

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST



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

Message from the President, Ed Barrios

With the school year coming to an end in a few weeks, many of us will see a drop in volunteer hours. This is because our largest partner organizations plan most of the environmental education programs when schools are in session. During the 1st quarter 2006, our 82 certified members averaged 37.5 volunteer hours. This is 3% higher than the 2005 average. That might not sound significant but remember that 2005 was a record year for volunteer hours.

So, I would like to thank all the volunteers and a special thanks to those of you that have contributed to the education of the youth of Brazoria County!

However, if you get bored this summer, don't forget partners like the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, the Gulf Coast Wildlife Refuges, and Sea Center Texas that are not as tied to the school year in terms of volunteer opportunities. Go to our website and click on the "Volunteering" link under the "Events" heading. This has all the volunteer opportunities from all the partners that Carolyn May-Monie has met with as she updates the partner agreements. There are opportunities that are documented here that you may not be aware of. This list continues to grow as Carolyn continues meeting with our remaining partners.

Finally, I've had some members concerned that we need to send out more e-mails rather than rely on the web for information. This is the classic "push – pull" communications debate that has been raging for sometime, particularly in big companies. My personal opinion is that e-mails should be reserved for more significant items. So I encourage you to go and surf our website – Neal is doing an excellent job posting every bit of information that is sent to him. If you have any suggestions or ideas on this topic, please feel free to call me. Also if you have ideas on how to make the website friendlier, call Neal or call me with your ideas.

General Meeting

May 10, 2006

Social Time – 8:30 a.m.

General Meeting – 9:00am

Advanced Training – 10:00 a.m.

Program: Habitat Gardening

Note: The Burkhardt's garden, 314 Linden Lane, Lake Jackson, will be available for viewing from 1 – 3 pm on May 10, after the COT meeting.

Master Naturalist – Cradle of
Texas Chapter

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

**Board of Directors Meeting
March 22, 2006
Minutes**

Opening: Attendees Carolyn May-Monie, Jan Kater, Barbara Burkhardt, Alice Sieling, Carl Dodson, Tom Morris, Jerry Eppner, Tracie Teague, Justina Dent, Jean Kater, Neal McLain, John Boettiger, Jerry Krampota and Marty Cornell were welcomed to the meeting by President Ed Barrios at 8:55 AM.

Interest Group Communication to Membership: Barbara Burkhardt announced that the Interest Group Status Report has been tabled for further review.. A report will be made at the next board meeting. Two interest groups have met so far: Photography and Master Gardeners. The Master Gardener Interest Group has only held a telephone conference to prepare for the May Class for TMN.

Volunteer Service Coordinator Status Report: Carolyn May-Monie has finished seven interviews with our partners . She will meet with Brazoria County Parks on April 24, 2006. Their representative, Denise Grier, has interest in activities for small children. We have not provided this in the past. Are we sure this is something we are interested in doing?

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges manages Prairie Restoration for the Parker Tract and would like more TMN members to participate.

Brazosport College partner contact is Dr. Ray. A meeting will be arranged when Jim Renfro is also available.

Peach Point Wildlife Management Area Manager, Todd Merendino, gave a site tour to Marty Cornell, Kirby Rapstein, Carol May-Monie, and Carl Dodson. He would like 100 Bluebird boxes to be built. (50 for Peach Point and 50 for Stringfellow.) Jessie Oetgen is the biologist for Peach Point WMA. He has four projects requiring volunteers

- Chinese Tallow Removal
- Box Turtle Population Survey at Stringfellow and Peach Point
- Mottled Duck Banding
- Prairie Restoration.

Tallow tree removal will be “burn and spray” and “knock down and mulch.” This second process has been successful for small motts. Stump treatment is also required. There is no water in the Mottled Duck wetlands at Peach Point WMA; so unless it rains, no banding will be taking place at that site. Volunteers are still needed who would be willing to travel to Corpus Christi for banding. There is a meeting scheduled at the end of this month. Al Childs and John Thayer will make an initial site visit to Peach Point WMA prairie pestoration site. Todd Merendino is willing to fence off the site if needed as the area is used for free range grazing. A meeting will be held shortly and experienced prairie people are needed.

