



**FROM NORTH TO SOUTH DENTON
COUNTY — Master Naturalist on
the move**

N
E
W
S
L
E
T
T
E
R

—LISA COLE Leads—

The first Trail Guide Training class with some 35 persons was treated to a overview tour through LLELA.

Learn more— bottom of p. 2



LLELA on a cool, cloudy morning



“Who’s that lurking?”— you may ask.

Joanne Fellows has the answers on p. 4

Photo: Jim Conrad’s Naturalist Newsletter

Inside this issue:

LLELA’s latest	2
Clear Creek Heritage Center building project	3
Which elm?	4-5
Editor page/Reminders/Announcements	6-7
March meeting speaker	8
Projects News-special message from coordinator	11
Meetings/EFCMN Board	13

Special points of interest:

- *Field trips-past & present*
- *March speaker biographical sketch*
- *Creepy, crawly or “gentle giants”*
- *March is green—in more ways than one*

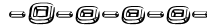
“Building Bridges”



Photo courtesy Owen Richards

is what **Hilton Dickerson** and **Richard Johnson**, at left, had in mind when they rebuilt one bridge and put handrails on a total of 5 more at LLELA.

This much needed bridge updating will make the area more accessible for all who pass this way — especially for the many groups of area school children.



“Lisa leads”

- cont 'd from p. 1



Photo courtesy Ron & Joanne Fellows

Lisa Cole, Education Coordinator at LLELA, instructed a very enthusiastic group at the second class for Trail Guide Training at LLELA on February 23. There were plenty of “ooh, look” as ospreys circled overhead. Tracks, scat, unique plants and rocks were discovered and scrutinized—as well as attempts made to master the name “Prothonotary Warbler”!



The remaining classes will cover trail guide basics of interpretation; LLELA’s wetlands; and prairie restoration.

LLELA Trail Guide Training class
on Redbud Trail



“Queuing up for the Kiosk” takes team work. . .

some “oversee”

Getting together to make things happen at Clear Creek Heritage Center are Peg LaPoint, Cheryl Kesterson, Abigail Miller, Randy Kimball, Alex Lieban, George Kragle and Jan Thompson.



some “tote”

some “build”

Some are “out of the picture” to take pictures — thanks, Jan Thompson

It was a successful day of kiosk building with an additional work day planned for completion.



Is it a caterpillar, wasp, or fly on that elm?

By Joanne Fellows



(Caterpillar) Cedar elms are the larval host for Mourning Cloak butterflies. Mourning Cloak caterpillars are sometimes called the spiny elm caterpillar. They stay in groups, feeding together. If they run out of food, they march in a group to the next tree. If disturbed on a branch, the mass of caterpillars will shake and vibrate in unison, thus, presumably, startling or frightening a potential predator. The bristling black spines covering the caterpillars are another good deterrent to predators.

Photo: <http://www.forestryimages.org>

(Wasp) A Sawfly is a primitive wasp not a fly. Elm Sawflies are greenish yellow with a black stripe down their back. They look similar to newly hatched Mourning Cloak caterpillars. How can you tell the difference between a sawfly larva and a caterpillar? Count the prolegs (fleshy false legs that hold like suction cups). Caterpillars may have up to five pairs, but never more, of abdominal prolegs. Sawfly larvae always have six or more pairs of abdominal prolegs.

Photo: <http://www.forestryimages.org>



Here is a Black Swallowtail caterpillar holding on with its prolegs and using its 6 insect legs to eat.



Photo: Jim Conrad's Naturalist Newsletter

The muscle that controls the opening and closing of the crochet hooks on the prolegs works rhythmically so it opens and closes one leg at a time. That makes the wiggly motion when you see a caterpillar crawling across the sidewalk. When the muscle relaxes, all crochets close, and the caterpillar holds tight while it sleeps.

There's more!



Now is a good time to identify those elms. American, Winged, Slippery are blooming now, in spring. Cedar elm will bloom in the fall. The green fruit, or samara, is oblong and flattened. The seed is scattered by the wind.

Which kind of Elm? The samara is the best way to tell the difference between an American, Winged or Slippery elm.

