interfluvial	The region of higher land between two rivers that are in the same drainage system.
Intertidal	Where air, earth, and land interact.
Intertidal flats	Land that is covered by high tide and then exposed at low tide. They are also referred to as mud flats and sometimes classified as nonvegetated wetlands.
Jack-up rigs	Raised platform for oil drilling.
Karst	Areas of irregular limestone in which erosion has produced fissures, sinkholes, underground streams, and caverns.
Lacustrine	Pertaining to lakes; also refers to the characteristic zones of vegetation fringing a lake.
Loamy	A soil mix of coarse sand, silt, clay, and organic matter.
Lowland	Generally flat land at an elevation lower than the surrounding area.
Macrobenthic	Bottom dwelling organisms that can be seen with the naked eye.

Macrophytes	Large, vascular aquatic plants that grow in shallow water along the shorelines of lakes or in the slow-moving reaches of rivers.
Marine	Refers to sea water, to sediments deposited in sea water, or to animals that live in the sea, as opposed to fresh water.
Marsh	A wetland dominated by herbaceous emergent plants.
Mesic	Neither wet (hydric) nor dry (xeric); intermediate in moisture, without extremes; manytimes a habitat that is well-drained but usually moist through most of the growing season.
Mesohaline	Moderately brackish water with a salinity range of 5-18 ppt.
Nepheloid Layer	A particle rich layer on the ocean floor.
Neritic	Of, relating to, or inhabiting the shallow water, or nearshore marine zone extending from the low-tide level to a depth of 200 meters. The neritic zone is populated by benthic organisms because of the penetration of sunlight to these shallow depths.
Niche	The functional role of an organism considered in the multidimensional (i.e. time, space, water, food, shelter) environment in which it lives.
Obligatory	Synonym: required; opposite of facultative.
Osmoregulation	Control of the levels of water and mineral salts in the blood.
Palustrine	Wetlands within this category include inland marshes and swamps as well as bogs, fens, tundra and floodplains. Palustrine systems include any inland wetland which lacks flowing water and contains ocean derived salts in concentrations of less than 0.05%.
Paramuriceids	Soft coral.
Peat	A deposit of dead plant material.
Penaecids	One specific type of shrimp family.
Petrochemical	Any chemical derived from fossil fuel. These include purified fossil fuels such as methane, propane, butane, gasoline, kerosene, diesel fuel, aviation fuel, or fuel oil, and also include many agricultural chemicals such as pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers, and other items such as plastics, asphalt and synthetic fibers.
Phototaxic	The movement of an organism or a cell toward or away from a source of light.
Physiographic	The physical features of the land, in particular its slope and elevation.
Playa	A type of marsh found on the high plain of northern Texas and eastern New Mexico that is characterized by small, seasonally flooded basins with clay or fine sandy loam hydric soils and emergent hydrophytic vegetation.
Recharge	Water added to an aquifer or the process of adding water to an aquifer. Ground water recharge occurs either naturally as the net gain from precipitation, or artificially as the result of human influence.
Resaca	Ox-bow lake, or sometimes used for a shallow ravine; usually freshwater marshes along the Rio Grande bordered by bulrushes and cattails.
Sedimentation	The process that deposits soils, debris and other materials either on the ground surfaces or in bodies of water or watercourses.

