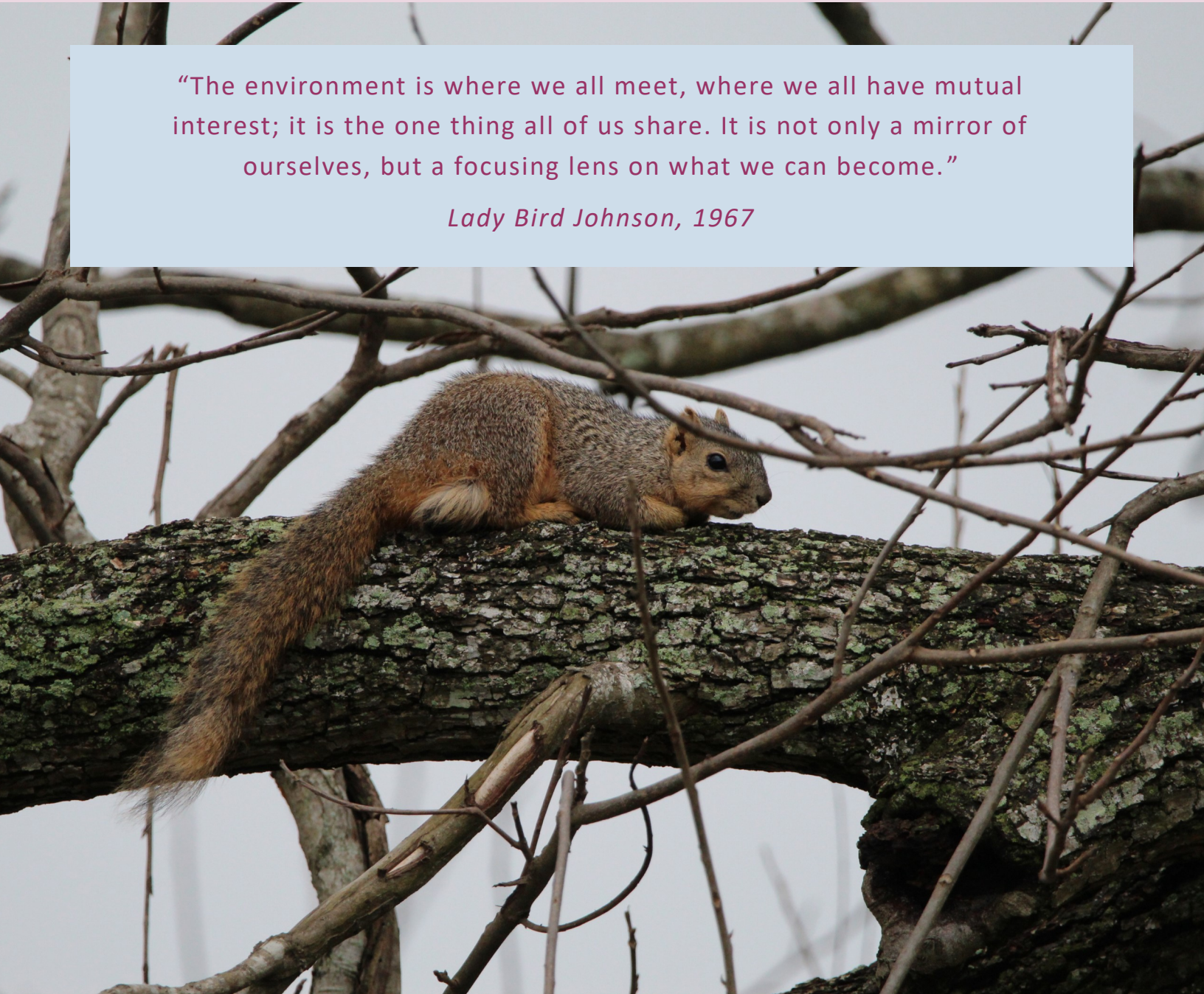


Coastal Prairie Chapter **Courier**

February 2023 — Volume 11 Issue 2

"The environment is where we all meet, where we all have mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become."

Lady Bird Johnson, 1967



Inside This Issue

TMNCPC Helps Make 1st Fort Bend CBC a Success!

Interview with the Bat Lady: Mary Warwick, TMNCPC

For the Love of Seabourne: Opportunities for Chapter Volunteers



We are a group of trained volunteers who share our appreciation and knowledge of nature with the community through outreach, education, and conservation/restoration projects.

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ON THE COVER

Fox squirrel resting on the limb of a pecan tree located in Fulshear, Texas

(Photo by Robin Wainikainen)

EDITOR TEAM

—Cindy Wainikainen, February
Co-Editor, Cindy@CoastalPrairie.org

Have a great story for next month's issue? Submit by **FEBRUARY 25th**.

