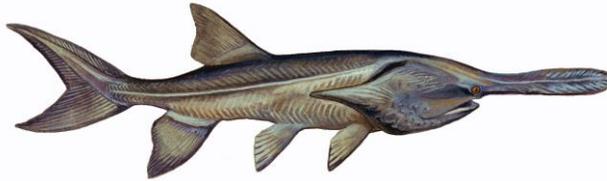




## THE PADDLEFISH



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## Snippets from Stella

Happy Valentine's; Happy Mardi Gras – and so it begins – a year of celebrations!

The first meeting of our 2017 class was amazing! Good speakers; our own Becky Gullette on Friday evening maybe Taxonomy fun and understandable – Thank you, Becky! Saturday, Boyd Sanders on Saturday morning taught us how to interpret topics to different audiences. Roy Darville took us through Resources of Texas Saturday afternoon. We were pretty cramped because of the FOURTEEN fabulous, energetic, knowledgeable new trainees! Jill, Carl and Diane have done a great job of scheduling expert speakers. Thank you! February classes cover Mammalogy, Ichthyology, Ornithology. We are including the schedule for the subsequent training classes so you can attend, too.

The NFWF bird blind part of the grant is well underway. In just two work days, it is framed and 3 sides up. We are going to need some nimble helpers as the roof decking goes on. See the pictures with this newsletter.

Planning for the Earth Day Paddling Regatta – getting started. You will get an email regarding your opportunity to volunteer at Sign-Up.com Save the date: Saturday, 4/22/2017 Shady Glade Resort, Uncertain Tx.

See you February 13, 6:30 pm, Jefferson Transportation Center! We are having Nathan Garner of the East Texas Bear Alliance as the presenter, so the business meeting will be short. Invite your friends to attend.

SB

### Upcoming Events:

- Feb 8 – Volunteer hours
- Feb 13 – Meeting
- Feb 15 – Volunteer hours
- Feb 18 – Work Day
- Feb 24 – 2017 Training
- Feb 25 – 2017 Training
- Mar 13 – Meeting Potluck
- Mar 18 – Work Day
- Mar 31 – 2017 Training
- Apr 1 – 2017 Training
- Apr 10 – Meeting
- Apr 14 – Work Day
- Apr 22 – Earth Day Regatta Planning

Get your BIRD HOUSES up now. Blue Birds are beginning to look for nesting locations. Spring will be here before you know it!

~Tom Walker

## Prescribed Fire as a Tool for Habitat

As a resident of the piney woods, one must understand that pine trees are adapted to fire. They are a species that have evolved with naturally occurring fires on the landscape. Natural occurrence of fire did many good things for the habitat. Land managers use prescribed fire and controlled burns to mimic the positive effects fire has on habitats. You'll notice that prescribed fire in this area most often happens in the cooler, wetter months of the year. This is because it is easier to keep the fire under control and meet your goals and objectives with those conditions. Let's discuss some of the positive things prescribed fire can do for the landscape:

1. *Removes heavy fire fuels from the forest floor* – because the pineywoods were naturally shaped by fire, one may then ascertain that pine needle litter is made to burn! And it gets deep quick. That buildup of fire fuels can be a hazardous condition. If there was a summer thunderstorm and lightning were to strike setting deep forest fuels on fire, then that could be catastrophic for the forest. Pine trees may be fire tolerant, but fire can still kill them. It can also kill other trees one may not want to kill such as mast producing hardwoods. A controlled fire can remove those fuels and thus lessen hazardous conditions reducing the possibility of catastrophic fire. Reduced fire fuels in a forest can also help firefighters get wildfires under control.
2. *Release and recycle nutrients* – Fire can release nutrition that is being held in leaf litter and woody debris. Those nutrients are quickly recycled in the regrowth after a fire. Wildlife will go in search of fresh burned landscapes. Animals can sense the nutrients in the fresh green shoots of a burn.
3. *Invasive species control* – for this, fire might help control invasive species or fire may help spread invasive species. Whichever is true will depend on the invasive species, but land managers can find ways to make the fire work for them in their fight against invasive species.
4. *Prairie renewal* – While we don't have many prairies in the pineywoods, it is true that fire is key to prairie management. It will remove woody species that will invade and degrade prairies and as explained above; the release of nutrients is very important to a prairie. It can also remove competition and debris allowing for the sun to warm the soil for germination. Fire can also scarify seeds so that they can germinate.
5. *Bog Renewal* – bogs and seeps without fire do not last long. They are soon overgrown with woody invasives and are degraded. Fire is also a great way to remove old debris and release nutrients back into the habitat.
6. *Site Prep* – This is a special use for fire. Hot summer burns of areas, generally clear cuts, help to remove debris allowing for easier replanting activities. Site prep is an important tool for the pine tree plantation industry.

