



MAY 2012

# Chapter News

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## A MESSAGE FROM "the PREZ"

**Thanks to all our great  
TMN-COT volunteers for  
making the 2012 Migration  
Celebration a great success.**

A few high points:

- ☺ Served almost 200 persons at the kick-off dinner.
- ☺ Increased sales at silent auction and nature store.
- ☺ Saturday's attendance was approximately 1000 persons.
- ☺ Sunday attendance was a new record, 632 persons.

I don't know the total of the monies earned to help the Friends organization, but it was a successful event in every way. Ed and Marty will have a full report next month

The DEEP program also benefited from very successful bake sales at both the Wal-Mart location and the Migration Celebration. It is so rewarding to work with folks who settle for only the very best results.

A really **special** fun time is coming up at our meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>. The 2012 Intern Class will be presenting their class projects. Most will be graduating and we want to celebrate with a special lunch.

We also want to honor the 2009, 2010 and 2011 TMN-COT graduates, so a **special invitation** is extended for all to attend. Because of the structure of the classes those three years, graduates didn't get the benefit of a class project and special graduation lunch. We will make up for this on Wednesday.

### Class of 2009

Irama Wesselman, James Wesselman, Howard Allen, Mary Holler, Ed Johnson, Donald McCreight, Denis Mudderman, Don Rosebury, John Battle, Elaine Crews, Joanna Harlan, Marlies Greenwood, Kathy Speights, and Shelia Williams

### Class of 2010

Bob Long, Bette Long, Jeanne Manry, Kathleen Murray, Don Van Dragt and "Charmin" Charlie Clements

### Class of 2011

Donna Graham and Leo O'Gorman

Everyone come join the fun and celebration!

*The Prez*

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281-756-155 8 (Alvin)  
979-864-156 6 (Fax)  
<http://tmn-cot.org>

## Upcoming events

Sunday, May 6, 1:00 PM

Nash Prairie Open House

Volunteers Needed

Approved for Volunteer Time

See Page 8 for details

Tuesday, May 8, 4:00 PM

Sea Turtle Patrol Spotter Training

San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge

Approved for Advanced Training

See Page 9 for details

Wednesday, May 9, 8:30 AM

General Meeting and Advanced Training Intern Training Class

Topic - Intern Project Reports

~~Approved for 1.00 Hour Volunteer Time~~

~~Approved for Advanced Training~~

See Page 4 for details

The entire morning session (business meeting plus project reports) is approved for 3.00 hours Volunteer time. Not approved for AT

Wednesday, May 9, 1:00 PM

Advanced Training Opportunity

Topic - Using Google Earth to Identify Wetlands

Speaker: Heather Biggs,

Approved for 1.50 hour Advanced Training

See Page 5 for details

Thursday, May 10, 9:00 AM

Friday, May 11, 9:00 AM

Beach Fest Coastal Expo

Location: Matagorda Bay Nature Park

Volunteers needed!

Approved for Volunteer Time

See Page 8 for details

Saturday, May 12, 9:00 AM

Birds and Bottomlands Blitz

Topic: Insects

Approved for Advanced Training

Approved for Volunteer Hours (if you help)

Thursday, May 17, 9:00 AM

Invasives Species Training: Invaders of Texas

Approved for Advanced Training

See Page 6 for details

Thursday, May 19, 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Monthly Bird Banding at GCBO

<http://www.gcbo.org/html/BirdBandingBrochure1.pdf>

Friday, May 26, 3:00 PM

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges Meeting

Topic TBA

BNWR Discovery Center

See calendar for details

<http://tinyurl.com/87jcgr7>

Monday-Thursday June 4-8, 9:00am - 12:00pm

Camp Mohawk Nature Camp

Location: Camp Mohawk County Park

Volunteers needed!

