

Alamo Area Chapter News

January 2014



EVENTS, VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES, EDUCATION, AND TRAINING

VOLUME 18, ISSUE 1

BOARD MEETING

January 14
5:30 PM
AgriLIFE Extension
Classroom 208

General Meeting 7-8PM
Jessica Alderson
TPWD
Meeting Approved for
Advanced Training

OFFICERS

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TO OUR AAMN VOLUNTEERS

May 2014 find you outdoors, enjoying nature and spending time with family and friends!



December Holiday Party

Thanks go out to the Hospitality Committee and Chair Alicia Hoover for transforming the Gathering Hall at the PHP Urban Ecology Center (PHP/UEC) into an unforgettable holiday scene. Thanks also go to PHP Staff Assistant Caitlin Buchanan for being on hand and assisting with the facilities. To all who pitched in to assist in set-up and clean-up, thank you, too! It was a splendid party, and having it at the UEC made it that much more special.

Check out the AAMN Facebook link to see the wonderful photos taken by Gary Rogers throughout the evening, and don't forget to "LIKE" us when you're there.
<http://goo.gl/AfReUo>

PHP Urban Ecology Center News

The AAMN 2014 Spring Class #34 will be held at the PHP/UEC! We are very excited about this new move and look forward to a wonderful training session at the park. Let your friends, family, and neighbors know about our new location; encourage them to join the Master Naturalist program and become a member of our fine organization. The application and more information can be found on the AAMN website at:
<http://txmn.org/alamo/files/2013/11/Training-Application-2014.pdf>

Proudly Honoring Patsy Inglet, Class 8, and Kent Page, Class 30



Congratulations to Patsy Inglet on her 5000 service hour milestone achievement. She will be receiving the specially designed TMN dragonfly pin that is polished gold with a diamond in the center. In addition, she will receive a U.S. Presidential Lifetime Volunteer Service Award, a lapel pin, a certificate, and a personal letter from the President of the United States.

Kent Page has been selected to receive the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. We congratulate Kent and wish him the very best as he travels to Washington DC to receive his award in the science category. See the KENS 5 link to see the wonderful story on Kent by reporter Luis Gutierrez.
<http://goo.gl/4XXRnV>

COMMITTEES

Activities Information

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Chair Pam Ball
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PINS AND AWARDS

Initial Certification Dragonfly

Bob Cage - 26
Greg Gibbons - 32
Jana Gibbons - 32
Keri Schmidt - 33

2013 Recertification Pin

Deborah Balderaz - 30
Bob Cage - 26
Richard Duarte - 33
Diane Fey - 23
Jana Gibbons - 32
Sharon Johnson - 32
Catherine Oberkampff - 33
Nancy Rogers - 31
Denise Schneider - 10
Jennifer Sorenson - 33
Wilt Shaw - 13
Rhonda Wise - 30
Gloria Word - 33

250 Hours Dragonfly

John Kiser - 29
Mike Startzell - 28

1000 Hours Dragonfly

Kimber Briggs - 25

Pins not already received may be picked up at our January chapter meeting.

In Memoriam Cynthia Nemcik

With condolences to her family, we mark the passing of AAMN member Cynthia Nemcik. Cyndy was a member of training class #17. She loved the outdoors and bird-watching. When just a teenager, she was a volunteer citizen scientist for Hawk Watch. At Friedrich Park she used her naturalist training to perform trail maintenance, teach children, and lead interpretive hikes. She was admired for her knowledge of native plants and passion for the environment. Determined to share her solid camping skills with children and adults, she led workshops and recruited others to help her teach both young and old. She was also an accomplished hiker, who spent many hours at Government Canyon State Natural Area assisting with the Trail Patrol, serving as Trailhead Advisor, and coordinating and presenting Leave No Trace programs. In the words of John Koepke, she was "a solid volunteer in all the best ways. She had a wonderful sense of humor and self-deprecation, but possessed a spirit that never wavered." Those who knew her share their feelings of great loss.

San Antonio Parks and Recreation-Natural Areas Stewardship Activities January 2014

Happy New Year! The first month of the year was called Januarius by the Romans, after Janus, the god of doors and gates. Since a gate opens both ways, Janus was thought to be able to see back into the past and forward into the future, and he was usually represented in pictures as having a double head that looked both ways.

