

The Tracker

Central Texas Master Naturalist Newsletter June 2023

Fowler Sanctuary at Lake Belton, by Guy Fowler

EARTH DAY 2023

You may have heard the slogan “Earth Day—Every Day”, but the volunteers in our chapter come pretty close to that. This year we had members volunteering simultaneously at three Earth Day events! The Tonkawa Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas invited the CTMN Chapter to have a booth about beneficial insects and horned lizards at their Saturday, April 22, 2023, native plant sale at the Barrows Brewing Company in Salado, Texas. Chapter members Mary Ann Everett, LouAnn Hight, Juan Anaya, Jerry Lewis and new class members Michael Hermans, Stephen Powell, Carina Costa, and Carol Smith all took part in meeting the public at the booth. Our booth was full of insect teaching materials under the canopy. It was a busy day with nearly 150 people visiting our booth.



Meanwhile, a crew was at Bell County Museum was helping visitors make seed balls, cast animal tracks, demonstrating how to identify critters by their scat (some people call it poop—ours are rubber replicas!), and showing the lifecycles of insects. Lynn Fleming, Jamey Douglass, John Burns, Joe Dorn and Jason Carrico visited with over 50 visitors stopping at their booth.



Colleen Smith-Fey led a team of Master Naturalists at the 3rd Annual Nolanville Monarch Fest where a live caterpillar exhibit was on display alongside plants ideal for butterfly habitat and food. Other CTMN members helping at the Monarch Fest were Kerry Fillip, Jean Solana, and Kelly Thornborrow. Read more about the Monarch Fest on page 30.

- Zoe Rascoe, 2004

President's Pen

Carroll Adcock, 2020



The Mission of The Texas Master Naturalist program is “to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas”.

Volunteerism is defined as the act or practice of doing volunteer work in community service. The root word comes from the Latin voluntarius “willing, of one’s free will”, from the ancient accusative singular present participle of velle “to wish”. In reviewing (Googling) the meaning, I discovered that considerable academic work has been done to study volunteerism, I will focus only on a few “pearls”. Community organizations, the communities they serve, and society at large — all stand to benefit from volunteerism. Numerous factors affect people’s level of volunteerism; however, motivation is one of the most studied variables. Motivation varies among individuals but most are likely to



Bell County Museum Weird Science Day

have multiple motives that influence their level of volunteerism and community involvement. Career and values motives rank highest among young adults. Older adults tend to be motivated to volunteer by helping values, social aspects of volunteering, and opportunities to make a contribution to their community or society, to use their skills or share knowledge, to learn, develop new skills and be intellectually stimulated.



Sharing Nature at Mother Earth News Fair



Andi K. teasing the kids

Cont.

I am glad to report that whatever the motivator is for the folks in our chapter, they certainly seem committed to be of service. I am especially pleased to see the enthusiasm of our current class of "trainees". Dale Hughling was kind enough to gather some information on our current level of productivity and I am happy to report that for the period between March 21, 2023 thru June 1, 2023 our new class has logged 709 volunteer service hours and 163 Advanced Training hours! Those are impressive numbers when you factor in that in addition to those hours, they are spending a significant number of hours in class in order to obtain the required training.



Fall Fest at Mother Neff State Park



Public Clean up Day at Miller Springs Nature Center

I am also excited to report that from January 1, 2023 thru June 1, 2023 all our members have logged 4,724 volunteer service hours 624 Advanced Training hours!

I liked this tip I came across; The Golden Rule of Volunteering is that if you commit to do something...do it! Your ability to fulfill a commitment doesn't just reflect on you, it also reflects upon the organization. Great volunteers remain professional in all situations.

Functional Theory: Why People Volunteer (Nesbit & Brudney, 2010; Stukas, Hoyer, et al,

2016) shows that individuals who find satisfaction in their volunteer experience ultimately decide to continue volunteering if a match is made between their personal interests and the degree to which the volunteer experience fulfills those interests. I am thankful for the

seemingly ever-expanding range of volunteer opportunities that our chapter presents to our members, as it helps to fulfill a wider variety of interests. It is the desire of the leadership of CTMN to assist all members to find opportunities that fulfill their interests.



Camp Tahuaya Trail Crew in April

Happy trails!

2023 TMN Training Course



- KELLY THORNBORROW, 2023

As the Class of 2023 Master Naturalist Trainees prepares to graduate, I reflect on how quickly the last 11 weeks have passed. I joined this class as a last-minute addition in a bit of a whirlwind as I had moved to Texas and discovered the Master Naturalist Program at a plant sale.

As Master Naturalist trainees we have had the opportunity to hear from a variety of passionate speakers like Wizzie's entomology lecture, play games pretending to be predator and prey (Interpretation), see a two-headed snake at Cameron Park Zoo (Herpetology), and identify fish from preserved samples (Ichthyology). Many of the trainees from our class have also been active in



Is Santi Duncan Shocked? Outraged? No!! It's Santi's "THIS IS SO AMAZING!!" look. May we all go outside and be amazed like Santi!



Who has the coolest critter in the aquatic diversity activity?

volunteer opportunities over the past few months like Adopt-a-Loop, BirdWatch, Monarch Projects, Gault Site Clean-up and more. It even looks like quite a few of us have our sights set on double certification this year. Here's to the class of 2023, let's get out there and make a difference!



Learning to throw an atlatl at Gault Archaeological Site.

Master Naturalists at Work

– **BILL NOVAKOSKI, 2020**

Gault Archaeological Site—Annual Workday

May 6th was a busy day in the life of Central Texas Master Naturalist Chapter. That Saturday, we had members volunteering at four activities across Central Texas. Eight members chose to participate in the Gault Site Annual Workday. I had already heard about how motivated this year's training class was, but at this event I saw that motivation myself. Seven of these eight were Class 2023 Members-in-Training.

We joined over 40 other volunteers and Gault Site staff, many of whom were also Master Naturalists from other counties in Central Texas. Work consisted of cleaning up storm damaged trees from the March 2023 ice storm and debris from the April 2022 tornado. The enthusiastic volunteers attacked with loppers and chainsaws, loaded the debris into pick-up trucks and unloaded it into five large burn piles. Work continued from 8:30am until almost noon and was followed by an appreciation BBQ lunch provided by a Gault Site staff.

Commendable job, Class of 2023!

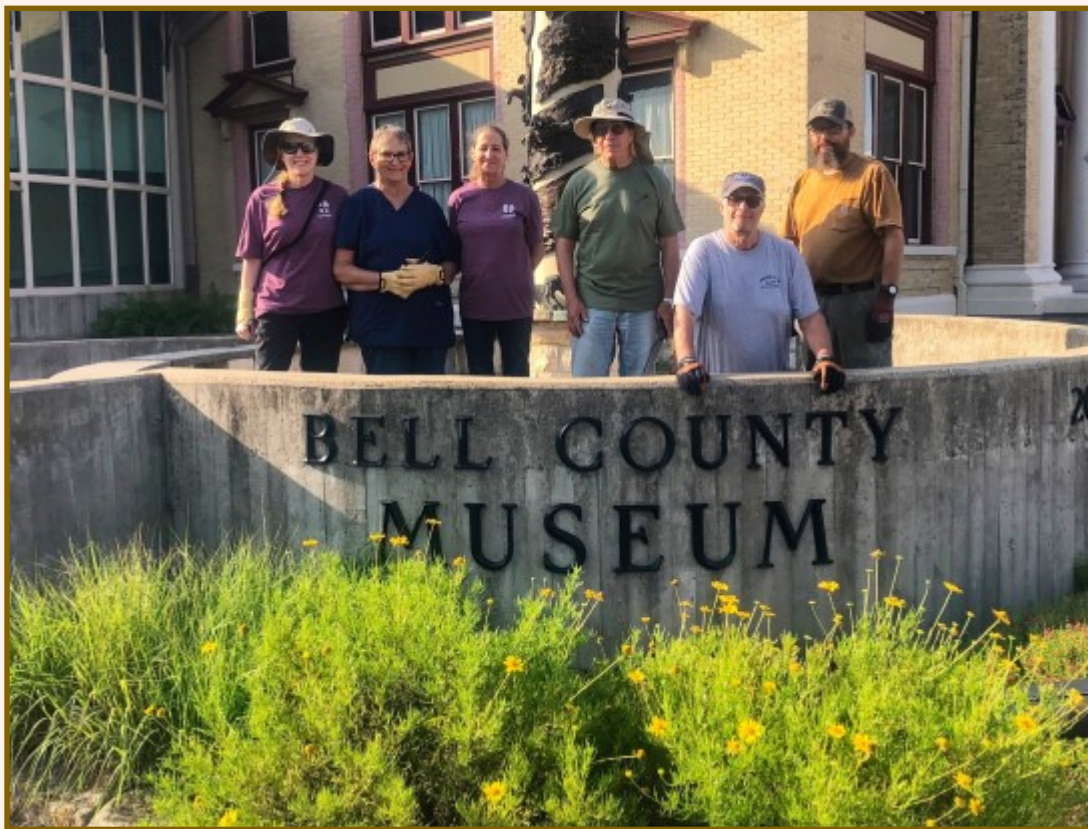


Master Naturalists at Work

Belton Library and Bell County Museum



Joan Ingram (photographer), Mary Ann Everett, Jason Carrico, Lynn Fleming and Charles Capen at the Belton Library Butterfly Garden.



