



NEWS RELEASE

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

BUILDING STRONG®

For Immediate Release:
Jan. 5, 2011

Media Contact:
Sandra Arnold or Isidro Reyna
(409) 766-3004
swgpao@usace.army.mil
Release No. 011102

USACE Galveston Assists Houston Audubon Society With Annual Bird Count

GALVESTON, Texas (Jan. 5, 2011) - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District, assisted the Houston Audubon Society Dec. 30, 2010 with their 46th annual Christmas Bird Count at the Old River and the 34th annual Buffalo Bayou count Jan. 2, 2011.

“We provided logistical assistance in the form of allowing the Audubon Society vehicle access to USACE areas where the general public is not able to drive and with boat transportation along the Trinity River and the Addicks and Barker reservoirs so that the birds could be surveyed in these areas,” said Natural Resources Manager Richard Long, USACE Galveston District.

The annual bird counts help identify environmental issues and local trends in bird populations that can indicate habitat fragmentation or signal an immediate environmental threat, such as groundwater contamination or poisoning from improper use of pesticides, and provide conservationists with vital data used for long term perspectives.

“The Old River 2010 Christmas Bird Count had a record 154 species,” said Harry Elliot, Old River Christmas Bird Count compiler. “We recorded the most total number of birds seen for each of 41 species and the lowest for each of four species seen during the last eight years.”

The count included duck and shore bird species as well as many “new birds” such as the Brown Creeper, White-tailed Hawk and the Ash-throated Flycatcher. The highlight of the count included spotting the Crested Caracara and Surf Scoter as they had not reported in previous counts.

“As 2008 was a low count year due to Hurricane Ike and dry conditions, few woodland birds had a lower count than 2008 but still were relatively low by historical standards,” said Elliot.

The Buffalo Bayou counters set a new unofficial count record of 135 species, with the previous high being 132 species in 2006. The total number of species recorded over the 34-year history of the count now stands at 201 species.

“We had a great day for birding,” said Adam Wood, Buffalo Bayou Christmas Bird Count co-compiler. “Some interesting notes are that the Inca Dove was not seen for the very first time in the count’s 34-year history and Common Grackles were recorded in all-time low numbers however, the Black-crowned and Yellow-crowned Night-

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – GALVESTON DISTRICT

2000 Fort Point Road, Galveston, Texas, 77550

Web: www.swg.usace.army.mil • DVIDS: www.dvidshub.net/units/USACE-GD

Twitter: www.twitter.com/USACEgalveston • Facebook: www.facebook.com/GalvestonDistrict

**CBC
PAGE 2**

Hérons were observed during the count for the first time since 1999 and bald eagles were recorded for the fourth straight year.”

The National Audubon Society’s 111th annual Christmas Bird Count took place over the course of three weeks from Dec. 14, 2010 to Jan. 5, 2011. Volunteers around the globe gathered data to provide a snapshot of bird populations which helps to monitor their status and distribution across the Western Hemisphere. The results are compiled into a database that is shared with federal, state, and private authorities.

Results of the bird count in this area will be posted on http://cbc.audubon.org/cbccurrent/current_table.html. For more information about the USACE Galveston District, visit www.swg.usace.army.mil. Find us on Facebook, www.facebook.com/GalvestonDistrict or follow us on Twitter, www.twitter.com/USACEgalveston.

###USACE###

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – GALVESTON DISTRICT

2000 Fort Point Road, Galveston, Texas, 77550

Web: www.swg.usace.army.mil ▪ DVIDS: www.dvidshub.net/units/USACE-GD

Twitter: www.twitter.com/USACEgalveston ▪ Facebook: www.facebook.com/GalvestonDistrict