



## Numbers are in; Corpus Christi birding festival's reputation soars!

PHOTOS: Denise Housler



**NORTHERN SHOVELER**



**SNOWY EGRET**

PHOTO: Debbie Noble



**NORTHERN CARDINAL**

The BIRDIEST FESTIVAL IN AMERICA firmly established its top-flight reputation in a year COVID discouraged air travel, the keynote speaker cancelled not able to get vaccinated in Massachusetts, plus the previous 2020 cancellation! This year's festival was April 21-25, with Rio Grande Valley pre-trip April 17-20. "There were 289 different bird species sighted by 163 registrants from 18 states plus Texas — all much better than expected, breaking our record of 262 species," event chair Denise Housler reported, "bringing our four-year sighting history to 314, a level we've heard no other birding festival has reached," she emphasized.

**SUPPORTING SPONSORS** were: *City of Corpus Christi Arts & Culture Commission, Port Corpus Christi, AEP Texas, Swarovski Optik, Vortex Optics, HOME2Suites and Alamo Inn.*

This year's birders were quite impressed with speakers, trip variety, beauty of home-base South Texas Botanical Gardens even after the freeze, accommodations and of course two "fallouts" during two cold fronts — one during the Rio Grande Valley pre-trip, and another amid the Festival itself. "Fallout" refers to birds landing for a migration break when weather dictates, increasing sightings.

### SIGHTING SPECIFICS:

- ▶ Warblers, 33 species
- ▶ Shorebirds, 32 species
- ▶ "Best bird," a late pair of Whooping Cranes seen on new Aransas National Wildlife Refuge field trip, 114 species, adding a late La Conte's Sparrow
- ▶ King and Virginia Rails sighted on Guadalupe Delta field trip
- ▶ Other new species: White-tailed Kite, Field Sparrow, American Goldfinch, Pine Siskin, Black-headed Grosbeak and Sooty Tern

*continued p. 2*



Next year's dates are April 20-24, when keynote speaker, David Sibley, has rescheduled. Both pre-trip and new post-trip planned!

Registration  
opens December,  
[BIRDIESTFESTIVAL.ORG](http://BIRDIESTFESTIVAL.ORG).

PHOTO: Clay Taylor



PHOTO: Debbie Noble



"The toughest thing about planning 2022 is topping this year's species counts," says veteran festival coordinator Joel Simon! "Thirty-two warbler species will be hard to beat without the right weather, let alone our 289 total, as will growing our 314 four-year cumulative species total!" he continued. He also wonders how to improve on the new Aransas National Wildlife Refuge field trip, with its 114 species, including very late pair of Whooping Cranes (see page 1).

Simon explains the most popular field trips are those with limited public access, like our world-famous King Ranch, usually first to fill up. "We are excited to be working on two new field trips where public access is not readily available," he said. This year's festival also brought many requests to drive personal vehicles. Excursions with only one or two easy destinations can eliminate cost of a van, lowering those field trip fees.

"We're proud of our first pre-trip, the Rio Grande Valley, which was quite successful; and planning to add our first post-trip, to the upper Texas coast, plus a day in the Piney Woods of East Texas," Simon emphasized. Watch for more news on [BIRDIESTFESTIVAL.ORG](http://BIRDIESTFESTIVAL.ORG).



# “MINI-BLOOM”

April 2 & 3,  
steps in for BIG BLOOM!

Following 2020 cancellation of BIG BLOOM Plant Sale’s popular eco-entertainment, multiple sponsors and huge crowd, 2021 still wasn’t a safe spring to welcome 6000 shoppers, no matter how badly everyone wanted replacement vegetation! A smaller creative alternative was needed. Challenges were to FIND enough plants, after wholesale growers’ losses; LIMIT CROWDS by marketing to members first; gather PRE-ORDERS in March; schedule PICK-UP TIMES; and hold FACEBOOK LIVE sales for non-members, April 3 and April 9! On-site sale of any remaining plants began April 10 and 11.

