

CROSS TIMBERS MASTER NATURALIST NEWSLETTER

T E X A S



July 2023



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**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION AGENCY**
NEWS RELEASE

President's Pen - Birders' Brains!

Sharon Hamilton

While most of us think we don't want to be known as "bird brains," it turns out that having a birder's brain is a plus! Several scientific studies have been reported describing how neuroscientists recruit birders for their studies, learning how knowledge of different birds affects our brains in a positive way.

Several regions of our brains fire when we recognize human faces. Vanderbilt University cognitive scientist, Isabel Gauthier, found when experienced birders were asked to identify various birds, these same facial recognition areas of the brain were activated.



Thomas Palmeri, a second neuroscientist at Vanderbilt, uses members of the Audubon Society and the American Ornithology Society as research subjects. He gave them bird identification tests to study their visual expertise and memory retrieval, building computer models based on the results. These models simulated real-time decision-making in the human brain.

According to Gauthier, learning to recognize birds of different species changes the firing patterns of neurons, or brain cells. The more one practices and learns, the more often the signals pass between certain neurons, and the pathway between them becomes easier to travel.

President's Pen - Birders' Brains!

Sharon Hamilton

Expertise changes the structure of the brain itself, thickening parts of the cerebral cortex that process visual and auditory knowledge and memory. Neuroscientist and birder Erik Wing, at Rotman Research Institute in Toronto, Canada, recruited experts from Canadian birdwatching groups to study memory. Wing says that changes in the structure of expert birders' brains make it easier for them to add new information. Longtime birders more easily remembered unfamiliar birds than did novices. According to Wing, experts may retain knowledge better as they age, supporting their memory functions.

I believe that cognitive scientists would find similar brain changes in those of you who are experts at recognizing and identifying native plants!

Sources:

Photo of Atlantic Puffins, *Fratercula arctica*, Puffin Marina "Hafnarholmi," Iceland. By Sharon Hamilton, June 2023.

<https://www.audubon.org/magazine/spring-2023/yes-birding-does-change-your-brain>

<https://www.nextavenue.org/birdwatching-and-your-brain/>

July 2023

Monthly Announcements

July Chapter Meeting at the Fort Worth Botanical Gardens:

Our upcoming meeting on July 17, 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 be Dr. Carly Aulicky. She will be leading our discussion, "Pockets and Remnants: Saving Texas Prairies". 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!

TMN 2023 Annual Meeting

Photo & Video Contest

Are you ready to share your best photographs? Did you capture a perfect image of a native prairie, bird, insect, or chapter member at work or play?

Photographers may submit one photograph per category, so it's time to start selecting your best to share with your fellow naturalists.

- **Photo, Art & Media Contest**

- Hosted by the Rio Grande Valley Chapter and South Texas Border Chapters of Texas Master Naturalists
- Entries to be submitted online (dates to be determined)
- Note: Photos & Media must be taken somewhere in Texas and within the current year: 2023.

- **Video Contest**

- Videos of 1 minute to 3 minutes

Photo Categories

- Plants
- Wildlife Birds
- Wildlife Insects
- Wildlife – Other
- Chapters at work/play
- Scenic

You do not need to be registered for the TMN Annual Meeting to enter any contest.

Pre-Annual Meeting Entries – all due by **5pm on Friday, September 15, 2023**

More contest details to follow in coming months or visit <http://txmn.org>

July Speaker - “Pockets and Remnants: Saving Texas Prairies”

Dr. Carly Aulicky

Dr. Carly Aulicky is the North Texas Director of Outreach and Stewardship for the Native Prairies Association of Texas (NPAT). In her position, Carly monitors and manages NPAT prairies, holds educational workshops, and acts as a spokesperson for conservation of native prairies. Carly completed her doctorate at the Kansas Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit at Kansas State University in 2020, where she researched lesser prairie-chickens (*Tympanuchus pallidicinctus*). Before her work in Kansas, Carly worked with tropical birds for her M.S. in ecology completed in 2014 at the University of Glasgow, Scotland, and received her B.S. in ecology and natural resources from Rutgers University.



Coming Soon...

Amy Martin

The Cross Timbers chapter is well represented in Amy Martin's new book, *Wild DFW: Explore the Amazing Nature Around Dallas-Fort Worth*. A vignette by **Michael A. Smith** opens the book's first chapter. Quotes by **Rob Denkhaus** are throughout the Eastern Cross Timbers sections. In the book's 25 hiking adventures, Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge gets a chapter with **Kate Morgan**. **Charley Amos** and **Zach Chapman** hold down the chapter on Village Creek Drying Beds and River Legacy Science Center. The chapter on Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve features **Jim Frisinger** and **Annabelle Corboy**, with photos by **Bob Brennan**. **Suzanne Tuttle** is showcased in the chapter on the Sid Richardson Tract prairie at Benbrook Lake with photos by **Chris Emory**, and **Don Young** leads the explorations and provides photos in the Tandy Hills Natural Area chapter.