—Shannon Westveer, March Co-Editor, Shannon@CoastalPrairie.org

President's Message

by Terri Hurley, TMNCPC President



Seabourne Needs You and You and You! Now is the time for all good members to come to the aid of their chapter!

We need your help to create a new paradigm for leadership at our signature project at the Seabourne Creek Nature Park (SCNP). Our outgoing SCNP director, Jerry Trenta, has done a fabulous job leading the way on the completion of many important projects out there. But now Jerry is looking for a replacement team. He has a great plan for the new leadership there. Jerry is to be commended for working hard to locate and train the new leaders.

Members, Seabourne is vital to the success of our chapter. It's our bread and butter and without it, we would not be able to make anywhere near the important contribution to the protection of Texas' natural resources that we've been able to make so far. Jerry and his team are part of a long line of volunteers who have been living up to the challenge of converting a cotton farm into a natural habitat important to the animals, plants and human visitors that spend part of their lives there. It's made our chapter the envy and a role model for other chapters. We get asked to give tours to other chapter visitors, schools and scouts all the time and they express sincere admiration for what we have done. If you really want to make a contribution to the protection of our natural resources, Seabourne is it. Being part of the new leadership team at Seabourne means that our work and successes can continue. For these reasons, I ask that each of you join somewhere on the new leadership team at Seabourne. Keep an eye out for SignUp Geniuses or send me or Jerry an email or send a DM on Slack.

Training class. Our Spring 2023 class is full! Lauren DeShazo has done a wonderful job getting everything organized. She has scheduled an exciting lineup of presenters and field sessions. Many chapter members have signed up to serve as hosts and co-hosts for each of these classes. There are still a few hosting spots left so if you haven't volunteered already, please visit the SignUp Genius posting.

Mentors. Mentoring our trainees keeps them engaged in our chapter and improves the chances of them following through to initial certification. The Spring 2023 class still needs a few more mentors. Contact our Membership Directors, [Jan](#) and [Kevin](#) Kolk, to sign up. Mentoring 101 sessions will be scheduled soon.

Continued, [next Page](#)

February Chapter Program: Thursday, February 2, 7 PM *"Landscaping to Attract Butterflies – Presented by Elizabeth White-Olsen"*

By Jan Peterson, TMNCPC Programs Director



Photo source: TMNCPC [website](#)

Along with many species of wildlife in our country, populations of Texas Gulf Coast butterflies are increasingly threatened by habitat loss and other factors. In this presentation, we will learn what butterflies need to survive and complete their life cycle, as well as ways we can help them in our own yards. Join us for an inspiring and illuminating journey into the magical lives of one of nature's most wondrous creatures, the butterfly.

Elizabeth White-Olsen is the co-founder of **GO Native Landscaping, LLC**, along with her husband, renowned naturalist Glenn Olsen. Through GO Native's on-site consultations, custom landscape designs, and classes, she and her husband have supported hundreds of homeowners, business owners, municipal employees and apartment managers choose sustainable, bird-and-

butterfly-friendly landscapes. She has achieved a Native Plant Society of Texas Landscape Certification Levels 1 and 2 and is currently in training to become a Texas Master Naturalist through the Gulf Coast chapter. Elizabeth holds two Master of Fine Arts in Writing degrees. She has published articles on habitat restoration for the Houston Chronicle and is the author of the poetry collection, *Given Words*.

Coastal Prairie Chapter **programs are free** and open to the **public**. [February's](#) is being held at the **Bud O'Shieles Community Center** located 1402 Band Road, Rosenberg, Texas. This is a change of location from January's program. Please plan to **arrive at 6:30 PM** for refreshments and social time; the **1-hour program begins at 7:00 PM**.

The [Texas Master Naturalist](#) program is sponsored by [Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#) and [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#).

[TMNCPC members in attendance should record their Advanced Training (AT) hours under "AT: Chapter Meeting-Coastal Prairie" and the VSP hours for the business meeting under "Chapter Business: Chapter Meeting."]



President's Message cont'd

by Terri Hurley, TMNCPC President

Continued from [previous Page](#)

Public Speakers at our Programs. We are implementing a new process for non-members who wish to speak during the business meeting at our monthly programs. From now on, they will fill out an online request form in advance, available [here](#). We will then review their request and schedule it as appropriate.

Membership Minute

By Jan and Kevin Kolk, TMNCPC Membership Co-Directors



Congratulations! to our numerous certification and milestone achievers. Way to go!