In the end, sales translated to roughly a \$10,000 profit — including \$1000 in orchids propagated from the Conservatory Collection by volunteers. New memberships surged to participate in the sale. Less revenue than a traditional BIG BLOOM, MINI-BLOOM benefits included lighter workloads for most staff, no parking issues, and no need for the army of 100-plus BIG BLOOM volunteers. Don’t be surprised if the bigger event isn’t “hybridized” a bit in future years, when parking area is reduced by S. Oso Parkway entrance construction.



## Earn a six-patch set at *Girl Scout Nature Adventure!*

The Botanical Gardens is excited to announce Girl Scouts of all levels can earn a six-patch set for completing training in butterflies, reptiles, birds, gardens and trails activities!



On select Saturdays this fall, Scouts will participate in nature crafts, science investigations, nature walks, journaling, photography, expert Q & A sessions with staff and volunteers.

Both self-directed activities and group session options will be available.

For more information, or questions, contact [Brendae@stxbot.org](mailto:Brendae@stxbot.org), • 361-852-2100

## CARING FOR THE COASTAL BEND

The Port of Corpus Christi is proud to sponsor  
the South Texas Botanical Gardens  
& Nature Center.



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# Unfriendly weather, extended pandemic prompts another \$50,000 Eugene Bouligny challenge match!

Contribute at: [www.STXBOT.ORG](http://www.STXBOT.ORG) (click on DONATE)



## Bouligny “Match” helps FREEZE FUND, event revenue short-falls!

**A**fter 2020 COVID-19 cancellation of both April BIG BLOOM, and BIRDIEST FESTIVAL in AMERICA, nearly a week of February “deep freeze” temperatures killed at least 17 palms and numerous plants, and triggered power outages damaging even green-housed plumeria! An unstable pandemic scaled back the annual April Plant Sale. Birdiest Festival keynote speaker David Sibley, unable to get vaccinated in Massachusetts, cancelled for many a festival highlight. With many concerned about air travel, festival revenue goals couldn’t be met.

Fortunately, generous local philanthropist Eugene Bouligny offered his fourth challenge match since 2015. “Raise \$50,000 in new money, and I’ll match it!”

With 400-plus “match” contributions thus far — for Annual Fund; Animal Ambassador sponsors; new members from Members Plant Sale and Mother’s Day — FREEZE FUND donations are still needed, to complete removal / replacement of Queen palms with freeze-resistant Florida Sabals, etc. Visit [STXBOT.ORG](http://STXBOT.ORG), click on DONATE, or call 361-852-2100. Your donation doubles, with Mr. Bouligny’s generosity!





after weather, road construction, pandemic . . .

please help us continue stewardship & enhancement of the  
South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center,

*by supporting*

# MOONLIGHT RETURNS to the GARDENS!

6:30-9:30 pm  
Friday,  
October 29

**EVENT CO-CHAIRS: Manette Scanio & Callie Walker**

Multiple Music Venues • Food and Beverage Stations • Signature Drinks  
Traditional Silent Auction • Garden Strolls • Jivin' on the Dance Floor  
Photo Souvenirs • Take-All Raffle Table • Casual Attire, Valet Parking



**Sponsorships available \$1000 and up • Watch [STXBOT.ORG](http://STXBOT.ORG) for upcoming details.**

**Call Michael Womack, 361-852-2100**





## It's graduation time for volunteers, 2 beginning veterinary school!

Younger Botanical Gardens volunteers often gravitate to Animal Care, becoming special friends with our parrots and resident reptiles! In fact, two past volunteers have been accepted to Veterinary School for fall semester. You'll note none of our volunteers seem to be average students. Read their accomplishments, *clockwise from top left* :

**ERIC JARAMILLO** graduated from Collegiate High School, and has been accepted to Baylor University. Interning here for six months, he completed more than 150 hours of service.

