

T E X A S

Master Naturalist™
Cross Timbers



January -
Welcome
2024~



Table of Contents

- CTMN Announcements 2**
- Speakers 8**
- President's Pen 9**
- TMN Tuesdays 12**
- Member Milestones 15**
- Member Highlight 17**
- Story Corner 18**
- Native-otM 23**
- Featured Project 24**
- Art&Photo Gallery 26**
- iNaturalist Obs.-otM 27**
- Current Events 28**
- Board Members 31**

In this Issue:



Fire at Chisolm Trail

Check out the photos taken at the most recent Chisolm Trail Community Center Prairie prescribed burn.

#TMNTuesdays Mini Series

TMN Tuesdays is bring a new kind of mini series to 2024. On January 23, learn how you can help Texan Nature Trackers with bat acoustic monitoring citizen science projects.



Featured Project

Come visit the White Settlement Monarch Waystation - these wonderful master naturalists volunteer their time to an underserved community so that everyone can see the beauty and power of native plants.



CTMN Announcements



Don't forget to pay your dues!

Thanks to all who have already paid your 2024 dues, including our Class of 2023 Trainees!

To those who have not yet done so, please pay your 2024 dues by January 31, 2024!

To pay using your credit card or PayPal, go to: <https://txmn.org/crosstimbers/>
On the home page, scroll down to this paypal section.

To pay by check, email our Treasurer, Dee Ann McGinnis, at treasurer@ctmn.org, to get the mailing address.

Pay Dues

Dues

Price:

\$25.00

Name

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
First	Last

PayPal
Pay Later

Class of 2022 needs to start paying dues now!!

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM

SEASON OF *Thanks!*



The Texas Master Naturalist Program is recognized in an article by AgriLife Today in celebration of it's 25th Anniversary.

“My hope is that when someone thinks of the future of Texas’ natural resources, they think of Master Naturalists and the Texas Master Naturalist Program. So many great things are accomplished because of the efforts of our volunteers.”

Michelle Haggerty, *Texas Master Naturalist Program State Coordinator, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department*

Master Naturalists, please spread the word:

Chandor Nature Trail Spruce-Up days will be on the last Sunday of each month from noon until 2:00 until warmer weather. Our next session will be Sunday, January 28. We will be priming the Monarch Garden at the trailhead and removing trail brush and deadfall, so bring garden tools, cutters, and tarps. Chandor's address is 711 W. Lee St., Weatherford, 76086. For questions or requests, **contact Christie Tull at 817-307-9307 or email greenwoodfarminc@aol.com.**

S&S Trail Services is returning Monday, Feb. 5 through Thursday, Feb. 8. Thanks to a grant from the Native Plant Society of Texas, private donations, area volunteers, and the City of Weatherford Parks and Recreation services, we will concentrate on keeping the trail open by removing invasives along the trail and pruning back branches. Anyone interested in helping with this major project, please **contact Christie Tull at 817-307-9307 or email greenwoodfarminc@aol.com.**

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM

SEASON OF *Thanks!*

Plants of Texas Rangelands Virtual
Herbarium Volunteer Team



We are thankful for our 62 TMN volunteers who have edited plant profiles, provided photographs, and wrote up new plants for the virtual herbarium!

*Though this year has had a slow start,
We hope you'll be ready in 2024 to do your part!*

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Love,
Megan & Stacy

Howdy, Master Naturalists,

Happy New Year! As the holidays come to a close, we would like to reflect on a new series we began this year, "Season of Thanks." Season of Thanks was created to highlight TMN volunteer projects, service, and accomplishments to close out 2023. We invited you to interact with our social media posts and share with us what you are most thankful for! Over the course of the past two months, we heard from so many of you about what you are most thankful for as a master naturalist and were able to use this feedback to plan for the future.

You can find all of the Season of Thanks posts on our social media channels below!

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistProgram>

Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/texasmasternaturalist/>

Or if you aren't on social media, I have attached each post below and encourage you to reflect on these questions and what the TMN Program means to you!

