



# The Tracker

The Central Texas Master Naturalist Newsletter April 2016

Inside This Issue	
President's Pen	2
Remembering Joanne Millican	3
Advanced Water Sampling	4
Aqua Charades/LEAF	5
Dinosaurs/Dragonfly	6
Congratulations	7
Wildflowers	8
On the Horizon	9

Photo taken by Richard McCarthy of Red Admiral butterflies in a tree on the street where we live. The tree was loaded with Red Admirals,

Calendar at a Glance	
April 5, hours due	
April 5, 3 p.m. BOD meeting, Extension Center	
April 2, 12, 16, 19, 30 Training Class	
April 12, 6:00 p.m. General Meeting	
April 26, Spring Prairie Walk	

## Dedicated CTMN Receives Stream Team Award

- Marilyn Whitworth

On 6 February 2016, Richard McCarthy received an appreciation award, in the form of a plaque, from Texas State University, San Marcos, TX for his 5 years of dedicated volunteer service to Texas Stream Team. It is a citizen scientist surface water quality monitoring program. Richard's data collected on two sites on Nolan Creek contributed a large valuable resource of information used by professionals to identify water quality trends, identify potential pollution problems and to facilitate management and protection of Texas water resources. The award was presented to him by Jenna Walker, Texas Stream Team Program Coordinator, during his final Advanced Stream Team Training conducted at Waco Wetlands.



*Chapter Motto*  
**Earth Day, Every Day**



# From the President's Pen

## *Tyrannus forficatus*

Most of us are familiar with the antics and joyful noise of *Tyrannus forficatus*. I just saw my first for the 2016 season this weekend landing on the fence and scowling at me as I passed by. Yes, the scissor-tailed flycatcher has arrived in Bell County.

They belong to the Tyrant Flycatcher Family. Makes sense to me. If you've ever gotten too close to their nest you may have received the scolding and possible attack they can deliver. Seeing them go after a cat on

wing and snatch June bugs right out of their early morning commute. Spiders, moths and caterpillars are targeted prey as well. They occasionally throw in some berries or a peach snack from fruit trees (selecting only the best ones that I was going to pick to pack).

Ah well, if they didn't have this high energy diet, we wouldn't have one of our other senses delighted. Their singing is voluminous and some of the happiest noise that I remember as a child. During the summers as I was growing up, we would "camp" (throw a sleeping bag in the yard and be smothered by dogs—no

tent needed) in the back yard. First light the next morning, the early birds would crank up--the mockingbirds and the scissor-tails. Nothing better than waking up to that joyful noise.

Just about the whole state of Texas can enjoy the scissortail while they spend their time here. Only way out El Paso way and a portion of the Pan Handle miss out on this beautiful master of flight. Although, my cousin in Austin says that they don't see them there

much. Maybe he's just in the wrong terrain because they do like a lot of open country and he lives up in the cedars.

a stroll is pretty funny to watch. The cat tries to remain cool (as cats should) while being dive-bombed relentlessly by the salmon colored marauder.

So we've got the Tyrannus name figured out, but what about forficatus? I had to reach for my Latin dictionary for that one. Meaning: deeply forked or notched from Latin forfex, a pair of scissors. Nailed it. Both the males and females have long tails even though the males are normally a little longer. That leads scientists to believe that the tail doesn't have anything to do with sexual attraction. It is not really known why they have such long tails, but they sure do entertain us humans with them. Watching them do back flips off the telephone poles, chasing each other through the yard twisting and flashing their beautiful feathers is better than any television show. Ever.

As insect eaters, they have to be pretty agile in their forays for food. They can catch grasshoppers on the

We usually see them start showing up at the end of March/early April. They hang around until it's time to head back south to the lowlands of Mexico and Pacific slope of Central America. One of our farms must be on a major flyway for scissortails because every spring and every fall they can be seen hanging out on the fence the stretches east and west. They don't move much when you drive by so they must be resting for their journey ahead. It's not unusual to see twenty or thirty at a time in that area. I just wave and say welcome or farewell depending on the season. Sometimes they wave back with their beautiful tails. Then I smile...Lynn

Photo credit: [Vic Prisliipsky Audubon Awarded Photo.](#)





## *Remembering Joanne Millican*



*Joanne Millican's unique beauty was that of a prairie in mid-Spring after a gentle overnight rain, when a light mist softens the view, and as it slowly lifts, brilliant hues and sparkling diversity are revealed. Joanne loved nature, she loved people, and she loved nothing better than to bring the two together. She was a beautiful, strong, selfless, good-humored, "yes" person who was always ready to serve others and always delightful company.*

*--Mickey Burlison*

Joanne passed away March 25, 2016. She was a member of the charter class in 2010.

