



Good Deeds  
In the Wild  
Plants We Eat  
Around Mexico  
In the Community  
For the Animals  
Behind the Lens  
Mexico Shines



*Lagoon and Fishing Boats Behind La Boquita*  
Photo by John Chalmers



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The 9th Annual BOCCE BALL TOURNAMENT  
and SURPRISE AUCTION is  
*Thursday, February 26th, 2026*

All proceeds benefit Animal Angels ZLO and their commitment to end animal suffering by providing sterilizations and vaccinations for animals in need.



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**48 Teams Participating in Mexico's Largest Beach Bocce Ball Tournament**

**2 Separate Divisions. Fun Division and**

**Seasoned Players Division (with a super draft of players for teams)**

**Closest to the Pallino (white ball) Contest**

**\*50/50 Raffle \*Dancing to Music by DJ Randy Dean**

**\*2 x 1 Beer, Margaritas and Well Drinks All Day**

**\*\$200 Peso Entry Donation for non players**



**See You On the Beach!**

**OASIS**  
ocean club  
restaurant bar



## The Important Work of Watching Over Manzanillo

an interview with Jesús García

### Vigilemos Manzanillo A.C. (VIMAC)

The brigades of **Vigilemos Manzanillo**, A.C., **VIMAC** for short, or Watching Over Manzanillo Civil Association in English, take care of our community, watching over environmental concerns, sea animals, provide education, and so much more.

From their beginnings in 2018, Vigilemos Manzanillo A.C. (VIMAC) has been a citizen-led environmental organization working to protect the coasts, air and biodiversity of Manzanillo, Colima.



Founded as a civil association, its mission is to promote and spread environmental conservation through action and education and to encourage active social participation in defending the right to a healthy environment. This group supports the work of many other organizations working to provide education and improve the welfare of people and animals in the community, such as their work alongside Dra. Zaira Tellez on the animal sterilization campaigns.

Their work is visible all along the bay. VIMAC coordinates regular cleanups on beaches such as Playa Azul Salagua, often joining forces with other groups and institutions to remove litter, cigarette butts and marine debris before it reaches the ocean. They have also taken part in underwater cleanups at La Boquita, where divers, surfers and volunteers have pulled more than a tonne of rubbish from the seabed, while raising awareness with beachgoers about keeping the coastline clean.

Education and advocacy are another pillar of their work. VIMAC offers talks on issues such as microplastics and their impact on wildlife, climate and air-quality campaigns, and public information sessions connected to initiatives like "Aire Limpio para Manzanillo", which seeks better air and environmental governance in the municipality. They have also been visible in peaceful marches to defend ecosystems such as the Laguna de Cuyutlán.

One of the recognizable faces associated with this effort is Jesús García, an environmental activist and member of VIMAC. In media interviews, Jesús has highlighted problems such as sewage pollution on Manzanillo's beaches and the importance of protecting nesting sea turtles, including rare visits from the leatherback turtle. His work bridges citizen advocacy, hands-on conservation and public education.

### HOW TO PARTICIPATE

- Join a cleanup brigade by following Vigilemos Manzanillo A.C. on social media to see cleanup events for beaches, mangroves and underwater sites.
- Help spread the word by sharing VIMAC's educational posts about reducing waste and protecting coastal ecosystems.
- Donate or collaborate as a business, school or community group by contacting VIMAC through their official channels to sponsor cleanups or request environmental education talks.

VIMAC and its volunteers show that local action can protect a global treasure and provide lasting change.

Contact Jesús García and the team at <https://www.facebook.com/VigilemosManzanilloAC/> or [vigilemosmanzanillo.ac@gmail.com](mailto:vigilemosmanzanillo.ac@gmail.com) to volunteer or donate.



...The Important Work of Watching Over Manzanillo

### Tortugario Manzanillo

Nestled along the Pacific coast of Colima, the **Tortugario Manzanillo** (Turtle Sanctuary) at Playa Azul/Salahua, one of the many projects that VIMAC champions, plays a vital role in marine conservation. This facility invites visitors to witness and participate in the release of sea turtle hatchlings, while also contributing to the protection of endangered turtle species in the region. Founded by Dra. Sonia Isabel Quijano in 2001, the sanctuary plays a vital role in turtle protection and survival on the Pacific coast of Mexico.

### A Unique Coastal Conservation Site

Playa Azul and its nearby beach of Salahua sit on the western side of the Bahía de Manzanillo, receiving nesting sea turtles that come ashore to lay their eggs. The Tortugario at this location gives visitors the chance to observe the entire process: from beach patrols in the dark, nest protection and incubation, through to the jubilation of tiny turtles heading out to sea.

### What Happens and Why It Matters

One of the key goals is to protect nests and eggs from natural predators, poaching threats and disturbances caused by human activity. In one documented incident, 79 eggs from a nesting site in Playa Azul were rescued and relocated for protection. Similarly, volunteers at the Tortugario track, monitor and safeguard nests that appear on the beach, sometimes relocating them to safer incubation zones. See the image for impactful results from October 2025 alone.

Beyond nest protection, the release of hatchlings is a symbolic and scientifically important moment. Each hatchling heading into the ocean represents a chance for survival and continuation of the species. Species such as the olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) and black turtles (*Chelonia mydas agassizii*) utilize the Pacific shores of Colima for nesting, and their survival is threatened globally by habitat loss, climate change and illegal egg collection.

### Visitor Experience and Educational Outcomes

The Tortugario Manzanillo welcomes visitors daily, turning what might be a simple beach outing into an immersive conservation experience. During the outing, participants receive a short talk about marine turtle biology and conservation, then witness the release of hatchlings into the sea.

Volunteers, more than 60 in all, take turns through the day and night to ensure the safety of the eggs and nests as well as to oversee the turtle releases, donating generously of their time and often their own money. Contact the team to join the volunteers.





...The Important Work of Watching Over Manzanillo



### Challenges and Impact

Operating in a tropical coastal environment brings challenges: night patrols, beach lighting issues, weather disturbances, and limited funding are ongoing realities. Moreover, while public release events are emotionally powerful, actual survival rates of turtles to adulthood remain low, so each hatchling counts.

Nevertheless, the impact of the Playa Azul site is tangible. During the season this facility protects hundreds of nests and has released tens of thousands of hatchlings. These efforts contribute locally to biodiversity preservation and globally to marine ecosystem health.

### Why It's Worth a Visit

For travellers to Manzanillo, a visit to the Tortugario at Playa Azul offers more than a photo-op: it's an opportunity to engage in meaningful conservation work. By participating in a turtle release or by visiting the site, or donating time or funds, you can support a community-driven effort to protect an endangered species and preserve an important ecological cycle.

Find out about upcoming turtle releases and conversation efforts at <https://www.facebook.com/tortugariomanzanillo> or reach out by email to [quijan Sonia@gmail.com](mailto:quijan Sonia@gmail.com).



# 30 Casa Hogar Los Angelitos Anniversary Benefit Dinner

OF MIRACLES! SAVING CHILDREN AND CHANGING LIVES!

Friday 23th, January 2026

6:00pm

“CALA” Event Center

Octavio Paz #5 Nuevo Salagua

6:00 pm doors open, silent auction and cash bar

7:00 pm dinner and show, CHLA and BFLA

8:00 pm Program and Live Auction, Auctioneer Eric Goodman

9:30 pm Event Closes

Tickets;

\$75 US - \$100 CA - 1500 Pesos

Table of 10 purchased together \$700 US

Information and reservations available;

[Info@tcfcares.org](mailto:Info@tcfcares.org)

Join us Saturday January 24, 2026 4:00 pm-7:00pm  
at the casa hogar facilities for our annual open house!





## The Birds of Manzanillo - and a quiz to help you enjoy them!

by John Chalmers

A great pleasure in the Manzanillo area is enjoying the bird life! I never go anywhere without my camera, a compact high-resolution digital point-and-shoot camera with a 40-to-1 zoom lens that brings the birds close to me, and I take them home as photographs!



Favorite places to see the birds are around the Vida Del Mar property where we spend the winter, along the mile-long road to the waterfront at La Boquita on Santiago Bay, and at the lagoon and backwater behind the bay. Hiking along the road to the town of El Naranjo at Highway 200 provides other opportunities for seeing birds of many species. Watch for our feathered friends in the trees, the bushes, on the ground, in the water, or in the air!

As well, many times I have photographed birds at the huge Laguna de Las Garzas beside the road leading to Manzanillo centro. Parking is always available at roadside by the bridge where water from the lagoon passes over the weir and out to the ocean.



I have photographed and identified over a hundred species of birds in our area. Some are easy to identify, while others send me to my bird books or the internet for more information and to confirm identification. The two of my four bird books in México that I use most are the *National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America* (my main reference) and *Mexican Birds* of the Peterson Field Guide series. They complement each other.

Some birds I have photographed many times, including herons, egrets, pelicans, frigatebirds, flycatchers, hawks, vultures, chachalacas, and the hummingbirds at our feeder. Some birds have been difficult to photograph, others are rarely seen, and a few I have seen only once, sometimes lucky enough to get a good photo in just a short time before the bird flies away. Pure luck is often a factor both in seeing a particular bird and getting a good photo of it!



### ...The Birds of Manzanillo

There are reportedly [1,136 species of birds in México](#) and I know I will never see them all! My "Mexican Bird Quiz" illustrates over 60 species of birds in the Manzanillo area. Most are commonly seen, but to add a little variety, a few of the lesser seen birds are included in the quiz! Binoculars and a camera with a zoom lens will help you to enjoy sighting the birds and taking their pictures. Keeping a list of the birds you see will help you to remember them!

The quiz is posted online and on the pages that follow this article. To download it and answer the questions, [click here](#). You can print the quiz to mark or enter the answers. A key is provided so you can check your answers. No cheating, please! Feel free to download, save and print the quiz for friends or relatives when they come to visit, or send the quiz to anyone interested.



A great bird show in the Manzanillo area is performed by frigatebirds that follow the fishermen when they arrive in the morning with their daily catch to the La Boquita beach. Dozens of frigatebirds often escort the boats coming in and hope for a handout. Fresh fish of various types can be purchased where they are brought in to the fish co-op at the shore.

Lagoons, the sea and the vegetation in the Manzanillo area all provide habitat and locations to see and enjoy bird life. I haven't identified the birds in this article in order to challenge you to find their names! But the Bird Quiz does have a key to give you the answers. To try it now, [click here](#), and keep your eyes open to see our resident or migratory birds!



you can reach John at [john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com](mailto:john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com)



## Manzanillo and Area Bird Quiz

by John Chalmers

Below each photo of a bird there are four names. Put a check mark in the space provided to indicate your answer. Hint: Here's how to get 100% correct on the test. If you don't know the name of the bird, don't guess! You can look up the names in a bird book or on the internet to find the right answer!



