

# The Tracker

Central Texas Master Naturalist Newsletter October 2023

*Photo by Carroll Adcock*

## HERE WE GROW AGAIN—GRADUATION!

We are delighted to have trained and graduated 23 new Texas Master Naturalists for 2023! They are enthusiastic, have a great variety of backgrounds and interests, and they jumped in head first in volunteering. On the first day of their training course, we had two volunteer slots to fill at a school outreach event that immediately followed their last class for the day. What the heck, Mary Ann thought—I'll see if any wants to help. Sure enough, two trainees stepped up immediately to fill the gap on their very first day.



All the trainees worked so hard at making it to all the classes and also volunteering for our projects. A lot. They were volunteering a lot. And taking advanced training while they were still getting their initial training. We had more trainees than ever before not only graduate on time, but also had met the criteria for their initial certification (graduates can take up to a year to complete those requirements!) Some have not only completed their initial certification very early, they have given enough volunteer service hours and taken even more advanced training to fully certify at as a Texas Master Naturalist. That's Double Certified and only happens the first year. That's just crazy good.

As we are growing by adding classes graduating 20 or more each year and our members are happily volunteering for things they enjoy doing, our chapter is now able to commit to multiple events on the same day in different parts of Central Texas. That allows us to reach more people and with the wide variety of over 100 active projects, we mean it when we say "you should never feel obligated to volunteer for something that isn't fun for you. It will be fun for someone else!" Congratulations to the 2023 Cohort! Y'all have been making a difference for nature since the very first day of class. To see our graduates and a bit about them, head back to our [April 2023 Tracker, pages 4-6](#). - **Zoe Rascoe, 2004**

# President's Pen

Carroll Adcock, 2020



## National Wildlife Refuge System

I found that there is no clear documentation of when the concept of protecting wildlife through habitat preservation was born, but diaries of early western explorers, pictorial records and reports from journalists and speakers familiar with the west brought about a realization that unrestricted slaughter of wildlife for food, fashion and commerce was destroying a national heritage that could not be replaced.

I initially started out with the intent of giving a condensed version of the history of the many acts, laws, treaties and executive orders over the years leading up to our current state. The resulting document was nearly 5 pages in length and had not even scratched the surface. Fortunately, some conservation efforts started as early as the late 1800's, with a flurry of activity in the early 1900's. With the

establishment of Pelican Island Refuge (Florida) in 1903, Theodore Roosevelt created the [National Wildlife Refuge System](#). While in office, he would go on to create 50 more federal bird reserves and four national game preserves within the refuge system.

(Click [HERE](#) for the history.)



*Great Egret with snack at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge*

*Cont.*



The National Wildlife Refuge system now comprises 588 refuges in the United States. Texas has 21 National refuges and the majority of them are fewer than 300 miles from Bell county. The Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge is scarcely a 90 minute drive from Bell county and comprises nearly 50 square miles of deeply dissected canyons of the Edwards Plateau. It has numerous hiking and birding opportunities and was in part designated to preserve habitat for the black-capped vireo and the golden-cheeked warbler.

The National Wildlife Refuge system oversees the caretaking of at least 700 bird species, 220 mammal species, 250 kinds of reptiles and amphibians, 1,000 species of fish and innumerable invertebrates and plants—some 293 of which are threatened or endangered.

National wildlife refuges have been underfunded since President Teddy Roosevelt created the first refuge in 1903 and Congress refused to appropriate money to manage it. Without adequate funding it is not possible to have the staff, resources, and education programs needed to maintain the lands, eliminate invasive species, and the ability to offer quality educational programs for the public which is so badly needed to help foster ongoing support of our natural areas.

I personally feel I have been remiss and only visited a few of our refuges to date, a couple of them on several occasions. I recently visited Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on the Texas coast north of Corpus Christi—over 115,000 acres in three counties. It attracts over 400 species of birds, including the whooping crane, one of North America's rarest birds. You can also find American alligators, Ridley turtles and many coastal plants.

It is my hope and desire to visit many more in the upcoming years, as the chance to observe flora and fauna in their natural environments abound. I hope that you will commit to visit some of these natural treasures in the near future, and also consider a monetary donation if possible to help preserve them.

***Happy trails!***



*American Alligator at Aransas National Wildlife Refuge*



# Master Naturalists at Work

## Vintage Christian School—Pollinator Garden Installation

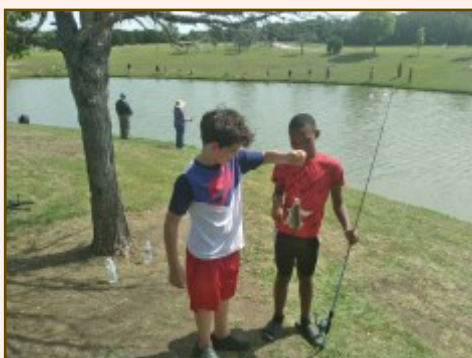
CTMN member Carol Smith will be coordinating projects with Vintage Christian School on a monthly basis this school year. On September 21st, Carol partnered with the Native Plant Society of Texas, Tonkawa Chapter to install raised beds and plant native species while teaching students about the benefits of native plants. NPSOT provided plants and supplies.





