

NESTING BIRDS OF SALT LAKE ROCKPORT, ARANSAS COUNTY, TEXAS



BLACK SKIMMER

Large black bird with white under parts, neck, and forehead – large, red and black bill with lower bill longer than upper. Feeds by Skimming surface of water with bill, snapping up prey by feel. To rest, they lie flat on the ground with their heads stretched out in front of them.
Length: 18”, common, decreasing.

FORSTER'S TERN

Mid-sized tern with black cap, orange bill with black tip, and orange legs. Note forked tail and white wing tip. Plunge dives to capture small fish and shrimp. Nests on the ground in small colonies, amid marsh and grasses.
Length: 13”, local, declining.



AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER

Black and brown with white underside; large laterally-flattened, reddish orange bill with red eye-ring. Forages on tidal flats for shellfish.
Length: 17”, common, stable.

TRICOLORED HERON

Mid-sized heron, slate, buff back, and dark breast with contrasting white belly. Nests in mixed-species colonies on islands in dense vegetation. Chases fish through water, crouching low and quickly stabbing bill to catch prey.
Length 26”, common, but decreasing.



GULL-BILLED TERN

Mid size tern – breeding adults have black cap, short, sturdy, black bill, pale gray upper parts. Nests in small colonies on bare to sparsely vegetated ground. Makes long, swooping dives to capture aquatic prey.
Length: 14”, local, declining.