

T E X A S

Master Naturalist™
Cross Timbers



Spooky &
Scary Issue!



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In this Issue:



Month Speaker

Erika Swyryn, CTMN Class of 2022, will be presenting next month on the topic of tarantulas and why they are amazing! Come join us in November!

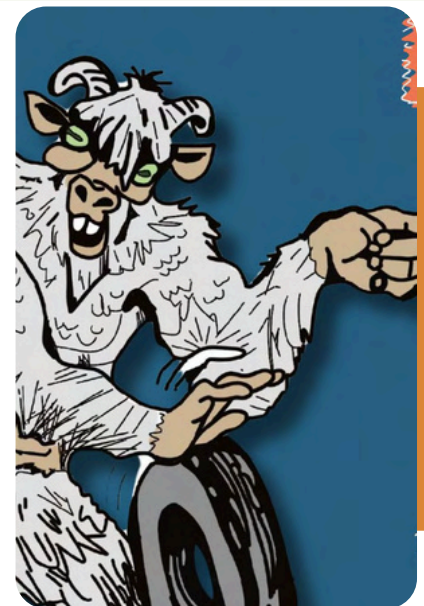
Member Highlight

Kimberlie has been active in a variety of volunteer activities since 2018. Kimberlie gives presentations across the metroplex. In 2022, she described a new gall species, *Druon laceyi*, and continues working with Gallformers.org to identify more.



Lake Worth Monster Bash

On Saturday, October 26 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., celebrate the 55th anniversary of the Lake Worth Monster ("Goatman") sightings at the FWNC&R! Fort Worth locals reported sighting a hairy, tall man-goat-beast on the Refuge in 1969. We're commemorating the event with hayrides, guided hikes, canoeing, and intriguing cryptozoology presentations.



CTMN Announcements



OCTOBER 24-27

[Annual Meeting Website](#)

Speakers

October's Speaker

CMTN Chapter Meeting/Presentation
November 18, 7:00 p.m.

Fort Worth Botanic Garden

Erika Swyryn, BS Biology, MBA, CTMN

Tarantulas and why they're amazing!

A review of the vast variety of tarantulas and native Texas species you can find in your own backyard.

I am a Texas Master Naturalist, Texas Master Gardener and Member of NPSOT. My undergrad degree is in biology, though I do have two advanced business degrees, which are not nearly as fun! I've been a Rescue Certified Scuba Diver since the 90's and it's my favorite thing to do! At home I have a wide variety of pets including dogs, cats, chickens, turkeys, three species of tortoises, fish, frogs, scorpions, beetles, and over 120 tarantulas across over different genera.



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 Speakers



Title: Chapter Project Fair

Description: Join us as we hear about projects from five Texas Master Naturalist Chapters for our 2024 Annual Meeting Chapter Project Fair: Bluestem Chapter, East Texas Chapter, Galveston Bay Area Chapter, Hays County Chapter and North Texas Chapter. Each chapter will present on their project entry for the Annual Meeting contest.

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

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

[Register Here](#)

[Webex Guide](#)

[FAQ](#)

Member Highlight

Meet CTMN Kimberlie Sasan!

What year did you become a master naturalist?

I joined CTMN with the class of 2017. I had been interested for a couple of years but my schedule wouldn't allow it, until I finally decided I was going to make it work. And I'm so glad I did!

Around 2015 I began posting photos to this new website called iNaturalist that I'd read about in a magazine. Most of my photos were from around my yard, but I'll give you a shiny penny if you can guess who the first person was to start identifying my observations. That's right, Sam Kieschnick. Mr. iNat himself! At the time he was working just a few minutes from where I lived and we made plans to meet up with a few others for a walk at a local park. That day I also met Brent Franklin, my now best-ever-nature-buddy! They kept on me until I finally joined the class. They both keep me involved to this day!

Shortly after I finished the class I heard about the Entomology Specialist certification and immediately signed up for the next class in College Station. By 2018 I completed that week-long class also.