Winged Elm
Ulmus alata



A small fruit 3/8 inch, narrow, oval with hairy margins, dark, often reddish, fruits sparse and short stalked

Winged Elm
Ulmus alata



American Elm
Ulmus americana

A narrow fruit 1/2 inch, deep notch, margins hairy, pale yellow-green ripening brown (tinged red in southern range)



Slippery Elm
Ulmus rubra

A fruit 5/8 inch, rounded, without notch, short-stalked, not hairy on the margins (unlike all other native elms)



Cedar Elm
Ulmus crassifolia

Cedar elm is the most widespread native elm in Texas, but it flowers and sets seed in the fall. If you find an elm now and it has some wings, but no sign of blooms or fruit, then it is a Cedar elm.



Samara: fruits 3/8 inch, oval, hairy, light brown, deeply notched, few in short-stalked clusters in the autumn.

Photos: Virginia Tech College of Natural Resources and Environment

From the Editor



Class of 2010—Help us get to know you. Send me a short bio/profile, and I will publish one or more each month.

wodum10043@aol.com

Reminders

- ◆ Sharon Barr is making great strides in developing efcmn.org into a valuable resource. With Susan Pohlen's help, there is now available a list of chapter projects. Have a question about a project? Look it up.
- ◆ Keep your membership current by submitting the \$30 annual dues payment to Kay Crowe, treasurer.
- ◆ If you have resource items checked out that you are not presently using, please return them to the Resource Room. This will help Jan Hodson keep tabs on materials.
- ◆ Betty Zajac needs your photographs for the chapter scrapbook.



Announcements and Opportunities



Field Trip: (Advance Training opportunity) **April 6, 2011** (alternate 5/4 in case of bad weather) trip to the LBJ Grasslands. See p. 9 for more details.



Redbud Festival: Downtown Denton: **April 9, 2011—9:00-4:00.** **Kay Crowe** is coordinating the booth so please contact her at Ethelwhipple@verizon.net if you can help either in setting up/dismantling or staffing the booth.



A Journey North:

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch/>

This is the site I use to track the Monarch migration. They started posting articles just a couple of weeks ago. The scientists who monitor the Monarchs say their numbers are up from an all time low. Enjoy taking the journey north with these incredible butterflies.

Joanne Fellows



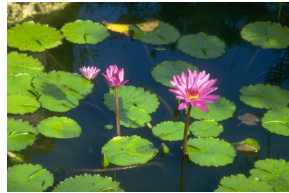
More about butterflies in next month's issue.

Announcements and Opportunities cont'd

LAERF Needs Volunteers

The Lewisville Aquatic Ecosystem Research Facility (LAERF, pronounced *Lay' erf*) is an experimental aquatic plant facility located within the Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area (LLELA) on Jones Street in Lewisville, Texas.

LAERF supports studies on the management of aquatic plants, including:



- Control of aquatic plants by microbial pathogens and host-specific insects
- Efficacy of aquatic plant herbicides
- Effects of aquatic plants on fisheries, water quality, macroinvertebrates, and native vegetation
- Impacts of introduced aquatic weeds, such as water hyacinth, Eurasian water milfoil, hydrilla, and giant salvinia, on native aquatic environments
- Methods for establishing native aquatic plants to prevent further spread of introduced weeds

If you would like to volunteer at this fascinating facility, please contact Mary Hooser at edenwoodplace@gmail.com.

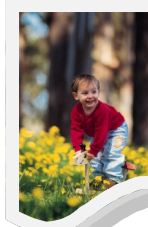


Ray Roberts Lake State Park, Isle DuBois Interpretive Center opened this month for the new season. To volunteer as a greeter, contact Doug Chadwick cjdathomeyahoo.com or 940-387-1140.

MN GUIDES NEEDED AT ELM FORK

The Elm Fork Education Center at UNT is still in need of guides. Master Naturalists lead groups of 15-20 children and their adult chaperones between activities conducted in and around the Environmental Sciences Building on the UNT campus. Free parking is provided. The staff and excellent and instructors are very friendly.

Guides do not have any teaching responsibilities and can choose how much interaction they have with the children. Guides meet their group at 9:30 a.m. and every 30-45 minutes the group is moved to their next activity. Guides are free to visit or read in the lounge while waiting for their group, or they may stay with the children during their activities. The field trip ends at 1:30 P.M.



Most Guides volunteer to serve one day a week, with some helping out every other week. There are children in attendance almost every weekday throughout the school year. The Christmas/New Year holiday conforms to the UNT schedule and is usually three weeks long.