Approved for Volunteer Time

See Page 9 for details

## Birds and Bottomland Blitz

By Tom Morris and Ed Barrios

This month's topic is "Aquatic Insects and Invertebrates" led by Ed Barrios, Jerry Eppner and Dave Brandes. Ed, Jerry, and Dave are members of the Cradle of Texas Chapter

With recent rains, insects are making a comeback. Ed will give an introduction to insects, and specifically aquatic insects. Jerry and Dave will lead the group in the use of nets to catch some aquatic insects and invertebrates.

We will identify some of the more common aquatic insects seen in the pond, such as dragonflies and damselflies.

Finally we will use a projecting microscope to show closeups of aquatic insects and discuss fascinating ways aquatic insects survive in the water

Birds and Bottomlands Blitz is a co-operative effort of GCBO and Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter. The program is intended to make GCBO more accessible to the public.

Today's program is the last in the 2012 series.

Birds and Bottomlands Blitz is approved for Advanced Training by the TMN-COT Chapter. The number of approved hours will be announced at the meeting, and will be available later at <http://tmn-cot-calendar.blogspot.com/>



Ed Barrios



Dave Brandes



Jerry Eppner

MAY 2012						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

**Texas Master Naturalist Program  
Cradle of Texas Chapter  
General Meeting and Advanced Training  
Wednesday, May 9, 2012  
AgriLife Building, Angleton**

<b>8:30 AM - 9:00 AM</b>	<b>Fun and Fellowship</b> Refreshment Team: Jim Calvert, Jeanne Manry, Candace Novak, Gerald Forrest
<b>9:00 AM - 9:30 AM</b>	<b>General Meeting</b> <del>This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour Volunteer Time.</del>
<b>9:30 AM - 11:30 AM</b>	<b>Morning session</b> <b>Intern Project Reports and graduation</b> Members of the TMN-COT Intern Class of 2012 have conducted independent research projects as part of their training. During this meeting, each team will present a report. Following the reports, 2012 interns will receive their certification pins and chapter T-shirts, and interns from the classes of 2010 and 2011 will be recognized for their efforts. See <b>Page 4</b> for details. <del>This training is approved for Advanced Training for current members; the number of approved hours will be announced at the meeting.</del>
<b>11:30 AM - 1:00 PM</b>	<b>Lunch provided by chapter members.</b> If you'd like to bring something for the lunch, please contact Marty Cornell at <a href="mailto:cornell@refugefriends.org">cornell@refugefriends.org</a> or 979-297-2235.
<b>1:00 PM - 3:00 PM</b>	<b>Afternoon session:</b> <b>"Using Google Earth to Identify and Map Wetlands"</b> <b>Leader:</b> Heather Biggs, Geo-Information Specialist with Texas Sea Grant and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service; adjunct instructor at University of Houston See <b>Page 5</b> for details. . <i>This training is approved for 1.50 hour Advanced Training</i>



The Intern Class of 2012. From left: Jim Hillis, Pete Romfh, Peggy Romfh, Jim Renfro (class adviser), Julia Geisler, Mike Mullins, Neeta Allen, Leo Novak, Ed Johnson (Training Director).

## General Meeting and Advanced Training Morning Session: Intern Project Reports and graduation

By Ed Johnson, Training Director

Members of the TMN-COT Intern Class of 2012 have been organized into three teams. Each team has conducted an independent research project and will present a research report at this meeting.

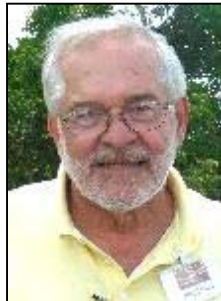
### **TEAM A:** *Pond Life: a survey of a fresh water pond* at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