Amy will be speaking at our Sept 18 meeting and re-creating her Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge hike on Sept 16 from 2 to 4 pm. During the Tandy Hills hike re-creation on Oct. 1 starting at 1 pm, attendees are invited to bring a picnic lunch at noon and engage in a conversation about what Amy, a life-long Dallasite, learned about Tarrant County and how it differs in history and ecology from Dallas. More details at Wild-DFW.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.

May

Glenn Butler	Annabelle Corby	Karen Knight
Linda Little	Patsy Miller	Jane Oosterhuis
Theresa Thomas	Christie Tull	

June

Bill Collins	Josephine Keeney	Mary Beth Lampe
Teresa Landfield	Donna Piercy	Dick Schoech
	David Vestal	

Member Milestones

- Roseann Giambro - 1st Time Certifying (Certified MN, Name Badge, and Painted Dragonfly Pin)
- Karen Hembree - 1st Time Certifying (Certified MN, Name Badge, and Painted Dragonfly Pin)
- Cheyne Kaspar - 1st Time Certifying (Certified MN, Name Badge, and Painted Dragonfly Pin)
- Barbara Williams - 1st Time Certifying (Certified MN, Name Badge, and Painted Dragonfly Pin)
- James Frisinger - 500 Hours (Silver Dragonfly Pin)
- Charley Amos - 2,500 Hours (Polished Silver Dragonfly Pin)
- Jose Martinez - 4,000 Hours (Polished Gold with Ruby Dragonfly Pin)

Will the Real Beeyounce Buzz the Mic

Stephonia Roberts

One of the most fascinating insects in Nature is bees. Of course, there are many more wonderful insects that grace our planet helping us with survival.

As a child, my grandmother had several beautiful peach trees surrounding the north side of her home. The peaches were so large, beautiful, and fleshy orange and red. You knew it tasted sweet and juicy as the juice would run down your chin. There were days I wouldn't wash off the peach because I didn't mind the fuzz which would evade my face like a bad razor burn from an unsharpened blade.



I knew then it was because of the beautiful pollinators of bees buzzing from bloom to bloom in the spring. The buzzing was loud as I would sit by the bedroom window listening and observing the comings and goings of these magnificent creatures. I even captured a few not knowing my footprint of destruction as a child. However, the memory of those beautiful springtime moments are embedded in my brain with the first time I was stung in the eye by a bumble bee. No more chaos for me. Mother nature has its own rules and guidelines. But I still marveled at their tenacity swollen eye and all.

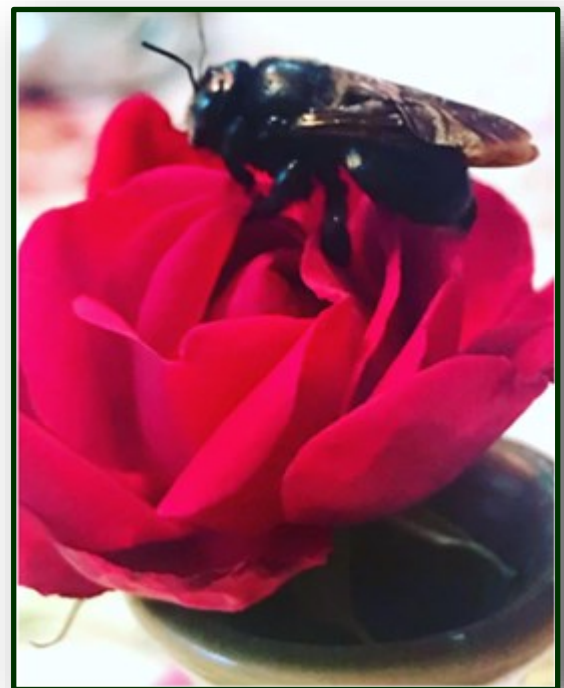
Will the Real Beeyounce Buzz the Mic

Stephonia Roberts

This brings me to my memorable and cherished experience with bees of all time. A few years ago, I found a beautiful black bumble bee on the ground in my garden. She (yes, I said she) was desperately trying to fly but to no avail.

Because of the size and color most people identify this type of bee as a bumble bee, but these black beauties are in the carpenter bee family. Her beautiful black and blue sheen and lack of fur or hair makes the distinction quite known as they buzzed from flower to flower.

I watched the bee for a while concerned about its welfare and after much consideration, I brought it inside. Placing her on a rose. This would be her new Air BnB. She received 5Star hospitality with fresh distilled bottle cap water, bee balms delights with a taste of honey. I would watch her as her little legs would move the bottle cap closer as she would drink with her proboscis. That day I named her Beeyounce.



Beeyounce despite her inability to fly would buzz for me. I like to think she was saying hello. Over the next few days, I saw her health declining. It still saddened me when I realized she had died sitting on top of the rose. It was her favorite spot. I keep her now in an enclosed plastic bubble when I have children come to the garden so I can tell them about her beauty and her kind. In her death she's still teaching.