Initial Certification

Monique Smith — 2022 Spring



2022 Recertification

(96 members recertified)

Diane Russell — 2011

Cyndi Scott — 2020 Spring

Bayard Nicklow — 2022 Fall

Linda Rude — 2012



2023 Recertification

Randolph Watson — 2022 Fall

Shannon Westveer — 2019



250 Hour Milestone

Randolph Watson — 2022 Fall



2500 Hour Milestone

Susan Walther — 2011



Chapter update:

Celebrate! For the first time, in our chapter's history, we have provided more than 20,000 hours of volunteer service in a single year!!! **20,655** hours to be exact, as well as **2,610** AT hours. *CPC members are an incredible group of dedicated, focused individuals!*

YouTube

Be sure to follow our channel:

[YOUTUBE @TMNCoastalPrairie](#)

Check out our latest video [Birth of a Pocket Prairie](#)



New VSP/AT Opportunity Spotlight:

TMNCPC held their first Texas Water Specialist study group on January 23rd, 2023. This group is on their way to becoming Certified Texas Water Specialists. Interested in joining? TMNCPC members can check out the [#team-texas-water-specialists](#) Slack channel to join.

Volunteer Service — February Highlights

By Cindy Wainikainen, TMNCPC Co-Editor



This year is shaping up to be a big year for TMNCPC and the members are stepping up to the plate.

February is the month of love and what better way to express our love of the outdoors than through volunteering! We have some exciting VSP opportunities this month, so be sure to read the weekly bulletin and check the website to stay up-to-date.

Signature Project. Seabourne Creek Nature Park (SCNP), Rosenberg: 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM Wednesdays and 1st and 3rd Saturdays which fall on February 4th and 18th

Signature Project. Monthly Bird Hike at SCNP, Rosenberg: 8:00 AM – 10:30 1st Wednesday of the month (October through May, OFF Summers) which falls on February 1st

FEBRUARY 2023


Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<u>1</u>	2	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
5	6	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	9	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u> 
12	13	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	16	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>
19	20	<u>21</u>	<u>22</u>	23	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>
26	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>				

Ongoing Project. Houston Museum of Natural Science in Sugar Land: 10:30 AM — 3:00 PM 2nd and 4th Saturdays—February 11th and 25th

Ongoing Project. Coastal Prairie Conservancy Indiangrass Preserve, Katy: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Tuesdays, Fridays, and 2nd Saturdays of each month which fall on February 3rd, 7th, 10th, 14th, 17th, 18th, 21st, 24th, and 28th

Ongoing Project. Houston Audubon's Bird Survey @ Archbishop Joseph A: Fiorenza Park, Houston: 7:30 AM – 12:00 PM 4th Monday which falls on February 27th

Ongoing Project. Lawther-Deer Park Prairie, Deer Park: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM 4th Saturday of each month which falls on February 25th

 ***New this Month*** [Memorial Park Land Bridge and Prairie Project](#): February 11th, 7:30 AM—6:00pm

As you become aware of new volunteer opportunities, have questions, or are unsure how to record service hours, please message [#help-vsp](#) channel or [@Johanna](#) on Slack or [email](#).

THANK YOU to the VSP Committee members Joanie Havlick, Terri Hurley, Charris Powers, Shannon Westveer, and Lynn Trenta.

Before arriving to serve, check our [website calendar](#) for last minute changes, cancelations, or other information before departing.

<https://txmn.org/coastal/events/month/2023-02/>

For the Love of Seabourne: Opportunities for Chapter Volunteers

By Jerry and Lynn Trenta, TMNCPC Seabourne Creek Nature Park



As we start a new year at Seabourne Creek Nature Park, we thought it might be appropriate to reflect on the why, what and how of our relationship with the Park. Why are we there? What are we doing there? How are we doing it?



TMNCPC members “bumping up” native plants

We are there because our chapter entered into a partnership with the City of Rosenberg to develop a park that provides the community a place to experience nature. While many other TMN chapters do similar work for their communities, ours came with an annual \$50,000 grant and the responsibility to design and install features in the park that enable the park visitors to see, learn about and enjoy the natural world around us. Many, many visitors to the park have commented that we have succeeded in that task. But there is a lot more that we can do to keep and improve the park which has become a valuable part of community life in Fort Bend County.

What we are doing there is helping to maintain and improve the park in cooperation with the City of Rosenberg’s Parks & Rec Department. The city maintains the bulk of the park while the chapter focuses on providing visitors opportunities to take a closer look at the natural world available in the park - the birds in the sanctuary; the plants in the gardens; the trees in the forest; the birds, butterflies, bees, bats and other living things that share the world around us.