**CAMERON TRAINER** graduated Salutatorian from the School of Science and Technology, attending Texas A&M-Corpus Christi this fall. Volunteering more than 600 hours in three years, participating at more than 15 off-site education events, he inspired his whole family to volunteer!

**CYANA RIVERA** graduated *summa cum laude* from Collegiate High School, with several recognitions. She interned here September, 2020-May, 2021, staying on as a volunteer with more than 450 hours, while attending Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi this fall.

**KEVIN NGUYEN** volunteered 600 hours while attending Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, helping evacuate animals for Hurricane Harvey. Returning home to help family, he received a B.S. in Biological Chemistry from University of Texas at Arlington, entering the Long Island University Veterinary Program, in New York this fall.

**RACHEL PERRIELLO** was one of two Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi landscape interns spring semester, both graduating in May. ( *Not pictured, JESSICA PENA* ).

**LUKE GIBSON** began volunteering in 2017 through 4-H. He graduated from Texas State University, married, and has been accepted into the Texas A&M University Veterinary program, in the first group to earn simultaneous Bachelors and Masters degrees. Mr. and Mrs. Gibson recently surprised staff with a visit!



# LOSE YOUR PLUMERIA?

Corpus Christi is a plumeria town, thanks to the Plumeria Society of South Texas, its famous annual sales, and the Plumeria Garden the group curates at the South Texas Botanical Gardens. Our February freeze claimed many backyard plumeria, with few sources of new plants at any reasonable price. The BIG BLOOM, a usual annual source, was downsized with no vendors (see page 3). But put this on your calendar!

## PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF SOUTH TEXAS SALE

**10 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Saturday, July 24!**

South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center  
Education Station Deck & Classroom, 8545 S. Staples St.

**Free Admission to Sale;  
General Admission to visit Gardens.**

Thank Plumeria Society members for fighting to save their personal plants during the freeze, creating starts to make this sale possible. Cuttings, sticks, rooted plants—named and unnamed—will be sold, with proceeds benefitting the Botanical Gardens Plumeria Garden, which the Society methodically cares for. Local plumeria growers will be at the sale to answer questions!



## Easier to attend Saturday classes, with health restrictions eased

We know our popular Saturday classes have been difficult to attend even by ZOOM, with tight pandemic restrictions. Starting with July's *Plumeria Passions* seminar, we have relaxed restrictions in compliance with latest CDC guidelines.

Education Station classroom allows up to 30 seated participants with spacing. Or you can still ZOOM. RESERVATIONS are required.

We recommend everyone wear a mask indoors, but if fully-vaccinated the choice is yours. However, for the greater good, we very strongly urge those not fully-vaccinated wear face masks during indoor classes!

Call 361-852-2100 for your reservation or ZOOM connection. Classes are free with general admission or membership, \$5 others (see Calendar, pages 9, 10).

# un poco.

ADVERB

TRANSLATION: A LITTLE BIT

Cutting your water usage a little  
bit goes a long way.



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#cctxconserve



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since 1852

## MEMBERSHIP: What you get • how to join!

- ✓ Free General Admission (12 months)
- ✓ American Horticulture Society **RECIPROCAL ADMISSION PROGRAM**  
(**FREE** admission to 350 Gardens in US) listing at [www.ahsgardening.org/rap](http://www.ahsgardening.org/rap)
- ✓ 10% Discount at: **Turner's Gardenland & Bay Area Landscape**  
(with valid STBGNC Member Card & ID) (excludes labor, sale items)  
**Feathered Friends & Co.** (excludes birds)
- ✓ **FREE Better Homes & Gardens OR Martha Stewart Living Magazine Subscription**
- ✓ 10% Discount at **Nature's Boutique** year-round (STBGNC Gift Shop)
- ✓ 10% Discount at **BIG BLOOM** Plant Sale
- ✓ Substantial Class & Kids Camp Discounts  
(most Saturday seminars free for members)
- ✓ Facilities Rental Privileges
- ✓ Newsletter ■ Event Invitations ■ Window Decal