- \_\_\_ a. Cattle Egret  
\_\_\_ b. Great Egret  
\_\_\_ c. Lagoon Egret  
\_\_\_ d. Snowy Egret



- \_\_\_ a. Cattle Egret  
\_\_\_ b. Great Egret  
\_\_\_ c. Lagoon Egret  
\_\_\_ d. Snowy Egret



- \_\_\_ a. Cattle Egret  
\_\_\_ b. Great Egret  
\_\_\_ c. Lagoon Egret  
\_\_\_ d. Snowy Egret



- \_\_\_ a. Golden-cheeked Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ b. Imperial Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ c. Lineated Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ d. Pale-billed Woodpecker

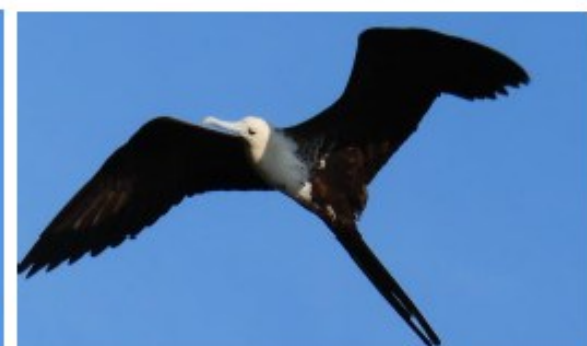


- \_\_\_ a. Golden-cheeked Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ b. Imperial Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ c. Lineated Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ d. Pale-billed Woodpecker



- \_\_\_ a. Golden-cheeked Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ b. Imperial Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ c. Lineated Woodpecker  
\_\_\_ d. Pale-billed Woodpecker

7. \_\_\_ a. Grant's Cormorants  
\_\_\_ b. Great Frigatebirds  
\_\_\_ c. Magnificent Frigatebirds  
\_\_\_ d. Olivaceous Cormorants





...Manzanillo and Area Bird Quiz



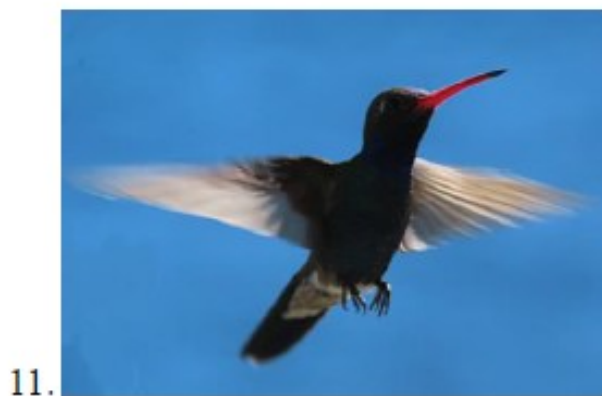
- \_\_\_ a. Marbled Godwit  
\_\_\_ b. Long-billed Curlew  
\_\_\_ c. Whimbrel  
\_\_\_ d. Willet



- \_\_\_ a. Marbled Godwit  
\_\_\_ b. Long-billed Curlew  
\_\_\_ c. Whimbrel  
\_\_\_ d. Willet



- \_\_\_ a. Marbled Godwit  
\_\_\_ b. Long-billed Curlew  
\_\_\_ c. Whimbrel  
\_\_\_ d. Willet



- \_\_\_ a. Black-chinned Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ b. Cinnamon Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ c. Broad-billed Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ d. Lucifer Hummingbird



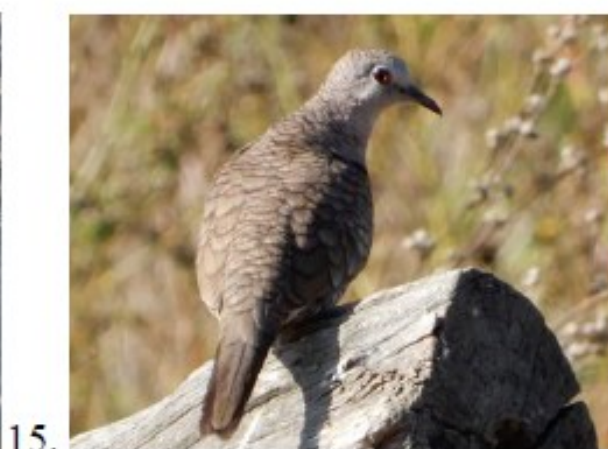
- \_\_\_ a. Black-chinned Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ b. Cinnamon Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ c. Broad-billed Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ d. Lucifer Hummingbird



- \_\_\_ a. Black-chinned Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ b. Cinnamon Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ c. Broad-billed Hummingbird  
\_\_\_ d. Lucifer Hummingbird



- \_\_\_ a. Tricolored Heron  
\_\_\_ b. Black-crowned Night Heron  
\_\_\_ c. Little Blue Heron  
\_\_\_ d. Yellow-crowned Night Heron



- \_\_\_ a. Colima Dove  
\_\_\_ b. Inca Dove  
\_\_\_ c. Manzanillo Dove  
\_\_\_ d. Aztec Dove



- \_\_\_ a. Tricolored Heron  
\_\_\_ b. Black-crowned Night Heron  
\_\_\_ c. Little Blue Heron  
\_\_\_ d. Yellow-crowned Night Heron

17.   
a. \_\_\_ Northern Chachalacas  
b. \_\_\_ Plain Chachalacas  
c. \_\_\_ West Mexican Chachalacas  
d. \_\_\_ Southern Chachalacas





...Manzanillo and Area Bird Quiz



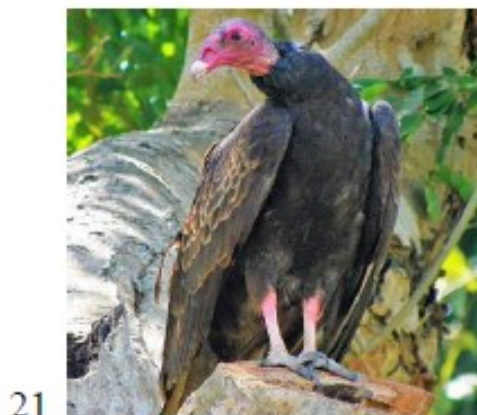
- ☐ a. Roseate Spoonbill
- ☐ b. Wood Stork
- ☐ c. Pink Ibis
- ☐ d. White Ibis



- ☐ a. Roseate Spoonbill
- ☐ b. Wood Stork
- ☐ c. Pink Ibis
- ☐ d. White Ibis



- ☐ a. Roseate Spoonbill
- ☐ b. Wood Stork
- ☐ c. Pink Ibis
- ☐ d. White Ibis



- ☐ a. Turkey Vulture
- ☐ b. Crested Caracara
- ☐ c. Red-headed Hawk
- ☐ d. Black Vulture



- ☐ a. Turkey Vulture
- ☐ b. Crested Caracara
- ☐ c. Mexican Buzzard
- ☐ d. Black Vulture



- ☐ a. Turkey Vulture
- ☐ b. Crested Caracara
- ☐ c. Black-headed Hawk
- ☐ d. Black Vulture



- ☐ a. White Pelican
- ☐ b. Anhinga
- ☐ c. Brown Pelican
- ☐ d. Pacific Swan



- ☐ a. White Pelican
- ☐ b. Anhinga
- ☐ c. Brown Pelican
- ☐ d. Pacific Swan



- ☐ a. White Pelican
- ☐ b. Anhinga
- ☐ c. Brown Pelican
- ☐ d. Pacific Swan

- 27.
- ☐ a. White-billed Cacique
  - ☐ b. Black and yellow Cacique
  - ☐ c. Mexican Cacique
  - ☐ d. Yellow-winged Cacique





...Manzanillo and Area Bird Quiz



- \_\_\_ a. American Oystercatcher
- \_\_\_ b. Black Skimmer
- \_\_\_ c. Orange-billed Skimmer
- \_\_\_ d. American Clamdigger



- \_\_\_ a. Little Blue Egret
- \_\_\_ b. Blue-bodied Heron
- \_\_\_ c. Blue-bodied Egret
- \_\_\_ d. Little Blue Heron



- \_\_\_ a. American Oystercatcher
- \_\_\_ b. Black Skimmer
- \_\_\_ c. Orange-billed Skimmer
- \_\_\_ d. American Clamdigger



- \_\_\_ a. Dwarf Egret
- \_\_\_ b. Green-backed Heron
- \_\_\_ c. Short-necked Egret
- \_\_\_ d. Lagoon Heron



- \_\_\_ a. Western Warbler
- \_\_\_ b. Tennessee Warbler
- \_\_\_ c. Prairie Warbler
- \_\_\_ d. Nashville Warbler



- \_\_\_ a. Coastal Dove
- \_\_\_ b. Inca Dove
- \_\_\_ c. White-winged Dove
- \_\_\_ d. Inland Dove



- \_\_\_ a. American Coot
- \_\_\_ b. Common Moorhen
- \_\_\_ c. Northern Jacana
- \_\_\_ d. Orange-billed Duck



- \_\_\_ a. Common Moorhen
- \_\_\_ b. Northern Jacana
- \_\_\_ c. White-billed Duck
- \_\_\_ d. American Coot



- \_\_\_ a. American Coot
- \_\_\_ b. Common Moorhen
- \_\_\_ c. Northern Jacana
- \_\_\_ d. Ruddy Duck

37.

- \_\_\_ a. Royal Terns
- \_\_\_ b. Franklin's Gulls
- \_\_\_ c. Caspian Terns
- \_\_\_ d. Mexican Terns







- ☐ a. Belted Kingfisher
- ☐ b. Crested Kingfisher
- ☐ c. Red-breasted Kingfisher
- ☐ d. Ringed Kingfisher



- ☐ a. Lincoln's Gull
- ☐ b. Jefferson's Gull
- ☐ c. Franklin's Gull
- ☐ d. Washington's Gull



- ☐ a. Belted Kingfisher
- ☐ b. Crested Kingfisher
- ☐ c. Red-breasted Kingfisher
- ☐ d. Ringed Kingfisher



- ☐ a. Blue Bunting
- ☐ b. San Blas Jay
- ☐ c. Orange-breasted Bunting
- ☐ d. Blue-Winged Grackle



- ☐ a. Blue Bunting
- ☐ b. San Blas Jay
- ☐ c. Orange-breasted Bunting
- ☐ d. Blue-Winged Grackle



- ☐ a. Blue Bunting
- ☐ b. San Blas Jay
- ☐ c. Blue-breasted Bunting
- ☐ d. Blue-Winged Grackle



- ☐ a. Great Blue Heron
- ☐ b. Great Egret
- ☐ c. Reddish Egret
- ☐ d. Tricolored Heron



- ☐ a. Great Blue Heron
- ☐ b. Great Egret
- ☐ c. Reddish Egret
- ☐ d. Tricolored Heron



- ☐ a. Great Blue Heron
- ☐ b. Great Egret
- ☐ c. Reddish Egret
- ☐ d. Tricolored Heron



...Manzanillo and Area Bird Quiz



- ☐ a. Great-tailed Grackle
- ☐ b. Groove-billed Ani
- ☐ c. Yellow-eyed Blackbird
- ☐ d. Crow



- ☐ a. White-breasted Stilt
- ☐ b. Black-necked Stilt
- ☐ c. Black-billed Stilt
- ☐ d. Pink-legged Stilt



- ☐ a. Glossy Blackbird
- ☐ b. Groove-billed Ani
- ☐ c. Black-eyed Blackbird
- ☐ d. Crow



- ☐ a. Yellow-breasted Swallow
- ☐ b. Great Kiskadee
- ☐ c. Striped Flycatcher
- ☐ d. Mexican Robin



- ☐ a. Rufous-backed Robin
- ☐ b. Mexican Robin
- ☐ c. American Robin
- ☐ d. Gray-headed Robin



- ☐ a. Fork-tailed Flycatcher
- ☐ b. Yellow-breasted Jay
- ☐ c. Mexican Wren
- ☐ d. Tropical Kingbird



- ☐ a. Roadside Hawk
- ☐ b. Osprey
- ☐ c. Common Black Hawk
- ☐ d. Yellow-legged Hawk



- ☐ a. Roadside Hawk
- ☐ b. Osprey
- ☐ c. Common Black Hawk
- ☐ d. Bald Eagle



- ☐ a. Roadside Hawk
- ☐ b. Osprey
- ☐ c. Yellow-billed Hawk
- ☐ d. Common Black Hawk

56. ☐ a. Anhinga  
☐ b. White-breasted Cormorant  
☐ c. Brown Booby  
☐ d. Magnificent Frigatebird





...Manzanillo and Area Bird Quiz



- ☐ a. Western Sandpiper
- ☐ b. Solitary Sandpiper
- ☐ c. Spotted Sandpiper
- ☐ d. Upland Sandpiper



- ☐ a. Ash-throated Flycatcher
- ☐ b. Jungle Treehopper
- ☐ c. Gray-breasted Robin
- ☐ d. Sharp-billed Flycatcher



- ☐ a. Lagoon Plover
- ☐ b. Ringed Plover
- ☐ c. Semipalmated Plover
- ☐ d. Sharp-tailed Plover



- ☐ a. Baltimore Oriole
- ☐ b. Hooded Oriole
- ☐ c. Black-backed Oriole
- ☐ d. Orchard Oriole



- ☐ a. American Kestrel
- ☐ b. Merlin
- ☐ c. Spotted Hawk
- ☐ d. Mexican Falcon



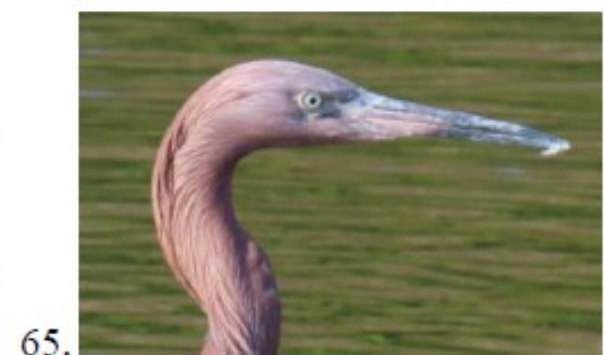
- ☐ a. Brandt's Cormorant
- ☐ b. Pelagic Cormorant
- ☐ c. Olivaceous Cormorant
- ☐ d. Great Cormorant



- ☐ a. Great Egret
- ☐ b. Great Blue Heron
- ☐ c. Reddish Egret
- ☐ d. Tricolored Heron



- ☐ a. Great Egret
- ☐ b. Great Blue Heron
- ☐ c. Reddish Egret
- ☐ d. Tricolored Heron



- ☐ a. Great Egret
- ☐ b. Great Blue Heron
- ☐ c. Reddish Egret
- ☐ d. Tricolored Heron

Below is the answer key. If you wish, you can record your score here! \_\_\_\_\_

#### Answer Key

1. d. 2b 3.a 4.c 5.a 6.d 7.c 8.b 9.a 10.c 11.c 12.b 13.a 14.b 15.b 16.d 17.c 18.d 19.a 20.b  
 21.a 22.b 23.d 24.a 25.b 26.c 27.d 28.b 29.d 30.a 31.b 32.d 33.c 34.b 35.d 36.c 37.a 38.a  
 39.c 40.d 41.b 42.c 43.a 44.d 45.c 46.a 47.a 48.b 49.b 50.b 51.a 52.d 53.a 54.b 55.d 56.c  
 57.c 58.a 59.c 60.d 61.a 62.c 63.d 64.b 65.c



BONUS PAGE! Now that you have answered the quiz and checked your responses with the Answer Key, can you identify the following birds from close-up pictures? They are all seen in or by the shore or in the water of the lagoon or the ocean. Write your answer in the space provided. Feel free to use the preceding pages with the answer key to name them correctly!