This is fun opportunity for Master Naturalists who like to interact with children or those who want a structured environment without heavy physical demands.

Project Coordinator: Peggy La Point

tnplapoint@msn.com

Elm Fork Education Center Coordinator: Brian Wheeler

btw@unt.edu



OPPORTUNITIES cont'd

LLELA is hosting UNT's volunteer adventure—The Big Event—Saturday, March 26, 2011, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. LLELA is asking for Master Naturalist to serve as team leaders. For more information, contact Van Elliott at velliott2105@msn.com or 972-539-4350.



Meet the Speaker – MARCH CHAPTER MEETING

Kenneth W. Mayben, P.E. will be speaking about "Stream Geomorphology and Stream Restoration" at our March general meeting on March 17, 2011. His presentation will review natural stream processes and its relationship to riparian vegetation. There will also be a review of case studies that show natural and mechanical stream restoration. It is a very interesting presentation which will show what we can do to help restore our streams & other waterways.

Mr. Mayben is a 1975 graduate of Texas A&M with a BS in Agricultural Engineering. The USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service) has employed him for 36 years as an engineer. He has served in various engineering positions from the lower Rio Grand Valley to North Texas including three years in the Texas State Design Section in Temple. He is currently serving as the Zone Engineer providing engineering leadership for the Weatherford Zone, which covers 51 counties in North and Central Texas. Mr. Mayben is on the NRCS state engineering team providing direction for the field engineering activities in the state.

Notes:

Geomorphology - the geological study of the configuration & evolution of land forms.

Fluvial - Of, pertaining to, or inhabiting a river or stream.

Both definitions from *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Published by The American Heritage Publishing Company and Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1970

PACK A LUNCH AND LOAD UP THE WAGON

Spring Field Trip to LBJ National Grasslands

April 6, 2011

Our spring 2011 field trip will be to the LBJ National Grasslands north of Decatur. It will be an all day affair starting at 8:45 a.m. at the Forest Service office north of Decatur on US Hwy 287. Forest Service Wildlife Biologist, Al Sanchez, will give us a brief presentation about the Grasslands. Mary Curry then will lead us in a caravan to several areas to observe various parts of the Grasslands.

We will have lunch (BYO) at one of the three sites with restrooms (mostly porta-potties.) After lunch, Kathy Saucier will lead an afternoon wildflower walk of about two hours. We should finish before 4:00 p.m. Google on LBJ Grasslands to get to the website for more information about the Grasslands.

Wear appropriate clothing & be prepared for changing weather. It is in north Texas in the spring. Long pants, hiking boots or other closed toe shoes, wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, etc. are recommended. Toilet facilities are limited. Bring your lunch, snacks, drinking water, camera, binoculars, reference books/materials, & other items appropriate for a field trip. No running water is available so bring hand cleaning wipes.

Driving directions: From Denton take US Hwy 380 west to Decatur (about 25 miles), exit at Hwy 287/81 to Wichita Falls. On 287 the Forest Service Office is on the right after a short distance, just past a small motel. The address is 1400 N. Hwy 287, Decatur, TX 76234, Phone 940 627 5475. According to MapQuest it's about 0.6 mile north from 380, just past FM 1810. **Carpooling is encouraged.** The FS parking lot will not hold more than 9-10 cars and parking on the highway shoulder is possible but not desirable, so

Carpooling is encouraged

Please let Russell Bilyeu at rgbilyeu@mypbmail.com and Rob Roy at robt_t_roy@msn.com know **by 3/31/11** if you plan to attend. We need to let Mr. Sanchez know several days in advance about how many will be coming. It should be a great field trip.

