

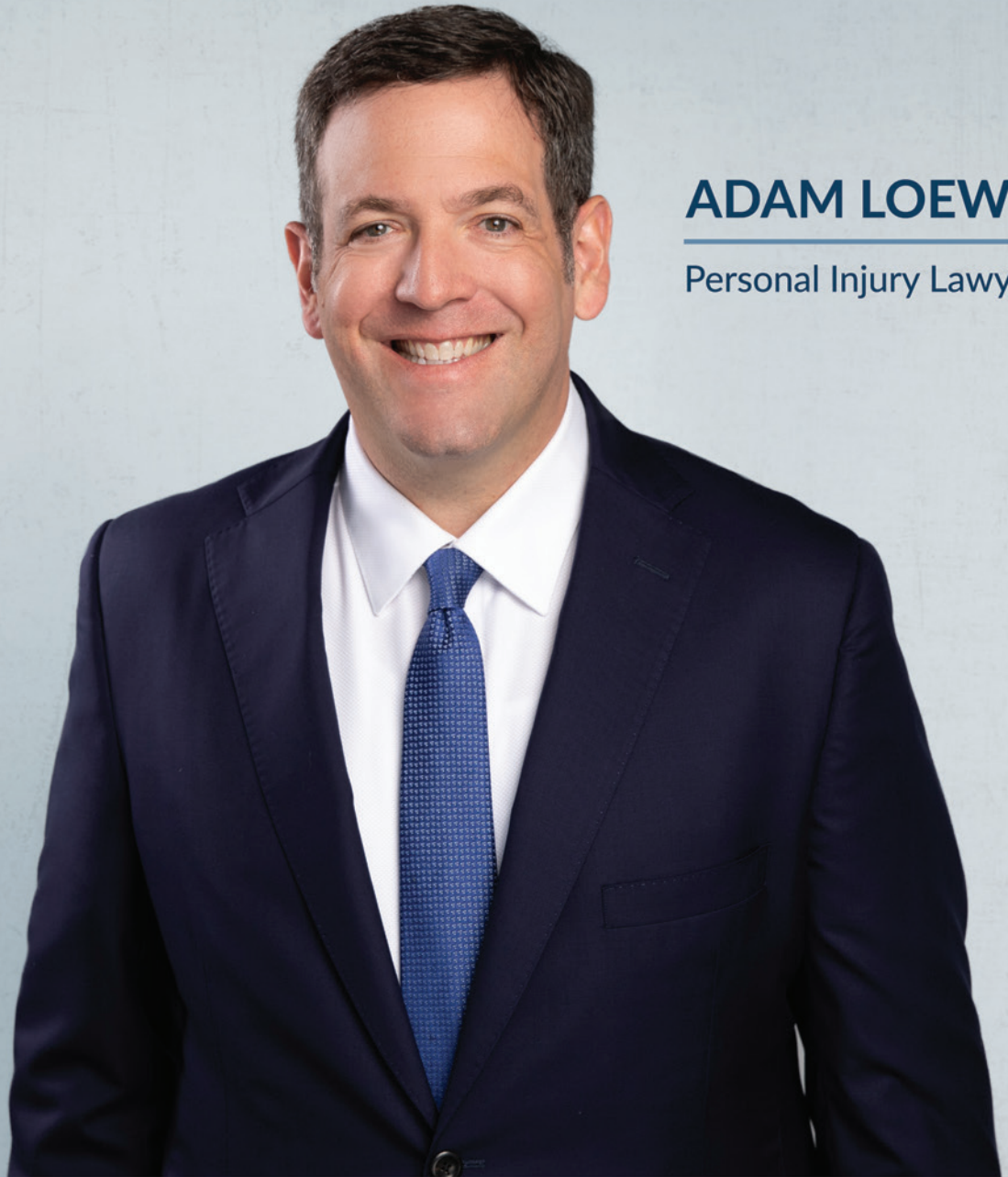
# *The Community* **Connection**

NEWS FOR SWEETWATER RESIDENTS

H A P P Y   N E W   Y E A R

2021

Bicycle Accidents | Boating Accidents | Car Accidents | Dog Bites | Drunk Driving Accidents  
Injuries to Children | Motorcycle Accidents | Slip and Falls | Truck Accidents | Wrongful Death



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## THE GREAT FISHERMAN

By Cheryl Conley, TWRC Wildlife Center



When one mentions raptors, there are a few species that people are very familiar with like owls, eagles and hawks. The osprey, however, isn't a familiar species to most people even though it is one of the most widespread raptors in the world. They are found on every continent except Antarctica.