# Master Naturalists at Work

## Harker Heights Parks & Rec Fishing Day/Farmer's Market



# Master Naturalists at Work

## - Carol Smith, 2023

Central Texas Master Naturalist, Carol Smith assisted with teaching plant ecology to the GTG Outdoors participants at Mother Neff State Park on June 15 and 22. The GTG Outdoors program is a community non-profit organization aimed at increasing access to outdoor adventure in Central Texas, advancing health equity across underserved populations through inclusive outdoor experiences for the communities in the area. Each of the two days involved a group of 10 youth that will be going into 3rd Grade or to going into 9th grade.



Central Texas Master Naturalists Carroll Adcock, Jamey Douglass, Stephen Schmitz, and Carol Smith participated in the Stewart C. Meyer Harker Heights Public Library's Mini Science Expo on Wednesday, June 28th.

About 200 people attended the Science Expo, of which 156 visited the Master Naturalist tables. The Naturalists taught the visitors about birds, snakes, mammals, and their tracks, as well as answering questions on the Texas Master Naturalist Program.





# Master Naturalists at Work

Help needed  
with Moth Night  
at Mother Neff  
State Park!

## Moth Night Volunteers Needed!



Event Date: Saturday October 7th  
Check In Time: 6:00pm  
Check Out Time: 9:30pm

We need help running the Moth Stations, Scorpion Hunts, Face Painting, Games station and wrangling folks that come into the park. This is our super fun, nighttime event that includes moths, constellations, glow paint and blacklights, come and join in on the fun!

If you would like to Volunteer and rack up some hours then please email Jessica Dieter: [jessycatd@gmail.com](mailto:jessycatd@gmail.com) and I will get you on the list!



## TEXAS STREAM TEAM

– DEBBY BRIDGE, 2022

The Stream Team monitors four different TCEQ sites in Bell County every month at 9:00 am on the following schedule. *See Sunday evening calendar email for contact information.* All are welcome!

**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



# Taking Nature into Schools

## Belton Education Station

– DAVID VESELY, 2023

On July 12<sup>th</sup> Mary Ann Everett and her merry band of Naturalists descended on the Belton Education Station. Their mission was to expose and stimulate the minds of over 53 children (and five adults) with the wonders of our natural world, a most daunting task with 5 to 10-year-olds. Under Mary's leadership and vast experience, the volunteer team (old timers and newbies) quickly organized five rotation stations to accommodate the inquiring minds.



The Mammals & Tracks station was manned by Mary Ann, Juan Anaya, Sam Priori, and Jerry Lewis. The Bird Station was staffed by Lynn Williams and Sue Valdez. Charles Capen (the snake charmer) thrilled his audience with Snakes and Turtles. Our senior angler, Jamey Douglass, amused the children with tall fishing tails and also provided an accounting of those children attending the fest. Finally, the children were thrilled about

Insects (such as Butterflies, Moths, Walking Sticks) by Julie Tanada and David Vesely. The duo literally “on the fly” (no pun intended) and with the Mary Ann's short course on Insectology, managed to convince the kids that female Moths and Walking Sticks are bigger than males. The Capstone of the event was Lynn Williams' presentation on honeybees. Lynn's performance as a real life bee captured everyone's imagination.

The morning was well spent. I think the adult volunteers and children all gained something. The children learned about animals in their immediate environment. The adults were reassured that this generation of kids are just as inquisitive and thought provoking (Asking Why) as their former generations. There's something reassuring when children ask questions or volunteer their knowledge about nature around us, in spite of the constant bombardment of social media, TV and movies. The snake charmer remarked at how many of his students recognized the need for nature's camouflage.

Kudos to Ms. Alana Harbes, BES Director, and her staff. Her children were well organized, well behaved and a pleasure with their insatiable quest for knowledge. The dreaded four hours of swarming kids was delightful; the time just flew by.