01. \_\_\_\_\_



02. \_\_\_\_\_



03. \_\_\_\_\_



04. \_\_\_\_\_



05. \_\_\_\_\_



06. \_\_\_\_\_



07. \_\_\_\_\_



08. \_\_\_\_\_



09. \_\_\_\_\_



10. \_\_\_\_\_



11. \_\_\_\_\_



12. \_\_\_\_\_



13. \_\_\_\_\_



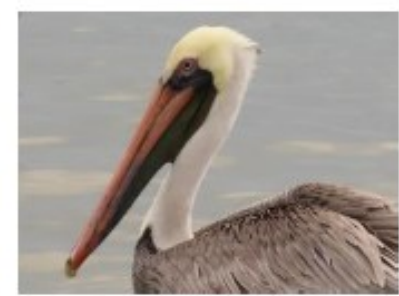
14. \_\_\_\_\_



15. \_\_\_\_\_



16. \_\_\_\_\_



17. \_\_\_\_\_



18. \_\_\_\_\_



19. \_\_\_\_\_



20. \_\_\_\_\_



21. \_\_\_\_\_



22. \_\_\_\_\_



23. \_\_\_\_\_



24. \_\_\_\_\_



25. \_\_\_\_\_

you can reach John at [john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com](mailto:john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com)



## MESE - Minors in Extraordinary Situations

by Mapy Seidel and Julie Ring

**Minors in Extraordinary Situations** (*Menores en Situaciones Extraordinarias - MESE*) is an organization created to keep school-aged children from working on the street and to keep them in school. EVERY DAY is an opportunity to sign up to be a sponsor of one of these children at risk.

MESE was founded by Mapy Seidel in 1995. In the last 30 years, MESE has helped hundreds of children through a scholarship program built on the donations of people who sponsor a child with a \$5,000 peso annual contribution.

The generosity of these folks is truly dynamic and the results are outstanding. The children may stay in the program if they continue to go to school. Many children have come and gone as their lives take unexpected turns, but many have gone on to graduate from university.

As of today, January 2026, MESE is currently helping 72 children with a total of more than 500 in the past 30 years, In that time, 15 kids have graduated from university. Meet some of these amazing young people...



LEFT

Geraldine Gonzalez with her sponsor Jack Babcock. Geraldine has been in MESE for 14 years and now has a engineering degree in supply chain.



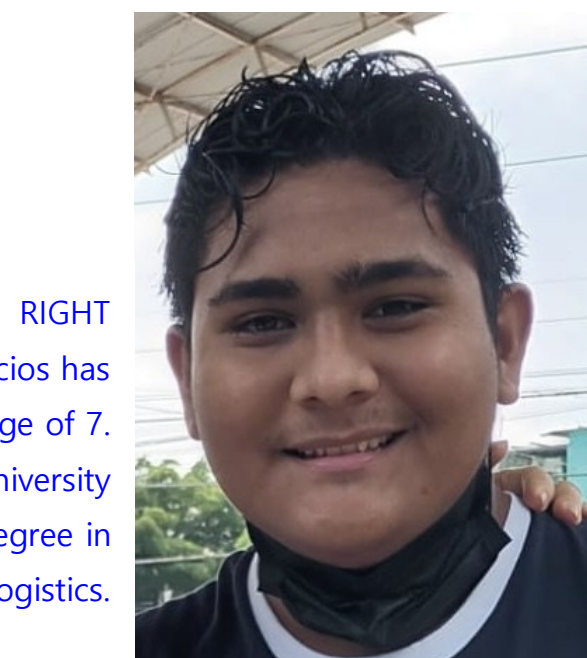
LEFT

Jonathon Andrade came to MESE at the age of 16 and now is a medical school graduate studying to be an orthopedic surgeon.

If you are interested in being part of **MESE** please come to the Mujeres Amigas luncheon every first Wednesday of the month at the Oasis. Mapy, Isabelle and Julie will be representing MESE there.

Or you may contact Julie Ring at

[julieannring@gmail.com](mailto:julieannring@gmail.com)



RIGHT

Darian Yattir Palacios has been MESE since the age of 7. He has graduated university with an engineering degree in international logistics.



RIGHT

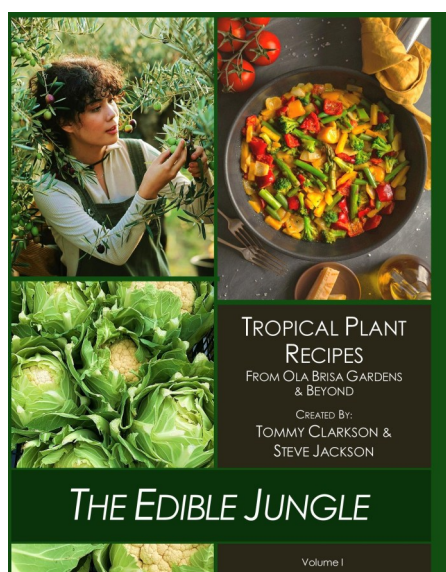
Natalia Aceves has been in MESE for 5 years and at age 14 took second place at the national taekwondo championships



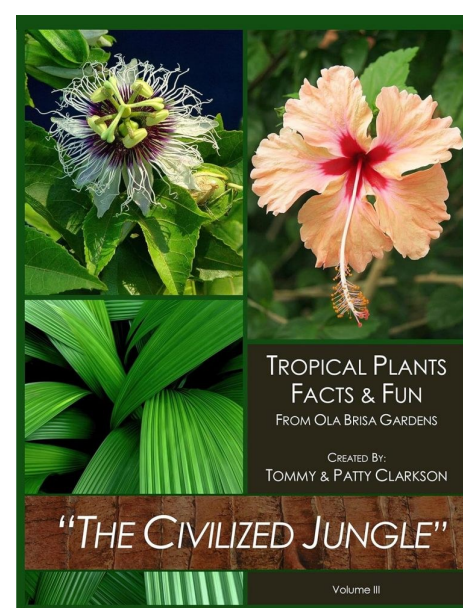
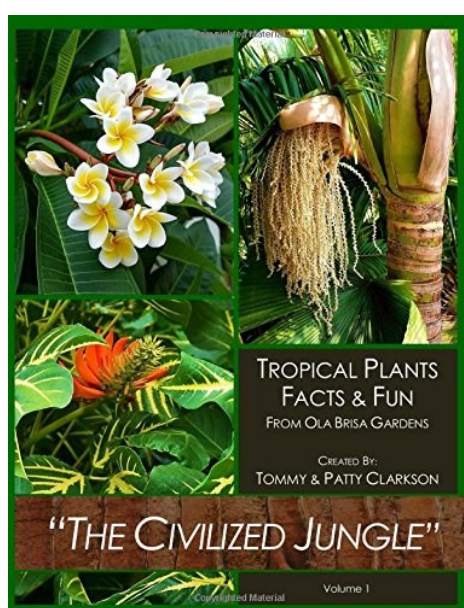
## A Taste of the Jungle

by John Chalmers

Whether you are a permanent resident in the Manzanillo area or a snowbird escaping winter in Canada or the United States, a common topic of conversation is always about a good location for dining out! Recommendations are always welcome for a fine restaurant, a café, a bistro or even a good taco stand.



Now with the publication of a new book by Tommy Clarkson, you can have an excellent resource for recipes to prepare at home. *The Edible Jungle: Volume I: Tropical Plant Recipes from Ola Brisa Gardens & Beyond* contains 71 tested recipes. You can find the ingredients at grocery stores, produce markets, roadside produce stands, the Saturday market on the Boulevard de la Madrid, the market at el centro in Manzanillo, or maybe even on the back of a pickup truck parked with fruits and vegetables for sale.



Known for his beautiful botanic garden, Ola Brisa Gardens in the Santiago area of Manzanillo, Tommy has previously written six books about tropical plants, trees, flowers and other vegetation. Now he has directed his talents to writing about food, "for munching, brunching, lunching, formal dining and beyond."

Tommy's first three books comprised a series of volumes entitled *The Civilized Jungle*, about tropical plants, many of which grow in México. Whenever I need information or photos about a plant or to help me identify it, those books are always my first reference.



### ...A Taste of the Jungle

Tommy then published three books called *The Medicinal Jungle*, Volumes I-III. They follow the first three with information about medicinal properties, uses and historical application of tropical plants. I felt honoured when Tommy asked me to write the Foreword for Volume II.



Now, with *The Edible Jungle*, Tommy has produced a book that is a logical complement to the previous six *Jungle* books by providing another way to enjoy México. This time I was honoured to have him include my recipe for avocado toast (Page 55).

Inspired by enjoying that dish at The Bean restaurant in Manzanillo, I found I could make various changes in its preparation. On the back cover, Tommy used my photo of him and his wife, Beate. They, along with family and friends, have prepared every recipe in the book to ensure your success with any of them.



Again Tommy has collaborated with Steve Jackson, who has done the design and layout for all the books. He is shown at left, with Tommy. I was pleased to have my photo of them on the back cover of *The Medicinal Jungle*, Vol. II. All the books are lavishly illustrated with excellent color photographs. *The Edible Jungle* is another work of art, and it will leave the readers with mouth-watering temptations as they go to shop for ingredients.



...A Taste of the Jungle

Although known for his botanical expertise and knowledge of tropical plants, Tommy Clarkson loves to cook and is as comfortable in the kitchen as he is in the gardens. For inclusion in the new book, Tommy drew on a lifetime of family favorite recipes, from living abroad or on world travels, from ethnic groups and from his own collection of international cookbooks. One of Tommy's own original recipes in *The Edible Jungle*, is his colorful creation, Tommy's Almond Chicken Stir Fry (Page 30) as seen at right.



You can purchase the new book from Tommy at Ola Brisa Gardens and have him sign your copy. He can be reached at [tomolabrisa@gmail.com](mailto:tomolabrisa@gmail.com). As well, *The Edible Jungle* is available from Dan Patman at Flip Flop Nomad Tours in Melaque. All of Tommy's books can be ordered online from [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com), where you can order a book in paperback, hard cover or Kindle format.

