

Alamo Area Chapter News

January 2016

txmn.org/alamo



EVENTS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING

VOLUME 20, ISSUE 1

AAMN BOARD MEETING
January 12 at 5:30 PM
AgriLife Extension
3355 Cherry Ridge
Classroom 208

General Meeting 7 PM (AT)
Come out and learn
how to report your
hours on the new
Volunteer Management
System (VMS)

OFFICERS
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Immediate Past President
Liz Robbins
liz.robbins.44@gmail.com

President's Message



First Things First: What a night! I think the December holiday gathering was a huge success. Thanks to everyone who helped pull that evening off. The Hospitality Committee was "on it" as usual, and without their efforts before, during and after, it just would not happen! Nice BBQ, good potluck dishes, and great fellowship for members and guests alike. My first pledge as the new president is "metal forks for all." I am committed to donate enough cutlery for every attendee of any AAMN event to have a metal fork. It's not just handy; it's good for the environment.

Speaking of Forks! The annual Lasagna Dinner is on and will be held just after the board meeting on Tuesday, January 12. It teetered on the fence a minute or two, but thanks to Nancy Brown's enthusiasm and some lightning quick offers of assistance and support, AAMN members are invited to enjoy an evening of lasagna tasting before the 7:00 PM training session. If you'd like to share a side dish, salad, dessert, or lasagna dish, please let Nancy know (nan.bro@att.net). All contributions are appreciated and serving time begins around 6:30 PM. Word on the trail is Nancy makes a mean seafood lasagna. I can't wait to try some.

You don't want to miss this: The training for Tuesday evening is on the new Volunteer Management System (VMS), so come on out and learn how to report those hours. This is a statewide initiative, and when you volunteer, it is vital to report your hours. These hours are required to stay certified, sure, but more importantly they are vital to the State in obtaining grants and they validate the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist. Don't just report them for yourself, report them for the good of the organization. Every hour counts.

Finally: If you have not sent in your dues, please do so. The dues are just \$12.00, and payment can be made in various ways. Treasurer Nancy Thoss will be present to receive your dues at the meeting; you can mail a check in if you want, or it's handy to just use the PayPal option that has been set up on the AAMN website. You can find a copy of the form at <http://goo.gl/Hwg7nk>.

And Finally Finally: I just have to say thanks again to Liz Robbins for six years of dedicated service as president of the chapter. Also, thanks to all the previous, continuing, and newly elected Board members and to those of you who have shared with me a kind word of encouragement on becoming the new president. It's a bit daunting, but with a great Board and solid membership, I have high hopes of a successful year!

COMMITTEES

Activities Information

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Historian/Archivist

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Hospitality

vacant

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Liz Robbins, New Class Director
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New Class Representatives

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Debra Haynes; debbiegriffin07@yahoo.com

Pins and Awards

Congratulations to all our pin recipients!
Those who haven't received their pins may
pick them up at the January 12 chapter meeting.

Initial Certification Dragonfly

Emily Hawthorn - 36

Barbara Potts - 36

Pat Symchych - 37

2015 Recertification – Texas Bluebonnet

Raquel Barba-Garza - 31

Jeanne Bodine - T

Lynda Chew - 37

Dwight Henderson - 26

Janie Henry - 19

Sara Key - 30

Vickie Kinder - 37

Linda Myers - 32

Fran Tomsett - 34

Rhonda Wise - 30

Rain Gardens: Landscaping for Sustainability & Beauty

Saturday
January 16, 2016

Phil Hardberger Park West
Urban Ecology Center
8400 NW Military Hwy
San Antonio, TX 78231

For more information on
rain gardens, please
visit www.sara-tx.org

Hands-on activities:

- Interactive residential LID model to demonstrate negative and positive stormwater impacts related to typical residential properties
- Live plants and activities to help plan your rain garden

10 a.m. — 12 p.m.
Free Parking

The workshop is designed to show and discuss the use of rain gardens to benefit water quality, wildlife and landscape aesthetics.



