

T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™
Cross Timbers



April Showers Issue!



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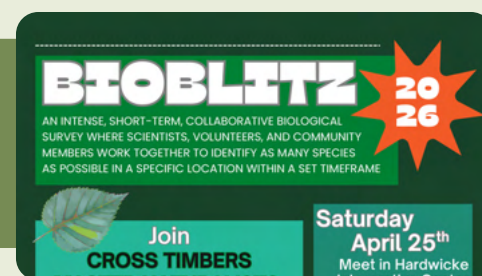


May Speaker

Next month, Guggenheim Fellow and UNT professor Dornith Doherty will share her work exploring environmental themes through photography and science.

Current Events

Literally everything this month. Spring is packed with hands-on opportunities to explore North Texas prairies, build ID skills, and contribute to community science. From BioBlitzes to grass ID workshops and prairie tours.



Adventurous Anecdotes

Take a short trip to the Easter Island with Teddi Zonker, who explains the unique ecology of the island and shares stories of her travels.



CTMN Announcements



CTMN City Nature Challenge 2026 iNat Competition

When: April 24–27, 2026

(Observations and ID submissions accepted through May 10)

Results will be announced May 13th.

Where: Dallas–Fort Worth Metropolitan Area

What: Document as many species as possible to help DFW win the City Nature Challenge and lead Texas.

Description:

Join the iNat City Nature Challenge and help put DFW back on top. Use the iNaturalist app to photograph plants, animals, and fungi anywhere in the metro area, from your backyard to local parks. This year includes friendly rivalry between DFW TXMN chapters, with chapter-specific projects you can join manually, plus upcoming opportunities to compete in small teams. You can contribute by making observations, identifying others' finds, joining a bioblitz, or exploring on your own. Let's show what DFW and CTMN can do!

Project Link: [CTMN CNC LINK](#)

Some Activities Listed Here
JOIN A TEAM!

Pollinators for Texas



PROJECT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

2026 PROJECT
AWARD
APPLICATIONS
OPEN NOW



Our Texas
Our Future

T E X A S



Cross Timbers TXMN Newsletter
April 2026

Announcements

2

BIOBLITZ

20
26

AN INTENSE, SHORT-TERM, COLLABORATIVE BIOLOGICAL SURVEY WHERE SCIENTISTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS WORK TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY AS MANY SPECIES AS POSSIBLE IN A SPECIFIC LOCATION WITHIN A SET TIMEFRAME



Join
**CROSS TIMBERS
MASTER NATURALISTS**
as we find & document species

**Saturday
April 25th**
Meet in Hardwicke
Interpretive Center
@ 8:30 AM



FORT WORTH NATURE CENTER & REFUGE

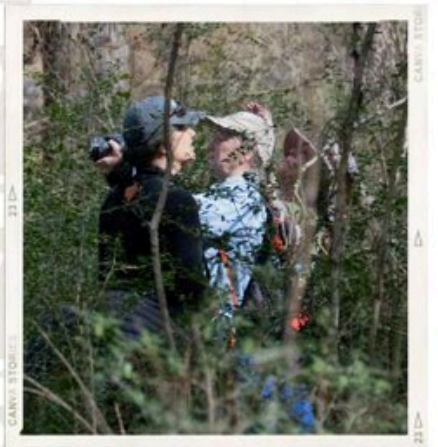
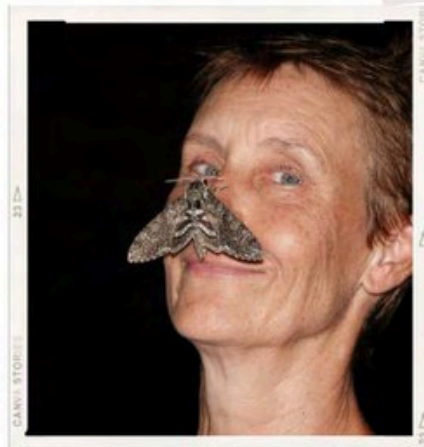
9601 Fossil Ridge Road, Fort Worth, Texas

Please install the iNaturalist app
on your smartphone & create an
account before the event



**Admission: Members FREE, \$6 adults (13+),
\$3 seniors (65+), \$2 kids (<13), and \$1 dogs**

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST **VOLUNTEERS** THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!