Advisers: Dave Brandes and Ed Barrios

Assistant Volunteers: Joan Simonsen, Carolyn May-Monie



Leo Novak



Jim Hillis



Mike Mullins

**Team Members:**

### **TEAM B:** *Flora, Fauna survey of Dow Woods Unit*

Adviser: Marty Cornell

Assistant Volunteers: Kirby Rapstein, Candace Novak



George Bettinger



Anne Bettinger



Julia Geisler



Neeta Allen

**Team Members:**

### **TEAM C:** *Beach Ecosystem, from shallow tide waters to dunes - Bryan Beach*

Advisor: Gerald Forrest

Assistant Volunteer: Kathleen Murray, Joanna Harlan



Peggy Romfh



Pete Romfh

**Team Members:**

## General Meeting and Advanced Training Afternoon Session: Using Google Earth to Identify and Map Wetlands

By Dave Brandes, Past President



**Leader:** Heather Biggs, Geo-Information Specialist with Texas Sea Grant and the Texas AgriLife Extension Service; Adjunct Instructor of Geography at University of Houston Clear Lake.



This will be hands-on training, so bring your laptop if you have one (be sure the battery is charged!). This is not a requirement, just a way to follow along with what she shows us. All of this will apply to your home desktops as well. This approved AT will last about 90 minutes with one break.

We will have a wireless network set up in the auditorium for the duration of training.

**PLEASE INSTALL GOOGLE EARTH ON YOUR COMPUTER PRIOR TO TRAINING!**

In this workshop, we will:

- Learn about the US Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory Database
- Learn how to map floodplains and watersheds fast and simple with the click of a button!
- Use the National Wetland Inventory to quickly monitor wetland loss over time!
- Learn how to view historical imagery (aerials as far back as the 1930's)

This is a FREE workshop. However, a \$10 donation would be appreciated to cover Galveston Baykeepers costs.

You can download Google Earth at <http://www.google.com/earth/download/ge/agree.html>

For questions regarding this workshop, please contact Dave Brandes

[djbrandes@comcast.net](mailto:djbrandes@comcast.net)

979-265-3813

Precinct 2 County Commissioner and Texas Cooperative Extension Service building in 1995. From Google Earth. Accessed April 21, 2012.

Note that the Extension Service was then known as "Cooperative Extension," the term originally established by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914. See <http://tmn-cot.org/organization/our-chapter/>



## Advanced Training: *Invaders of Texas*

### May 17, 9:00AM - 4:00PM

By Dave Brandes, Satellite Leader and Past President

May brings *Invaders of Texas* training on how to identify and report invasives and their location. This program has been sponsored and operated by the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center for several years. Our Cradle of Texas Chapter has operated a satellite **COT Invaders** program since 2009. Data Submitted to the database rolls into the national USDA invasive species database. Jessica Strickland will be our workshop leader.

This year we are expanding the program to include not only plants, but invasive pest reporting as well. Training will be at AgriLife on May 17 from 9:00AM to 4:00PM. An interest form will be passed out at our next meeting for those that would like to attend. This is approved AT and volunteer time is approved for those participating in the monitoring program as part of our COT Invaders project.

To sign up for this training, go to: <http://txmn.org/cradle/files/2012/05/InvasivesSignup.pdf>

Below is our tentative agenda. *Please note that you will need to bring a lunch and drinks.*

Time	Activity	Instructor	Chapter
9:00 – 9:15	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS	DB	
9:15 – 10:00	INTRODUCTION TO INVASIVE SPECIES AND THE INVADERS PROGRAM: General overview of invasive species issues and activities in Texas, and an overview of the Invaders of Texas Citizen Science Program (PowerPoint).	JS	1&2
10:00 – 10:30	DEMONSTRATION: Data collection and data entry demonstration.	JS	1
10:30 – 10:45	FIELD PREPARATION: Group projects, field safety, field equipment.	JS	3
10:45 – 11:00	BREAK		
11:00 – 12:00	SPECIES SELECTION: Web resources, USDA Codes, Invasive Species Lists, Identification Lab	JS, DB	4
12:00 – 12:45	LUNCH		
12:45 – 1:15	DATA COLLECTION: Data sheets and definitions, frequently asked questions.	JS	5
1:15 – 1:30	USING GPS: What it is, receiver set up, decimal degrees.	JS	6
1:30 – 2:00	DIGITAL IMAGING: Tips and techniques for taking verifiable images.	JS	7
2:00 – 3:00	FIELD TRIP	JS	
3:00 – 3:45	DATA ENTRY TUTORIAL: Logging in, data entry, and photo upload procedures.	JS	8
3:45 – 4:00	WORKSHOP EVALUATION and CLOSING	DB	