Share your thoughts, reflections, and hopes for the 25th Anniversary of the Texas Master Naturalist Program through our Survey - linked below. These will be collected and shared in April this year as part of our National Volunteer Month celebration in 2024!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/tmn25thanniversary>

**We are thankful!
TMN Program Team**

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM

SEASON OF *Thanks!*



Thanks to Great Texas Wildlife Trail Adopt-A-Loop Volunteers!

Your great work accomplished the following in 2023:

- 4 new Great Texas Wildlife Trail sites added
- 8 sites removed (closed, fallen into disrepair)
- 53 sign replacements in the works
- 55 sites with updated web information
- 39,330 new iNaturalist observations at GTWT sites (total since project began: 82,867)
- 1,100 new unique species observed and inputted into AAL iNaturalist project for GTWT sites (total since project began: 5,233)
- 195 TMN volunteers offering 3,773 hours of their time to make this project great

WE'RE THANKFUL TO ALL OF YOU!



Speakers



This Month's Speaker

The Cross Timbers Chapter is well-represented in Amy Martin's new book, Wild DFW. The book's 25 hiking adventures include the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge. The book utilizes content, photos, and quotes from many well-known chapter members. Explore the Village Creek Drying Beds, River Legacy Nature Center, and Tandy Hills Natural Area in this book catered to DFW.

[Monthly Meeting Zoom Link Here](#)

Next Month's Speaker

Chapter Meeting at the Botanic Garden and using Zoom - Monarch Tagging, Migration, and Life Cycle by **Kakkie Cunningham**, CTMN Member.

Learning about the amazing citizen science research, migrational journey, and captivating life cycle of our state butterfly, the Monarch.

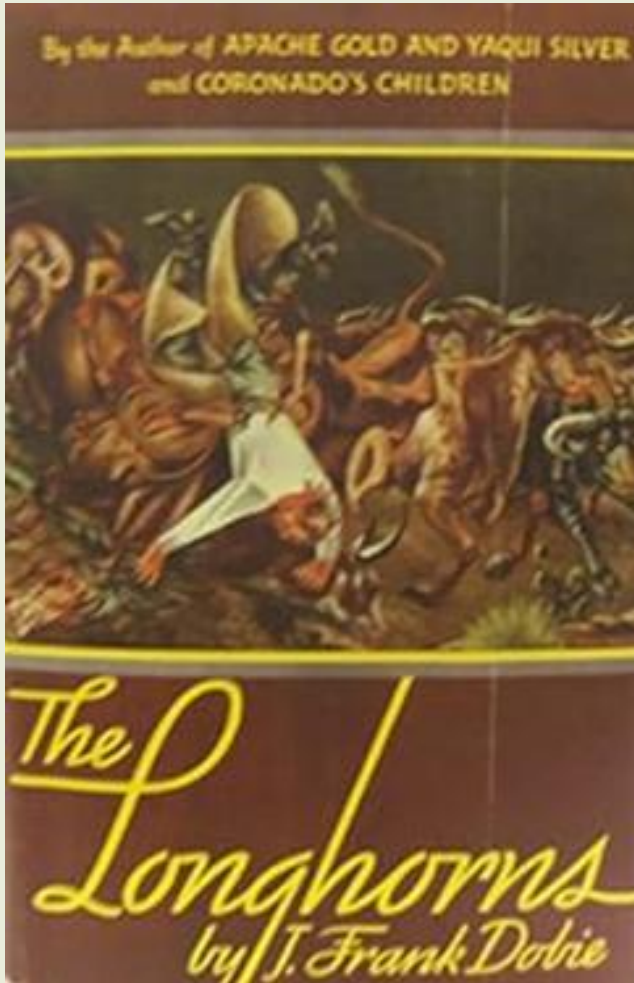


x President's Pen



J. Frank Dobie—Author, Rancher, Texan, Naturalist

-Sharon Hamilton



If you've lived in Texas very long, you've heard of J. Frank Dobie. Best known as a folklorist, Dobie wrote about the people, places, and land of Texas.