Semi-submersibles	See emergent vegetation.
Shinnery	A dense growth of small trees; especially, one of scrub oak in the West and Southwest; synonymous with oak woodland.
Speciated	The evolutionary formation of new biological species, usually by the division of a single species into two or more genetically distinct ones.
Spermatophytes	Seed-producing plants.
Stenohaline	Limited to or able to live only within a narrow range of saltwater concentrations.
Stratigraphy	Study of the formation, composition, and sequence of sediments, whether consolidated or not.
Stream	A general term for a body of flowing water; natural water course containing water at least part of the year. In hydrology, it is generally applied to the water flowing in a natural channel as distinct from a canal.
Subtidal	The benthic ocean environment below low tide that is always covered by water.
Swamp	A generally wet, wooded area where standing water occurs for at least part of the year.
Terrestrial	Adapted to living on land. Not aquatic.
Terrigenous	Derived from the land, especially by erosive action. Used primarily of sediments.
Thermocline	The middle layer in a thermally stratified lake or reservoir. In this layer there is a rapid decrease in temperature with depth. Also called the metalimnion.
Tideland	Coastal land submerged during high tide.
Tinaja	Earthenware jar.
Tributary	A stream that flows into a larger stream or other body of water.
Troglobitic	Living obligatory in caves.
Upland	Land or an area of land of high elevation, especially when level.
Vulnerable	Vulnerable in the nation or state/province due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Symbol	Meaning
ac	Acre
ALCOA	Aluminum Company of America
ATSD	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease
bbf	Barrel
BCR	Bird Conservation Region
BEG	Bureau of Economic Geology
BLH	Bottomland Hardwoods
BMP	Best Management Practices
CAPA	Chlor-alkali process area
CCBNEP	Corpus Christi Bay National Estuary Program
cf	Cubic foot/feet
cfs	Cubic feet per second
cm	Centimeter
cm³	Cubic centimeter
COE	US Army Corp of Engineers
CRMWA	Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
CRP	Conservation Reserve Program
CTJV	Central Texas Joint Venture
CWA	Clean Water Act
DFW	Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex
DO	Dissolved oxygen
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESH	Essential Shrimp Habitat
FSA	Farm Service Agency
ft	Foot/feet
ft²	Square foot/feet
FWNCR	Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge
GBNEP	Galveston Bay National Estuary Program
GCVJ	Gulf Coast Joint Venture
GIS	Geographic Information System
GIWW	Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
GLO	Texas General Land Office
GM	Greenbelt Municipal
GMFMC	Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council
GMP	Gulf of Mexico Program
gpm	Gallons per minute
GSMFC	Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission
h	Hour
ha	Hectare
HGAC	Houston-Galveston Area Council
IAFWA	International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
IBWC	International Boundary and Water Commission
in	Inch

iSWM	Integrated Stormwater Management
IWA	Industrial Water Authority
kg	Kilogram
km	Kilometer
km²	Square kilometer
L	Liter
LANDSAT	Land remote sensing satellite
lb	Pound
LCRA	Lower Colorado River Authority
LIP	Landowner Incentive Program
LLM	Lower Laguna Madre
LMV	Lower Mississippi Valley
LMVJV	Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture
m	Meter
mi	Mile
m²	Square meter
m³	Cubic meter
mi²	Square mile
ml	Milliliter
mm	Millimeter
MMS	US Department of Interior Minerals Management Service
MPRSA	Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act
MSL	Mean Sea Level
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NABCI	North American Bird Conservation Initiative
NAWCP	North American Waterbird Conservation Plan
NAWMP	North American Waterfowl Management Plan
NBCI	Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative
NCTCOG	North Central Texas Council of Governments
NDD	Natural Diversity Database
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NETMWD	Northeast Texas Municipal Water District
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRC	National Research Council
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NST	National Status and Trends Program
NTU	Nephelometric Turbidity Units
NWI	National Wetlands Inventory
°C	Degree Celsius
OCS	Outer Continental Shelf
PAH	Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons
PCB	Polychlorinated biphenyls
PCO	Point Comfort Operations
PFW	Partners for Wildlife
PLJV	Playa Lake Joint Venture
ppm	Parts per million
ppt	Parts per thousand
PWPA	Panhandle Water Planning Area
RGJV	Rio Grande Joint Venture

RRA	Second
s	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
SAV	Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales
SEMARNAT	Southern Regional Climate Center
SRCC	State Wildlife Grants
SWG	Texas Administrative Code
TAC	Texas Agricultural Experiment Station
TAES	Texas A&M University
TAMU	Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TCEQ	Texas Cooperative Extension
TCEX	Texas Department of Health
TDH	Total Dissolved Salts
TDS	Texas General Land Office
TGLO	Total maximum daily loads
TMDL	Texas Nature Tourism Council
TNTC	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
TPWD	Texas Speleological Survey
TSS	Texas Water Development Board
TWDB	Texas Department of Transportation
TXDOT	Upper Laguna Madre
ULM	US Army Corp of Engineers
USACE	US Department of the Interior
USDI	US Environmental Protection Agency
USEPA	US Forest Service
USFS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
USFWS	US Geological Survey
USGS	United States Shorebird Conservation Plan
USSCP	University of Texas at El Paso
UTEP	World Birding Center
WBC	Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
WHIP	Wildlife Management Area
WMA	