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



500 Hours!

**Tina Atkins (2016) reached 500 Volunteer Service Hours!! Tina has volunteered at many events and is also a log-dragging pro on workdays. Congratulations, Tina!!**



250 Hours!

**Gail Wilson (2019) reached 250 Volunteer Service Hours on a variety of projects! Congratulations, Gail!**



250 Hours!

**Andi Klein (2019) reached 250 Volunteer Service Hours! She's a regular at outreach events with kiddos and was our VMS Admin—that one really adds up. Congratulations, Andi!**



250 Hours!

**Guy Fowler (2021) reached 250 Volunteer Service Hours! He's done outreach events, helped run our NestWatch project at Miller Springs and provided Tracker images & articles. Congratulations, Guy!**

# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Catherine Schmitz (2022) receives Initial Certification



Cassie Daley (2022) and Carol Smith, Charles Capen and April Hignojos (all 2023) receive their Initial Certifications



Michael Hermans, Santi Duncan and Randy King (all 2023) receive Initial Certifications



Cristy Wade and Jim Wade (both 2023) receive Initial Certifications



Kelly Thornborrow, Joan Ingram, Jason Carrico and Jake Wilson (all 2023) receive Initial Certifications



Lysa Liem (2023) receives her Initial Certification



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



2023 Recertifications go to Debby Bridge, Letti Lim-Kosel, and Charlie Langsdale (all 2022), Bill Abright (2016), and Louann Hight (2010)



2023 Recertifications go to Andrea Liles and Susan Schneider (both 2020), Lynn Fleming (2004), Jessica Dieter and Jenna Chappell (both 2019)

# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



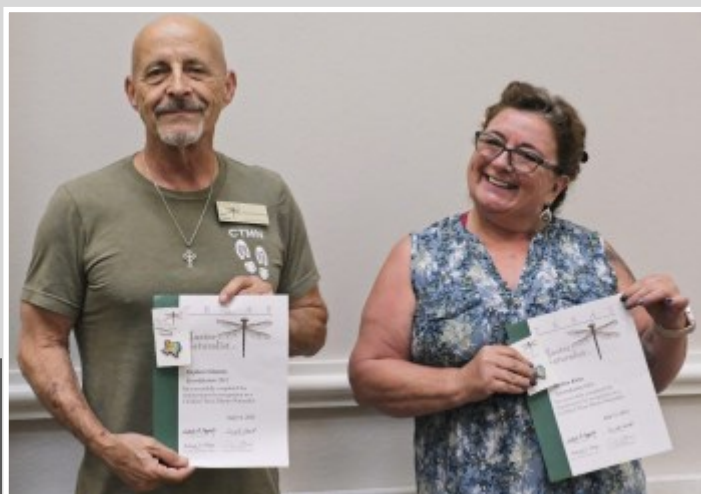
Recertifications go to John Burns (2018), Gail Wilson (2019), Wade Matthews (2015) & Bruce Polikoff (2015)



Michael Belcher (2021)  
receives 2023 Recertification



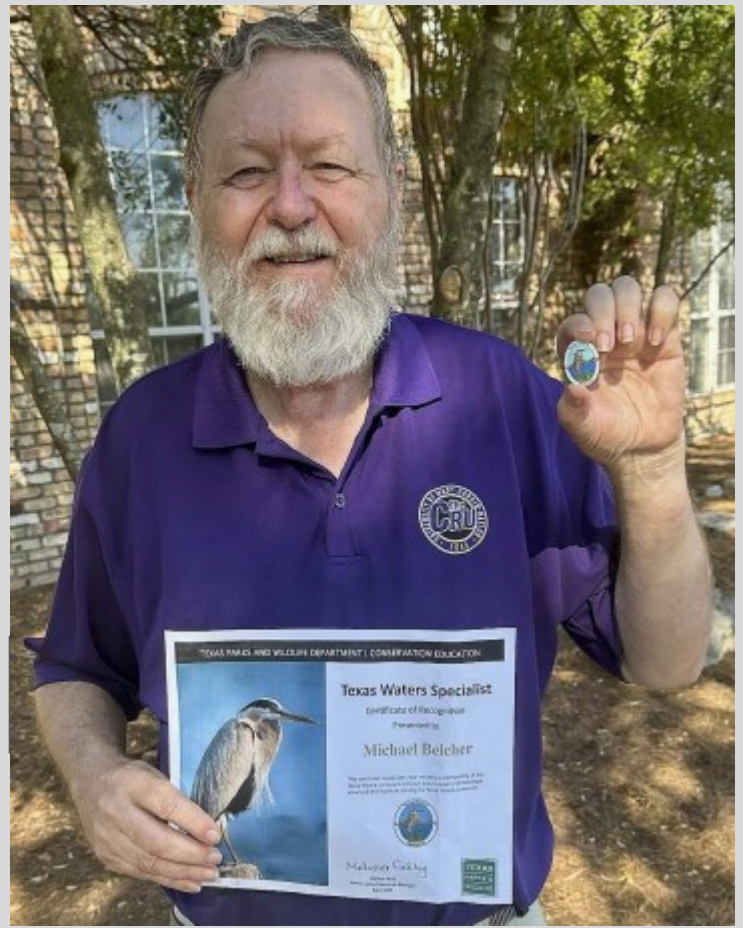
Zoe Rascoe (2004) receives her 2023  
Recertification—she didn't get a shot of that.



