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**Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority**  
**Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir**  
**P.O. Box 68**  
**Fannin, TX 77960**

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To receive copies of this newsletter, please complete the form below and mail to the Coletto Creek Office at P.O. Box 68, Fannin, TX 77960.

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## Last Minute Christmas Gift Ideas

Are you struggling trying to decide what to get for your favorite outdoors person? Let the staff at Coletto Creek help you. Yes, we do have some items that you could use. Ranging from inexpensive to more costly. First, "hot off the press", we have the "Images for Conservation – Book II" for \$45, which is a compilation of the winning professional wildlife photos taken in 2008 for the ICF – Pro Wildlife Photo Contest; in which Coletto Creek is well represented. Next, we have copies of the "Coastal Bend Wildlife Photo Contest – Book IV" for \$40 which is a compilation of the winning wildlife photos entered in the 2007 CBWPC in which Coletto Creek is also well represented. Also offered are Coletto Creek 25th Anniversary T-shirts for only \$10 each. Stocking stuffers include Reservoir Topography maps for \$3 each and Coletto Creek Bald Eagle Patches for only \$4 each. The official "Texas Campground Guide & Cookbook" for \$18, which lists the majority of the public campgrounds in Texas along with favorite camping recipes, makes a great gift. The park staff would be glad to put together a "gift certificate" for your favorite outdoors person. Gift certificates can be for Coletto's Annual Pass, a weekend stay in one of our campsites or cabins, or just several days of entry into the park. So if you're still looking for a last minute gift – consider Coletto.



# Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir

*"Where Family Memories Are Made Daily"*

2009 Winter Newsletter

[www.coletocreekpark.com](http://www.coletocreekpark.com)

Volume 10, Issue 4



## Christmas Greetings

"The Coletto Creek Staff wishes each of you a very Merry Christmas and a most joyous New Year. We hope your holiday travels are safe. We truly appreciate that you choose to use the GBRA Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir for your outings and look forward to serving you in 2010."



## Victoria Photography Club Partnership and 2010 Coletto Photo Contest

*by Jim Payne, VPC President*

A study conducted by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service indicated taking pictures of wildlife and scenery has become a major recreational activity. Realizing the potential for making this leisure activity possible for area photographers, members of the Victoria Photography Club (VPC) entered a partnership with GBRA-Coletto Creek Park in June 2008 to promote wildlife conservation and photography. In September 2009, the partnership agreement was renewed.

Members of the VPC have worked on a number of projects with Wilfred Korth and his staff at the Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir. One of these projects involved the construction of several photography blinds. One, dubbed the "eagle's nest blind" was built and located close to an eagle's nest on the Coletto property. The blind was moved from its original location this year to a location with a better view and one that will be less stressful for the eagles. VPC members recently put a new coat of camouflage paint on it. Several other ground blinds

were built using PVC pipe and shade cloth covering. The plans for this year call for the construction of additional ground blinds. The location of where these blinds will be placed is under discussion. The blinds should be ready to use in the early spring.

In 2009 the VPC members also assisted the Coletto Creek staff by writing and publishing the rules for the annual Coletto Creek Photo Contest. Posters about the Contest were made. In addition, the rules were placed on the VPC's web page. Judging for the contest was done by Club members. The VPC will be partnering with Coletto Creek again for its 2010 Photo Contest. The format for this year's contest will again be only digital images and members of the VPC will again serve as judges to review all entries. Cash awards will be given for the top photography prize winners. The official rules and regulations for the 2010 Coletto Creek Photo Contest already have been

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Victoria Photography Club Partnership ➤ Christmas Gift Ideas

Texas Master Naturalist ➤ Drought is Broken

## Victoria Photography Club Partnership and 2010 Coletto Photo Contest Continued from page 1

posted on VPC's website at [www.victoriaphotographyclub.com/other-contests.asp](http://www.victoriaphotographyclub.com/other-contests.asp) or stop by the Park office to pick up the rules. All submitted photos must be taken within the boundaries of the Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir; and must be submitted by noon on May 14, 2010.

Conducting photography workshops is another area in which the VPC and Coletto Creek work together to promote photography and conservation. Jim Feig, a long-time member of the VPC, conducted a basic photography workshop for approximately 15 members of the Mid-Coast Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist organization.



Photo by Jim Payne

Other workshops are being planned for the spring. VPC members are working with the district Boy Scouts with hopes of conducting workshops for the Photography Merit Badge.

Coletto Creek will be providing the facilities for the workshop. In addition, four workshops/outings, one for each season of the year, are being planned for the members of the VPC; plus public photography workshops are being evaluated.

Members of the Victoria Photography Club have enjoyed a wonderful association with Mr. Korth and his GBRA-Coletto Creek staff. The club members are looking forward to continuing our work together as we promote photography and wildlife conservation in our area.

## The Extended Drought Eases at Coletto

With more than 16 inches of rain since Sept. 1, the reservoir has not only returned to its "normal" full level, 98.3 feet msl, but staff has actually had to make several releases of excess water in November and December. Since Sept. 1 the reservoir has risen 4 feet, which has dramatically changed the appearance of the reservoir since it has been below normal since Nov. 15, 2007.

