



# Chapter News

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## A MESSAGE FROM "the PREZ"

### **BONJOUR MON AMIS:**

Yes, a wonderful time was had by all. I had never had the pleasure and privilege of going to France. I was very impressed with the beautiful countryside and friendly people.

In Normandy, the flax was in bloom and it was cool, rainy and green, with good food and wine. I recommend cruising as a relaxing way to travel.

In Burgundy and Provence, it was hot and sunny with great food and wine. The fields of sunflowers and lavender were awesome, not to mention the beautiful vistas of vineyards along the Rhone Valley. For a gardener, it was absolutely heaven, with the many displays of flowers in public and private spaces.

However, as beautiful as it was, I found myself missing our wonderful wildlife. We saw very few bird species, with the exception of swans and ducks along the rivers. We saw and heard a small black bird with a beautiful song, the European robin. We saw magpies and ravens and one hawk that we couldn't identify. No squirrels, deer, or other wildlife were seen, even though we were in rural areas.

As much as I loved France and enjoyed the wonderful scenery, food and wine, I missed the **diversity** of our beautiful country. To me, the fields and wooded areas would have been more beautiful with birds and/or other wildlife. But then, I'm spoiled because of where I am privileged to live!

We have a very special treat next Wednesday at our regular meeting. Dr. Wayne McAlister and his lovely wife Martha will be with us. I hope everyone will take the opportunity to hear his talk.

July 4<sup>th</sup> fell on our usual board meeting day. If you have any items for the business meeting agenda, please send me e-mail or give me a call.  
See you on the 11<sup>th</sup>.



**The Prez**

*Chapter News* is published by Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter.

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<http://tmn-cot.org>

The Texas Master Naturalist program is coordinated by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife. Texas Master Naturalist programs serve all people without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

## Upcoming events

This list does not include the Summer Library Program. For the Library Program Schedule, see <http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-BCLS-2012>

**Saturday, July 7, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM**

**Fishin' Fiesta**

Freeport Municipal Park - RiverPlace

**Volunteers Needed**

For details see TMN-COT Calendar

<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>

*Approved for Volunteer Time*

**Wednesday, July 11, 8:30 AM**

**General Meeting and Advanced Training**

Topic - TBA

Speaker: Dr. Wayne McAlister

*Approved for 1.00 Hour Volunteer Time*

*Approved for Advanced Training*

**See Page 3 for details**

**Friday, June 13, 5:00 PM**

**Brazos Belle River Excursion**

Fee \$25.00 - Bring snacks

For details see TMN-COT Calendar

<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>

**Saturday, July 14, 8:30 AM**

**TMN Southeast Texas Regional Meeting**

Spring Creek Greenway Nature Center,

Landscaping with native plants to create habitat gardens

**See Attachment 3 for details**

<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>

*Approved for Advanced Training*

**Saturday, July 21, 8:00 AM**

**Monthly Birdbanding at GCBO**

For details see TMN-COT Calendar

<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>

**August 1 - November 15**

**Smith Point Raptor Migration Count**

Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area, Chambers County

For details see TMN-COT Calendar

<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>

*Approved for Volunteer Time*

JULY 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				

**Welcome to the Brazos Belle**

The Brazos Belle is located at "Belle's Landing" at the intersection of the Brazos River and Highway 35 (Southeast corner).

The Brazos Belle is the first paddle-wheeled vessel to operate on the river since late 1880's.

The Brazos Belle offers various historical tours of the river when weather and currents are favorable. She will also be available for charter for social events of all types



**Above:** The Brazos Belle at its home dock on the Brazos River near the SH35 bridge, in East Columbia.



**Right:** Captain Mike Leebron, owner and host.



**Right:** Phil Huxford, Guest Naturalist

These photos were taken in July 2011 during "History Trip on the Brazos Belle" sponsored by Captain Mike Leebron for local historians.

<http://tinyurl.com/BB-July-2011>

**Texas Master Naturalist Program  
Cradle of Texas Chapter  
General Meeting and Advanced Training  
Wednesday, July 11, 2012  
AgriLife Building, Angleton**

<b>8:30 AM - 9:00 AM</b>	<b>Fun and Fellowship</b> Refreshment Team: Mary Helen Israel, Billy Heck, Kirby Rapstein, Sandy Henderson
<b>9:00 AM - 9:30 AM</b>	<b>General Meeting</b> <i>This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour Volunteer Time.</i>
<b>9:30 AM - 11:30 AM</b>	<b>Advanced Training:</b> <b>Topic:</b> TBA <b>Speaker:</b> Wayne McAlister Educator and writer Friend of the TMN-COT Chapter. Leader of the trips to Matagorda Island <a href="http://tinyurl.com/MatIsland">http://tinyurl.com/MatIsland</a> <i>This training is approved for Advanced Training. The number of approved hours will be announced at the meeting and will be available after the meeting at</i> <a href="http://tmn-cot-calendar.blogspot.com/">http://tmn-cot-calendar.blogspot.com/</a>



Wayne and Martha McAlister

From most people's point of view, a barrier beach is a paradox: appealing to visit but appalling to live on. An enjoyable day's excursion requires shade, dark glasses, sunblock, drinking water, food, and, of course, a shower afterward. Take all those amenities away and consider existing alone on the island fulltime, even during hurricanes.