You are more likely to find Tommy and Beate in the kitchen or the gardens than you are to meet them on a cruise ship dressed for dinner! But all of Tommy's books will help you to enjoy México, and now you can benefit from his writing and all the work that he and Beate did to provide you with some epicurean delights and gourmet dining!



you can reach John at [john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com](mailto:john.chalmers@manzanillosun.com)



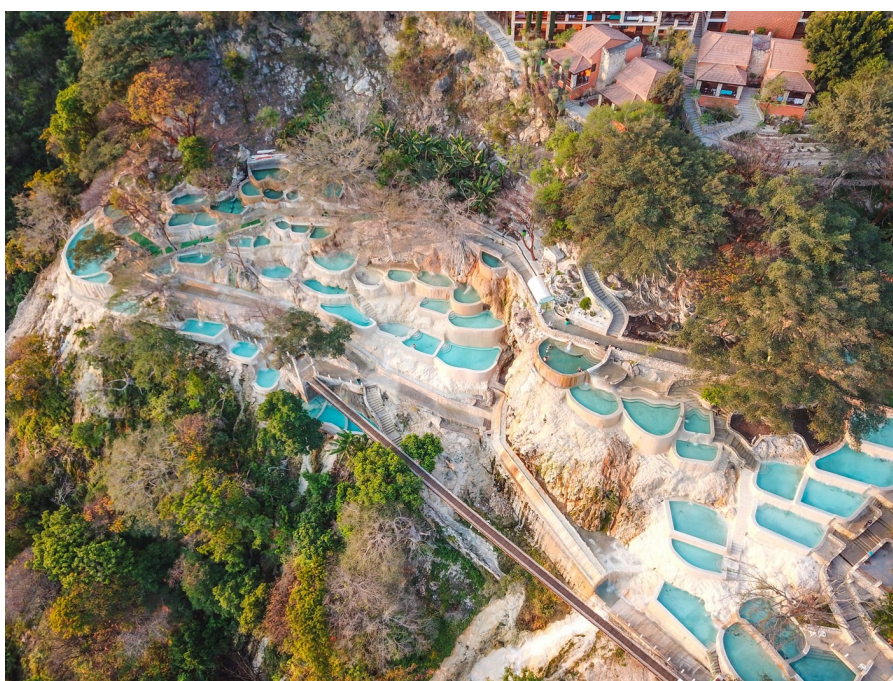
## On the Go in Mexico

by Ruth Hazlewood

As someone who travels regularly through Mexico to plan tours, I am frequently asked which is my favourite trip; it is a difficult question to give a short answer to, because I love so many things about this fascinating country. My favourites generally include two or three of the following criteria: sites, people, or events of special cultural or historical interest, or places of stunning natural beauty. These include our Magical Christmas Tour, Day of the Dead tours, Chiapas, Copper Canyon, Tolantongo Hot Springs & Mineral del Monte, Morelia & Monarch Butterflies, Oaxaca, and the breathtaking Huasteca Potosina. Those of you who know me well probably know that I could talk all day about travelling Mexico, but for the sake of keeping it short, I have chosen to concentrate on Tolantongo and Mineral del Monte.

**Las Grutas de Tolantongo** is a system of caves, caverns and tunnels in the state of Hidalgo where hot springs emerge into the main caverns and flow down to the river below. The warm water carries minerals like calcium, magnesium, sulphur, and potassium, which create a striking turquoise colour and offer a soothing natural massage in one of the most magical environments you can imagine.

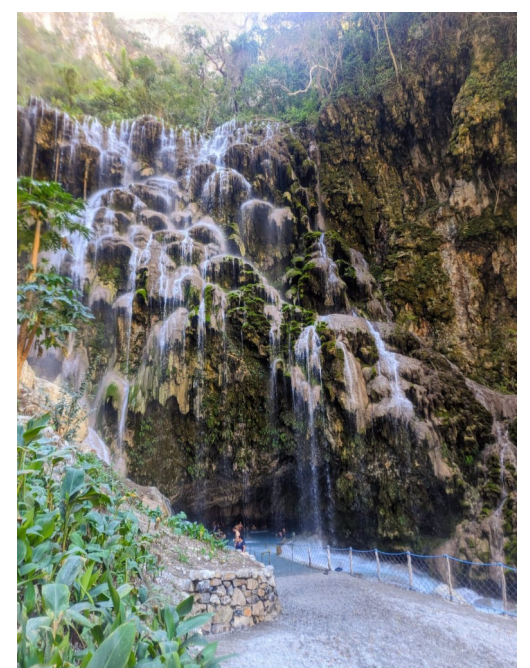
Tolantongo is relatively complicated to reach because of its remote location, so is it worth the effort? Here's why I think it is:



Mountainside pools at Tolantongo

On my first visit to Tolantongo I felt quite excited as soon as we started to descend the rough mountainside road and caught our first glimpse of the impressive valley below.

When we arrived at our accommodation, we immediately changed into our swim suits and literally just stepped out of the hotel to enjoy the terraced mountainside pools and tunnels.



Tolantongo waterfall

At that moment I knew I was going to love this experience - I had never seen anything like it before! After the first afternoon of relaxation, and a casual evening meal with our group, I felt quite content and thought that this had been a good choice. The best was yet to come! The next day we had a hearty breakfast and got the group together to explore more of Tolantongo.

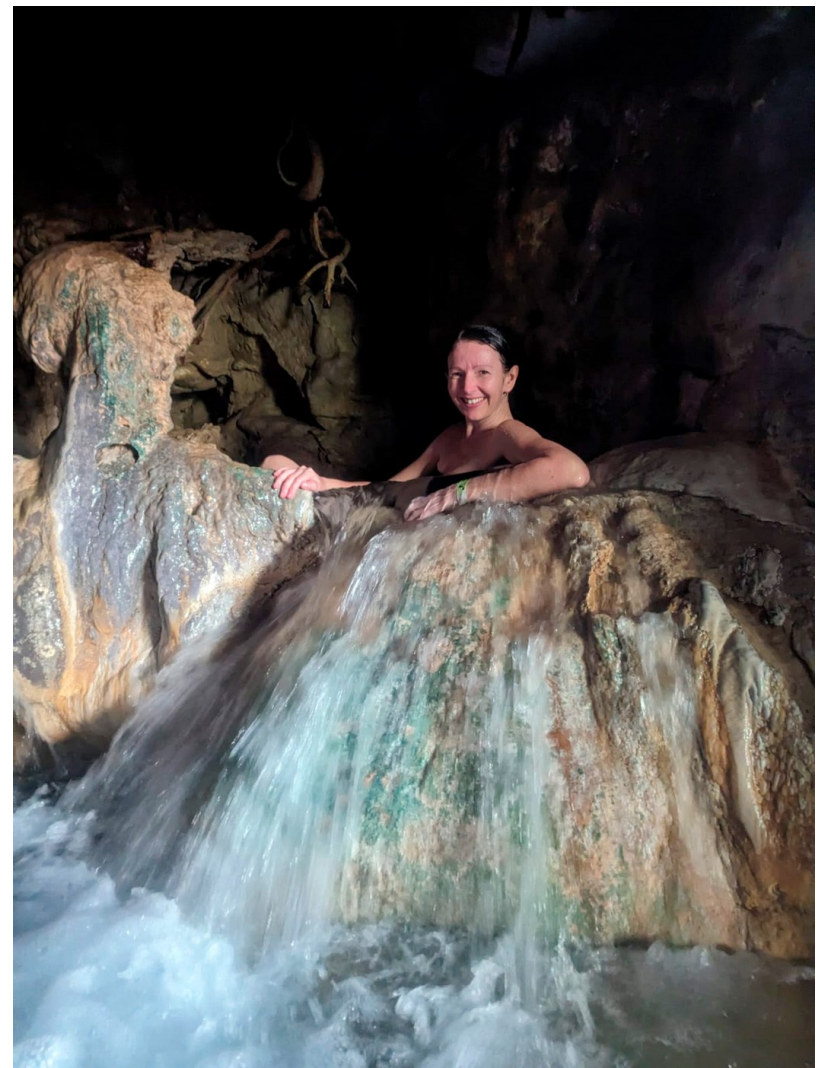


...On the Go in Mexico

After a short combi ride, we started our walk down a paved path with intermittent breaks in the vegetation that offered privileged views of the river below and the surrounding mountains.

At the bottom we came to the main cavern and its adjoining tunnel. As we walked through the icy water flowing down the cliff face, it was hard to believe that inside we would find warm water gushing in from the cavern walls - and what a treat it was. Each of us found a spot to lean against the cavern walls to enjoy this warm, natural massage.

I thought it couldn't get any better - but after a short walk across a suspension bridge into the next ejido, we came upon even more stunning views, and some very special caverns with no one else to share them with. I felt so lucky to be there, experiencing one of nature's finest gifts.



Caverns at Tolantongo



Mineral del Monte

After 2 days in this watery paradise, we moved on to the second stage of our trip, the mining town of Mineral del Monte. After trying some of the area's famous pasties (introduced by Cornish mining workers in the 1800s) and visiting one of the old mines, we stopped to enjoy this picturesque town's historic centre, and in particular, its silver shops! Upon our arrival to the hotel, we were spoiled with a fabulous wine tasting experience, and fantastic views of the Pueblo Mágico.

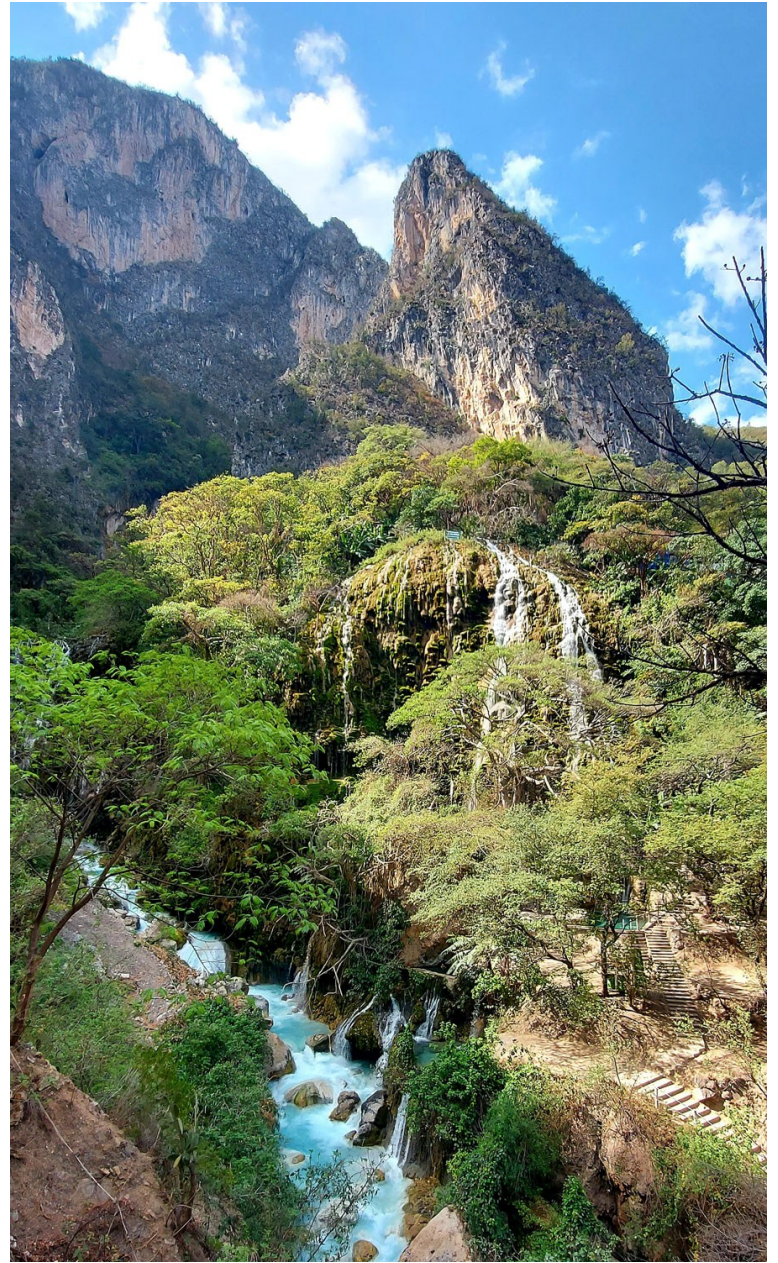
On the final day of the tour, we visited yet another natural wonder, the Basaltic Prisms of Santa Maria Regla, formed by the rapid cooling of basalt lava flow as it came into contact with the river. This was the perfect end to a wonderful trip full of natural and cultural highlights.

*More pictures from these beautiful destinations follow...*





Impressive valley near Tolantongo



View of the river in Tolantongo



Mineral del Monte - Pueblo Mágico



Left and right  
Basaltic Prisms of Santa María  
Regla



Find all the multi-day tours, with departures from Manzanillo and Costalegre,  
[at this link](#)

you can reach Ruth at [info@mex-ecotours.com](mailto:info@mex-ecotours.com)



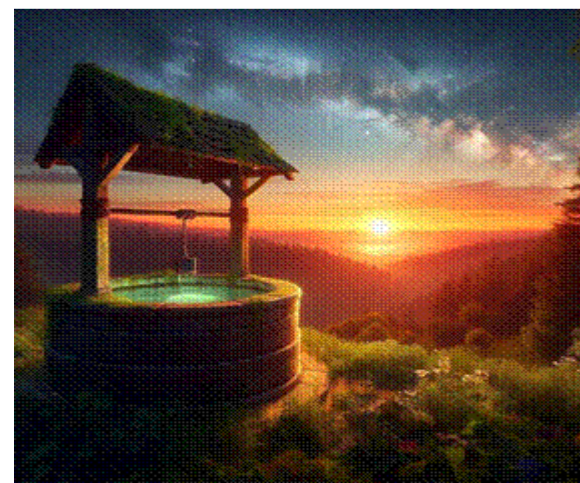
## Building Hope at El Naranjo: Community Efforts Transform a Local School

by Raul and Sue Moreno

In the small town of El Naranjo, a group of local residents and volunteers - led by Raul and Sue Moreno - continues to bring lasting improvements to the Telesecundaria School, demonstrating how collective goodwill can change lives.