I picked up a copy of Dobie's collection of stories about Texas Longhorns, published in 1941. Love them or hate them, Longhorns were integral to the Texas landscape and its economy for many decades. No, they're not native, but after reading this book, I want to make them honorary natives as the animals best adapted to the wild lands of south and southwest Texas.

Conquistadors brought Spanish cattle to North America in the 1500s, releasing them to fend for themselves and populate the rangelands of Mexico, which included what we know as Texas. In a perfect example of fitness and survival, descendants of these cattle adapted physically and behaviorally to thrive without human intervention in terrain that modern Herefords and Angus breeds cannot.

Horns grew long, curling upwards or downwards, useful for offense and defense; cows birthed and protected calves that grew to be hardy, thirst tolerant, and cunning in the thorny, brushy landscape. Aware and alert, they spooked at a surprising sound or sudden movement; camouflaged, they lay still, remaining unseen when men searched for them.

Men of the 1800s learned that hides and meat of Longhorn cattle were valuable, as a commodity they could be driven to market on their own hooves. Dobie tells wonderful stories about cattle drives, where man and beast faced drought, floods, lightning, and stampedes. His descriptions of rounding up maverick animals match any naturalist's. The reader feels thorns scraping her skin, hears the lowing of cows searching for lost calves, tastes the dust that thousands of hooves stir up. Like the best naturalists, Dobie describes how the herd moves and how good horses and drovers could turn the herd into itself, milling in a huge circle, ending a stampede. He relates the knowledge that former cattle drivers shared—how the animals could “smell water” miles away from their position; how a herd would turn itself around and travel those miles if thirsty enough.



Photo via Canva

From the chapter, “Horns,”

“It was when the cattle were massed that horns presented the most extraordinary spectacles. Grazing in tall grass, a herd sometimes appeared to be almost headless, the curved horns bobbing and jerking the air as if separated from any fastening. The play of lightning on a sea of wet horns was a sight to be remembered forever. Crowded in a pen with their chins resting on or held over the necks and backs of neighbors, the cattle sifted about under a bizarre panoply of seething horns that almost made beholders forget that was anything else in the cattle world.

“Sometimes they swam high, heads and tails well out of the water. Again, all parts but noses, faces and the surmounting horns were submerged. Then the glistening river of horns composed by their own undulating formation, surging on curves as graceful as those of the old moon’s horns, was something that not the Colorado, the San Gabriel, the Brazos, the Trinity, the Canadian... ever surpassed in wonder.”

Growing up on a south Texas ranch in the early 20th century, Dobie lived the range. Fortunately, a college professor steered him to a career in writing. We are the beneficiaries of his research, interviews, and talent with written words, seeing the natural resources of our state through his eyes.



Photo via Canva

-Sharon Hamilton

Editor’s fun fact:: Longhorns are a **landrace breed**, nature’s way of taking a domesticated species and rewilding them back into the landscape via natural selection.

TMN Tuesdays

On the second Tuesday of each month at 12:00pm Central Standard Time, the TMN State Office offers an hour-long virtual advanced training event - with fantastic new and returning guest speakers.

This Month's Speaker



Join us as Program Coordinators, Michelle Haggerty & Mary Pearl Meuth, update us on the state of the program, recap 2023, and touch on 2024 planning and events!



TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

2024 #TMNTuesdays

January 9	May 14	   <small>T E X A S</small> 
February 13	June 11	
March 5* <small>*first week of the month</small>	July 9	
April 9	August 13	
September 10	October 8	
	November 12	
	December 10	

[View Past #TMNTuesday Presentations Here for Advanced Training Hrs.](#)

[Register Here](#)

[Webex Guide](#)

[FAQ](#)

NEW For 2024: Texas Nature Trackers #TMNTuesdays Mini Series

SAVE THE DATES: January 23, 2024 and February 6, 2024

We are so excited to be collaborating with our friends at Texas Nature Trackers with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department to bring you an amazing #TMNTuesdays Mini Series! On Tuesday, January 23 and Tuesday, February 6 from 11 am – 1 pm, we will be joined by Texas Nature Tracker Biologists, Craig Hensley and Wendy Anderson. Craig and Wendy will be hosting two, two hour long webinars on these dates and you don't want to miss it!