Stephen Schmitz (2020) &  
Andi Klein (2019) receive  
2023 Recertification



# MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**Larry Turner & Michael Belcher (both 2021) became Texas Waters Specialists! Larry and Michael both on volunteer our Texas Stream Team.**

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

# CHAPTER MEETINGS

## - Kelly Thornborrow, 2023

The July chapter meeting featured biologists Charlie and Chelsea Plimpton from the Fort Cavazos (formerly Fort Hood) Adaptive and Integrative Management (AIM) office.

Charlie discussed some avian research projects they have conducted in the grassland of the training area. One project is Monitoring Owls and Nightjars (MOON) that started in 2020. Charlie

explained the point counts and vocalisation recordings they conduct and an interesting modification of conducting counts early in the morning to avoid helicopter noise from the training area. The data they record helps them understand the population of the species, highlight any data trends, and identify potential impacts these species may require on troop movement in the future.

Chelsea focused on pollinator programs within AIM. She noted Monarch butterflies are a flagship species and there is potential for threatened or endangered species designation in the future. In 2024 the USFWS will determine if they deem monarch butterflies to be endangered. Some of the AIM pollinator research includes programs with Monarch Joint Venture and Monarch Watch. One program with Monarch Watch includes a monarch tagging program from September to October. They have tagged over 10,500 monarchs. Like the avian research, the pollinator research is used to help better understand the populations and impact on-post but also contribute to national projects like that of Monarch Watch. For more information about the programs Charlie and Chelsea work on at AIM check out their [Facebook Page](#).



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## - Zoe Rascoe, 2004

Jamey Douglass, CTMN Vice President and retired NRCS Soil Scientist, presented “Soils, From the Surface Down” at our August meeting. He described soil profiles in Texas and noted there are 1318 soils series in our big state. No wonder I can’t remember them. We learned about soil taxonomy (that’s naming, describing and classifying). There is ent, ert, ult, ust, ox, hapl, udic (at least that one sounds like a word) and burnt (which is a word). There are a lot of characteristics of soil that can be described to differentiate between various soils. It was noted in the 2022 update to NRCS’s Keys to Soil Taxonomy that “many changes are intended to make Soil Taxonomy more intelligible to those who use soil surveys for conservation planning and land use purposes.” That’s *exactly* what Jamey was trying to do for us! “More intelligible” is always good.







# Mother Neff State Park

1680 TX Hwy-236, Moody

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

## Pocket Prairie Restoration by Boy Scout Troop

Back in February of 2023 Lee Moomaw, scoutmaster for Killeen BSA Troop 287, asked for help from Central Texas Master Naturalists for conservation projects at Mother Neff State Park. In April, 20 scouts and adult leaders came to Mother Neff and pulled a whole lot of bastard cabbage, learned how to find monarch caterpillars, and took a general hiking tour of the park led by Jean Solana.



Their newest conservation project is a “pocket prairie restoration” near the prairie pond at Mother Neff. Carly Aulicky, native prairie expert from the Native Prairie Association of Texas, sent guidelines for the project. The Scout-in-Charge is Isabella Lawson and by the way, half of the troop members are girls!

The first task was to clear a patch of invasive, non-native King Ranch Bluestem grass. Mother Neff rangers had previously mowed the prairie patch and provided a water tank on September 2<sup>nd</sup>. The troop, consisting of 8



adults, 5 boys and 6 girls of all ages, watered the patch and covered it with heavy duty clear plastic sheeting, securing it with plastic stakes. This process, called “solarization”, is the best organic way to knock back the KR Bluestem, taking advantage of the Texas heat to cook the unwanted grass and seed. Isabella made signs explaining the project and put them in place. Next the troop collected a big bag of dried wildflower seeds, primarily Bee Balm and Blanketflower, which will be planted in November.

The next phase will occur on Saturday, November 11<sup>th</sup> when the troop returns to Mother Neff to transplant native grasses and plant wildflowers seeds at the site. This is the first use of this restoration process at Mother Neff and it is expected there will be more to come. A prescribed burn is expected soon as well.

# Mother Neff State Park *Cont.*

## Fall 2023 Volunteer Opportunities

**Workdays:** Every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday from 9am-12pm. Tools will be provided. Activities may include trail clearing, transplanting native grass or clearing invasive plant species. Contact Jean Solana at [jmsolana76@gmail.com](mailto:jmsolana76@gmail.com) We will have our first workday for Fall on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Meet in the Headquarters parking lot.

**Moth Night:** October 7<sup>th</sup> 7-9 pm Discover the night life at Mother Neff State Park. Contact Jessica Dieter at [jessycatd@googlemail.com](mailto:jessycatd@googlemail.com)

**Fall Fest:** Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm. Come help celebrate 100 years of Texas Parks with nature hikes and education, children's activities, Dutch-oven cooking, birthday cake and more! We need lots of CTMN volunteers – contact Jean Solana at [jmsolana76@gmail.com](mailto:jmsolana76@gmail.com)



TEXAS STATE PARKS  
100 YEARS

Fall Fest 2023  
Mother Neff State Park  
November 4<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm

A fun fall celebration will take place featuring nature hikes, storybook trails, children's activities, demonstrations, and much more.