"A wise man once said, 'I may not be the person that will change the world, but I will be the one that will spark the mind of someone who will.' These young students are the future of Mexico," says Raul Moreno.

The Morenos coordinate The Well initiative, a grassroots movement that unites donors and volunteers to give time, materials, and mentorship to local students. In 2025, approximately 40 donors and 10 volunteers joined their efforts to support school projects aimed at education, sustainability, and recreation.



Recently, a fundraising effort yielded 100 food gift packages to distribute in the communities of El Naranjo and Miramar, to be donated to the elderly, single mothers, the sick and the disabled community members.



### Science Lab Renovation

Volunteers worked side by side with students to repaint, repair, and refurnish the school's Science Lab. The team completely remodeled the Science Lab, rewiring outlets, repairing air conditioning, fixing broken tiles, replacing lighting, repainting walls, and equipping the space with new stools, a refrigerator, and improved lab fixtures. The lab now provides a safer, more inspiring environment for students to learn and experiment.

### Recycling Program

Students at the new recycling centre proudly display their fencing and environmental projects. A new recycling station was established, built largely from repurposed fencing materials. Through a partnership with Blanca Gutiérrez of Reciclaje de la Costa, students are learning how to reduce waste and protect their surroundings. The initiative also includes participation from neighbouring communities such as Vida del Mar, Las Lomas, Punta Encantada, and El Naranjo itself.



### Environmental Education

Students attend marine science seminars at the University of Colima, expanding their understanding of conservation. Students attended a seminar at the University of Colima's Marine Faculty of Science, where they learned about marine preservation and ecosystem health - linking classroom learning with real-world environmental stewardship.





...Building Hope at El Naranjo: Community Efforts Transform a Local School

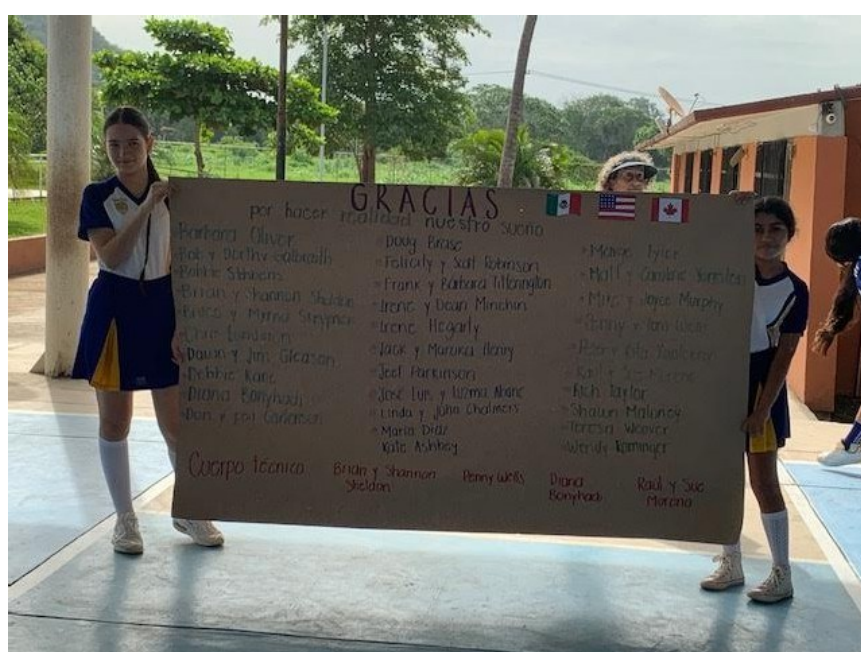
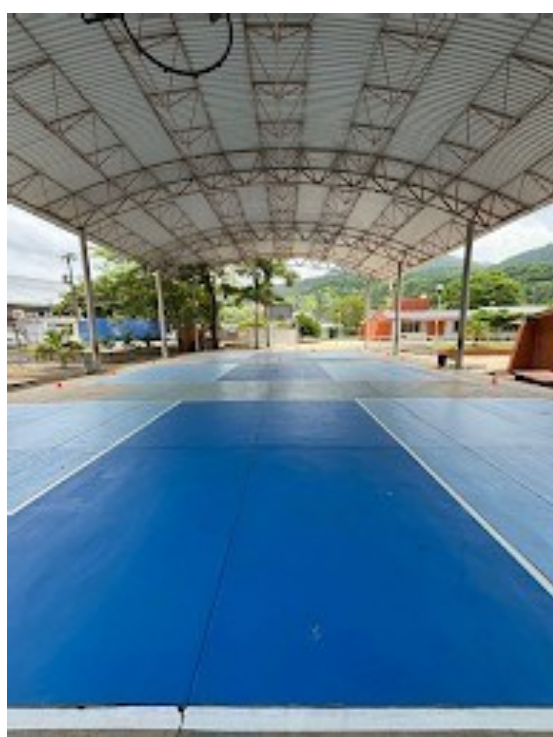
## Tree Planting and Soccer Field

Empresa Timsa joined the reforestation effort, planting 15 new trees and preparing land for a proper soccer field. In partnership with Empresa Timsa, volunteers planted 15 almond trees to promote reforestation and combat climate change. Plans are underway to level and irrigate the soccer field, with a sprinkler system and drip lines soon to be installed for the young trees.



## Pickleball Tournament 2025

Newly painted courts hosted the school's first Pickleball Tournament - students, teachers, and volunteers celebrating teamwork and fun. The community also completed three pickleball courts - just in time for the school's first-ever tournament. Special thanks go to Brian and Shannan Sheldon for coaching students and teachers, Shawn Maloney for his support with the science lab and magic shows, and Sue Moreno for her leadership and encouragement throughout every project.



How to reach  
Raul and Sue Moreno

+52 314 181 6887  
+52 314 181 6697  
VoIP +1 (916) 222-2944

**Practice Kindness**



## Vida Del Mar and El Naranjo Telesecundaria Recycle Program

by Raul and Sue Moreno

We would like to thank Ricardo De LaTorre and the Vida del Mar Board for their support and participation for the El Naranjo Telesecundaria and Reciclaje De La Costa recycling program. We would like to give a special thanks to Yamil Torres, the school's director for the example he sets and his dedication to betterment initiatives.

We have dedicated an enclosed area in the corner of the school right next to the medical clinic which will have a gate on each end to keep the children safe and so that it's not an eyesore from the street.

### Operating Hours

Please take your donation during the week - Monday to Friday, from 8am to 1pm. During these hours the donations can be placed in front of the gate or, if possible, please throw the recyclables over the fence. The students will sort out the recyclables at the end of the school day.

Vida Del Mar Owners—Please place your donation of plastic containers and aluminum cans in the recycle bins located by the office. Vida will take the recyclables to the El Naranjo School.

Anyone is welcome to donate. If you are making donations after these days / hours please throw your recyclables over the fence. This will eliminate animals from tearing into the bags.

Recyclable Materials:

1. Make sure to place only recyclable items in black storage bags
2. Make sure the containers are flattened so the school can receive more for each delivery. There is a cost per pick up. The more they can fit in a container, the more weight per pick up which means more money for El Naranjo School.
3. Keep plastic items separate from the aluminum cans.
4. Make sure all containers are completely empty and free of residue.
5. Aluminum drink cans are accepted (crushed)
6. Once yearly a paper drive is also held to gather recyclable books and other paper materials - check for event dates

### Acceptable Material for Recycling

Some number PET 5 are recyclable such as electrolyte drinks, prescription and supplement bottles as long as they are squeezable. Not like Charmin but needs to be pliable and not brittle. So, if you can squeeze the bottle then it is recyclable. Other items made of pliable plastic such as waste baskets, mop buckets, all pliable plastic with a PET number of 1 - 5. All containers must be completely empty and free from any residue.

### Non-Acceptable Material for Recycling

Plastic bags or containers that are used when making purchases at the store such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, clothing etc. are not recyclables. These are the bags that are on a roll by the fruits and vegetables or at the checkout stands, prepackaged fruits or vegetable containers as pictured below. No plastic disposable cups or fabric softener made by Ensueño are acceptable.

If you have any questions concerning recyclable items please send a picture to the following people in charge of recycling in your area, Raul Moreno [raulske251@gmail.com](mailto:raulske251@gmail.com) and Sue Moreno [suemoreno05@gmail.com](mailto:suemoreno05@gmail.com)

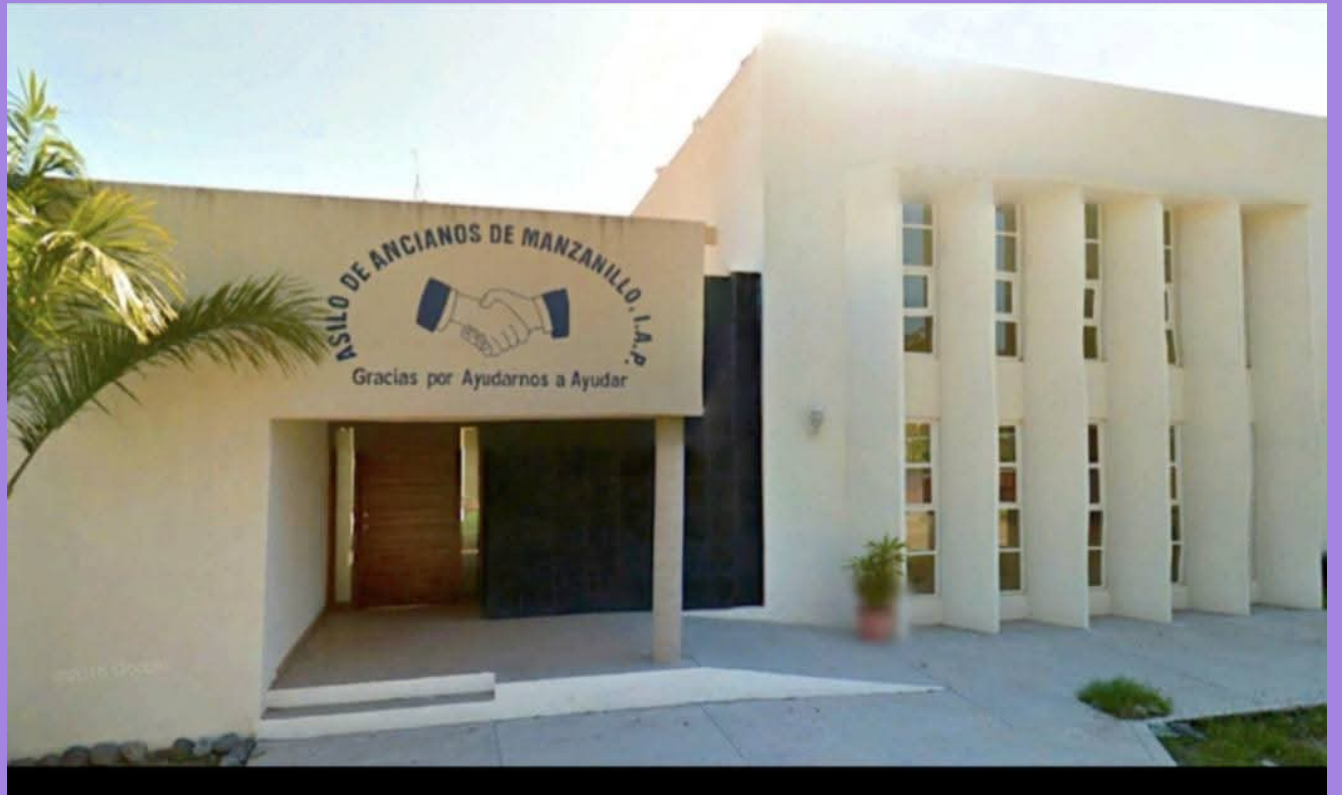


# Asilo de Ancianos de Manzanillo

You can support the local seniors' home through donations in kind or in pesos.

