

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST



CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER Chapter News –June 2005 Editor, Mary Helen Israel

THE PREZ S&Z:

Here it is –June already! The year's half gone, summer is here bringing the heat and mosquitoes along with it. Time to look back and see where we were and look forward to see where we are going. When you do this I hope you are pleased with what you see. I know I am. It didn't happen by accident - a lot of good people doing a good job. There have been a few bumps but when haven't there been a few bumps. Ours were leveled and on we go.

Speaking of bumps, here is one we need to talk about. The "Hold Harmless" forms we all signed when we joined COT, remember them? At my last contact with the office we can't find all of them on file. If we can't find yours we will have to ask you to sign another some time between now and September. I know this is an inconvenience but an important one to the State.

If you volunteer (turn in volunteer hours for) at some location out of the local area would you send me an e-mail and let me know about it. Places where COT Members volunteer was brought up and we found we didn't have all that information. This is no big deal but I would really like to know.

If you have access to a boat and like to observe colonial water

birds the islands in the local bays are full of them.

Take plenty of water, your straw hat and go volunteer somewhere.

CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER, TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST, SPECIAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, MAY 10, 2005

MINUTES

Opening: The meeting was called to order by President Carl Dodson at 9:00 a.m. Seven of the eight voting Board members were present, plus a committee chairman and the unofficial assistant to the secretary. The attendance record is on file.

1. Ratification of the New Membership Chairman Appointment

It was moved and seconded to ratify the appointment of Tom Morris as the new Membership Chairman, replacing Tommie Holt. See the April 13, 2005 Board minutes for an appreciation of Tommie Holt's valuable service to the Chapter (reported in the May 2005 Newsletter), and the President's appreciative remarks about Tommie in his opening remarks in the same newsletter.

2. “Hold Harmless” Form

Barbara Burkhardt announced that the previous Hold Harmless form, and not the more recent one, is to be used to satisfy the requirement that all Master Naturalists sign one of these forms by September 1. Rich Tillman will ask Sandra Smith to make a list of the signed forms already on file. It is not necessary to submit a form more than once. Those who do not have a signed form on file, and new trainees, will have to sign one of the previous format forms by September 1, 2005, or as soon as they begin training. She emphasized the importance of reporting all of our volunteer hours and locations, since these reports together with a signed Hold Harmless form, would be submitted if one of us had an occasion to prove that we were covered by the State’s insurance.

3. Background Check Process

Various aspects of the required background checks of each chapter member were discussed, including the question of whether all are required to have it, even those not working with children. The conclusion was that there is not sufficient information available for us to begin taking applications and the individual \$10 fee required for the check. All we do know at this time is that the checks must be completed by September 1. Barbara Burkhardt recommended that we put consideration of this subject on hold until final instructions are received. A straw vote showed unanimous approval of this sentiment. No formal motion had been made.

4. Amending the COT Policies and Procedures Handbook

The fact was brought out that the latest Policies and Procedures Handbook, the by-laws, and previous

organizational documents still being referred to, do not agree in every detail. Carolyn May-Monie moved that Al Brushwood chair an ad hoc committee to resolve these issues, and that Carl Dodson and Jan Kater assist him. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

5. Whatever

Fall Training: John Boettiger announced that 11 Wednesday sessions and 1 Saturday session have been scheduled for the fall training schedule. They may be viewed on (and printed from) the chapter website.

Submittal of hours in December:

There was a discussion of the end-of-year deadline for reporting individual hours, which will define the chapter’s 12 month total to be submitted to the state TMN organization. In order to meet the state TMN annual reporting requirements, member hours for 2005 will have to be received at the Membership Chairman’s e-mail address no later than December 15 (tmorris66@houston.rr.com). Member hours received on December 16, 2005 and beyond will be counted in the 2006 total.

Chapter Scrapbooks: Rita Pruitt will bring the scrapbooks to the May 11 membership meeting. They will be on display, and afterward kept upstairs in the COT storeroom. Much appreciation was expressed for her work in bringing them up to date.

Webmaster Neal McLain announced that the **Advanced Training schedule** (past and future) and **AT hours earned** for past programs are posted on the website. Click on “Advanced Training” to review the

entire year's schedule. **Website:**
<http://grovesite.com/tamu/TMN>

Al Brushwood clarified an announcement in the April 13 Board minutes saying that **shirt orders** could be placed with him at a slight discount. The notice should have said that shirt orders can be placed at a slight discount with Barbara Burkhardt (979-297-4386) for the green jersey or washed denim shirt with the TMN COT logo if you get your order in to her by July 1. Carl Dodson had available a catalog and more information about contacting the company directly. E-mail the secretary (jankater@principia.edu) for a copy of the information sheet Carl supplied.

The meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan L. Kater
Jan L. Kater, Secretary
Texas Master Naturalist
Cradle of Texas Chapter

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST – CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP MEETING, MAY 11, 2005 MINUTES

Opening: The meeting was called to order by President Carl Dodson at 9:00 a.m. Forty-four members and one visitor were present. The attendance list is on file.

Training Recognition

Kerry Magee recently completed his training sessions after having to be absent from several last fall. He was commended for his persistence in finding make-up sessions in other chapters, and, in turn, thanked his mentors in our chapter for helping him

connect with the other chapters.
Congratulations!

Innovene (BP Amoco) School Project

The school children instruction project held earlier this year was a big success. BP-Amoco was very pleased and will hold a “thank you” cookout for the volunteers from COT in the near future.

Conoco/Phillips Land Project

Phil Huxford is in charge of the 12 surveys of the plants and animals he expects to make throughout the next year. Four to six teams are needed to do two surveys apiece. One has already been done and Phil is looking for volunteers to help with the others.

Sandra Clarke is the Sweeny ISD coordinator for the school children visits. Around 150 students will soon visit the area for a scavenger hunt. Eventually there will be permanent stations for the educational part of the program, and volunteers are needed to plan, construct, and man the stations during the children's visits.

A broad range of considerations was discussed – how other programs function, how the children's interest can be maintained during each visit and during future year visits, who will do the instruction, if volunteers will mainly “teach the teachers,” grade levels, size of groups, who will pay for the equipment (principally Conoco), how to keep from getting in over our heads, involving PTO, getting support of principals and superintendents, whether or not Conoco will provide employees.

Programs

John Boettiger announced the June 8 10:00 a.m. advanced training program

on Flounders. He also reviewed the August program with Kathy Adams Clark on wildlife photography, including the afternoon program from 1 to 4:30 for a limited number of photographers (15 to 20), the fee of \$16 each (send money to John), and the purpose of the afternoon session to teach participants how to use their own equipment. He also gave some details of the archaeology field trip Saturday October 22. Please read our Monthly Newsletter (also posted on our website) and visit our website <http://grovesite.com/tamu/TMN> for more details on future programs.

Treasurer's Report: Al Brushwood reported that the bank balance as of May 11, 2005 is \$1140.

Secretary's Report: 1) Look for the **minutes** of the most recent membership or board meetings in the current Chapter Newsletter. 2) Members needing their **name spelling, address, telephone number or e-mail address updated** should call or e-mail the secretary: jankater@principia.edu, tel. 979-297-1449.

State Representative's Report:
"Hold Harmless" Form

Barbara Burkhardt announced that the previous Hold Harmless form, and not the more recent one, is to be used to satisfy the requirement that all Master Naturalists sign one of these forms by September 1. Rich Tillman will ask Sandra Smith to make a list of the signed forms already on file. It is not necessary to submit a form more than once. Those who do not have a signed form on file, and new trainees, will have to sign one of the previous format forms by September 1, 2005, or as soon as they begin training. She emphasized the importance of

reporting all of our volunteer hours and locations, since these reports together with a signed Hold Harmless form, would be submitted if one of us had an occasion to prove that we were covered by the State's insurance.

Background Check Process

Various aspects of the required background checks of each chapter member were discussed, including the question of whether all are required to have it, even those not working with children. The conclusion was that there is not sufficient information available for us to begin taking applications and the individual \$10 fee required for the check. All we do know at this time is that the background checks must be completed by September 1. This project is on hold until final instructions are received.

Regional Advanced Training Fair for Chapters

will be Sunday, July 24, 2005, beginning 9 a.m. at the Brazosport Center for Arts and Sciences. Instruction and tours will include an early morning nature trail tour at the Center for Arts and Sciences, the Natural History Museum at the Center, and a visit to Sea Center Texas for a hatchery tour, aquarium tour, and a wetlands tour. Our chapter will furnish the morning refreshments. Barbara Burkhardt needs volunteers to help with food and set up.

Training: **Marty Cornell** needs help in **assembling the new workbooks** for the fall training class. Call Marty (979-297-2235) or John Boettiger (979-297-5427) if you'd like to help. John Boettiger announced that **GCBO needs volunteers** to lead children in **bug identification sweeps** this fall.