**ALSO JOIN ONLINE, [WWW.STXBOT.ORG](http://WWW.STXBOT.ORG)**

☐ **Renewal or Former Member**    ☐ **New Member**

**Membership Category ~ MARK SELECTION**

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 35
<input type="checkbox"/> Couple *	\$ 50
<input type="checkbox"/> Family *	\$ 75
<input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent **	\$ 75
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (Family or GP + 2 guests)	\$ 100
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting (Family or GP + 4 guests)	\$ 250
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron (Family or GP + 6 guests)	\$ 500
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor (Family or GP + 10 guests)	\$1000

\*(Couple, Family: Must be Same Household)

\*\* (Grandparents: Includes grandchildren / greatgrandchildren under age 18)

**Age 60+ /Active Military may take 10% off the membership level of their choice**

**PHOTOGRAPHER MEMBERSHIP, for you & clients-\$150/year!**

**Member Information ~ PLEASE PRINT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAMES (S)

\_\_\_\_\_  
STREET ADDRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY STATE ZIP

\_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE (S)

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-MAIL

AMT \$ \_\_\_\_\_ CASH \_\_\_\_\_ CK # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ MC    ☐ Visa    ☐ DISCOVER    ☐ AMX

\_\_\_\_\_  
ACCT #

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME ON ACCT

\_\_\_\_\_  
EXPIRATION 3 DIGIT SECURITY CODE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

**PLEASE MAIL TO: South Texas Botanical Gardens**  
8545 S. Staples St. ■ Corpus Christi, Texas 78413

## Major website redesign boosts Botanical Gardens' image!

After logo, signage and other branding changes, a totally new website look launched in May! Dozens of moving images, more content, online tools, special effects and brilliant garden colors offer a full picture of South Texas Botanical Gardens' flora, fauna, education, events, weekly featured blooms, rental availability, donor opportunities, media info, and even nearby lunch spots, hotels and shopping.



"A large slide show just begins the experience," says Marketing Director MaryJane Crull, who assisted *Branded by Web Design* owner Aletia Stewart as she applied her creative technology and 20 years of web design experience, resulting in the exciting modern format, now found at [www.stxbot.org](http://www.stxbot.org). Visit often!

**Remember to ALWAYS Recycle Right Corpus Christi!**

**The Recycle Coach App Keeps You on Track!**

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# EDUCATION, EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT CALENDAR

## WEEKEND VISITOR ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

### REP-TALES

**Saturdays, Sundays, 10:30 am**

Meet, pet, learn about, & sometimes feed several of our Resident Reptiles, supervised by trainers, on the Festival Lawn area.



Bonnie, Leopard Gecko



Ivan, the Iguana



Sheldon, Raphael, Michael Angelo

### PARROT TALK

**Saturdays, Sundays, 1:30 pm**

*(weather permitting)*

Meet, greet, chat and learn about our most personable exotic parrots with their trainers & volunteers.



Tequila



Tabasco



Maxwell

## SCHOOL INTERSESSION & HOLIDAY CAMPS

**Ages 6-8, 9 am-noon,**

**\$125 members, \$150 others.**

**Sept 7-10 • Oct 11-15 • Dec 27-31**

**Any District, Any School!**

Campers will explore the world of parrots, reptiles, butterflies and other nature topics led by Education and Animal Care Staff/Volunteers. Daily science investigations, crafts, journaling, more...

Sixteen campers maximum divide into small groups rotating through different daily adventures!

Masks may be required indoors if not fully-vaccinated.

**Contact: [brendae@stxbot.org](mailto:brendae@stxbot.org), 361-852-2100  
for Registration Form, information.**

## PRIVATE ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

### PRIVATE REPTILE ROOM ENCOUNTER

Interact with at least 3 of our scaly Animal Ambassadors. Take photos in the Reptile Room, closed to the public during your session. Each guest can hold 1 animal; and your group will help staff offer an Animal Ambassador a snack!