Newsletter Policies

We try to publish all material we receive, but space is limited in each month's newsletter. Long articles may be published on the website instead of the newsletter. Event notices must go through Pam Ball; and only the Activities Information Committee is authorized to declare whether an event is approved for Advanced Training or Volunteer Service Hours. Deadline for submissions is the 25th of each month.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

Class 25

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News from Headwaters

On Saturday, in spite of the iffy weather, more than thirty volunteers showed up ready to work. We had folks from YMSL (Young Men's Service League), the Alamo Heights Environmental Club, Kym's Kids, the Spanish Honor Society at ISA (International School of the Americas), a generous sprinkling of Master Naturalists, and others.

After a morning of hard work, hungry volunteers tucked into some delicious Kielbassa sausages on a bun, adorned with a variety of toppings. Tom Willems brought the cooker pot to warm them up, and Rowena brought some homebaked sweets. As this was the last Saturday workday until January, it was a fitting end to another great season of volunteerism in the Headwaters. Email Howard.Homan@gmail.com to come join us!

THANKS Everyone!!!



January Training and Volunteer Events

First Day Hikes (AT) and Bike Rides (Fun)

Friday, January 1, 8 AM – 2 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Be a part of a National movement to get people into State Parks! Join Government Canyon State Natural Area Rangers and Volunteers on either a hike or bike ride on the first day of the year. No matter which activity you choose, you will be able to boast being one of the First Visitors to enjoy the trails of Government Canyon in 2016. This is an event you don't want to miss! Below are the available activities for 2016:

1) 8 AM – 10 am: Backcountry Mountain Bike Ride (10 miles) Intermediate-to-advanced with steep inclines and descents.

2) 9 AM – Noon: Guided Hike: Bluff Spurs (3 miles) Moderate with some elevation gain 11AM – 2:00PM: Guided Hike: Bluff Spurs (3 miles) Moderate with some elevation gain

All First Day activities are open to all ages; minors must be accompanied by an adult; no pets please.

All hike group sizes are limited to the first 12 people who register; bike group size is limited to first 8 people who register. All bike participants must wear helmets. Dress in layers and wear sturdy shoes for hiking over rough terrain; bring two liters of water and a snack. Reservations are required and will be accepted through noon on December 31. Sorry, no group reservations. Make your reservations online at <http://friendsofgc.org/events/>. Include name, age if under 18, email address and telephone number for each individual participant. Natural Area Entry fees apply. Meet at the Visitors Center by the rainwater harvesting tower after stopping at the Entrance Fee Booth Area to self-pay/register. Plan to be at the Visitor Center to meet with your hike or bike leader at least 15 minutes prior to departure time. Subject to cancellation. If weather is inclement call GCSNA's main office (210-688-9055) after 7:30 AM on January 1st to check on trail conditions, or go to the GCSNA website (tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/government-canyon) or to the GCSNA Facebook page. For information email activities@friendsofgc.org or call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

Guided Hike to the Protected Habitat (AT)

Saturday, January 2, 8:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Members of the Government Canyon Activities Committee and Trail Patrol will lead a hike to the Protected Habitat Area starting at 8:00 AM. Participants must be at least 14 years of age and physically able to hike 12 to 13 miles over broken, rocky terrain with a good portion of elevation gain and loss. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian; no pets please. The hike will last until around 3:00 or 4:00 PM depending on participants. Dress in layers appropriate to the weather. Carry at least 3 liters of water per person, snacks, lunch, sunscreen, hat, and raingear. Wear sturdy, well-broken-in hiking shoes or boots. Participation is limited. Reservations are required and will be accepted until noon on December 31. Sorry, no group reservations. Make your reservations online at <http://friendsofgc.org/events/>. Include name, age if under 18, email address and telephone number for each individual participant. Natural Area Entry fees apply. Meet at the Visitors Center by the rainwater harvesting tower after stopping at the Entrance Fee Booth Area to self-pay/register. Plan to be at the Visitor Center to meet with your hike leader at least 15 minutes prior to departure time. This program is subject to cancellation. If weather is inclement call GCSNA's main office (210-688-9055) after 7:30 AM the morning of the hike to check on trail conditions, or go to the GCSNA (tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/government-canyon), or to the GCSNA Facebook page. For information email activities@friendsofgc.org or call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

