

CROSS TIMBERS MASTER NATURALIST NEWSLETTER

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Master
Naturalist™



May 2023

Inside this issue:

PRESIDENT'S PEN 2-4

ANNOUNCEMENTS 5

GLENWOOD PARK 6

DO HORSES LIKE
THIS HERB? 7-8

MONARCH
FESTIVAL 9

PLANTING AT
FWNC 10

MINERAL WELLS
STATE PARK 11

RECERTIFICATIONS
& MILESTONES 12

BOARD MEMBERS
& CITATIONS 13



President's Pen - Nature's Prodigal Son?

Sharon Hamilton

The bus rumbled along a nicely paved road as we traveled from one gorgeous location toward our next, an overnight in the Costa Rican cloud forest. I didn't know what to expect as we pulled off to visit the privately owned Hacienda Barú Nature Reserve. A well-maintained residence, tended gardens, a dining area, neat outbuildings, and a parking lot affected my first impression—"manicured nature," I thought.

We dutifully unloaded and walked toward the small pavilion, our elderly host perched on a stool. After fumbling with the microphone and slide presentation, he spoke so softly that we strained to hear him tell the history of the reserve. I quickly learned that my first impression was so wrong. **Jack Ewing and his family are nature pioneers and Costa Rican master naturalists.**



Arriving in Costa Rica in the 1970s, Coloradan Ewing's job was to locate and buy land for Americans investing in cattle ranches. Over time, he fell in love with the land and its people, and relocated his family, who lived in the capital city for several years. Ewing, his wife Diane, and two kids decided to live full time and forever in the rugged rainforest abutting the Pacific Ocean. Their immersion in nature, with few amenities, including one bridge to the Pan American Highway and civilization that occasionally washed out, was complete.

Ewing was wise enough to listen to the stories of his Tico (native Costa Rican) neighbors, to give them assistance when he and his wife could, and to learn which practices preserved the land and water and which were destructive. He noted that certain animals, including tapirs and jaguars, became more and more rare in the Dominical region. Ewing transformed from cattle rancher to conservationist.

President's Pen - Nature's Prodigal Son?

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Working with locals and expats, he was instrumental in initiating the environmental movement in Costa Rica.

Recollecting his decades of experience, Ewing told stories that affected me most profoundly. He described locals' hunting expeditions, noting that in 1957 a man likely killed the last tapir in the region. If you'll forgive me for mixing metaphors, he shared his "road to Damascus" moment: A staffer brought in a beautiful, freshly killed ocelot, proud of his trophy. Ewing experienced a rapid succession of emotions—sadness, momentary excitement at the prospect of bagging an ocelot himself, then shame and disgust for having such a thought. From that day on, hunting was prohibited on the Hacienda.



Ewing promoted wildlife friendly structures and practices that have been adopted by Costa Rica: building wildlife bridges and tunnels across roads; installing ropes between electrical poles, so that monkeys and sloths use them rather than risk electrocution; motivating land owners along critical corridors to manage their land so that locally extirpated animals, including tapirs and jaguars, may return to their historic habitat. He is justifiably proud of the corridor known as the "**path of the tapir**" in the south central

President's Pen - The 2023 Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting

Sharon Hamilton

Pacific coastal region of his adopted land—waiting for animals living farther south to find their way back home. Today, **Hacienda Barú National Wildlife Refuge** houses a research center and visitors cottages and sponsors guides, interns, and volunteers.

I will never forget the valuable lessons I learned from Jack Ewing: First impressions are not always correct. People who begin their lives and careers as no friends of the environment may be transformed by knowledge of and immersion into unique ecosystems. Master Naturalists can be found all over the world.



May 2023

Monthly Announcements

May Chapter Meeting at the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens:

Our upcoming meeting on May 15, 2023 will be held in person and on Zoom, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. Social time will start at 6:30 pm. Our guest speaker will Buddy McIntyre, who will be leading a discussion on our climate change and supercells. **THIS MONTHS MEETING WILL BE IN THE AZALEA ROOM RATHER THAN THE ROSE ROOM.** Hope to see you all there.