Permission is needed at all times to be on Peach Point WMA property. A public area is available with trails near Highway 36. Remember this is not a refuge, it is a hunting site, and safety is a vital consideration. Todd Merendino is very interested in more public use of the site for purposes other than hunting. He would like to change the public perspective that Peach Point WMA is just a public hunting site.

TMN has never done a project for Master Gardeners. Paula Craig, Master Gardener Sponsor and Cooperative Extension Horticulturist, would like to get the organizations to work together.

Our proposal for the Levi-Jordan Plantation site has been mailed. We suggested 4 visits a year in different seasons so all flora and fauna are surveyed.

Liaison Concept discussion has been tabled until all the interviews with our partners have been finished. At that time our chapter needs to decide which partners we wish to keep and to terminate.

Volunteer Service Survey Results:

Carolyn May-Monie was very impressed with the range of our members' activities and interests. Survey showed a great desire for more advanced training. The biggest surprise was the variety of training topics. She suggested that advanced training should be matched with a partner's needs. Where would the advanced training be used? There seems to be some perception among our members that our partners consider us a free labor force. There was expressed a desire for more citizen science projects. Our chapter at this time does mainly public education projects. We do not promote citizen science as some chapters do. Tom Collins suggested the Columbia University website as a source of citizen science projects.

Results of the membership survey will be grouped according to similar interests and a further report given next meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Jan Kater submitted a draft budget for 2006. Marty Cornell may order curriculum

for 2006 class at \$30 a notebook. There is \$2081.17 cash on hand in our account. However a loss of \$597.28 is projected. \$546 of that is money set aside for 2006 class snacks. Tracie Teague offered to get donations of binders needed for 2006 class. Our chapter is not eligible for corporate sponsorship as we are not incorporated 501(c) (3) status, nonprofit. Final 2006 budget will be submitted next meeting.

Advanced Training Opportunities:

Tom Morris clarified approval of advanced training procedures. Page 17 of Policy and Procedures states "training must be applicable to Brazoria County." John Thayer, John Boettiger and Tom Morris will work on an approved list of advanced training to be posted on our website. Galveston chapter already posts approved training opportunities from outside sources on its website. This is our goal as well.

2006 Class Training Report: Marty Cornell reported the 2006 training draft. September 16, 2006 will be a Levi-Jordan Plantation Field Trip led by Johnney Pollan. There will be 9 outside venues used this year. The advanced training classes will actually be held there and not in the extension office. Two changes in schedule: September 20, 2006 class will be held at Hudson Woods. November 1, 2006 class will be held at Brazoria Wildlife Refuge and led by team of Jim Renfro, Jerry Eppner, Tom Morris, and John Thayer.

One result of using venues for classes is there will not be room for the general membership at all class meetings (except. Hudson Woods.)

Our chapter spent no money on class advertising last year. A list was kept of how 2005 members found out about the class. Most contacts were from personal friends or *The Facts* article, one from migration celebration, and none from posters. We may want to consider advertising this year. Lynn Krampota wrote the Facts article for us last year.

A suggestion was made that Al Childs explain the Prairie Restoration Project to the general membership at May meeting. Tracie Teague urged anyone interested in the Box Turtle Survey to contact her as the funding has been obtained.

The next board meeting will be May 8, 2006 at 8:00 AM in the Cooperative Extension Office. Next general meeting will be May 10, 2006 at 8:30 AM for social ½ hour. Speaker at 9:00 AM will be Barbara Burkhardt on "Habitat Gardening".

Meeting Adjourned at 11:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Alice Sieling, Secretary

Outreach Activities, Jerry Eppner

During April, chapter members participated in two different Outreach opportunities to help build awareness of the local Texas Master

Naturalist program. The display board that we use to describe our chapter and its mission, sponsors and activities has been updated and received many favorable comments. On April 1, we took the display board to the Brazos Bend State Park Earth Day. Park attendance that day was reported at around 3500. Of those numbers, probably 10% came through the tent where our display was people interested in the fall intern class. The following week, we did the same exercise at the Migration Celebration at Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge. It was estimated that about 350 people (a low number compared to last year) attended the event. Again, we were able to identify three more people expressing an interest in the fall intern class. The Outreach Committee chairman again expresses his appreciation for all the volunteer help at both events.