When Wayne and Martha McAlister moved to Matagorda Island, a wildlife refuge off the central Texas coast, they anticipated staying perhaps five years. But sent to take up duties with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wayne McAlister fell under the island's spell the moment he stepped out of his aging house trailer and met his first Matagorda rattlesnake.

Seven years later, the McAlisters were still observing the flora and fauna of Matagorda. Except for the road and some occasional fence posts, the island appears untouched by humans. <sup>[1]</sup>

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Dr. McAlister has retired from the Fish and Wildlife Service, but he and Martha remain active with research, writing and speaking engagements. Doc has been an occasional speaker at our chapter meetings since the chapter was founded. In 2009, 2010, and 2011, Doc and Martha hosted three field trips to the Island for chapter members and guests. Photos of these visits are posted on the chapter website. <sup>[2]</sup>

For further information about Matagorda Island see the Matagorda Island website. <sup>[3]</sup>

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[1] Review of [Life on Matagorda Island](#) by Wayne H. McAlister, with illustrations by Martha K. McAlister. College Station: Texas A&M University Press Consortium, 2009. Accessed 16 June 2012.  
<http://tinyurl.com/8yat2p3>

[2] "Matagorda Island Field Trips." Angleton: Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter, 2000.  
<http://tmn-cot.org/archives/scrapbook/matagorda-island-field-trips/>

[3] Forrest Hawes. "Welcome to Matagorda Island, Texas." Victoria: matagordaisland.com, 2006.  
<http://www.matagordaisland.com/index.htm>

## Membership Report

By Jerry Eppner, Membership Chair

As of July 1, thirty-nine members have submitted time sheets. A total of 3,630 volunteer hours have been reported so far. Of the 39, 24 members have either certified or recertified. No members reached milestones during June.

We still have quite a few Migration Celebration hours yet to be submitted. Now would be an excellent time to do so. And I suspect that great summer program at the libraries is generating some excellent volunteer time – just nobody bragging on it yet.

## 2012-2013 Federal Duck Stamp now on sale



The 2012-2013 federal Duck Stamp is now on sale across the country, giving anyone who cares about migratory birds and other wildlife an easy way to help conserve habitat. Ninety-eight percent of each dollar from sales of the stamp goes to acquire and protect vital wetlands.

This year's Duck Stamp features a wood duck painted by Joseph Hautman of Plymouth, Minnesota.

You can buy the new stamp at post offices, Bass Pro Shops and other sporting goods stores and retail locations. Or you can buy electronic Duck Stamps at

[http:// www.duckstamp.com](http://www.duckstamp.com)

## What is it?

Long-time TMN-COT member John Boettiger sent this photo several members, asking for positive identification. A few members offered opinions. The consensus:

### Eastern Hercules Beetle (*Dynastes tityus*)



The Eastern Hercules Beetle is the largest beetle in the United States. They grow over two inches long.

Males, slightly larger than females, are olive green in color with patterns of brown spots. Males also have a pair of "horns" extending from the front of their heads. Females are greenish brown and have no horns.

Hercules beetles live in shady areas with lots of plants

After mating, the female beetles pack bits of decaying wood into a pile. She then sticks her ovipositor into the pile and lays an egg. Usually this is in a stump, log, or dead tree.

The egg hatches in three to four months, and a larva immediately starts to feed on the dead wood where it is born. It eats and grows for about eight months..

Source: Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax County, Virginia  
[http://www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes/ecology/eastern\\_hercules\\_beetle.htm](http://www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes/ecology/eastern_hercules_beetle.htm)

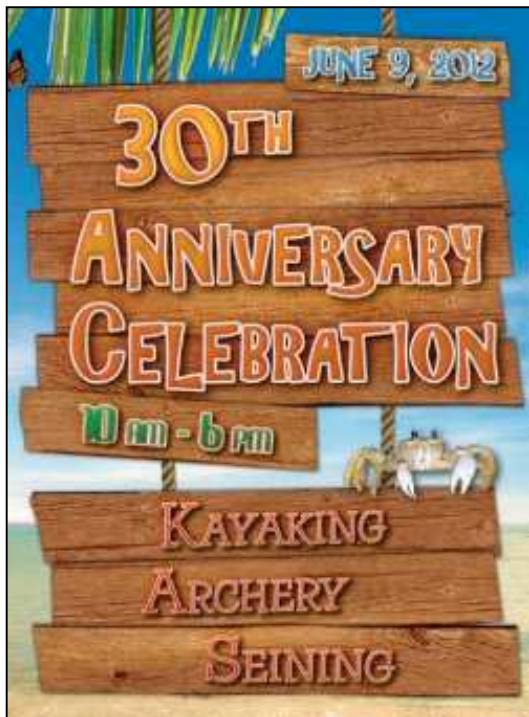
## Volunteer Help Wanted

Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges (FOBWR), needs a newsletter editor to resurrect its long-dormant newsletter *Wing Beats*. The editor should be a member of FOBWR, have access to a computer with an internet connection, and be able to write and edit.

