



Victor Lloyd Emanuel

October 24, 1940 - March 11, 2025

Victor Lloyd Emanuel of Austin, Texas passed away peacefully on March 11, 2025. He was 84 years old.

Victor was born and raised in Houston, Texas by his loving parents, Marian Nancy Alice Williams Emanuel, and Victor Aaron Hershel Emanuel. It was in Houston where, at a very young age, Victor developed the intense and intimate bond with nature that was to define him, a passion that enriched his own life and the lives of countless others.

Victor earned his bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Texas and a master's degree in government from Harvard University. After a brief foray into Houston school board politics, Victor founded Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT) in 1976, in the days when ecotourism and nature tours were largely unknown. His company quickly became a leader in this fledgling industry. VENT's success was a testament to Victor's business acumen, his skill and knowledge as a birder, and, above all, his passion for sharing his love of and excitement about nature with others. That passion was infectious; one could not spend time around Victor without developing a deep enthusiasm for the natural world, and birds in particular. In 1978, Victor moved his company to Austin, Texas, which became his home for the next five decades.

Victor's love of nature was matched only by the love he had for people, and he formed deep friendships with well-known philosophers, novelists, physicists, adventurers, musicians, politicians, conservationists, and birders alike. He was well known for his mentorship, zeal for nature and conservation, his infectious enthusiasm, and magnetic personality. He was fiercely loyal and unfailingly generous.

One of his most lasting legacies was establishing a summer camp program for young birders in 1986. Victor was deeply aware of the transformational power of mentorship, and many of the young birders whose talents were cultivated by the camps have gone on to become prominent leaders in ornithology and conservation.

In recognition of the scope and impact of his work in birding and conservation, he received many important awards and accolades including the Roger Tory Peterson Excellence in Birding Award from Houston Audubon, the Roger Tory Peterson Award from the American Birding Association, and the prestigious Arthur A. Allen Award from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The Travis Audubon Society in Austin, Texas created the Victor Emanuel Conservation Award to honor local leaders in conservation, with Victor himself the inaugural recipient of his namesake award.

In 2017, the University of Texas Press published his memoir, *One More Warbler, A Life with Birds*.

Victor was preceded in death by his parents, Victor and Marian, and his sister, Marilyn Emanuel McStravick. He is survived by his nephew Steve Emanuel, his nieces Sherry McStravick and Kathy Starr, and great nephews and great nieces Tyler Emanuel; Kelton Holmes, Brookman Holmes, and Helen Evers; and Maitland and Morgan Starr; and a host of devoted friends too numerous to count.

He will be dearly missed by all those who were fortunate to have had this remarkable man as part of their lives.

More tributes to Victor will follow, and a service to celebrate his life will be announced at a later date on ventbird.com. Donations may be made to the Victor Emanuel Nature Scholarships Fund naurescholarships.org.

"Think where man's glory most begins and ends, and say my glory was I had such friends."

-William Butler Yeats

Cemetery Details

Eloise Woods Natural Burial Park

115 Northside Lane
Cedar Creek, TX 78612

Events

Details are pending.

Tribute Wall

BR

“ *My dear friend Victor, there was never enough time. A heartfelt thank you for all you gave me. You will always be in my heart*

Bonnie Christina Randall - March 08 at 03:51 PM