

Alamo Area Chapter News

August 2016

txmn.org/alamo



EVENTS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING

VOLUME 20, ISSUE 8

AAMN BOARD MEETING

August 9 at 5:30 PM
AgriLife Extension
3355 Cherry Ridge
Classroom 208

General Meeting 7 PM (AT)

Film *Plastic Paradise*
will be presented
by Headwaters at
Incarnate Word

OFFICERS

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Immediate Past President
Liz Robbins
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President's Message

Hello Everyone! Thank goodness for A/C, huh? The chapter continues to move forward, just at a more measured, sweaty pace. This is the time where you just dig in and get it done. Here's an update worth mentioning: our "Call to Arms" for assistance with next year's annual meeting will not be needed. A diligent effort was made by our state staff to find a venue. They even went so far as vetting the city on two different occasions but to no avail. It's a far more complicated process than you might think; it involves finding a location suitable, available, and cost affordable, and those are a just a few of the criteria. On the plus side, thanks to all those folks who were willing to help, and hopefully we can redirect that energy towards our 20th Anniversary Celebration in 2017, whatever that may be.

Also, on the plus side, the 17th Annual TMN meeting details and agenda have been finalized, and registration is open on the TMN website at <http://txmn.org/2016-annual-meeting/>. If you're going to the annual meeting, be sure to check out our two AAMN's, John Kiser—Class 29 and Penelope Boyer—Class 38, who will be representing the chapter when they present. John will be speaking about the Stone Oak POA's efforts in water cost reduction and conservation, and Penelope will be speaking about Flipboard, an online digital magazine. I want to personally congratulate both of these members and thank them too for making the effort to be part of the annual meeting. I will see you there!

While I am on the thread of congratulations, I would like to congratulate everyone who continues to participate with this chapter. No matter how minor or major your contribution is—fieldwork, admin, education, outreach—it all matters.

Thank you, Matt

COMMITTEES

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New Class Training Committee

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New Class Representatives

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Pins and Awards

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

Initial Certification Dragonfly

Theresa Butler – 38
Martha Steele – 38
Ron Tietz – 37

2016 Recertification – Guadalupe Bass

Pam Ball – 18
Josie Gonzales – 13
Bernice Gonzalez – 30
Jean Hackett – 37
Lissa Martinez – 25
Pam McMillie – 38
Gary Rogers – 30
Denise Schneider – 10
Patricia Swahn - 33

250 Hours Dragonfly

April Thomason – 35

500 Hours Dragonfly

Matt Carley – 32



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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Class 38

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Monday, August 1 (AT)
3:30 PM at Christus
Heritage Hall, The Village
at the Incarnate Word

Environmental film
brought to you by
Headwaters at the
Incarnate Word

Community Rain Gardens Project

The Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) will work with Homeowners' Associations (HOAs), school districts, colleges and universities, local governments, and regulatory agencies to create Community Rain Gardens on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. These projects will engage participants through a series of presentations, planning exercises, and project implementation. Homeowners and students will learn how to maintain existing stormwater filtration systems, and will participate in installing Low Impact Development (LID) features such as swales, rain gardens, and site-specific plantings to enhance the filtration of stormwater before it enters the aquifer. Landscape architects with expertise in LID will be employed to design gardens and direct homeowners to properly install and maintain LID enhancements.

GEAA will collaborate with city council representatives from the districts that contain portions of the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone for outreach to HOAs. GEAA will meet with HOAs to present information about the Community Rain Gardens program, determine appropriate sites for LID enhancements, and plan the projects.

Volunteers from the HOAs and schools will provide "sweat equity" for the creation and planting of the Community Rain Gardens projects, which will involve laying the underdrains, backfilling soil, and planting under the direction of trained professionals. Each event will be staged for one or two work days, depending upon the complexity of the project. Heavy equipment will be operated by paid staff in advance of volunteer activities. Additional volunteer assistance will be sought from local organizations, including the Native Plant Society of Texas, Master Gardeners, Boy and Girl Scouts, and local businesses. We expect participation of 20 to 30 volunteers for each project. GEAA staff will follow up with the volunteers on a weekly basis to ensure that the rain gardens are being properly maintained. Volunteer organizations and funders will be acknowledged in interpretive signage at each site.

