

T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™

Cross Timbers



Enter: Fall Migration!



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OCTOBER SPEAKER

Jennifer Bristol

Wild Women for Good: Stories of Conservation in Texas — Join author Jennifer Bristol for a look at the remarkable women who have shaped conservation in Texas for more than 150 years.



TOPIC 02

Sustainable Business Innovations

Join NPSOT in Lewisville, TX for this year's local Prairie Rendezvous!



TOPIC 03

2026 TXMN Annual Meeting

Don't forget to check out the annual meeting website and register before the site registration closes!

x President's Pen



Chelsee Self, CTMN President

We still have volunteer opportunities for anyone interested in helping with chapter business. If you have time to assist and are willing we can teach you what we need help with. You do earn volunteers hours for helping with chapter business. If you are interested or would like to learn more, please email president@ctmn.org.

We often get requests for volunteers to speak on a variety of different subjects. If you are interested in being a speaker, either at a chapter meeting or with the public, please click on the link below and tell us what you are qualified to speak about. If we have your information on file, it is easy for us to reach out to you about the opportunity. [->>> Click Here <<<-](#)

One of the ways we can improve our chapter is by collaborating with each other! We don't often get to meet in person and share ideas or concerns. I have created this very simple "suggestion box" form in the hopes that this will open a door of communication. I would love your feedback, suggestions, concerns, ideas and thoughts. [->>> Click Here <<<-](#)

CTMN Announcements



[Annual Meeting Website](#)

Registration
closes
September 30!



TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST 2026 ANNUAL MEETING
October 22–25 | Waco, TX

From our Chapter Sponsor: “Several local chapters are working together to plan a regional conference. The planning committee is hoping to have at least one liaison from each chapter in North Texas. This person would be responsible for promoting the conference to CTMN and making sure everyone in our chapter is in the know for the regional conference. The chapter liaison does not need to be a board member. Do you think that we have any CTMN member that would be willing to act as a liaison for the regional conference?” - **Rachel Richter**



VOLUNTEER IN THE VISITOR CENTER



SHARE



INSPIRE



EXPLORE

Contact



Addy France
AFrance@cityoflewisville.com



Learn More
LLELA.org/volunteering



9/5/2026	9AM - 12PM	<i>Canoeing / Herping</i>
	12:30PM - 3PM	<i>Aquatics Field Trip</i>
9/8/2026	6-7:30 PM	Forest Systems
	7:30-9PM	Mammals
9/12/2026	9AM-12PM	Class Bio Blitz Using iNat (optional)
9/22/2026	6PM-8:15PM	Invertebrates
	8:15PM-9PM	Nothing Activity
9/26/2026	9AM - 12PM	<i>Birds / Log Flipping</i>
	12:30PM - 3PM	<i>Forests / Trees</i>
9/29/2026	6-9PM	Urban Systems
10/3/2026	9am-12PM	Prairie Systems (Rock Creek Ranch Park)
10/6/2026	6PM-9PM	Prairie Systems
10/17/2026	8AM-3PM	<i>Urban Systems Field Trip</i>
10/24/2026	9AM-12PM	Land Use (Tandy Hills)



Speakers

September Speaker



**CTMN Chapter Meeting/Presentation –
Sept. 21, 2026 - 7:00PM.**

Fort Worth Botanic Garden

Jennifer L. Bristol, Author

**Wild Women for Good: Stories of
Conservation in Texas**

[Zoom Link](#)

Wild Women for Good spans a century and a half of conservationists—rural and urban—and the differences they made. Opening with the first conservation movement in Texas and the effort to stop the millenary industry's slaughter of birds for their plumage, the book shows how early advocates broke down barriers and opened doors for other women to save and protect species, land, and water for future generations.

Bristol covers more than sixty individuals and groups: environmental policy makers, famous first ladies, early land trusts champions, and educators. These are women whose stories are as integral to the state's history as the natural landscapes they worked to preserve.



TMN Tuesdays



Online Webinar
Speaker Series

#TMNTuesdays

Join us on the 2nd
Tuesday of each
month at 12:00pm CT!*

*Some TMNTuesday dates and times are subject to change.
Join our Email Listserv to stay updated.