# Advanced Water Sampling

- Richard G. McCarthy

Our streams are of vital importance to our being. To insure that our waters are of good quality, the Meadows Center at the University of Texas, San Marcos, sponsors the Texas Stream Team Program throughout the State. These teams conduct testing of samples of the local waters for a variety of parameters. Those performing the tests must be trained and qualified in both Basic and Advanced Stream Testing procedures.

Individuals complete the Basic course and sample a location for a while then attend the Advanced Course. The latest Advanced Course was presented by Jenna Walker, Stream Team Training Coordinator, Texas State University, at the Waco Wetlands February 6, 2016.

The following personnel attended:

From Central Texas Master Naturalist Chapter: Ken Cilliers; Shawn Perry; Trudy Perry; Thomas Salmi; and Lyna Pitts.

From Heart of Texas Master Naturalist Chapter: Addie Matney.

Baylor University Seniors and Graduate Students: Madie Simms; Matt Garbarino; Stephanie Ortiz; Sarah Guerra; and Patty Reynolds.

The training consisted of sampling and testing for: Nitrate-Nitrogen; Orthophosphate; Turbidity; Stream Flow; E-Coli and analysis/reporting procedures.



Students were shown step-by-step procedures for each test and then provided sample water to perform test and analysis of the water on their own. Assistance was provided as needed to insure the student fully understood the procedure.



Water samples were plated to be incubated and tested for E-Coli; however, with incubation requiring a minimum of 28 hours, prepared samples from the University Laboratory were brought for the students to examine and count the colonies of E-Coli.

Reporting procedures were covered in detail to ensure that the data collected would be captured by the Stream Team Automated Reporting System.

# Aqua Charades

- Richard McCarthy

Salado Elementary School students having fun with “Aqua Charades” projects. Presented By Miriam Jordan, Kathy Cantu, Lyna Pitts, Marilyn Whitworth, and Richard McCarthy.

Left top: Kathy Cantu playing a game of will it sink or float; left below: Water in raisins and grapes.



# Llano Earth Fest

- Terrie Hahn

Check out the Rock Stacking work and the guy in the tree costume at the 2nd Annual

Llano Earth Art Fest (LEAF). Fun, fun, fun!



# Let's Talk Dinosaurs

- Zoe Rascoe

Rene Berkhoudt, CTMN VP, presented anthropologic research and preservation activities at Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. Right: Resources on Anthropology.



Photos by Zoe Rascoe

# Darner Dragonfly Larvae

- Richard McCarthy

Family: Aeshnidae. Can be found throughout North America. Most Darner larvae are found at the edges of ponds and lakes. Darner larvae stalk their prey, which can include small fishes and larger larvae. Females lay eggs on living or dead plants. Most species have one generation per year while others may require 2-4 years for one generation. Eggs remain dormant for 3-6 months. Larvae stage lasts about 10 months. The Larvae will shed its skin 10-15 times before becoming an adult. Larvae must climb out of the water before they emerge from their final skin. It takes 1-3 hours to complete their final molt and become adults.



Photo by Richard G. McCarthy

# Congratulations!

- Zoe Rascoe

Counter Clockwise below: Andreas Wooten and Rehanon Pampell earn their Recertification pins; Lynn Williams gets her 250 hour Bronze Milestone pin; Kathy Cantu gets her 500 hour Silver Milestone pin; Linda Mahaffey receives her 1,000 hour Gold Milestone pin; Zoe Rascoe, lone photographer that night, does a selfie for receipt of new CTMN chapter 2000 hour Milestone pin- a barn owl;



Mary Ann Everett receives the CTMN chapter 2000 hour milestone award.



Photos by Zoe Rascoe



# Time for Wildflowers

- Terrie Hahn

I couldn't resist putting in some photos of the Bluebonnets in our yard. The white spots on the florets change to red as they are pollinated. According to beekeeper, Rusty Burlew of [www.honeybeesuite.com](http://www.honeybeesuite.com), "Bees are extremely attracted to the bright white spots on the florets and can collect a large quantity of high-quality pollen. As the florets age, however, the white spots turn a purplish-red and the bees are much less attracted to them as a result. At the same time that the spot changes color, the pollen becomes less abundant, less fertile, and less sticky. This confluence of events just happens to be good for the bees and good for the plant. It is good for the bees because they can efficiently collect lots of nutritious pollen without having to expend energy checking the purple-spotted florets. In addition, the pollen is so sticky the bees can carry large loads of it back to their hives or nests."