#TMNTuesdays



Texas Nature Trackers Mini Series

**Craig Hensley, Texas Nature
Trackers Biologist, TPWD**

presents

*“Acoustic Monitoring of Texas
Bats: A Community Service Project
for TMNs”*

January 23, 11am-1pm



NEW For 2024: Texas Nature Trackers #TMNTuesdays Mini Series

Join TNT Biologist Craig Hensley for an introduction to the bats of Texas, their challenges and this new effort to better understand these flying mammals through acoustic monitoring. We are looking for Master Naturalists chapters and individuals interested in surveying bats in your area using acoustic monitors beginning this May. Specifically, we are looking for one individual in each participating chapter to help coordinate the effort within their respective chapter, members willing to put an acoustic monitor on their property and sharing those results with TPWD, and generally, individuals across the spectrum of TMNs interested in helping with data storage and analysis. More information on this webinar can be found in the letter attached below.

About the Speakers:

Craig Hensley is one of two Texas Nature Tracker Biologists. He has served TPWD as a Wildlife Biologist and Park Interpreter/Resource Specialist at Guadalupe River State Park and Honey Creek State Natural Area. He has spent the majority of his career engaging audiences in outdoor learning from Minnesota and Nebraska to Missouri, Kansas, and Texas. Craig holds degrees in Fisheries and Wildlife Management (BS) and Zoology (MS). He is an avid naturalist and grower of native plants.

Register for the January 23 webinar [here](#).



Photos by Kate Rugroden taken from Bat World MidCities Facebook Page.

Member Milestones

Let's take a moment to help us congratulate members that have recertified in 2023 so far!

They have completed, logged, and had approved 40 volunteer hours and 8 advanced training hours. They will all receive the Texas Ecoregion Pin.



September Recertifications

Melinda Pajak



November Recertifications

**Loretta Bailey
Zach Chapman
Marian Hiler
Ann Knudsen**

**Marsha McLaughlin
Jan Miller
Becca Surginer**



December Recertifications

**Gina
Alexander
Vicki Brooks
Jason Cole
Ray Conrow
Cynthia Crump
Wendy Elias
Carmen Fahy
Fonda Fox
Sheila Franklin**

**Anna Leone
Ellen Long
Megan
McConnell
Banjo Moore
Larry Mundt
Roberto Ramos
Nicole Slobodin
Erika Swyryn
Glenda Walker**





Member Milestone Achievements

Morgan Chivers - 250 Hours (Bronze Dragonfly Pin)

Christie Tull - 250 Hours (Bronze Dragonfly Pin)

Kate Morgan - 1000 Hours (Gold Butterfly Pin)



Bronze
250 Service Hours



Gold
1000 Service Hours

Meet-a-Member

Meet CTMN Ryan Wiggins!

What year did you become a master naturalist?

2020

What is your work career?

I have been a 3rd grade teacher for 21 years at Fort Worth Academy of Fine Arts. I currently teach 3rd grade math & science and highschool yearbook.



Where do you like to earn your volunteer hours?

I am so excited that I just hit the 500 volunteer hours milestone. The first 2 years I got most of my hours at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge doing work for natural guard or working in the interpretive center handling and teaching about the snakes. The last few years I get my hours as a Master Naturalist Trainee committee member. I also love to iNat at mothing events!!!

What are your interests outside of naturalist activities?