Again, fire in the pineywoods should be welcomed and accepted. Prescribed fire is a very useful tool for improving habitats. That being said, it is not an easy tool to use and there is a lot of science and liability for prescribed fire to be safe and useful. Therefore, getting prescribed fire on the landscape is no easy task.

~ Vanessa Neace

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## Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2017

**ATTENDING:** 27 members - Kristi Thomas, Michael Mathews, Ted and Stella Barrow, Charles Gillis, Pam Andrews, Herman Hazard, Marge West, Steve and Susan Sedberry, Mickie Moore, Carl and Diane Turner, Carol Fox, Roger Geiger, Phyllis Wilson, Sandra Hooker, Pam Watts, David and Vicki Gilliland, Linda Richtsmeier, Floyd and Ellen Anderson, Nancy Rhey, Pete and Jill Wright, Becky Gullette, and advisor Vanessa Neace.

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Stella called meeting to order at 6:32, and welcomed incoming Vice President Susan, then read messages from outgoing VP Betty Morgan to the group.

**PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES** - unanimously approved with a motion by Ted, second from Linda.

**TREASURER REPORT** - Stella reported that 2017 dues are due, and report was published in the newsletter. Unanimous approval with motion from Herman, and a second from Vicki.

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION** - Stella was hoping Betty could be here, but will be back later. Handed out milestones and class cert pins, plus 250-500 hour pins. Photos taken.

**SIGNUP.COM LINK** - Michael sent you a link to open and see how this works. As many projects as we will have it would be an amazing way to track. Check emails for link and play around with it. Thanks Michael for taking on, Susan will monitor. Just skip the question about insurance when you do that sign-up. VMS still recording time, but this will track opportunities. Per Michael, will be sending another email so watch for it.

### GENERAL ITEMS:

**HISTORIAN** - Per Stella, we need one - we are becoming such a renowned group so we need a historian to gather and either put on digital file or do a scrapbook. Looking for volunteers. Michael will help you do it online, if someone wants to. Pam volunteered. Will need to funnel stuff to Pam re NFWF, and anything else that we do. Same thing for newsletter. Per Vanessa, think about what you do and pat yourself on the back at every opportunity.

**NEW CLASS INFO:** It made BIG! Jill will tell you about. Per Jill, 13 as of this weekend - 3 males, 10 females. Many are Master Gardeners, but we will make it work with their flower sale the last weekend. Pass out presenter schedule - all very enthusiastic. Going back to "ology" approach. Need hosts for their training classes - sign up sheet going around, need volunteers.

**MENTORS** - Who will be one? If interested, will send list out. Per Stella, it is like a buddy system.

**SCHEDULE** - Jill went over new trainees. Thanks to Jill, Carl and Diane.

**2017 ADVANCED TRAINING** - Trees - board met Friday, decided to select a topic. Will be hitting you up to do tree presentation to group.

**TONIGHT** - Birds - will be postponed until Feb. meeting due to length of tonight's meeting. March will be Nathan Garner with Black Bear Alliance.