Our work in land management requires us also to look both backwards and forwards. We consider not only the historical use of the land; but also the land's potential. While managing biotic components is important, if we do not address erosion and hydrological issues, our work is incomplete. This month our planned projects are directed at improving sheet flow of water. Our work site could change, so please send me an e-mail (jayne.neal@sanantonio.gov) to let me know which date(s) you plan to join us. If I find out I have to change a location, I will send out an e-mail as soon as I know. Also note that Babcock is closed between Camp Bullis Rd and Heuermann Rd, so take an alternate route or be prepared to follow a detour.

Thurs., Jan. 9, 8:30-11:30 AM (VSH)
Meet at Friedrich Wilderness Park, 21395 Milsa. We will do trail maintenance. Please bring work gloves and any of the following tools: rake (for moving soil), bucket (in which to put mulch), hoe, shovel (transfer or digging type for scooping up mulch and opening drainage passages). Also, please bring work gloves. No worries if you do not have gloves or tools; I'll have some to share.

Thurs., Jan. 23, 8:30 -11:30 AM (VSH)
Meet at Woodland Hills West (WHW) entrance, 7649 Heuermann Rd. WHW is not open to the public and has no water, restrooms, or other amenities, so please prepare accordingly. We will be removing impediments to water flow. See Jan. 9 write-up for tools to bring—IF you have them. As always, I will have tools to loan.



PARKS & RECREATION
SAN ANTONIO

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

Class 25 & State Rep.

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December Training and Volunteer Events

Guided Hike to Protected Habitat (VSH if assisting)

Sat, January 4, 2014, 8AM – 4PM

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

Join us on a guided hike to the Protected Habitat with members of the GCSNA Activities Committee and Trail Patrol. Dress appropriate to the weather; carry at least 3 liters of water per person, snacks, lunch, sunscreen, hat, and raingear. Wear sturdy hiking shoes or boots. Participation is limited; participants must be at least 14 years of age and physically able to hike 12-13 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. Reservations required and accepted until noon on January 3, 2014. No group reservations. Natural Area entrance fees apply. Make reservations online at <http://friendsofgc.org/events/>. Include names of each participant, age if under 18, email address, and telephone number. Natural Areas fees apply. For information email fogcsna@gmail.com or call (210) 688-9055. Ext 289.

The Eagle (Lady) has Landed! (AT)

Guadalupe River State Park, 3350 Park Road 31, Spring Branch, TX

Sat, January 4, 2014, 9AM – 2PM

Guadalupe River State Park and the Friends of Guadalupe River and Honey Creek are pleased to welcome back Doris Mager, affectionately known as the Eagle Lady! Doris will be at the park to present her wonderful program on birds of prey. Please bundle up and plan to join us for a sure-to-be-educational and enjoyable presentation. Donations welcome. Programs are scheduled to be held at the Amphitheatre behind the Discovery Center inside the park. This program is free with a Park Pass or \$7 daily pass (children 12 and under are free). For information, call 830-438-7653.

Fantastic Fossils (AT)

Sat, January 11, 2014, 10AM – 12PM

Eisenhower Park, 19399 NW Military Hwy, San Antonio, TX

There aren't many T rex fossils around here but our paleontologists will help you learn what can be found. Examine local fossils and sort through fossil rock material for some specimens to take home! Reservations are recommended; call 210-207-5320.

Nature Walk (AT)

Sat, January 4, 2014, 10AM – 12PM

Friedrich Wilderness Park, 21395 Milsa, San Antonio, TX
Start your new year off with a guided walk in this gem of a Natural Area. Retired geologist Bob Hixon has been roaming the hill country for years and he brings his love of the land and knowledge of geologic history to help you get a rocky perspective on Friedrich Park. Reservations are suggested; walks occasionally change. Call: 210-207-5320 or email peggy.spring@sanantonio.gov. Participants are limited to 15 per hike. Meet near the restrooms. A donation of \$2 per person, max \$6/family is suggested.