Like all raptors, the osprey is a large bird

with a hooked beak and sharp talons, both of which are used to catch their prey and tear it apart to eat.

About 99% of the osprey's diet is made up of fish so it only makes sense that they nest near water along the coasts and large lakes. Occasionally they can be seen along rivers. They build their nests at the tops of dead trees, buoys, chimneys, and even atop power poles. Like the bald eagle, they use the same nest year after year but can be seen making minor repairs each spring.

They are amazing to watch as they glide over water looking for a fish. Sometimes they plunge so forcefully into the water that they are totally submerged. After catching a fish, they arrange the fish so it faces upright with the head forward.

The osprey is a great fisherman, successfully catching a fish one out of 4 tries. They have a much higher success rate than it's relatives like the eagle. Sometimes eagles watch and when an osprey catches a fish, the eagle will attack the osprey causing it to drop the fish. Easy meal for the eagle! Benjamin Franklin said in 1784 that "bald eagles are too lazy to fish for himself.....and does not get his living honestly." True then, true today.

Ospreys generally mate for life but they will find a new partner should their partner die or disappear during spring migration.

If you'd like to watch an osprey nest, there are many online. The Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey has an osprey cam that you can watch here: <http://www.conservewildlifenj.org/education/ospreycam/>. In the New Jersey area, nest building begins in early April and eggs are laid from mid-April to early May. You can watch the eggs hatch and observe Mom and Dad caring for the babies. It's interesting and educational.

TWRC Wildlife Center is a 501(c)(3) organization located in the Spring Branch area of Houston. Since 1979, we have been committed to providing quality emergency care and rehabilitation for injured, ill, orphaned and displaced wildlife. We are proud to be making a difference for the wildlife in our area.

[www.twrcwildlifecenter.org](http://www.twrcwildlifecenter.org)

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

### EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY .....	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance.....	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-0845
Travis County ESD No.6/Lake Travis Fire Rescue	
Administration Office.....	512-266-2533
Travis County Animal Control.....	512-972-6060

### SCHOOLS

Lake Travis ISD.....	512-533-6000
Lake Travis High School.....	512-533-6100
Lake Travis Middle School.....	512-533-6200
West Cypress Elementary .....	512-533-7500

### UTILITIES

Pedernales Electric.....	888-554-4732
Crossroads Utilities (Water, Sewer, Trash).....	512-246-1400
Texas Gas Service	
Customer Service.....	1-800-700-2443
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
AT&T.....	1-800-288-2020
Time Warner Cable.....	512-485-5555
Austin/Travis County Hazardous Waste .....	512-974-4343

### OTHER NUMBERS

Bee Cave City Hall.....	512-767-6600
Bee Cave Library.....	512-767-6620
Bee Cave Municipal Court.....	512-767-6630
Lake Travis Post Office .....	512-263-2458
Baylor Scott & White Medical Center.....	512-571-5000
City of Bee Cave .....	<a href="http://www.beecavetexas.com">www.beecavetexas.com</a>
Travis County (General No.).....	512-854-9020
.....	<a href="http://www.traviscountytexas.gov">www.traviscountytexas.gov</a>

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The *Community Connection* is mailed monthly to all Sweetwater residents. Residents, community groups, churches, etc. are welcome to include information about their organizations in the newsletter. Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, recipes, special celebrations, and birthday announcements are also welcome.

To submit an article for the *Community Connection* please email it to [sweetwater@peelinc.com](mailto:sweetwater@peelinc.com). The deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the issue.