**1-6 people    15 minutes    \$30**

**6-10 people    20 minutes    \$45**

(More than 10 will split into 2 encounters, or request party information)

### PRIVATE PARROT PARTY

Interact with at least 3 of our feathered Animal Ambassadors! Take photos, each person may take photo holding a parrot. One bag of pistachio treats for parrots in outdoor enclosures.

**1-4 people    20 minutes    \$45**

**5-7 people    25 minutes    \$50**

**8-10 people    30 minutes    \$65**

### SQUAWK, WALK & TALK!

Interactive walk-through tour featuring our resident parrots. This is a 25-minute encounter, mostly outdoors.

Two pistachio treat bags included.

**1-10 people    25 minutes    \$45**

(Individual photos holding a parrot can be added for \$5 per person, increasing time of encounter by several minutes, and possibly taking place indoors.)

**You may add this option at the time of encounter.)**

\*\* Prices are for groups, plus Gardens admission per person.

\*\* \$5 discount on package for Gardens members.

\*\* Please schedule & pay minimum 24 hours in advance.

\*\* Limited spots available each day.

\*\* Have hands & arms clean, free of repellent, sun screen.

\*\* Bring cameras, be ready to learn and have some fun!

**Scheduling /questions: [dedrab@stxbot.org](mailto:dedrab@stxbot.org), 361-852-2100**

*(continued on page 10)*



## CLASS PROTOCOL, JULY-DECEMBER

**Up to 30 in-person, MASKS strongly urged if NOT fully vaccinated, due to class duration. ZOOM available. Reservations, ZOOM Links, 361-852-2100. Membership, Admission, or \$5.**



### **SPECIAL EVENT PLUMERIA SOCIETY OF SOUTH TEXAS SALE**

**Saturday, July 24, 10 am-1:30 pm**

**EDUCATION STATION Deck & Classroom.** Cuttings and rooted plants, named and unnamed varieties, will be sold, with proceeds benefitting the Botanical Gardens Plumeria exhibit, which this year required almost total replacement after February's freeze (*see article page 7*). **FREE ADMISSION** to Sale. General Admission to visit Gardens.

### **SUCCESS WITH FALL VEGGIES**

**Saturday, August 7, 9:15-10:15**

Staff Horticulturist Carol Krank, and Nueces Master Gardener Deb Houlihan give you unbeatable gardening guidelines for specifics on what, when, where, and how to plant your vegetable choices, including proven maintenance, fertilization and insect prevention methods, with charts and instruction sheets available.



### **INCORPORATING NATIVES INTO EXISTING LANDSCAPES**

**Saturday, August 21, 9:15-10:15**

Horticulturist and STBGNC Executive Director Michael Womack will introduce you to native plant options that can be used in place of traditional trees, shrubs and flowers to transition your yard into a more water-smart and freeze resilient landscape.

### **BUTTERFLY GARDENING for FALL MIGRATION**

**Saturday, October 2, 9:15-10:15**

Nueces Master Gardener Deb Houlihan tells you what to plant to attract plenty of butterflies to your yard during fall migration, including Monarch way stations.

### **COMPOSTING SEMINAR and WORKSHOP**

**Saturday, October 9, 9:15-11:15**

Melissa Zamora, Master Composter, shares insights on how to take clippings from your spring garden clean-up and transform them into "Gardener's Gold" to enrich your flower beds and vegetable gardens, while reducing waste going to our landfills.

### **NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY with Wildlife in Focus**

**Saturday, October 23, details TBA**

Mark your calendar for this cooperative workshop with *Wildlife In Focus* to learn how to step up the quality of your nature photography. Award winning photographers will share how to get the perfect shot of flowers, birds and other wildlife (*Pricing and schedule T.B.A.*).