Free admission during the event from 10:00am to 2:00pm

Address: 1921 Park Road 14, Moody, TX. 76557  
For questions, please contact the park at (254) 853-2389

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TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

TEXAS STATE PARKS  
100 YEARS

16



Discover the night life @ Mother Neff State Park

Free event with no port entrance fee! Gate opens at 6:45 pm

Moth Night

Mother Neff State Park  
1921 Park Rd. 14  
Moody, TX 76557

October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023  
7:00-9:00 PM

National Moth Week is held worldwide celebrating moths. Everyone everywhere can become a Citizen Scientist and contribute scientific data about moths.

MOTHER NEFF STATE PARK  
1921

TEXAS  
Master Naturalist

TEXAS  
PARKS & WILDLIFE

<http://txmn.org/centraltexas/central-texas-moth-night>





## Not hot yet!

The June workday was the beginning of warmer weather. It wasn't too hot to get some work done and



we had a good team of 10 volunteers. The volunteers for the day were (left to right) Bae Liem, Miles Liem, Lysa Liem, April Hignojo, Bill Novakoski, Wade Matthews, Michael Hermans, Jim Wade, David Vesely, and myself (John) – the photographer. Two guys picked up litter and the rest of the team headed down the trail to just above Green Pond to remove invasive plants. Jim Wade (below) brought his chainsaw and really

got after it cutting larger Ligustrum. The rest of us brought the puller bears and loppers to work on the many smaller Ligustrum. My sidekick (Miles) and I followed Jim with a puller bear to get the smaller plants while Jim cut the bigger trees. The others were working in a low area that was very thick with smaller plants. Everyone made a big difference on this last good workday before the hot summer weather.

I have a plan to keep working in the same area we have worked for the last few months and eventually meet back up to the area where we started working 4 years ago. The goal is to get this done by this coming Winter or possibly even this Fall.

In March 2019 we started this task of removing invasive plants from Miller Springs Nature Center. In reflecting on that time, I remember thinking we will work forever and not make much of a difference. Honestly, we will never totally win the battle against the invasive plants, but on the positive side we have made a huge difference. We have made it possible for native plants to have a fighting chance and they are thriving in many of the areas we have worked.

*Cont.*





# Miller Springs Nature Center *cont.*

The July workday saw very HOT temperatures. Even with the hot temperatures we had ten trooper volunteers. Nine of us (left to right), Bill Novakoski, David Vesely, John Atkins, Michael Hermans, Lysa Liem, Miles Liem, Bae Liem, Ben Clement, and myself (not pictured!), took off down the trails to pick up litter. Even



with just walking and picking up litter we were all very hot by the end of the day. Keller Matthews was the tenth volunteer and he had noticed several trees down near the Belton side of the Nature Center and he wanted to get them cut and off the trails. The big group never met up with Keller, but he was successful in getting the trees cleared as you can see from his photos below.

In August Bill Novakoski will be taking my place leading the team. I imagine the weather will still be very hot so he will make the call as to what will be done. Thanks in advance Bill! *(Right: David and Bill with Puller Bear; Below Right: Gayfeather on the Prairie)*





# ENTOMOLOGY TRAINING

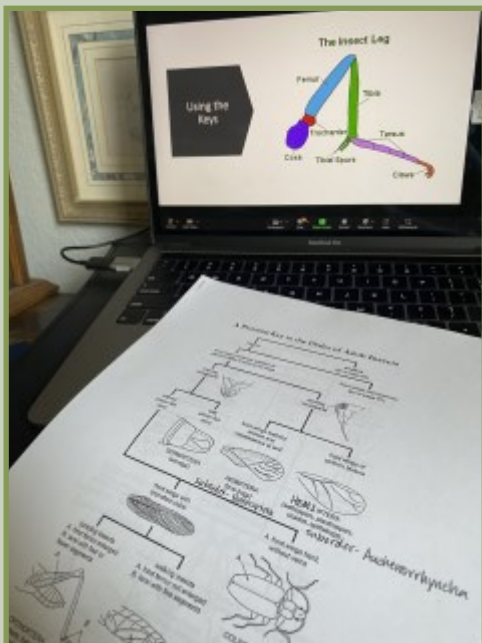


– KELLY THORNBORROW, 2023

This year's Master Naturalist and Master Gardener Entomology Advanced Training class started the beginning of September. This class occurs by Zoom every Tuesday and Thursday will run through the end of October. The webinars cover a variety of topics like beneficial insects, ornamental integrative pest management, butterfly 101, medical and veterinary entomology and more. It is a great way to dive into entomology topics and provides a variety of engaging speakers.

As a Master Naturalist a lot of my favorite activities have included bugs of some sort, mostly butterflies and moths.

