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[www.gbra.org](http://www.gbra.org)

**Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority**  
**Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir**  
**P.O. Box 68**  
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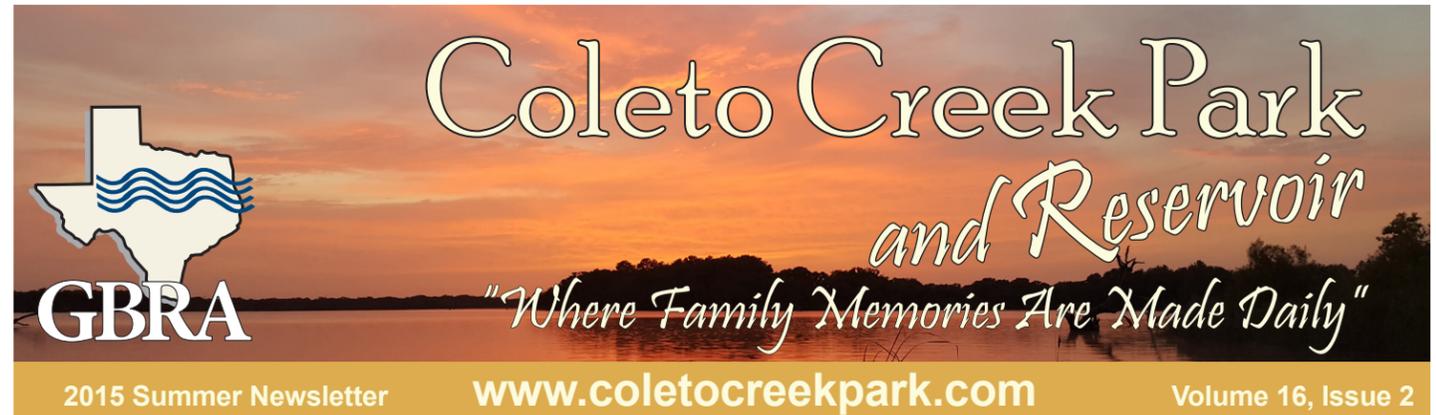
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## Coletto Voted Best of the Best in Victoria Region

Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir has once again been voted "The Best Lake" in the Victoria Region in the *Victoria Advocate's* Best of Best Contest, making this the seventh year in a row Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir has been selected "The Best Lake" in the region. Coletto was also voted in the "Top 3" for Best Park, and Best Picnic Spot. It is an honor for customers recognize Coletto's efforts to provide one of the best family oriented outdoor recreation areas in the region and take time to voice their opinion by voting in this contest.



## Spring Rains Fill Coletto Creek Reservoir Again

The Spring rains returned the Coletto Creek Reservoir to its full level on March 18, 2015. The additional rain allowed the excess flow to be released. The reservoir had not been at its full level since 2010. As a result of the low reservoir level, large amounts of vegetation had grown on the exposed shoreline that is now covered in water. This freshly flooded shoreline will tremendously help the fishery this year as it provides extra cover for small bass and a new food source for all fish.



Photo by Janet Thome

## Annual Drawing for Coletto's Bow Hunt is Rapidly Approaching

The Coletto Creek Park 18th Annual Bow Hunt deadline for submitting entries is noon Friday, Aug. 14, 2015. This annual bow hunt is for white-tail deer and feral hogs and will take place from September through December.

Hunts are restricted to the use of archery equipment only. On the first weekend of the event, Oct. 3rd, hunters may hunt only on Saturday the 10th and Sunday the 11th. The remaining weekends through Jan 3rd, th, 2016, hunters will be allowed to pre-scout and hunt in assigned areas beginning the Friday of their hunt weekend continuing through Sunday.

Annual hunts help reduce the size of the deer herd that has grown beyond the carrying capacity of the Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir's lands. Especially after this years record nuber of fawns born and help reduce the numbers of feral hogs that damage reservoir property.

The hunting compartments are managed by GBRA around the reservoir but not a part of the Coletto Creek Park. Hunters

will be allowed to harvest two antlerless deer and an unlimited number of feral hogs. Hunters may apply for the hunts individually or as groups of 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 10 per party. Each individual or group will be assigned a specific hunt area dependent on the number in their hunting party. The fee to hunt per weekend will be \$150/hunter.