**A TEXAS WATER'S COURSE** - sign sheet if you would be interested. It is a self study program where you can read a little, answer questions. Will send an email about it. Would be easy and informative advanced training, then could find facilitators. Could meet then do some on your own. Will see if interest.

## Meeting Minutes cont.

January 9, 2017

**FRIENDS OF REFUGE MEMBERSHIP** - we really need to support Friends of Refuge. Charles made suggestion maybe we put it on our website. Their meeting is 19th this month and she will figure out how to get applications. Charles said you can send applications to him if need to.

**NEWSLETTER** - Help Angela out. She needs help with any kind of blog material, photos, articles. All agreed that the January issue was great and we appreciate her doing it, and Michael helping her get started.

### PROJECTS:

- NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE GRANT - that's a big one.
- EARTH DAY REGATTA - to start planning soon. Will start sending emails.
- PADDLE TRAIL SIGNS - Ted working with TXDOT to put signs up. On the water, hoping Steve will help take lead on that. Vanessa thinks need a subcommittee, might be changes to be made to dress those signs up. Refuge has machine that can actually make signs - can design and per Vanessa if they see money come back into trail that will really be a good thing. Good idea by Vanessa to maybe put our info on map signage.
- REGATTA -need to get planning. Will start seeing a lot of emails on that.
- MOONVIE - talk about that at later date.
- EAST TEXAS CHAPTER VISIT - April 8, wants to come on this day and spend morning at refuge, will want to go out on pontoons again. We need to invite ourselves to other chapters, per Stella.
- MONARCH BUTTERFLY HABITAT GRANTS - Gary Endsley shared this, lady in Linden sponsors, if you are thinking of doing some in your yard here is the information, for individuals. Gary has opportunities to help plant trees January through March - sign up sheets going around.
- NFWF, three pieces, bird kiosk, and Pete is over construction of bird blind, and not sure who will do the work. Got grant for 8 X 15 bird blind, then will need some hefty volunteers, need trucks and trailers, goal to be finished by end of Feb. before snakes come out. Will be utilizing sign-up.com. On work day, assume can help with tear down. Will start this Saturday at 9:00 a.m. On grant, pictures are going to be very important, all during the process, and for any projects that we do.

What else? Every year struggle with making sure we do projects that interest you, per Stella. Want to make sure that we are doing things that you want to do. Probably in Feb. will try to pull that together to do a poll. Encourage trainees to come to meetings, make sure got mentor thing going on. Give dues to Kristi in February, per Charles.

ADJOURNMENT - 7:34

Volunteer Time 1.0 plus travel

Advanced Training Time

Submitted by Kristi Thomas, Secretary

## Financial Report for January 2017

<b>Beginning Bank Balance, 12/31/2016</b>		<b>\$5,718.20</b>
<b>Less: Expenses</b>		
<b>Memorial</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	
<b>Four books for speakers</b>	<b>120.00</b>	
<b>New class-Postage</b>	<b>8.99</b>	
<b>Regatta</b>	<b>119.00</b>	<b>-347.99</b>
<b>Add: Deposits</b>		
<b>New member fees &amp; Annual Dues</b>		<b>1,535.00</b>
<b>Ending Bank Balance, 01/31/2017</b>		<b>\$6,905.21</b>
	<b>Dedicated Funds – Regatta</b>	<b>\$2,698.41</b>
	<b>Undedicated Funds</b>	<b>4,206.80</b>
<b>Ending Bank Balance, 12/31/16</b>		<b>\$6,905.21</b>

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**Kristi Thomas**  
**Interim Treasurer**