What is your work career?

For most of my work life I was a business analyst for an insurance company. I had the luck of being able to retire early to take care of my family for over twelve years before I decided it was time to dip my toe back in the working world. For the last two years I have been working at BRIT, the Botanical Research Institute of Texas at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden as an Herbarium and Research Assistant. Part of my job is spent in the herbarium doing random projects like digitizing smaller partner herbaria or georeferencing specimens from Texas counties.

The other part of my time is spent as a research assistant to the Ferns of Colombia team. I oversee the importation of fern specimens from Colombia, the processing of dried specimens, and the DNA extraction of silica specimens. I enjoy having a variety of tasks to keep me busy, but more than anything I love the people I work with the most! If you have any interest in volunteering with BRIT|FWBG or coming by for a tour of the BRIT building, reach out to me at kimberlietx@gmail.com and I'll get you connected!

Where do you like to earn your volunteer hours?

As with work, and most everything else in my life, I like to keep a variety of things going for my volunteer activities. I first started in 2018 monitoring bluebird nest boxes in Keller and that has grown to over 50 boxes and seven volunteers today. I don't spend as much time checking the boxes myself as I do training new volunteers or handling administrative tasks, but anytime I get the urge to see one of those adorably cute ugly little hatchlings I have plenty of nests to pick from. We are always looking for new volunteers interested in helping with bluebirds, so feel free to email me about this topic, too!

I also get a few volunteer hours from giving presentations around the metroplex. When I wasn't looking, Sam volunteered me to give a presentation on moths to another TMN chapter, which I happily did. I LOVE blacklighting/mothing so it was an easy topic to share about. Apparently they liked the presentation enough to ask me back a few more times and even to host a blacklighting night last year during National Moth Week. Keep your eyes out for that presentation coming to CTMN in 2025!

I have also given a presentation to CTMN, the TMN annual meeting, and a couple of other chapters about my other passion... GALLS. A couple of years ago I became really interested in gall wasps because no one else was able to answer my questions about them. Fast forward, I teamed up with some great folks from iNaturalist to identify galls and we started a website for identification called Gallformers.org. In 2022 I published a description of a new gall, *Druon laceyi*, and I have several more undescribed wasp species waiting for genetic confirmation.

continued ->

And if you haven't picked up on it yet, I enjoy the heck out of iNaturalist. I get a few volunteer hours on the Citizen Science side during Bioblitzes and other data collection events. You can find me on iNat under the name @kimberlietx. And just in case you were wondering, I have 35,409 observations representing 5,691 species, as of this writing on July 16th. Work slows me down from getting the numbers I used to, but I'm active when I can be.

And finally, last year I became a New Member Mentor and really enjoyed it. (I had great mentees!) So I'll be volunteering again this year with the 2024 class.



What are your interests outside of naturalist activities?

My favorite thing to do is travel! I'm either traveling or planning to travel, but usually the latter. My next trip is another cruise at the end of the summer with my 21-yr old son and his girlfriend to Costa Maya and Cozumel, Mexico. My husband and I are still tossing around ideas for a trip just for the two of us. My friend and fellow CTMN, Lisa Pequeño and I are also actively planning a trip to the Galapagos together. In addition to traveling, I read or listen to audiobooks a lot, and cross-stitch. I also have a 180-pou

nd Great Dane named Trooper and an 8-pound short-haired cat named Maggie that demand a lot of my attention. If you are interested in any of the subjects I mentioned above, feel free to reach out to me at kimberlietx@gmail.com.





Favorite Bats of the Cross Timbers

by Madison Gover

originally in October 2023 Issue



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

Mexican Free-tailed Bat (*Tadarina brasiliensis*) are the state flying mammal of Texas! They get their name from their tail that is “free” from their **uropatagium**, a membrane that extends between the wings, thighs and tails of most bats.

These gentle creatures have the largest maternal colony in the world outside San Antonio in **Bracken Cave**. Up to **15 million** ladies congregate there each year to raise their young.