Second Saturday: Be Watershed Wise! (AT)

Saturday, January 9, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom, 21395 Milsa Road, San Antonio, TX

Learn how you can become Watershed Wise through voluntary actions that create a healthier watershed and river. See a large-scale model of the San Antonio River and participate in a hands-on lesson that addresses the geography of the river, landforms, watersheds, and non-point source pollution. Fun for the whole family! RSVP required. To make a reservation, email nicole.mcLeod@sanantonio.gov. For more information, please call 210-207-3782.

January Training and Volunteer Events

Hike the Canyon (AT)

Saturday, January 9, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Open to ages 13 and over; minors must be accompanied by an adult. Group size is limited; no pets please. Dress appropriately; sunscreen and hat recommended. Wear sturdy footwear appropriate for rough trails; bring two liters of water per person and a snack. Natural Area Entry fees apply. Meet at the Visitors Center by the rainwater harvesting tower after stopping at the Entrance Fee Booth Area to self-pay/register. Plan to be at the Visitor Center no later than 8:15 AM; the hike starts promptly at 8:30 AM. Subject to cancellation. On inclement mornings call GCSNA's main office (210-688-9055) after 7:30 AM Saturday to check on trail conditions, or go to the GCSNA website (tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/government-canyon), or to the GCSNA Facebook page. For more information call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

Wildlife Tax Valuation Workshop (2 part series January 9 & 16) (AT)

Saturday, January 9, 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM

CNC Auditorium, 140 City Park Road, Boerne, TX
Do you have an agriculture tax valuation on your land? Are you interested in managing for wildlife? This in-depth seminar is especially for owners with more than 20 acres who are seeking to transition from an Agriculture Tax Valuation to a Wildlife Tax Valuation. This workshop emphasizes wildlife management strategies that improve native habitat and increase species diversity. Our presenters will help you gain land management knowledge, understand the history of this Texas law and fulfill requirements to qualify for a wildlife management tax valuation. Participants will complete the seminar ready to apply for their Wildlife Tax Valuation. Session 1: Overview, History of Wildlife Tax Valuation & Property Inventory

Saturday, January 9, 9 AM – 2:30 PM

Session 2: Management Practices, Habitat Assessment, Application Procedures

Saturday, January 16, 9 AM – 3:10 PM (+ Option to work on plan with biologist & appraiser from 3:10 – 4 PM)

Tuition: Members \$75/person and \$95/couple.

Non-members \$90/person and \$115/couple.

Registration at <https://goo.gl/qlSb3q>

Explore the Canyon to the Dinosaur Tracks (AT)

Saturday, January 16, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Join TPWD Interpreter John Koepke and our regular Natural Area hike leaders for a special Explore the Canyon to the dinosaur tracks in Government Canyon SNA. Open to all ages; minors must be accompanied by an adult and capable of hiking 5 miles over rugged terrain. Group size limited; no pets please. Dress appropriately, sunscreen and hat recommended, and wear sturdy footwear appropriate for rough trails; bring two liters of water PER PERSON and a snack. Meet at the Visitors Center by the rainwater harvesting tower. Reservations are required and can be made online at <http://friendsofgc.org/events/> through January 15. Sorry, no group reservations. Include name, age if under 18, email address and telephone number of each individual. For information email activities@friendsofgc.org or call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009. Subject to cancellation; Natural Area entrance fees apply.

