## GETTING HERE

Port Aransas is on the northern tip of Mustang Island, about 30 minutes from downtown Corpus Christi, three hours from the Rio Grande Valley, three hours from San Antonio and four hours from Houston or Austin.

Take I-37 to Corpus Christi, then U.S. Highway 181 thru Portland, to State Highway 361 thru Aransas Pass to the free ferry ride. Or, take I-37 to Corpus Christi, right onto South Padre Island Drive and left onto State Highway 361 into Port Aransas.



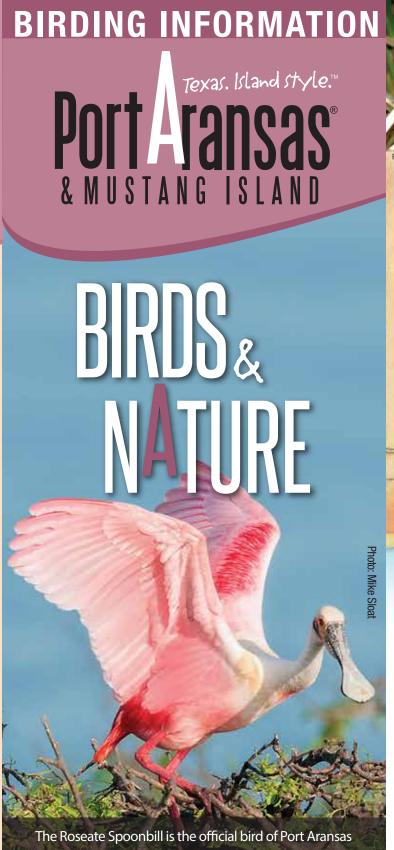


#### **Port Aransas Visitor Center**

Port Aransas Chamber of Commerce & Tourist Bureau 403 W. Cotter, Port Aransas, TX 78373 • 361-749-5919

800-45-COAST • www.portaransas.org www.whoopingcranefestival.org

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#### **Best Local Bird Watching Sites**

- A Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center 💍
- B Wetlands Park 5
- C City Fishing Pier 💍
- D J.P. Luby Pier 💍
- Ancel Brundrett Pier
- F South Jetty / I.B. Magee Beach Park
- G Horace Caldwell Pier
- H Roberts Point Park
- San Jose Island (privately owned)

- J Birding Boat Excursions
- K Jetty Boat to San Jose Island
- Beach and Dunes
- M Mustang Island State Park
- N Joan & Scott Holt Paradise Pond 5
- O Port Aransas Nature Preserve Port St. Entrance
- Port Aransas Nature Preserve Hwy 361 Entrance
- Q Wetlands Education Center-UTMSI and Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve

#### **Area Points of Interest**

- US Coast Guard Station
- Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Bureau
- Fishing Boat Docks
- Public Boat Launching Ramps
- 5 Lydia Ann Lighthouse (privately owned)
- 6 Lynn Gavit Marsh Bird Exhibit (City Hall)
- Historic Tarpon Inn
- Community Park

Service Animals ONLY allowed at all locations.



# If you love birds you'll love Port Aransas.

Located in the central flyway, Port Aransas and Mustang Island boast hundreds of permanent residents and thousands of migrants that consider this the perfect rest stop. Texas is the number one birding state and Port Aransas is a must-stop destination for avid birders. Our island offers dozens of perfect vantage points to view birdswetlands, inlets, jetties, piers, boats, and 18 miles of beaches and dunes. Boardwalks and observation towers fumish easy access to wetlands and vegetation pockets specially designed to attract birds.

There are also distinguished birding events throughout the year that you won't want to miss. The Whooping Orane Festival, held the last weekend in February, is a special event featuring world renowned speakers, exhibits, bus and boat tours, workshops and field trips. Spring and fall migration are amazing times to visit Port Aransas. With five sites on the Great Texas Birding Trail, regardless of the time of year, you'll find Port Aransas and Mustang Island as relaxing a rest stop as the birds do.









Great White Egret

Green Winged Teal Duck



Annual Whooping Orane Festival celebrated last weekend in February. isit www.whoopingcranefestival.org

### Leonabelle Turnbull Birding Center A 👆

Black Skimmer

www.citvofportaransas.org/leonabelle turnbull birding center.cfm

The popular boardwalk extends into a marsh associated with the adjoining wastewater treatment plant. Little water is available for much of the year on barrier islands such as Mustang, and the ponds here offer a consistent supply of water for a variety of wetland species. Walk along the boardwalk and from the observation tower look for Cinnamon Teal, Black-bellied Whistling Duck, Least Bittern, herons, egrets, cormorants and Roseate Spoonbills.

The boardwalk and parking area are planted with native species, so be alert for hummingbirds, warblers and other songbirds during migration. Keep your eyes open for the resident American Alligators "Boots" and "Bags"! Guided tours take place every Wednesday at 9:00am. Free viewing scopes.

#### Port Aransas Wetlands Park B www.citvofportaransas.org/wetland park.cfm

The wetland lies on a natural tidal flat along State Hwy 361. The observation platform overlooks a basin that may be thick with a variety of waterfowl and shorebirds during wet periods. This site is ephemeral and during migration the scrubby vegetation and grasses attract a number of migrant land birds.

#### Joan & Scott Holt Paradise Pond N 🕭 www.cityofportaransas.org/paradise pond.cfm

Paradise Pond is Mustang Island's only seasonal freshwater wetland and pond. The natural setting on two acres is surrounded by giant Black Willows and native coastal prairie. The board-walk leads into an oasis that can be filled with songbirds and more than 100 species of neotropical migrants on busy days.

#### South Jetty / I.B. Magee Beach Park www,nuecesbeachparks,com/ibpark,html

The jetty extends for several hundred yards into the Gulf and furnishes an excellent vantage point for observing a variety of open water species. Gulls and tems often rest at the base of the jetty, and shorebirds are usually feeding along the beach. Brown and white pelicans can be seen gliding over the Gulf year round.

#### Port Aransas Nature Preserve 0 P 🛬 www.citvofportaransas.org/nature preserve.cfm

The Nature Preserve is a 1,200 acre site composed of upland trails, elevated boardwalks, viewing towers, covered pavilion and picnic areas. This natural area's extensive tidal flats provide feeding areas and important habitat for shorebirds and endangered and threatened species. The Snowy Plover. Wilson's Plover and Homed Larks nest on the flats. There are two entrances: one at the end of Port St. and one on Highway 361 near the airport.

#### Port Aransas Sightings

- Blue-throated Hummingbir
- Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher
- Tropical Parula

For a complete checklist of birds in Port Aransas and Mustang Island, go to www.portaransas.org

#### UT Marine Science Institute Wetlands Education Center 0 & www.utmsi.utexas.edu/outreach/wetlands-education-center.html

The Wetlands Education Center occupies 3.5 acres between the UTMSI Marine Science Education Center and the South Jetty. It is a marsh/seagrass pond, landscaped and planted with various seagrasses and appropriate coastal vegetation, nourished by water from the adjacent ship channel. The public is invited to stroll the surrounding boardwalk to observe migratory waterfowl and resident marsh birds. Weekly guided tours.

#### Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve **Q** www.utmsi.utexas.edu/about-the-institute/mission-aransas-nerr.html

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration designated the Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research, with the UT Marine Science Institute as its lead agency in 2006. It is one of 28 coastal reserves in the United States, and the only one on the western coast of the Gulf of Mexico.

Comprising some 185,708 acres of marshes, mangroves, open water and coastal prairie, the Mission-Aransas Reserve is among the largest and most pristine in the program. Contact UTMSI for more information.

Service Animals ONLY allowed at all locations.

