

**Minutes of the GENERAL MEETING of the
Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter
WEDNESDAY July 11, 2012
AgriLIFE Extension Building, Angleton, Texas**

Attendance: 47 members and 3 guests including COT sponsor John O'Connell of AgriLIFE. Karl Baumgarher and Jim Brannon of the TMN Coastal Prairie Chapter attended to hear the presentation of our guest speaker, Wayne McAlister.

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

General Announcements

- ✓ Barbara announced that the 2012 intern class has selected Mike Mullins to join Pete Romfh as intern representatives on the COT board.
- ✓ Mike as also agreed to assist Training Chair Ed Johnson in developing and running next spring's intern training classes.
- ✓ Barbara asked the membership to be wary of opening any mail from COT with the topic "You got to see this" as it is likely to contain a virus.
- ✓ Despite the heavy rains of this week, this Friday's (July 13th) chapter outing on the Brazos Belle is still a go, weather permitting.
- ✓ The Gulf Coast Bird Observatory's (GCBO) fall Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza will occur on September 8th and 15th (both Saturdays); Barbara is working with Carol Jones of GCBO to coordinate our volunteer assignments.

Membership Chair Jerry Eppner gave Carole Wenny her pin for recertification.

Outreach Chair Ruby Lewis...

- ✓reported that the June program on reptiles given at county libraries was attended by 1139 children and 522 adults,
- ✓ ...that the July library program "Wild in the City" covering mammals began last Monday at with four children participating and was followed on Tuesday with a respectable number of children and parents attending,
- ✓ ...asked for volunteers to help staff the remaining library programs scheduled this month.

Steve Zilliox observed that these programs are a good opportunity to recruit interns, as many of the accompanying adults are grandparents that fit the profile of most of COT members [retired, interested in nature].

Background Checks: John O'Connell updated the membership on the requirement for members to have a current background check if they are to work with youth. Members may opt out of this check if they sign a form stating that they will not work with youth. He noted that the COT board has agreed to pay the \$10 per person fee for the next round of checks. John will receive a spreadsheet noting those who have passed the screening. Certificates attesting to a passed background screening can then be issued to those who may use them for volunteer work with other organizations. John noted that the screening process goes back ten years, and will take some time to complete as state resources to conduct these tests are limited. So far 50 requests for background screening have been submitted by COT.

Tom Morris noted that next season's Birds and Bottomland Blitz will start this September; details are pending.

The general meeting ended at 9:29 am and was followed by a lecture from Dr. Wayne McAlister (with assistance from his wife Martha) on "Shallow Water Invertebrates of the Western Gulf of Mexico".

Submitted by

Marty Cornell

Secretary, Texas Master Naturalist, Cradle of Texas Chapter.