The majority of improvements at the Plano ISD Holifield Science Learning Center butterfly house are completed thanks to Mittie McDonald, Al Baume, Beverly Carpenter, Gail Alldredge, Shelly Stevens, Linda McBee, Patti Tuck and Cathy Westmoreland.

“The facility was in disrepair before Al coordinated efforts to help clean up this facility before plants and butterflies were introduced,” said Mittie.

The Learning Center property has sensory, butterfly and native plant gardens containing dill, parsley, borage, black-eyed Susans, horsemint and Texas Yellow Star, among others. This facility is toured by PISD school classes year round. Last year, these master naturalists began watering the existing gardens through the hot, dry spring, summer and into the fall.

“The results were pretty amazing, our weekly morning watering (weeks without measurable rainfall) insured healthier plants and the gardens came back in bloom,” said Mittie.

They added a canopy outside the butterfly house to shade plants inside and outside and cleaned up the grounds where existing plants were — trimming and planting where needed. Al and a friend replaced wooden trellises for trailing plants.

“Some new master naturalists may be looking for a project, and we really need to replenish our volunteer sources to keep this effort moving forward,” adds Mittie. “We started our hand watering campaign at Holifield the Thursday after Easter, and our goal is to again water the gardens to get them through the dry months ahead. We start around 8 a.m. and finish easily by 10 a.m.”

If you are interested in helping these gardens survive to be enjoyed by school children, (even one week a month would be appreciated), contact Mittie at mittiemc@sbcglobal.net or 972-447-0144, and she will get you started. It’s easy, fun and rewarding.
Each and every Wednesday afternoon we explore topics in nature that inspire and educate. This spring we have been fortunate to have several expert guests and master naturalists visit Sharon Russell’s classroom and share their knowledge. Our program continues to expand and improve thanks to the involvement of you, our volunteer master naturalists.

Carol Clark visited and spoke to the children about native bees. We also had the Honey Queen and Princess of the Collin County Hobby Beekeepers who brought along an observation hive. Master naturalist Linda Ergonis visited and spoke to the junior naturalists about waterfowl migration. Our session on bats went very well. The guest rehabilitator got the kids thinking about the role of bats in the ecosystem, identifying local bats, and giving them a better understanding about all the roles a rehabilitator plays.

The children visited the farmstead’s prairie garden in April and planted seedlings of pollinator plants. They will be making plant presses and will learn how to press and mount plants and watch a video about the B.R.I.T. herbarium in a coming session. They will return to the farmstead to collect plant specimens to press and mount during one of our final meetings.

As this semester comes to an end, we want to thank everyone who has volunteered to see that our middle schoolers deepen their understanding of the natural world around them. We are very grateful to those of you who heeded our call for assistance at our recent meetings. You have been a tremendous help. Our after-school program stands above all the rest because of the mentoring we are able to provide.

Please put our Junior Naturalist Program on your list of volunteer opportunities, and let us know if you would like to join us in the fall. We will announce a planning meeting in late summer, and we'll be sure to invite you.

Contact Nancy Furth nfurth@verizon.net, or Gwen Thomas ignthomas29@fastmail.gm, if you would like to volunteer with this group.

“If a child is to keep his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.”
— Rachel Carson
Friends Support LLELA

Supporters of Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area (LLELA) have joined together to form a nonprofit organization to assist in the promotion, interpretation, and operation of LLELA, an urban wilderness in the heart of DFW. The Friends of LLELA will serve as the chief fundraising and service group.

Formed in 1991, and funded by habitat mitigation grants, LLELA is now coming to the end of that funding source. The Friends group will be vital in ensuring the ongoing viability of LLELA, including its efforts in the restoration of dwindling prairies and bottomland forests, education of thousands of children and adults, and research efforts aimed at discovering how best to maintain an urban wildlife area.

If you'd like to be a Friend of LLELA, please contact Martha Peet at Martha.Peet@unt.edu.

Live Green in Plano Sponsors Great American Cleanup Collection

Do you need to do a little spring cleaning? On Saturday, May 17, from 9 a.m. until noon, you can drop off clean, reusable items in good condition such as books, clothing, pet products, eye glasses, bicycles and even have documents shredded for free (two box limit per household) to Clark High School, 523 W. Spring Creek Pkwy., Plano.

For more information visit livegreeninplano.com

City of Dallas’ 19th Annual WaterWise Landscape Tour

Saturday, June 1, 2014, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

For more information, go to www.savedallaswater.com


Open House at Connemara Meadow

Connemara will host an open house on Sunday, May 25 and June 22, 1 p.m. – 5pm. It is located at Alma and Tatum Rd, in Allen (meadow preserve parking lot public gate). Come enjoy anytime this afternoon to wander (and wonder) at the meadow by hiking the trails, watching the flora and fauna and enjoying being somewhere pretty much away from the hustle and bustle of Texas suburbia. Enter at the wooded gate on the east side of Alma, south of Bethany.