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 ATs can be watched at any time and count towards AT for the year, so come back at any time.**

September 2026



Title: Annual Meeting Project Fair

Speaker: Various Chapters

Date: September 15th, 2026

Description: The Texas Master Naturalist Program holds this competition during our Annual Meeting each year to share and award the premier projects of the TMN Program. Our chapter members continually list this fair as a favorite way to learn about projects other chapters are doing and how they may be able to replicate such projects in their areas.

[Webex Guide](#)

[Register Here](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Click Here for Past #TMNTuesday
Presentations](#)

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Member Highlight

Meet CTMN Ruth Mauppin!

What year did you become a master naturalist?

2025!

Which local natural spot has left a lasting impression on you and why?

I am very fond of the FTWNC&R where I am a member and go several times a month, but Tandy Hills also feels real special to me. I need to spend more time out there, but it is such a mid-city treasure. It's a tie between those two places for me, I think. Hard questions to answer!



What unique hobbies or creative pursuits do you enjoy when you're not volunteering with CTMN?

I still work and have a kiddo at home so that keeps me really busy, but I do read a lot, watch movies a lot and I just got a new fancy camera. So, hopefully I can get some good pics while I'm out in nature! I'm looking forward to giving that a try!

What sparked your passion for nature and conservation?

I am a 7th generation Texan and was raised to camp, garden, go fishing, explore outside (my parents took me to the FTWNC&R as a kid often) but I didn't really start to love and respect the outdoors the way I do now until about 10 years ago when my husband and I bought a camper for our family. It's no secret that our area is a metro mess with not a whole lot to do other than go out to eat and spend money and we wanted our kids to experience nature and the better way to live. To experience life out of the concrete mess and spending frenzy that our area encourages. I am also Realtor and I see the land being bought up and developed. I vowed to complain less about our area and do what I can to help keep what we have. I feel so so so lucky to be a part of this program and I won't shut up about it and the opportunities we have.



I heard you got double-certified. What was that like?

I did double certify and I'm so proud that I did it. Between working and my kids' busy schedules, training classes and field trips, it was a lot. But I carefully planned out what I wanted to do and where I wanted to volunteer and I was able to get it all done-it was imperative that I planned it all out on my calendar.

It helped that I had done my City of FTW background check and Volunteer training at the FTW Botanic Garden prior to being accepted into the training program. I was able to hit the ground running. Being awarded the double certification was cool--I had my husband and kiddos go to the ceremony so that they could meet all my new friends and see what I had been working so hard towards.



Featured Project

Elmer W. Oliver Nature Park



When: Year-round opportunities available

Where: Oliver Nature Park, Mansfield, TX

What: Inspire nature appreciation through education, conservation, and community engagement

Oliver Nature Park offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities for nature lovers of all ages and experience levels. Whether you're helping with summer camps, archery lessons, kayak programs, or caring for bird feeders and native gardens, there's a meaningful way for everyone to get involved. Volunteers can assist with educational programs, special events like the Monarch Festival and Stargazing Nights, or lend a hand behind the scenes in the office or with animal care.

This is a great opportunity to give back to the community, support environmental education, and enjoy the outdoors. All volunteers must complete an application and background check before participating.

Learn more and apply: [Description](#)

Questions? Email: olivernaturepark@mansfieldtexas.gov



The Importance of Moths

by Meredith Chacin

**re-published from Sept. 2025 Issue



On Saturday morning, September 6, following the Molly Hollar Wildscape's first Saturday volunteer workday, Sam Kieschnick, TPWD Urban Wildlife Biologist, presented a continuing education session called "The Importance of Moths." Sam is known for being an engaging and captivating presenter, so it was certainly a treat for anyone who attended. That evening, at the Wildscape, Sam hosted part two of this event. Mothing stations were set up for people to observe activity that evening from 8-11 pm. They could take photos and have a chance to ask questions about the moths that were attracted to the stations.



