

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST



CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER Chapter News – August 2009 Editor, Mary Helen Israel

President's Message, Dave Brandes

Our fall Matagorda trip has been postponed until next spring. I solicited comments from the folks that were signed up for the trip and have heard back from most. Everyone was unanimous in wanting to cancel the fall trip due to drought conditions on the island. This is consistent with Doc and Martha McAlister's latest thoughts, which are "Our feeling is that the continued hot, dry weather makes an island trip this fall almost useless. There will be very little to see and there is your important point about damage to the island from walking around on it."

September brings the ninth annual Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza with Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in Lake Jackson. This event is every Saturday from 8:00 to noon and features lectures, plant sales, banding and, of course, watching the hummers and butterflies. Cecilia Riley and her team are looking for volunteers to help with the event. I'll pass out a sign-up sheet at our general meeting.

Ruby Lewis has successfully completed the summer library programs. She and her team conducted both a reptile program and a program using Sea Center's education trunk at all 11 of our county libraries over a 2 month period for a total of 22 programs, reaching 1600 children and adults. A big "Thank You" to Ruby and her 25 (yes, 25!) volunteers.

Membership, Jerry Eppner

Through July, Chapter members have turned in total of 4544 hrs in 2009. Since the chapter started, members have volunteered 74,233 hours of time. Time submissions have been pretty slow, but maybe those summer doldrums have just gotten to a few of us. For August, I would like to recognize the following milestones: New Intern Certification – John Battle; 2009 Recertification – Betty Bouley, Neal McClain and Roy Morgan. Congratulations to all.

Training Chair Report, Laura Brandes

Interns: A big welcome to our newest TMN Interns: Kay Boegner, Ken and Marian Colura, Janet Jackson Ellis, Marlies Greenwood, Tim Meuth, Dogle Oliver, Kim Skipworth, Charen Teague and Sheila Williams. These ten (10) individuals will be joining those Interns who continue to work on becoming a TMN. These Interns include Stephanie Bradford, Elaine Crews, Joanna Harlan, Mary Holler, Don McCreight, Sonia Nimitz, Don Rosebury and Kathy Speights.

Remember to welcome these 18 Interns into the Cradle of Texas organization and to offer assistance in their training or progress toward Certification whenever possible.

Since January 2009 we have welcomed seven new TMNers of which six have Certified.

This year's Intern Training program is a "**pilot**" and, as such, there have been plenty of "glitches" and numerous "tweaks". Without the input and patience from each person going through this new approach, the TMN-COT would not have the energy and enthusiasm that these people have brought to the organization. The 2009 Interns are superb-ulous and deserve a big "**Thank you for all that you have done and continue to do**".

2009-2010 Intern Training Calendar: This is the FINAL document that schedules all of the required and optional classes/fieldwork that an Intern can use to set their personal training schedule. This document is posted on the website for your information.

New criteria for this period will require each Intern to "reserve" their spot in a class or event at least 30 days in advance. This is necessary so that the class size is sufficient to warrant the time necessary for the Instructor(s) to prepare their presentations and materials. Each required class is scheduled twice--once in the Fall and again in the Spring. If the 1st class is canceled then the Interns will have the 2nd training opportunity.

New TMN Brochure: As there were no more brochures in stock, we took advantage of this situation and developed a new quad-fold handout that includes a ready-to-mail Interest card. The Board has reviewed the brochure draft and made several corrections. There will be a limited number of copies available at the August meeting for your information and/or comment. If you miss out, see Laura Brandes.

Hopefully, we will have a quantity of copies by September which we can distribute to specific locations such as Academy, the Bass Pro Shop, the eleven (11) Brazoria County libraries, etc. Naturally, each COT member will want several to use in your recruiting activities.

"Bats" and the Waugh Bridge: The September 9th general meeting will have a presentation on "Bats" by Diana Foss as our AT. This will be followed by a Field Trip on September 12th (Saturday) to Waugh Bridge in Houston at 6:30 p.m. The AT will count as 2-hours Class and the visit to Waugh Bridge will count as 2-hours Field for the

current Interns-in-training. At his time there are fourteen (14) reservations for the Houston trek.

We are opening the Waugh Bridge experience to **ALL** COT Members. Diana Foss will be joining us with more information on this specific bat colony. We plan to sit along the bank, have a picnic dinner and enjoy the bats' flight. If you want to join the group, please email Laura (ljb823@comcast.net) with the number of persons in your group. You will need to bring dinner, a blanket to sit upon, binoculars and camera. (For your information, there is a Subway located nearby.) Sodas and water will be provided.

A location map will be sent by September 6th for those who have registered. If you have any questions, please ask the Training Director (Laura).

Attachments

Two attachments are included with this Newsletter:

August09-Attach-1.pdf - Minutes of the July General Meeting by Joan Simonsen

August09-Attach-2.pdf - This month's Cultural History column by Neal McLain

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