With the continuing rainfall runoff into the reservoir, fishing has been great for both bass and catfish. The full level has covered a great deal of new shoreline vegetation which will provide added nutrients to the reservoir and encourage more fish production over the next couple of years. Both the fish and wading shorebirds are also enjoying the new habitats provided by this inundated vegetation.

With the increase in numbers of fish being caught and heading into some great winter fishing times, staff thought it would be a good time to repost Coletto's "Water Body All-Ages, All-Tackle Fish Records" as of November, 2009, as maintained by TPWD. The Coletto office maintains a certified scale on which to record your record catch up to 30 pounds. If your catch is over that weight, the office can help you find a certified scale in the area to use. Plus, we keep the TWPD forms available for your use to file for a record catch.



Record Catfish 46 pounds - March 23, 2007  
by Kevin Schultz

| Species                          | Weight | Length | Date     | Angler             | Method        |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|----------|--------------------|---------------|
| Bass, Largemouth                 | 12.81  | 27.50  | 03/13/97 | Jimmy Johnson      | Rod and Reel  |
| Bass, Palmetto (Striped X White) | 7.18   | 23.75  | 03/19/03 | Kenneth Tyner      | Rod and Reel  |
| Bluegill                         | 0.74   | 9.88   | 03/17/05 | Dixie Sanders      | Rod and Reel  |
| Buffalo, Smallmouth              | 25.50  | 31.50  | 12/24/05 | Sonya Little       | Rod and Reel  |
| Carp, Common                     | 13.14  | 30.50  | 11/15/02 | Clifford Powers    | Rod and Reel  |
| Catfish, Blue                    | 51.50  | 44.50  | 05/22/03 | Larry Volkmer      | Trotline      |
| Catfish, Channel                 | 9.73   | 28.00  | 12/30/01 | J. Tyler Janota    | Throw Line    |
| Catfish, Flathead                | 46.00  | 46.00  | 03/23/07 | Kevin Schultz      | Jug Line      |
| Crappie, Black                   | 1.39   | 14.00  | 04/21/02 | Hilda Lovely       | Rod and Reel  |
| Crappie, White                   | 1.92   | 15.50  | 08/09/98 | Ann Holland        | Rod and Reel  |
| Gar, Longnose                    | 24.30  | 52.00  | 02/20/04 | Kelly Stanford     | Bow and Arrow |
| Gar, Spotted                     | 5.50   | 34.00  | 07/11/09 | Mathew Hendrickson | Bow and Arrow |
| Mullet, Striped                  | 11.72  | 31.00  | 05/23/03 | Brian Morris       | Bow and Arrow |
| Sunfish, Redear                  | 1.20   | 11.00  | 01/30/09 | Mary Dicken        | Rod and Reel  |
| Tilapia, Blue                    | 3.94   | 16.75  | 05/29/07 | Robert Blackburn   | Bow and Arrow |

## What is a Texas Master Naturalist?

by Wilfred Korth

The "Texas Master Naturalist" program was created in 1998 by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service to help generate a corp of "trained" volunteers to provide service to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within the many different eco-regions of Texas. I went through the program in 2004 and even with years of

initial training from more than 50 hours offered during 9 sessions which run from February to June. The 1st 2010 session addresses Texas geology and ecological regions, Mid-coast indigenous peoples, plus how to take field notes. Two sessions are at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), one covering Mid-coast ecology: geologic history, flora and fauna of Black Jack Peninsula; and approved volunteer projects.



Photo by Wilfred Korth

The other session at ANWR covers technology and techniques for interpreting nature. A session at Welder Wildlife Foundation covers upland ecology. Fennessey Ranch hosts one covering riparian ecology.

Mad Island Marsh Preserve is the site for a session covering coastal prairie and wetland ecology. Bay ecology is the subject of an on-the-water session, and barrier island ecology is covered in a session at the Matagorda Island Nature Conservancy. The last session includes native plant identification and habitat use; as well as invasive species.

Second, TMNs must complete 8 hours of advanced training. Advanced training opportunities range from identification of invasive plants and animals to how to

evaluate wildlife habitat. And third, TMNs must complete 40 hours of volunteer service, to become certified. To remain certified, TMNs must continue to complete 8 hours of advanced training and 40 hours of volunteer service every year. Volunteer service projects range from giving a presentation on alligators to a school group to helping maintain a nature trail. Each person chooses which approved advanced training and which approved service projects they wish to participate in. Opportunities are available from introductory to expert levels.

If you are conservation minded, have some free time that you want to put to beneficial use, have a passion for the outdoors and working with others, and have a desire to learn more about the ecosystem we live in and how to work on preservation of a healthy system then consider signing up for the MidCoast Chapter's 2010 class. You can find more information at their website -midcoast.tamu.edu or contact Wilfred at the Coletto Creek Park at 361-575-6366 who is a Master Naturalist.

The Texas Master Naturalist - Midcoast Chapter is now recruiting for its 2010 Training Program. It requires three things to become a Master Naturalist. First is learning about our area's ecosystems. TMNs complete 40 hours of