



Chapter News

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A MESSAGE FROM "the PREZ"

Happy Autumnal Equinox: Well, hopefully by this time next month, we will begin to have real signs of fall!!!!

I hope you were able to get out to the Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza at GCBO. There was an excellent crowd, thanks to the good weather. Almost 100 hummingbirds were trapped and banded over the two Saturdays. The children's (and adults') faces were wonderful when they held their adopted bird in their hands. As usual, COT provided many volunteers for our partner.

★ Great job folks ★

October 14th to the 20th is National Wildlife Refuge Week. I hope you will make an opportunity to visit one of the Mid-coast Refuges in our county. Many of us volunteer at the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge with the DEEP program.

The migratory birds will be arriving soon, so have a look. Click on the link below to look at the NWRA website.

<http://tinyurl.com/NWRW-2012>

Speaking of websites—have you visited COT's lately? Thanks to Neal (our computer guru), Mike Mullins (assistant training chair), Ed Johnson (training chair) and several other COT members, we now have a direct way for folks, interested in becoming TMN-COT members, to get pertinent information easily. Training class information, requirements for becoming a member and necessary forms are all just a click away.

The committee responsible for revising Section E: Member Requirements and Categories, of the COT Policies and Procedures Handbook (P&P), presented their recommendations to the board in September. After a lengthy discussion, the board requested a bit more "tweaking" on the wording, before final approval. Stay Tuned!!!!

A reminder: The TMN State Meeting is October 26th-28th at Camp Allen. COT will be well represented. John O'Connell is giving a class, Estuaries 101. Ellis Burkhardt is in charge of the photo/art, scrapbook, newsletter and flyer contest. Mike Mullins and Ed Barrios will be assisting him. Mickey Dufilho. and John O'Connell will be judging several of the contests.

If you have photos or art you would like to enter, you do not have to attend the meeting. I will be glad to take your photos/art and make sure they are entered for judging.

The contest rules are found on Page 5 of this issue.



Thanks Corrie Bowen for your help and support!!! All the best on the new job.

-the Prez

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

Contact us at
Brazoria County AgriLife
21017 County Road 171
Angleton, TX 77515-8903

979-864-1558 (Angleton)
979-388-1558 (Brazosport)
281-756-1558 (Alvin)
979-388-1566 (Fax)
<http://tmn-cot.org>

The Texas Master Naturalist program is coordinated by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Texas Master Naturalist programs serve all people without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

Upcoming events

This page does not include:

- BCLS Library Program schedule. See calendar at <http://tmn-cot.com/calendar/>
- DEEP School Program schedule. See calendar at <http://tmn-cot.com/calendar/>
- INEOS School Program schedule. See <http://tmn-cot.com/files/2012/08/INEOS.pdf>

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

Wednesday, October 10, 8:30 AM

General Meeting and Advanced Training
 Agrilife Extension Building, Angleton
 Topic - "Bats: The Most Misunderstood Mammal"
 Speaker: John O'Connell, Marine Coastal Marine
 Resources and Sea Grant Agent
Approved for 1.00 Hour Volunteer Time
Approved for Advanced Training
See Page 3 for details

Saturday, October 13, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Birds and Bottomlands Blitz
 Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Approved for Advanced Training (see details at right)
Approved for Volunteer Time (see details at right)

Saturday, October 13, 11:30 AM - 5:00 PM

"Hands on Nature" at Brazoria NWR (NWRW event)
 For details see TMN-COT Calendar
<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar>
Approved for Volunteer Time (if you volunteer to assist)

Saturday, October 13, 6:30 PM

Night walk at Dow Woods (NWRW event)
 For details see TMN-COT Calendar
<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar>
Approved for Volunteer Time (Tour leaders only)