### **SPECIAL EVENT**

#### **MOONLIGHT Returns to the GARDENS!**

**Friday, October 29, 6:30-9:30 pm.**

Casual, relaxing evening in the Gardens, with myriad of food and beverage stations, music, garden strolls, TAKE-ALL RAFFLE, auction, dancing—totally enjoyable annual evening fundraiser benefiting continuing care and enhancement of the South Texas Botanical Gardens. **GARDEN STEWARD SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE.** 361-852-2100. Watch STXBOT.ORG for more . . . (*see page 5*).



### **HOLIDAY COOKING WITH HERBS WORKSHOP**

**Saturday, November 13, 9:15-11:15**

Aransas/San Patricio Master Gardener Linda Collins and her fellow "herbies" share their favorite herbs for holiday cooking, plus recipes for truly memorable meal holiday meals, including samplings!



### **SPECIAL EVENT**

#### **HOLLY DAYS at the GARDENS**

**November 26/27 • December 3/4 • 10/11 • 17/18**

**4 special holiday weekends celebrating the joys of the season around a beautiful 20' fresh-cut lighted fir tree!**

Friday & Saturday **EVENINGS** — open until 7:30 to view lighting displays and trees; cocoa, cider, s'mores over fire pits! **SATURDAY, 9-6** — See **SANTA** on site, holiday photo ops, hay rides, kids' crafts, animal ambassadors. Most activities covered by general admission. Watch for exact schedule, details at STXBOT.ORG, 361-852-2100.

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City of Corpus Christi  
Swarovski Optik  
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Manette & Richard  
Scanio  
Barbara Little  
Eve & Jeffery Coberly  
Thomas DeWitt Harvey

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Anonymous  
Katherine Kearley &  
David Beck  
Brenda & Conner Bishop  
Myra Coward  
Sharon & Patrick Delozier  
Phyllis Dinges  
Darryl Donaldson  
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Clara & Dale Trainer  
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101 Corpus Christi  
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CITGO

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Wildlife In Focus

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Karen Dominguez  
Photography

Daphne Hancock  
Photography

Shoocha Photography

Francene Moya  
Photography

Sammantha & Matthew  
Clark Photography

Jilka Zdvihalova  
Photography

Timothy & Clarrissa May  
Photography

Taylor Molano  
Photography

## NEW MEMBERS

(Previous issue to July 1)

## SUPPORTING

Samuel & Thetis Neal

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Brittany & Fucundo Cruz,  
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Callie Walker  
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Chelsy Williams

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## FAMILY

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Christy Stockman  
Patrick & Bonnie Strain  
Josclyn Taylor  
J.D. & Kat Tierney  
Michael Burris & Vicki Tucker  
Windi & Michele Vianello  
Kyle Krebs & Stacey Ward  
Travis Wetzel  
Jennifer Parr & Jason Zapata

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D. Alfred Anderson  
Nuala Archer  
Sarah Bassett  
Donetta Beaty  
Duncan Berube  
Devante Boll  
Lucinda Cantu  
Kelley Carlock  
Lucia Cervantes  
Patricia Clark  
Juliet Collins  
Ida Cowan  
Akosua Donkor  
Elizabeth Farek  
Tammy Fox  
Pat Garcia  
Gabriella Gonzalez  
Ron Grant  
Irma-Laura L Green  
David Griffin  
Analia Guterrez  
Jennifer Hancock  
Scott Heischmidt  
Cathy Hornbuckle  
Ryan A Hornbuckle  
Ron Kanipes  
Meghan R King  
Carrie Koliba  
Deborah LeBel  
Launya Lott  
Clifford Mann  
Leigh-Anne Maynier  
Donna Mesmer  
Ameziyah Pastore  
Marvin Pivonka  
Ginny Powell  
Margarita Remes  
Renata V Rivas  
Katrina Russo  
Madeliene Salazar  
Megan Schrenk  
Carla Scott  
Michael Seelig  
Amanda Slaughter  
Karen Smith  
Shanna Swindle  
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*p. 10*



MOONLIGHT  
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