Items needed include

- . Rice
- . Beans
- . Pasta
- . Sugar
- . Coffee
- . Tea
- . Tuna
- . Wheat flour
- . Corn flour
- . Fruits and vegetables
- . Clothing
- . Sheets
- . Blankets
- . Jackets
- . Sneakers
- . Water
- . Cash to buy propane for their stove and water heater



**For more information, contact**

Cecilia Ruvalcaba

314 282 0620

Phone and WhatsApp

Mrs Carmon Bomak

fwcp38@gmail.com

**Address** to drop off donations

Alfonso Reyes Street 519, Nuevo Salahua, 28869 Manzanillo, Col



## A Life Devoted to Animals and a New Future in Cuyutlán

an interview with Maurie Deaton

On a quiet stretch of coastal land in Cuyutlán, Colima, surrounded by palms, salt air and the soft rumble of the ocean, sits a cluster of containers, a yard and a camper: the beating heart of **Casa de Las Patas Santuario Animal**, an animal sanctuary built through determination, compassion and a lifetime of resourcefulness.

Its founder, **Maurie Deaton**, lives on the property in a motor home while caring for approximately **60 cats** and **eight dogs**.

What began as a temporary arrangement has evolved into a full-time mission. "I came to Mexico with no animals," she explains. "I was just fostering at first. But there weren't many adoption options, and most of the cats stayed. They needed a safe place."



Donny, found with his sister, Marie, after having been abandoned at the Sanctuary

**CASA DE LAS PATAS**  
Santuario Animal  
en Cuyutlán

Contacto:  
Mari 315-152-99-25

### From Canada to Mexico

Maurie's path to Mexico has never been straightforward. She lived in Canada and worked with non-profit organizations. She spent a year in the Ukraine working with social and community organizations. Later, she eventually moved to the Pacific coast of Mexico for health reasons. Here, in the quiet community of **Melaque**, she first began taking in animals. As numbers grew, she relocated to **Cuyutlán**, where she purchased land and built a sanctuary from scratch.

The population of cats has increased steadily - from 0 to nearly 60 - along with the cost of food, veterinary care and maintaining the property. "It's a lot," she says, "but this is where they are safe."

### Life at Casa de Las Patas

The sanctuary is a patchwork of practical solutions: 4 fenced yards, 2 containers with shade, and a newly reinforced boundary after heavy rains and termites damaged the original posts. Recent earthquakes and heavy rains have added to the workload.

Maurie trains her animals to travel calmly in carriers for when they travel to their forever homes and ensures every cat and dog is vaccinated, fed and closely monitored. She receives no government assistance. Most donors prefer to give directly rather than through tax-deductible channels - so Maurie stretches every peso.





Fergus, the Number 1 Troublemaker

### Planning for the Future

The sanctuary land is in Maurie's name, but she has already arranged for its future. Upon her death, ownership will transfer to **Alianza Animal Manzanillo**, a charity that works closely with **Friends of Mexican Animal Welfare** (FOMAW). Alianza will take over the care of the animals when the time comes.



### New Horizons: An RV Park with a Purpose

Alongside the sanctuary, Maurie is developing **Cuyutlán RV Park**. Visitors will stay just steps from the beach, with the chance to meet the animals and see the sanctuary in action.

An event planned for January 14, **the Sunset Soirée**, at 5:30 pm in Melaque will introduce the project to the community and help dispel misconceptions. **The goal is simple: more visibility, more support, and a sustainable way to fund ongoing care.** And Bow Wos bingo will take place at Cabo Blanco in Barra at 12:30 pm. Events link [here on Facebook](#) and reach out on WhatsApp at +523151529925



Clementina, Frida and Freddy

### How You Can Help

Maurie welcomes support in many forms. Some of the most helpful contributions include:

- Volunteering on-site for animal care, feeding and socializing
- Assistance with fencing, tools and light construction and cleanup on the property
- Helping with transportation for vet appointments
- Creating and managing social media and a YouTube channel
- Donating food, supplies or covering veterinary care costs
- Renting a space at the new RV park to help generate revenue
- Sharing the sanctuary's story with friends, neighbours and visitors
- Donating items to the tianguis (market) in Cuyutlán each Sunday, helping out with the tianguis in person or donating items for the online tianguis
- Adopting animals or helping find homes to adopt them

Even a few hours a week makes a difference. "I just want these animals to be safe," Maurie says. "That's the whole point."

Find adoptable pets [at this link](#) and on [Facebook](#)

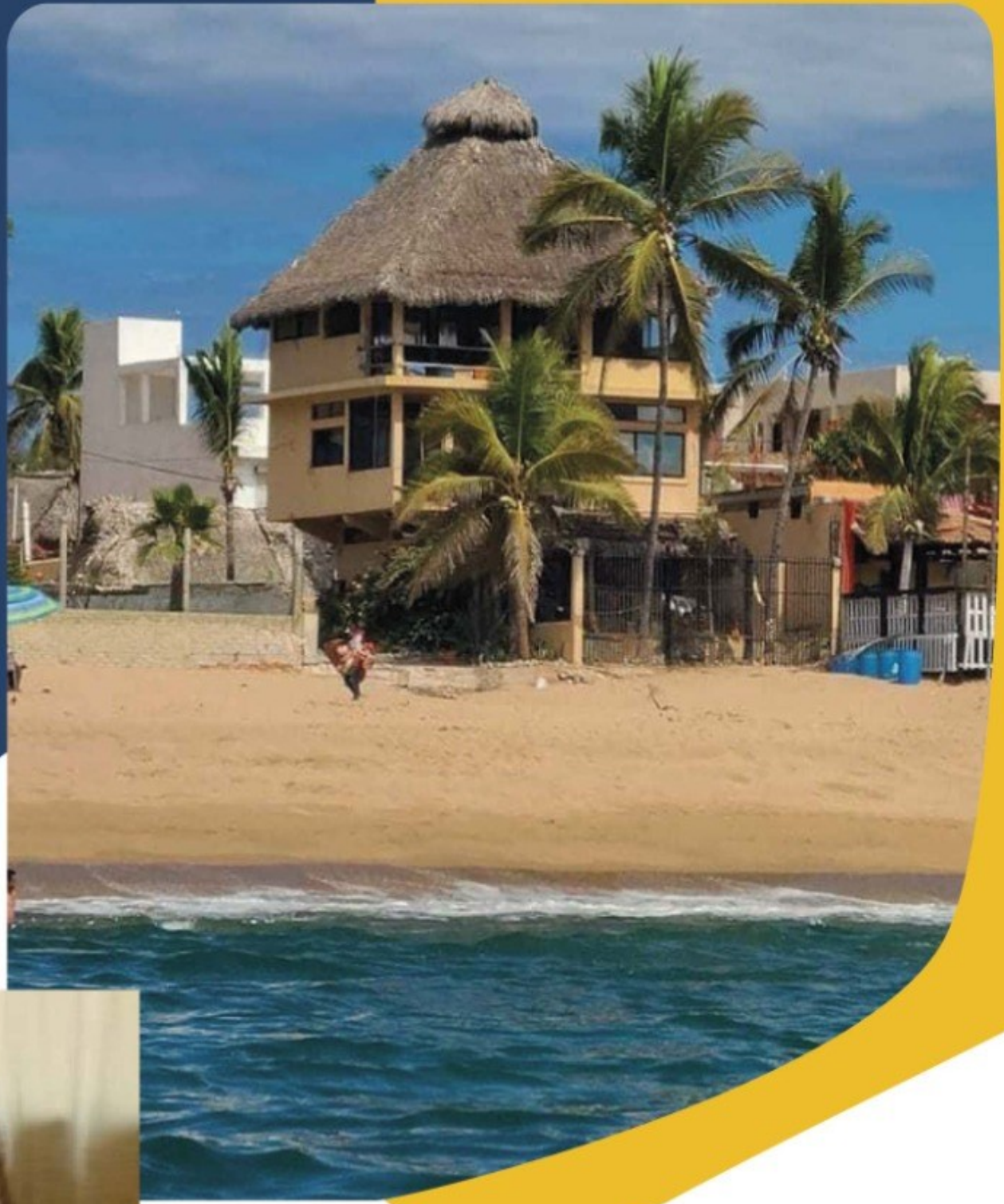


# BEAUTIFUL HOUSE

*Ocean Front*

## ADDRESS

Las Fincas #13  
Melaque, Jalisco



- Beautiful beachfront house is designed to be either 1 whole house, a 2 story house with a separate income suite or 3 separate suites.
- 3 blocks from Melaque's downtown.
- 2140 square feet.
- Currently 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, 3 covered outdoor patios.
- Many updates-upgrades including new 6 inch sewer line, fresh paint, first floor kitchen cabinet doors and drawers, etc.

**Price \$375,000 US**

**Contact:**  
**Maurie Deaton**  
**WhatsApp 315-152-9925**



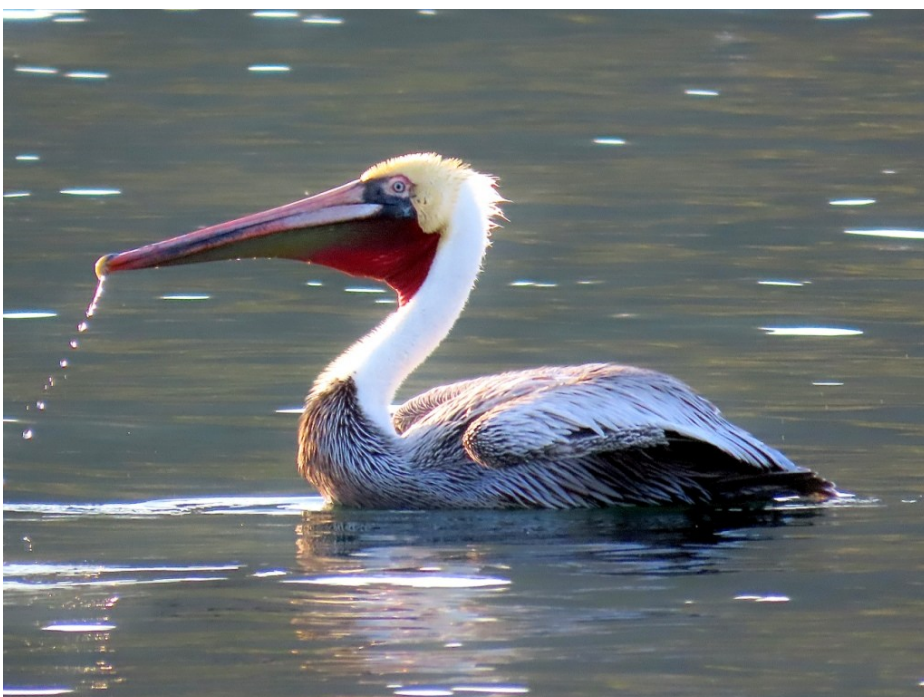
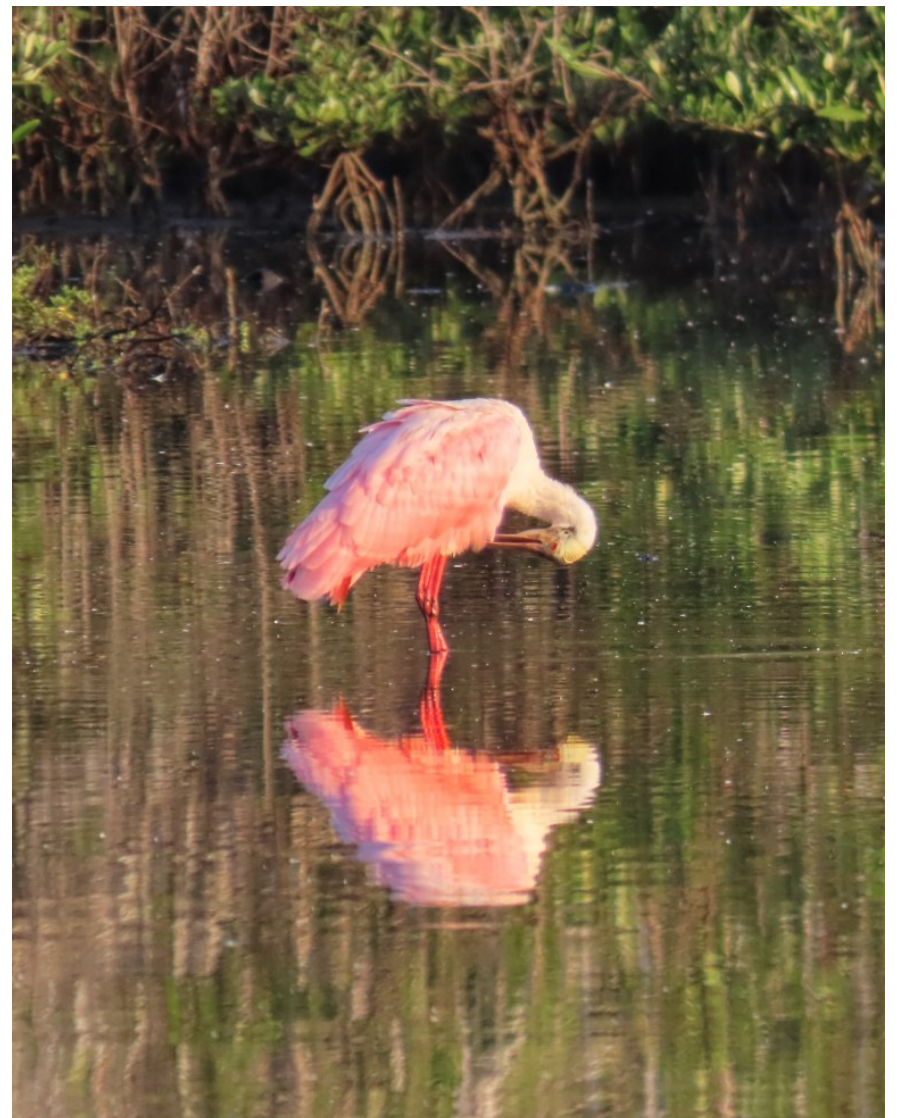
## Life on the Water

