

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST



CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER Chapter News – August 2006 Editor, Mary Helen Israel

Report on the Southeast Texas Master Naturalist Fair, Barbara Burkhardt

“Be the Change You Wish to See in the World” was the theme for the fifth annual Fair for the Southeast Texas Region of the Texas Master Naturalist, held at The Center for the Arts and Sciences, on Saturday, July 29. The speakers covered a wide range of environmental topics to educate Master Naturalist on ecological problems facing this area and ways that might be used to lessen the environmental impact of unplanned growth. Three hours of advanced training were given for these lectures.

The schedule was designed to allow time to meet and interact with MN from Coastal Prairie, Galveston Bay, Gulf Coast, Heart of Texas and Mid Coast chapters. During the breaks, attendees could also buy tickets for the many raffle items. There were some 71 MN in attendance. Sonny Arnold also joined us for the day.

The COT Chapter really “showed their stuff” in the photo contest which had 50 entries from different chapters. Best of Show went to Jerry Eppner for his photograph of a Violet-tailed Sylph hummingbird, “Dressed for the Ball”. (See Jerry’s award winning photo at the end of the newsletter.) ”. In the Wildlife category, Ed Barrios won first, with “Winging It”, his photo of a flight of Black Bellied Whistling Ducks. Jerry took second and third in

the category with “Watching you Watching Me”, a yellow-billed cuckoo, and “Natures Stained Glass”, a multitude of monarchs waiting to warm up and take flight at Quintana.

In the Plant/Wildflower Category, Ellis Burkhardt won first for his “Coneflower with Bee”. A new member of COT, Steve Zilliox took second for his photo of a dogwood blossom. Third went to Nancy Taylor, Gulf Coast Chapter.

Ellis took win, place and show in the Landscape category. “Reflection Lake” was his view of Mount Rainier, while “Paradise Park Sentinel’s”, Douglas fir took second. Third place “Glorious Morning” was taken at the kids’ farm near La Grange.

The event also featured a wonderful selection of books from Naturally Curious, Galveston Bay Areas store and a fajita lunch from Mendoza’s.

The fair committee sends a **BIG** “Thank You” to members of the COT chapter members for their help with set-up and clean-up, as well as the wonderful breakfast items and lunch deserts. Your help and participation was greatly appreciated.

Recruit An Intern! Marty Cornell, Training Chairman.

With only a couple weeks to go, we still have plenty of room in our fall training class. We need a quorum of about 15 to conduct these classes, so every COT member is encouraged to recruit an intern.

UPCOMING MEETING

August 9, 2006

8:30 - Social time

9:00 - Program – Fire at the San Bernard NWR (Fall, 2005), Jennifer Sanchez, Refuge Manager

Texas Master Naturalist – Cradle of Texas Chapter

<http://grovesite.com/tamu/tmn>

**Board of Directors Meeting
July 19, 2006 – Minutes**

Opening: Attendees: Ed Barrios, Tom Morris, Marty Cornell, Barbara Burkhardt, Carl Dodson, Neal McLain, John Marshall, John Thayer, Jerry Eppner, Jan Kater, Jerry Krampota, Rich Tillman, and Justina Dent were welcomed to the meeting by President Ed Barrios at 9:00 AM.

Project for State Fair Presentation:

Ed Barrios stressed the need for a TMN-COT project for the state meeting. A project chairman is needed as well as a project theme. Several ideas were discussed, and "Impact thru Partners" was chosen as our theme. Presentation will include several projects TMN-COT members participate in with our partners. The project committee will consist of: Mary Helen Israel, Carolyn May-Monie, Ed Barrios, Carl Dodson, Jerry Eppner, and Barbara Burkhardt.

Volunteer Hours Update:

Barbara Burkhardt reported that no information has been received back from the state on the questions TMN-COT submitted concerning volunteer hours. The submitted questions primarily covered volunteer activities at Gulf Coast Wildlife Rescue.