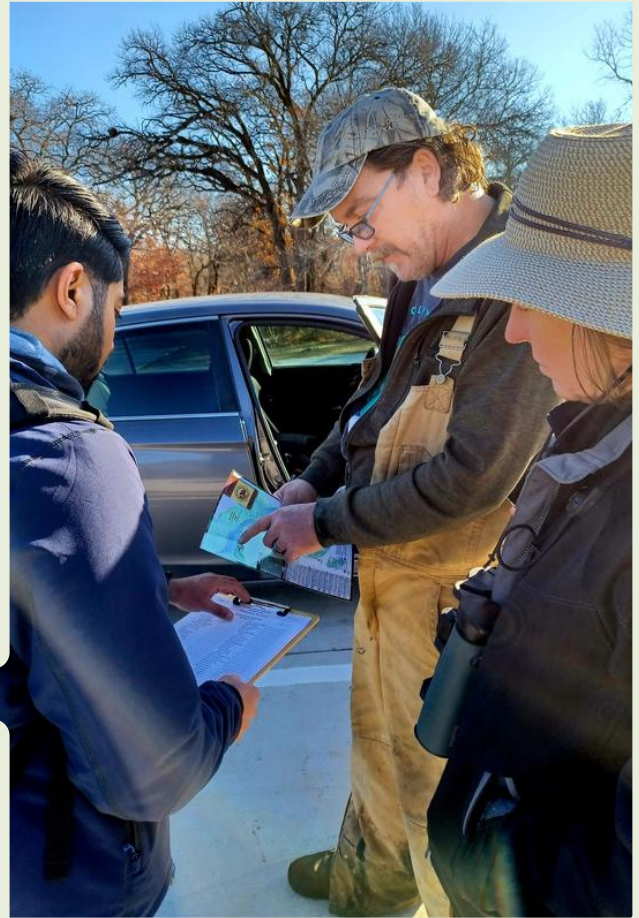
I am very involved at my school - it is a performing arts school and so I attend and photograph every performance. I have a nephew that is 8 and a neice that is 2 that I spend a lot of time with. I also like to travel- my next trip is going to Angel Fire, New Mexico. My bucket list trip is to Jackson Hole, Wyoming.





Christmas Bird Count

On the 16th of December at the Fort Worth Nature Center Christmas bird count was conducted. This is an annual event that became a good tradition for Audubon society. Also 3 Master Naturalists took part in the count. Several groups had different routes going throughout different biomes. We started our route at 6 a.m. in the morning, when it was so dark, that I couldn't see my own hand next to my face. But the Carolina Chickadees and Dark-eyed Juncos were already up. We also saw a Barred Owl on the way to the spot. We got an access to the Area 12 and were the first to conduct the count in this place. There we saw 12 yellow legs sitting on the tree. Nothing surprising happened today, but we ended the day with a good number of birds.



-Eleanor Pate



Photos by Eleanor Pate

CTMN New Years Resolutions

- *MMWW hike at Tandy Hills on January 1!
- *Next batch of CTMN hours!
- *Add Azure Blue Sage to my landscape.
- *Prairie Seekers!
- *Avenue of the Giants tour (4,000yo redwoods)

-Teddi Zonker

- Get my 40 hours in
- Remember to try and make a backlog of content so I'm not scrambling
- Learn to grow plants better
- Learn about bat acoustic monitoring citizen science

-Madison Gover

Don't forget to submit entries to the newsletter! We try to have a theme each month!

City of Arlington Volunteers of the Month 2023/2024!

I want to say congratulations to those Cross Timbers Master Naturalists who volunteer within the scope of the City of Arlington Parks & Rec and have received recognition this past year. Growing up in Arlington, I have seen many of the beautiful landscapes and native gardens that these wonderful people have been a part of. - **Madison G.**

VOLUNTEER
OF THE MONTH

HESTER
SCHWARZER



JANUARY
2024 UNTEER
OF THE MONTH

ANN
KNUDSEN



DECEMBER
2023



**VOLUNTEER
OF THE MONTH**

**JIM
FRISINGER**

**MAY
2023**



**VOLUNTEER
OF THE MONTH**

**CAROL
MARCOTTE**

**JANUARY
2023**



**VOLUNTEER
OF THE MONTH**

**JOSEPHINE
KEENEY**

**FEBRUARY
2023**



Chisolm Trail Prescribed Burn

by Madison Gover

On January 11, a field classroom full of various organization members, city workers, naturalists, and firefighters gathered together to burn the Chisolm Trail Community Center Prairie. From what I could gather, this was one of the more “urban” burns the City of Fort Worth had ever done. So far they have done the Fort Worth Nature Center and BRIT. I am unsure of this writing if they have done Tandy Hills yet, but I believe after the success of this burn, it may be in the future. I think with all the different representatives of a few cities in the metroplex, that our future in urban wildlife is burning bright soon!



