

El Camino Real Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist™ program

Mission: To develop a corps of well-educated “Master Volunteers” to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated toward the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.

Method: The program will furnish participants with essential information and strategies to restore and conserve our indigenous species and habitats. Throughout training, area experts will cover interesting topics about our natural resources and lead hands-on field trips to area ecosystems.

Projects: Texas Master Naturalist™ trainees may select from a wide variety of approved local projects to volunteer their time, including habitat restoration, native plant rescues, prairie seed collection, schoolyard habitats, educational presentations, and projects of their own design.

Requirements: To become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist of the El Camino Real Chapter, trainees must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Have one of the first 20 completed applications received with payment attached
2. Pass a background criminal investigation
3. Complete attendance to training classes and field trips (one absence allowed) (missed classroom events may be made up by watching the video, as available)
4. Perform 40 hours minimum of volunteer service approved projects within a year of graduation
5. Complete 8 hours of advanced training in approved classes within a year of graduation


To maintain “Certified” status in the El Camino Real Chapter, Texas Master Naturalists must complete the following annually:

1. Perform 40 hours of volunteer service on approved projects
2. Complete 8 hours of advanced training in approved classes

The Texas Master Naturalist program activities are coordinated by Texas AgriLife Extension and Texas Parks and Wildlife. Texas Master Naturalist programs serve all people regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

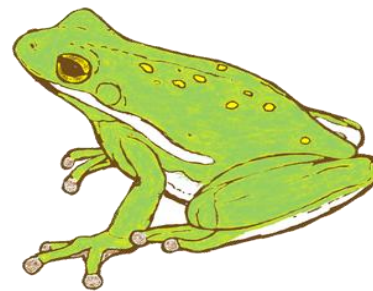
The 2010 training session is an 8 month program and will be held the first Thursday evening of each month from 6pm to 10 pm, April 1 to November 4, 2010, in Gause (school). There will be a graduation to follow soon after the last class. The fee for this training is \$150 per person and includes all class materials. Three to four Field trips will be held on Saturdays and no class will be held those weeks. Carpools will be encouraged and coordinated. A detailed schedule will be published Spring 2010.

Apply: A minimum of ten applicants will be required to make the first class. The first 20 applications received will be chosen to undergo criminal background checks and, if passed, attend the 2010 class. Applications are only complete if they are received with a check payable to El Camino Real Master Naturalist. All monies after the first 20 will be returned as un-cashed original checks.

 **Accessibility:** The Texas Master Naturalist program activities are coordinated by Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife. Texas Master Naturalist programs serve all people regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. As developed, this course may involve a boat ride, walking in fields, and climbing a mountain. Please advise as soon as possible of auxiliary service or aid that you require.

Background Check: You might find yourself in a situation where you chaperone youth while serving as a Texas Master Naturalist. Thus the Youth Protection Standards process requires that all volunteers undergo a criminal background check. The procedure is in place for all volunteers and they will be screened prior to being accepted into the class and as required or every three years thereafter. This is a background check based upon the first five digits of the applicant's social security number. The criminal history, as received by the reporting agencies, may include arrest and conviction data as well as plea bargains and deferred adjudications and delinquent conduct as committed as a juvenile. No credit report is either requested or obtained. Candidates in the first 20 received, who do not pass the background check, will be notified and alternates accepted in their place.

Mailing: Please return the completed and signed application, as well as the signed Texas Master Naturalist Volunteer Policy, to El Camino Real Master Naturalist, 100 East 1st Street, Cameron TX 76520. The application deadline is March 15, 2010. You must mail the \$150 fee with your application. Please make check payable to El Camino Real Master Naturalist.



Our Chapter Logo

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Please do not return an application without a check for the training fee. If you are unable to attend this particular training session, but have further interest, we hope to have subsequent classes.

Thank you for your interest in the Texas Master Naturalist Program. We look forward to your participation in this educational and beneficial volunteer program. You will be contacted no later than March 19, 2010, about the criminal background check and class enrollment.

Refunds: As much effort is being made to coordinate a meaningful training agenda, class stability and headcount are important. This class is also in demand in our area, so we want to ensure that students are truly interested. Thus refunds will not be offered after March 26, 2010.

Fairness: Tremendous effort is being made to make this process fair for all parties. Applications are being accepted in the order in which they are received. Postmark date will determine the order in which they are reviewed. Applicants are asked to carefully review the submission details. For example, applications without payment will not be accepted. For example, those not wishing to have a criminal background check conducted will not be accepted. Applications are only being accepted via the above address.

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El Camino Real Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist™ program Application

The application deadline is March 15, 2010 or when the class fills, whichever comes first. Please print clearly and return your application and check to: El Camino Real Texas Master Naturalist, 100 East 1st Street, Cameron, TX 76520.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

YES, I will be available for the 8 classes to be held the first Thursday of every month from April 1 through November 4, 2010. I understand that I am required to attend the classes and field trips scheduled, complete 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of approved advanced training by July 1, 2011 (15 months from class start) in order to become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist™.

Volunteer Pledge: I understand that in exchange for the training made possible through the proposed El Camino Real Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program I will volunteer at least 40 hours of my time towards approved projects and complete 8 hours of advanced training within one year. I understand that I will become a Certified Texas Master Naturalist™ when I complete both the training and volunteer work.

Signature

Date

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Texas Master Naturalist™

Volunteer Policy & Liability Release

- I understand that I must attend a minimum of 40 hours of Texas Master Naturalist training. One class may be missed. Classroom content may be made-up by viewing the video of the class. Once the class has been completed than I will be eligible for graduation as a Texas Master Naturalist.
- I understand that I must complete the above training, plus a minimum 40 hours of volunteer service and at least 8 hours of advanced training to be certified as a Texas Master Naturalist. The volunteer service and advanced training must be completed within 15 months from the beginning of the initial 40 hour training. To renew my certification as a Texas Master Naturalist in succeeding years, I must annually complete a minimum of 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of advanced training.
- I understand that the volunteer service will be done only on projects approved by the Texas AgriLife Extension County Agent and/or a participating Texas Parks and Wildlife employee, and/or the Chapter Volunteer Service Committee. Advanced training outside the chapter must also be pre-approved by the Chapter Curriculum Committee.
- I understand and acknowledge that the local chapter in which I am receiving training under may have training, advanced training, and volunteer service requirement exceeding that of the state-established minimum requirements and agree to uphold their locally set standards.
- I agree to faithfully fulfill my obligation as a volunteer participant of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.
- I agree to present a positive public image that speaks well of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.
- I agree to actively participate as a team member with other individuals of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.
- I understand that in consideration of being accepted as a participant in the Texas Master Naturalist volunteer program (“program”) I hereby release, **discharge, and agree to hold harmless** the program and its sponsoring state agencies, their agents, employees, officers and successors, from and against the program and sponsoring state agencies, their successors, employees, or officers for all personal injuries (including death), known and unknown or damage to property caused by or arising out of activities performed under the Texas Master Naturalist Program.

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Volunteer Pledge

I understand and agree to uphold the above statements of the Texas Master Naturalist™ Program. I further understand that if, for any reason, I am unable to comply with the above policies and/or complete the requirements, I cannot be certified as a Texas Master Naturalist:

Signature _____ Date _____

Name (please print) _____

Chapter Affiliation El Camino Real

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