GEAA will collaborate with school districts on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone to install one Community Rain Garden and an outdoor Aquifer Learning Lab. A curriculum will be developed to educate students about the functioning of the Edwards Aquifer, and how these gardens will enhance that function. GEAA will use the Garden and Aquifer Learning lab to conduct classes for students from all school districts. The landscape architect will work with grounds keeping staff to ensure proper maintenance. The Architecture and Civil Engineering departments of UTSA will plan and install one LID enhancement project on campus. Students of the Engineering and Environmental Sciences departments will assist in water quality monitoring. GEAA will design curriculum in collaboration with professors and will work with staff to insure maintenance.

This project has the potential to affect all citizens of San Antonio and the surrounding communities, and it will benefit 2.5 million individuals in the San Antonio Metropolitan Area who rely on the Edwards Aquifer as their primary source of potable water. San Antonio is one of the largest cities in the world to enjoy artesian water so pure that no treatment is required prior to distribution. We aim to preserve water quality for the enjoyment of all citizens and future generations. Also worthy of preservation are recreational water quality standards for Comal, Hueco, and San Marcos springs, among the largest springs in the state, which generate a vibrant local economy.

– Deborah Reid, deborahjreid@outlook.com



Flying WILD **Workshops**



Are you a classroom teacher or environmental educator?
Do you work or volunteer for a local nature or conservation organization or group?
Do you facilitate other environmental education programs?

Then the Flying WILD Program is for YOU!

Flying WILD makes it easy to educate students about the natural world and how they can help to conserve it using birds as the vehicle.

Flying WILD helps Educators connect kids with nature.

Summer 2016 Workshops now taking Applications

Educator Training: Herff Farmhouse, Tuesday, August 9, 2016, 9:00am–4pm

Facilitator Training: Herff Farmhouse, Wednesday, August 10, 2015 1pm–4pm

Please note: Educator Training is a prerequisite for Facilitator Training

Cibolo Nature Center & Farm, Boerne, Texas

Fee: \$30 (includes Educator's Guide)

Facilitator Workshop is FREE

To Register for these Workshops

Contact: Cindy @ Cibolo Nature Center 830-249-4616

For more information, contact Patsy Inglet tpinglet@satx.rr.com



- **Flying WILD** offers a whole-school approach to environmental education using birds as the focus.
- Educators learn how to conduct **WILD** lessons and participate in hands-on activities from the Educator's Guide included in the workshop price—activities that teach language arts, social science, math, and basic science as well as offering community outreach and service learning applications.
- Flying WILD is targeted for the middle school audience, but it is widely adaptable for elementary through adult education. The curriculum meets national educational standards.
- **Formal educators receive 6 CEU credits.**
- **Want to become Flying WILD Facilitator? You can take the Facilitator Workshop FREE after completing the Educator Workshop.**

Flying WILD is presented in conjunction with the Council for Environmental Education and the Cibolo Nature Center & Farm, Flying WILD City Partner for San Antonio

Come Join the Fun: Fly WILD!

www.flyingwild.org



***for AT**

August Training and Volunteer Events

Headwaters of Incarnate Word Film Series: *The City Dark* (AT)

Mon, August 1, 3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Christus Heritage Hall, The Village at Incarnate Word, 4707 Broadway, San Antonio, TX

When was the last time you could see the stars? Is darkness becoming extinct? When filmmaker Ian Cheney moves from rural Maine to New York City and discovers streets awash in light and skies devoid of stars, he embarks on a journey to America's brightest and darkest corners, asking astronomers, cancer researchers and ecologists what is lost in the glare of city lights. *The City Dark* provides a fascinating introduction to the science of the dark and an exploration of our relationship to the stars. This definitive work addresses light pollution, disappearing stars, and the health and well-being of all living creatures. Produced in association with American Documentary | POV. "Monday Matinee"- First Monday of each month, 3:30 PM. Contact person: Pamela Ball at pamela.ball@amormeus.org or 210-842-7967. Admission is free.

Grasses of Friedrich Wilderness Park (AT)

Sat, August 6, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

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

Enjoy a morning walk with Bill Carr to discuss the importance of local grasses as well as shrubs, trees, and other flora. Bill Carr is an expert botanist, retired from The Nature Conservancy, and owner of Acme Botanical Services. RSVP required. Visit fosana.org to reserve your spot. Suggested donation: \$3 per person, or \$6 per family. For more information, call 210-207-3782, or email nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov.