TMNCPC members at the Seabourne prairie harvesting seeds

How are we doing it this year? That is the \$50,000 question we need to answer. There are many parts to the ‘how’ we must provide. Some are known from previous years – continue maintaining and improving the Native Plant Garden, Butterfly Garden, Bird Sanctuary, Bird Blind, and Prairie. Some are new – construct a Bird Viewing Platform on the Wetlands

For the Love of Seabourne: Opportunities for Chapter Volunteers cont'd

By Jerry and Lynn Trenta, TMNCPC Seabourne Creek Nature Park



Continued from [previous Page](#)

South Shore; help create an Arboretum/Picnic area. But to get the most out of our \$50,000 effort, we need volunteers and task leaders and an organization designed to help make their job easy.

This is where our chapter members come into play. We thank each and every one who has volunteered over the years and everyone who has signed up to help this year. We all work together in the park and can see that our work is appreciated when people come out and enjoy the results of all of the many projects we have completed. We also enjoy the camaraderie we have with each other at the park. It is one of the best ways to get to know each other. When



TMNCPC members after completing roosting racks

we volunteer, we can also enjoy nature along with the park visitors.

We are looking at an expanded organization this year with dedicated teams of volunteers to handle the various tasks needed to accomplish our mission at the park. Help is needed in several areas, among them Signage and Outreach, Volunteer Communication, Arboretum Projects, and Project Management.



TMNCPC members at Seabourne Nature Park

If you have not considered volunteering at the park, please check out the SignUp Genius located in the VSP Slack Channel to see what the different teams are doing. You can also contact our VSP Director, [Johanna DeYoung](#), or just come out to the park on one of our Wednesday or Saturday Volunteer days for a quick tour of the many different volunteer opportunities the park has to offer. We look forward to seeing you at the park!

In Our Backyards: Light Stewardship in Winter

By Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC



Missouri violet, Photo by Shannon Westveer

Transforming natural ecosystems into suburban ones affects more than just wildlife. Master Naturalists have learned this from our co-sponsor experts, and we work hard connecting Texans to our local ecosystem and teaching ecoregion importance.

Many restore prairie pockets to provide for local insect and animal wildlife. When mine went in early 2019, I had no idea what the prairie really meant in terms of services it provides for people too. Master Naturalist training and local experts on the coastal prairie ecosystem in Fort Bend County, where I live, taught me about grasses' ability to slow and filter flood waters, store water in the soil, and sequester and hold carbon deeply and permanently within the soil – no additional engineering needed.

For wildlife and for people, winter is a time for rest. Pristine lawns with exotic landscapes remind us how important it is to steward rather than manage our small pieces of land. Those who can afford it hire lawn crews who will continue to mow and cut and bag yard waste for the curb through the dormant winter months, unaware of the wildlife value also lost to their land. They spend hundreds of dollars with a goal of keeping things tidy rather than understanding and appreciating the ecosystem which supports all of us.

A naturalist keeps things tidy with a rake and a broom. He knows the requirement of decaying leaves to the gray hairstreak butterfly larvae who consume them. He values the life cycle of the firefly which depends upon that leaf litter, twigs, bark, or dropped limbs for insects on which these carnivorous creatures rely. Most remain when they fell. The thick smothering layers of winter-dropped leaves against fences or on the driveway get raked underneath the tree who shed them instead. Never are these precious carbon sources are thrown to the curb! Stewardship means tidy AND purposeful.

Among St. Augustine turf blades wildflowers await. Fleabane, crowpoison, pinkladies, and buttercup are already putting up flower stalks for an early-spring bloom. Cutting the lawn now will remove food for tiny wildlife, beauty for us before things green up in March. Mow now and miss out on the free nitrogen service provided by clover and vetch that will keep turf green and beautiful through our hot summer without water or care. Less is best!



Returning monarch drinking from crowpoison,
Photo by Shannon Westveer

Book Review: *A Prehistory of Houston and Southeast Texas* by Dr. Dan M. Worrall

By Jim Butcher. TMNCPC "The Grand Poobah"

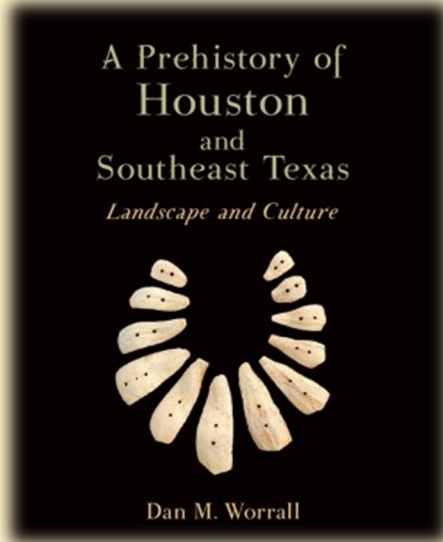


Photo source: [Concertina Books](#)

This month the Poobah will be reviewing Dr. Worrall's effort to educate the readers on the incredible existence of the people that preceded us here in the Houston area. They were the Atakapa and neighboring tribes such as the Karankawa, and their border was the Brazos River.

