

Minutes of the COT GENERAL MEETING,  
WEDNESDAY JANUARY 12, 2011  
BRAZOSPORT MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCE.

Start Time: 9:00                      48 Members and Interns present.                      2 Guests present.

President Barbara Burkhardt called the meeting to order, then thanked the Sea Shell Searchers of Brazoria County for allowing us to hold our chapter meeting among their vast display of sea shells in the Brazosport Museum of Natural Science.

The president then noted that the Cradle of Texas Chapter will be celebrating our tenth anniversary this year, and that we could expect a special recognition of this milestone in September. She noted that COT was the fourth TMN chapter, following San Antonio, Galveston, and Houston. COT remains unique in that we are the only chapter to have our founding sponsors, Connie Stolte of Sea Center Texas and Rich Tillman of TAM's AgriLife®, also certify as Master Naturalists. She referred the membership to a very complete description in our latest newsletter of the creation of our chapter, written by founding member Tom Collins.

COT remains as one of the top five TMN chapters contributing volunteer hours (VT); a week before the deadline for submitting our annual report to the state, we have submitted over 11,000 hours of VT. It was noted that at least three of our most active members have yet to submit hours, and a special personal encouragement will be made for them to do so.

Hospitality Chair Jerry Krampota thanked the museum staff for supplying coffee for this meeting and he thanked those COT members who provided food for last year's events. Jerry circulated a sign-up sheet for providing food at the 2011 general meetings, noting that we average about 50 attendees. The final schedule of meeting hosts will be posted on our web site, and hosts for the next month's meeting will be published in our newsletter.

Since the Membership Chairman was absent, awards were not presented. However, Barbara Burkhardt noted that milestones were reached by Janet Clemenson (500 hours) and by Laura Brandes (2500 hours).

Training Chair Laura Brandes reported on ads that have begun to appear in local newspapers that promote our upcoming training sessions which begin on February 2nd. Thus far, four couples have indicated an interest; these, plus folks currently in training, could result in 14 interns going through training. Laura noted that we tend to get most

of our interns from personal contact<sup>1</sup>, followed by responses to our brochure. Newspaper ads come in third in their recruitment effectiveness. Laura thus urged the membership to personally recruit, and she passed out packets of brochures for members to distribute at assigned places around Brazoria County and at Brazos Bend State Park.

The membership was advised to check the COT newsletter for upcoming training classes. Laura noted that many of our classes will be taught by our member; Kirby Rapstein will teach trees, Barbara Burkhardt will teach botany, Ed Barrios will teach entomology, and Roy Morgan and Charlie Clements will teach a new ichthyology class. The class on our coastal prairies will be taught in March by Kirk Feuerbacher of the Nature Conservatory, which will shortly take title to the Nash Prairie. COT members may receive Advanced Training credit on an approved subject if it has been more than two years since they took a class. Members are welcome to join in training classes.

President Burkhardt advised members to use the calendar on our web site since we will once more have a year full of activities. One of these events will be the three-day 2011 Migration Celebration (MC11) that will begin with the traditional Friday kickoff at Freeport's RiverPlace featuring silent auction and dinner fund raisers and keynote speaker Kathy Adams Clark addressing techniques of taking nature photography. Ed Barrios will outline the full MC11 plan at February's general meeting.

Denis Mudderman passed out brochures promoting the MC11 photo contest and urged COT members to submit, noting that Cathy Adams Clark and Larry Ditto, who will judge the contest, will spend an evening with submitters reviewing submitted photos.

Neal McLain reminded the membership of DunesDay at our local beaches this Saturday.

Sandy Henderson mentioned the Gulf Coast Wildlife Rescue's workshop on February 22nd.

On February 5th at the Center for the Arts and Sciences, the Scholastic Bowl will once again feature COT's Nerdy Naturalists, a.k.a. Jerry Eppner, Barbara Burkhardt, and Ed Barrios.

Treasurer Sandy Henderson reminded members that dues are due for 2011, \$10 for an individual or \$15 for a family.

Tom Morris mentioned that perhaps 25 COT members participated in the several Christmas bird counts. The chapter whooping crane trip next week perhaps have

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<sup>1</sup> This dominance of personal contact has been consistent since the founding of COT.

variable weather; thus far all but 30 of the Canadian whoopers have arrived in Aransas, including 46 of the 47 chicks hatched up north.

Torry Tvedt invited the COT membership to attend the Sunday, January 23rd meeting of the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges at the Discovery Center, where members will vote on the membership of the board the use of remote video systems will be demonstrated; the meeting begins at 2:30.

Steve Zilliox commented that the May 1st chapter trip to Matagorda Island is not fully booked.

Laura Brandes led the chapter in thanking Tom Morris and Steve Zilliox for setting up these trips

Rich Tillman introduced guests, Gretchen and Tom Wright, Master Gardeners from Pearland.

Carolyn Schlein introduced lead speaker Patty Humbird to begin our AT topic about shells. Other speakers included Wayne Humbird and Frank Petway, President of the Sea Shell Searchers of Brazoria county.

Submitted by

Marty Cornell, Secretary

Texas Master Naturalist, Cradle of Texas Chapter