Texas Tough Roundtable Series: Xeriscaping 101 (AT)

Sat, January 16, 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio, TX

Xeriscaping in South Texas is much more than rocks and cacti. Get a proper introduction to xeriscaping and learn how to apply water conservation principles in your landscape design. Meet with gardening experts in these roundtable forums to discuss basic design principles and implementation techniques for drought-tolerant landscapes. Fee: \$15 (\$13.50 members). For information, contact Nadezhda at deprogrms@sabot.org.

Rain Garden Workshop (AT)

Saturday, January 16, 10 AM – 12 PM

Phil Hardberger Park West Urban Ecology Center, 8400 NW Military Hwy, San Antonio, TX

The workshop is designed to show and discuss the use of rain gardens to benefit water quality, wildlife and landscape aesthetics. For more information on rain gardens, please visit www.sara-tx.org.

January Training and Volunteer Events

Map and Compass Basics: Finding Your Way in The Wild! (AT)

Saturday, January 16, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Learn to use a map and compass! Join Phil Starr for a fun workshop and field exercises to help you learn how to find your way around Government Canyon and other Natural Areas and Parks. BYO compass or borrow one of ours. Open to everyone 12 years of age and older; class size is limited to the first 12 people who sign up. Sorry, no group reservations accepted. Participants under 18 must be accompanied by their parent or guardian. No pets please. Wear sturdy shoes and weather appropriate clothing; bring water (1 liter per person), and a snack if you like. Meet at the Exhibit Gallery by the main Visitor Center. Reservations required and will be accepted through noon Friday, January 15. Make your reservation online at friendsofgc.org/events/. Include name, age if under 18, email address, and telephone number. Natural Areas fees apply. For information email activities@friendsofgc.org or call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

Kids ALIVE! (AT)

Sunday, January 17, 11 AM – 1 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Join us for a wilderness survival class for kids!

Would you know what to do if you got lost in the wilderness? Join SOS Adventures Master Outdoor Leader Joey Rios and learn the skills you'll need to stay alive and get found! Activities will include games, demonstrations, and instruction, followed by a short hike. Dress for the weather; bring plenty of water, a snack and sun protection. Program open to all kids ages 6-to-14; all minors must be accompanied by parent or guardian; no pets please. Reservations required and will be accepted through noon Friday, January 15. Class size limited to the first 20 kids who sign up. Sorry, no group reservations. Reserve your spot online at friendsofgc.org/events/. Include name of each participant, age if under 18, e-mail address, and telephone number for each reservation. For more information, e-mail activities@friendsofgc.org or call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009. Natural Area entrance fees apply; program subject to cancellation.

Sierra Club presentation: Texas Land Conservancy (AT)

Tuesday, January 19, 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM

EcoCentro, San Antonio College, 1802 North Main Avenue, San Antonio, TX (Parking: On Eco Centro site or in SAC lots 14,15, or 17 nearby)

Dr. Ashley Lovell, Ph.D., director of Partnerships and Outreach for the Texas Land Conservancy, will talk about the mission of the conservancy (“We save the iconic landscapes of Texas for future generations”) and how it operates to achieve its goals. In addition she will go over some of the outstanding hikes this spring to conservancy lands. For information about the conservancy see <http://tlc.audionhosting.com/>.

Super Saturday Work Day at Castroville Regional Park (VSH)

Saturday, January 23, 2016, 8 AM – 12 PM

Castroville Regional Park, 816 Alsace Avenue, Castroville, TX

Super Saturday Work Day followed by complimentary picnic. For information, contact Mary Beth Francis at mb_francis@yahoo.com or 210-296-8559.