Eastern Red Bat (*Lasirius borealis*) are one of our fluffy **arboreal species** of bats found nearby. Arboreal bats roost in **trees** instead of caves. They are **solitary** and do not roost in large colonies.

These insectivores consume many agricultural pests. They can use their **fully-furred** uropatagium to wrap themselves up like a blanket, or use it as a scoop to catch insects mid-flight.



Evening bats (*Nycterius humeralis*) are a **forest-dwelling** bat. Unlike the solitary bats, evening bats will form a colony. They tend to be found under **peeling bark** and in crevices of trees.

The Cross Timbers and Post Oak regions seem to be the edge of their range. Once the **post oak savannahs** blends into the prairies, they are not likely to be found.

They, along with other bat species, partake in **resource partitioning**.



Camp Leroy Shuman BioBlitz

by Sandy Milfeld

The CTMN Class of '24 had the fantastic opportunity to attend a BioBlitz at the former site of Camp Leroy Shuman, led by Jeff Quayle, who frequently leads walks for the Native Prairies Association of Texas (NPAT) and collects herbarium specimens for BRIT.

This secluded little patch of Western Cross Timbers Post Oak/Blackjack Oak woodland is tucked away along the eastern shores of Lake Worth, amidst the occasional roar of jet engines and the hum of distant traffic. Camp Leroy Shuman was established by the Longhorn Council of the Boy Scouts of America in the 1920s. When the Boy Scouts stopped using the camp in 2009, the structures they built were left to deteriorate until they fell victim to arson. The City removed the debris, and now all that remains are a few concrete slabs and a host of wildlife species. This space is now part of the City of Fort Worth Open Space Conservation Program.

We were privileged to help Jeff hunt for two special plant species that grow in the Silstid Fine Sandy Loam, or "Sugar Sand," found in this area. Pink-scale Blazing Star (*Liatris hesperelegans*), previously known as *Liatris elegans*, is found in two locations in Tarrant County: at a city park in Arlington and at Camp Leroy Shuman. Michaux's Croton (*Croton michauxii*) is a new species for Tarrant County, having been discovered at the camp recently. This dainty little croton is typically found in the Post Oak Savannah or the Pineywoods.

As we hiked through the understory of Netleaf Hackberry, Gum Bumelia, Possumhaw, and Rusty Blackhaw, we were greeted by sun-dappled open areas filled with Little Bluestem, Red Lovegrass, Purpletop, Sand Dropseed, Plains Lovegrass, and Scribner's Rosettegrass. These openings are dotted with spring and autumn wildflowers like Pussytoes, Butterfly Weed, Prairie Gaillardia, Florida and Slender Snake Cotton, Pink Scale Gayfeather, and many more. There is also an ample presence of Glen Rose Yucca, which grows in deep, sandy soils.

We turned over logs to discover flatcoil snails and Texas Ovals, along with skittering spiders (including one of my personal favorites, the Brown Recluse, *Loxosceles reclusa*). We spotted a Little Brown Skink (*Scincella lateralis*), numerous dragonflies and damselflies, skippers, and a gorgeous Hummingbird Clearwing moth (*Hemaris thysbe*). We also saw the largest Lynx Paw Oyster (*Pleurotus levis*) I've ever seen.

At the end of our day, we were able to add 73 species to the iNaturalist Project Camp Shuman/Mosque Point Park, which currently hosts a total of 595 species. Thank you to Jeff for coordinating and leading this excellent learning experience for the CTMN Class of '24 students.

LetsNotMeet - Critter Edition

by Madison Gover

Last month, I went to the PNW for the first time to participate in a field trial with my dog. To be brief, the goal of a basset hound field trial is to essentially flush a rabbit out of brush, and then put two dogs against each other in a “brace” to go trail the rabbit. The way I was taught to get the rabbits out of the brush is by whacking the grass and shrubs while walking.