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Jan Kater distributed an annotated copy of TMN-COT's check register for 2006 to date. He gave a verbal update to the register to include expenses submitted to him at the board meeting. The purchases of curricula and binders based on a class of 25 trainees and gifts to speakers for the 2006 class were added. These items totaled \$1187. Based on this update, the TMN-COT bank balance as of July 19, 2006 is \$1244.59. This includes deposits of \$130 each by the two initial 2006 trainees, and a donation of \$200 to offset the cost of 2006 class binders. In clarification of the financial figures presented at the board meeting, Jan Kater adds this additional information to the minutes:

"Our annual budget, including non-training and training income and expenses, is based on a maximum enrollment of 25 trainees. Based on this budget, the anticipated overall surplus at year end 2006 is \$217, resulting in a budgeted end-of-year bank balance of \$2602.33. Other economies already being considered will increase this amount modestly. I project that with only 20 trainees in the 2006 class, our end-of-year bank balance would be near \$1500. With a 2006 class of only 12 trainees, our end-of-year bank balance would be near \$1000. These estimates are based on the assumption that training expenses would be further decreased on a per capita basis.

"Though the expense and income figures mentioned are based on several variables, they are close enough to reality to indicate the need of additional income from current members in the form of dues or voluntary contributions. Responsible financial planning requires that these issues be discussed."

Barbara Burkhardt moved that the treasurer's report be accepted. Rich Tillman seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Miscellaneous: Rich Tillman reported a new transferee to our chapter was enthusiastic about the welcome he received from members at our last general meeting. Barbara Burkhardt requested "goodies" for the TMN Region Fair on July 29, 2006. Her main need is for breakfast foods. Neal McLain will post a request on our website.

Training Class Report: Marty Cornell reported 47 members of TMN-COT are involved in some part of the training program. A list with pictures of 2006 TMN-COT officers and committee chairs will be published for inclusion in training materials. The 2006 gifts for speakers are purchased and will be dragonfly cardholders.

Ed Barrios was interviewed by *The Facts* to publicize our training class and sent photos to accompany the article. Community contact possibilities for obtaining new members were discussed.

Policy and Procedure Handbooks: Ed Barrios reported that all missing addenda have been updated and added to new handbooks. Some changes are still needed on Advanced Training Form and write up.

2007 Dues: Dues shall be \$10 per member on January 1, 2007. Sponsoring memberships will be \$25 or more. New trainees' dues are included in their class fee. Dues will be considered past due on March 31st. Barbara Burkhardt made the motion. Carl Dodson seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carl Dodson, Acting Secretary and
Alice Sieling, Secretary

<p style="text-align: center;">COT Texas Master Naturalist Awards July 12, 2006</p>
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2006 Certification – 8 hrs AT and 40 hrs VT

Davie McCaskill*

Re-Certification- 8 hrs AT and 40 hrs VT

James Calvert*
Jan Kater
Jean Kater
Paula Jacobs (2005)*
Tom Morris
Archie Pratt*
Kirby Rapstein
Kermit Schlameus

Bronze Award – 250 hrs

Laura Brandes*
Paula Jacobs*
Jan Kater

*Absent previously

Advanced Training, John Thayer

The Advanced Training Committee has reviewed AT opportunities listed on nearby TMN Chapter Web Sites and have approved the advanced training opportunities listed at the end of the newsletter (Attachment 1). If you find other opportunities not listed that you would like to attend, please submit a Request for Advanced Training form. (Available on our Web Site).

I would like to highlight three upcoming training opportunities:

1. The Wetland Restoration Team working in Harris and Galveston counties will be offering a one-day-a-week training for five weeks on wetland restoration and wetland plant identification. Andy Sipocz, Texas Parks and Wildlife, will lead the plant identification sessions. I attended similar sessions last year and Andy is an excellent instructor. In addition the Wetland Team leaders, Marissa Sipocz and Charriss York, would like to form a Wetland Restoration Team in Brazoria County. These sessions would be a good opportunity for a few of us to see what it is all about. More training for our chapter will be planned later.

