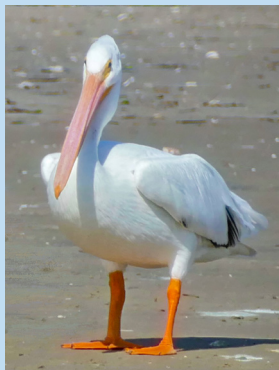


## FUN FACTS

- ◇ The Brown Pelican is the smallest of the world's eight pelican species.
- ◇ They are 4 feet long (including the bill) with a 7-8 foot wingspan.
- ◇ A pelican pouch can hold up to 3 gallons of water, but the stomach can hold only 1 gallon of water.
- ◇ Primarily fish-eaters, pelicans can eat up to 4 pounds per day.
- ◇ They spot fish underwater and can dive from heights of 70 feet. The pressure on the water stuns the fish, allowing the bird to scoop it into its pouch.
- ◇ Only Brown and White Pelicans are found in the United States.



Brown Pelican

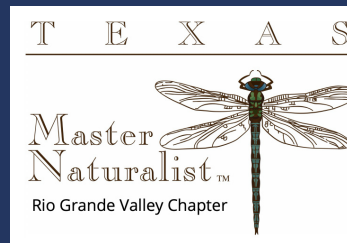


White Pelican

Thank you  
for helping to  
keep my  
friends safe.



Señor Pelé created by Lilliana Cisneros  
Photo credits: Pat McGrath-Avery  
Diana Lehmann  
Pamphlet created by Texas Master Naturalists,  
Rio Grande Valley Chapter

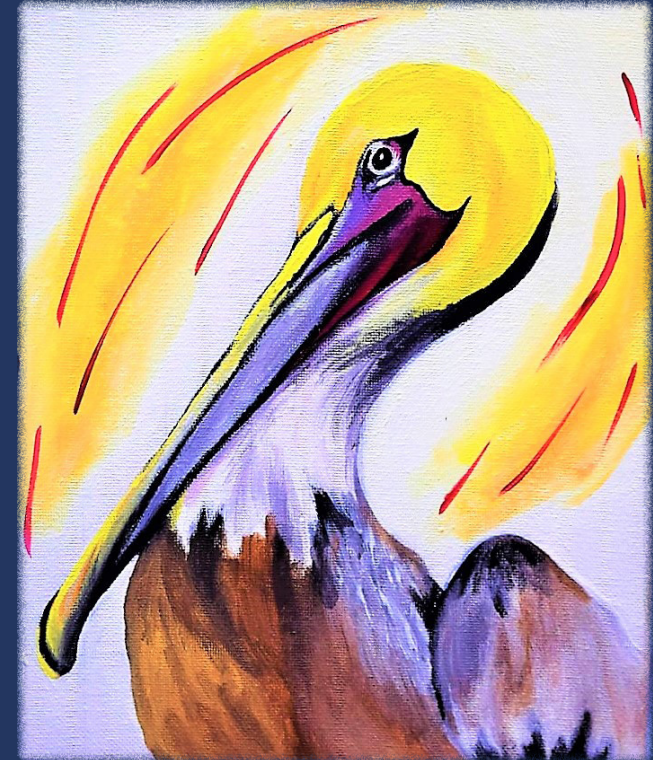


Sea Grant  
Texas  
AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE

SEÑOR PELÉ  
says, This is  
our FLYWAY...



...PLEASE slow  
down if going  
my way.

## IMPORTANT FACTS

Brown Pelicans have been on the brink of extinction twice because of:

- ◇ Pesticides (DDT) which cause their eggs to be too thin to survive
- ◇ People hunting for feathers



In 1973, there were only 12 breeding pairs in Texas. Now there are more than 12,000 pelicans annually.

Yet, pelicans continue to be threatened due to:

- ◇ Discarded fishing line and hooks
- ◇ Food shortage
- ◇ Habitat loss
- ◇ Traffic



Fishing Line

## WHERE IS THE FLYWAY?



In the Rio Grande Valley, Brown Pelicans are known to roost nightly on a group of islands in the Bahia Grande.

The bridge on State Highway 48 in that area creates a disturbance in their natural flyway. Pelicans struggle to get over the bridge, due to negative air pressure.

Pelicans may temporarily land on the road while on their way to the roosting islands. They need us to slow down and be aware, so they are not in danger of being hit by a vehicle.

## HOW CAN WE HELP?

### SLOW DOWN

#### along pelican flyways

- ◇ SH 48 between Port Isabel and Brownsville
- ◇ Queen Isabella Causeway between Port Isabel and South Padre Island
- ◇ Any elevated roadway along the Texas coast
- ◇ And driving on the beach

### OBSERVE

#### weather conditions

- ◇ Pelicans have difficulty flying during cold and windy weather.



Pat McGrath-Avery