So there I was, -whack whack whack- bunnybunnybunny! -whack whack whack- just in my own little happy world, when suddenly the lady next to me says “Ouch- OUCH! Something’s-” and before she could finish the words “biting me,” I felt it, like sharp stinging tiny bullets, in multiple parts of my body.



Photo by Zach Chapman

Now I have had my fair share of time outside, albeit not mindlessly whacking bushes around - however I have never been accosted and assaulted the way these hornets came at me. I was stung a multitude of times, repeatedly - because they grab onto your clothing.

I now understand why everyone was yelling at me to take my shirt off while I was running at mach speed, blindly - I fell on my face and cracked my glasses. The quarter mile sprint for my life ended at my car, where I took my shirt off and the hornets were still stinging. The welts took over four weeks to disappear and felt like I was beaten with a bare palm.

I’m sorry for whacking your home, little hornets. But please, let’s not meet again!



Native of the Month



Buffalo gourd (*Cucurbita foetidissima*)

by Madison Gover



Buffalo gourds are our very own native pumpkin species! They are perennials that grow from a tuberous root. Natives used the plant for various different reasons, such as healing. The vine grows outward along the ground with tripartite leaves.

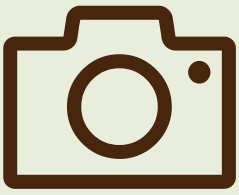
This plant requires very little water and is adapted to semi-arid and arid environments.

A fresh gourd can be eaten much like a squash, while the mature gourd has too many bitter compounds for it to be edible. They bloom from June to August.



Photos by Madison G.

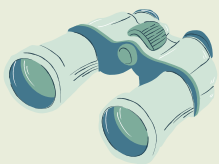
Sources of info: texasbeyondhistory.com Lady bird Johnson Wildflower Center



Art & Photography Gallery



Photos by Ellie Pate





Shrike the Impaler

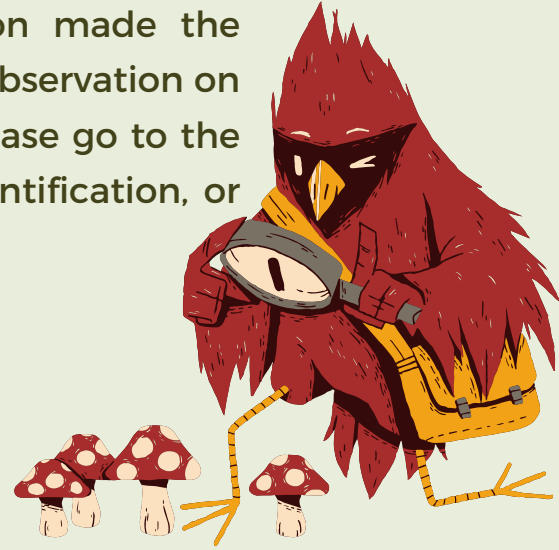
Art by Madison Gover

iNaturalist Observation of the Month

Each month we will choose an iNaturalist observation made the previous month in Tarrant or Johnson 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.

Pearl Crescent (*Phyciodes tharos*)