Texas Aggi Horticulture Website

Learn everything about Texas Horticulture

Click to view the Texas Aggi Horticulture Website

Native Plant Society of Texas

Click to view the Native Plant Society of Texas Web Site
Linda McBee, Jim Binnings and Larry and Carolyn Cuffman volunteered to staff the BPMN booth at the Master Gardener’s Garden Show in March.

**Volunteer Opportunities**

**Blackland Prairie Raptor Center**  
Brockdale Park, Lucas, TX  
(www.bpraptorcenter.org)  
**Contact Erich Neupert**  
erich.neupert@bpraptorcenter.org,  
469-964-9696 or  
**Dick Zartler**, zartler@verizon.net  
* Most projects are ongoing including animal care and construction, prairie rehab, trail guiding, gardening and public interaction.

**Collin County Adventure Camp**  
1180 W. Houston, Anna, TX  
(www.collincountyadventurecamp.org)  
**Contact Ron Bamberg**, rbamberg@gmail.com,  
972-832-4791.  
* The camp has an ongoing need for trail guides to lead nature walks for children and adults.

**Connemara Meadow**  
300 Tatum (Alma & Bethany), Allen, TX  
(Connemaraconservancy.org)  
**Contact Bob Mione**, 214-534-1900, meadow-manager@connemaraconservancy.org  
* Projects include invasive removal and helping at the monthly open house.

**Heard Museum and Wildlife Sanctuary**  
1 Nature Place, McKinney, TX  
(www.heardmuseum.org)  
**Contact Wes Morrow**, Wesmorrow39@yahoo.com,  
832-332-9099,  
* Volunteer for native reptile and mammal care, bird banding, outreach and at the sanctuary.  
**Contact Dave Powell**, powell1217@yahoo.com to help maintain the Heard gardens or to become a trail guide.

**Junior Master Naturalists**  
**Contact: Gwen Thomas**  
gmthomas29@fastmail.gm  
* During the school year, the group meets every Wednesday from 3:30-5 p.m. at Wilson Middle School on Custer Road, Plano. The class is for 6th-8th graders.

**Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area (LLELA)**  
201 E. Jones, Street, Lewisville, TX  
www.ias.unt.edu/llela  
**Contact Lisa Cole** at lisacole@unt.edu or **Mike Petrick** at mike.petrick@verizon.net  
* Trail guides are especially needed for Saturday, weekdays, or night hikes. LLELA has many outdoor activities and opportunities for both advanced training and volunteer hours for master naturalists. To find out what we have to offer, click on the link above or contact Education Director Lisa Cole at lisacole@unt.edu or 972-219-3930.

**Plano Environmental Education Center**  
4116 West Plano Parkway, Plano, TX  
**Contact Nancy Casillas** at  
nancyca@plano.gov or 972-769-4313  
* To volunteer, go online and create a volunteer profile then sign up at eeoc@plano.gov for volunteer activities. Volunteers must submit a waiver three days prior to volunteering. Throughout May and June, there are lots of activities that need volunteers such as the Nature Explore Family Club and the Eco Tots Discovery Hour.

Send Your Volunteer News & Photos

We want to feature master naturalist volunteer activities in future newsletters. Send a photo with an explanation of your activity to eastbluff@verizon.net.
Blackland Prairie Texas Master Naturalist

**Monthly Meeting**, 7 p.m.,
Heard Museum Science Resource Center
May 13 - Dave Powell: *Texas Symbiotic Relationships*
June 10 - Dick Zartler: *Trail Guiding 101*

**Connemara Meadow**
(Connemaraconservancy.org)
300 Tatum (Alma & Bethany), Allen, TX

Contact Bob Mione, 214-534-1900, meadowmanager@connemaraconservancy.org

May 3, Connemara 8 to 11 a.m., bird walk with Gailon and Rodney
June 1, Connemara, 8 to 11 a.m., bird walk

**Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area**
201 E. Jones, Street, Lewisville, TX

Contact Lisa Cole at lisacole@unt.edu or 972-219-3930.

**Native Plant Society of Collin County**
Meets the first Tuesday at 7 p.m. in Laughlin Hall at the Heard Museum

May 6—Larry Offerdahl, speaker

**Plano Environmental Education Center and Gardens**
4116 West Plano Parkway, Plano, TX

For information and to register for classes, click the link above.

**Prairie and Timbers Audubon Society**
Meets the 4th Tuesday, at 7 p.m. Heard Museum
No meetings in June, July or August

**Texas A&M AGRILIFE Research Extension**
http://dallas.tamu.edu,
Texas A&M Agrilife
17360 Coit Road, Dallas
Phone: (972) 231-5362

Agrilife offers a variety of classes, some which qualify for advanced training. For times and information about the classes, click on the link above.

Bluebonnets and Texas Yellow Star plants grow in the prairie garden — a BPMN project — at Heritage Farmstead in Plano.

More approved activities for volunteering and advanced training, listed by both type and by partner, can be found at http://bptmn.org/info/project-opportunities/

You can find past issues of *Prairie Partner Update* on the BPMN website at: http://bptmn.org/info/newsletters/