Geocaching 101 Workshop (AT)

Saturday, January 23, 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

There's a treasure hunt going on that combines technology with nature! Come learn how to Geocache with experienced geocachers Angie Gruber and the Friends of Government Canyon. Some GPS units will be available for those who don't yet have one or you can bring your own! We'll be seeking temporary caches that are close to the workshop meeting area. 1:00 – 4:00 PM. Meet at the Visitor Center Exhibit Gallery. This program is limited to the first 20 who sign up! Open to ages 8 and above; participants under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian; no pets please. Reservations are required and will be accepted through noon, January 22. Sorry, no group reservations. Reserve your spot online at friendsofgc.org/events/. Include name of each participant, age if under 18, e-mail address and telephone number for each reservation. Subject to cancellation. For more information, e-mail activities@friendsofgc.org. Natural Area entrance fees apply.

January Training and Volunteer Events

Night Hike (AT)

Saturday, January 23, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Experience the canyon after dark. Join knowledgeable guides on a fairly short hike and maybe we'll even howl at the moon if it's up and glowing! Participants should be able to hike 3 miles (round trip) over rugged but beautiful trails with some elevation gain. Dress for the weather, wear sturdy shoes. Bring a flashlight, at least a quart of water, and a snack if you like. Meet at the Visitor Center by the Rainwater Harvesting Tower. Reservations required; accepted through noon January 22. Group size limited to the first 12 who register; open to ages 14 and older; minors must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian; no pets please. Reserve your spot online at friendsofsgc.org/events/. No group reservations. Include name, age if under 18, e-mail address and telephone number for each reservation. Due to weather conditions this program is subject to cancellation. For more information or to confirm program please e-mail activities@friendsofsgc.org or call 210-688-9055, ext. 2009. Natural Area entrance fees apply. Since this hike begins after hours, be sure to self-register as you enter the Natural Area. You will need correct change: \$6 per adult (13 years or older), or enter your annual Texas State Parks pass number on the appropriate line of the self-pay envelope.

Fourth Sunday Bird Hike: Winter Brrrds (AT)

Sunday, January 24, 8:30 AM – noon

Government Canyon State Natural Area, 12861 Galm Road, San Antonio, TX

Join Steve Hawkins, member San Antonio Audubon Society Bird Records Committee, for a hike to find birds of Government Canyon and the Edwards Plateau. We will look for changes in GCSNA's bird life as the seasons progress. Length of walk and destination will vary, depending on the interests, abilities, etc. of the group. Open to the first 12 people who show up (no large groups please); all ages welcome; minors must be accompanied by an adult; no pets please. Meet at the Visitor Center by the Rainwater Harvesting Tower. BYO binoculars or binoculars can be provided. Natural Areas fees apply; subject to cancellation. For information email activities@friendsofsgc.org or call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

What Every Gardener Should Know about Soil (AT)

Tuesday, January 26, 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Lions Field Adult Center, 2809 Broadway, San Antonio, TX
David Vaughan will share his knowledge about the microscopic life teeming in our soils. David has a BS in Forestry from Stephen F. Austin University and a Masters in Natural Resources Development from Texas A&M University. Social time starts at 6:30 PM. Meeting/Program starts at 7:00 PM.

Train to Lead Starting Out Wild! (AT)

Fri, January 29, 2016, 9 AM – 11 AM

Friedrich Wilderness Park classroom, 21395 Milsa Road, San Antonio, TX

Love to teach children? Train to Lead Starting Out Wild! Training led by Master Naturalist & Educator Wendy Drezek, PhD. Training will cover development of SOW, how to teach classes, and lead age appropriate lessons and art activities. RSVP required. E-mail nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov. Open to all Master Naturalists, field guides, and educators. Refreshments provided. Visit alamomasternaturalist.org and scroll down to Starting Out Wild for sample lessons. For information, call 210-207-3782.

