

Minutes of the COT GENERAL MEETING,
WEDNESDAY May 11, 2011
Gulf Coast Bird Observatory, Lake Jackson, Texas

Start Time: 9:00 34 Members and Interns signed the attendance list. 1 Guest, Andy Smith from the Mid-Coast Chapter, was present.

President Barbara Burkhardt opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

Barbara announced that Jeanne Manry has completed her intern training, Marlies Greenwood has certified, Don Rosebury has recertified, Jane Eppner has achieved 500 hours of volunteer time and that Barbara Burkhardt has surpassed 2,500 hours of volunteer service.

Ed Barrios reported that a record 170 volunteers served at the 2011 Migration Celebration (MC11), including 47 COT Master Naturalists. Approximately 100 of the better photos from the MC11 photo contest will be on display during the month of June at the Brazosport Art League hall in the Center for Arts and Sciences.

Ed also reminded the membership of the May 21st work morning at the Dow Woods to install edging along the path of the southeast trail. A hot dog lunch will be served.

The membership was reminded of the June 20-23 summer camp at Camp Mohawk where COT will be leading activities for 30 participants, in partnership with the Brazoria County Parks Department.

Ruby Lewis noted that volunteers are still needed for the June programs for children at our county libraries. She referred the members to our website under environmental education for directions to each library.

Ruby and Mary Helen Israel are coordinating with Tom West of the Brazoria County Library System to provide speakers for the BCLS "Nature Night" programs. Those interested in presenting an approximately 45 minute program should contact Ruby or Mary Helen.

The recent chapter trip to Matagorda Island instigated discussion on permissible VT to be reported for travel. It was clarified that the actual travel time may be reported to chapter events, but not to exceed AT+VT accrued at the event -- in this case 6.5 hours.

Corrie Bowen reported that budget cuts will eliminate about 146 positions at AgriLife Extension Program, including that of 31 PhD specialists. It was not known if Barron Rector's position would be affected. Corrie explained that the impact of the cut of \$1.4 million in state funding was doubled because this initiative would eliminate another \$1.4 million in matching federal funds. It is our county commissioners who have decided to not replace our county marine agent and part of their cost reduction measures.

Mary Helen Israel attended her first DEEP session at the Brazoria NWR with her granddaughter, and reported that her granddaughter found the whole experience to be quite exciting. Mary Helen thanked the DEEP volunteers, most of whom are TMN-COT members, for their efforts.

Bob Honig, environmental consultant and past member of the Board of Directors of the Katy Prairie Conservancy, gave an excellent presentation on dragonflies and damselflies, followed by a walk around the pond at GCBO to observe these insects.

The meeting was adjourned around 11:30, following the field work.

Submitted by Marty Cornell, Secretary, Texas Master Naturalist, Cradle of Texas Chapter