This global warming notion and the rise of the sea level is nothing new. Geologists have proven that after the last glacial maximum 13,500 years ago, our own Gulf of Mexico has risen by 400 feet and the shore line moved North 140 miles to the present day Galveston Island.

The first human settlers arrived about that time and for over 600 generations existed as what I would refer to as cave men. They hunted with spears for game and used nets for fishing. Clothing was animal skins. It was not until much later on in the late prehistoric era that bows and arrows, horses and ceramics appeared.

The majority of this work is given over to the documentation of the discovery of many spear points in numerous locations in the area. The many types of points and the depth in the middens demonstrate an evolution in the production of this most important product.

Dr. Worrall touches on the trade routes and goods and the shared prairies being burned by the tribes for hunting deer and bison.

I would have preferred more anecdotal accounts as I find them more interesting.

This book opened up a new world to me right in my own back yard. As an old Texan once said. "You ought to know something about where you are from."

I'll see you out at Seabourne, Jim Butcher

JOIN US!

The public is always welcome to serve alongside us in our communities. Get out and meet TMNCPC members in the field!

About the Cover Page: Why is the squirrel laying down on the branch? Well, Fox Squirrels experience the same Fight, Flight or FREEZE trauma response that we do. These furry mammals tend to hide or remain motionless when they sense a predator nearby. They use their coloration to camouflage into the tree or hollow. (check out [this article](#) to learn more)

So any theories on why our friend on the cover is laying down? I'll give you a hint — "man's best friend." This photo was snapped while there was a dog at the base of the tree!

Coastal Prairie TMNs Help Make 1st Fort Bend CBC a Success!

By Robbin Mallett, TMNCPC

The first count of the Fort Bend Christmas Bird Count circle (TXFT) was a great success thanks largely to the efforts of Coastal Prairie Chapter members. "Thank you to the nearly 50 birders who participated in this inaugural count on December 20. The great results were due to our collective efforts. I very much enjoyed hearing about your days at the countdown dinner and cannot wait for next year. I hope the weather will be as accommodating," said Count Compiler Bayard Nicklow.

Nicklow was a member of the Coastal Prairie chapter's Fall 2022 Training Class and a Naturalist at Kleb Woods Nature Preserve. While the Brazos Bend Christmas Bird County has been held for nearly 30 years and a Peach Creek Count was started three years ago, he noticed a gap in Fort Bend County. There was no Count that included Seabourne Creek, Cullinan Park and other top Fort Bend birding hotspots.

He approached several people with the idea to start a new Count, including Fort Bend County eBird reviewer Mark Scheuerman, Robbin Mallett, President of the Cullinan Park Conservancy, the staff at Long Acres Ranch and others. The suggestion was met with overwhelming enthusiasm. A call for



Harris's sparrow, Photo by Janey Woodley

help in organizing the Count went out, two planning meetings were held and the date was set. The Count Circle was approved by the National Audubon Society and added to the nationwide [map](#) of CBC circles.

The event was publicized, and organizers were amazed at the enthusiasm for the new event. Nearly 50 people signed up to join in a day of birding just days before Christmas, including a large number from the Coastal Prairie Chapter. We were fortunate to have good weather on Count Day with a chilly morning that warmed up by the afternoon and no rain. A Count Dinner was held at Rudy's BBQ with more than 35 birders in attendance. After tallying the results, we had a count day total of 126 species. There were thousands of other individual birds reported over the



Left to right: Robbin Mallett and Bayard Nicklow, Photo by Robbin Mallett

Coastal Prairie TMNs Help Make 1st Fort Bend CBC a Success! cont'd

By Robbin Mallett, TMNCPC

Continued from [previous Page](#)



Winter wren, Photo by Janey Woodley

course of the day, with over 85 party hours clocked and nearly 300 miles covered.

Notable were ten species of sparrows, White-tailed Hawk, Merlin, Greater Scaup, Brown Creeper and Winter Wren. Another highlight was a whopping 5 species of hummingbirds – Black-chinned, Broad-tailed, Rufous, Allen's and Buff-bellied. These can be attributed to the hummer-friendly backyards of Mark Scheuerman, Jamie Fairchild and Robbin Mallett. Special congratulations go to Robert Opperman and the Cullinan Park team for their Big Bird Award-winning Pacific-slope Flycatcher. A few additional species, including Eastern Towhee & Rusty Blackbird, were seen during the count week (3 days before and after) bringing our total for the



week to 130. This was despite a lack of several expected waterfowl species which had not arrived in the area yet – leaving room for growth next year.