## 2017 Training Schedule

**Session I: Friday, January 20 6:00-9:00 pm at the Collins Academy in Jefferson**

**Topic: Intro. to the TMN Program, Taxonomy**

**Saturday, January 21 9:00am-5:00pm at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Karnack**

**Topic: Volunteers as teachers (Morning), Resources of Texas (Afternoon)**

**Session II: Friday, February 24 6:00-9:00 pm at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Karnack**

**Topic: Mammalogy**

**Saturday, February 25 9:00am-5:00pm at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge**

**Topic: Ichthyology (Morning), Ornithology (Afternoon)**

**Session III: Friday, March 31 6:00-9:00pm at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Karnack**

**Topic: Archaeology**

**Saturday, April 1 9:00am-5:00pm at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Karnack**

**Topic: Herpetology (Morning), Botany (Afternoon)**

**Session IV: Friday, May 5 6:00-9:00pm at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Karnack**

**Topic: Ecological Regions/Ecosystem Management**

**Saturday, May 6 9:00am-5:00pm at Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Karnack**

**Topic: Entomology (Morning), Forest Management (Afternoon)**

**Direct questions to: Stella Barrow by telephone: 903-672-5524 or 903-736-3063**

**Jill Wright by email: [jillmom8788@hotmail.com](mailto:jillmom8788@hotmail.com)**

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## Bird Blind Project



Want to see more pictures? Click here: <https://rightshot.smugmug.com/Events/CNWR-Bird-Blind>

**OFFICERS:**

Stella Barrow  
President

Susan Sedberry  
Vice President

Kristi Thomas  
Secretary

Charles Gillis  
Treasurer

Jill Wright  
New Class Director

Marge West  
New Class Director

Michael Mathews  
Marketing Director

Linda Richtsmeier  
Membership Director

Vanessa Adams  
Neace  
Advisor

Doug Weir  
Advisor

## Texas Master Naturalist License Plate

**A fundraiser was launched to fund the \$9000 needed to create the Texas Master Naturalist license plate. After one week, \$1000 has been raised by 30 individual TMN volunteers.**

**The Cypress Basin Chapter Officers have voted to not send the requested donation. If you, as an individual, choose to donate, please follow the link in the article.**

**Visit to donate:** <http://www.gofundme.com/tmnllicenseplate>

**If you have any questions, you can email Allison Copony at [aecopony@aol.com](mailto:aecopony@aol.com) or Mary Pearl Meuth at [mpmeuth@tamu.edu](mailto:mpmeuth@tamu.edu).**

## 2017 Meeting and Work Day Calendar

MONTHLY MEETING DATES	WORK DAYS
FEBRUARY 13	FEBRUARY 18
MARCH 13 – Potluck	MARCH 18
APRIL 10	APRIL 15
MAY 8	MAY 13
JUNE 12 – Potluck	JUNE 17
JULY 10	JULY 15
AUGUST 14	AUGUST 19
SEPTEMBER 11 – Potluck	SEPTEMBER 16
OCTOBER 9	OCTOBER 14
NOVEMBER 13 – End of Year Celebration	NOVEMBER 18

## Need Volunteer Hours??

**February 8 10:00 am. The Corp of Engineers has prepared sites at the park below the west end of the dam, called Lakeside Park. Tree planting and seed scattering. You'll need to bring your own lunch.**

**February 15 Same as the event on February 8 but the spot at Lake of the Pines is yet to be determined. Stay tuned!**

**Please let Gary know if you can help. [endsley961@gmail.com](mailto:endsley961@gmail.com)**

## Smile.Amazon.com

**Our chapter is now registered with the Amazon foundation as a charitable organization entitled to receive .05% of your Amazon purchases. This does not change the price paid for items purchased from Amazon as the money comes from their foundation. If you make purchases from Amazon you can chose our chapter to receive these funds. It is a one-time registration and can easily be changed if you later decide to chose a different charity. It is simple to do; just click on the "Learn more" button in their message under "spread the word...." or go to the Amazon web page and at the bottom left, click on "About Amazon Smile" and you will get full details and description of the program. We are registered as Cypress Basin Texas Master Naturalist. <https://smile.amazon.com/>**

~Charles Gillis