CTMN member and avid naturalist Ryan Wiggins attended this event and shared about her experience. She said that while it was exciting to see many familiar faces, she was particularly glad to see that five students from the current CTMN trainee class had joined in. When asked about takeaways from Sam's presentation, Ryan stated, "Sam is the most energetic, passionate, and knowledgeable person I know. He always does a great job of talking about the importance and diversity of moths." Many moths were drawn to the stations Sam set up, and attendees saw a wide variety of species. Ryan reported spotting a sleeping Snowberry Clearwing Moth. From attendees posts on social media, it looked like it was a critter-filled experience beyond seeing moths. One of the CTMN trainees caught a tiny, green grass snake that many were excited to get a chance to hold.



continued ->



Attendees also spotted a giant stick bug, an anole, a Texas spiny lizard, snails, a possum, lots of caterpillars, and a big display of harvestmen (aka Daddy longlegs). Ryan is a regular at mothing events, and, when asked if she had any moths in mind that she would really like to spot, she excitedly reported that she finally saw a huge and beautiful Polyphemus moth, and she's still hoping to eventually spot a Luna moth.

She was kind enough to share the photos here with us from the event. Many thanks to the folks at Molly Hollar and to Sam Kieschnick for putting on this event and to our enthusiastic CTMN members for making it a memorable time.



Plant of the Month



Leavenworth's Eryngo (*Eryngium leavenworthii*)

by Meredith Chacin

**re-published from Sept. 2025 Issue



In our North Texas native prairies right now, you will commonly see white swaths of Snow on the Prairie (*euphorbia bicolor*), leggy, tall native annual sunflowers that are beginning to fade, and many varieties of waving native grasses. Punctuated throughout this monochrome backdrop, you're likely to spot pops of intense, almost neon purple - these are Leavenworth's Eryngo (*Eryngium leavenworthii*). Eryngo is a very showy and particularly prickly plant that branches out at the top and is some shade of purple in nearly every part, from the leaves to the stem to the bracts to the tiny purple blooms. These rigid, spiny plants emerge as gray-green and turn purple as they mature.

The flowerheads resemble tiny, purple pineapples. Their prickly nature is said to make them unappealing to deer, and they do not have any serious pest or disease issues. Sometimes referred to as False Purple Thistle, Eryngo are not true thistles but are actually in the Apiaceae or carrot family. Eryngo grow 1-3 feet high with a 1-2 foot spread and are found in the Cross Timbers region as well as in Edwards Plateau, Southern Texas Plains, and Texas Blackland Prairies. This herbaceous plant grows in both woodlands and grasslands and can tolerate a variety of soil types from sandy to clay to caliche. It can handle both moist and dry conditions and requires full sun to light shade. Eryngo begin to bloom in late summer through the fall.

They benefit butterflies, birds, nectar insects, and bees. The color and nectar combination of Eryngo must be irresistible as reports of butterflies, moths, bumblebees, flies, crab spiders, soldier bugs, ants, grasshoppers, and a variety of beetles all feeding simultaneously are not uncommon. Though you're not likely to find these plants for sale in nurseries, they are easy to propagate through seed which can be collected from dried seed heads. Be sure to venture out to a prairie near you to spot these prickly purple beauties.



Continued Education



The bluebird of happiness: nearly lost, but gained again

by Ellie Pate



The bluebird of happiness: nearly lost, but gained again
Life Support



Watch on  YouTube

Congrats CTMN Ellie Pate on your new nature
Youtube channel! This is an embedded video,
click to view.

Leave the Leaves: A Naturalist's Fall Reminder

by Teddi R. Zonker, CTMN (2023)

*re-published from Oct/Nov 2025 Issue

As autumn arrives in North Texas, many yards are soon buried in fallen leaves. But before you reach for the rake and the trash bags, consider this: those leaves are not litter, they're life!

Under the blanket of leaves, countless native insects overwinter, including fireflies, butterflies, moths, and solitary bees. Leaf litter provides insulation, moisture retention, and shelter for these essential species. When we remove leaves, we're often throwing away next year's pollinators and fall/winter bird food.