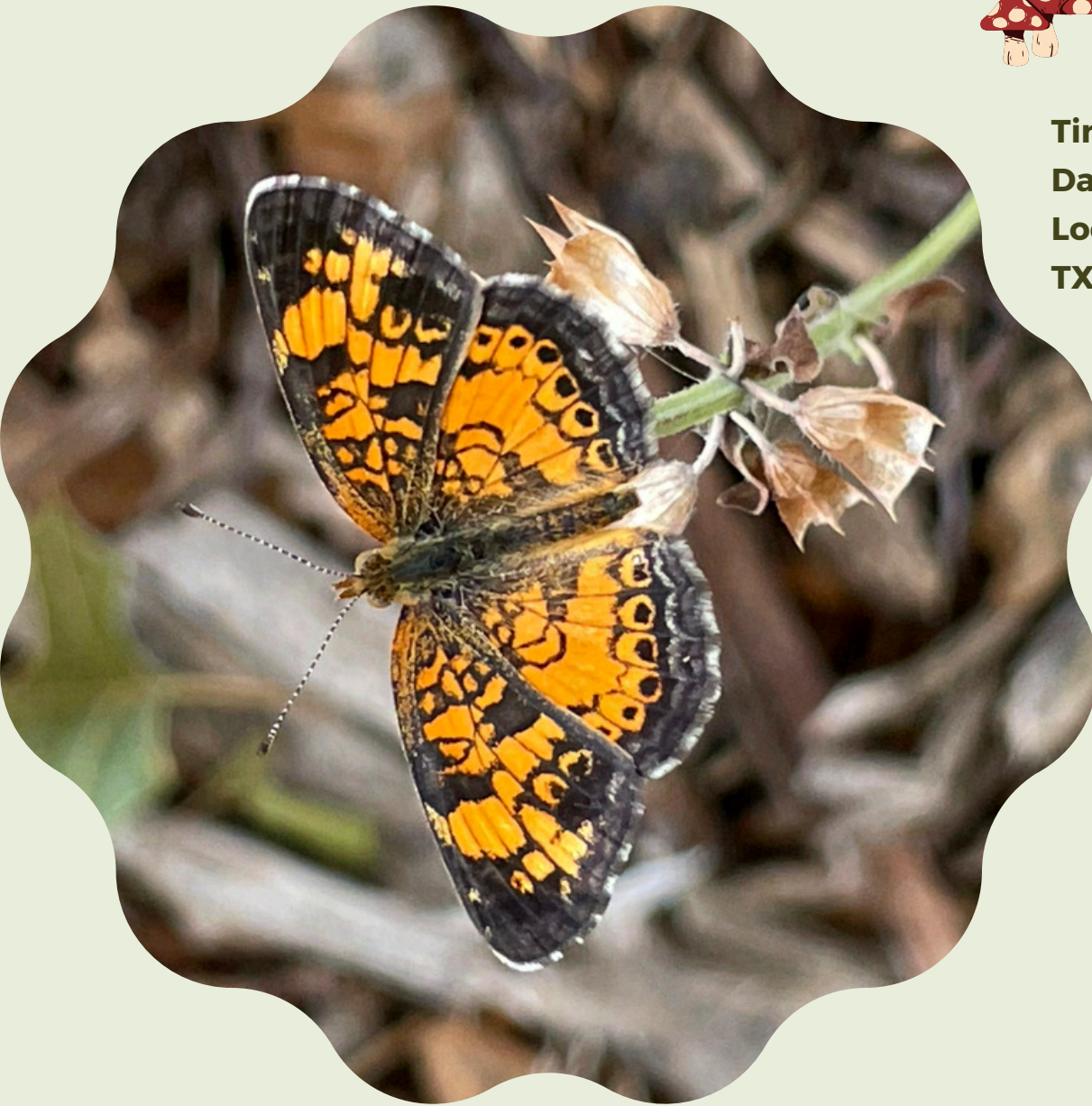
cecilyrod



Time: -

Date: October 2024

Location: Fort Worth,
TX



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



Current Events

Free Trees Texas Arbor Day In The Garden

*Sponsored by the
Tarrant County Master Gardeners*

FREE trees & gifts giveaways
Refreshments available

- Take a guided tour in the garden with a Master Gardener
- Meet a Citizen Forester & learn about Fort Worth trees
- Discover the best trees for Tarrant County
- Learn how to plant and care for trees

WHERE:

Resource Connection
1801 Circle Drive
Fort Worth, TX

Take the Campus Dr. exit off of
I20 to Joe B Rushing to Circle Dr.