Joan Ingram, Mary Ann Everett, Kecia Daughett, Charles Capen, Mike Hermans, Jason Carrico and Lynn Fleming (photographer) enjoying native plants at the Museum

Master Naturalists at Work

Oakalla Old Home Day

- COLLEEN SMITH-FEY, 2022

On Saturday May 6th, Colleen Smith-Fey, Lynn Fleming, John Atkins, Tina Atkins, Lynn Williams, Mary Ann Everett, Andi Klein and Jason Carrico journeyed to the rural setting of Oakalla, for the community's second annual Old Home Days which was organized by the community librarian, Tricia Pratt. Residents scoff at outsiders who say the town name as it is spelled. The proper pronunciation is similar to "oak alley." Oakalla is located where Rock Creek and the Lampasas River meet, about 12 miles south of Copperas Cove. Oakalla is home to about 45 people, according to the Handbook of Texas. This community gathering is something akin to a family reunion with live music, food, games, live demonstrations, silent auctions and of course education!

The Master Naturalists set up under the large (about a 50-foot canopy) oak tree along with its fuzzy spiny oak caterpillars! A good rule of thumb is if a caterpillar looks fuzzy — don't touch it! Under one section of the tree Lynn ran the plaster animal track cast making station, John played in the dirt with the seed ball rolling station, and Tina educated visitors with a selection of bones, skin, fur and scat (models of course).



Mary Ann plays a spider game



John Atkins uses replica skulls, skins and scat to talk about animals



Lynn Williams says "Hold on! I know that chickadee is in here somewhere."

Under another section of the oak tree was the Master Naturalists Kids Play. Lynn Williams, Mary Ann Everett and myself ran various educational play stations (no, not the electronic kind). From the photo op at the bird wingspan display, bird kabobs, Web weaver game, fish and release, fish plinko, animal match, to bug rescues, the kids (and adults) had fun. Our oak tree spot, with all the activities and take-home crafts, was the happening spot! Master Naturalist cheer was felt by all visitors!

Master Naturalists at Work

Dirty Dozen Divers

- Jake Wilson, 2023

Oftentimes as Naturalists, when we find ourselves out on a glorious hike or volunteering, we encounter a disappointing amount of trash and litter peppering the landscape. Habitually, we scoop it up to help restore the natural Texas landscape and move on with our day. However, while we pick up and properly dispose of what we can physically see on land, oftentimes what we can't see goes unchecked by our endeavors. Litter mitigation efforts ultimately can only extend to the length of accessibility.

Stillhouse Hollow Lake is frequented by anglers, party goers and everything in between. A side effect of the lake's popularity is an egregious amount of litter distributed not only along the shoreline, but under the lake as well. Thankfully, the [Scuba Divers Paradise Dive Club](#) located at the Stillhouse Hollow Marina has a voluntary dive team nicknamed the Dirty Dozen whose entire purpose is to eliminate trash from the lake bottom. Functioning as a club within a club, the sole purpose of the DDDT is to encourage responsible stewardship of the lake while also cultivating further diving experience for its members. Equipped with oxygen tanks, BCDs, experience and onion bags, we scoured the North shoreline at a depth of 25 feet just above the thermocline to recover anything we could. Our particular site on May 28th yielded only a small amount of trash along the lakebed, so to extend our efforts we beached the boat and cleaned an otherwise inaccessible portion of the shoreline. I'm personally reminded of the parable of the hummingbird as told to us during the Urban Ecology training by Sam Kieschnick. We simply do what we can. Below left: Jake Wilson. Right: DDD team members pick up litter on land, too.



SOILS FIELD DAY

– JAMEY DOUGLASS, 2021

As a retired soil scientist, sharing my knowledge and expertise with Central Texas Master Naturalists has been a dream for a few years. In 2022, a date was set, then an injury, and three months of 100 degree days postponed that event. This year a soils classification field training event came together on May 9th on ag production land owned by Lynn and Robert Fleming. Lynn is a Master Naturalist and retired from NRCS but continues helping manage Fleming Grain & Cattle. There were 11 field day participants from Central Texas, El Camino Real and Heart of Texas Master Naturalist Chapters. Instructors were three NRCS Soil Scientists: Dr. Laurie Kiniry (retired), John Sackett III (NRCS based in Weatherford), and me (also retired).



to get the app up and running. Next John discussed soil series, and soil mapping units using trees as an example of grouping items. These are informational tools available to the public.

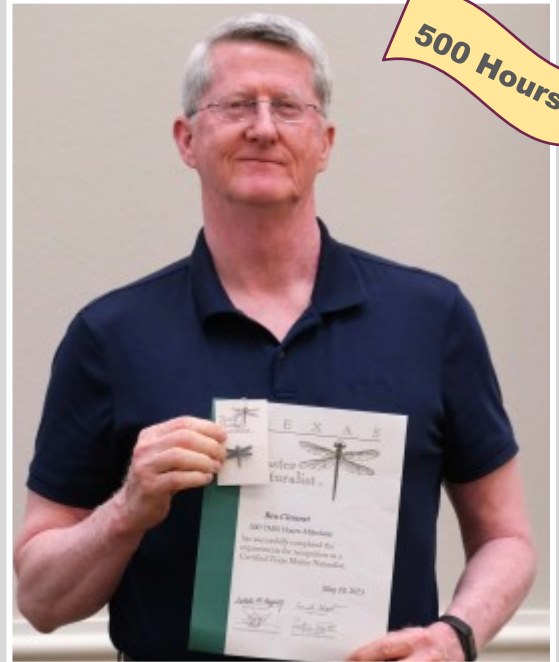
We broke into two groups, one with John and the other with Jamey and Laurie. We wanted to show the participants how to write a pedon (a 3-D soil sample) description using two different soils on the property—the Crockett and the Wilson series. John's group had an advantage with his truck-mounted hydraulic soil probe that he used to punch a soil core tube into the deep soil. The other group hand dug their Crockett soils. We explained how to consistently describe soil color, soil texture, redox features, and calcium carbonate features. I made sure everyone turned the person-powered bucket auger. There was great feedback from participants and another Soils Field Day was planned.



MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Lynn Williams, aka as Screech, (2014) reached 1500 Volunteer Service Hours!! She is a Game-inventing machine for kids. Congratulations, Lynn!!



Ben Clement (2016) reached 500 Volunteer Service Hours—many of those hours are chopping down invasive trees! Congratulations!

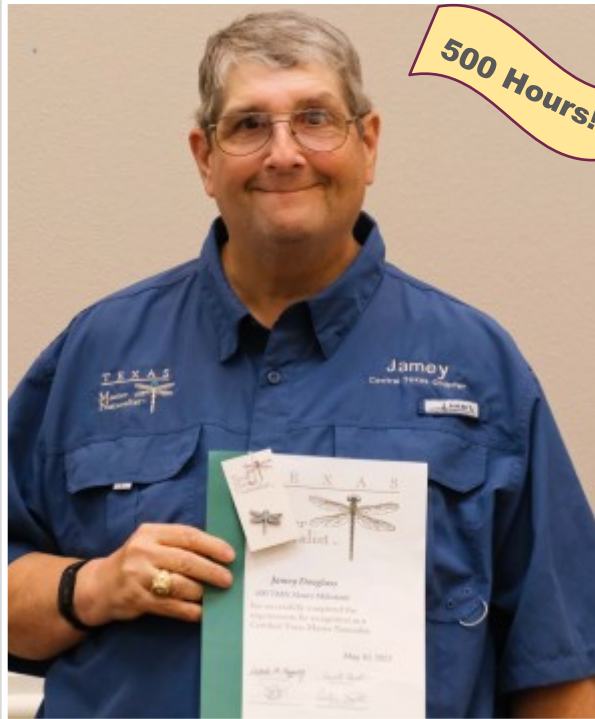


Bill Novakoski (2020) reached 500 Volunteer Service Hours— many tasks from invasive tree chopping to showing skins and skulls to kids at Mother Neff State Park. Congratulations!

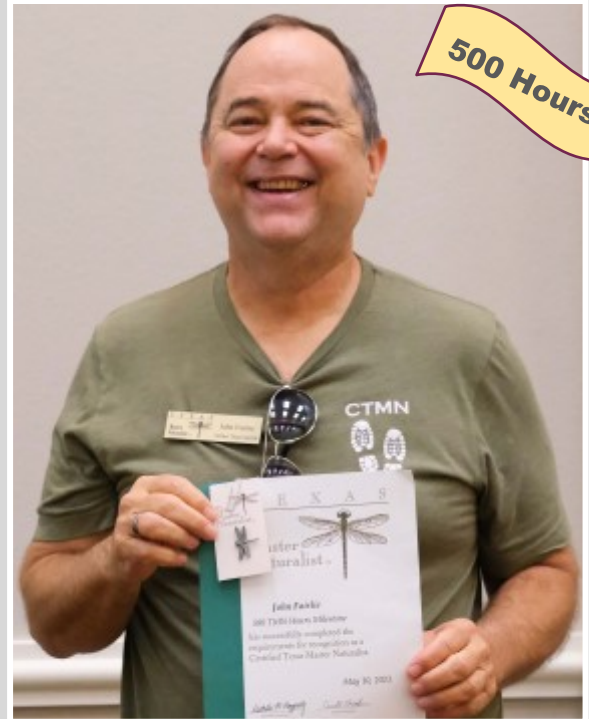


Carroll Adcock (2020) reached 500 Volunteer Service Hours helping with many projects, although being President sure adds up. Congratulations!

MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Jamey Douglass (2021) reached 500 Volunteer Service Hours. He works at a lot of different outreach events and is our Vice President! Congratulations!



John Fairlie (2021) reached 500 Volunteer Service Hours. John organized and manages the TPWD Adopt A Loop project for our chapter. Congratulations!



Danny Welch (2022) reached 250 Volunteer Service Hours. Danny put a crew together and restarted our Texas Stream Team. Congratulations!



Sharon Schmitz (2020) reached 250 Volunteer Service Hours. She mostly racks up hours trying to keep us all straight with VMS. Congratulations!

MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Tommy Reeder & Brook Fowler (both 2022) receive their Initial Certification—Hurray!



Charlie Langsdale and Letti Lim-Kosel (both 2022) completed the Texas Water Specialist Training



Bill Novakoski (2020) completed the Texas Water Specialist Training

MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



2023 Recertifications go to Sue Valdez (2013), John Fairlie (2021), Carroll Adcock (2020), Jamey Douglass (2021)



2023 Recertifications go to Stan Simons (2022), Sharon Schmitz (2020), Danny Welch (2022), Bill Novakoski (2020) and Linda Fairlie (2018)

MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Bill Cornelius (2020) left, Marilyn Whitworth (2010) and Tom Gerik (2021) recertify for 2023.

The first Central Texas Chapter Training Course was held in the spring of 2010. Congratulations to all those who continue to volunteer and train to remain Certified Texas Master Naturalists.

City Nature Challenge



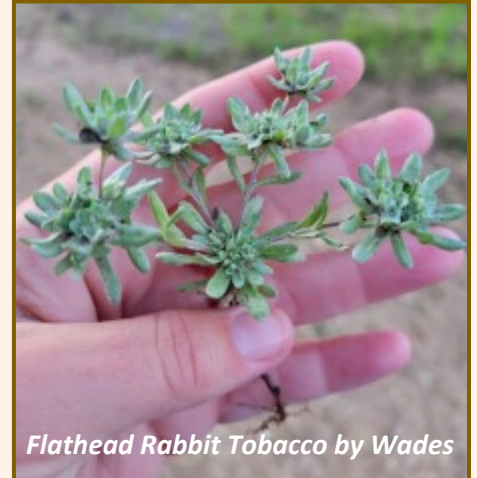
City Nature Challenge 2023: Heart of Texas

APR 28, 2023 - MAY 1, 2023



- Jamey Douglass, 2021

This past April 28th to May 1st was the City Nature Challenge 2023: Heart of Texas (CNC 2023: HOT). During this period citizen scientists and Master Naturalists across the world observed wildlife and plants using the iNaturalist app. Several Chapter members participated in this project, earned volunteer hours observing plants, bugs, animals, birds, etc. They learned new flora and fauna, and were outside enjoying nature.



Flathead Rabbit Tobacco by Wades

Here are comments from some chapter members who participated:

"I walked around the campground area of Dana Peak Park for 1.25 hours. I observed and photographed eleven total species, some of the birds, butterflies and deer were just too quick for me to snap a picture." **Cassie Castillo, Class of 2022**



Common Hop Tree by Wades

"We made 266 observations within the Heart of Texas challenge area, of 212 unique species. This was a very valuable learning opportunity. The challenge was great motivation to go out and identify as many flora and fauna as we could. We followed the entries of our area naturalist friends, which made the challenge more engaging and fostered a sense of community." **Jim and Cristy Wade, Class of 2023**

"I made 12 observations of 11 species that were added to the project

while participating with Mary Ann Everett in the City of Harker Heights-sponsored nature walk at Miller Springs Park on Saturday April 29." **Larry Turner, Class of 2021**



Pearl Milkweed by Larry at MSNC

Cont.

City Nature Challenge *Cont.*



City Nature Challenge 2023: Heart of Texas

APR 28, 2023 - MAY 1, 2023



"I had 9 observations.... each one proved that the names I thought I knew were incorrect. Was well worth the time and as a Naturalist showed me that I have a lot more to learn." **Jason Carrico, Class of 2023**

"I submitted 179 observations on 151 species. I have been active on iNaturalist for years, but it is a good opportunity on a project like this to seek to find things outside of just your own little pocket of nature and try to discover something new." **Randy King, Class of 2023**



Eastern Kingbird by Randy

"I had 62 observances with 38 species." **Mary Ann Everett, Class of 2003**

"I wanted to be the #1 Identifier for CTMN but lost out to The Wades. I made 229 observations and identified 121 species. The Wades finished in 6th place; I finished in 8th place in the CNC 2023: HOT." **Jamey Douglass, Class of 2021**

Other Chapter members who participated in the CNC 2023: HOT included **Jean Solana, Bill Novakoski, Matt Ridley, Santi Duncan, Kelly Thornborrow, Jake Wilson,**

Molly Wilson, Linda Fairlie, John Fairlie and Andreas Wooten—for a total 18... that we know about!

Thanks to all who participated this year. I believe the City Nature Challenge 2023: Heart Of Texas had about 6,756 observations, identified 1,570 species, and there were 244 observers. Our chapter had at least 5 in the top 30 observers.

Well done, Central Texas Chapter!



Brazos Heelsplitter Mussel by Jake, kayaking on Brazos River



Texas Thistle with bees by Jean

A WALK IN THE WOODS

– KECIA DAUGHETT, 2023



On May 27th, a group of CTMN members went to the Fowler's home for a field learning experience on their 11 acres of woodlands and prairie. Our gracious hosts were Master Naturalists Guy, Cindy and their daughter Brook. As soon as I arrived, I heard birds chirping. Cardinals were eating seed from their feeders, and then Red-bellied and Downy Woodpeckers, and a Summer Tanager were in the trees nearby. Birds were everywhere!



Guy told how he and Cindy came to find their property on the lake, and the work that they put into it, such as clearing and mulching overgrown underbrush, identifying hardwood trees to manage, identifying native plants, building trails and learning the location of the floodplain.

The first stop was observing many native plants on the trail. Among the plants on this nearly eleven-acre property are Mullein, Heartleaf Skullcap, Golden Crownbeard, Pearl and Zizotes and Antelope Horn Milkweeds, White Horehound, Mexican Plum, Stemmy Four-nerve Daisy, Mealy Cup Sage, Texas Prickly Pear, Pink Verbena, as well as Mexican Blankets, Vitex, Phlox, Wine Cup, and few remaining Bluebonnets going to seed.



Next stop was on the observation deck midway down to the lake where we saw a Tiger Swallowtail recently out of his chrysalis drying its fully-opened wings. I had never thought of this stage in the lifecycle of a butterfly. This process can take up to two hours making them very vulnerable to birds and other predators.

Back on the trail, we saw where the Fowlers had hung Mason Bee houses. Mason Bees are important to pollination and although they do not make honey, they pollinate plants 120 times more than honey bees. Guy also mentioned he and Cindy are now raising honey bees.

Heading closer to the lake, Guy pointed out the floodplain location and how floods had affected the vegetation in the past. He went to the water's edge and pulled out a handful of Zebra Mussels. Of course, we all know these are invasive species and can clog water pipes and power plant intakes, damage boats and other structures. They also filter out algae that native species use for food. Brook and Cindy also took a turn pointing out important features along the water's edge and plants nearby.

What a great way to start the day! Thank you, Guy, Cindy, and Brook!





Taking Nature into Schools

Providence School *by Jamey Douglass*

On March 21st, four Master Naturalists under the leadership of Mary Ann Everett travelled to Providence School, part of First Baptist Church in Belton. Volunteers included Mike Hermans and Stephen Powell who had just completed their first day of training and volunteered to go! Jamey Douglass rounded out the team.

Stations for 2nd graders were setup in the classroom. Mike used an inflatable bug ball to ask questions, Stephen's station had insect life cycles, including cocoons, Mary Ann had one of her bug specimen boxes, and Jamey's station had bug etching templates using crayons and paper.

All the children seemed interested and asked many questions. The teachers had a great time as well. I am pretty sure we will be invited back another time.

St. Mary's School *by Mary Ann Everett*

4th and 5th grade classes learned about composting. The students brought scraps from home, including veggies and fruits, coffee and tea grounds, newspaper and cardboard. They enjoyed getting a hands-on experience doing this activity. Jerry Lewis lent a hand with the 4th grade class.

One of the students from 5th grade presented a PowerPoint presentation on composting for his family, and his mother told me how much he has enjoyed



learning about gardening, nature and being outdoors.

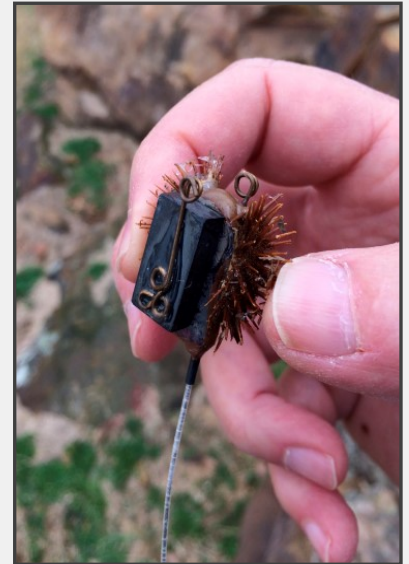
The 5th grade class was studying camouflage in nature, so the students made masks to disguise their faces using natural items from outdoors. Can you see them?