To all Members:

Your hours matter. Please record them within 45 days of service.

Hours may qualify as \$74 worth of matching funds so the State of Texas can receive money from the Federal Government. Let's get our tax dollars back in Texas!

Looking for the monthly Calendar of Events?

Please go to <https://txmn.org/crosstimbers/events-calendar> for a readable, upgraded calendar

Help us include as many Master Naturalist activities as possible to our online calendar.

If you have CTMN items to add or corrections, contact Mary Beth Lampe at mblampe@gmail.com

Thank you!

Glenwood Park FW Report

Read all about the work TCU, Fort Worth's Historic Southside Neighborhood Association, and the Climate Safe Neighborhood Coalition are doing to revitalize Glenwood Park in the Fort Worth Report!

CTMN is proud to support this initiative.



Click on the link to read the May 8, 2023 article written by Haley Samsel.

<https://fortworthreport.org/2023/05/08/neighbors-and-tcu-professors-team-up-to-revitalize-long-neglected-park-in-fort-worths-historic-southside/>

Do Horses Like This Herb?

Stephonia Roberts

As an herbalist and forager, I would hear this question asked of me quite often, “Is Horse herb edible or Does horse herb have any medicinal benefits?”

My answer would always be No. Except horses and other small animals really enjoy eating it. And just like that it seems the interest is gone like Elvis has left the building and we are all in awe waiting on an encore. And it just doesn’t happens.

For those who are wondering why is it considered an herb it is not . All for the practical purposes of botany it is any seed bearing plant that dies back down to the ground after blooming and doesn’t have a woody stem. This maybe the reason so many inquire about whether it has medicinal properties.

As an herbalist an herb is any herbaceous plant that has culinary, fragrance and medicinal properties. So sorry its not your typical herb.

Horse Herb (*Calyptocarpus vialis*) is out of the Sunflower family thus it has several names such as Straggler Daisy or Lawn flower. It’s native home is our beloved state of Texas, especially south and south-central Texas. It is beautiful perennial groundcover blooming from mid spring to fall in some areas. When it grows you either like it or you don’t.



Do Horses Like This Herb?

Stephonia Roberts


However, I've made friends with it as it adds lush border and contrast to my mix of native and ornamental flower bed. The dainty yellow flowers remind me of the blooms of the Maximilian Sunflowers which both are from the Asteraceae family.

Horse herb beautiful green spear shaped leaves and its dainty yellow flower is also called the Creeping Cinderella weed. Sometimes, this gives me pause to think if it loses its magical spell after midnight? I guess I will never know.

Anyway, I am definitely mesmerized by its beauty and truly enjoy having it around growing between penstemons, rock rose, Greg's mist, and even four o'clock in bloom. And, on plenty of occasions I have seen quite a few pollinators enjoying the nectar from the flowers as well but, I'm still waiting on a horse or two to give me their verdict.



MANSFIELD MONARCH FESTIVAL



Come see us at the Mansfield Monarch Festival!

On Saturday, May 13 from 9am - 12pm
Located at Oliver Nature Park

The biggest event of the year is almost here! Join us to celebrate our favorite wings of spring, the monarch butterfly!

Featuring:

- Crafts
- Games
- Science and nature education
- Gardening for Texas Butterflies classes at 9:30, 10:30, and 11:30
- Guided hikes
- A butterfly house you have to see to believe!



Out Planting to the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge

Bill Collins


On Friday morning, March 31, seven volunteers and two Fort Nature Center and Refuge staff persons outplanted about 500 plants in the east pasture at the nature center. All were planted within view of the new buffalo viewing platform and the future home to prairie dogs.

Staff members Jennifer Matthews and Laura Veloz lead Kayla West, Marcie Delgado, Avon Burton, Glen Butler, Morgan Chivers, Karen Hembree and Bill Collins in the planting effort.

Mostly grasses were planted, Texas grama, Canada wild rye, side oats grama, white triden as well as some green thread daisy, and inland sea oats. After the planting, the area was cordoned off with electric fencing to keep the buffalo from grazing on the new plants.

Now we just need some rain.