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## NATURE WATCH

### A CHARM OF FINCHES

by Jim and Lynne Weber



*Lesser Finch*

At times, winter in Central Texas may seem a bit drab, colorless, and dreary, but the season is usually brightened by members of a beautiful and diverse group of birds called finches. These small, seed-eating birds have an undulating flight, and flocks of them often roam south in the winter.

Found primarily west of the Balcones escarpment, Lesser Goldfinches (*Spinus psaltria*) are present year-round, but are more likely to be seen at bird feeders in the colder months. At 4.5 inches long, males have an entirely black crown and back, white wingbars, and are lemon yellow below, while females have olive backs, black wings with whitish wingbars, and duller yellow underparts. They can gather in groups of up to several hundred at a time, and are most commonly found in Texas and California.

The American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*) is a slightly larger bird that is less common but typically present here from November to March. At 5 inches long, males have a bright yellow body, a black cap, and black wings with white wingbars. Females are duller overall, with an olive body and black wings with prominent white wingbars. They are the only finch that molts its body feathers twice a year, in late summer and then again in late winter in preparation for breeding season.

Most gregarious are the Pine Siskins (*Spinus pinus*), a 5 inch long finch with prominent brown streaking and yellow at the base of the tail and in flight feathers. At first they may appear mostly grayish-brown, but they flash their yellow markings as they explode into flight

or flutter while feeding. Typically present from December through March, flocks of Pine Siskins may congregate at bird feeders one winter and be completely absent the next. Their behavior is highly nomadic and their presence is erratic across North America in winter in response to available seed crops. In fact, some individuals may stay near a dependable food source and breed far south of their normal breeding range, which is in Canada, the northern U.S., and higher elevations of the west.



*Pine Siskin*



*American Goldfinch*

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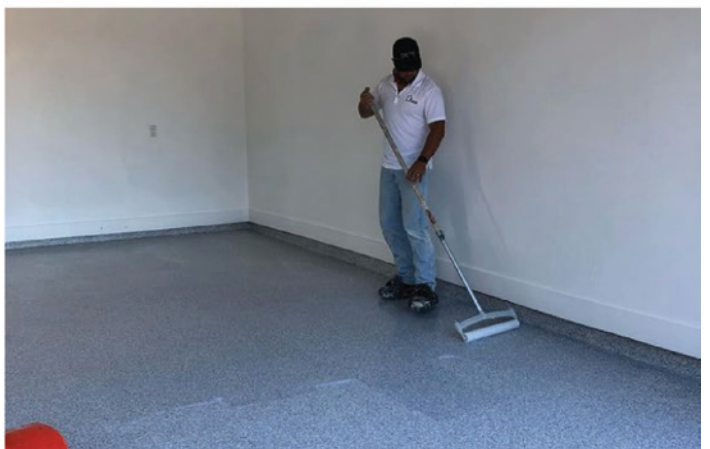
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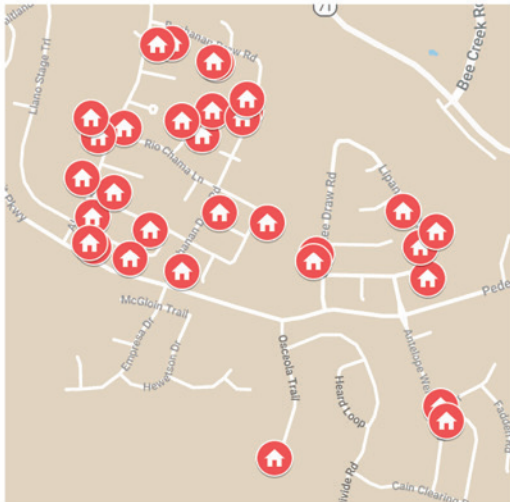
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5208 Inks Clearing - **SOLD**  
5300 Buchanan Draw - **Multiple Offers**  
6104 Gunnison Turn - **SOLD**  
5608 Cherokee Draw - **Multiple Offers**  
18621 Tanner Bayou - **Multiple Offers**  
18517 Tanner Bayou - **Multiple Offers**

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