CHAPTER MEETINGS

- Kelly Thornborrow, 2023

In our April chapter meeting, Michael Mayes, Chairman of the North American Wood Ape Conservancy, spoke about “wood apes” in the Lonestar state. Mayes used the identification of this cryptid as wood ape as an alternative to the name bigfoot to denote the potential relation to other hominids like *Gigantopithecus blacki*. This nomenclature is based on the concept that there are many things that are still unknown and unidentified in the world and there are potentially species like wood apes that have neither been proven nor disproven to exist. He discussed the Anthropoid Hypothesis that a wood ape is an unlisted ape closely related to chimps, gorillas, orangutans and humans.

Mayes provided a variety of media that included fossil records, historical accounts, audio recordings, and personal accounts. One of the accounts included a tracking study in which a transmitter was placed in a cocklebur on a string trap with the goal of adhering to any wood apes in the area. Tag 7 was activated and tracked over a span of 10 months. As a result of GPS data collected, they found it unlikely to belong to any of the known indigenous species for the area but were unable to definitively identify what it had attached to. The accounts presented by Mayes bring us to venture into the unknown and ask *what* exactly is out there?



NAWAC 2022

- Zoe Rascoe, 2004

This a BIG year for Texas State Parks—that organization is celebrating its 100th year of providing outdoor experiences for Texans. At our May Chapter meeting, Montse Canedo, Regional Interpretive Specialist, provided both a look back at 100 years of State Parks as well as what TPWD has in store for the future. I’m anxiously awaiting the opening of Palo Pinto Mountains State Park with a lake and 5000 acres of undeveloped land west of DFW. Montse announced there would be a soft opening this summer with 5 more parks opening in the next decade. To celebrate this big birthday, all 89 state parks are hosting special events, which included a “100 S’more years” with free s’mores on Mother’s Day weekend. Birthday celebration events across the state can be found at TexasStateParks.org/100years. We hope to see Montse Canedo back in our area to provide our Chapter advanced training on interpretive skills— especially related to hikes we lead at Mother Neff.



Mother Neff State Park

1680 TX Hwy-236, Moody

Jean Solana (2019), MNSP Liaison, can be reached at jmsolana76@gmail.com

Mother Neff is at its best in April and May, especially with all the rain this spring. The wildflowers have never been better, and the pollinators are thriving because of the abundance of host plants. For example, one of the dominant prairie plants this year is “Prairie Bishop”. It has tiny white flowers and “dill-like” foliage. It is a host plant for the Black Swallowtail, resulting in many caterpillars and butterflies this Spring. Monarchs are doing great as well, with many more eggs and caterpillars found compared to the last 2 years. The



birds are happy too – the Painted Buntings and Dickcissels are here and are having singing competitions in the tops of the trees.

The last week of April saw 2 workdays at Mother Neff, which we desperately needed due to the explosion of invasive

Bastard Cabbage. On Wednesday, April 26th new CTMN members Mike Hermans and Lysa Liem, with her 2 children Myles and Bae (left), helped Jean Solana pull bastard cabbage, check the seven bird boxes, and perform



the weekly Mother Neff milkweed survey. Exciting moments included everyone finding a monarch caterpillar, for a total of 10, and finally finding tiny eggs. And we all got to look at a nest full of baby chickadees (right).

On April 28th John Fairlie led our Mother Neff Adopt A Loop Hike and this also began our City Nature Challenge weekend (left).



Mother Neff State Park *Cont.*

On April 29th a Boy Scout troop from Killeen came to Mother Neff – Wow! This troop included 24 people – boys and girls 5th grade and older and all their chaperones. The bastard cabbage was wiped out with this large, hard-working group. Lee Moomaw is their troop leader. As they moved through the park they learned how to find Monarch and other caterpillars and looked at the baby Chickadees in the bird box by Headquarters. They learned about the Civilian Conservation Corps by the Big Bell, and experienced the Cave as we talked about the Tonkawa Indians that lived there. Lee says they need more “Conservation Hours” so we are sure to see them back at the park this summer.



NO SCHEDULED CTMN WORK DAYS IN THE SUMMER. TOO HOT AND SNAKE-Y.

Ongoing Volunteer Opportunities for CTMN members—Contact Jean Solana and she will connect you with appropriate park staff to schedule your visit.

-Native Garden Maintenance

-Social media content development

-Painting signs, kiosks, fences, benches

-Invasive species removal and control

-Thistle and grass identification

-Facebook Live interpretive programs

-Trail maintenance

-Bird blind maintenance



How far we've come.

I am writing this after just returning home from the April 13th workday. It was such a beautiful day and all I can say is WOW to the number of folks who came out to work. We had thirteen adults and two kids. Of the adults, five were first-timers at the MSNC 2nd Thursday workdays. Four of the five are 2023 trainees (April Hignojo, Charles Capen, Michael Hermans, and Lysa Liem). Lysa also brought her two kids with her, Myles and Bae. The fifth person of the first-timers was Rayy Ball. Rayy had just heard about us and decided to come out and see if she could join in the fun, which she did and we were glad to have her. We had folks spread out doing different things. John Fairlie, Linda Fairlie, and Michael Hermans were on litter patrol. April Hignojo, Charles Capen, Lysa, Myles, and Bae Liem, Ben Clement, Stan Simons, Tom Gerik, Bill Cornelius, Carroll Adcock, and myself all went down to the Green Pond Trail area to remove invasive plants.

It was a great day to work and to also introduce the first-timers to the progress we made in the past few years. It was a good time for me as well to reflect back on what we have accomplished. In pointing out the different areas we have worked in the last four years, it really stood out to me how much of a difference this group has made. When you stop and look at the work that was done in a day it looks good and you feel good about the progress. However, when you see the bigger picture of four years of progress, it is pretty amazing and satisfying. I commented to Carroll, as we were walking back along the green pond trail, that we had cut the invasive plants in that area two years ago and on this day it was just so beautiful with native plants. If you had not been part of the work party you would not have known we did anything. Actually, that is our goal!



Carroll Adcock, Bill Cornelius, Ben Clement, Linda Fairlie, John Fairlie, Mike Hermans, Stan Simons, April Hignojo, Lysa Liem, Myles Liem, Tom Gerik, Rayy Ball, Charles Capen and John Burns behind the camera

Miller Springs Nature Center *cont.*

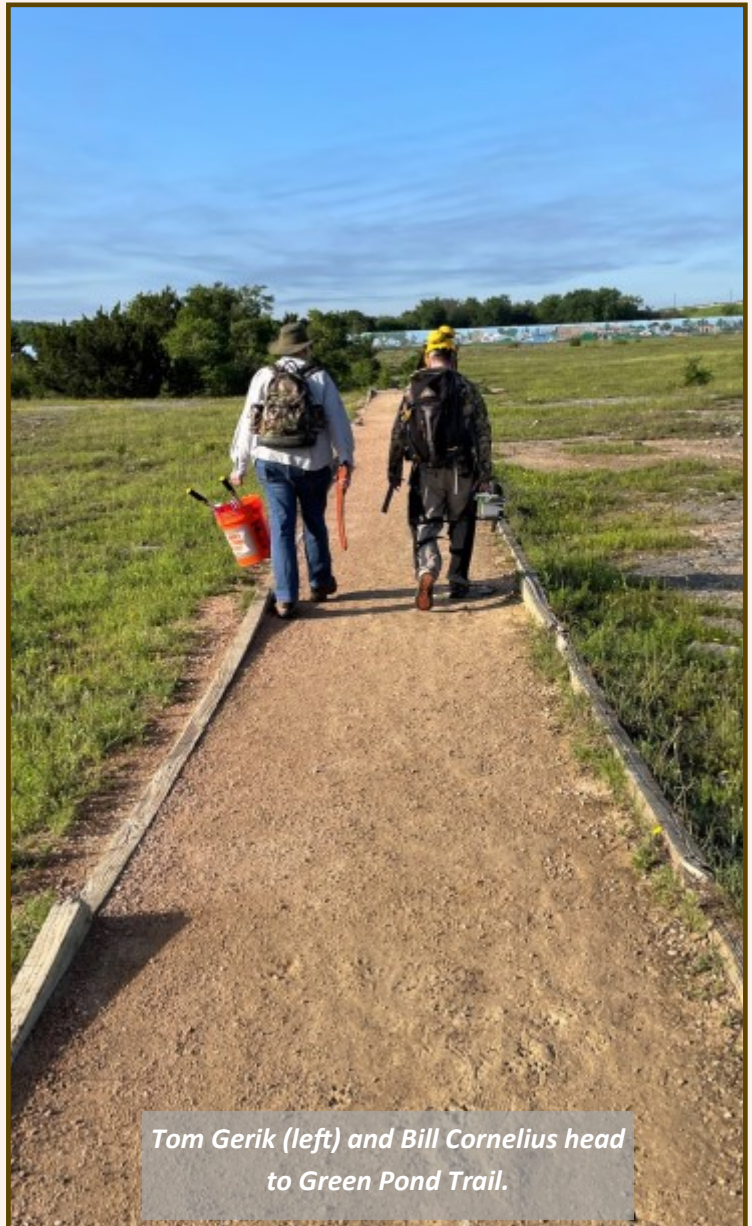
We also took a few minutes during the workday to do some naturalist things. We stopped, listened, and try to see a bird that kept singing to us the whole time we were working. Carroll got out his bird app and found the bird to be a Scarlet Tanager. It was so close to us, but we just could not find it. Later, just before we left, April said she had seen it just above where we were working. We also had another visitor: a green tree frog. I had not seen one in the wild and I thought it was beautiful.

