



*Merry  
Christmas!*

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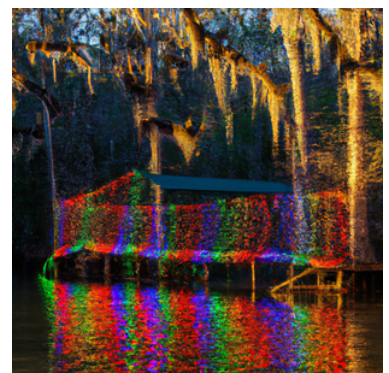
## JANUARY MEETING INFORMATION

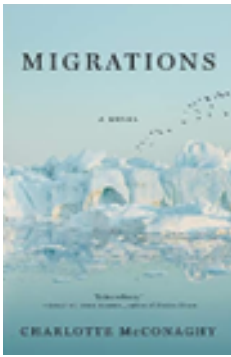
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Our first meeting of 2024 will be at the Rec Hall at the State Park, on January 8th at 6pm, with set up at 5:45. Steve Sedberry will talk to us about the history of the Refuge, touching on all the facilities it has been up to the present Wildlife Refuge status. He will speak for about 45 minutes and have plenty time at the end for questions. Hope you can make it, and start the year off earning that 8 hours of necessary AT!



**NO  
DECEMBER  
MEETING**





# BOOK CLUB

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7TH AT 6 PM

Caddo Lake Wildlife Refuge Classroom  
Caddo Lake Wildlife Refuge

## SUSTAINABLE SWAP



As the holiday season approaches, there's a growing awareness of the environmental impact of festive gatherings. One simple yet impactful way to make a sustainable swap is by opting for compostable plates. Traditional disposable plates contribute to the staggering amount of single-use plastic waste, but compostable plates offer a more eco-friendly alternative.

Compostable plates are typically made from plant-based materials like sugarcane, cornstarch, or bamboo, making them biodegradable and less harmful to the environment. Using these plates during holiday celebrations can significantly reduce the carbon footprint associated with disposable tableware. Beyond their environmental benefits, compostable plates are sturdy and versatile, suitable for various dishes.

By making the switch to compostable plates, individuals can contribute to a healthier planet without sacrificing convenience. It's a small but impactful step towards more sustainable holiday practices, aligning festive cheer with responsible choices for a greener future.

## SOIL SAMPLING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Soil testing is a crucial step in optimizing agricultural productivity, and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides invaluable resources in this realm. The importance of using soil tests and samples from this reputable institution cannot be overstated. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension offers state-of-the-art soil analysis, providing farmers with detailed insights into their soil composition.

Accurate soil testing enables farmers to make informed decisions about nutrient management, irrigation, and crop selection, leading to enhanced yields and sustainable farming practices. By utilizing the expertise of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, farmers gain access to tailored recommendations for fertilization and lime application, ensuring optimal nutrient levels for crop growth.

Furthermore, these tests contribute to environmental conservation by preventing overuse of fertilizers, which can lead to soil and water pollution. The commitment to research and education by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension ensures that farmers have access to the latest advancements in soil science, empowering them to cultivate healthier crops while preserving the long-term health of their land. In essence, soil testing through Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is a cornerstone for modern, efficient, and environmentally conscious agriculture in Texas.



## COCORAHS YEAR END FUNDRAISER

The 2023 CoCoRaHS fundraiser centers on the theme of clouds. With an engaging cloud-themed shirt as a donation incentive, CoCoRaHS aims to educate participants about cloud types such as cirrus, altostratus, and cumulonimbus. The campaign highlights the diverse community of over 26,300 active observers, spanning North America, contributing to the world's largest daily precipitation measurement network. CoCoRaHS extends beyond data collection, offering unexpected personal benefits, as shared by participants, fostering a sense of purpose and routine. Financial support is encouraged to sustain the nonprofit organization, with matching funds available. There is over \$40,000 in matching funds available via "challenge matches" offered by 51 CoCoRaHS observers who will match your gift up to a certain amount in many areas of the country. A special "Clouds" t-shirt is offered as a thank-you gift for donations of \$65 or more, emphasizing the importance of individual contributions to CoCoRaHS' ongoing operations.

## MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS

The training class of 2023 included 12 trainees, who will each be featured in the newsletter over the next few months as they complete their 40 required hours of training. In addition to the 40 hours of training the new members will be required to complete 40 hours of volunteer time and additional hours of advanced training.

### *Debby Ward*



My hobbies include walking, reading, birding, photography, and line dancing. I like to start many days walking three miles. The walk allows me time to enjoy the outdoors. I enjoy a variety of genres. One of my favorite authors is James Lee Burke. I'm a member of Tex-Ark Audubon. The meetings and excursions I've taken with the Tex-Ark Audubon group have expanded my knowledge of all outdoors. Attempting bird and wildlife photography has led to meeting many interesting people. I dance weekly with Texarkana Line Dancers. I have a T-shirt that states my truth about line dancing, "I go line dancing because I like it not because I'm good at it." While in nature, I enjoy absorbing the calming sights and sounds of the world around me.

I usually start listening to and observing birds. The variety of every minute outside keeps my mind active. Something new always appears. In the past my family and I camped a lot. Before the tragedy at Albert Pike in Arkansas, we spent many weekends tent camping at Albert Pike swimming, hiking and sitting around a campfire. We also spent big chunks of the summer camping at Dierks Lake in Arkansas. Dierks Lake is a great lake for enjoying bream and crappie fishing. In the late 1970's through the 1990's, we often camped at White Cliffs on Little River. Little River in Arkansas is one of my favorite areas for fishing and birding. My two favorite seasons are Spring and Fall. Bird migrations in both seasons make each day of those fun. The changes in plants during those seasons make each day different. The temperatures allow for more time outside. I grew up eating a lot of home garden produce raised by my family. After I married, we raised a garden and for many years ate mostly homegrown food. I spent a lot of time canning and freezing the food we raised. Currently, I have two small flower beds. The flower beds were a success this past Spring and Summer.