Instead of bagging, try these nature-friendly options:

*Mulch leaves directly into your lawn to return nutrients to the soil.

*Rake leaves into garden beds or under shrubs to protect roots and reduce weeds.

*Start a leaf pile in a corner of your yard as a mini-wildlife refuge.



Letting leaves stay where they fall, or repurposing them wisely, is a small act that supports the ecosystems we love. As Master Naturalists, we can lead by example and help neighbors rethink their fall cleanup routine.

So this season, let's leave the leaves and make room for wild things to thrive.

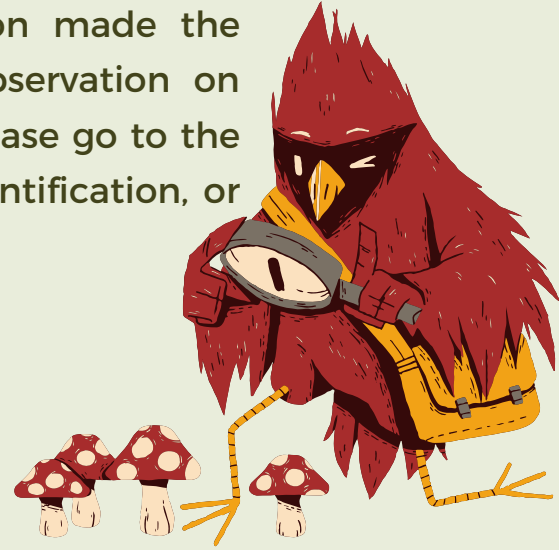


iNaturalist Observation of the Month

Each month we will choose an iNaturalist observation made the previous month from the CTMN Project. 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.

Widow Skimmer (*Libellula luctuosa*)

lynnwchen



Time: 9:26AM

Date: 08/30/2026

Location: Dallas, Tx



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



Current Events

Native Prairies Association of Texas



PRAIRIE RENDEZVOUS

BENEFITING LOCAL & STATEWIDE PRAIRIE CONSERVATION

FREE TO ATTEND

CONVERSATION • COMMUNITY • CONNECTION

SEPTEMBER 12TH

LEWISVILLE, TX 5 PM TO 9 PM

BUFFALO HIRSCH COCKTAIL TRUCKYARD

MORE INFORMATION:

TEXASPRAIRIE.ORG



September 4 | 7:30–9:30 am

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: First Fridays (Friday Feathers) Bird Walk at Kelley Park

Address: Kelley Park, 4195 W. Arkansas Lane, Arlington, TX

Leader: Chuck Baskin and others

Event Link: [Here](#)

September 10 | 7:00–8:30 pm

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: September 2026 General Meeting: Beyond the “Birds of Texas” by David Sarkozi

Address: UNT Health Medical & Education (MET) Building, Room 124, 1000 Montgomery Street, Fort Worth, TX

Leader: David Sarkozi

Event Link: [Here](#)

September 12 | 7:30–9:30 am

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: Foster Park (Fort Worth) Local Bird Walk

Address: Foster Park, Trail Lake Drive at South Dr., Fort Worth, TX

Leader: Jean Ferguson

Event Link: [Here](#)

September 15 | 8:30–10:30 am

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: Observations at Oliver Park, Mansfield – Third Tuesdays

Address: Oliver Nature Park, 1650 Matlock Rd., Mansfield, TX

Leader: Jennifer Cross

Event Link: [Here](#)

September 17 | 6:00–7:00 pm

Organization: TRWD Conservation

Title: Shade Gardening with Native Plants

Address: Not provided

Cost: Free

Event Link: [Register Here](#)

September 20 | 8:00–9:30 am

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: Parr Park, Grapevine – Seasonal (Migration Times) Bird Walk

Address: Parr Park, 3010 Parr Lane, Grapevine, TX

Leader: Karen Rice and others

Event Link: [Here](#)

September 26 | 8:00 am–1:30 pm

Organization: Cross Timbers Master Naturalists

Title: CTMN Outreach for Raíces Vivas (Living Roots Seminar)

Address: 1440 N. Main St., Fort Worth, TX 76164

Description: Outreach booth celebrating the connection of our Latin culture with the earth, plants, and nature.

