



FIELD GUIDE TO LAKE CREEK PRESERVE

BIRDS

BLUE JAY (*CYANOCITTA CRISTATA*)

Habitat

- Mostly near oak trees and forest edges
- Urban and suburban areas

Food

- Glean insects and take nuts and seeds in trees
- Dead or injured small vertebrates

Behavior

- Complex social systems and tight family bonds
- Communicate vocally and through body language
- High crest, high aggression



MOURNING DOVE (*ZENaida MACROURA*)

Habitat

- All throughout North America
- Does not prefer deep-wooded areas

Food

- Forages for seeds in soil

Behavior

- Exhibits sudden ascents and descents
- Their wings makes a whistling noise upon takeoff



NORTHERN MOCKINGBIRD (*MIMUS POLYGLOTTOS*)

Habitat

- Open ground and shrubby vegetation
- Prefers grassy areas

Food

- Insects (beetles, earthworms, butterflies, ants, wasps...)
- Fruits
- Sometimes drink sap from pruned trees

Behavior

- Perches on wires and fence posts
- Can sight prey from 60 ft away





GREAT EGRET (*CASMERODIUS ALBUS*)

Habitat

- ❑ Wetland areas, both freshwater and saltwater, sometimes grasslands and agricultural fields

Food

- ❑ Fish, reptiles, insects, smaller birds

Behavior

- ❑ Wades slowly or stands still watching for prey
- ❑ In flight neck folds in "S" shape
- ❑ Elaborate courtship rituals in which the male displays his plumage and shakes twigs in his beak



WOOD DUCK (*AIX SPONSA*)

Habitat

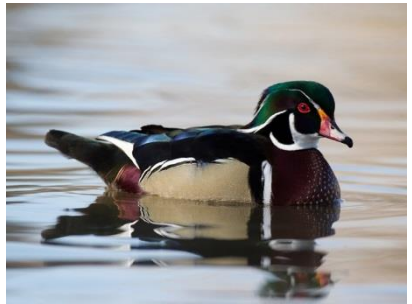
- ❑ Wooded swamps
- ❑ Beaver ponds

Food

- ❑ Fruits
- ❑ Insects
- ❑ If aquatic foods are unavailable, they are known to eat tree nuts, like acorns

Behavior

- ❑ Wood ducks are one of few waterfowl species whose feet can grasp things, allowing them to perch



RED-SHOULDERED HAWK (*BUTEO LINEATUS*)

Habitat

- ❑ Stands with open subcanopies, suburban areas

Food

- ❑ Small mammals
- ❑ Reptiles and amphibians
- ❑ Crayfish

Behavior

- ❑ Soar in a circular pattern
- ❑ Perch and waits for prey to pass below





TURKEY VULTURE (*CATHARTES AURA*)

Habitat

- ☐ Open areas, along roadsides and at landfills
- ☐ Roost on high secluded spots

Food

- ☐ Carrion (mostly mammals but sometimes reptiles and fish)
- ☐ Preferably dead animals, never attack living prey

Behavior

- ☐ Slow, teetering flight style
- ☐ On ground move with ungainly hops
- ☐ Feed one at a time



EASTERN SCREECH-OWL (*OTUS ASIO*)

Habitat

- ☐ Dwells in tree cavities

Food

- ☐ Insects
- ☐ Crayfish
- ☐ Frogs and lizards

Behavior

- ☐ Has a trilling cry
- ☐ Like most owls, they are nocturnal





SPIDERS & INSECTS

SPIDERS

SIX-SPOTTED FISHING SPIDER (*DOLOMEDES TRITON*)

Habitat

- ☐ Shallow, quiet water

Food

- ☐ Mainly insects sometimes small fish, frogs, tadpoles

Behavior

- ☐ Can "walk" on water
- ☐ Do not build webs
- ☐ Females will eat males if they're already mated

Size

- ☐ 2.5 in



WOLF SPIDER (*RABIDOSA RABIDA*)