For those of y'all who know me, you may have seen me always looking for caterpillars or finding butterflies. A few have been known to even catch a ride on me during Adopt-a-Loop activities. Also, as a personal hobby I raise a variety of pet moths. These moths include silk worms, polyphemus moths, cecropia moths, and promethea moths. We've even recently invested in a mini fridge to help keep the bugs I store in the fridge away from the food. It's a bonus that it also gives me more space for the gourmet mushrooms I grow too.



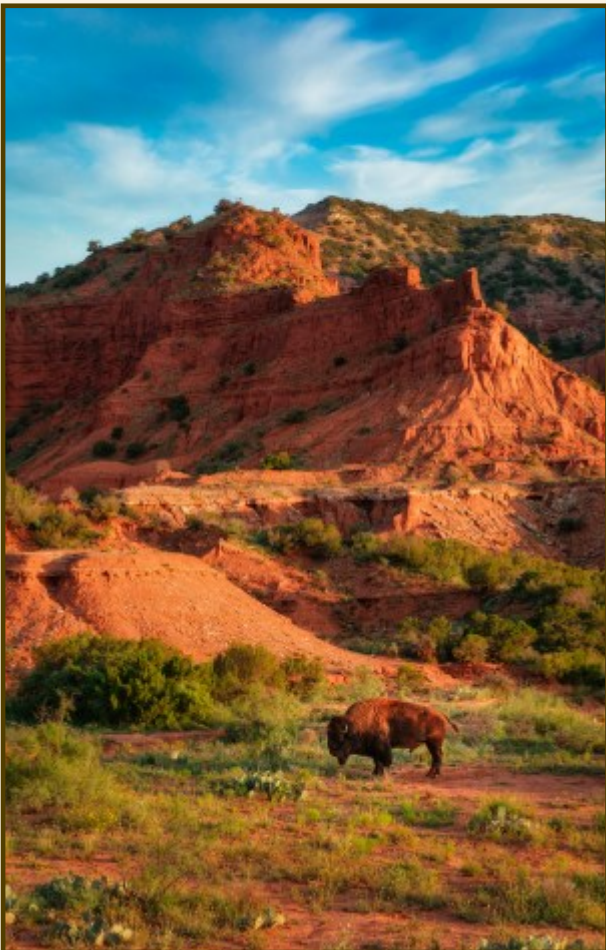
In the last few months since joining this chapter, opportunities like the Monarch Festival on Earth Day, NABA Butterfly Count, and various Adopt-A-Loops, I have had a chance to volunteer with topics relating to the insects that I love. The entomology AT was a great way to extend upon this and learn more about the insects that have fascinated me so much. It builds upon the seminar we had in our initial training while not being too complicated or technical to follow. We are currently only about halfway through the classes and so far they have provided a brief sampler to a variety of entomology topics. Continuing with advanced training for a specific interest, entomology, has been a great way to learn more about a topic I already love, while helping me to learn more and understand Texas-specific species that I may see while volunteering as a Master Naturalist.

# Caprock Canyon State Park

– ZOE RASCOE, 2004

Some call Caprock Canyon State Park “Palo Duro Lite” but that doesn’t do justice to the dramatic canyons that drop off the edge of the high plains of north Texas.

Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway is located along the eastern edge of the Llano Estacado in north Texas, about 100 miles southeast of Amarillo. The state park is 15,314 acres in size, making it the third-largest state park in Texas. It is home to the Goodnight Texas State Bison Herd, rescued in 1878 from the remnant of the great southern bison herd of North America.



Prior to the “great slaughter” by hunters in the 1870’s, those bison are thought to have numbered as many as 60 million. The remnant herd is carefully managed at Caprock Canyon State Park where they roam free and are easy to encounter.

In early June we traveled 400 miles to the State Park, pulling our little Casita travel trailer, to hike, ride mountain bikes and photograph the canyons, its critters, and flowering plants. It’s a beautifully rugged area with trails ranging from easy to challenging whether you are in boots or on bikes. There is not much lodging near the State Park. A quick google search yields 25 places to stay; all but 2 are 30-45 miles from the park. The 2 that are closer are “rustic” B&B’s (call for availability). Groceries and eateries are few, but there is a great hardware store in Quitaque that has a lot of what you need. Oh, and you need to know that it’s pronounced “Kitty-Quay”. Says so right on the town’s Welcome sign. **Cont.**

*Photos by Terry Rascoe*



# Caprock Canyon State Park *cont.*

There are about 25 miles of trails inside the park and another 65 miles of “rails to trails” just outside the park boundaries. TPWD acquired a donation of 65 miles of a 1920’s era railroad right-of-way that runs from the top of the Caprock Escarpment on the west to Estelline in the Red River Valley on the eastern end. The trail goes through three counties, a 200 foot-long bridge, and the 742 foot-long Clarity Tunnel, home to Mexican free-tailed bats. We prefer single track climbing trails on our mountain bikes, so did not take the tunnel trail—railroad beds are never steep!