## Membership Report

By Jerry Eppner, Membership Chair

As of May 2, thirty members have submitted time sheets. A total of 2379 VT hours have been reported so far. Excellent!

Members to be recognized at our May meeting will include Ellis Burkhardt, Jim Calvert, Jerry Eppner, Leo O'Gorman, Kirby Rapstein – all for recertifying for 2012.

Also, we will have four 2012 interns who have accrued enough VT and AT to be certified upon graduation. They include Neeta Allen, Mike Mullins, Peggy Romfh and Pete Romfh.

Congratulations to all on your volunteer contributions.

## Volunteers Needed!

By Neal McLain,  
Volunteer Service Coordinator

If you need volunteer hours, this is the month! During May and June, we'll be participating in four events that need volunteer help:

- Nash Prairie Open House
- Coastal Expo/Beach Fest
- Camp Mohawk Nature Camp
- Sea Turtle Patrol

See pages 8 and 9 for details.

## The Fake Photo that Fooled the USFWS

By Neal McLain

The photo at the right is a fake. It's been bouncing around the internet for years.<sup>[1]</sup> The original source is unknown, but it still keeps popping up in emails and on various websites. Some reports claim that it was taken in Florida; other reports claim it was taken in Australia.

A study of the photo reveals several clues to indicate that it's a fake: the sign doesn't fit the perspective of the rest of the photo; the text is Times Roman (most real road signs use sanserif fonts); the text is left justified (real signs typically center text); and the caption is just "too perfect" for the situation.

Nevertheless, fake or not, it just keeps popping up. In its most recent incarnation, Joanna Webb, National Friends and Partnership Coordinator at the National Wildlife Refuge System, Division of Visitor Services and Communications, posted it on the Friends of National Wildlife Refuges Facebook page.<sup>[2]</sup> She stated that "A refuge employee had actually told me that the image was taken at Alligator River NWR and that is the only reason it was used." In response,



"HIKERS and BIKERS Move to the side of the road when a vehicle approaches"

Ann Marie Salewski Chapman, a former USFWS employee at Alligator River NWR, wrote, "I worked on Alligator River for almost 7 years, and can testify that it didn't come from there! No way would Alligator River have that many gathered in one spot. You were lucky to see just one on a canoe tour!

And that's the story of the "Hikers and Bikers" fake photo. If somebody emails you a copy some day, now you know how to respond.

[1] <http://message.snopes.com/showthread.php?t=49785>

[2] <https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofwildliferefuges/>

## Volunteer Help Wanted

### NASH PRAIRIE OPEN HOUSE MAY 6, 2012

Submitted by Susan Conaty  
St. Mary's Episcopal Church, West Columbia

**Nash Prairie Preserve will be open to the public on Sunday, May 6. This event is part of the West Columbia Tourism Council's "Be A Tourist In Your Town" in where thirteen historic sites will be open free to the public.**

**Date . . . . . May 6, 1:00pm – 5:00pm**  
**Location .. Nash Prairie Preserve**  
**GPS . . . . . 29.2367545, -95.5910754**  
**Map . . . . . <http://g.co/maps/5em5s>**

Nash Prairie Preserve will be open to the public from 1:00 to 5:00 pm. Volunteers are needed as tour leaders to explain "Prairie 101" and to do some plant identification. Volunteers do not have to be experts, just know a little more than the general public.