—“Thrills and Chills” for hardy trekkers—

Photo Owen Richards



The hikers at Hagerman NWR (L to R): Zachary Owens, Hilton Dickerson, Rob Roy plus unseen photographer on hike, Owen Richards

Front row (L to R): Sandra Cavanaugh, Marian Kester, Susan Pohlen, Adelaide Bodnar, Owen Richards, Zachary Owens; Back row: Hilton Dickerson, John Bodnar, Theresa Page, Don Page, Carl Patrick, Rick Cantu (Assistant Manager, Hagerman NWR), Rob Roy, and Marilyn Turnage



—Routine for regular habitants—

The Hagerman guide’s statement that this was a snow goose prompted S. Pohlen to do some research and found: "There are 2 races of the Snow Goose, the "Lesser" and the "Greater." The "Lesser" Snow Goose (*C. c. caerulescens*) has 2 color phases—a dark phase (the so-called "Blue" Goose) and a white phase (the Snow Goose)." This excerpt is from *The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding, Vol I.*

Photo Owen Richards



Snow Goose (blue morph)

Photo Susan Pohlen



To Serve or not to Serve

Introduction: In nearly all organizations a small percentage of the people are more willing to handle the majority of the administrative work required to keep it going. It's easy to understand why some people shy away from this “behind the scenes” work, but perhaps they don't realize the opportunities that are lost, both for themselves and for the organization.

Value to the Chapter: One reason to consider serving on the Board of Directors, as a Project Manager, or on a committee is that you can add significant value to our chapter. Organizations are stronger and more productive if they stay current, represent diverse backgrounds, and incorporate new points of view. It is much easier to stay current with a flow of new ideas and fresh perspectives. There is a natural tendency to stay within the boundaries of the comfort zone created by each individual as well as that of the current team of volunteers. However, our chapter benefits the most when utilizing the strengths of all its members.

Value to Self: Some of us are hesitant to move beyond our comfort zone, but personal growth, and the subsequent personal satisfaction, comes from expanding our comfort zone. Each situation will vary of course, but here are some potential opportunities to improve your sense of value:

Getting to know more members in the chapter

An increased feeling of belonging

Improved communication skills, both on the computer and in person

Increased Master Naturalist knowledge in general

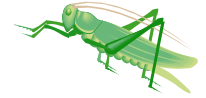
A better understanding of what it takes to set and implement chapter goals, and how our chapter is aligned with the state goals and mission

Summary: You have an opportunity to serve on the Board, as a Project Manager, or on a committee, so please consider accepting the responsibility. You can help improve our chapter while gaining personal growth and satisfaction. There are several areas where you can help right now, including the Publicity Committee, as the Lake Ray Roberts Project Manager, and as the Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center Project Manager.

Steps to Making a Difference: If you think you would like to assist with any of these, or some other committee or project, please contact any member currently serving on the Board of Directors or on a chapter committee (<http://txmn.org/elmfork/about-us/chapter-officers/>). *Thank you for helping us keep the Elm Fork Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists a vibrant and significant organization in our community!*

RREAL OLD WEST TALES – *By Wanda Odum*

I recently came across a photo that took me back to another time and place. Many years ago, as a child, I lived in a small west Texas farming community – gateway to the Texas Panhandle. Across the rural, dirt road in front of our house was a canyon that meandered through the rugged landscape as a “tine” of the Double Mountain Fork of the Brazos River. Since it rarely had water in it, there were plenty of mysterious, cavernous pockets to probe along the approach and in the red canyon walls.



My brother was the mischievous, typical boy, and I was the “tag along”. We never went exploring without a stick to poke under rocks and into crevices and a jug of water to pour down what we perceived to be “snake holes”. Sometimes they actually were! There was an abundance of little creatures to trap in our Mason jars and shoe boxes, some of which are now on the threatened or endangered species list. One plentiful favorite at that time was the horned toad (“horny toad”). However, though the choices were varied, our supreme capture was invariably a fair sized ball of brown and/or black fur known as a tarantula.

Since my mother was deathly afraid of all things “creepy, crawly”, we, unfortunately, caused her many hours of anxiety. Not only did she often have to endure our treasured odd tarantula, but it was not unusual to find one or more of these fuzzy spiders crawling on the outside of the screen door. Much to our glee, it almost always resulted in a frenetic reaction from her!

While I would never advocate that children traumatize their mothers in this manner, I cannot help but think what a travesty it is that most children today will never have such an opportunity to interact with nature. Although there is no real substitute for growing up in the midst of this kind of environment, the Master Naturalist program is rekindling interests and planting seeds in numerous ways which give ample reason to be optimistic about the future connection between nature and children.

Below left is the 8-legged wonder that was the source of such pleasure for my brother and me. For a spectacular photograph of the Double Mountain—the actual habitat of these little critters that we tracked so long ago—go to <http://www.panoramio.com/photo/>.



Clip art

Quick facts:

Typical size: 4.75 inches long

Weight: 1-3 oz.