Government Canyon A-Z Training (AT)

Sat, January 11, 2014, 8:30AM – 3:30PM

Learn about the history, geology and environment at Government Canyon State Natural Area by taking the A - Z training provided by natural area staff. Participants will be expected to assist with regularly scheduled hikes on the second and third Saturday morning of the month. The second Saturday hike - Hike the Canyon - is a three to six mile hike over natural area trails that are moderate to difficult. The third Saturday hike - Explore the Canyon - is an interpretive hike and is shorter and slower. Those leading hikes will be required to submit to a criminal background check (paid for by the state) and learn the basic hike procedures. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about this great local treasure and to promote conservation of the environment and San Antonio's primary source of water. If interested in the A - Z training, Please contact: John Koepke, 210-688-9055 Ext. 291, john.koepke@tpwd.texas.gov. For general information contact, Aubrey George, 210-288-7519, ageorge13@att.net.

History of the San Antonio Botanical Garden with Paul W. Cox (AT)

Fridays, Jan. 17, 24, & 31, 2014 9AM-noon

Hear amazing stories about the conception and development of various garden areas. Learn the designs, problems, challenges and special plantings. The first session meets at the SoL Center; the next two at the San Antonio Botanical Garden. Fee: \$45. Contact: SoL Center at University Presbyterian Church, 210-732-9927 or upcsa@upcsa.org

December Training and Volunteer Events

Mitchell Lake Audubon Center Docent Training (AT)

Sat, January 18, 2014, 9AM – 2PM

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

MLAC is currently seeking applicants for the 2014 Docent Program. Cost to participate is \$35. Retired teachers, university students, and those with Spanish language skills are encouraged to apply. For more information, please contact Alex Antram, Volunteer Coordinator, at 210-628-1639 or mlac@audubon.org.

Essentials of Gardening (AT)

Mon, January 20, 2014, 12PM – 3PM

San Antonio Garden Center, 3310 N. New Braunfels Ave, San Antonio, TX

Free and open to the public the 3rd Monday of every month. The first session usually starts around 12:15; the second session around 1:30pm. No advance reservations are necessary. \$5 donation appreciated to help cover expenses. (Bring your hand pruning tools and have them sharpened by “Dr. Fix-It” for \$2 each, a donation to GVST). For more information: info@gardeningvolunteers.org or 210-251-8101.

Kreutzberg Canyon Bird Census (VSH)

Tue, January 21, 2014, 8:00AM – 10:30AM

Kreutzberg Canyon Natural Area: 143 Mark Twain Dr., Boerne, TX 78006-7837

This bird census is conducted on the third Tuesday of every month. All levels of birders are welcome. Email census leader Tara Randle, tmrandle@swbell.net, for information or to participate. Bring binoculars, guidebook, and water. No potable water in park. Contact info is at kendallcountyparks.org.

James Kiehl River Bend Park Bird Census (VSH)

Tue, January 28, 2014, 8:00AM – 10:30AM

James Kiehl River Bend Park: 118 River Bend Rd., Comfort, TX 78013-3610

This bird census is conducted on the fourth Tuesday of every month. All levels of birders are welcome. Email census leader Carolyn Bean, curione@yahoo.com, for information or to participate. Bring binoculars, guidebook, and water. No potable water in park. Sponsored by Kendall County Partnership for Parks. kendallcountyparks.org.

San Antonio Chapter Native Plant Society of Texas Monthly Speaker (AT)

Tue, January 28, 2014, 7PM – 8PM

Lions Field Adult Center 2809 Broadway, San Antonio, TX

The January 2014 NPSOT meeting features David K. Langford, nature photographer, Hill Country land owner, and regional water expert. In his “Water 101” program, David will unravel the complex web of policies, policy makers, and jurisdictions that determine how Texas water flows from its source to our faucets. Audience members will leave armed with the knowledge they need to get answers to their water questions and to advocate for environmentally sensible management of our most crucial resource. Free and open to the public. For information, contact the San Antonio chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas at npsotxsa@gmail.com.

Weed Wednesdays (VSH)

Wed, January 29, 2014, 7:30AM – 10:30AM

Phil Hardberger Park West, 8400 NW Military Highway, San Antonio, TX

The Weed Wednesday volunteer program has resumed. Please meet in front of the playground in PHP west. Contact Wendy Leonard for more information (210) 207-3292 or wendy.leonard@sanantonio.gov.