I was out of town on the 2nd Thursday workday in May. Bill Novakoski was going to lead the group in my absence, but after consulting with Carroll Adcock, they decided it would be best to cancel since there had been a 1½ inch rain the day before. Safety is always the most important thing to consider. I always hate to cancel, but it sure was good to get rain!

It's getting warmer, but hopefully it won't be too hot for the next workday on June 8th. Come out and work with us and make a difference.



Myles and Lysa Liem use loppers on invasives



Tom Gerik (left) and Bill Cornelius head to Green Pond Trail.

MONARCH MONITORING PROJECT



– JEAN SOLANA, 2019

Lake Belton Spillway—New Site on Monarch Larva Monitoring Project!

First the Bad News:

The Monarch Butterfly population is steadily decreasing due to milkweed (its host plant) destruction by agriculture and urban sprawl in the United States, and winter forest habitat destruction from logging in Central Mexico. Monarchs are projected to be on the endangered species list by 2024. For almost 50 years *Monarch Joint Venture* has encouraged growing native milkweed. Unfortunately, milkweed is extremely hard to grow, with professional growers having a dismal 5% success rate. This highlights the need for finding and protecting existing native milkweed patches.

In 2023 Central Texas Master Naturalists noticed an abundance of Antelope Horn (*Asclepias asperula*) milkweed along the nature trail through the Lake Belton spillway. A count was organized –



10 people counted 40 lanes of milkweed on the west side of the trail and found over **4000** plants. In the spring of 2023 twenty-two Central Texas Master Naturalists conducted a 6-week survey from late March to early May. This is when the monarchs fly north into Texas from their winter home in Central Mexico. The data was entered into the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project. This study was begun in the 1990s by researchers at the University of Minnesota, collecting information over 30

years. Volunteers survey milkweed plants weekly for monarch eggs and 5 stages of caterpillars called Instars. As of 2015, participants had monitored 1100 sites in 43 states and 3 Canadian provinces.

MONARCH MONITORING PROJECT *CONT.*

CTMN surveyors surveyed a maximum of 1638 milkweed plants per week, finding a total of 348 eggs and 69 caterpillars over the 6 weeks. An interesting trend was noticed – most of the eggs and caterpillars were found by the Mural wall on the South side of the spillway. It seems the Monarchs

MLMP Data Portal

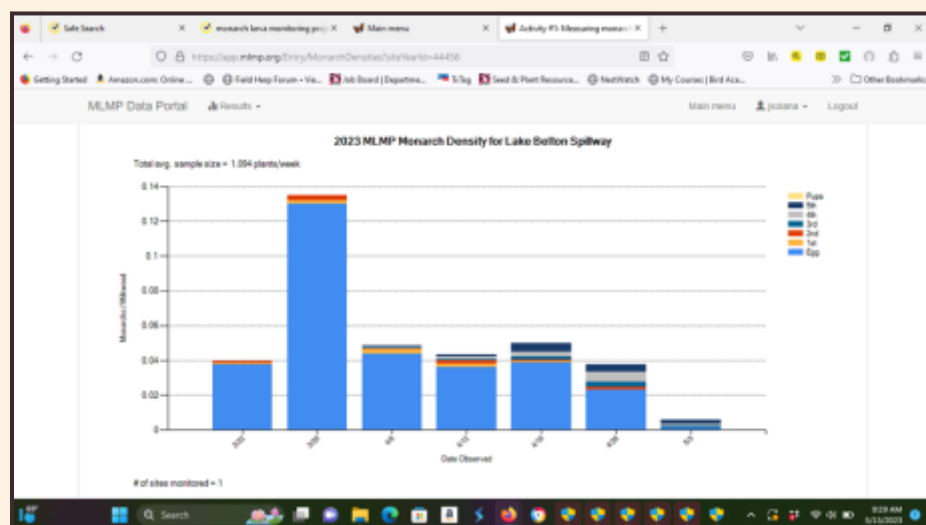
at the site. We use this measurement to see how densities vary within a year, between years, and among different sites and locations.

[Add a new record](#) [Go to activity #4: comparing milkweed characteristics](#) [Go to main menu](#)

More information (refer to the instructions and datasheets for Activity #1 EF on the MLMP website)

	Date	Activity	Plants	Live Egg	Live 1st	Live 2nd	Live 3rd	Live 4th	Live 5th	Live Pupa	Dead Egg	Dead 1st	Dead 2nd	Dead 3rd	Dead 4th	Dead 5th	Dead Pupa
View Details	3/22/2023	1A	907	34	1	1											
View Details	3/29/2023	1A	984	126	2	3											
View Details	4/5/2023	1A	1638	72	4	1	1	1	1		3						
View Details	4/12/2023	1A	1472	53	3	3	1	2	2								
View Details	4/19/2023	1A	1137	44	1	1	2	3	6								
View Details	4/26/2023	1A	689	16		1	2	4	3								
View Details	5/3/2023	1A	830	1			1	1	2								

coming from Mexico laid their eggs on the closest side of the field. Right, are the numbers we found and the data entry for Monarch to Milkweed ratio that Monarch Larva Monitoring Project measures. Our ratio was extremely low because of the large quantity of unused milkweed – not enough Monarchs are finding this extremely dense patch of milkweed.



Thanks to these volunteers for wearing out their backs bending over to find eggs and caterpillars. Hopefully this will be an annual survey for CTMN for many years, as we monitor this rich patch of milkweed. Surveyors were **Carol Smith**, **April Hignojo**, **Santi Duncan**, Andi Klein, Tom Gerik, **Stephen Powell**, Steven Schmitz,

Randy King, Colleen Smith-Fey, Guy Fowler, Sue Valdez, Marilyn Whitworth, Carroll Adcock, Linda Fairlie, John Fairlie, Susan Schneider, Mary Ann Everett, Charlie Langsdale, Letti Lim-Kosel, Debby Bridge, and Danny Welch. Names in bold are brand new CTMN trainees – way to jump right in there!

Thanks also to Jewel Hale, Lead Ranger for Lake Belton Army Corps of Engineers, for facilitating this project.

(Editor's Note: Apologies for the small print graphics! Please zoom in to read the details.)

Great Texas Wildlife Trails

- John Fairlie, 2021

GTWT Adopt-A-Loop Coordinator



One of our chapter's ongoing volunteer projects is our quarterly wildlife surveys for the Great Texas Wildlife Trails (GTWT) Adopt-A-Loop program. Our chapter has adopted the Chisolm Trail Loop, which includes eight sites -- Chalk Ridge Falls and Dana Peak Park on Stillhouse Hollow Lake, Belton Lakeview Park, the Miller Springs Nature Center, Mother Neff State Park, Lake Waco Wetlands, Cameron Park, and the Cameron Park Zoo.

We did our ninth round of site evaluations in late April/early May. While the drought is still having a negative impact on wildlife viewing in some areas, especially the Lake Waco Wetlands, we are seeing some recovery. The variety of birds that we are identifying in each site is impressive – at least to me! Here are the numbers of species of birds at each site: Miller Springs – 30, Belton Lakeview - 34, Chalk Ridge Falls - 22, Dana Peak - 18, Cameron Park - 24, Cameron Park Zoo - 9, Mother Neff - 20, and the Wetlands - 41. (Thank you Sue Valdez, Linda Fairlie, and Randy King for these numbers!)

Our pool of volunteers continues to grow, with many of our new trainees joining us for this round. We had 26 volunteers who put in over 200 hours of field research at our eight sites! Our CTMN volunteers for this round included Sue Valdez, Charles Capen, Jason Carrico, Cassie Castillo, Bill Cornelius, Santi Duncan, John Elwood, Mary Ann Everett, John Fairlie, Linda Fairlie, Tom Gerik, Mike Hermans, Joan Ingram, Randy King, Charlie Langsdale, Lysa Liem, Letti Lim-Kosel, Bill Novakoski, Matt Ridley, Carol Smith, Jean Solana, Robb Startzman, Kelly Thornborrow, Jim Wade, Cristy Wade, and Jake Wilson. Thank you all for your help!



GTWT ADOPT-A-LOOP PROJECT *cont.*

Our next round of AAL Wildlife Surveys will be in August. All of the site visits will be listed in our Chapter's weekly emails, as AAL Wildlife Survey @ Chalk Ridge Falls (or whatever site we are visiting that day). Feel free to join us whenever you wish! We have a lot of fun, enjoying the company and nature, while accumulating volunteer hours. We walk as much or as little as we want at each visit, using either iNaturalist or eBird to record observations. If using iNaturalist, we simply take pictures of wildlife of all sizes and shapes (all fauna) and enter them into the project. You are welcome to identify your observations, but it is not necessary. The TPWD has paid experts who evaluate all observations. If using eBird, we work together to get an accurate tally.