Speakers

May Speaker

**CTMN Chapter Meeting/Presentation –
May 18, 2026 6:30 Social 7:00 Presentation.**

Fort Worth Botanic Garden

**Dornith Doherty, Distinguished Research
Professor UNT (Art)**

Botanical Collaborations



[Zoom Link](#)

Doherty will present an artist talk detailing her art/science collaborative projects, including a two-year project with FWBG's Dr. Alejandra Vasco, as well as her long-term project documenting seed vaults and their preservation efforts (Archiving Eden). Supported in part by a Guggenheim Fellowship, she photographed over twenty seed banks across five continents, including the Svalbard Global Seed Vault. In exhibitions and publications, she juxtaposes artworks created from images captured with the archives' on-site x-ray equipment of research plants and seeds alongside the documentary images to shed light on this important effort. The resulting artworks have been featured widely in the US and abroad, including the US National Academy of Sciences Art Gallery and the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, among many others.

Dornith Doherty is an American artist and Distinguished Research Professor at the University of North Texas whose work blends photography and scientific imaging to explore environmental themes. A Guggenheim Fellow and Fulbright Scholar, she collaborates with scientists to highlight ecological issues. She holds degrees from Rice University and Yale University, with exhibitions shown internationally.

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. **These can be watched in the future asynchronously for advanced training.**

April Speaker



Title: Virtual Volunteer Fair

Date: April 14, 2026, from 11:30AM – 1:00PM CT

Speakers: Michelle Haggerty, Mary Pearl Meuth, Hannah Ferguson, and various organizations

Description: The Virtual Volunteer Fair will be an opportunity for our partner conservation organizations to present volunteer service projects that need volunteers from a distance or virtually!

Learn who is presenting, how to sign up to volunteer and more on our [Virtual Volunteer Fair 2026](#) page!

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

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

[Register Here](#)

[Webex Guide](#)

[FAQ](#)

Member Highlight



Congrats to these CTMN members for getting a shout out on the official TXMN Facebook page for Volunteer Appreciation Month!

Cross Timbers Chapter



T E X A S

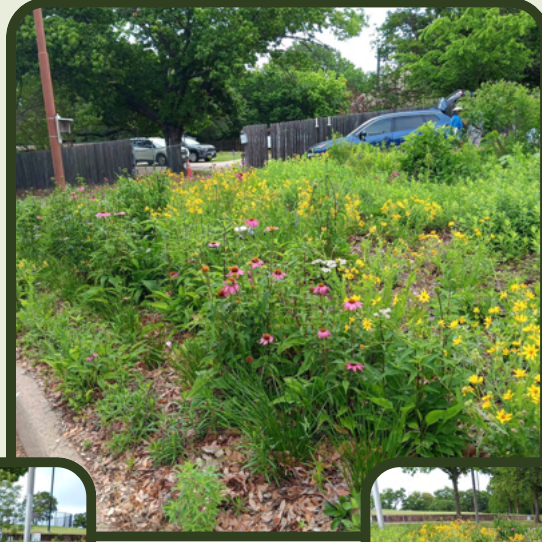
Master Naturalist™





Featured Project

Randol Mill Park Pollinator Garden



When: Rotating Monday schedule, [see our calendar for contact information and dates.](#)

Where: Randol Mill Park Pollinator Garden

What: Goal.

The Randol Mill Park Pollinator Garden is one pollinator garden out of many in Arlington that have a rotating care schedule throughout the year. These gardens are important sanctuaries for native insects!



Easter Island: Small Island, Big Ecology Lessons

by Teddi Zonker

In March, I had the incredible opportunity to travel to Easter Island (Rapa Nui, its native name). For Master Naturalists, the island offers a powerful reminder: isolated ecosystems are fragile, and introduced plants and animals can permanently reshape landscapes.

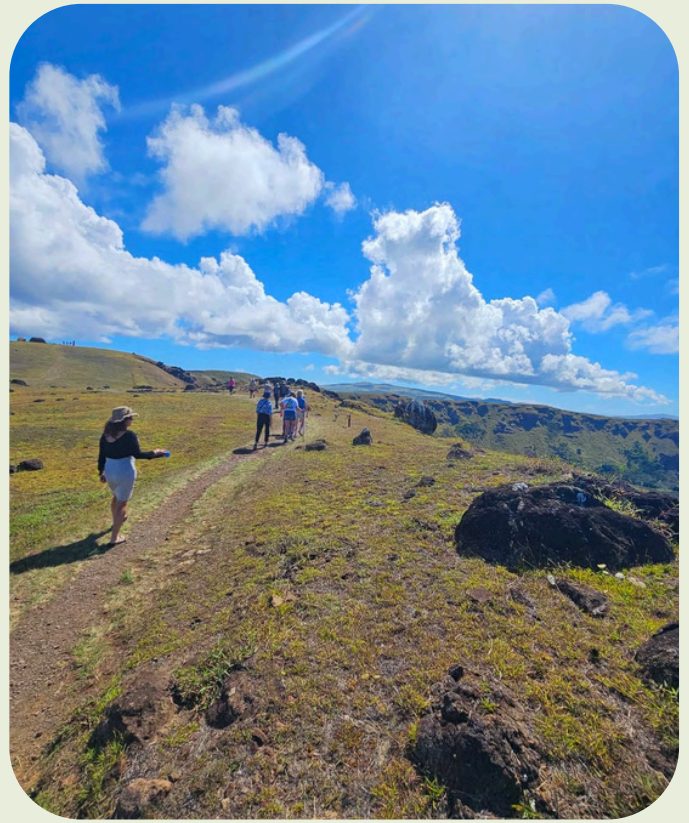
Easter Island is one of the most remote inhabited places on Earth, (2,150 miles from South American; five hour flight from Chile). While the island is famous for its moai statues, its ecology is just as fascinating. Once covered in palm forests, Easter Island is now primarily grassland due to deforestation, introduced species, and centuries of human impact.