Thank you to all the section leaders who pre-scouted their areas and led the volunteers on Count Day. Those underlined are Coastal Prairie Chapter members. Other chapter members who participated include Terri Hurley, Randolph Watson, Joyce Tipton, Lucy Moyer, Sandra Brown, Susan Fortenberry, Susan Walther, Janis Peterson, Jan Kolk, Kevin Kolk, Jan Poscovsky and Deb McMullen.

Section 1 – Albert Ribes &

Robbin Mallett

Cullinan Park, Imperial Trails & Retention Pond, Duhacsek Park, Eldridge Park

Section 2 – David Goff & Suzanne Mottin

Brazos River Park, Memorial Park, First Colony, Oyster Creek, Venetian Estates

Section 3 – Mark Scheuerman, Jeff Schaberg; John Faragher & Shannon Westveer

Riverpark Nature Trails; Long Acres Ranch

Section 4 – Jean Greenhalgh & Glen Lindeman

Country Road birding around George Ranch/farm roads/ Smithers Lake

Section 5 – Erik Wolf & Bill & Margo Johnson

Seabourne Creek Park and surrounding area

Section 6 – Nathan Cross & Janey Woodley

Waterview Retention Ponds & Wetlands, Waterside Estates & Harvest Green Village Farms

Interview with the Bat Lady

By Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC



It had been a while since the last deep freeze hit the Houston area, devastating households with burst pipes in the now infamous 2021 Storm Uri Texas power outage. Having checked and wrapped our pipes thoroughly this time, Houstonians, the grid, and we were all much better prepared for sudden cold. A few days before Christmas, the air temperature dropped as predicted from a balmy 60 degrees to below 20 degrees – 40 degrees in a few hours.

Some of us, it turned out, weren't quite as prepared. At the Waugh Street Bridge in Houston,

Photo source: NPR's [article](#) on Mary Warwick

hundreds of Mexican free-tailed bats were all snuggled up for the winter's nap among the truss crevices. Frozen stiff, their tiny feet grips released, and they fell to the concrete below. To passersby, these little piles of tiny bats were dead and beyond help. To TMNCPC member Mary Warwick (Class of Fall 2020), however, hope was not lost. She was exactly what they needed for a second chance.

At the Brazos Bend Holiday in the Park event (see [January Courier](#), page 15) we learned that Mary was uniquely trained in bat rehabilitation many years ago by BatWorld.org. She is also the current Executive Director of the Houston Humane Society TWRC Wildlife Center and up for a challenge when it comes to rehabilitating wildlife! This was just another day to do good. On a kayaking excursion together, she told me about her about her adventure and story-gone-viral.

As I was warm at home enjoying my family and time off, editing the last Courier newsletter, it turns out Mary was busy with more than 1,000 bats in her attic from both the Waugh Street Bridge and Fite Bridge (Pearland). Knowing that bats are social, she dutifully kept them in separate containers so that those important ties could be kept intact when released. Like people, Mexican free-tailed bats are social creatures and need their friends and family.

They were cared for in Mary's attic for several days to keep high metabolisms low; the "warmer" cold temps helped keep them in torpor so they wouldn't need to be force-fed. Being vaccinated against rabies, all Mary



Photo source:
NPR's [article](#) on Mary Warwick

Coastal Prairie TMNs Help Make 1st Fort Bend CBC a Success! cont'd

By Robbin Mallett, TMNCPC

Continued from [Page 11](#)

This year marked the 123rd Christmas Bird Count. Sponsored by the National Audubon Society and conducted by volunteers, the counts attempt to record every individual bird encountered within a defined 15-mile diameter — about 177 square miles — during one calendar day. This year, 1,155 counts were held throughout the U.S. and Canada between December 14 and January 5 with a total of 18,025,439 birds counted. Current Year summary will be published after all the data are reviewed and confirmed by all of the regional editors.



Pacific slope flycatcher, Photo by Robert Opperman

The counts began on December 25, 1900, when a small group of bird lovers led by scientist Frank Chapman posed an alternative to the Christmastime “side hunt,” in which teams competed to see who could shoot the most birds and small mammals. Chapman’s group identified, counted, and recorded all the birds they saw, thus founding one of the world’s first and largest “community science” initiatives.