Kelly Thornborrow gives a ride to a Red Admiral as Jean Solana looks on.

This is a low impact, easy way to earn volunteer hours while hiking and taking pictures in beautiful areas – something most of us Master Naturalists love to do for fun. We look forward to seeing many of you on the next round!



Kern's Flower Scarab



Variegated Fritillary



American Dagger Moth Caterpillar

NESTWATCH 2023



– GUY FOWLER, 2021

NESTWATCH UPDATE AT MILLER SPRINGS! This year has been pretty active so far. We have 14 nesting boxes, we've done 17 nesting checks finding 36 eggs, and 17 young that have all "flown the coup" so to speak. We've also had numerous paper wasp squatters that I've asked (forced) to leave. All successful nests so far were chickadees. Presently we have two nests with 5 eggs, and one with 3. The 5 egg nests are most likely chickadees although I haven't seen the parents yet, and the 3-egg nest I think is a wren.

Next year we'll need to replace a couple of the boxes and maybe add or relocate



Guy Fowler feed a cable camera into Nest #6 at Miller Springs with help from Randy King.

one or two and see if we can get a nesting pair of the elusive Eastern Bluebirds. I'd encourage our members to think about joining in our NestWatch group. It takes about an hour a week during nest and fledging season, it's easy work, AND you see lots of our local natural beauty.



Thanks to those who have volunteered for the team, including members of the 2023 Training Class! We meet at the Miller Spring parking lot at 9:00am (for the summer) on Wednesdays. For those who are interested in learning more about the NestWatch citizen science project, check it out at <https://nestwatch.org>. This website has tons of

information on building nesting boxes and [egg identification](#)! Several of us have endoscopes (see photo above) to see what's happening inside the boxes with minimal disruption to the tenants. Especially when the tenants are wasps!

TEXAS STREAM TEAM

– DEBBY BRIDGE, 2022

On May 20th at the Lampasas River Venue, an isolated spot, we had record crowds for doing our water testing. There were 11 Master Naturalists! Six of us regulars: Danny Welch, Letti Lim-Kosel, Charlie Langsdale, Larry Turner, Bill Cornelius and myself. It was Mike Belcher's third visit (becoming a regular!), Bill Novakoski was there and three from the 2023 class: David Vesely, Julie Tanada, and Mike Hermans (his second visit). We let the new people—this time Julie and David--do the testing, with all of us regulars supervising and one of us giving the instructions as we go along. Bill Cornelius brought Round Rock doughnuts (not a regular feature) and we all had a fun time (regular feature)!! If you're interested, come join us and we'll let you conduct the testing to see if you like it. Check the Sunday night CTMN e-mail for the exact location. There is training down in San Marcos, but it's not required, although it counts towards yearly Advanced Training hours.

Left to right: Michael Belcher, Bill Cornelius, Mike Hermans (back), Charlie Langsdale, Letti Lim-Kosel, Larry Turner (back), Danny Welch, David Vesely, Julie Tanada, and Bill Novakoski on the Lampasas River.



The Stream Team monitors four different TCEQ sites in Bell County every month at 9:00 am on the following schedule:

First Saturday: Leon River @ Heritage Park

Third Saturday: Lake Belton @ Temple Lake Park

Second Saturday: Nolan Creek @ Harris Center

Fourth Saturday: Lampasas River @ FM 1123



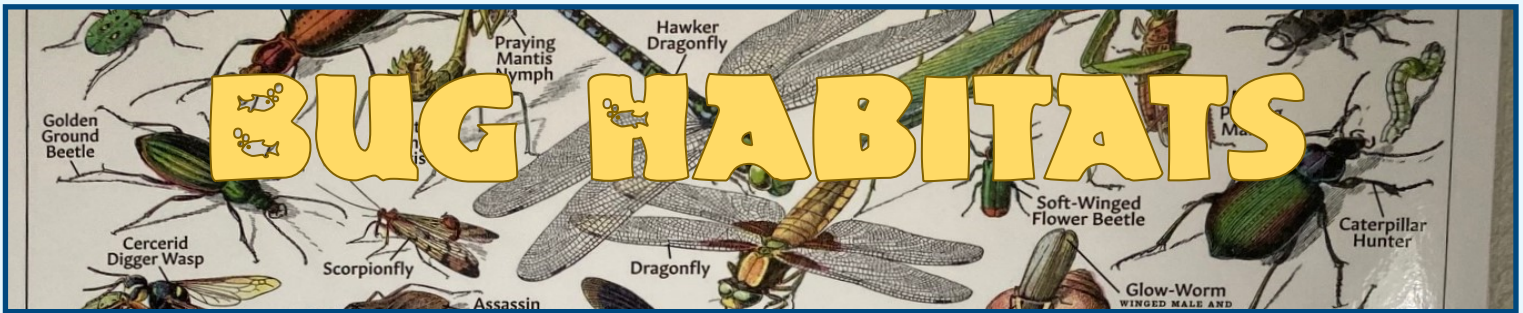
- COLLEEN SMITH-FEY, 2022

The Nolanville Monarch Fest creator, retired Nolanville Economic Development Coordinator and Master Naturalist, Kerry Fillip served alongside Jean Solana, Kelly Thornborrow and myself for this year's Fest. The first Fest was hosted in 2021 and with the Fest in its 3rd year more people have been made aware of the monarch butterfly, its habitat and life cycle.

The Fest's aim is to bring to light and educate adults and children alike on the plight of the Monarch butterfly and the need to provide support for this beloved insect on its migration route through Texas. The event held in Monarch Park also has a butterfly garden with a host of various plants for food and habitat for various butterflies including the Monarch. The Central Texas Master Naturalist Chapter 'set up shop' for just that!



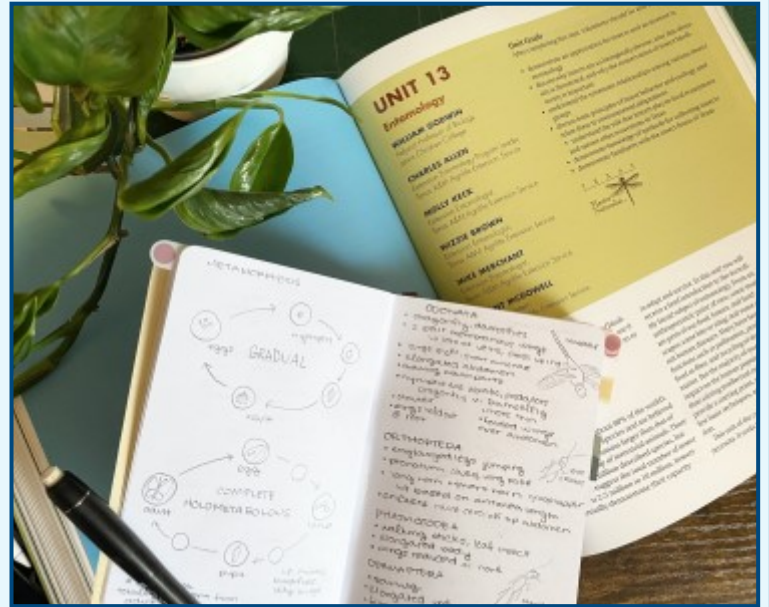
The CTMNC Chapter had a live caterpillar exhibit, make and take butterfly making station, coloring station, educational handouts for children and adults, live plant exhibits for attracting monarchs and pollinators, along with a Monarch lifecycle display. The booth stayed busy throughout the 3-hour event! As the story of the Monarch's lifecycle was explained, the children made coffee filter butterflies. They were amazed that the butterflies unfolded their wings from the chrysalis the same way they were opening the wings of their handmade creations. Teaching and learning about the Monarchs brought many smiles to the children and curiosity to join CTMNC with the adults. We would love to continue to be a part of this event as long as the City of Nolanville will have us!



- KELLY THORNBORROW, 2023

The 2023 Master Naturalist Training course has kicked off with 23 new recruits attending 26 lectures over the next 3 months. The entomology lecture was by Wizzie Brown, TAMU AgriLife Extension Program Specialist—Integrated Pest Management. She is passionate and can get anyone excited about arthropods.

As the weather warms, it is very likely we will begin to see many little friends emerge that Wizzie had discussed, like pollinators, coming out of their hiding spots. Texas has a variety of pollinators such as;



Monarch Butterflies. Monarchs are a commonly recognized species of butterflies that migrate through the state of Texas. Monarchs feed and lay their eggs on Milkweed plants exclusively. Planting Milkweed is a great way to help these pollinators. It is also possible to [order](#) Monarch larvae to raise through Monarch Watch. Raising Monarchs is one way to contribute to Monarch populations as well as a fabulous resource for teaching young children about insects and concepts like metamorphosis.

Long-Horned Bees. These bees are named for- you guessed it, the long antenna 'horns' they have. Texas has a variety of long-horned bee species that can be found nesting in the ground or out and about pollinating. Maintaining spaces that they can carve their nests in the soil is one way to help this pollinator. ([Sharp & Eatman](#), 2019).

Sphinx Moth. There are a few kinds of sphinx moths found in Texas such as the white-lined sphinx moth and the walnut sphinx moth. Their caterpillars belong to the "horn worm" species that have a characteristic horn. There are a variety of host plants for the diverse species in Texas, where some adults are important pollinators while other species do not have mouth parts and do not feed at all ([Maeckle](#), 2015).