Photographer: Marg McKenna



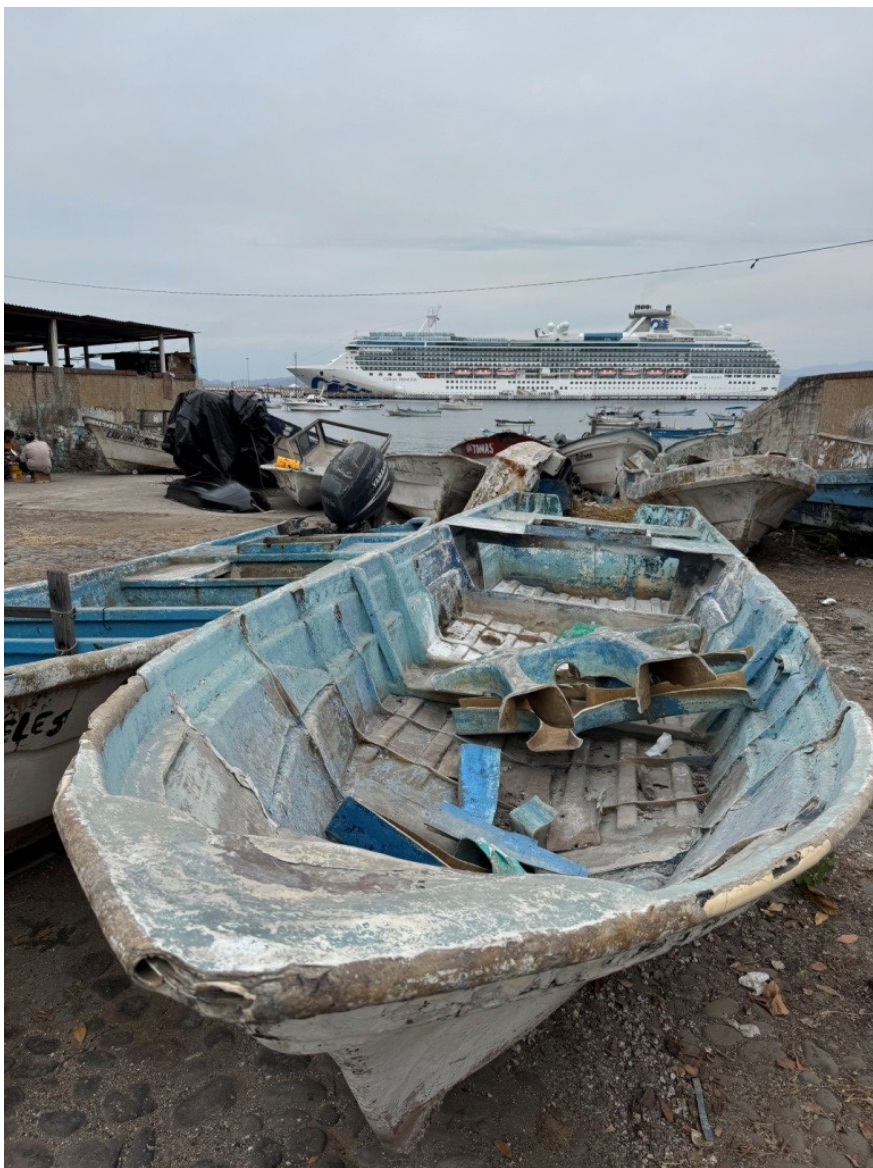
LEFT Green-backed heron waiting on the tide at La Boquita

RIGHT Reflections in the lagoon waters at La Boquita  
BELOW Brown pelican washing down breakfast at La Boquita

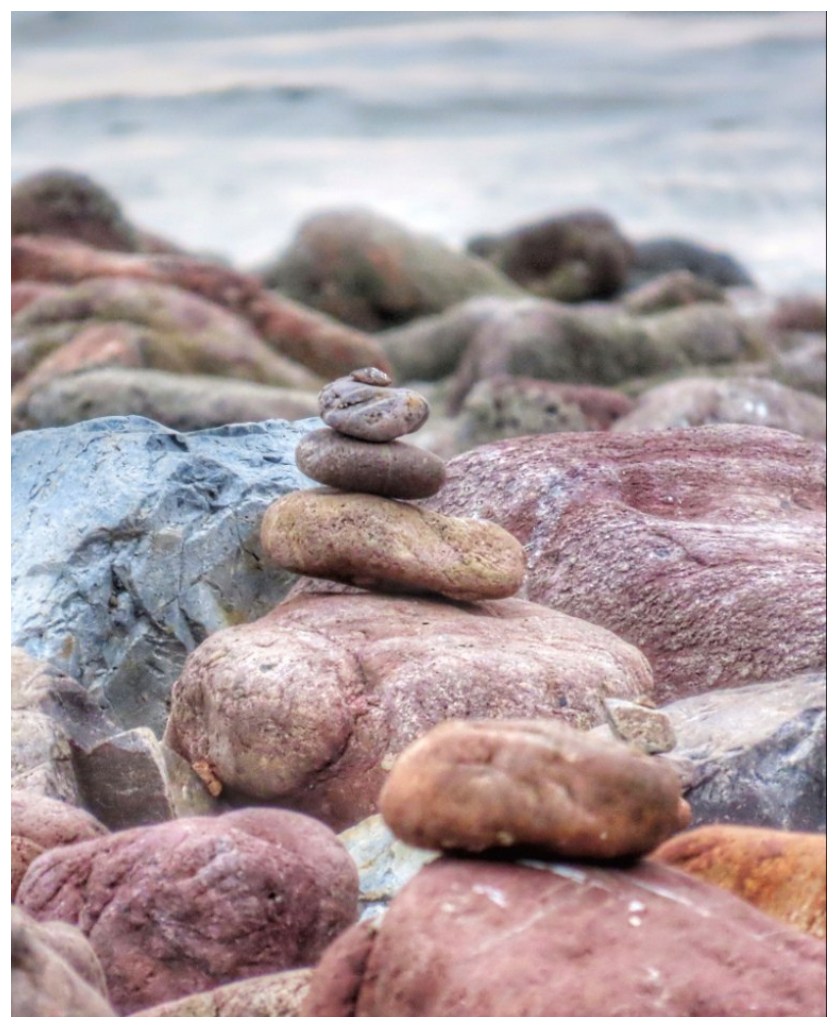




RIGHT American Oystercatcher with a sea urchin (erizo del mar)