FOBWR is the Friends Group associated with the Texas Mid-coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex, based in Brazoria.

This project is approved for volunteer time by TMN-COT. For information, contact Ed Barrios, President, FOBWR, at [ed77566@comcast.net](mailto:ed77566@comcast.net) or 979-297-1815.

## Quintana Beach County Park 30th Anniversary Celebration



Ed Johnson and Sandy Henderson describe TMN-COT and GCWR activities to visitors.



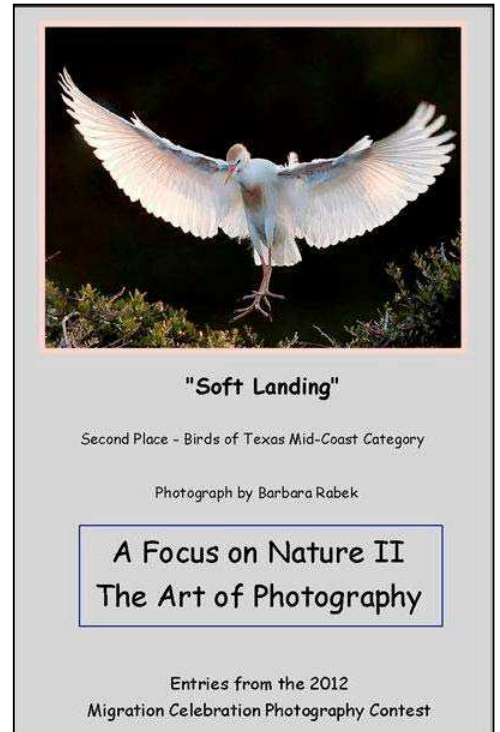
The Pavilion. Several local non-profit organizations, including Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges, Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter, and Gulf Coast Wildlife Rescue, shared exhibit space in the Pavilion.

More photos at: <http://tinyurl.com/QBCP-30-Photos>

## Migration Celebration Photo Contest Art League Exhibit



Roger Allen points out the bee in his photo *White Hawthorn Flowers with Bee*. This photo was the winning entry in the category "Plant Life of the Texas Mid-coast."



The Photographers. *At left:* Linda Matheson, Art League President.

- *Front row, from left:* Pete Romfh, Peggy Romfh, Torry Tvedt, Dawn Hays, Scott Buckel.
- *Back row, from left:* Jackie Hicks, David Plunkett, Ed Barrios, Roger Allen, Ellis Burkhardt.

More photos at <http://tinyurl.com/2012-Mc-PhotoContest>

## Attachments

### This issue of *Chapter News* has three attachments

- Minutes of the June General Meeting (Minutes were not available at press time, but they will be published at this address when available).  
[http://txmn.org/cradle/minutes\\_june\\_2012/](http://txmn.org/cradle/minutes_june_2012/)
- Summer Library Program Volunteer Schedule  
[http://tmn-cot.org/files/2012/06/2012-06-Att-2\\_Library.pdf](http://tmn-cot.org/files/2012/06/2012-06-Att-2_Library.pdf)
- Southeast Texas Regional Meeting  
[http://tmn-cot.com/files/2012/07/2012-07\\_Attach-3.pdf](http://tmn-cot.com/files/2012/07/2012-07_Attach-3.pdf)

### Reminders about the July Meeting

- The refreshment team for the meeting includes Mary Helen Israel, Billy Heck, Kirby Rapstein, Sandy Henderson
- The 9:00 meeting is approved for 1.00 hour of Volunteer Time.
- Training provided at this meeting is approved for Advanced Training hours. The number of approved hours will be announced at the meeting, and will be available after the meeting at <http://tmn-cot-calendar.blogspot.com/>

<b>CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER OFFICERS</b>	
President	Barbara Burkhardt
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
Chapter Advisors	Connie Stolte (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension Service)
Newsletter Editor-at large	Mary Helen Israel
Newsletter Columnists	Barbara Burkhardt, Jerry Eppner
Newsletter Production Editor	Neal McLain
Website	<a href="http://tmn-cot.org">http://tmn-cot.org</a>
FaceBook	<a href="http://facebook.com/TMN.COT">http://facebook.com/TMN.COT</a>
E-mail Listserv	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail">http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail</a>