October 14 — 20

National Wildlife Refuge Week (NWRW)
<http://tinyurl.com/NWRW-2012>

Friday-Sunday October 26—28

TMN Southeast Texas Regional Meeting
 Camp Allen - Navasota, Texas
 For details see TMN-COT Calendar
<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>
Approved for Advanced Training (subject to approval)
Approved for Volunteer Time (subject to approval)

Wednesday, November 7, 2:00 PM

COT Board Meeting
 AgriLife Extension Building
 For details see TMN-COT Calendar
<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>
Approved for Volunteer Time

Birds and Bottomlands Blitz



Thomas Adams



Mike Lange

Trees & Shrubs of the Columbia Bottomlands

Thomas and Mike are both employees of the Texas Mid-coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex. Thomas is a botanist and Mike is responsible for identifying and working to preserve quality habitat in the Columbia Bottomlands.

They will lead the group on walks through the forest and discuss the plants and trees, teach you how to identify them and talk about their importance in this ecosystem.

All Birds and Bottomlands Blitz events:

- Count as Advanced Training provided that you haven't had the same subject in the past two years.
- Count as Volunteer Time if you assist with the planning and execution of the event.

OCTOBER 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, October 10, 2012
AgriLife Building, Angleton**



8:30 AM - 9:00 AM	Fun and Fellowship Refreshment Team: Louis Peltier, Carolyn Schlein, Tom Morris, Kathleen Murray
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	General Meeting <i>This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour Volunteer Time.</i>
9:30 AM - 11:30 AM	Advanced Training: Topic: <i>Bats: The most misunderstood Mammal</i> Speaker: John O'Connell , Coastal Marine Resources and Sea Grant Agent Marine Agent Texas AgriLife Extension Service Brazoria County, Texas

Bats are one of the most feared and misunderstood mammals on the planet. This presentation will pull back the veil of of night to expose bats and the important role they play in the environment. The presentation will cover the natural history of bats, Texas bats, currents threats to bats, and bat house construction. Join us to learn about the wonderful world of bats.

—John O'Connell, 10/01/12

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
<http://tmn-cot-calendar.blogspot.com/>.

ORDER CHIROPTERA: BATS ^[1]

Chiroptera, "hand wing," alludes to the great elongation of the fingers that support the flying membrane. Among mammals, bats are unique in that they have true powers of flight; other mammals, such as flying squirrels, volplane or glide, always from a higher to a lower elevation.

Bats as a group are crepuscular or nocturnal; their eyes are small and inefficient, but their ears are usually well developed. Experiments suggest that the middle and inner ear and high-frequency vocals are highly important in guiding bats in flight and in their aerial feeding activities. Some bats hibernate in winter; others migrate seasonally.

In the temperate regions, the young are born in late spring; in the tropics there appears to be no definite breeding season — young bats may be found in every month of the year. Most bats feed on insects, but some kinds feed regularly on fruits, nectar, or fish, and some, the vampire bats, are peculiarly adapted to feed on blood.

Bats are nearly worldwide in distribution. The tropical regions are best suited for them, and there the greatest variety is found. The temperate regions are inhabited by fewer species; no bats have been recorded in the Arctic and Antarctic regions. Thirty-two species of bats occur in Texas.

In addition to the 32 species of bats living in Texas today, four others are known from fossil skeletal remains. One of these, *Myotis rectidentis*, is extinct, but the other three — *Myotis evotis*, *Macrotus californicus*, and *Desmodus rotundus* — still occur in other parts of the continent. The range of *Myotis evotis* includes almost all of the western United States from the Great Plains westward; the leaf-nosed bat *Macrotus* occupies a range from the southern parts of Arizona, Nevada, and California southward into Mexico; and *Desmodus*, the common vampire, occurs in Mexico and has been found recently about 200 km south of the Texas border near Jimenez, Tamaulipas. Intensive search may reveal the presence of both *Macrotus* and *Desmodus* in Texas.