Photos by Madison G.



Native of the Month



Frostweed (*Verbesina virginica*)

by Madison Gover



Photo by Teddi Zonker

Frostweed is a very easy to grow plant that is inconspicuous to the untrained eye. It prefers shaded understory around the edges of woodland.

It has small white flowers and large green leaves. It is a very important plant for pollinators, and even considered bat-friendly by all the moths it attracts!

What really is fascinating is the formations that give its' name when it drops below freezing.

The base of the stem will exude water that freezes into beautiful shapes. Naturalists alike have been sharing their frostweed pictures during the freeze Jan. 13-15, 2024.



Featured Project

White Settlement Monarch Waystation

by Avon Burton



Photos by Avon Burton

White Settlement Monarch Waystation (in the courtyard between the Senior Center and the Recreation Center)

8213 White Settlement Road
White Settlement, Texas 76108

Cross Timbers Master Naturalist project.

Native Plant Society of Texas, North Central Chapter Demonstration Garden.

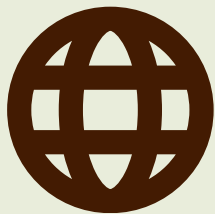
Weekly email communicates our activities each week. To be added to the distribution list email avon.burton@npsot.org



- Located in the courtyard of the White Settlement Municipal Complex.
- Established by invitation from the city in 2017.
- White Settlement is an underserved community.
- One of our recurring activities is a native plant giveaway.
- We've established a project in iNaturalist – White Settlement City Complex. We also have Facebook and Instagram accounts.
- In 2023 we received a grant for a rainwater collection cistern from Tarrant Regional Water District, and a grant for educational signage from Fort Worth Audubon Society.



- Facebook



-Website

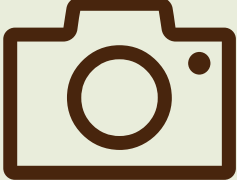


[Click here for the BJNC iNat Project!](#)

-iNaturalist Project



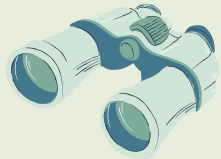
-Instagram



Art & Photography Gallery



Photos by Teddi Zonker

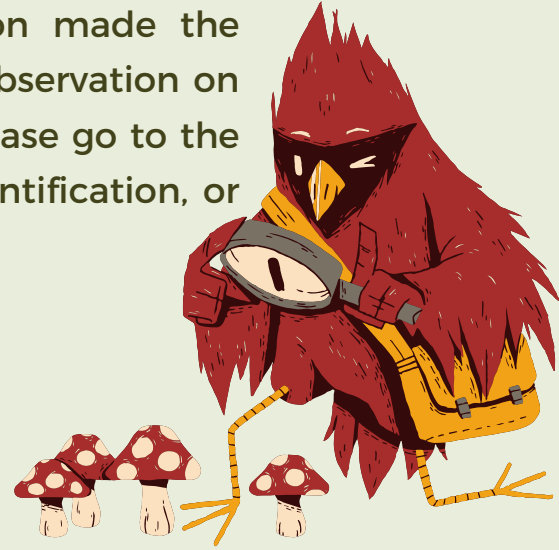


iNaturalist Observation of the Month

Each month we will choose an iNaturalist observation made the previous month in Tarrant or Parker County*. Make an observation on iNaturalist to be in the running for this achievement! Please go to the observation itself to congratulate the user, add your identification, or favorite (star) the observation.

Dark-eyed Junco (*Junco hyemalis*)

sam_moore_



Time: 11:50 AM

Date: 1/15/2024

Location:

Arlington, Texas



*Observation copyright settings must not be set to full rights reserved so that the photo can be used for the newsletter.