Volunteers may participate for one- or two-hour segments, or for any period desired. When not leading a tour, volunteers are free to wander the Prairie on their own.

Since it is an "open house" event, we are not sure how many will be at the Prairie at any one time. So if TMN-COT members will call or e-mail me and let us know what times they want to volunteer, we will fill in the gaps.

Also we would just like to get the word out that Nash Prairie will be open to the public that day. If you have questions

To volunteer, please call Susan Conaty at 979-345-3285 (home), 979-236-2573 (cell), or [stmaryswc@centurylink.net](mailto:stmaryswc@centurylink.net).

This event is approved for volunteer time by TMN-COT for members who assist any of the above organizations. You may claim:

- All time spent at the Nash Prairie while conducting a tour (but not just wandering around on your own).
- Travel time to the Nash Prairie (not to exceed the number of VT hours claimed).

**Please code your timesheet "OTHER."**

### COASTAL EXPO/BEACH FEST MAY 10-11, 2012

Submitted by David Plunkett and Connie Stolte

**Coastal Expo/Beach Fest is an annual two-day event sponsored by Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and the Lower Colorado River Authority for grade-school students primarily from Bay City ISD. This year, TPWD expects 500 students each day. Volunteers are needed to assist with the planning and execution of the event.**

**Date . . . . . May 10 and 11, 9:00am – 3:00pm**  
**Location .. Matagorda Bay Nature Park**  
**GPS . . . . . 28.6028159, -95.976541**  
**Map . . . . . <http://g.co/maps/tfemv>**

Three TMN-COT cooperating organizations need volunteers for this event:

- **Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges** (FOBWR) will host programs about microscopes, animal tracks, animal scat, and animal tracks. To volunteer, please contact David Plunkett at 979-297-3322 or by email [plunkett@refugefriends.org](mailto:plunkett@refugefriends.org)  
**Timesheet code: "USFWS."**
- **Sea Center Texas** (SCT) will host the TPWD Coastal Expo events. To volunteer please contact Connie Stolte at 979-292-0100 ext 23 or by email at [connie.stolte@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:connie.stolte@tpwd.state.tx.us).  
**Timesheet code: "SCT."**
- **Texas Parks & Wildlife Coastal Expo** (TPWD) needs help for several other tasks. Volunteers are needed to accept spur-of-the-moment assignments. To volunteer, please contact Kris Shipman at 512-389-8737 or [Kris.shipman@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:Kris.shipman@tpwd.state.tx.us)  
**Timesheet code: "TPWD"**

This event is approved for volunteer time by TMN-COT for members who assist any of the above organizations. You may claim:

- All time spent at the Nature Park including setup and takedown
- Round-trip travel time to the Nature Park (not to exceed the number of VT hours claimed).

**Please code your timesheet using the timesheet codes indicated above.**



## Volunteer Help Wanted

### CAMP MOHAWK NATURE CAMP JUNE 4-8, 2012

Submitted by Ed Barrios  
Camp Mohawk Nature Camp Chair

*Camp Mohawk Nature Camp is sponsored by Brazoria County Parks Department. Nature Camp is unique among the environmental education programs in that TMN-COT supports. It is a 4-day event in which the same kids attend every day.*

**Date . . . . . June 4-8, 9:00am – 12:00pm**  
**Location . . . . . Camp Mohawk County Park**  
**GPS . . . . . 29.3345531, -95.2854484**  
**Map . . . . . <http://g.co/maps/3sq8x>**

Each day has a different theme and the activities support the theme for the day. The kids are divided into three groups, based age, and each group participates in three 50-minute activities every morning.

We need a few folks to work on the planning of the event and we need folks that will help with the implementation. Some of the typical events include Birds and Bird Rehab, Owl Pellets, Pond Life, Fish Casting, Fishing, Snakes/Gators/Turtles, Bug Sweeping, Animal Tracks, Archery and more.