[1] "ORDER CHIROPTERA: BATS." The Mammals of Texas - Online Edition. Lubbock: Natural Science Research Laboratory of the Museum of Texas Tech University. n.d. Accessed October 1, 2012. <http://www.nsrll.ttu.edu/tmot1/ordchiro.htm>

Membership Report

By Jerry Eppner, Membership Chair

As of September 30, fifty-one members have submitted time sheets. A total of 6235 VT hours have been reported so far this year. Excellent!

Members to be recognized at our October meeting will include Betty Bouley, Susan Conaty, Rainbo Johnson, John Marshall and Archie Pratt, all recertifying for 2012. Also, Kathleen Murray has reached the 250-hour VT mark. Congratulations to all.

As we approach the end of the year, if you have not submitted time sheets, now would be an excellent time to get your game plan together on how to meet that commitment.

Birds & Bottomlands Blitz

By Gulf Coast Bird Observatory

GCBO has announced the Birds and Bottomlands Blitz (BBB) schedule for the 2012-13 season. BBB is a monthly program jointly presented by GCBO and TMN-COT, scheduled for the second Saturday of each month from October 13, 2012 to June 8, 2013.

See page 2 of this issue for Information about the October 13 BBB. The complete schedule is on the TMN-COT calendar and at:

<http://txmn.org/cradle/files/2012/09/BBB.pdf>

TMN-COT members who participate in BBB may claim hourly credit as follows:

- **Advanced Training** provided that you haven't had the same subject in the past two years.
- **Volunteer Time** if you assist with the planning and execution of the event.

California Artist Robert Steiner Wins Duck Stamp Contest

By USFWS. September 29, 2012

Robert Steiner, an artist from San Francisco, Calif., is the winner of the 2012 Federal Duck Stamp Art Contest. The announcement was made today by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Deputy Director Rowan Gould at Weber State University in Ogden, Utah, during the annual art contest – the only juried art competition sponsored by the federal government.

This is Steiner's second Federal Duck Stamp Contest win. His art previously appeared on the 1998-1999 Federal Duck Stamp.

Steiner's acrylic painting of a common goldeneye will be made into the 2013-2014 Federal Duck Stamp, which will go on sale in late June 2013. The Service produces the Federal Duck Stamp, which sells for \$15 and raises about \$25 million each year to provide critical funds to conserve and protect wetland habitats in the National Wildlife Refuge system for the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of people.

Paul Bridgeford of Des Moines, Iowa, placed second with his acrylic painting of a pair of northern shovelers.



First place winner by Robert Steiner



Second place winner by Paul Bridgeford

2012 Photo and Art Contest Rules

By Barbara Burkhardt

Share your favorite photos and/or art work with your fellow Master Naturalists by entering the Photo and Art Contest. Bring your item(s) with you or send them with a friend. Entries should be submitted by 7:00 p.m. on the opening day of the meeting, at the area designated for art and photos. The entries must be labeled with the owners name, chapter, category and title of the work. There will be a panel of judges this year, as well as the usual popular vote by the attendees. Winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony on Sunday morning. If there are less than five entries in a given photo or art category, a placement ribbon will not be awarded.

2012 Photo and Art Contest Rules

- Entries must be submitted **by 7:00 p.m.** on Friday, the opening day of the meeting (10/26/12), at the area designated for art and photos. The entries must be labeled with the owners name, chapter, category and title of the work.
- All entries must be the original work of and submitted by a Master Naturalist volunteer.
- Photos must be Texas-specific (i.e. taken in Texas).
- Entries are limited to one per category per individual.
- Photographs should be 8"x10" and mounted on a stiff backing for display purposes.
- The photos must be unmated, unframed and have no digital enhancements.
- Photography Categories: (1) Plants, (2) Wildlife, (3) Scenic and (4) Master Naturalist at Work/Play.
- Art categories: (1) drawings & paintings, (2) sculpture and (3) sewing/stitchery.
- The scrapbooks, chapter newsletters and chapter flyers compete in separate categories.