To enter the random drawing for the hunts, send a 3.5" X 5.5" Postcard with name, address, daytime phone number, email address, number and names of those in the hunting party (maximum of ten, and each hunter may submit a postcard in their own name) and preferred hunt date or dates and preferred hunt compartment(s) if hunted before to GBRA-Bow Hunt, Coletto Creek Park, P.O. Box 68, Fannin, TX. 77960. Each individual is limited to only one postcard entry. No email or faxed entries will be accepted. Only those applicants drawn will be notified of the results of the annual draw.

[Coletto Assists in Roseate Spoonbill Breeding Program](#) ➡ [Kid Fish Results Coletto](#)  
[Best of the Best](#) ➡ [Annual Bow Hunt Drawing](#)

# Coletto Creek Park and Reservoir Assists in Roseate Spoonbill Collection for Captive AZA Breeding Program at the Fort Worth Zoo

By Shelly Collinsworth, Asst. Curator of Birds Fort Worth Zoo

The Roseate spoonbill, *Platalea ajaja*, with distinctive pink feathering and spatulate bill, is found across the coast of Texas, Louisiana, Florida and south through Mexico, Central and South America. Although the spoonbill population is fewer in winter, these birds reside year-round in Texas, breeding between April and June.

Unlike the large, stable populations in the tropical Americas, between 1890 and 1919 the population of North American Roseate spoonbills declined to approximately 20-25 breeding pairs (Oberholser and Kincaid 1974:133). As stated by R.P. Allen, "If a reservoir of supply had not existed to the south, the Roseate spoonbill would probably have become extinct in the United States before 1900".

During Christmas bird counts, when populations of spoonbills are at their lowest due to migration, yearly counts are conducted by the Audubon Society. The repetition of these counts show an increasing trend in the population of Roseate Spoonbills on the Texas coast despite environmental encroachment.

The Fort Worth Zoo (FWZ) has held a breeding flock of Roseate Spoonbills as a reserve stock for wild populations since the 1960s. Additionally it has had more success breeding and parent-rearing Roseate Spoonbills than any other institution worldwide.



Photo by Wilfred Korth

In 1960, after populations in the wild began showing recovery, the FWZ developed a mission to provide a captive reserve population should Texas wild flocks once again dwindle. With the cooperation of several zoos across the nation, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPW) this population has flourished.

Occasionally there is a need to infuse new genetics into the population to keep it healthy. In 1982 fledglings were first collected with the support of USFWS and TPW. In an effort to provide new genetics and support the healthy, long-standing Roseate Spoonbill captive population, the FWZ would like to begin a several year campaign to collect the extra eggs that would otherwise not survive a wild nest and raise them as a part of this isolated group.

Previous studies showed that survivorship in nests is only 50% with an average of 1.5 chicks surviving. In the first year, the FWZ would like to collect 12 eggs with the hopes that with the natural mortality of eggs and chicks it would result in 7 healthy birds. These birds would be hand-reared and integrated into the current breeding population in a large aquatic aviary built specifically to house coastal species. In addition, while in this reserve population they would act as ambassadors for their species to the public through educational display.

This process would be repeated for several more years until a solid group of breeding spoonbills can infuse their genetics into the population as new founders. The hope is to end with a total of 35 spoonbills over a several year period, with varying age groups represented.

As part of this solution, Staff from the Fort Worth Zoo visited the Coletto Creek Reservoir in May, 2015 and collected 12 spoonbill eggs from Bird Island. The hatchlings from Coletto are doing well.

The Fort Worth Zoo has an enormous amount of experience in both fieldwork and in the establishment of captive populations. The FWZ's work with the Texas horned lizard and its reintroduction is celebrated. The newly created Green Jay conservation program has already set up several pairs that are facing their first breeding season in spring 2015. The FWZ work with Spoonbills, beginning in the 1960s, has been a much loved program lead by dedicated aviculturists.

In addition to working with captive populations, FWZ is also involved in many other bird related research projects. For many years, zoo employees have traveled to the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge and Ria Lagartos in Yucatan, Mexico to participate in their bird-banding projects.

The Fort Worth Zoo is very concerned with the status of our world's bird populations, and it is doing everything within its means to conserve and protect these natural treasures.