Gardening and Water Wise Class: WaterSaver Landscape Coupon Series (AT)

Sat, January 30, 2016, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio, TX

This spring the SAWS WaterSaver Landscape Coupon focuses on native and adapted plants that thrive in San Antonio climates. The San Antonio Botanical Garden is offering classes to help customers create successful landscapes with step-by-step instruction. Free to members or with paid admission. Pre-registration required. Topics covered in our sessions include: Designing and Planning, Retrofitting Your Space for Drought Conditions, Plant Tour & Tips. For information, contact Nadezhda at deprograms@sabot.org.

Botanical Names (AT)

Sat, January 30, 2016, 9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston Place, San Antonio, TX

Learn where these cumbersome names come from and how knowing them makes your gardening so much richer. Instructor: Mary Irish Fee: \$20 (\$18 members) For information, contact Nadezhda at deprograms@sabot.org.

Open Carry of Firearms— TPWD Volunteer Policy

This new policy contains four essential points (summarized here) that pertain to the TMN program:

- volunteers will not take action to discourage members of the public from the lawful carrying of firearms
- with virtually few exceptions (specialized duties), volunteers shall not carry firearms
- when wearing anything with TPWD designation, volunteers may not openly carry a firearm
- if a volunteer believes a person openly carrying a firearm is acting inappropriately, the volunteer should contact a law enforcement officer

The policy will be available for review at the January general membership meeting. Policy questions regarding specific situations in the AAMN volunteer activities list will be discussed.

Seeking Chapter Records

In an effort to consolidate chapter physical records we are collecting information about training classes 1-16. Please consider donating class rosters, training schedules and graduation brochures that you may have. We also seek newsletters: Vol. II, No. 4; Vol. 7, Issues 2 and 12; Vol. 8, Issue 9 and Vol. 14, Issue 1. Contact Ron Tullius at rvtullius@sbcglobal.net to donate.

2016 Chapter Dues

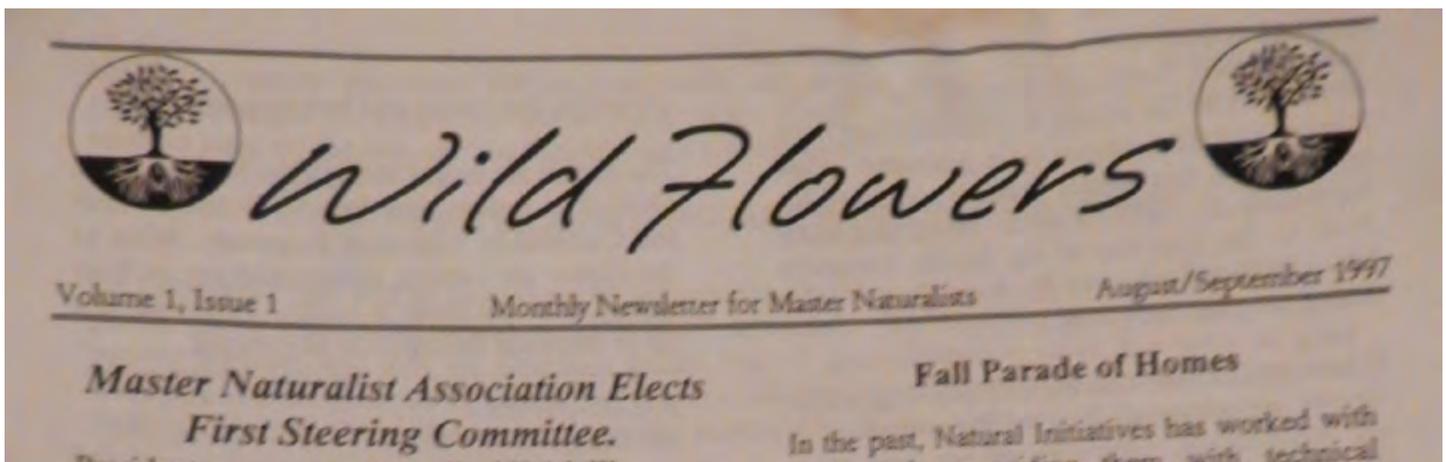
Our 2016 Annual Dues Payment & Record Update form is now available on our website. New this year is the ability to pay by credit card using PayPal! For those that prefer to write a check, the form can be downloaded from our website, completed, and mailed with a check to our PO Box address, which is on the form. Dues are payable by December 31, 2015.

