

FUN FACTS

- ◇ Pelicans travel in groups called squadrons.
- ◇ 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.
- ◇ Only Brown and White Pelicans are found in the United States.



Brown Pelican

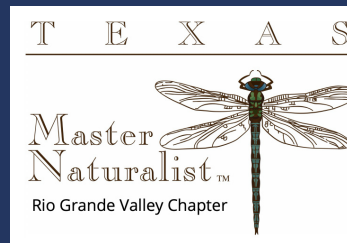


White Pelican

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

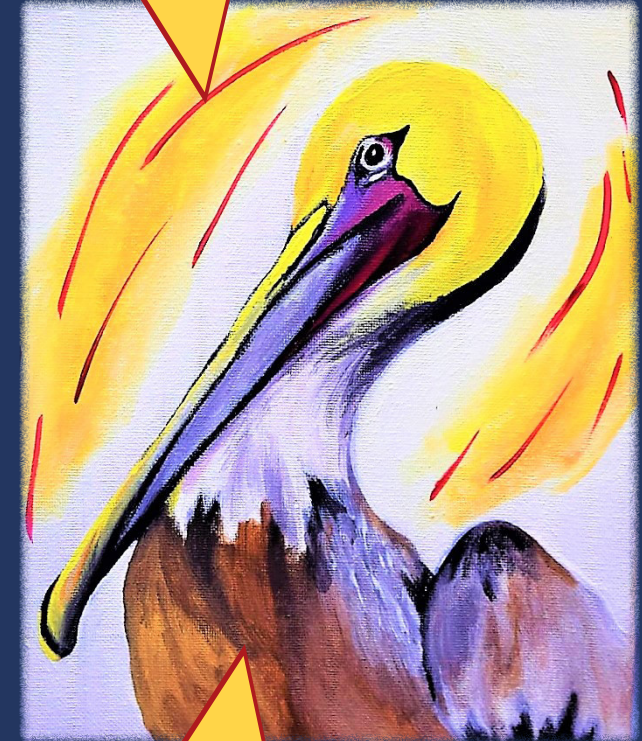


Sea Grant
Texas
AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE

HEY KIDS,
I'M
SEÑOR PELÉ.



I'M CAPTAIN
OF THE PELICAN
SQUADRON.

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.

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

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Ask adults to **SLOW DOWN** when driving 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 along the beach

Also **OBSERVE** weather conditions

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



Pat McGrath-Avery