If you haven't been to the nature center recently, come and check out the new buffalo viewing platform and other changes that are happening.



**MINERAL WELLS
STATE PARK
POLLINATOR GARDEN
WORKDAY**

**VOLUNTEER TIME:
MAY 20, 2023
FROM 9AM - 11AM**

**WE SHOULD HAVE SUNNY WEATHER
THAT MORNING. WE WILL BE PREPPING
SPRING PLANTS THAT ARE STARTING TO
POP UP.**

**BRING A HAT, SUNGLASSES, AND ANY
GARDEN TOOLS YOU MAY HAVE WITH
YOU.**

I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING EVERYONE!

VICKI BROOKS (VICKI.BROOKS@ME.COM)

CTMN Volunteer Achievements

2023

Please take a moment to help us congratulate those members that have recertified in 2023! They have completed, logged, and had approved 40 volunteer hours and 8 advanced training hours. They will all receive the Texas Ecoregion Pin.

April

Charley Amos
Sharon Hamilton

Hollie Carron
Chris Honkomp
Kristine Smathers

Annamarie Fresta
Hester Schwarzer

May

Kristine Hembree

Member Milestones

Bob Siglin - First Time Certification (Painted Dragonfly Pin)
Chris Honkomp - 500 hours (Silver Dragonfly Pin)
Debbie Stilson - 500 hours (Silver Dragonfly Pin)
Sharon Hamilton - 1,000 hours (Gold Dragonfly Pin)
Carol Marcotte - 2,500 hours (Polished Silver Dragonfly Pin)

CTMN Board Members

- SHARON HAMILTON - PRESIDENT
- MARY BETH LAMPE - VICE PRESIDENT
- GLENDA WALKER - SECRETARY
- DEE ANN MCGINNIS- TREASURER

CTMN Chair Members

- DEBBIE STILSON - MEMBERSHIPS
- SHARON HAMILTON - OUTREACH
- MELINDA WOLFINBARGER - EDUCATION
- THERESA THOMAS - VOL SERVICES AND AT HOURS
- SANDY THORNBURGH - HOSPITALITY
- THERESA THOMAS - RECORDS
- EVAN VAUGHN - NEWSLETTER
- FRANK KEENEY - WEBMASTER
- ERIKA SWYRYN - CLASS OF 2022 REPRESENTATIVE

Citations

- "COVER PAGE" PHOTOS - GLENWOOD PARK PHOTO - [HTTPS://HTTPS://FORTWORTHREPORT.ORG/](https://fortworthreport.org/); HORSE HERB - [HTTPS://NATIVE-GARDENERS.COM/PRODUCTS/HORSEHERB](https://native-gardeners.com/products/horseherb); FWNC - [HTTPS://WWW.ALLTRAILS.COM/PARKS/US/TEXAS/FORT-WORTH-NATURE-CENTER-REFUGE/WILD-FLOWERS](https://www.alltrails.com/parks/us/texas/fort-worth-nature-center-refuge/wild-flowers); LODGE - [HTTPS://MYTANFEET.COM/ACTIVITIES/HACIENDA-BARU-DOMINICAL/](https://mytanfeet.com/activities/hacienda-baru-dominical/)
- "PRESIDENTS PEN" - JACK EWING PHOTO - [HTTPS://WWW.HACIENDABARU.COM/EN/BLOG/BIOGRAPHY-JACK-E-EWING/](https://www.haciendabaru.com/en/blog/biography-jack-e-ewing/); TAPIR PHOTO - [HTTPS://WWW.GOVISITCOSTARICA.COM/TRAVELINFO/FLORA-FAUNA/BAIRDS-TAPIR.ASP](https://www.govisitcostarica.com/travelinfo/flora-fauna/bairds-tapir.asp); LODGE - [HTTPS://MYTANFEET.COM/ACTIVITIES/HACIENDA-BARU-DOMINICAL/](https://mytanfeet.com/activities/hacienda-baru-dominical/)
- "DO HORSES LIKE THIS HERB>" - PHOTOGRAPHER: STEPHONIA ROBERTS