

one place for more than a day during migration, it is important that they not be disturbed or harassed at these stopovers. As a federally protected species, it is illegal to disturb or harass these birds.

Wade Harrell, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Whooping Crane Coordinator at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), says that over half of the banded whoopers he studies have made their way to Texas. The first of the season was spotted in the Seadrift area on October 19. Typically, Whooping Cranes arrive in pairs or family groups.

“The recent cold front really put the birds on the move southward,” Harrell said. “For the most part, all of the banded birds have moved out of Canada, but some are still as far north as the Dakotas and still in migration. Typically, we don’t have all the birds on the Texas Coast until December, so November is often our big month for migration sightings here in Texas.”

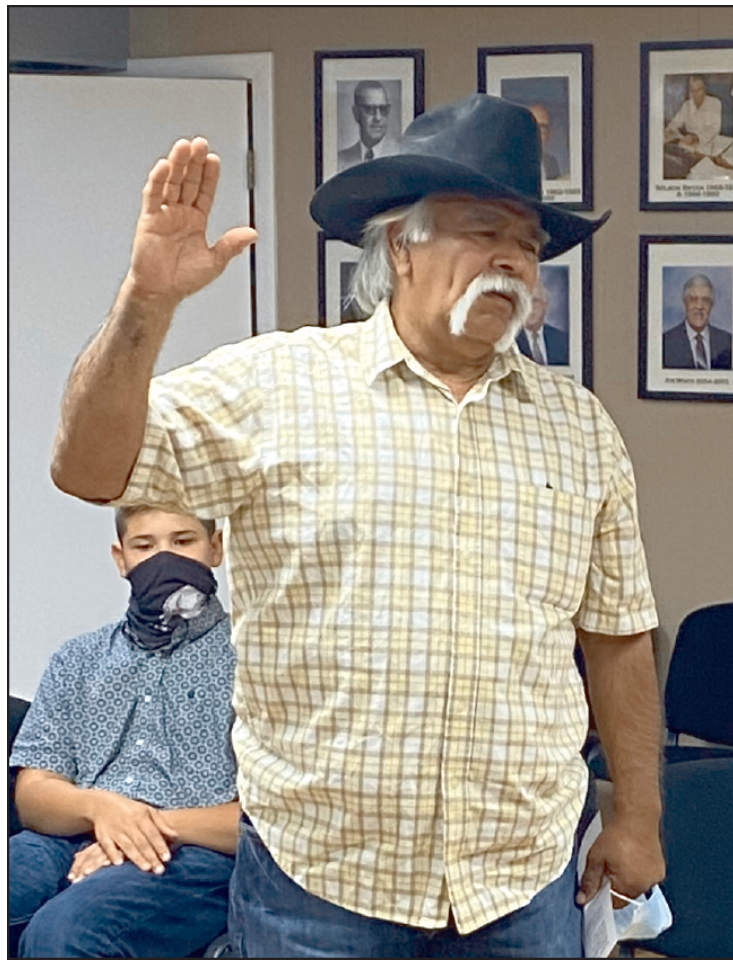
Once whooping cranes arrive on their wintering grounds, many stay in the same general area. Younger birds, however, often haven’t paired yet and may wander a little off their usual flight path, using areas quite distant from the Aransas NWR area.

Harrell says that due to the La Nina weather pattern forecast for this winter, the Southwest is in for a drier, warmer season, on top of the drought much of Texas is already experiencing. As such, freshwater wells on the Aransas NWR and surrounding areas will be very important for the whooping cranes upon their arrival. The USFWS is encouraging landowners to consider providing freshwater on their properties as well to aid the birds during their migration and wintering period.

With sandhill crane and waterfowl hunting seasons opening and whooper migration in full swing, TPWD urges hunters to be extra vigilant. Whooping cranes are sometimes found in mixed flocks with sandhillcranes, which are gray and slightly smaller. With their all-white body plumage and black wingtips, whooping cranes may also resemble snow geese, which are much smaller and have faster wing beats. A video detailing the differences between snow geese and whooping cranes can be found on the TPWD YouTube Channel.

There are several other non-game species that are similar in appearance such as wood storks, American white pelicans, great egrets and others, but a close look will reveal obvious differences. More information on look-alike species is available online.

The public can help track whooping cranes by reporting sightings to TPWD’s Whooper Watch, a citizen-science based reporting system to track whooping crane migration and



New Council Members! Daniel Jasso (above left) and Jonathan Torres were sworn in as new Robert Lee City Council Members by Coke County Judge Hal Spain on Monday evening, November 9, 2020.



wintering locations throughout Texas. More information about Whooper Watch, including instructions for reporting sightings, can be found online and by downloading the iNaturalist mobile app. These observations help biologists identify new migration and wintering locations and their associated habitats.

...Election Results

(Continued from front page)

Jeff Boyd (R) 1,510, Staci Williams (D) 163, William Bryan Strange III (Lib) 19

Justice, Supreme Court, Place 8

Brett Busby (R) 1,515, Gisela Triana (D) 148, Tom Oxford (Lib) 24

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 3

Bert Richardson (R) 1,519, Elizabeth Davis Frizell (D) 161

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 4

Kevin Patrick Yeary (R) 1,521, Tina Clinton (D) 151

Judge, Court of Criminal Appeals, Place 9

David Newell (R) 1,520, Brandon Birmingham (D) 150

Member, State Board of Education, District 15

Jay Johnson (R) 1,511, John Betancourt (D) 152

District 28 State Senator

Charles Perry (R) received 1,585 votes and 181 under votes.

District 72 State Representative

Drew Darby received 1,595 votes with 171 under votes.

Chief Justice, 3rd Court of Appeals District

Jeff Rose (R) 1,516, Darlene Byrne (D) 152

NRCS announces deadlines for conservation assistance funding

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Texas has announced the first funding application deadline of December 4, 2020, for the

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). A second funding application deadline will be February 12, 2021.

Applications are taken year around for NRCS programs, but deadlines are announced to rank and fund eligible conservation projects. Producers interested in signing up for EQIP should

submit applications to their local USDA service center. If already a USDA client, a producer can submit applications online via Farmers.gov.

EQIP is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers.

(Continued on next page)

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2017 Ford F-250 King Ranch Diesel \$64,700 <i>Bronze Fire w/Brown Leather! Navigation, Sunroof, & Gooseneck Setup! Only 17K Miles!</i> #7231A	2013 Ford F-150 FX4 4WD \$24,795 <i>Silver w/Black Leather! Navigation, Sunroof, & 3.5L EcoBoost! 91K Miles!</i> #V170B
2019 Chevy Tahoe LT 4WD \$56,995 <i>Satin Steel Metallic w/Black Leather! Black Widow Package! Navigation, Sunroof, & Rear DVD Player! Awesome Looking SUV! Only 32K Miles!</i> #W443A	
2018 Ford F-150 Lariat 4WD \$47,500 <i>White Platinum w/Brown Accent & Tan Leather! 3.0L V6 Diesel! Navigation, Heated & Cooled Seats, & FX4 Offroad Package! Beautiful Truck! Only 26K Miles!</i> #W359M	
2017 Ford F-150 XLT \$31,995 <i>Blue Jeans w/Gray Cloth! 3.5L V6 EcoBoost! Navigation! Very Nice Truck! 62K Miles!</i> #7235A	

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