Texas Wasp Moth. Aptly named, these moths look like paper wasps but are in fact moths. While they may look frightening to some, they are not able to sting people. You are most likely to find them in southern Texas while they are pollinating flowers. ([Iowa State Bug Guide](#), 2023).





While these are a few of the pollinators you may see in Texas, there are many more. Pollinators are essential because they enable fertilization of many of the plants in our ecosystem. The US Forest Service (2023) highlights this by stating in their online pollination education, “Of the 1,400 crop plants grown around the world, i.e., those that produce all of our food and plant-based industrial products, almost **80%** require pollination by animals”.

To help them and other arthropods out, some may choose to set-up bug homes and pollinator gardens in their yard. These are great ways to help provide an additional habitat that otherwise may have been destroyed or not present in areas of human development.

In Wizzie’s lecture she discussed opportunities and guidelines for creating bug-friendly habitats. She cautioned that any implementation of these ideas will result in some plant damage as many bugs may eat or remove parts of leaves. Her recommendations include:

- Do not use bug zappers
- Provide sun basking areas
- Have safe moisture sources i.e. putting rocks at base of gutter downspouts
- Provide sheltered areas and wind breaks
 - Bug boxes can be purchased or made and should be hung 3-5ft off the ground
- Have patches of bare ground for nesting insects
- Preserve overwintering spots i.e. fallen leaves, hollow stemmed plants
- Have a variety of nectar sources



Wizzie’s tips from the lecture are greatly applicable beyond trainee naturalist’s initial training but also as a way to help encourage community members to promote healthy bug habitats. If you volunteer at any upcoming events, consider any bugs that may be around you and help encourage community members to be mindful of bug habitats, like those for pollinators.

Show us your bug garden or pollinator habitats with the hashtag **#CTXMNBugHabitats** on social media and spread the word about ways to contribute to bug habitats.

BACKYARD COMPOSTING

Image: FarmFreshFeasts.com

- Sally Jordan, 2022

As Master Naturalists, we have a responsibility to be better stewards of our beautiful planet Earth. One of the ways that I am trying to be “earth friendly” is to compost my kitchen scraps. This means that I am using my garbage disposal less frequently. I have bought a metal container with a lid which I keep near my kitchen sink. I line it with a plastic bag from HEB and then toss my strawberry leaves, banana peels, apple cores, coffee grounds, bread, egg shells, and vegetable scraps. You will be amazed at how quickly the bucket fills up.



The recipe for successful composting calls for 2 to 3 parts “browns” to your “green” scraps. Browns consist of dead leaves, sawdust, small cardboard pieces, shredded newspaper, paper napkins, paper towels, and coffee filters. Avocado seeds and peels are impossibly slow, so I do not use them. Bones, meat, and dairy products will not decompose properly. Grass clippings do compost well.

I have invested in a composter from Lowe’s, which has a handle to rotate the barrel, and this helps the scraps to break down more quickly. Turning your compost twice a week is recommended. You can get the same effect with any large container, but you will need to turn the compost regularly with a shovel or rake. You may need to add some moisture if it gets too dry.



Everything composts better in warm weather, but your compost heap will create heat on its own in the cold weather. If you begin to notice maggots and worms, that is a sign of healthy compost! The insects are part of the recipe and an essential ingredient.

It will take several months to completely compost or break down the scraps and dry matter, and then you can add it to your flower pots, flower beds, and hanging baskets.

Compost adds nutrients and organic matter to your soil. It also improves the water retention capacity of your soil. You will be amazed at how well your plants thrive with compost added to the growing medium or soil! Happy Composting!

Good to Know...



**Central Texas Master
Naturalists**

2023 Class Graduation

**Tuesday, June 13th
6:00-8:00pm**

***Belton Church of Christ
3003 N. Main Street***

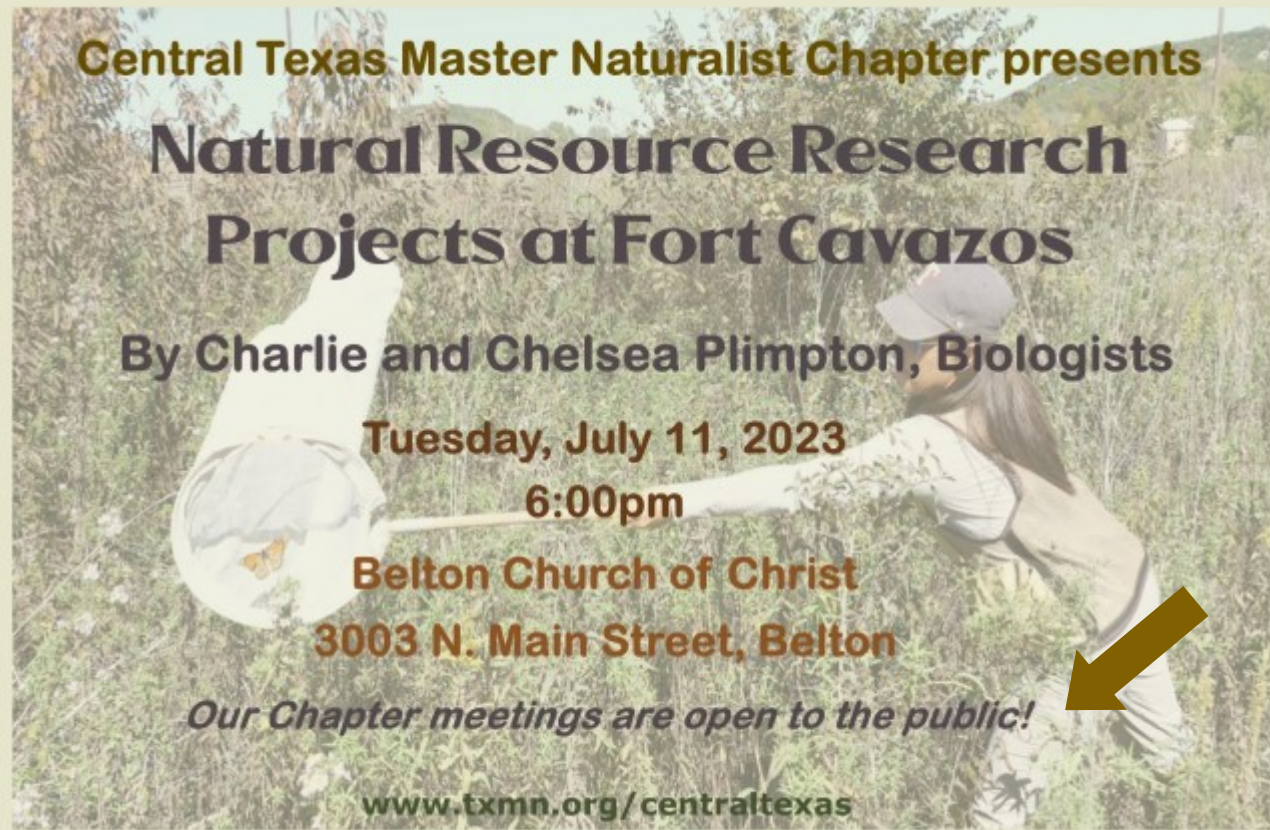
**Program: *Forensic Entomology*
by Ryan Kilpatrick**

Family & Friends of Graduates Welcome!

We could not be more excited to be graduating 23 new Texas Master Naturalists on June 13th! As in the past, this group is diverse in their interests in conserving and sharing information on our natural resources, and in the life experiences they bring to our chapter. These graduates have gone “all in!” volunteering at our many outreach and work projects, some starting on the first day of class. We love their excitement in learning and in serving. The Mentors, Training Committee and members who have helped along the way have been awesome as well.

Congratulations to all!!

More Good to Know...



To celebrate our 25th Anniversary, the Texas Master Naturalist Program is hosting a year-long storytelling project to highlight our wonderful TMN members and their conservation volunteer work across the state.

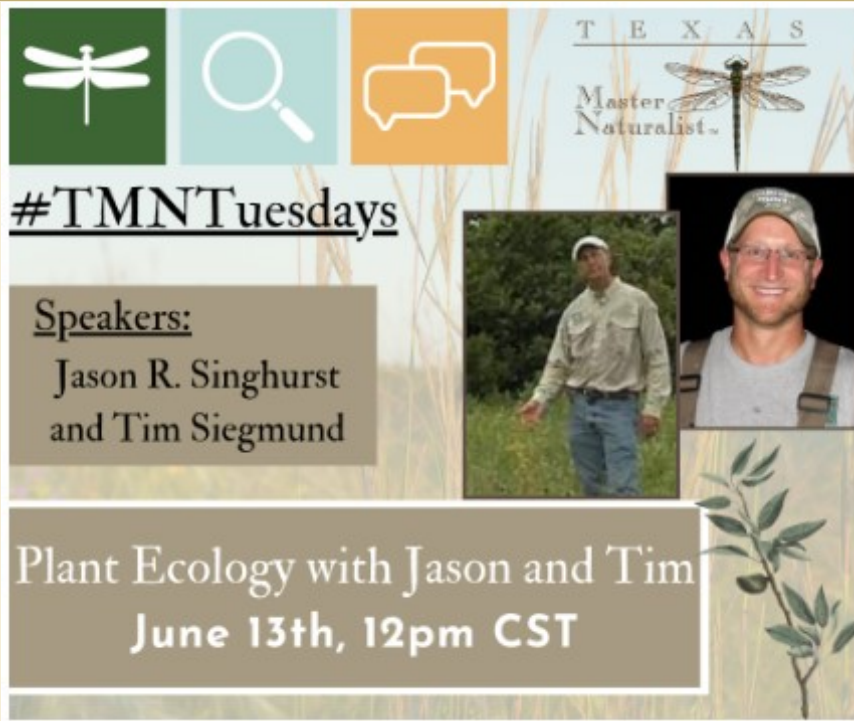
They want to know! What inspired you to become a TMN member? Do you have a favorite TMN in-the-field memory? What has been your most meaningful project, community outreach, or conservation event? What does nature mean to you?