Medina River Natural Area Field Guide Training 2014 (AT)

Fri, January 31, 2014, 9:30AM – 11:30AM

Medina River Natural Area, 15890 Highway 16, San Antonio, TX

We need your help! Starting in March-May, we have several large field trip groups of 50-90 elementary school students. Would you like to lead elementary students on a hike? Are you already a field guide and would like more information? Do you need Advanced Training hours? Come and join us! After a brief orientation, enjoy an informal interpretive hike and explore the trees, birds, and native plants along the Medina River. Free to all participants. Snacks provided. Please email Susan Campbell at Susan.Campbell@sanantonio.gov or call 210-207-3106 if you are interested in this great opportunity!

Winter Wonders in Texas

The cool season behavior of Frostweed is usually predictable, but this year was different. Most years, water in the stems oozes out the base in smaller amounts over the first two or three freezes. This year, the mid-teen temperatures on December 6th and 7th squeezed it all out at once, creating incredible 2- to 4-foot tall, swirly ribbons of paper-thin ice sculptures throughout the entire creek bottom.

Roy Leslie
AAMN Class #24



Two photos of Frostweed (*Verbesina virginica*) plants at our ranch along Block Creek in northwest Kendall County.

News from the Balcones Satellite of the Texas Invaders

Greetings for the New Year! In this time of New Year's Resolutions, it is important to be realistic and set achievable goals! In the realm of invasive plants, we have listed twelve resolutions to guide you in the New Year. Choose JUST ONE RESOLUTION to make a difference. We are available to help with any of these resolutions!

1. Look carefully in your yard for invasive plants. If you have one (or more!) invasive plants, take action! It may be as simple as cutting off the berries or flower heads or as complex as cutting down the plant or digging up the roots.
2. As you select new plants for your landscape, CHOOSE NATIVES! They have evolved to suit our local habitat and will provide food and shelter for local wildlife. If you don't know it, don't grow it!
3. If you see invasive plants being sold at your local nursery or retail store, speak up! Tell the manager you are concerned about the impact of invasive plants, and encourage him/her to sell more native plants instead.
4. Tell your family, friends, and neighbors about the negative impacts of invasive plants. Enlist their help in NOT planting invasive plants in their landscapes.
5. Attend an invasive plant or native plant workshop or informational program.
6. After outdoor activities, check your clothing, hiking boots/shoes, car tires, boats and trailers, etc. for "hitchhikers" to help avoid spreading invasive seeds.
7. Join a local wildlife society such as the Native Plant Society of Texas (npsot.org) or the Audubon Society (tx.audubon.org) to learn more about local native flora and fauna.
8. Read one or more books about the impact of invasive plants. Start with *Bringing Nature Home* by Douglas W. Tallamy to give you a greater understanding of why native plants are critical to sustaining wildlife.
9. Volunteer to eradicate invasive plants in your neighborhood or community. You will see firsthand the benefits of removing invasive plants!
10. Invite an invasive plants specialist to your next garden club or homeowner's association meeting to spread the word!
11. If you see invasive plants in your place of employment, speak with the manager of the grounds about removal and replacement.
12. If you would like to become more involved, become a citizen scientist through the Invaders of Texas program. Observing, reporting and eradicating invasive plants has never been easier due to the new phone apps. texasinvasives.org/invaders

In San Antonio, local volunteers are needed for eradication of invasive plants in the Leon Creek Greenway. No prior experience or invasive plant recognition expertise is required – just bring gloves and water. We have a supply of loppers and saws, 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 specific working site locations and cancellation for severe weather conditions.

January schedule: Tuesdays 8:30 to 10:30 AM on the Leon Creek Greenway (VSH)



NEWLETTER POLICIES

We try to publish all the material that we receive. Space is extremely limited in the newsletter. Long articles may be published on the website or not published. We don't publish articles that are political or that advocate particular policies. Event notices must go through Pam Ball. Only the Activities Information Committee is authorized to declare an event approved for AT or VSH, so please don't include this notice in your article. The newsletter software deals very poorly with pre-formatted material. Please don't use tables or block indents. We use black 12 point Times New Roman font. Articles should be 250 words or less and fit in a half column (including pictures). Longer articles will be edited, posted to the web, or ignored. Event notices may be treated as calendar items. The editor maintains the right to edit or exclude any article. All editorial decisions are final and not subject to review.



RESTORING OUR CONNECTION TO EARTH

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday
January 16, 2014

3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

**HEADWATERS
OPEN HOUSE
&
VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION**

More later!



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Return Service Requested