Current Events

Observation, Elmer Oliver Park

January 16, 2024

830am - 1030am

1650 Matlock Road, Mansfield 76063

Sponsored by Ft. Worth Audubon Society

Join Jennifer Cross; 2mi walk on crushed granite paths (benches, restroom, picnic area).

Friday Feathers at Kelley Park, Arlington Friday, February 2nd, 2024

1st Friday of most months; 830am

4195 W Arkansas Ln Arlington 76013

Sponsored by Ft. Worth Audubon Society

Join Chuck Baskin

Birding at Foster Park

February 10, 2024

830am Start Time

13725 South Drive, Fort Worth 76109

Sponsored by Ft. Worth Audubon Society

Join Jean Ferguson; Dress for the current weather conditions, and bring water and snacks if wanted.

Village Creek Drying Beds

February 14, 2024

2nd Wednesday, most months; 830am

715am, Dunlop Sports Center, 1500 NW Green Oaks Blvd Arlington 76012

Sponsored by Ft. Worth Audubon Society

Join Jim Sipiora, across the street

Garden Design Principles Using Native Prairie Plants

Thursday, January 25 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Sponsored by Trinity Forks NPSOT Chapter

To Join the Meeting Via Zoom: [Click Here](#)

In a one hour online seminar presented by Neil Diboll, native plant industry pioneer and internationally recognized native plant ecologist.

Open to the public.

The Blackland Prairie Across Time

Heard Museum in McKinney, 1 Nature Pl, McKinney, TX 75069

Tuesday, February 6 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Sponsored by Collin County NPSOT Chapter

To join the meeting via Zoom – [click here](#)

The presentation will be on “The Blackland Prairie Across Time” by George Diggs, an evolutionary biologist and botany professor at Austin College in Sherman. Open to the public.

FW NPAT tour of the James Prosek Exhibit at the Amon Carter

[Trespassers: James Prosek and the Texas Prairie](#)

Amon Carter Museum of American Art

3501 Camp Bowie Blvd, Fort Worth, TX 76107

Fort Worth NPAT had a fantastic tour of this exhibition on Saturday January 13 with an incredibly knowledgeable docent. **The exhibition has been extended until May 12 so everyone has time to visit (or revisit) this inspiring exhibition.**

SAVE TARRANT WATER EVENTS

Landscape Design



JANUARY 20-27
ONLINE - ON DEMAND

[SAVETARRANTWATER.COM/EVENTS](https://www.savetarrantwater.com/events)





Board Members

CTMN Board Members

- Sharon Hamilton - President
- Mary Beth Lampe - Vice President
 - Bill Collins - Secretary
- Dee Ann McGinnis- Treasurer

For submissions, nominations or announcements, please put the subject line as the newsletter category you are entering for and email to newsletter@ctmn.org

CTMN Chair Members

- Carol Marcotte - Memberships
 - Sharon Hamilton - Outreach
- Melinda Wolfinbarger - Education
- Theresa Thomas - VOL Services and AT Hours
 - Sandy Thornburgh - Hospitality
 - Theresa Thomas - Records
 - Madison Gover - Newsletter
 - Frank Keeney - Webmaster
- Theresa Posani - Class of 2023 Rep.

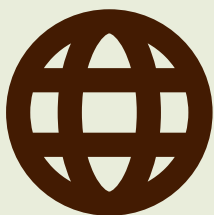


Inclusivity:

Together we can make the newsletter inclusive to the visually impaired. Consider providing a text description of your photos for screen-reader software.



**Cross Timbers
Master Naturalists
Facebook Group**



**Cross Timbers
Master Naturalists
Website**

CTMN Sponsors

- **Rachel Richter**, TPWD, Urban Biologist, Rachel.Richter@tpwd.texas.gov
- **Jacklyn Jones Doyle**, Texas AgriLife, County Extension Agent – Agriculture and Natural Resources, jacklyn.jones@ag.tamu.edu
- **Michael Perez**, Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge michael.perez@fortworthtexas.gov