We hope many of our members will share their stories!! For instructions and tips go to :

<https://txmn.tamu.edu/blog/25th-anniversary-storytelling-project/#storytelling>



Even More Good to Know...



The graphic features a header with three icons: a dragonfly, a magnifying glass, and two speech bubbles. Below these is the text "#TMNTuesdays". To the right, it says "TEXAS Master Naturalist" with a dragonfly illustration. Two photos of speakers, Jason R. Singhurst and Tim Siegmund, are shown. At the bottom, a dark box contains the text "Plant Ecology with Jason and Tim June 13th, 12pm CST".

#TMNTuesdays

Speakers:
Jason R. Singhurst
and Tim Siegmund

Plant Ecology with Jason and Tim
June 13th, 12pm CST

**The 25th Anniversary
Recertification Pin!**
Representing the variety (there's
a lot!) of Texas Ecosystems.



On the second Tuesday of each month at 12:00pm, the TMN State Office offers an hour-long virtual advanced training event—with fantastic new and returning guest speakers. These *are available to the public* and count for Advanced Training for our CTMN members. Click to [REGISTER](#) for the upcoming webinar, or to [watch recorded webinars](#). Tim Siegmund is a TPWD biologist well-known to our chapter! Mark your calendar for June 13th!

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is hosting **Water Wednesdays**—online webinars on important water topics.

The webinars are free, but you must [register](#).

June 21—Weather: A look at the 2023 Hurricane Season forecast.

July 19—Water Safety: How to avoid water-related hazards

August 16—Aquatic Invasives: plants and critters impacting our fresh and salt water



A vertical schedule for "2023 WATER WEDNESDAYS". It lists topics for each month: March - CoCoRaHS, April - Aquaponics, May - Water Wells, June - Weather, July - Water Safety, and August - Aquatic Invasives. Each topic is accompanied by a small icon. At the bottom are the logos for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Sea Grant.

2023 WATER WEDNESDAYS

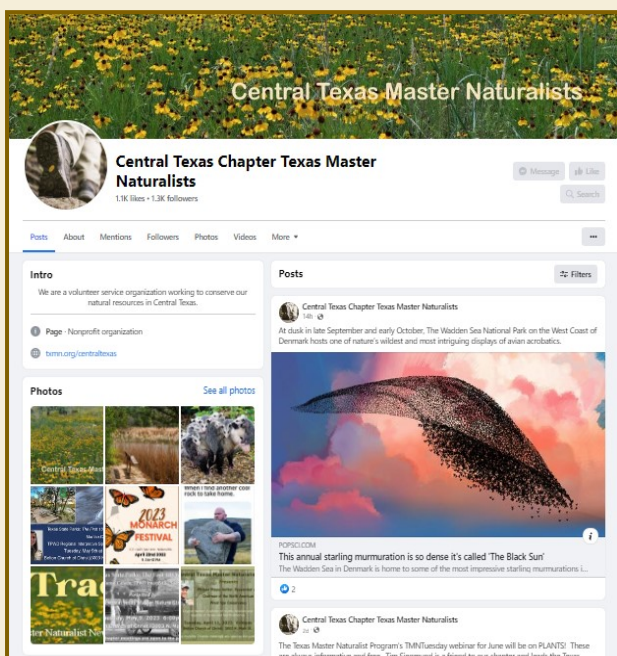
MARCH - CoCoRaHS
APRIL - AQUAPONICS
MAY - WATER WELLS
JUNE - WEATHER
JULY - WATER SAFETY
AUGUST - AQUATIC INVASIVES

SAFETY FIRST

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION
Sea Grant

More More Good to Know...

We have learned our members are walking billboards for our Chapter. From CTMN Volunteer t-shirts in line at HEB, to people stopping to ask why our crew is chopping down trees at Miller Springs Nature Center (they are invasives!) We want our members to know we have information cards you can keep in your vehicle or backpack, and 2 kinds of calling cards (we're not a business) with room to add your name and contact information. Please pick some up at our next chapter meeting to share!



Did you know we have a Facebook page? We have over 1,300 people who follow our page! Jessica Dieter leads a group of members who search out fascinating, disturbing, amazing and sometimes silly nature-related information from reliable sources to pass along to our followers. We also announce our monthly Chapter meeting topics on our Facebook page. We do monitor the "message" function if you have a question or want to pass along an interesting nature-y find. If you haven't already, check us out at the descriptive, but overly long, name of [Central Texas Chapter Texas Master Naturalists](https://www.facebook.com/CentralTexasChapterTexasMasterNaturalists).

Wait? More Good to Know?

Why birds and their songs are good for our mental health



Click image for a story by The Washington Post with birdsongs

(Birders already know this!)

You are going to be seeing this line up at meetings now. It's the Clipboard Gauntlet. We are doing more and more projects and events and doing them at the same time in different places. Yay for all our volunteers! But that means we've got to make sure everything is covered, so we need you to sign up when an activity sounds fun to you. If it doesn't sound fun, leave the spaces for our members who love doing what you don't love. It's great how that works out! But do please sign up when there is a need. There are things to do and places to go...



Stop already...



HOW TO FIGHT FIRE ANTS

By Wizzie Brown,
Program Specialist—
Integrated Pest Management

IN TEXAS

Ways to manage fire ants can be broken into two basic categories- broadcast treatments and individual mound treatments. Individual mound treatments treat one mound at a time and are labor intensive, requiring you to search and find every fire ant mound for treatment and can result in more pesticide being applied to the environment. Broadcast treatments spread product (granular or bait) over a large area using specialized equipment.

Individual mound treatments include pouring boiling water onto the mound, using insecticide mound drenches, spreading insecticide granules over top of the mound and watering them in, sprinkling insecticidal dusts on top of the mound or using bait-formulated insecticides around the perimeter of the mound. Sometimes people like to concoct or recommend home remedies using ingredients from the kitchen, but most of these do not kill fire ant, but cause them to a move their mound 1-2 feet away.

Bait-formulated insecticides most often consist of a defatted corn cob grit coated with soybean oil; the active ingredient- what kills the pest- is dissolved in the soybean oil. The soybean oil is what is attractive and consumed by the fire ants as fire ants do not eat solid food. Worker ants collect bait as a food source and take it back to the colony to share with other ants, including the queen(s). Depending on the active ingredient, bait may cause the queen to either die or be unable to produce viable eggs, leading to gradual death of the colony. When using baits, results may be slower to observe when compared to individual mound treatments, but can provide 80-90% suppression for 12-18 months. A bonus to broadcasting baits is that the amount of active ingredient is generally very small- baits are usually broadcast at a rate of 1-1.5 pounds per acre, which places less chemical into the environment.



With any pesticide treatment, *read and follow all label instructions*. Make sure to water in the pesticide *if the label instructs you to do so*. Failure to water in chemicals when recommended by the label does an inadequate job of killing the ants. Baits should not be watered in or used before a rainfall event; baits will not be picked up by ants if they get wet.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600.

Contributing Authors to this Newsletter





I'm lichen this! Fairfield Lake SP—Zoe Rascoe

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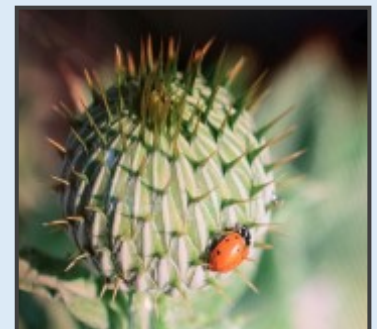
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Contributed Images: Jean Solana, John Burns, John Atkins, Lynn Fleming, Colleen Smith-Fey, Kelly Thornborrow, Debby Bridge, Sally Jordan, Guy Fowler, Jamey Douglass, Lysa Liem, Jake Wilson, Terry Rascoe, Zoe Rascoe.

If you have photos or a story to share, just send me your idea.

Zoe Rascoe trascoe@hot.rr.com

Newsletter contributions count for Volunteer Service hours. Just sayin'.



Thistle with Asian Lady Beetle
Miller Springs Nature Center

Central Texas Master Naturalist Chapter Meetings

Chapter meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at the Belton Church of Christ at 3003 N. Main. Location exceptions is December (holiday party!) and occasional outdoor demonstrations. Meetings include a nature-related program and the public is welcome to attend. Find topic information and locations on our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page.

The Board of Directors meets the 1st Monday of each month (unless it's a holiday) from 11:30am-12:30pm at the AgriLife Extension Building in Belton. Meeting notices will be sent to chapter members with location information and all members are welcome.