# 2016 Class



## Our Class Directory



Ben Clement



Bill Abright



Colleen Robinson



Dan O'Neill



Diana Hostettler



John Atkins



Kim Tompkins



Marian Riegel



Mary Sharp



Nichole Smith



Sara Winn



Tina Atkins



Vanessa Crosby



Wende Hammond

# On the Horizon

## - Sarah Byrd

(V/Training) 4/2/2016 - 8:00-2:30 pm **2016 Training Class** @ Fort Hood, TX -- for more information contact *Mary Ann Everett / Zoe Rascoe* (everett.maryann4@gmail.com / trascoe@hot.rr.com).

(V) 4/2/2016 - 8:00-1:00 pm **Bell County Master Gardener Spring Plant Sale** @ [Bell County Extension Office](#) -- for more information click [here](#).

(V) 4/4/2016 - 8:30-10:05 am **Growing Up Wild: Fishing Fun** @ [Thomas Arnold Elementary](#) -- for more information contact *Lyna Pitts* (lyna.pitts@gmail.com, 254-947-8445).

(V) 4/4/2016 - 1:15-2:50 pm **Growing Up Wild: Fishing Fun** @ [Thomas Arnold Elementary](#) -- for more information contact *Lyna Pitts* (lyna.pitts@gmail.com, 254-947-8445).

(V) 4/6/2016 - 8:15-9:55 am **Growing Up Wild: Spider Webs** @ [Thomas Arnold Elementary](#) -- for more information contact *Lyna Pitts* (lyna.pitts@gmail.com, 254-947-8445).

(V) 4/6/2016 - 11:45-1:25 pm **Growing Up Wild: Spider Webs** @ [Thomas Arnold Elementary](#) -- for more information contact *Lyna Pitts* (lyna.pitts@gmail.com, 254-947-8445).

(V) 4/9/2016 - 8:00 am **Texas Trash Off** @ [Killeen, TX](#) -- for more information and registration call (254-501-7878).

(AT/Priceless/Training) 4/12/2016 - 6:00-8:00 pm **CTMN PACE Meeting & 2016 Training Class + Texas Water Issues** @ [Belton Church of Christ](#) -- for more information contact *Mary Ann Everett / Zoe Rascoe* (everett.maryann4@gmail.com / trascoe@hot.rr.com).

(V) 4/14/2016 - 8:30 am **Miller Springs Workday** @ [Miller Springs Park Nature Center](#) -- for more information contact *Mary Ann Everett* (everett.maryann4@gmail.com).

(AT) 4/14/2016 - 6:00-9:00 pm **TPWD Herps of Texas Workshop** @ [Beverly S. Sheffield Education Center](#) -- for more information and registration click [here](#).

(V/Training) 4/16/2016 - 8:30-12:30 pm **2016 Training Class** @ Merz Ranch, Salado, TX -- for more information contact *Mary Ann Everett / Zoe Rascoe* (everett.maryann4@gmail.com / trascoe@hot.rr.com).

(V) 4/16-17/2016 - 5:00 am through 10:00 pm **BioBlitz: Common Fords** @ [Common Fords Ranch Metropolitan Park](#) -- for more information click [here](#).

(V) 4/18/2016 - 8:00-9:30 am **Andy Wells Hike and Bike Clean-up** @ [Killeen Community Center](#) -- for more information contact *Gail Hughling* (gailhughling@aol.com).

(V/Training) 4/19/2016 - 6:00-8:00 pm **2016 Training Class** @ [Harris Community Center](#) -- for more information contact *Mary Ann Everett / Zoe Rascoe* (everett.maryann4@gmail.com / trascoe@hot.rr.com).

(V) 4/20/2016 - 9:00-12:00 pm **Mother Neff Workday** @ [Mother Neff State Park](#) -- for more information contact *Yvonne Eele* (yeele@ymail.com).

(V) Approved for Volunteer Hours  
(AT) Approved for Advanced Training  
(MA) Must Apply for approval of hours

Continued on next page...