# MEET THE \*NEW\* MEMBERS



## *Jessica Fitzgerald*

I am excited about the opportunity to serve through education concerning our natural resources to work towards instilling an appreciation for our unique Caddo Lake ecoregion. I worked in public education for 7 years prior to becoming an extension agent for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension service. I worked in that capacity for 5 years before deciding to commit to being a stay at home mom to my 6 month old and my 4 year old stepson. I am currently the creator of the "Paddlefish" and enjoy putting it together each month.

I enjoy creating whether in the kitchen, garden or through digital design. I have enjoyed nature since I was a child, spending all of my free time outside with livestock or horseback. I would like to explore all of the American National Parks with my husband and children. I enjoy camping and when working as a teacher took every opportunity to give students the opportunity to experience it as well. I am definitely a mountain person over a beach person, both find joy in both. I am an avid gardener. I grow vegetables, herbs, and landscape using native plants. I have encountered lots of wild animals on my outdoor adventures, but their weirdest one has to be a nilgai in South Texas. They aren't native and are so very bizarre mixed in among the herd of cattle. My preferred super power would need to be controlling the weather!



## *Teresa McKinney*

I live in O'Farrell, TX between Linden & Atlanta on Crooked Creek Ranch, a 300 ac oasis that husband Keith grew up on. I was born in Washington, DC but got to TX as fast as I could when I enlisted in the USAF at 17 & attended Basic Training at Lackland AFB in San Antonio. I served faithfully for 20 years with assignments in NC, Athens & Crete Greece, FL, Azores Portugal & back to DC. Put myself through college & got a double major BS degree in Psychology & Business Administration.

I had the nature bug at birth apparently since I was continually escaping crib/playpen to go explore the world! I truly enjoy seeing all the amazing creatures the Creator made! The vastness, variety & vulnerability of nature humbles me, especially when I look up at the night sky & see some of the trillion heavenly bodies that my LORD knows by name! As an avid SCUBA diver for 37 years I've seen mind-blowing flora/fauna including a Manta Ray who tapped me on the head with his 12' wing & got "inked" by a squid who (unlike his buddy that kept following me around on a night dive) did NOT like its belly rubbed!! While exploring the Peruvian and Amazon, saw pink dolphins, caught & ate piranha & released baby turtles back into the wild. Back in the USA embarked on a 3 month National Park RV trip out West. Explored 10 parks & left Glacier NP in Montana in the snow. . . a 4' blizzard it turned out to be!! Ask me about Moose encounter BTW. Back on the ranch, I like to garden & grow veggies, asparagus being the most interesting AND patience testing. I'd love to be able to soar like an eagle especially during autumn, my fav season, to see all the vibrant colors. And this is a glimpse of me!



# Fifteenth Class Reunion

Cypress Basin Texas Master Naturalist

Saturday, December 2, 2023  
Collins Academy 500 E. Broadway, Jefferson TX  
10:30 am - 12:30 pm  
RSVP : barrowstella1@gmail.com or 903.736.3063

2008 was the founding year for the Cypress Basin Texas Master Naturalist Chapter. It seems only right that we gather as members and share memories. Please share this invitation with anyone you know and remember as a member.

## 2023 OFFICERS:

Barbara Judkins  
*President*

Susan Sedberry  
*Vice President*

Laura Wilson  
*Secretary*

Charles Gillis  
*Treasurer*

Caroline Hughes  
Susan Sedberry  
*Training Co-Directors*

Laura Wilson  
*Class Rep.*

Linda Richtsmeier  
*Membership Director*

Vanessa Adams  
Neace  
*Advisor*

Doug Weir  
*Advisor*

## 2024 Meeting Dates

Here is the list of meeting sites for next year. We have eliminated the Fire Station, due to their parking situation, and have moved those meetings to Marshall's Library, located at 300 S. Alamo in Marshall. Caroline and Susan are looking for some AT for the meetings. If anyone has a topic that they would like to present to the group, please let one of them know. If you have any field trip suggestions, pass those along also. They are working on a trip to the Longview Arboretum in early May and a birding event at Atlanta State Park with David Brotherton in early April.

January 8- Caddo Lake State Park  
February 12- Transportation Center in Jefferson-Potluck  
March 11- Marshall Library  
April 8- Kellyville  
May 13- Caddo Lake State Park  
June 10- Library  
July- no meeting  
August 12- Transportation Center - Potluck  
September 9- Library  
October 14- Kellyville  
November 11- State Park  
December- no meeting

## In Need of AT?

Remember that out of the 8 hours of advanced training required each year, only 4 can be online except the current year TMNTuesdays.

Here are a few good online options:

### #TMNTuesdays

<https://txmn.tamu.edu/tmntuesdays/>

### Forestry and Natural Resources Webinars

<http://forestrywebinars.net/>

### Conservation of Natural Resources

<http://www.conservationwebinars.net>

### Natures Notebook

<https://www.usanpn.org/nn/webinars>

### Texas Wildlife Federation

<https://www.texas-wildlife.org/>

## 2023

## #TMNTuesdays

January 10	May 9	September 12
February 14	June 13	October 3*
March 14	July 11	November 14
April 11	August 8	December 12

\*first week of month