Life Span: In wild may live 30 years or more.

Rarely bites humans – bite could be painful but so far as known, no reported deaths.

Night hunters – approaches prey stealthily – sneaking up, then pouncing.

Note: Permission has been granted to reprint the article "**Tarantula!** Texas' most fear-some-looking spider is actually a gentle giant. **By Dale Weisman**", March 2010 issue of the Texas Parks & Wildlife magazine, but because of the length and wonderful photographs, I refer you to the article at <http://www.tpwmagazine.com/archive/2010> .

OF SPECIAL INTEREST

TEXAS PARKS and WILDLIFE is currently setting up 3 workshops for our area for the monitoring of Texas Horned Lizards, Texas Amphibians, and Texas Mussels. To support the workshops, the Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist is looking for members to act as host for each of the 3 workshops. The host(s) is responsible for coordinating with the state representative to set up the workshop (the Amphibian workshop on Friday with the Horned Lizard and Mussel workshops on Saturday). A host can take responsibility for 1 workshop or all 3.

The host is, also, responsible for coordinating additional Elm Fork Chapter volunteers to monitor stream and wetlands areas and to report this information back to TPWD.

For more information please contact George Kragle , President Elm Fork Chapter, gkragle1@verizon.net




Photo courtesy
TPWD

www.tpwd.state.tx.us/learning/texas_nature_trackers/horned_liz...

June 17 and 18, 2011, **Texas Amphibian and Mussel Watch Train the Trainer Workshops**—Trinity River Audubon Center, 6500 South Loop 12, Dallas, TX. Learn to identify amphibian and freshwater mussel species and participate in scientific research. Sponsored by the Trinity river Audubon Center, Texas Amphibian Watch will be held on June 17, 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., and Texas Mussel Watch will be held on June 18, 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Texas Master Naturalist Approved Advanced Training. CPE and TEEAC credit available for educators. Registration fee \$10 for materials per workshop. Registration required. Contact Stephanie Timko at stimko@audubon.org or (214) 309-5813 for information and registration.

—End Notes—

May the road rise to meet you 

May the wind be always at your back

May the sun shine warm upon your face,

The rains fall soft upon your fields

**...and remember that the song
you hear may not always be a
bird, so be alert in the woods—
you never know!**

LLELA



TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST

ELM FORK CHAPTER

Texas AgriLIFE Extension
306 North Loop 288, Suite 222
Denton, TX 76209-4887
Phone: 940-349-2883

*Education, Conservation,
Preservation, Restoration*

We're on the web
www.efcmn.org

Members of the Board 2011

Elected:

President: George Kragle
Vice-President: Rob Roy
Secretary: Marian Kester
Treasurer: Kay Crowe
Class Representative:
Deborah Estes
Member-at-Large:
Doug Chadwick

Advisor: Janet Laminack

Appointed Committee Chairs-

2-year terms:

Communications: Monica Chaffin
Newsletter: Wanda Odum
Projects: Susan Pohlen
Publicity: Open
Training: Van Elliott
Website: Sharon Barr

Appointed Standing Committee Chairs:

Education: Cheryl Kesterson
Historian: Betty Zajac
Hospitality: Linda Cox
Resource: Jan Hodson

Monthly Chapter Meetings:

9:30 a.m. preceded by a social time at 9:00 a.m.
on the third Thursday of each month.



Meetings are held at the Denton County AgriLife Extension Office Conference Room unless otherwise noted. Meetings are open to the public.

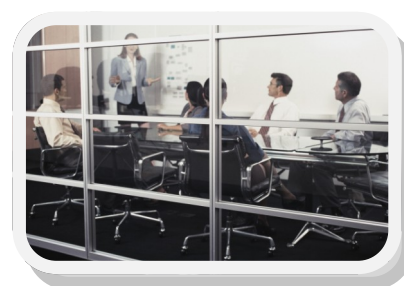
March 17th —“**Stream Restoration**” will be the topic of our speaker, Mr. Kenneth Mayben, Zone Engineer, USDA-NRCS.

April 21st—**To be announced**

Board Meetings:

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m., Denton County AgriLife Extension Office. The Board last met March 10, 2011. Next meeting is April 14, 2011.

Board meetings are open to members.



OUR MISSION . . .

to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our community”