Interview with the Bat Lady cont'd

By Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC

Continued from [previous Page](#)



Mary Warwick (left), Photo by Shannon Westveer (Right)

needed to do was assure they were sufficiently hydrated until release. Of the hundreds of bats rehabbed that week, only a few dozen died, likely due to injuries from their falls.

Many of our members went out to join the public at the Waugh Street Bridge late December as Mary released the bats back to the wild. It was just the kind of joy we all seek out that time of year. The event was covered by dozens of news sources all over the world including the Washington Post and New York Times. Mary’s efforts to brought awareness to HHS-TWRC and helped get a ‘bat team’ and special room all prepared for the next time they’re needed. She was even spot-lighted on the local news; my mother was quick to let me know when she saw Mary on TV.

Thank you, Mary, for being the change you want to see in the world!

TMNs Swarm to College Station

By Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC



Early January, Texas A&M University's College of Entomology hosted an open house for their insect collection for the first time in many years. Several Master Naturalists from area chapters came to have a look and learn more about our tiny neighbors. Susie Doe and I traveled together representing TMN Coastal Prairie.

After the initial orientation to the collection rooms by undergraduates, Dr. Karen Wright, Associate Curator invited us into her office for a look at her personal collection of pinned native bees.



Pinned native bee collection, Photo by Shannon Westveer

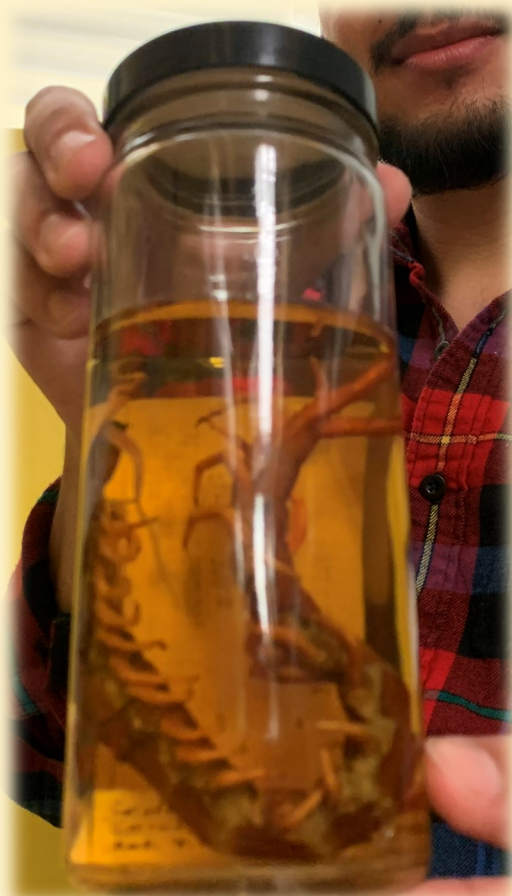
We learned how difficult it is to distinguish many species without a closer look at tiny subjects under a microscope, which some of us

did. Many times, the unseen-with-the-naked-eye 'dimples' and 'hairs' on a specimen's body may be the only difference.

Some bee experts, like Dr. John Ascher (National University of Singapore) have the special gift of photographic memory, she told us. John can recognize many iNaturalist bee observations immediately so long as decent photographic captures are uploaded. He has helped get many native bee species around the Houston area to research grade; many other will remain at the genus level given limitations of further study in the field.

Throughout the morning, visitors were encouraged to explore the pinned and ethanol collection rooms and for species that intrigued us. I spent my time with trays of pinned *Megachilidae* (leafcutter bees) and *Phaneus* (dung beetles) who grace my property in Fort Bend County. Student Jesus showed me a jar containing a gigantic centipede from Peru. Not everything is bigger in Texas!

As an advanced training opportunity, Mike Quinn – known to us as @entomike on iNaturalist – presented an historical and informational hour on beetle species in Texas along the I-35 corridor to a large classroom. He remains to be one of the most respected citizen scientists in the field of *Coleoptera*, and we are



Gigantic centipede, photo by Shannon Westveer

TMNs Swarm to College Station ... cont'd

By Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC



Continued from [previous Page](#)



Photo by Shannon Westveer

always appreciative when he takes the time to educate TMN's on the subject. (If your invertebrate interest is beetles, watch his [recorded session here](#).)

The end of the day was punctuated by a surprise tour of the Orthoptera lab given by Dr. Hojun Song himself – not pinned but live animals. He toured a small group of us through the offices of the floor, sharing techniques and equipment used in photographing the species, informing us of the ongoing research there. He even allowed us through the airlocks and into the climate-controlled live species room where students are learning about how and why some species of Schistocerca grasshoppers will swarm as locusts under certain stimulus. According to the USDA, grasshoppers and locusts are considered the most economically important pests worldwide.