There is a easy hike from the road on Eagle Point Trail to a natural bridge (see photo right) over a ravine. You wouldn’t notice if not highlighted by the sign. We also made the steep climb to Haynes Ridge from the valley of the canyon for a 360° view for many miles.



*Natural Bridge on Eagle Point Trail*



For another kind of fun,

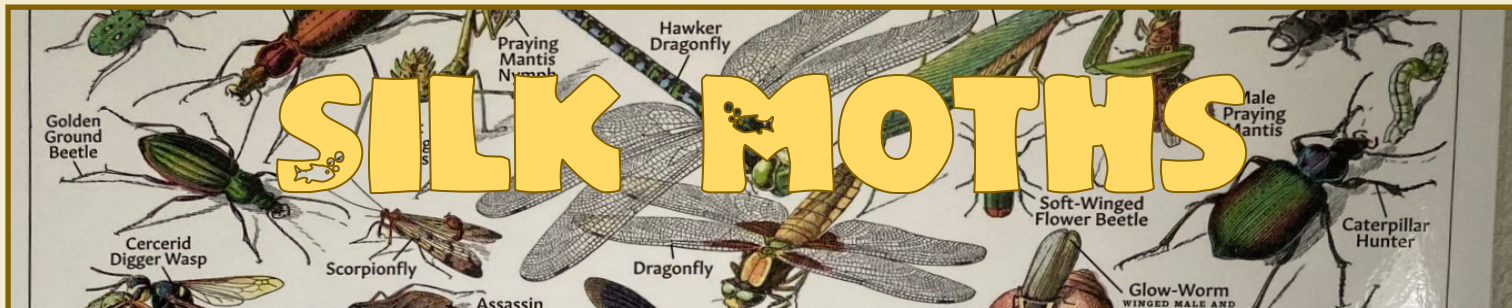
there is a huge prairie dog town right in the camping area of the park. We were trying to be quiet to catch some photos, but when people started walking on the sidewalks and talking and laughing, that’s when all the critters came out to see what was going on! They were everywhere!!

Caprock Canyon State Park is a great nature getaway. Put it on your list!



*Sunset at South Prong Trail*





## Raising Giant Silk Moths

– KELLY THORNBORROW, 2023

Moths and butterflies are some of my favourite things, but more specifically I love saturniids. Saturniidae is a family within Lepidoptera that include species like luna moths and other giant silk moths. This past spring I decided I wanted to try raising giant silk moths to learn more about them first hand. After a deep dive reading about caring for silk moths I took the plunge and ordered a few different species from breeders and educational supply companies. Although a few of the species are found in Texas, these moths were bred to live in captivity, not for release.

Due to the time of year with the breeding cycles I ordered these moths as pupae instead of as caterpillars. This meant that the breeders had already overwintered the pupae so the moths were preparing to emerge from their cocoons. I ordered three polyphemus, one promethea, and one cecropia moth cocoon. Each day I sprayed the cocoons with water until about two weeks later the first polyphemus moth



*Polyphemus moth cocoon. When I unpacked this cocoon you could lightly feel the moth shaking inside as a defense mechanism.*

emerged. One morning the cocoon began to shake and within a few hours the moth had bored its way out and hoisted itself up to slowly unfurl its wings. Later that week, the other polyphemus and promethea moths emerged. About a month later, the cecropia moth finally emerged. Getting to see and handle these moths was an incredible experience for me since I never can seem to find any of these species outdoors. The moths even seemed pretty content to just hang out on me, some days I closed my office door and just let them chill on my shoulder.



*Top: promethea moth, Others: polyphemus moths*

**Cont.**





Adult moths of these species do not have mouths, so they did not need to feed, I simply regularly gave them a chance to fly around free from the large pop-up mesh laundry bucket I kept them in. In the wild these species typically only live about a week or so, essentially to breed and then expire. Unfortunately, there were no breeding pairs with my moths, so I was not able to get viable eggs to raise a new generation. Even though I was not able to raise a new generation, this experience gave me an even greater appreciation of moths and even helped me find a new hobby in moth rearing.

If you are lucky, you may see polyphemus or cecropia moths here in Central Texas! Cecropia caterpillars like to feed on plants like ash, birch, box elder, alder, elm, and maple. Polyphemus caterpillars like to feed on things like elm, birch, willow, sycamore, maple, and even rose bushes. If you are travelling East any time soon you may even get a chance to see Promethea moths that feed on sassafras, sweetbay, and lilacs as caterpillars. As we move toward the Fall these moths will begin emerging from their pupae and you too may get to observe these beautiful moths.