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. If you find other opportunities not listed that you would like to attend, please submit a Request for Advanced Training form (available on our website).

**Texas Master Naturalist-Cradle of Texas Chapter
Awards
April 12, 2006**

2006 Certification – 8 hrs AT and 40 hrs VT

Laura Brandes

2006 Re-Certification – 8hrs AT and 40 hrs VT

John Boettiger, Sr.

Laura Brandes

Beura (Al) Childs

Tom Collins

Justina Dent

Denis James

Rainbo Johnson

Bronze Award – 250 hrs

Jerry Eppner

Silver Award – 500 hrs

John Boettiger, Sr.

Platinum Award – 2500 hrs

Tom Collins

Kirby Rapstein

Kerry Magee

Maurice Monie

Texas Master Naturalist Advanced Training Opportunities

| DATE | LOCATION | CONTACT | AT HOURS |
|---|---|--|-------------|
| Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center - Austin | | | |
| May 16 Wildflower Center - Austin | Train the Trainer Session to establish satellite Citizen Science programs for the early detection and reporting of invasive species. Will be trained on the Invaders of Texas Citizen Science Invasive Species Toolkit. One person/chapter. | Damon E. Waitt, Ph.D. dwaitt@wildflower.org | |
| Galveston Bay Chapter | | | |
| May 18 8-11 am Challenger 7 Park Memorial Learning Center | Pond Studies - Another quality learning experience brought to you by the E2 team. This workshop will include student participation, classroom reinforcement, and hands-on pond dipping. A "tenner" in pond organisms is also offered. Bring your lunch if you wish to stay for a picnic at the end of the class. | Claudia Edwards Claudia@duckduckgoose.net 281-332-8514 | 3 hours |
| Gulf Coast Chapter | | | |
| Saturday, May 13 Afternoon | Katy Prairie Preserve Tour. | 713-523-6135 http://www.katyprairie.org/events.html or info@katyprairie.org | |
| Saturday, May 20 , 2006 - 10 am | Carnivorous Plants at Jesse Jones Park. Come visit the park's carnivorous plant bog and learn about the many varieties of plants that turn the tables on the animal world, how they attract and capture prey. FREE. | 281-446-8588. | |
| Sunday, May 21 2 pm | "What's Bugging You?" at Jesse Jones Park. Join wildlife biologist Don Olhausen for a discussion on "winged jewels" (butterflies) and other insects of the woodland forest, followed by a walk to view them in the wild. FREE. | 281-446-8588 | |
| Thursday, May 25 , Noon - 3 pm | This Garden is for the Birds by Mark Klym, sponsored by Heartwood Chapter MNs at Mercer Arboretum. Mark will discuss how we can, with simple changes to our landscape provide not only a dining room, but a full home for birds in the urban and suburban backyard. | heartwoodnaturalists@earthlink.net | |
| Saturday, June 10 , 10 am | Bites, Stings & Itches at Jesse Jones Park. Learn about summer outdoor hazards such as poison ivy, venomous snakes, and dangerous arthropods. Information includes how to avoid bites and stings and treating the effects. FREE. | 281-446-8588 | |
| Saturday, June 24 , 10 am | Geology Walk at Jesse Jones Park. North Harris County geology dept. head, Tom Hobbs explores the park's geologic processes and their relationships with the dynamically changing environment. Learn how geologic processes influence the balance between man and nature. Free but reservations are required beginning June 14. | 281-446-8858. | |

CRADLE OF TEXAS OFFICERS

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| President | Ed Barrios |
| Vice President/Program | John Boettiger |
| Secretary | Alice Sieling |
| Treasurer | Jan Kater |
| State Representative | Barbara Burkhardt |
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| 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) |