

Minutes of the GENERAL MEETING of the  
Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter  
WEDNESDAY August 8, 2012  
AgriLIFE Extension Building, Angleton, Texas

**Attendance:** 47 members and 2 guests including COT advisor John O'Connell of AgriLIFE and Rainbo Johnson's husband.

President Barbara Burkhardt opened the meeting at 8:59 am.

**General Announcements:**

- ✓ Barbara reminded the membership that it is time to get hummingbird feeders ready for the fall migration.
- ✓ President Burkhardt also noted that each member needs to help recruit interns for the spring training class.
- ✓ The Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza on the mornings of September 8<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> will require volunteers both for the event and for the COT booth at the event.
- ✓ Members were asked to consider becoming a docent at DEEP, which starts another season of environmental education of 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders beginning at the end of September.
- ✓ Volunteers will also be needed at the Brazoria County Parks Department Family Day at Hanson Riverside County Park on November 10<sup>th</sup>.
- ✓ The TMN state meeting will occur over the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in October, and members were reminded that accommodations fill very shortly after being made available.

**Membership** Chair Jerry Eppner gave service awards to Anne Bettinger, who certified, and to Elaine Crews, Neal McLain, Roy Morgan, Ramah O'Gorman, and Pam Peltier, who recertified. Pam also passed the milestone of 250 hours of volunteer service. It was specially noted that founding member Mary Helen Israel surpassed 1,000 hours of volunteering for COT activities on her way to recertifying for 2012. This effort is in addition to the over 7500 hours that she has logged in her volunteer service to Sea Center Texas! To date, 44 members have turned in time vs. 68 for all of last year. The chapter has surpassed 14,000 hours of VT since its inception in 2001.

**Outreach** Chair Ruby Lewis.....

- ✓ .....reported that the summer programs at Brazoria County libraries in June attracted 1139 children and 532 adults for the June sessions on reptiles (16 presentations at 12 libraries), and
- ✓ ...the July "Wild in the City" program was given at ten libraries to 209 children and 146 adults. 32 different COT members helped in these sessions, including four that attended every session,
- ✓ ...for a summer total of 1429 children, 668 adults → 2097 total.
- ✓ Four "Nature Night at the Library" sessions were held in the first five months of 2012. The fall season of this program will begin with Barbara Burkhardt's talk on hummingbirds at the Pearland library on September 11<sup>th</sup> and the Brazoria library on September 18<sup>th</sup>. The Angleton library will follow with Ruby's talk on alligators on September 25<sup>th</sup>. John O'Connell will talk about bats at the libraries of Lake Jackson on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and of Angleton on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Ruby will be presenting to the Freeport Senior Citizens Commission on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Minutes of the GENERAL MEETING of the  
Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter  
WEDNESDAY August 8, 2012

**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. To date, applications have been received from 84 members, 95% of these have been processed and all processed have passed this screening.

All members who work with children are required to have this screening, which begs the question of what is the chapter's official definition of "membership". A check of the COT Policies and Procedures and a cross-check of the Texas Master Naturalist state definitions revealed inconsistencies of defining "membership". President Burkhardt thus formed a working group of Jerry Eppner, Ed Barrios, and Mike Mullins to propose this definition at the September meeting of the COT board. Upon adoption of the proposed or amended definition, the board will submit the approved definition of membership to the state TMN organization for consideration as a uniform definition for all chapters.

Peggy Romfh has extensively upgraded the chapter's **Photo Gallery**, adding easy search functionality, and sections on mammals, fungi, monocot plants, and dicot plants.

The general meeting ended at 9:37 am and was followed by a lecture from Greg Green of Ducks Unlimited.

Submitted by

Marty Cornell

Secretary, Texas Master Naturalist, Cradle of Texas Chapter.