Bats 101 (AT)

Sat, August 6, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

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

Join Master Naturalist and San Antonio Botanical Garden staffer Tim Roan to uncover the intricacies of bats. This class will explore the natural history and ecology involving these winged wonders. Fee: \$15 (\$13.50 members). For more information, contact education@sabot.org or call 210-536-1413. To register, go to sabot.org/education/adult-classes/

MLAC Habitat Work Day (RM - NPA)

Sat, August 13, 8:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, 10750 Pleasanton Road, San Antonio, TX

Help us enhance our 600 acres of brushland, woodland, wetland, and grassland habitats for native species! Projects vary seasonally and may include trail maintenance or invasive species removal. Projects are recommended for ages 12+; minors required to have an adult present. Bring water bottle, closed-toe shoes, bug spray, hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Long pants and socks recommended. Personal items such as gloves, pruners, and clippers are allowed, but Audubon is not liable for any lost or damaged items. Contact: Jacob T Stush, MLAC, 210-628-1639.

Hike the Canyon (AT)

Sat, August 13, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

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

Join the Friends of Government Canyon and the Sierra Club for a jointly-led guided hike. The hike will range from 4 to 7 miles depending on the group. Open to ages 13+; 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. Subject to cancellation. On inclement mornings, call main office 210-688-9055 after 7:30 AM on Saturday to check on trail conditions, or go to GCSNA's twitter feed (tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/government-canyon) or Facebook page. For information, call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

Texas Tough Roundtable Discussion Series: Pruning, Pests, and Proper Care (AT)

Sat, August 13, 9:30 AM – 11:00 AM

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

Meet with gardening experts to discuss seasonal checklists, proper pruning, watering, pesticides, soil treatment, and overall care of your Texas Tough Landscape. Fee: \$15 (\$13.50 members). Contact: education@sabot.org or 210-536-1413. Register at sabot.org/education/adult-classes/

August Training and Volunteer Events

Explore the Canyon (AT)

Sat, August 20, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

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

Knowledgeable guides discuss the flora, fauna, natural and cultural history of this awesome natural area on this exploration. Length of walk and interpretive topic will vary. Minors must be accompanied by an adult; group size limited to the first 12 people; 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. Subject to cancellation. On inclement mornings, call main office 210-688-9055 after 7:30 AM on Saturday to check on trail conditions, or go to GCSNA's twitter feed ([tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/government-canyon](https://twitter.com/tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/government-canyon)) or Facebook page. For information, call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

Beyond Feeders: How to Attract Hummingbirds (AT)

Sat, August 20, 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM

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

Beyond filling multiple feeders with nectar, learn the simple guidelines to creating a beautiful, low-maintenance garden for hummingbirds using the nectar and beauty of native plants. This class will provide a step-by-step instruction of the components needed for a successful hummingbird garden. Fee: \$30 (\$27 members). For information, contact education@sabot.org or call 210-536-1413. To register, go to sabot.org/education/adult-classes/

Winged Wonders Family Drop-In Program (AT)

Sat, August 13, 10 AM – 12 PM

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

Join us for some hands-on family fun! Programming will include activities such as reading a story about a pollinator, creating a simple craft, playing a game, and taking part in a garden exploration activity. Free with Admission. For more information, contact education@sabot.org or call 210-536-1413. To register, go to sabot.org/education/adult-classes/

MLAC Beginner Bird Walk (AT)

Sat, August 27, 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center, 10750 Pleasanton Road, San Antonio, TX

4th Saturday of each month, \$8 non-members, Free for Members Travelling by foot, this bird tour is perfect for the beginning birder! Your guide will go over basic bird identification techniques, proper binocular use, and apply it in the field. Experience several of our varied habitats on your walk to see a variety of bird species. This walk is family-friendly and suitable for all ages. Bring: water bottle, closed-toe shoes, bug spray, hat, sunscreen, binoculars and favorite field guide if you have them For information, contact Jacob T Stush, MLAC, 210-628-1639.

Oak Loop Seasonal Walk: Xeric Adaptations by Plants (AT)

Sat, August 27, 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM

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

Leaders: Wendy and Stan Drezek. Expert presenter: Mary Irish. Walks start from the patio of the Urban Ecology Center. Most walks go around building (N & W), using the mulched path west along south side of Butterfly Meadow. Some events (e.g. Grasses) may utilize mainly the savanna walk. Soils & Plant Life will use the Savanna Loop Trail and have a longer timeframe.

GCSNA Bird Hike (AT)

Sun, August 28, 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM

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@friendsofgc.org or call 210-688-9055; ext. 2009.