Judging will be done by: (1) by a panel of judges and (2) popular vote of the attendees. Ribbons will be given for judges picks and certificates will be awarded for popular vote. A ballot for the popular vote is found in your registration packet. If there are less than five entries in a given photo or art category, a placement ribbon will not be awarded. Winners will be announced during the Awards Ceremony on Sunday.

You do not have to attend the meeting to enter an item for competition. I will be happy to transport the entry/entries for you and see that they are returned after the meeting. You can bring them to the general meeting on 10/10/12, drop them by my house or leave them with Jami at the AgriLIFE building and I will pick them up.

Recollections from the Class of 2012

by Ed Johnson, Training Director, and members of the class

Photos by Ed Johnson, Pete Romfh, and Neal McLain



Ed Johnson

I have asked the new Texas Master Naturalist members who completed and graduated from the spring 2012 Intern Training Classes to submit a summary of what becoming a Texas Master Naturalist has meant to them. I am newly inspired by their observations, probably because I can identify with every one of their poignant

memories and feelings. No greater honor have I had in TMN than to have been privileged to be the training chair for this class.

I personally felt extremely welcomed by the friendliness of many of you whenever I joined in 2009. Several members were generous in assisting me with my involvement in many volunteer activities and in becoming a board member. My lifelong appreciation of nature and my interest in preserving it for future enjoyment are certainly motivations for these volunteer services.

But perhaps most important to me is the enjoyment of the here and now of the teaching and educational opportunities and working with so many sincere and dedicated TMN members. I continually stand in awe of the dedication of so many of you with your talent, abilities and time. It is you who have made this possible for me to be a part of; thank you.

—Ed Johnson



Mike Mullins

What a ride!

First off let me say that I have never been around a friendlier more dedicated group than the Master Naturalist. Every member always has time to answer questions. They have been more than willing to go the extra mile to give or lead you to the answer.

I joined this year not really knowing what I was getting into but have been rewarded beyond my expectations. I have seen and learned more about the natural bounty of Brazoria County than I had any idea existed. I have ridden Sargent and Matagorda beaches searching for sea turtles, built a boardwalk, swept bugs, seined ponds and most of all had a fantastic time. I have seen the joy in kid's eyes touching and learning about the reptiles. I have had my eyes open to the wonders and absolute beauty of Mother Nature.

I do not look upon the world as I did before. I look for the subtle things such as color patterns of butterflies, listen to the frogs at night and try to identify, take notes of when, where and what I have seen. But, most of all I appreciate being able to share with the chapter members in this fantastic journey. Thank you for saving me a seat on the bus.

—Mike Mullins



Project Team Meeting



Bryan Adams speaks at the first class meeting

Recollections from the Class of 2012

by Ed Johnson, Training Director, and members of the class

Photos by Ed Johnson, Pete Romfh, and Neal McLain



Anne Bettinger

After retiring last year, I was not sure how I wanted to invest my new-found time. One of our friends who is a Texas Master Naturalist suggested that I consider joining the local chapter. It was the first program/activity that I joined since retiring and I have found it very rewarding.

I majored in the biological sciences in college and graduate school so the Texas Master Naturalists was a good fit as far as my interests and training. This coupled with my enjoyment of the out-of-doors, animal life and gardening influenced my decision to join the program this year.

At the time that I registered for the program I wondered how the training would be. I cannot emphasize enough how well each topic was covered. I looked forward to each intern training session because they were all very informative and scientifically presented, from A to Z (archeology to zoology).

I am so impressed by how knowledgeable the presenters and members are. Everyone has been so willing to enthusiastically share information and give assistance. It is fun to get to know other people with similar interests who are genuinely excited about nature and the ecology.

I look forward to attending the meetings each month to gain more knowledge of the unique ecological niche that is Brazoria County. Although just newly certified, I am enjoying working with children to help open their eyes to the natural wonders that surround us.