2. Wildscapes Workshop and Native Plant Sale sponsored by NPSOT. September 9th at IUH - Central campus. Speakers include Chris LaChance, WaterSmart Coordinator and our friends Gloria and John Tveten.

3. Same Day, September 9 - The Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza at GCBO - Excellent volunteer opportunity as well as an AT opportunity. Contact Cecelia Riley or Carol Jones at GCBO to volunteer.

Butterfly Count, September 24

Don't forget the Brazos Bend Butterfly Count, Sunday September 24. Meet at the 40 Acre Lake parking lot at 8:30 am so we can be organized and begin counting by 9:00. We usually count until lunchtime and then meet at the picnic grounds to discuss our progress over lunch (bring your own).

Be sure to wear sturdy walking shoes and bring sun protection, plenty of water and mosquito repellent. A pair of close-focusing binoculars and a butterfly field guide are helpful, but not required.

For additional information email Rich & Sandy Jespersen at jespera@consolidated.net.

Mental Snapshots - birding notes by Jan Kater

The recent July rains left many small shallow pools of water among the trees on our church's property. Late one afternoon I was looking westward from inside the church in hopes of seeing some Yellow-crowned Night Herons. A tan bird with an approximate 24-inch wing span appeared from behind me around the north end of the church, gliding under the canopy of trees toward one of the small pools of water. It lit in the water and grabbed whatever it had spotted. But it didn't get a firm hold. It lost its balance, spread its wings and tail to keep from falling over, and struggled to straighten up. Finally it got a secure grasp on its prey (a crawfish?), lifted off the water, and lumbered westward about ten feet off the ground - before disappearing among the trees. But I never got to see its face or breast. I do remember seeing alternate bands of tan and white on its tail.

What was it? Researching my bird books later, I concluded it must have been a juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk. Why juvenile? Because my bird books show the bands on the tail of the adult Red-shouldered Hawk to be black and white, not tan and white. However, I may have mis-remembered the color of the tail bands! I welcome any

ideas you other birders may have about the identity of this twilight visitor.

The rains also left shallow pools of water in the field between Canna Lane and the Brazosport Hospital. In drier weather golfers often use this area to practice their chip shots. But the other day three Snowy Egrets were wagging their feet in the pools in hopes of stirring up some bugs – or maybe crawfish. Beyond them on the ground was a group of four Black-necked Stilts also searching for food.

Suddenly a Crow appeared chasing two more Black-necked Stilts, who, being more agile than the Crow seemed to be having a good time giving their clumsy assailant a run for his money. As one of them quickly landed among his brethren, apparently convinced there was safety in numbers, the other continued his game of betcha-can't-catch-me, turning and diving just out of reach of his frustrated pursuer. Normally small birds chase Crows to scare them away from their nests. What I saw may have been the end of a successful diversionary tactic to lure the Crow away from the Stilts' nesting area. Or, it may have just been the Stilts having fun at the expense of a bothersome intruder whom they thought needed to be shown that he was not always the king of the mountain.

CRADLE OF TEXAS OFFICERS

President	Ed Barrios
Vice President/Program	John Boettiger
Secretary	Alice Sieling
Treasurer	Jan Kater
State Representative	Barbara Burkhardt
Past President	Carl Dodson
Membership Chair	Tom Morris
Training Chair	Marty Cornell
Volunteer Service Chair	Carolyn May-Monie
Resource Library	Jim Renfro
Advanced Training	
Coordinator	John Thayer
Outreach Chairman	Jane & Jerry Eppner
Chapter Hosts	Jerry Krampota & Archie Pratt
Web-site Manager	Neal McLain
Newsletter Chairman	Mary Helen Israel
Sponsors:	Connie Stolte (TP&W) and Rich Tillman (Extension)

DRESSED FOR THE BALL!