San Antonio Parks and Recreation Natural Areas Stewardship Activities

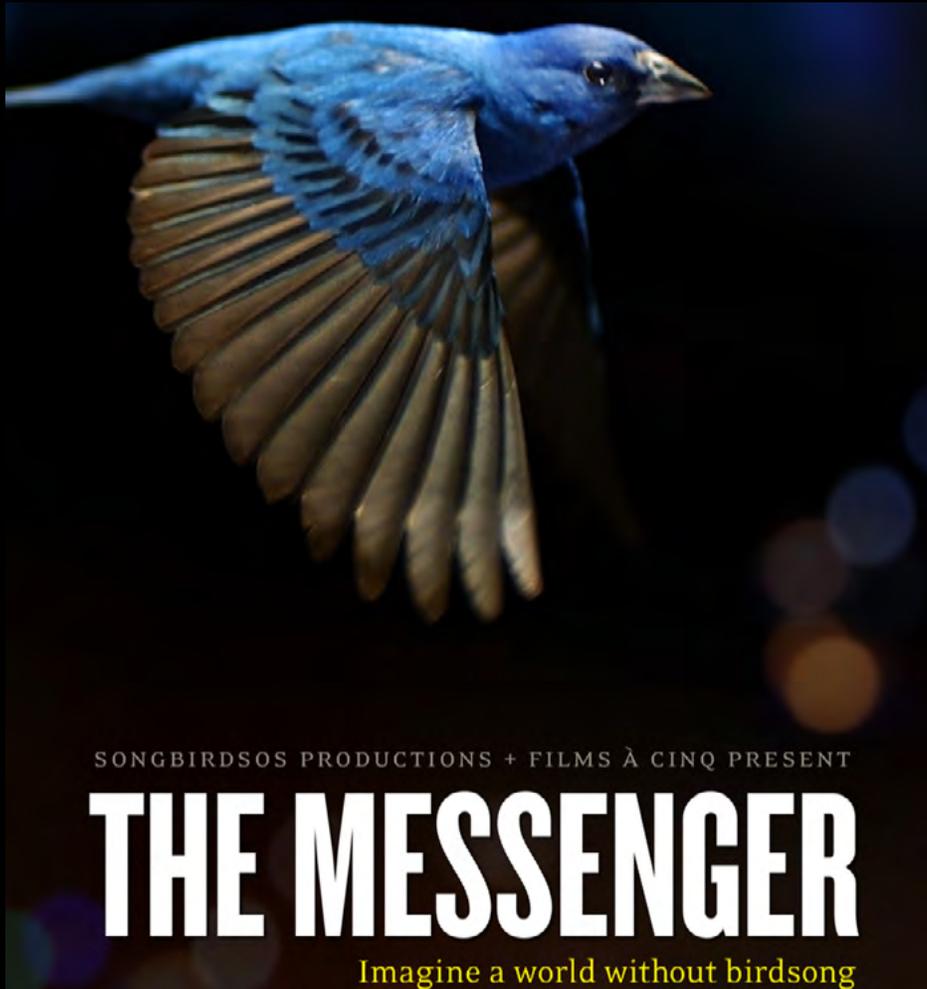
Suspend your orthodoxy. How often do we do things the same way over and over? Sometimes it is the very method of our inquiry that limits our understanding. A colleague recently sent me a link to a story that really brought this home to me.

Researchers Sydney Brannoch and Gavin Svenson decided to do something that had never been done to identify species of praying mantis: they examined female genitalia. In the process, they discovered a new species, *Illumantis ginsburgae*, which they named for Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. One of the reasons they chose the name was to honor Ginsburg's commitment to gender equality. You see, the orthodox way of classifying insects is based on male genitals. Moreover, by examining the female *I. ginsburgae*'s genitalia, Brannoch and Svenson corrected a taxonomic mistake. Turns out, two genera that had been grouped together should have been separate.

But wait—there is more. Svenson observed that “having criteria for classification based on both sexes also makes identification of insects, well, much easier. After all, what if you only find one specimen—and it's female, when all your species criteria are based on male structures?” The whole story is at <http://goo.gl/1O4YxL>

Suspend your orthodoxy. You never know what you may discover!

We are suspending a different kind of orthodoxy, and taking a little break this month, but will resume our work days in September. Til then, stay cool as you can!



Please mark your calendar for our next environmental film screening: *The Messenger*

Tuesday, September 6, 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM, The Village at Incarnate Word, CHRISTUS Heritage Hall. For directions, contact Pamela Ball at pamela.ball@amorheus.org or 210-842-7967.

“*The Messenger* is riveting, emotionally engaging, and visually extravagant from the first frame to the last. Up-to-the-minute facts on how birds communicate about environmental change are interwoven with gripping stories about the perils faced every year by these amazing world travelers. This is a must-see movie for anybody who values the natural world or wonders about its relationship to humans.” – John Fitzpatrick, Executive Director, Cornell Lab of Ornithology