This is a very rewarding opportunity teach the same group of kids every day. They are so excited to be there. You kind of get attached to these little people.

Our first planning meeting will be the week of May 14th.

To volunteer, please contact Ed Barrios at 979-297-1815 (home), 979-415-4998 (cell) or by email [ed77566@comcast.net](mailto:ed77566@comcast.net)

This event is approved for volunteer time by TMN-COT for members who assist with the planning and execution of the event. You may claim:

- All time spent at the Camp Mohawk including setup and takedown
- All time spent in planning activities.
- Round-trip travel time to meeting locations and Camp Mohawk (not to exceed the number of VT hours claimed).

**Please code your timesheet "BCPD."**

### SEA TURTLE PATROL MAY - JULY

Submitted by Kevin Brown  
San Bernard Sea Turtle Patrol

*Sea Turtle Patrol is an ongoing project sponsored by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The project is administered by San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge staff.*

**Date . . . . . Ongoing during nesting season**  
**Location . . . . . Gulf of Mexico Beaches**

Objectives of the Sea Turtle Program:

- Locate Kemp's ridley's nest to excavate the eggs and transport them to an incubation facility on the Padre National Seashore.
- Locate any live turtles stranded and transport them for rehabilitation at the NOAA facility in Galveston.
- Document any dead stranded turtles and relay the information to Padre National Seashore for their studies.

We accomplish this mission with the help of volunteers who have taken a one-hour Spotter training class at San Bernard Wildlife Refuge Headquarters. Once the training is complete, volunteers may patrol the beach by walking, by a bicycle, or by driving a USFWS off-road vehicle. Agency training is required before using any USFWS vehicle.

To maximize coverage of the beaches we ask volunteers to access our Google site and to indicate which beach segments they are monitoring that day.

Even if volunteers can't donate more than a couple hours of time a week, that is still a big help. The more eyes we have on the beach the better.

Thank you considering participation. Remember: any help we can get will go directly to benefiting the recovery effort of the Kemp's ridley.

The next spotter training is scheduled for San Bernard Wildlife Refuge on May 8 at 4:00pm.

Participation in this event is approved for volunteer time by TMN-COT for members who participate in patrol. Spotter Training is approved for Advanced Training. You may claim:

- All time spent on patrol (VT) or spotter training (AT).
- Round-trip travel time required for beach patrol or training.

**Please code your timesheet "USFWS."**

## Attachments to Section A

This issue of *Chapter News* has one attachment — Minutes of the April General Meeting  
[http://txmn.org/cradle/files/2012/05/2012-05-Att-1\\_Minutes\\_April.pdf](http://txmn.org/cradle/files/2012/05/2012-05-Att-1_Minutes_April.pdf)

### Reminders about the May General Meeting

- The refreshment team for the morning meeting includes Jim Calvert, Jeanne Manry, Candace Novak, and Gerald Forrest.
- This meeting consists of two sessions, morning and afternoon. All members and interns are invited to enjoy lunch provided by chapter members. Plan on staying for lunch even if you aren't planning to stay for the afternoon training session.

### CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Barbara Burkhart
Vice President/Program	Mary Holler
Secretary	Marty Cornell
Treasurer	Sandy Henderson
State Representative	Ed Barrios
Past President	Dave Brandes
Training Director	Ed Johnson
Membership Director	Jerry Eppner
Volunteer Service Chair	Neal McLain
Advanced Training Chair	Tom Morris
Outreach Chair	Ruby Lewis
Chapter Host	Jerry Krampota
Calendar Editor	Andy Smith
Webmaster	Neal McLain
Intern Representative	Pete Romfh
Newsletter Editor-at large	Mary Helen Israel
Newsletter Columnists	Barbara Burkhardt, Jerry Eppner
Newsletter Production Editor	Neal McLain
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E-mail Listserv	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail">http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail</a>