WHEN:

Saturday, November 2, 2024
10:00 AM to 2:00 PM



OCTOBER/NOVEMBER

NPAT event

Meridian State Park Tour:
Tuesday October 29, 9am-1pm
Meridian, Bosque County

NOVEMBER

FWAS Kelly Park
Friday, November 2, 830am
4195 W Arkansas Lane, Arlington

FWAS Park Park/Grapevine Bird Walk

Sunday, 11/3, 730am
3010 Parr Lane, Grapevine 76051

NPAT event

Lake Mineral Wells State Park Hike
Tuesday November 5, 9am-1 pm
Mineral Wells, Parker County

Fall Prairie Seekers Training:

Saturday November 9
Tandy Hills

Prairie Sky/Star Party (sunset)

Tandy Hills
Saturday, November 9, 5:31pm
Free, all ages, coolers welcome, no pets, cancelled if cloudy

FWAS Birding

Foster Park, November 9, 730am
4398 Trail Lake Drive, Fort Worth 76109

FWAS – Foster Park outing Bird Watching

Saturday, 11/9, 830am
Foster Park, 4398 Trail Lake Drive, Fort Worth 76109

FWAS, 2nd Wednesday Bird Watching

Jim Sipiora's monthly walk/Village Creek Drying Beds
Wed., 11/13, 830am
1500 NW Green Oaks Boulevard, Arlington 76012



“On Saturday, October 26 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., celebrate the 55th anniversary of the Lake Worth Monster (“Goatman”) sightings at the FWNC&R! Fort Worth locals reported sighting a hairy, tall man-goat-beast on the Refuge in 1969. We’re commemorating the event with hayrides, guided hikes, canoeing, and intriguing cryptozoology presentations. Come enjoy Goatman’s habitats and recreational activities AND check out Trails & Treats! Yes, Trails & Treats is being expanded with more hours and more things to do so that more kids can participate!” - FWNC Website

CRYPTOZOOLOGIST SPEAKERS

OCTOBER 26
 AT HARDWICKE INTERPRETIVE CENTER


11 AM		Lyle Blackburn <small>Lake Worth Monster Legacy</small>
11:45 AM		Bobby Brooks <small>Book Cover Artist & Lake Worth Monster Witness</small>
12 PM		Aric Reichert <small>Son of the Initial Lake Worth Monster Witness</small>
12:30 PM		Jason McLean <small>Metroplex Monsters</small>
1:30 PM		David Weatherly <small>Monsters of Texas</small>

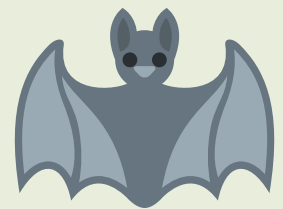
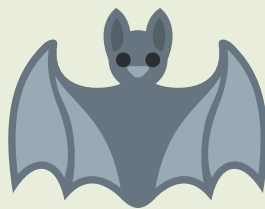
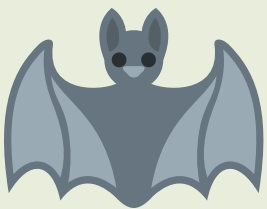
October is Bat Appreciation Month!

[Click Here](#)
[What To Do](#)
[If You've](#)
[Found A Bat](#)

Bat-Watching Sites of Texas

Texas happens to be the battiest state in the country. It is home to 32 of the 47 species of bats found in the United States.

 [texas.gov](https://www.texas.gov)





Board Members

CTMN Board Members

- Mary Beth Lampe - President
- Teddi Zonker - Vice President
 - Bill Collins - Secretary
- Dee Ann McGinnis- Treasurer

CTMN Chair Members

- Carol Marcotte - Membership
- Sharon Hamilton - Past President
- Melinda Wolfinbarger - Training
- Theresa Thomas - VMS Admin & Vol and AT Hours
 - Sandy Thornburgh - Hospitality
 - Theresa Thomas - Records
 - Madison Cover - Newsletter
- Frank Keeney - Announcement eblasts
 - Mary Beth Lampe - Webmaster
 - Theresa Posani - Class of 2023 Rep.
 - Julio Corralejo - Class of 2024 Rep.

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

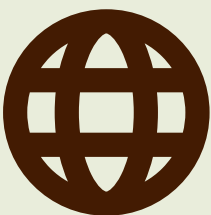


Inclusivity:

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