Habitat

- ☐ Open grasslands, suburban lawns, deciduous forests, sandy soil and wet terrain

Food

- ☐ Mainly insects

Behavior

- ☐ Live on ground and hunt for prey at night
- ☐ Do not spin webs

Size

- ☐ 2.2 - 35.0 mm



DRAGONFLIES

BLUE DASHER (*PACHYDIPLAX LONGIPENNIS*)

Habitat

- ☐ Ponds, lakes, marshes, bogs, still water
- ☐ Larvae highly tolerant of poor water wetlands

Food

- ☐ Tiny flying insects

Size

- ☐ 25-43 mm





CALICO PENNANT (*CELITHEMIS ELISA*)

Habitat

- ☐ Ponds, lakes with marshy borders

Food

- ☐ Forage in fields

Size

- ☐ 3.0 cm



EASTERN PONDHAWK (*ERYTHEMIS SIMPLICICOLLIS*)

Habitat

- ☐ Primarily ponds

Food

- ☐ Small flying insects

Size

- ☐ 36-48 mm



BUTTERFLIES

LITTLE WOOD SATYR (*MEGISTO CYMELA*)

Habitat

- ☐ Grassy woods and openings

Food

- ☐ Sap, aphid honeydew, and flower nectar

Wing Span

- ☐ 1 ½ - 1 7/8 in





BUCKEYE (*JUNONIA COENIA*)

Habitat

- Open, sunny areas with low vegetation

Food

- Nectar from aster, chickory, gumweed, knapweed

Wing Span

- 1 5/8 – 2 3/4 in



RED ADMIRAL (*VANESSA ATALANTA*)

Habitat

- Moist woods, yards, parks, marshes

Food

- Sap flows on trees, fermenting fruit, and bird droppings

Wing Span

- 1 3/4 - 3 in



INVASIVE SPECIES

ARGENTINA FIRE ANT (*SOLENOPSIS INVICTA*)

Habitat

- Warmer climates

Food

- Omnivorous, will eat almost any plant or animal material, alive or dead





AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

AMPHIBIANS

SPRING PEEPER (*PSEUDACRIS CRUCIFER*)

Habitat

- Grassy lowlands near bodies of water

Food

- Beetles
- Spiders
- Flies

Behavior

- Stays in areas that match its body coloring
- Has a prominent mating call



STRECKER'S CHORUS FROG (*PSEUDACRIS STRECKERI*)

Habitat

- Moist wooded areas
- Sand prairies
- Cultivated land

Food

- Mainly small insects
- Is an opportunistic eater of small invertebrates

Behavior

- Is a burrowing amphibian, using its front limbs in order to enter its burrow headfirst



SQUIRREL TREEFROG (*HYLA SQUIRELLA*)

Habitat

- Found on the edges of water bodies in the Southeast Coastal Plain region

Food

- Small insects

Behavior

- Has external fertilization, in which they lay approx. 1,000 eggs in shallow water
- Can be found in domestic locations, waiting near housing lights that attracts prey





REPTILES

GREEN ANOLE (*ANOLIS CAROLINENSIS*)

Habitat

- Arboreal, but ubiquitous

Behavior

- Both males and females have bright red dewlaps for territorial and mating displays
- Can change color when threatened or stressed



COTTONMOUTH (*AGKISTRODON PISCIVORUS*)

Habitat

- Freshwater aquatic environments

Behavior

- Will strike if threatened or provoked
- Vibrates its tail and throws back its head to display its white interior

WARNING

This snake is venomous. Avoid if at all possible.



TIMBER RATTLESNAKE (*CROTALUS HORRIDUS*)

Habitat

- Deciduous forests

Behavior

- Will brumate (reptilian dormancy, similar to hibernation) in stone crevices during cold seasons
- Pregnant females lie on open, rocky ledges for warmth, while males and nonpregnant females dwell in cooler conditions



WARNING

This snake is venomous. Avoid if at all possible.