NEWSLETTER Tales—A Look Back in Time

What newsletter items did AAMN members encounter in past issues?

Aug/Sep 1997: in Volume I, Issue I of *Wild Flowers, Monthly Newsletter for Master Naturalists*, the very first newsletter, the first President of the Master Naturalist Association, Anton Paul Hajek III, wrote in his President's Column: "There are only 29 certified Master Naturalists in Bexar County...I ask that every Master Naturalist commit to make our organization functional and growing."

Feb 1998: Rufus Stephens explained in Volume 2, No. 1 of *Master Naturalist News* how to estimate a neighborhood's squirrel population. "Squirrels find protection from winter in den sites in tree cavities or in nests made from leaves and twigs...For each nest counted, there is about one squirrel...Squirrels breed twice a year, once around June and again around January...A squirrel's home territory ranges from 2-19 acres."



San Antonio Parks and Recreation Natural Areas Stewardship Activities

Happy New Year! January is commonly believed to be named for the Roman god Janus. Janus was the god of beginnings, ends, and transitions. He presided over every “entrance and departure, and because every door and passageway looks in two directions, Janus was seen as two-faced or *Janus bifrons*—the god who looked both ways” <http://www.ancient.eu/Janus/>).

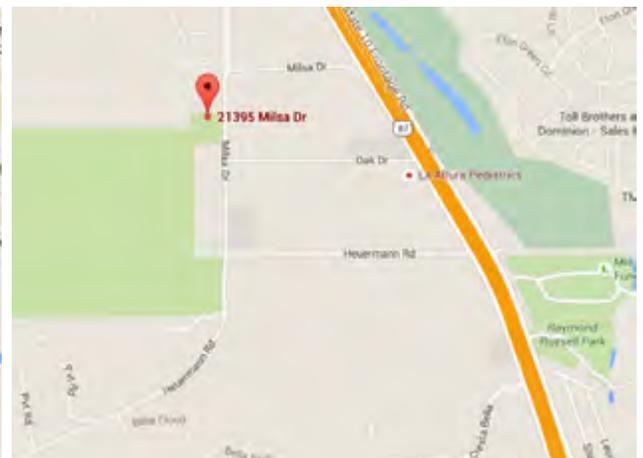
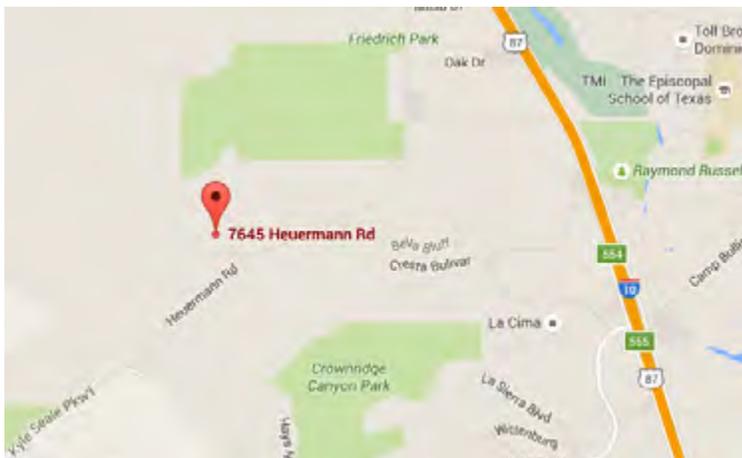
In nature, January is a good time to see evidence of ends and beginnings. For example, look closely at the twigs of deciduous trees and you will see both scars (ends) and buds (beginnings). Located at the attachment point of leaves now fallen, leaf scars mark the end of a leaf’s connection to the tree. Interestingly, “the leaf scars on twigs are a characteristic shape for each species, the sealed vascular bundles, making a pattern of dots in them” (<http://www.biology-resources.com/plants-buds-01.html>).