North Texas Master Naturalist
Presents

URBAN WILDLIFE WORKSHOP

Thursday, August 3, 2023
9am - 3pm CDT

Land & Water Resource Building
Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension
Center at Dallas

17360 Coit Rd., Dallas, TX 75252

Details & Tickets

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/urban-wildlife-workshop-2023-registration-622974231697>

Questions, email:
registration@ntmn.org



Moth Week Event

THE NATIVE PRAIRIES ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS (NPAT) IS HOSTING A MOTH NIGHT IN CELESTE TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL MOTH WEEK. MOTH ENTHUSIASTS AND NATURE LOVERS ALIKE ARE INVITED TO JOIN US. NPAT STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WILL HAVE MOTHING STATIONS SET UP FOR VIEWING, BUT OTHERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO BRING THEIR OWN MOTHING EQUIPMENT.

**LIVE MUSIC - DANCE - GAME
FOOD - FIREWORK**

**SPACE IS LIMITED
PLEASE RSVP**

**NO PRIOR MOTHING EXPERIENCE
REQUIRED! - PLEASE BRING YOUR
INAT APPS AND CAMERAS TO HELP
RECORD DATA FOR SUBMISSION!**

**AT THE NATURE CENTER CONSERVANCY'S
CLYMER MEADOW PRESERVE
4318 FM1562, CELESTE, TX 75423**

29 JULY 2023 | 8 PM - 12 PM

Please contact
Carly Aulicky at carly_aulicky@texasprairie.org
with any questions!

First-Ever National Environmental Youth Advisory Council

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced the formal establishment of the agency's first-ever National Environmental Youth Advisory Council (NEYAC). The NEYAC will provide independent advice and recommendations to Administrator Michael S. Regan on how to increase EPA's efforts to address a range of environmental issues as they relate to youth communities. The NEYAC will provide a critical perspective on how the impacts of climate change and other environmental harms affect youth communities. The Administrator announced his intent to launch the youth council last June at the Austrian World Summit.



EPA is soliciting applications for youth to fill 16 vacancies on the NEYAC. Selected applicants will contribute to a balance of perspectives, backgrounds, and experience of the council and will be appointed by the Administrator. As a first-of-its-kind committee, all members of NEYAC will be between the ages of 16 and 29.

As part of the agency's commitment to centering environmental justice communities, at least 50% of the overall membership of NEYAC will come

First-Ever National Environmental Youth Advisory Council

from, reside primarily in, and/or do most of their work in disadvantaged communities as defined by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) as part of Justice40.

“We can’t tackle the environmental challenges of our time without input from our younger communities, who’ve long been at the forefront of social movements,” said **EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan**. “This committee will help ensure that the voices and perspectives of our youth are included and valued in EPA’s decision-making as we continue to advance President Biden’s commitment to ensuring everyone in this country has access to clean air, safe water and healthy land, now and for generations to come.”

Applications to the NEYAC are due by August 22, 2023 at 11:59PM ET. To apply for appointment to the council, the below information is required:

- Contact information
- Resume OR short biography OR qualification essay
- Statement of interest
- Media Project

First-Ever National Environmental Youth Advisory Council

Visit the [EPA NEYAC webpage](#) for more information on the council and to apply.

EPA will be hosting virtual application webinars where the public can ask EPA staff questions live. The webinars will be on Zoom and will be hosted at the following times:

- Friday, June 30, 2023 @ 3PM – 4PM ET // [Register here](#)
- Monday, August 7, 2023 @ 12PM – 1PM ET // [Register here](#)



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 - FORT WORTH SKY PHOTO BY CHRIS EMROY; MOTH PHOTO - [HTTPS://TEXASPRAIRIE.ORG/MOTH-NIGHT-AT-CLYMER-MEADOW-PRESERVE](https://TEXASPRAIRIE.ORG/MOTH-NIGHT-AT-CLYMER-MEADOW-PRESERVE); CARPENTER BEE PHOTO - [HTTPS://AMERICANPEST.NET/BLOG/3-TRUTHS-ABOUT-CARPENTER-BEES-THAT-MAY-SURPRISE-YOU/](https://AMERICANPEST.NET/BLOG/3-TRUTHS-ABOUT-CARPENTER-BEES-THAT-MAY-SURPRISE-YOU/); EPA PHOTO - [HTTPS://WWW.EPA.GOV/](https://WWW.EPA.GOV/)
- "PRESIDENTS PEN" - PHOTO BY SHARON HAMILTON
- "JULY SPEAKER" - PHOTO BY DR. CARLY AULICKY
- "WILL THE REAL BEEYOUNCE BUZZ THE MIC" - BEE ON PEACH TREE PHOTO - [HTTPS://TRACEMEEK.COM/](https://TRACEMEEK.COM/); BEE ON ROSE - PHOTO BY STEPHONIA ROBERTS
- "BLUEBIRDS ON HOLIDAY" - PHOTOS BY DONNA HONKOMP
- "ENVIRONMENTAL YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL" - PHOTOS - [HTTPS://WWW.EPA.GOV](https://WWW.EPA.GOV)