PLANTS

TREES

WATER HICKORY (*CARYA AQUATICA*)

Habitat

- Grows in poorly drained, tight-textured soils that are flooded in winter and dry in summer

Characteristics

- Develops a taproot in the seedling stage
- Can tolerate many different soil moisture levels

Uses

- Cleansing water drainage in low floodplains



SUGARBERRY (*CELTIS LAEVIGATA*)

Habitat

- Alluvial soils near river bottoms
- Well-drained soils

Characteristics

- Bears berries that begin as orange-red, then turn purple in autumn

Uses

- Lumber used for furniture
- Shade tree



LOBLOLLY PINE (*PINUS TAEDA*)

Habitat

- Grows in slightly acidic soils (pH: 4.5-7.0)
- Very common in North America

Characteristics

- Grows in a straight column

Uses

- Major timber crop
- Cheap and easy species often used in reclamation





BLACKGUM (*NYSSA SYLVATICA*)

Habitat

- In well-drained soils
- Often grows alongside oaks species

Characteristics

- Male and female flowers are borne on the same tree OR on separate trees
- Bears a dark blue-purple fruit

Uses

- Box boards
- Paper pulp



SHRUBS

AMERICAN BEAUTYBERRY (*CALLICARPA AMERICANA*)

Habitat

- Grows under canopy
- Found in bottomlands and on swamp edges

Characteristics

- Bright purple berries that remain on bush until winter
- The green foliage turns yellow in autumn

Uses

- The purple berries are edible by wildlife and humans



EASTERN BACCHARIS (*BACCHARIS HALIMIFOLIA*)

Habitat

- Found in wetlands
- Salt-tolerant

Characteristics

- Vibrant white blossoms
- Is a dioecious species (has male and female plants)

Uses

- The white blossoms are good sources of nectar for Bees and butterflies, namely Monarchs





PALMETTO (*SABAL MINOR*)

Habitat

- ❑ Moist soils for establishment
- ❑ Can tolerate most soils types thereafter

Characteristics

- ❑ Fan-shaped leaves
- ❑ Will grow a stalk when in standing water
- ❑ Black fruits are produced in clusters
- ❑ Is drought and frost-tolerant

Uses

- ❑ The fruits are edible to birds
- ❑ Established plants are used as nesting locations



RATTLEBOX (*SESBANIA DRUMMONDII*)

Habitat

- ❑ Low, wet grounds
- ❑ Sand dunes
- ❑ Coastal areas

Characteristics

- ❑ Many spaced-out leaflets
- ❑ Rattling seed pods when mature
- ❑ Yellow blossoms in clusters

Uses

- ❑ The seeds contain sesbanimide and are toxic and are therefore limited in use
- ❑ Most animals avoid it, but those that consume the pods become ill; some die



HERBACEOUS VEGETATION

BUSHY BLUESTEM (*ANDROPOGON GLOMERATUS*)

Habitat

- ❑ Low, moist areas with lot of sunlight

Characteristics

- ❑ Blue-green blades; copper in winter
- ❑ White-brown blooms

Uses

- ❑ Livestock feed
- ❑ Nesting material for birds





ROSETTE GRASS (*DICHANTHELIUM SP.*)

Habitat

- Widespread all throughout North America

Characteristics

- Hollow stems
- Seeds are grown at the tips of the stalks

Uses

- The small seeds are eaten by songbirds



INLAND SEA OATS (*CHASMANTHIUM LATIFOLIUM*)

Habitat

- Poorly-drained soils
- In most sands, loams, and clays

Characteristics

- Drooping, oat-like seed heads
- Blue-green leaf blades; yellow in autumn

Uses

- Larval host for the Bronzed Roadside Skipper Butterfly
- Attractive ornamental/decorative choice





INFORMATION AND/OR IMAGES GATHERED FROM:

Texas A&M Forest Service:	http://texasforests.tamu.edu/
Texas eBird:	http://ebird.org/content/tx/
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center-	
University of Texas at Austin:	http://www.wildflower.org/
United States Department of	
Agriculture Plants Database:	http://www.plants.usda.gov/