Because of its extreme isolation, there are very few butterflies. Two commonly observed species are the Painted Lady and the Large White, both likely introduced. Common animals include seabirds such as masked boobies, brown noddies, red-tailed and white-tailed tropicbirds, and frigatebirds. Land birds include Chilean partridges.



Introduced animals now common on the island include cats, dogs, chickens, horses, and cattle.

Native and endemic plants include ferns, grasses, totora reeds (found in volcanic crater lakes), the Marikuru (native shrub), Hau Hau (woody shrub), and Toromiro (small tree). The Easter Island palm, once dominant, is now extinct (nuts have only been found in caves and archaeological sites). There are some areas that include 'gifted' palms and Eucalyptus trees. Today, much of the landscape is dominated by introduced species such as eucalyptus and guava. I was surprised to see tropical milkweed growing there!!



Many original species disappeared centuries ago following widespread deforestation, leaving behind a landscape that tells a powerful story about ecological change and resilience.

Easter Island shows us that isolation doesn't guarantee protection. Introduced species and human activity can permanently alter landscapes, but understanding these impacts also gives us tools to protect and restore fragile ecosystems elsewhere.





Plant of the Month



Prairie penstemon (*Penstemon cobaea*)

by Madison Gover*

*Originally in the April 2024 Issue



Penstemon, cobaea, foxgloves, beardtongue, this plant goes by many names. It is a perennial in the figwort family. This plant ranges through the native Cross Timbers and specifically has adapted to the limestone outcrops of the Fort Worth Prairie, as well as loamy soil, rocky or open hillsides. This plant hosts the Dotted Checkerspot butterfly and also attracts hummingbirds and moths. According to the Xerces Society, they have special value to bumblebees.

My Penstemon cobaea transplanted last year from a remnant Fort Worth Prairie being destroyed. A deeper purple color morph is growing a few yards away. Delighted to say the least that it survived transplant, an entire summer of drought and my neglect.



Continued Education



Coming Soon: Reptiles and Amphibians of North-central Texas



by Michael Smith



All that's needed for this series is serious interest, not a lot of prior experience or training. I have written or co-authored a couple of books in the subject and taught herpetological natural history to incoming Master Naturalists in several chapters. In those classes I always wanted to include more. So I've created a series of presentations with lots of photos and graphics. **What I need to know is what kind of interest there would be - so if you are interested, please let us know! (see below)**

Sessions will probably happen on Thursday evenings about every other week. We'll cover basic skills in the field and discuss finding and observing vs. capturing, and safety where venomous snakes may be around. I'll cover amphibians, the frogs, toads, and salamanders of our area. We'll listen to some frog calls. We'll also cover alligators and the turtles of our area, then lizards and snakes, and finally herp conservation issues. Venomous snakes and snake bite will be part of the presentation on lizards and snakes.

The idea is to offer this series without charge, in collaboration with **Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve**. If you're interested in participating, please email events@friendsofscnp.org to help gauge attendance before scheduling is finalized.



Current Events

April 25 | Time TBD

Organization: Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge

Title: BioBlitz

Address: Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge, Fort Worth, TX

Leaders: Chelsee Self

Contact: Email: 817-691-0746 or Chelseeself@yahoo.com

April 26 | 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Organization: Native Prairies Association of Texas (Fort Worth Chapter)

Title: Savage Cabbage Bash

Address: Fort Worth, TX

Leader: N/A

Event Link: [Here](#)

April 29 | 7:00 pm

Organization: North Texas Master Naturalists

Title: City Nature Challenge ID Session (iNaturalist)

Address: Virtual (Zoom)

Leader: Beth Andresen

Event Link: [Here via Zoom](#)

May 9 | 8am-12:30pm

Organization: Oliver Nature Park

Title: Monarch Festival

Address: Oliver Nature Park, Mansfield, TX

Leader: Lisa Gibson

Contact: [SIGN UP LINK](#)