LEFT When the “haves” meet the “have nots”, San Pedrito



RIGHT Inukshuk created from the rocks of La Boquita

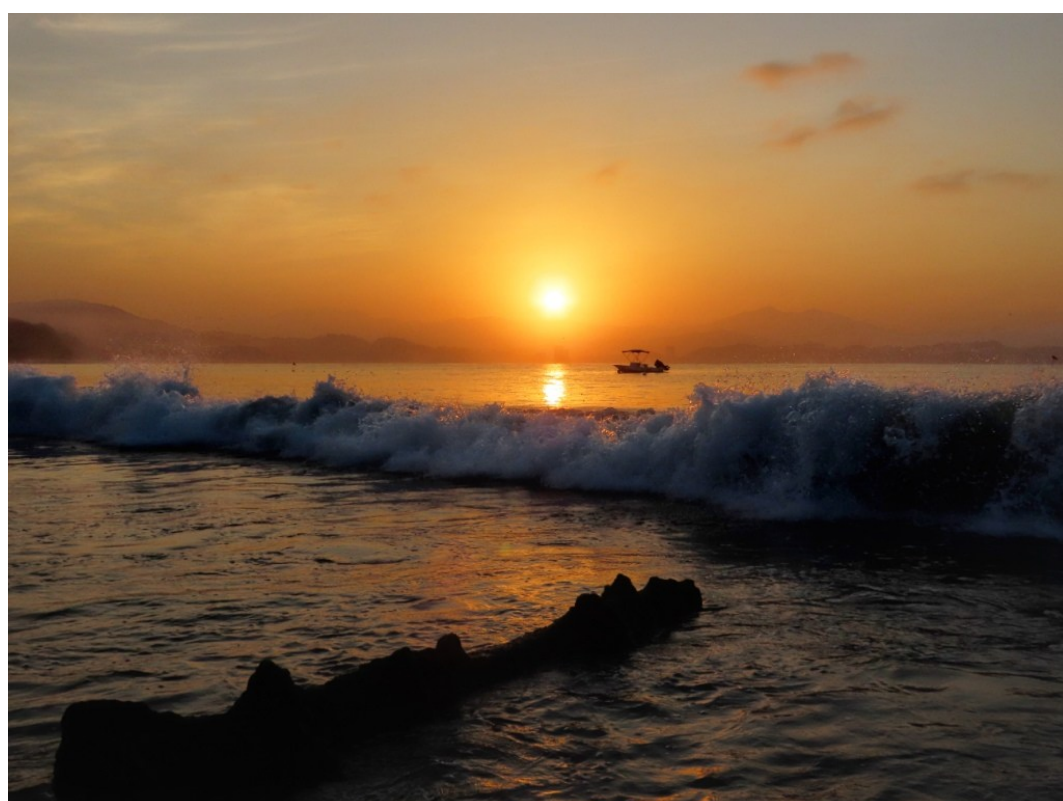




LEFT Morning shadows



RIGHT An Snowy Egret greeting the waves



LEFT Sunrise and waves



...Life on the Water



LEFT Erizo del mar among the colourful stones of La Boquita

BELOW Pescadores of La Boquita bringing in the morning catch





## Sunrise - Sunset

Photographer: Marg McKenna



LEFT Pescador feeding fish to the birds

BELOW Shades of dawn at the public entrance to the beach at Club Santiago

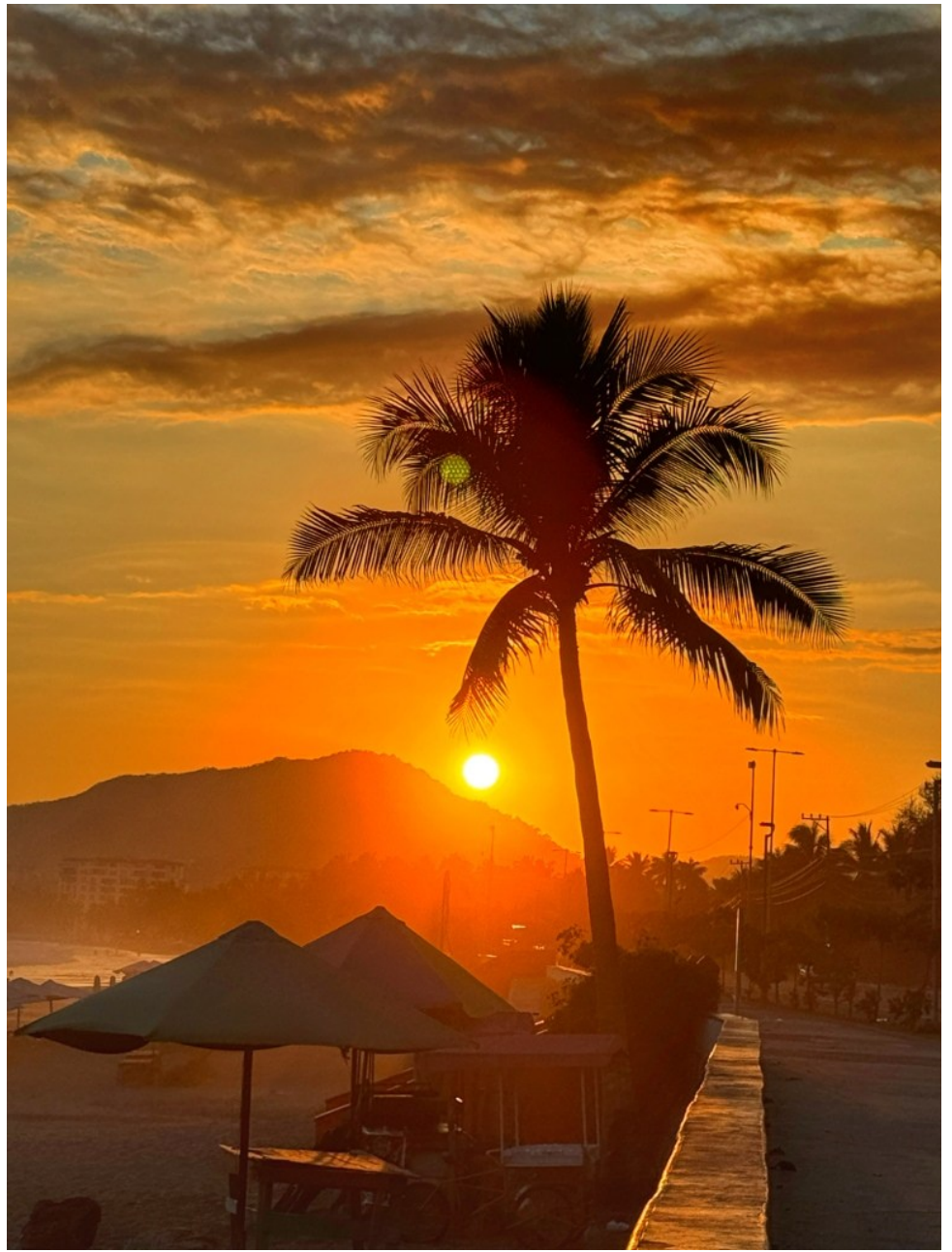


LEFT Miramar sky before dawn



...Sunrise - Sunset

RIGHT Sunset as seen from the tikis in Miramar



LEFT Sentinel of the playa



RIGHT Sunrise at Miramar  
*If fishes were wishes, we would all cast our nets*





...Sunrise - Sunset



LEFT A 'Skate's last sunrise



RIGHT Reflections of beauty



LEFT Tranquility at La Boquita



- Tours
- Education
- Live flowers
- A whole new world to explore



[viveplants.com](https://viveplants.com)



## Mexico According to El Güero

by Ken Waldie

Manzanillo is always a blast when I visit, sometimes quite literally, although you only truly understand this contrast if you escape a cold climate to enjoy the winter warmth this place offers, as we do. I have not experienced a Manzanillo summer yet, so I can only imagine how much hotter it must be, given how warm the winters already feel.

Several years ago, we left home in the middle of the night, driving through a foot of snow in a major storm. We could not even see the road. Bundled in fuzzies, jackets, boots, scarves and loaded like burros, we made our way from the parking lot to the terminal. Once on the plane, we peeled off our layers and tucked everything into the overhead bins for the trip. Upon arrival, I had more things than hands, so I put it all back on. Fuzzy sweater, heavy winter jacket, scarf, touque, backpack, bags in hand, and off I went toward the exit.

If you have arrived in Manzanillo before, you know the blast of humid heat that greets you. That day it was thirty-seven degrees and likely close to ninety percent humidity. Holy lobster in a pot! I reached the top of the stairway, stepped into a wall of heat and immediately broke into a full sweat. My baggage began slipping in my hands as I made my way across the tarmac. The ground crew stared and smiled (crazy *güero*) with a mix of surprise and amusement but still offered a cheerful, "*hola*" as I shuffled past like a sherpa dressed for a blizzard, but who had somehow wandered into the jungle.

Once inside, I immediately shed the layers, heat stroke averted, but that moment stayed with me. It perfectly captured the contrasts I experience on every visit to Mexico.

The first thing I noticed are the sidewalks of Manzanillo. I'm sure you're chuckling already. I like to call them creative obstacle courses. I am simply not used to watching my feet, watching for cyclists, watching for cars entering parking areas and checking the map on my phone all at once. It is a full sensory workout. If you have walked almost anywhere in town, then I'm sure you can empathize.

Driving, oddly enough, feels less stressful. Anyone who has driven in a large and busy city might expect chaos, yet drivers here are surprisingly tolerant and adaptable to deal with the unexpected. Potholes, sudden lane changes, dogs crossing, people appearing from nowhere, weaving through traffic, everyone simply rolls with it. Road rage is nearly nonexistent. Drivers let others in. It is a live and let live system that I wish we could bring home. And the sights are unforgettable.

Three riders and a stack of parcels balanced on an itsy-bitsy motorbike. Spiderman cruising along the boulevard while glued to his phone. And of course, the left turn lanes are placed on the right side of the road-totally logical. Really it seems outrageous, yet somehow it works beautifully, most of the time, as long as drivers understand the system.





...Mexico According to El Güero

We often rent cars when we are in town, and the process always feels a little like a game of chance, including whether the car you booked is going to be available. You never quite know what you will receive. Rental cars live demanding lives here and most show it. Dings, scrapes, tire wear or occasional missing parts are typical, even if the car is nearly new. There are deals to be found but you must watch for extra coverages and exclusions.

Generally, in Mexico, the renter is responsible for any damage that occurs to the car while in their care. There are coverage waivers that can be purchased but usually they come with wiggle out clauses that leave you paying for the damage anyway. I guess that's the bottom line. For example, if a side mirror goes missing or a tire blows out, the renter pays for it.

Large rental chains usually have contracts in both English and Spanish, but many local companies use Spanish only which is useful to know. And a note, my wife and I both drive a standard shift vehicle, and that has helped us many times to get an upgraded car, because no one else wants to drive a stick shift. We show up and a stick shift car gets assigned to us, as if the reservation of an automatic vehicle was a mere suggestion.

If you have wandered through the side streets of Santiago or the old town near the port, you have seen a master class in entrepreneurship. I love walking by just to see what creative businesses are available. Garage-sized shops bustle with life and offer nearly everything you could ever need.

One day, we stopped at a tiny flower shop in a garage (*laca*). The florist assembled a bouquet in a minute. Layered, arranged, trimmed, wrapped. It was like watching a dance performance and I appreciated the bouquet all the more for having enjoyed its creation.





### ...Mexico According to El Güero

We went to a photographer for a set of formal documents. I didn't have the mandatory white shirt. No problem, the photographer used photoshop to make my shirt white. He also lightened under my eyes to make me look less - how would you put it? Gangster, I think my wife said. I preferred the photo to the one on my driver's license from home, an unretouched mugshot.

Back home, living spaces are sealed behind insulation and closed construction with what we call stick build structures or wood-frame construction. We have a friend in Manzanillo, an architect, who, with a smile tells me, "here we use concrete". I have shown him photos of our wood framing and plastic wrap, to which he shakes his head and explains the thousand reasons that concrete is better. I find the openness that buildings generally have here refreshing. Restaurants without walls, open-air markets, breezy hallways. Take the Saturday market (*tianguis*) in Santiago. On Friday it is a field of dirt. On Saturday it becomes a full market. On Sunday it returns to a dirt field, and it always amazes me.



Then there are the hand signals. Do you know that people commonly use signals or gestures to communicate at a distance? I once watched a man communicate across the street with nothing but gestures. It looked like an entire conversation conducted without speaking. I did learn one signal. If you wave the back of your hand toward another driver, it means thank you. A simple way of acknowledging another person. Don't ever do that in Italy, though.

Connection is truly woven through Mexican culture. People greet each other warmly, even strangers. *Provecho* as you pass diners in a restaurant expresses a wish that they enjoy the bounty of their meal. *Permiso* or *con permiso* in the market aisle or a crowded place when passing by. *Propio* is the response.

Friends visit, share meals, include the children and make time simply to be together. Breakfast before work, coffee drop ins, spontaneous casual gatherings. These habits seem less common in the other land I call home, where it seems like we fit friends in when everything else that takes our time is exhausted.

I'm blessed to have enjoyed extended travels through Mexico, not nearly as much as my wife, but we've been to Baja Sur, to several cities and communities in Sonora, Colima, Jalisco, and into central Mexico including Mexico City and Puebla. Manzanillo, however, has a place in my heart.

Every time I come back to Mexico, I feel more at home. I notice more of the contrasts, but more of the similarities and endearments that pull me back to enjoy, starting with that heat blast I get when I step off the plane.



# MELAQUE MURDER CLUB



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## MELAQUE MURDER CLUB

Follow Author Edmond Gagnon and a Group of Retired Seniors staying in a small Mexican Beach Town, while they try to find out what's happening to Missing and Murdered Tourists in their quiet little Piece of Paradise



**Edmond Gagnon** is a Melaque resident and Canadian author celebrated for his captivating crime and mystery novels. Drawing on his rich experiences as a retired police detective, Gagnon weaves authentic narratives that immerse readers in the gritty realities of law enforcement. His works, including the popular **Norm Strom** series (with such titles as “**Finding Hope**” and “**Border City Chronicles**”), showcase his keen eye for detail and deep understanding of human behaviour. In addition to his fiction, including “**Melaque Murder Club**”, Gagnon has penned travel memoirs, sharing his adventures and insights from exploring diverse cultures. Passionate about storytelling, he continues to write compelling tales that reflect his life's unique journey.



## Sunset over the Manzanillo Sun

My husband looked up songs that have the word "last" in the title. He said that he found a hundred and seventy. Last Dance, Last Chance, Last Waltz, The Last Song I Will Sing for You, Last Train To Clarksville... Like the other side of the proverbial coin, last brings the possibility for new things to begin.

For sixteen years, the **Manzanillo Sun** has been a small yet meaningful part of life along our coast. Yes, this will be our last edition.

What began in November 2009 as a printed newsletter magazine, carried from place to place by volunteers, became a digital magazine read in Mexico, Canada, the United States and many other corners of the world. With the release of this edition, the story of the Manzanillo Sun magazine will come to a close, though the stories created live on in our archives. They stand as a record of life here: ordinary days, remarkable people and the coastline that holds us all.

This is not a goodbye to the people, the places or the spirit that flow through its pages. It is simply the closing of this chapter, with deep appreciation to all who made this publication possible.

The magazine was founded in 2009 by Freda Rumford and her son, Ian Rumford, later joined by Kirby Vickery, who saw a gap: a need to share information, community news and the many human stories that made Manzanillo and the Costalegre region remarkable. They encouraged others to contribute. The early editions were filled with restaurant reports, personal essays, small-town observations, travel notes and the news of charity work that so often goes unnoticed. Most of all, they were filled with people helping people.

In 2015, the mantle passed to Dana Parkinson, and the Sun continued as a monthly digital publication, with help of friends and family (special thanks to El Gordo) and the wonderful community of collaborators. The design changed, the technology changed, but the purpose remained the same: to celebrate this coastal community and the lives woven through it.

Over the years, dozens of volunteer writers, photographers, translators and supporters have shared their gifts. Their names appear in every issue, and their work remains available to read and revisit at [www.manzanillosun.com](http://www.manzanillosun.com) as articles and in the magazine archives. These individuals deserve a special thank you. The Manzanillo Sun was never a commercial product. It was a community collaboration, powered by generosity and curiosity.

Readers saw images and articles on local wildlife, volunteer organizations, beach clean-ups, gardens, history and architecture. There were personal reflections from long-time residents and newcomers alike. There were stories about fishing, animal sanctuaries, firefighters, craftspeople, musicians and the many unsung heroes who enrich life here. There were humorous tales, thoughtful essays and photos that captured more than sunshine - they captured belonging.

When the world slowed during COVID, so did the magazine. Community activities were suspended, gatherings were rare and social life went quiet. It became difficult to find stories and it seemed practical to shift from monthly editions to annual ones. Since 2021, the Sun has arrived once a year on January 1, marking the height of the winter season when so many return to Manzanillo.

To our readers, thank you. Your interest and encouragement kept this project going. To everyone who wrote or photographed or helped in any way, this magazine is yours as much as it is ours.

The Manzanillo Sun may end in this format, but community spirit carries on. We look forward to seeing you again, whenever the coast calls.

From all of us: **thank you for reading!**



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