

**Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area** – located in the extreme south tip of the county. To reach the Wildlife Management Area from I-10: Take the Anahuac/Hankamer exit, which is exit 813 (Highway 61). Go south on 61 and continue South when the road becomes FM 562. In approximately 8 miles, the road will split at Double Bayou. Take the right fork, which continues Highway 562. Follow this road another 11 miles, to reach the community of Smith Point. Small signs will point you to the Abshier Management Area, which is located on the water. The claim to fame here is the Hawk Watching Tower, utilized most heavily during the fall migration season. Thousands of hawks will gather in the early hours to await the rising thermals, and will rise with the warmer air before peeling off, high above, to soar further south. Few facilities at this site, but the views of the water from the tower are great. The 208.77 acre site is located within the Gulf Prairies and Marshes eco-region of Texas in the southern portion of Chambers County, bordered on the north, east, and west by the community of Smith Point with East Bay to the south. State Highway 562 provides the only access to the area from Anahuac, the county seat. The area is bounded by Plummer's Camp Road on the east, SH 562 on the north and west, with East Bay to the south. Established January, 1990.



**Chambers County Parks** – The county fathers have provided a large number of park sites & boat ramps for the public, allowing access to the water as well as picnic, camping, and casual recreational access. Nearly all the parks have public restroom facilities. A list of parks is available at the county webpage: [www.co.chambers.tx.us](http://www.co.chambers.tx.us).



The three Chambers County Library System branches have large collections of books to identify birds, butterflies, fish, snakes, and mammals. Check us out!

**J.J. Mayes Wildlife Trace** – located south of Interstate 10 on the west bank of the Trinity River, just a few hundred yards from the bridge crossing the river. Includes a 4-mile nature trail along the top of a levee, which is part of the Wallisville Lake Project, an effort of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Galveston District. A handicapped accessible loop trail is also within the nature site. Observation decks and boardwalks, and a small pavilion and restroom are also located within the Trace. Ribbon cutting for the newest nature site in the county was May 1, 2003.

# Chambers County Nature Sites



*A Publication of the  
Chambers County Library System*

Chambers County Library  
202 Cummings Street, Anahuac  
409-267-2554

Juanita Hargraves Memorial Branch  
108 East Fear Rd. Winnie  
409-296-8245

Sam and Carmena Goss Memorial Branch  
1 John Hall Drive, Mont Belvieu  
281-576-2245

[www.chambers.lib.tx.us](http://www.chambers.lib.tx.us)  
[ccls@chamberstx.gov](mailto:ccls@chamberstx.gov)

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**Chambers County  
Library System**  
your source for information

**Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge** – to reach the Wildlife Refuge from I-10: Take the Anahuac/Hankamer exit, which is Highway 61 (exit 813). Go south on 61 and continue south when the road becomes FM 562. In approximately 8 miles, the road will split at Double Bayou. Take the left fork, which is FM 1985. The refuge is 4 miles from the fork.

Formed in 1963, and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the NWR currently has over 34,000 acres devoted to providing habitat for native fish and wildlife. Grazing, farming, prescribed burning, and shoreline stabilization are used as management tools for this vast area. Public access to the Refuge allows fishing, hunting, birding, and wildlife watching.

The Friends of the Anahuac NWR provide services at a Visitor Information Center, located inside the Refuge entrance, near the only restroom facilities available. The Friends provide a variety of educational opportunities for the public, from school class trips to Yellow Rail Walks. They coordinate with the staff of the Refuge to provide manpower for special projects and to supplement staff during major public events. The Refuge maintains motor home pads for volunteers seeking a working stay at the Refuge. For more info, call 409-267-3337, or write P.O. Box 278, Anahuac Tx 77514.



**Trinity River Mouth Waterbird Rookery** – located just east of the Trinity River Bridge on I-10, this recent addition for bird watchers provides boardwalk access to a cypress swamp. Egrets, Ibis, Spoonbills, and Anhinga gather in huge numbers each evening to cover the trees, giving visitors a breathtaking view. Only boardwalk facilities at this site, but it is handicapped-accessible. Another project of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

**Chambers-Liberty Counties Navigation District** – Anahuac Pumping Station Levee Trail – As stewards of the Trinity River, the Navigation District provides access to the river via Anahuac Harbor and along a levee which helps to form Lake Anahuac. The Levee Trail, inaugurated a few years ago, allows wildlife watchers and birders foot access to view migratory birds and permanent residents of the river area. The path is not designed for handicapped-access, since it is actually a maintenance route for the District.

**Wallisville Lake Visitors Center** – Open 8 a.m.-4 p.m. daily, located approximately one mile east of the Waterbird Rookery. The Wallisville Lake Project began decades ago, and in its current form, provides a lock system to prevent salt water intrusion into the Trinity River. As a major estuary, the Trinity River mouth is a breeding ground for numbers of marine life. In the past, the Trinity was heavily used as a navigable waterway, but very little of the Trinity is utilized in this manner now; recreational and educational boating provide the greatest amount of river traffic near the I-10 bridge and points north. The lock system is a fascinating project to view in

action, but there are also boat ramp facilities, picnic grounds, restrooms, and displays.



### **Texas Chenier Plain Refuges Complex Headquarters and Visitor Center**

– to reach the center from I-10 take the Anahuac exit, Hwy 563, and go south for approximately 2 miles. The Complex Building will be on your right. If you are traveling from Anahuac, go north on Hwy 563 for approximately 4 miles. The Complex Building will be on your left. The grand opening of this facility was on May 7, 2011 and was built on property donated to the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) by Chambers County. This 16,100 square foot Visitor Center/Headquarters office is built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)-Silver building standards. It is the first LEED constructed building in the Southwest Region of the USFWS.

The Visitor Center features an environmental education classroom, a Nature Store run by the Friends of Anahuac Refuge (FOAR) which is a non-profit organization in support of USFWS projects and programs, and an exhibit hall that is open Tuesday through Sunday from 10:00 AM until 5:00 PM (holidays are observed). The Visitor Center has exhibits and information such as the following:

- An airboat theater that takes you on a ride through the marsh as you discover the diverse wildlife and habitat on each of the Refuges in our area
- An alligator incubator that allows you to step inside a jumbo alligator nest replica and learn all kinds of fun facts about Anahuac's favorite reptile
- A migration diorama that lets you learn about birds and other migrating animals
- Information about Refuges, where they are, and why they exist
- A beautiful and educational boardwalk behind the Visitor Center which takes you through upland woods, a cypress swamp, and finally to the shores of Lake Anahuac. It is approximately 1/2 mile round trip of easy walking and enjoyable sights.

For more information, call 409-267-3337 or write to USFWS, P.O. Box 278, Anahuac, TX 77514.

### **Turtle Bayou Nature Preserve**

Located 1.75 miles off of FM 563 from I-10 (exit 810), Turtle Bayou Nature Preserve is comprised of 514 acres of protected wetland, prairie and forested habitats along Turtle Bayou and Lake Anahuac in Chambers County. The Preserve is owned by the Chambers-Liberty Counties Navigation District, for the purposes of preserving coastal habitat and protecting water quality.