# On the Horizon

(AT) [4/22/2016](#) - 8:00-5:00 pm **TPWD Angler + Bowhunting Workshop @ [Carl Levin Park Pavilion](#)** -- for more information and registration click [here](#).

(V) [4/22-23/2016](#) - 6:00 am through 6:00 pm **BioBlitz: Tandy Hills Natural Area @ [Tandy Hills Natural Area, Ft. Worth](#)** -- for contact and event information click [here](#).

(AT) [4/22-23/2016](#) - 7:30 am through 6:30 pm **Texas Pollinator PowWow @ [Museum of Texas Tech](#)** -- for contact and event information click [here](#).

(AT) [4/26/2016](#) - 9:30-12:30 pm **Spring Prairie Walk: Burleson Prairie @ [Mickey and Bob Burleson Prairie, Temple](#)** -- for more information and RSVP contact Lesley Fleming (lynn.fleming99@gmail.com).

(V/Training) [4/30/2016](#) - 8:30-12:30 pm **2016 Training Class @ [Harris Community Center](#)** -- for more information contact Mary Ann Everett / Zoe Rascoe (everett.maryann4@gmail.com / trascoe@hotmail.com).

(V) [4/30/2016](#) - ALL DAY **The Great Texas Birding Classic Big Sit @ [Mother Neff State Park](#)** -- for more information contact (254-853-2389).

## Spring Prairie Walk: Burleson Prairie

Much mind building,  
mouth gasping (in wonder, not exertion),  
and folk communing will be had.

4/26/2016, Mickey and Bob Burleson Prairie

Once a year they let the TMN run free over their prairie. Don't miss it.

Come to Mickey and Bob Burleson Prairie in Temple for an exploration of a replication Blackland Prairie site 9:30 - 12:30 pm. Bring a sack lunch and chair if you wish to picnic on the prairie. Please wear closed toe shoes, bring a hat, plenty of water, sunscreen, field guides, and your usual outdoor gear.

Directions in a Local's Words:

From I-35 North: Take Exit 305 Berger Rd. At stop sign take right over railroad tracks. Follow Berger Road approximately 4.6 mile. You will make several 90 degree turns, the pavement will end and switch to gravel. Mickey's address is 5101 Berger Rd., Temple, but go past her driveway about .3 miles. On left there is a metal gate (set back from the road) and gravel drive, turn in there. Drive down to a group of trees and park along the road! Welcome to the Prairie!

For more information and/or to RSVP contact: Lynn Fleming, [lynn.fleming99@gmail.com](mailto:lynn.fleming99@gmail.com)

## *Newsletter Mission Statement*

*"Our mission is to inform and educate Master Naturalist members and the general public about our local environment and resources, and what we, as caretakers, can do to protect them."*

### **Board of Directors**

**President:** Lynn Fleming

**Past President:** Mary Ann Everett

**Vice President:** Rene Berkhoudt

**Secretary:** Sarah Byrd

**Treasurer:** Don Wyatt

**Web Master:** Dale Hughling

**Membership:** Linda Mahaffey

**Historian:** Dana Hazelwood

**Host:** Mary Odom

**Training:** Sue Valdez

**Newsletter:** Gail Hughling

### **Chapter Advisors:**

Heidi Prude,  
County Extension Agent, Natural Resources

Derrick Wolter,  
Wildlife Biologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife

### **Newsletter Staff**

**Editor:** Terrie Hahn

**Proofreader:** Werner Hahn

**Contributing Writers and Photographers:** Lynn Fleming, Mickey Burleson, Marilyn Whitworth, Richard McCarthy, Zoe Rascoe, Sarah Byrd, Terrie Hahn

**Please send any news of events, articles or photos of what you're doing or what's going on in your yard or area to:**

**Terrie Hahn at [moompie45@hotmail.com](mailto:moompie45@hotmail.com)**

### **The Central Texas Master Naturalist Chapter:**

Holds member meetings the 2nd Tuesday of February, April, June, August, October and December at 6 p.m. at the Belton Church of Christ at 3003 N. Main. Location exceptions are in December and June.

**PACE** meetings are at the Church location at 6 p.m. the 2nd Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September and November. **THE PUBLIC IS WELCOME AT ALL OF OUR MEETINGS.**

**Programs      Activities      Committees      Everything else**

The Board of Directors meet the 1st Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September and November at 3 p.m. in the Board Room at the Agrilife Extension Center at 1605 Main in Belton.