May 9 | 8:30 am – 1:30 pm

Organization: Native Prairies Association of Texas (Fort Worth Chapter)

Title: LBJ Grasslands Prairie Tour

Address: Decatur, TX (Units 71 & 75, LBJ Grasslands)

Leader: Jeff Quayle, Canaan Sutton & Suzanne Tuttle

Event Link: [Here](#)

May 16 | 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Organization: Native Prairies Association of Texas (Fort Worth Chapter)

Title: Introduction to Cool Season Grass Identification

Address: Fort Worth, TX

Leader: John Snowden

Event Link: [Here](#)

May 23 | 8:00 am – 10:00 am

Organization: Native Prairies Association of Texas (Fort Worth Chapter)

Title: Hip Pocket Theater BioBlitz

Address: Fort Worth, TX

Leader: N/A

Event Link: [Here](#)

May 23 | 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

Organization: Native Prairies Association of Texas (Fort Worth Chapter)

Title: Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge BioBlitz (Old Equestrian Trail)

Address: Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge, north of Cross Timbers Trail, Fort Worth, TX

Leader: Kate Morgan & Dave Vestal

Link: [Here](#)

May 30 | 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Organization: Native Prairies Association of Texas (Fort Worth Chapter)

Title: Cool Season Grass ID Master Class

Address: Hardwicke Interpretive Center, Fort Worth, TX

Leader: Dr. Joseph K. Wipff III

Link: [Here](#)

Click to
Volunteer



OLIVER NATURE PARK
Monarch
FESTIVAL

May 10 9AM-12PM



Methodist
MANSFIELD MEDICAL CENTER



nature mondays

at geyer commons

sign up for project 365 to rsvp & discover more free family fun!

~~monday 04/13 @ 10am: ride a raindrop~~

tarrant regional water district (kids)

~~monday 04/20 @ 10am: monarch butterflies~~

tarrant regional water district (kids)

monday 04/27 @ 10am: build a pollinator water station

tarrant regional water district (adults)

monday 05/11 @ 10am: water rangers

tarrant regional water district (kids)

monday 05/18 @ 10am: archeology adventures

tarrant regional water district (kids)

monday 05/24 @ 10am: native plant propagation

tarrant regional water district (adults)

PROJECT
365 
MANSFIELD

[Click to](#)
[Register](#)

mansfieldparks.com



TAKE A PEEK INTO THE DAZZLING WORLD OF
NATURE'S TINIEST AND MIGHTIEST SUPERHEROES!



PHOTO BY SAM JAFFE

A FILM BY JEFF MCKAY

FEATURING

SAM JAFFE AND THE CATERPILLAR LAB,
DOUG TALLAMY, AND DAVID WAGNER

THE EXTRAORDINARY CATERPILLAR

HOMEGROWN NATIONAL PARK EDGELAND FILMS tvo MANITOBA CANADA

RSVP TODAY



TUESDAY, 6/23/2026

6:30 PM - 9 PM

PALACE ARTS CENTER

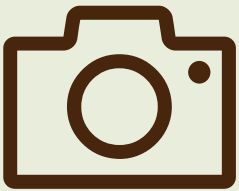
300 S. MAIN ST., GRAPEVINE, TX



RSVP IS REQUIRED TO RESERVE YOUR SEATS

PANEL DISCUSSION

- **Sam Kieschnick**, Urban Biologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife
- **Jake Poinsett**, Education Manager, Trinity River Audubon Center
- **Carol Clark**, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist
- **Teddi Zonker**, Vice President, Wild Ones DFW: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes



Art & Photography Gallery



Easter Island by Teddi Zonker



Opossum by Teddi Zonker



Antelopehorn Milkweed by Teddi Zonker



Board Members

CTMN Board Members

- Mary Beth Lampe - **President**
- Teddi Zonker - **Vice President**
 - Bill Collins - **Secretary**
- Sarah Caldwell - **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 Directors

- Annamarie Fresta - **Membership**
- Sharon Hamilton - **Past President**
 - Erika Swyryn - **Training**
- Theresa Thomas, Hester Swartzner, Sandy Milfeld - **VMS Approvals**
- Roseann Giambro and Eli Turner - **Hospitality**
 - Madison Gover - **Newsletter**
 - Mary Beth Lampe - **Webmaster**
 - Chelsee Self - **Class of 2025 Rep**
- Lisa Gibson (Director), Mike Law, Alice Salazar, Eli Taylor, Annamarie Fresta, Michelle Cyr - **Outreach Committee**

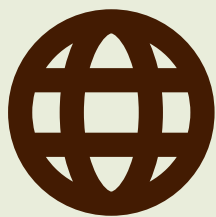


Inclusivity:

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