SignUpGenius: [Sign Up Here](#)

Questions: Contact Lisa Gibson at outreach@ctmn.org

VMS: Outreach

September 27 | 8:30–10:30 am

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: Trinity Trails Bird Walk & Count

Address: Trinity Trails / Clearfork Trinity, 3000 S. Hulen St., Fort Worth, TX

Leaders: Tom Haase and Jean Ferguson

Event Link: [Here](#)

October 2 | 8:30–10:30 am

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: First Fridays (Friday Feathers) Bird Walk at Kelley Park

Address: Kelley Park, 4195 W. Arkansas Lane, Arlington, TX

Leader: Chuck Baskin and others

Event Link: [Here](#)

October 10 | 7:00 am–8:00 pm

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: The 2026 Annual Lake Waxahachie Big Sit!

Address: Lake Waxahachie, Ellis County, TX

Event Link: [Here](#)

October 10 | 8:30–10:30 am

Organization: Fort Worth Audubon Society

Title: Foster Park (Fort Worth) Local Bird Walk

Address: Foster Park, Trail Lake Drive at South Dr., Fort Worth, TX

Leader: Jean Ferguson

Event Link: [Here](#)

October 10 | 9:00 am–7:30 pm

Organization: Cross Timbers Master Naturalists

Title: CTMN Outreach Booth at River Legacy Fall Festival – Bats & Origami Bats

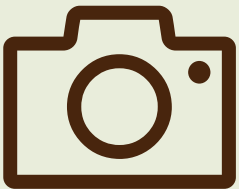
Address: 701 NW Green Oaks Boulevard, Arlington, TX 76006

Description: Educating about bats and making origami bats. Volunteer shifts are 1.5–3 hours.

SignUpGenius: [Sign Up Here](#)

Questions: Contact Lisa Gibson at outreach@ctmn.org

VMS: Outreach



Art & Photography Gallery



2025-2026 Highlights



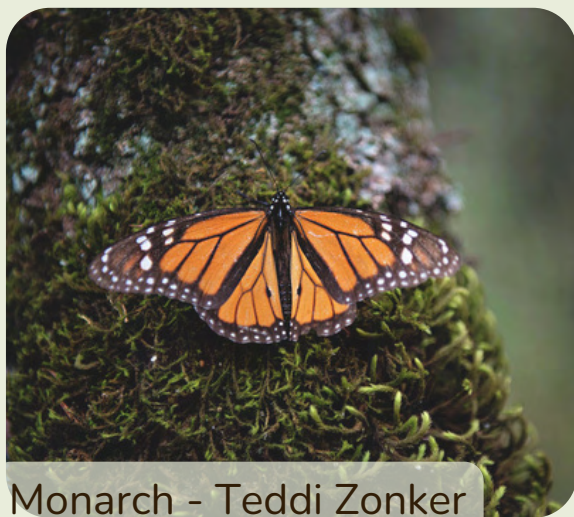
Ruth Mauppin



Bumblebee -
Teddi Zonker



Beebalm - Eleanor Pate



Monarch - Teddi Zonker



Eli's drawing of Dobsonfly



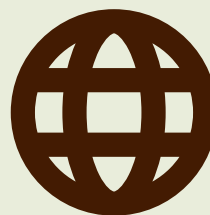
Board Members

CTMN Board Members

- Chelsea Self - **President**
- Ruth Mauppin - **Vice President**
 - Bill Collins - **Secretary**
 - Sarah Caldwell - **Treasurer**



**Cross Timbers
Master Naturalists
Facebook Group**



**Cross Timbers
Master Naturalists
Website**



**Cross Timbers
Master Naturalists
Instagram**

CTMN Directors

- Annamarie Fresta - **Membership**
- Mary Beth Lampe - **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**
 - Chelsea Self - **Class of 2025 Rep**
- Lisa Gibson (Director), Mike Law, Alice Salazar, Eli Taylor, Annamarie Fresta, Michelle Cyr - **Outreach Committee**

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 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