Signaling the potential for new growth, buds are also easy to see on winter twigs. During winter dormancy, “small scalelike structures cover the buds” (<https://www.uwsp.edu/cnr-ap/leaf/Documents/LEAFWinterTreeIDKey.pdf>) and protect them from damage. What’s really cool is that the “bud-forming habit gives the plant the advantages of being able to present a photosynthesizing surface to the atmosphere very rapidly after weather conditions become favourable, whereas it would take many weeks for them to grow from the single cells at the growing point (<http://www.biology-resources.com/plants-buds-01.html>).

Beginnings and endings, endings and beginnings—the circle of life is continuous, even in the coldest part of winter. (BTW, check out the WinterTreeIDKey pdf referenced above to see how you can identify leafless trees in winter. Although not intended for use in San Antonio, this particular key is still enlightening.) See the calendar below for opportunities to connect with our local ecosystem’s circle of life, and contact Jayne Neal at Jayne.Neal@sanantonio.gov, 210-207-3785, if you have questions.

Come prepared to do trail maintenance, tree protection, landscape maintenance, and/or removal of small junipers. Please bring leather work gloves. Construction on Babcock between Camp Bullis and Luskey may impact your travel route.

January 7, 8:00-11:30 AM Crownridge Canyon Natural Area, 7222 Luskey, meet in the parking lot
January 21, 8:00-11:30 AM Friedrich Wilderness Park, meet at the service gate at 7645 Heuermann



Balcones Invaders News

As we wrap-up our activities for 2015, we would again like to thank all of our volunteers for an exceptional year! We had a total of 530 volunteer hours and 8,270 plants eradicated for the year. 2016 marks the beginning of our seventh year as the Balcones Invaders and finds all of us that much older but it also can be noted that our newer volunteers from UTSA were still in middle and high school when we started.

Our invasive removal areas for the year included Helotes Creek and Rancho Diana the first part of the year and Government Canyon State Natural Area from September to present time. We continue to be the Texas Invaders satellite with the greatest percentage (50.5%) of the reported eradication hours in the state.



There has been a steady increase in the demand for educational programs and activities on invasives. Our activities in this area in 2015: information tables at NPSOT plant sales and the Hill Country Landscape Fair; Citizen Scientist course at Eco-Central completed by 14 trainees. A program for the UTSA Green Society resulted in new student volunteers and involvement in student research projects. We continue to present information on the Balcones Invaders activities to the AAMN classes and are now teaching the plants curriculum (including invasive plants) for AAMN. Other education initiatives: an ongoing invasive plants survey at the Salado Creek Greenway with Susan Oualline as the Volunteer Coordinator and Wendy Leonard as the SAPAR supervisor; a presentation at the NPSOT Austin Fall symposium: Spread the Word, Stop the Spread, Just Do IT; participation in the Millennial Trains Project for National Geographic; and speaking to girls interested in Citizen Science at a KLRN SCI-GIRLS event.

In November, we hosted a volunteer appreciation social at Madla Natural Area for our regular volunteers and wish we could do more for all the dedicated, hard working volunteers who join us each week hacking, pulling, spraying, cutting and helping us to spread the word about invasive plants!

In San Antonio, local volunteers are needed for eradication of invasive plants. No prior experience is required. Sturdy shoes, long-sleeved pants and shirts, gloves and water are necessary. We have a supply of tools, but welcome anyone who brings their own. For details of exact location and directions, contact Lonnie at lonnieshockley@satx.rr.com. Those on the mailing list will receive notification of the location of the eradication area and cancellation for severe weather conditions. Tuesdays, January 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th 8:30 to 10:30 AM.