Even our calm, local non-swarming species, American bird grasshopper (S. americana), can be coerced to swarm using the same stimulus applied by students.

We eagerly look forward to the next open house. Thank you to our co-sponsor for helping us to learn more about our invertebrate neighbors in Texas!

To learn more about Mary and her work with bats, check out these articles. Feeling generous? Click the link to donate.

NPR.org | [1,600 bats fell to the ground in Houston's cold snap. Here's how they were saved.](#)

CNN.com | [This wildlife rehabilitator rescued over 1,600 bats during Houston cold snap.](#) Includes video ... watch it!

Consider donating to help bats | [Houston Humane Society TWRC Wildlife Center](#)

Keep bugging out! Here are some additional articles to learn more about these cool invertebrates.

Texas A&M University | [The Song Laboratory of Insect Systematics and Evolution](#)

Mike Quinn | [Beetle Diversity of the Texas I35 Corridor](#)

Timeline.com | [In one year, 12 trillion locusts devastated the Great Plains – and then they went extinct.](#)

The Lighter Side

By Lynn Trenta, TMNCPC Class of 2011



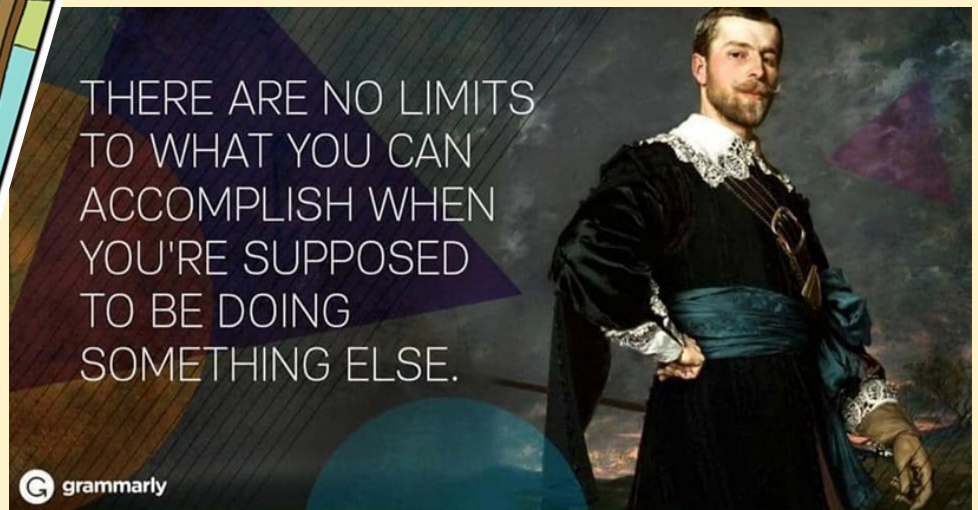
Facebook –The Cat Butler



Facebook --Blazing Blind Trails



Facebook—Jim Cantrell



Facebook—the Heinlein society

Elected Officers

President	Terri Hurley
Vice President	Susan Walther
Secretary	Joyce Tipton
Treasurer	Pam Jones

Board of Directors

Past-President	Bert Stipelcovich
Membership	Jan and Kevin Kolk
Programs	Jan Peterson
Communications	Judi Harrington and Megan Cromeens
Volunteers	Johanna DeYoung
Adv. Training	Kerry Padilla
New Class Spring	Lauren DeShazo
New Class Rep.	Rebecca Aguilar
Info. Tech.	Bert Stipelcovich
State Rep	Hoiman Low
Seabourne Creek	Jerry Trenta

TPWD / AgriLife Chapter Advisors

Prgm. Coordinator	Brandy Rader
TPWD Fort Bend	Jon McLeod
Fort Bend Ag Agent	John Few
Wharton Ag Agent	Corrie Bowen
Waller Ag Agent	Candace Moeller

SPRING TRAINING — Day Classes, Feb. 18 to May 6

CLASS FULL — Wait List Still Open

The Spring Training class is now full. If you're still wanting to join our corps of volunteers, please visit the [Spring Training 2023 page](#) and sign up for the waiting list. You can become a Master Naturalist™. **[JOIN US. RECONNECT!](#)** Please stay tuned for the next training class. Check out the TMNCPC [website](#) for the latest information.

FACEBOOK—Like us!



[Follow us](#) for timely and seasonally relevant content. Learn about Coastal Prairie and engage with your volunteer organization.

MEMBERS ONLY To join the private Facebook Group, send a request and wait for TMNCPC Admin to respond.



Instagram

Check out our talented photographers over on the [TMNCPC Instagram page!](#)
[@tmn_coastal_prairie_chapter](#)

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