John Thayer reported on the **Nash Prairie program** held in West Columbia Saturday April 30 and said there will be **another one in the fall**. He encouraged those who have not seen the area to attend the next program. Watch the website!

Membership: **Tom Morris** awarded first time certification pins to five members of the 2004 fall training class: Ed Barrios, Ellis Burkhardt, Kerry Magee, Neal McLain, and Kermit Schlameus.

- 2005 re-certification pins were awarded to John Boettiger, Barbara Burkhardt, Tom Collins, Jan Kater, Carolyn May-Monie, Maurice Monie, Tom Morris, Tracie Teague, and John Thayer.
- Total lifetime volunteer over-250 hours pins were awarded to John Boettiger, Al Brushwood, and Carol Jones.

Whatever

• **Carl Dodson** encouraged members to **catch up on their reports** of hours earned, offering a **grace period** through August 31 for hours earned anytime before then in 2005. In order to meet the state TMN annual reporting requirements, member hours for 2005 will have to be received at the Membership Chairman's e-mail address no later than December 15 (tmorris66@houston.rr.com). Member hours received on December 16, 2005 and later will be counted in the 2006 total.

• Carl also pointed out that the **two official shirts** are the hunter green knit shirt and the stone washed denim shirt. He made available a list of shirts by style, sizes, and price. Copies will be available at the next meeting too, or you can request one

by e-mail from the secretary (jankater@principia.edu). Barbara Burkhardt has offered to take orders for either of these shirts if you get your order to her by July 1 (979-297-4386). Or you can order from the company: EPD Inc., 1407 East Cedar, Angleton, TX (979-849-8633) - ask for Paula. The company is just past the railroad track on the right, as you go into Angleton from the TexCoopExtension office.

• **The Resource Library** is now on the website, thanks to Jim Renfro's good work, helped by our webmaster Neal McLain, and can be downloaded. It is an ongoing project and will have additional resources listed from time to time.

• Phil Huxford announced that the **Friends of Brazoria NWR** organization is holding an open house May 15 at 2 p.m. to encourage volunteers to take part in their program. Hot dogs and tours are on the agenda.

• **Carol Jones** from **GCBO** asked interested members to sign up on a list she circulated to help prepare four **Coastal Wild Bird Trunks** and learn how to use them in classroom sessions.

The meeting adjourned at 10:00

a.m., followed by our guest speaker and chapter member, Ann McLain, PhD. Her two hour program on "Biological Invasions" supported by a PowerPoint presentation was a timely and effective program for our chapter and enthusiastically received by our members.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan L. Kater

Jan L. Kater, Secretary
Texas Master Naturalist
Cradle of Texas Chapter

2005 TRAINING PROGRAM, MARTY CORNELL

The 2005 training program is nearly finalized, with all speakers committed. The training schedule and application form can be found on our COT website. COT members are encouraged to promote this program to potential interns. The deadline for submitting an application and paying the \$130 fee is August 19th.

A limited number of 17" by 22" posters that advertise our fall training program have been printed and will be posted in libraries and nature centers around Brazoria County. Please let Marty Cornell know if you want copies to post in other areas.

Next Meeting, June 8, 2005 General Meeting - 10:00 a.m.

Program: David Abrego of Sea Center Texas will talk about "Flounders" at the Sea Center and research results. This will provide Advance Training credit.

There will be a board meeting at 9 am and the general meeting will start promptly at 10 am, so come a little early for snacks, sign-in, etc.

HIGHLIGHTS OF UPCOMING MONTHLY PROGRAMS:

Wed - JUN 8, 2005 10 am

Flounders, David Abrego, Sea Center Texas

Wed - JUL 13, 2005 10 am

Sea Turtle Recovery Project, Mike Ray

Deputy Director Coastal Fisheries, TPWD

Wed - AUG 10, 2005 10 am 12-

Steps to Improve Your Wildlife

Photography, by Kathy Adams Clark

Wed - SEP 14, 2005 9 am

Earth Sciences, by Wayne McAllister

CRADLE OF TEXAS OFFICERS

President	Carl Dodson
Vice President/Program	John Boettiger
Secretary	Jan Kater
Treasurer	Al Brushwood
State Representative	Barbara Burkhardt
Past President	Carolyn May-Monie
Training	Marty Cornell
Vol. Service Projects	John Thayer
Membership	Tom Morris
Outreach	Jerry Eppner
Class Host	Durwood/Becky McKinney
Historian	Neal McLain
Resource Library	Jim Renfro
Newsletter	Mary Helen Israel
Sponsors:	Connie Stolte (TP&W) and Rich Tillman (Extension)