## Park Staff Attend National Children in Nature Conference

The Coletto Creek Park is a partner in the Texas Children in Nature Network to help families and their children re-connect to nature. Two staff members attended the National Children in Nature Conference and returned with new ideas to bring families and children together to experience nature.

The "Children in Nature" international movement was inspired by the book "Last Child in the Woods" written by Richard Louv. With the loss of recess in most of our schools, more kids spending time indoors has resulted in an increase in obesity and attention deficient disorders. Studies have shown that reconnecting kids with nature and spending time outdoors can reduce stress, improve attention spans, and help with mental and physical development. Many physicians are signing on to the Children in Nature Network and writing prescriptions in an effort to get kids outdoors for their health. Coletto Creek Park has made a commitment to this partnership network to help get one million kids outdoors this year. The Park is also a partner in the Nature Rocks South Texas - TCIN group. To learn more about the full range of outdoor activities or to participate visit their website at [www.naturerockssouthtexas.org](http://www.naturerockssouthtexas.org).

## Coletto Offers Environmental Education Opportunities



Park Ranger Dan Beckendorf and Park Naturalist Anna Beckendorf held Kids Fishing Classes and Guided Nature Walks throughout the summer. This is one of the many offerings Coletto Creek Park provides as part of its commitment to Children in Nature Network providing outdoor and environmental education for school and youth groups and adult groups. Programs include freshwater ecosystem studies, Texas wildlife, guided nature hikes, alligator program, bald eagle program, boating/water safety, invasive plants and animals, coastal prairie studies, Texas fish and game regulations, and tours of reservoir and power plant operations. To learn more, contact the Coletto Creek Park office.

# 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Kids Fishing Tournament



Photo by Cliff Barbour with the Victoria Photo Club

Front row – Tyler Kirkpatrick, Victoria; Gage Kirkpatrick, Victoria; Calli Brown, Port Lavaca; Carly Migura, Victoria; Haylee Haug, Victoria; Brady Fagg, Goliad; Abigayle Fagg, Goliad; Darrel Gibson, La Vernia; And Reid Rangnow, Victoria. Back row – Peyton Brown, Shiner; Catheryne Brown, Shiner; Lori Sanderford, New Braunfels; Aimee Brown, Shiner; Paige Brown, Shiner; Lauren Gale, Cuero; And Emily Vincik, Shiner.

More than 160 kids tested their fishing skills at the GBRA/TPWD Coletto Creek Park 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Kid's Fishing Tournament held on June 6, 2015. Kids ranged in age from 2 to 16, traveling from as far away as La Vernia, New Braunfels, Portland, and Spring Branch.

Abigayle Fagg, 9 years old from Goliad not only had the overall heaviest stringer of the day with a weight of 7.86 pounds, she also took home first place in the 7-9 age group for the heaviest fish and largest catfish weighing in at 5.07 pounds.

First place winners in the three other age groups for heaviest stringers were Brady Fagg of Goliad in the 2-6 age group with a stringer weight of 5.63 pounds, Lori Sanderford of New Braunfels in the 10-12 age group had a stringer weight of 6.23 pounds, and Aimee Brown of Shiner in the 13-16 age group had a stringer weight of 1.32 pounds.

Other winners included Ty Kirkpatrick from Victoria with the heaviest crappie at 1.46 pounds and Reid Rangnow of Victoria caught the largest bass weighing in at 4.10 pounds. Calli Brown of Port Lavaca in the 7-9 age group and Haylee Haug of Victoria in the 6 and under age group both caught the smallest perch in their age groups.

All of the kids competing went home as winners for participating in the annual family oriented tournament. The tournament was presented by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Warden Association, and sponsored by Academy Sports and Outdoors. Additional supporters include GDF Suez-Coletto Creek Power, TPWD Game Wardens, Cliff Barbour of the Victoria Photo Club, Coletto BassMasters for providing hotdogs, Montana Mikes Steakhouse for providing drinks and chips, Fishing Brothers Guide Service, The Tackle Box, Robert and Shelley Mikes, Melva Don Brown with Oak Valley Livestock and Ranch, and Caleb and Andrea Wilson. Tournament Trophies were sponsored by Interstate All Battery Center of Victoria.

Plans are underway for the 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Tournament to be held Saturday, June 4, 2016. If you would like to help or support this event, contact Coletto Creek Park at 361-575-6366 or email [wkorth@gbra.org](mailto:wkorth@gbra.org).