—Anne Bettinger



George Bettinger

Following retirement, I was looking for an outlet that fit my outdoor interests and give me the opportunity to become active in some volunteer activities. A friend told me about the Texas Master Naturalist program, so I went to a meeting and decided to sign up for training.

I have a biology background, and I was looking for ways to leverage that experience. Well, the TMN program fit the bill fully. I enjoyed the training classes, learned about the ecology of our region, and had the opportunity to visit many new parks that I never knew existed. I enjoyed meeting new people and making friends among the TMN group, especially with the training class members.

The TMN program has been a welcome addition to my retirement life here in Brazoria County, and I look forward to doing what I can to help keep the TMN program alive and well.

—George E. Bettinger, Ph.D.



Herpetology class at Brazos Bend State Park.

Recollections from the Class of 2012

by Ed Johnson, Training Director, and members of the class

Photos by Ed Johnson, Pete Romfh, and Neal McLain



Peggy Romfh

I never knew that becoming a part of the Texas Master Naturalists was going to be so much fun or that I would learn so much. The training classes and field trips were packed with new information each week, and we refreshed our knowledge of everything from birds to mammals to invertebrates and plants.

My favorite activity was the student project; our team studied the ecosystem of Bryan Beach, and we kept going back again and again to catalog the birds, mollusks, and other species that we saw.

There's something life-affirming about tracking ghost crabs back to their holes in the sand dunes, photographing willets pulling bivalves out of the surf at low tide for a tasty lunch, or watching ruddy turnstones and plovers flit among the *Sargassum* to find a meal.

Becoming part of the Texas Master Naturalists is like becoming part of nature itself – from learning about invasive species to the importance of estuaries, we find ourselves eager to learn more about how we can protect the precious plant and animal life in Brazoria County .

Volunteering has provided another layer of fun and learning – every time we share with others we come away enriched and learning more ourselves. I learned that becoming a Texas Master Naturalist is not a one-time event – it is a journey of learning and sharing that I hope to continue throughout my life

—Peggy Romfh .



Neeta Allen

Texas Master Naturalist? I wondered what that would be. I'd been a nature lover for years, a sometime bird watcher, an avid gardener, and a Girl Scout. I'm not a scientist, so I was hoping I didn't have to be to participate. I didn't have to worry.

What I found when I took the Master Naturalist course was a group of very accepting, and very interesting and interested people. The courses on everything from the animal and insect kingdom; to the bays and estuaries; plant life in our area; invasive species; archaeology; how government agencies interface locally; information on volunteering to help animals.

The presenters were not all professional scientists, but some were employees of the various nature supporting agencies in our area. The field trips introduced me to places I never had even heard of, and they were always fun and informative.

Texas Master Naturalist? I'm proud to be one, and would encourage anyone to participate, if you like nature, like adventure, and like meeting new people who share your interest in nature. Come join us!

—Neeta Allen



Mammals class at Brazos Bend State Park



Rich Tillman examines a crab as Peggy looks on

Outreach: Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza

Photos by Neal McLain and David Plunkett



The pavilion at GCBO, site of many XHX activities



Roy Morgan



Mickey Dufilho at the GCBO Exhibit



Children's artwork



Bird banding



Ed Barrios with customer



Ed Johnson with a visitor



George Bettinger, Marty Cornell

Attachments

This issue of *Chapter News* contains one attachment:

Attachment 1 - Minutes of the September General Meeting
http://tmn-cot.com/files/2012/09/Attach-1_Minutes-September.pdf

Reminders about the October Meeting:

- The refreshment team for the meeting includes Louis Peltier, Carolyn Schlein, Tom Morris, Kathleen Murray
- 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/>

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	Mike Mullins
Intern Representative	Pete Romfh
Chapter Advisers	Connie Stolte (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension Service)
Newsletter Editor-at large	Mary Helen Israel
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