

Minutes of the GENERAL MEETING of the
Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter

WEDNESDAY November 9, 2011

AgriLIFE Extension Building, Angleton, Texas

Attendance: 40 Active Members, 2 guests: Warren Pruess and our guest speaker, Thomas Adams

Start Time: President Barbara Burkhardt opened the meeting at 8:57 am.

Membership: Barbara Burkhardt, in the vacation absence of Membership Chair Jerry Eppner, presented awards to Kathleen Murray (certification) and to Kerry Magee (recertification). Barbara then explained the heightened importance of turning in volunteer hours because they reflect the impact of volunteerism at this time of cuts in state budgets. She also noted that the value of our hours will shortly be increased from the current \$10 per hour to over \$20 per hour, which will match the rate recognized by the federal government.

2011 State Meeting: Barbara Burkhardt reviewed the annual meeting of Texas Master Naturalists at Mo Ranch, beginning with the first prize for chapter scrap books won by Mary Holler and Kathy Speights of COT. Twelve scrapbooks were entered in the contest. Our chapter project on the Dow Woods trails did not win an award. Sonny Arnold, who recently retired as the assistant state coordinator for TMN, was very appreciative of our chapter's gifts to him, a shadow box of the life stages of the Lightning Whelk and an encyclopedia of shells.

Barbara announced that the 2012 TMN state meeting will be in October at Camp Allen near Natchitoches. Next year's recertification pin will be a bat, in step with the United Nation's declaration of 2012 as "The Year of the Bat."

Chapter Elections: The nominating committee of Dave Brandes, Ed Barrios, and Joan Simonsen presented their recommended of chapter officers and committee chairs for next year.

2012 Slate of Officers

<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>INCUMBENT</u>	<u>NOMINEE</u>
President	Barbara Burkhardt	Dave Brandes Barbara Burkhardt
Vice President	Mary Holler	Mary Holler
Secretary	Marty Cornell	Marty Cornell
Treasurer	Sandy Henderson	Sandy Henderson
Membership Director	Jerry Eppner	Jerry Eppner
Training Director		Ed Johnson
State Representative	Ed Barrios	Ed Barrios
Past President	Dave Brandes	
Committees	Incumbent	Nominee
VT Chair	Neal McLain	Neal McLain
AT Chair	Tom Morris	Tom Morris
Outreach Chair	Ruby Lewis	Ruby Lewis
Chapter Host	Jerry Krampota	Jerry Krampota
Webmaster	Neal McLain	Neal McLain
Newsletter	Mary Helen Israel	Mary Helen Israel

Elections will occur at the December 14th general meeting.

GCBO Project, Bird/Bottomland Blitz: Tom Morris met with Felipe Chavez and Carol Jones at GCBO to discuss our involvement with them in developing and executing this program. GCBO agreed to provide the publicity and promotion (indeed the announcement of the "Blitz" was made by Carol Jones in her column in the Saturday, November 5th edition of *The Facts*.) We agreed to a six-month trial program, starting on Saturday, December 10th, from 9:00 to 11:00, and continue on the second Saturday of the next five months (except for April, where the program will be given on the first Saturday). The first topic will be a mini Christmas bird count (led by Tom, Jerry Eppner, and Tom Taroni), teaching the objectives and protocol of such counts. Kirby Rapstein, with Mike Lange of the USFWS, will cover Trees and Shrubs at the January 14th session; Warren Pruess will discuss Lichens and Mushrooms on February 11th; Ed Barrios will teach "Insects of the Forest" on March 12th, GCBO's Cecilia Riley and Carol Jones will cover migration on April 7th, and Thomas Adams of the USFWS will address wildflowers and prairie habitat on May 12th. Tom Morris passed around a volunteer sheet for chapter members to help in these sessions.

GCBO will insure that a staff or board member will be present at each session, and will develop docent guides for the topics.

It is thought that each session would be worth one hour of advanced training for attending COT members.

Bird Banding at Big Pond has been a ten-year project engaging many COT members. Jim Renfro, with his permit, leads this effort. Jim invited interested members to participate, although the current team is sufficient to handle the workload.

Outreach: Barbara Burkhardt reviewed the upcoming COT outreach programs, which include Family Day at Hanson Riverside County Park on November 12th and Lake Jackson's Festival of Lights on November 19th. Please see the chapter web site for details.

General Meeting Topics: Barbara Burkhardt requested suggestions from the membership for topics to be presented at the general meetings. In January, Dave Brandes will discuss plankton, and Barron Rector will speak on April 11th to a combined meeting of the intern training class and the general membership. Barron's focus will be on our coastal prairies.

Christmas Bird Counts: Tom Morris invited the membership to participate in the many bird counts that will be held around Brazoria County during the month of December. Details are provided on our website.

Thomas Adams, botanist at the Texas Mid-coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex of the US Fish and Wildlife Service, gave a presentation on edible wild plants of Brazoria County, which included many samples for the membership to sample. Credit for one hour of advanced training may be taken by attendees.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 am.

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