*Cecropia Moth*

# Good to Know...



## **MOTH NIGHT**

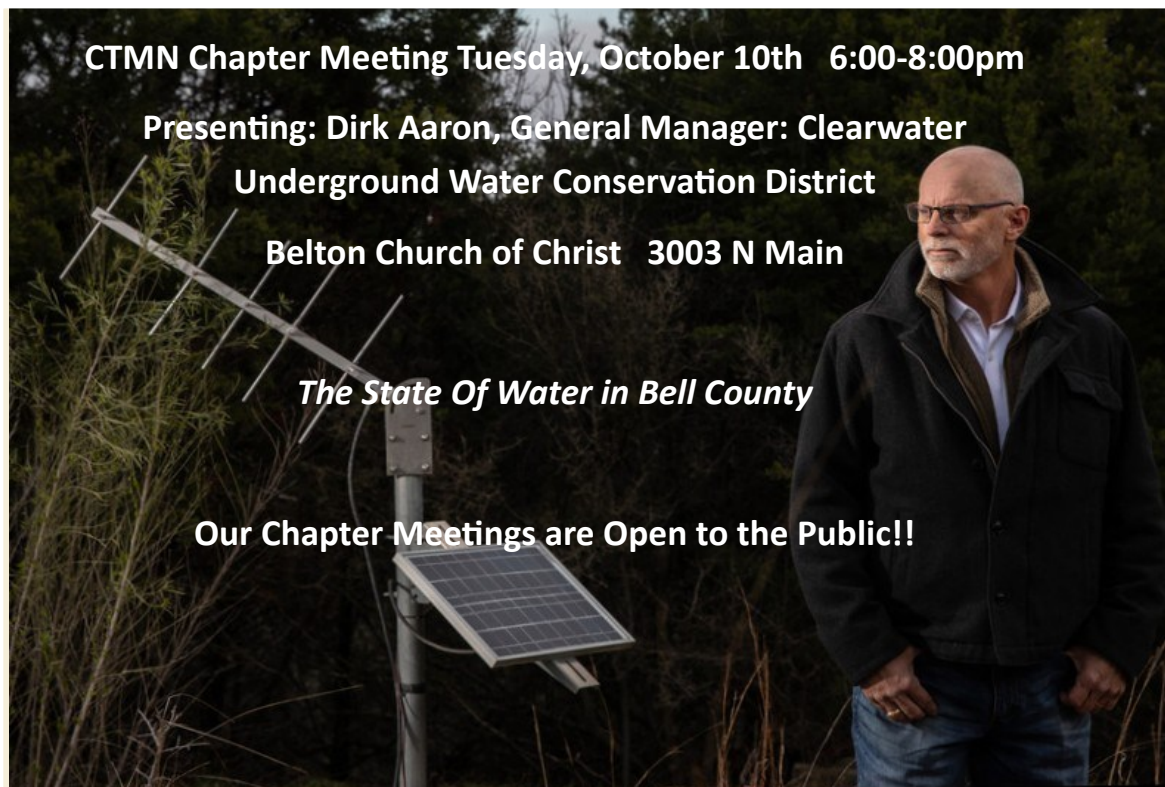
**Saturday, October 7th**

**Mother Neff State Park**

**7:00-9:00pm**

**CENTRAL TEXAS MASTER NATURALISTS**

In partnership with Mother Neff State Park, we will have Moth Attracting Stations, Scorpion Hunts with black light, face painting , games and night sky viewing. This is an annual event for our chapter and a great way to enjoy an October evening!



**CTMN Chapter Meeting Tuesday, October 10th 6:00-8:00pm**

**Presenting: Dirk Aaron, General Manager: Clearwater  
Underground Water Conservation District**

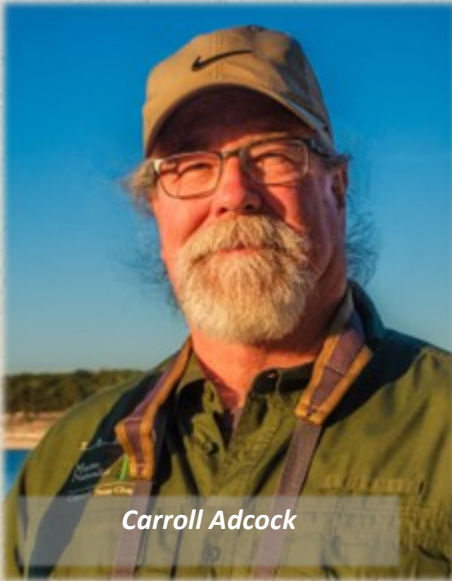
**Belton Church of Christ 3003 N Main**

***The State Of Water in Bell County***

**Our Chapter Meetings are Open to the Public!!**



# Contributing Authors to this Newsletter







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**2023 Class Rep:** Carol Smith

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### ***Newsletter Volunteers***

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**If you have photos or a story to share, just send me your idea. Newsletter contributions count for Volunteer Service hours. Just sayin'.**

**Zoe Rascoe**

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## **Central Texas Master Naturalist Chapter Meeting**

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 are 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.