

NEWSLETTER—Texas Master Naturalist, Elm Fork Chapter

Our vision. . .in our community, Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program will be recognized as a primary source of information, education and service to support natural resources and natural areas today and in the future.



Elm Fork Chapter continues to be validated for its efforts in aiding preservation of the community’s natural resources and natural areas!

Special permission from local photographer, Al Key, was given to the newsletter to include his photo of Indian paintbrush that appeared in the Denton Record Chronicle on April 22, 2013. Since this is wildflower season (see article and photos from Dorothy Thetford p. 9), it is especially appropriate and becomes more meaningful with the below comments from Mr. Key.

Al Key/DRC



I grew up in this area between Denton and Sanger camping, hiking, riding horses, etc. around Clear and Elm Creeks and in what is now Lake Ray Roberts. It’s a very special place for me. I love being able to still roam it, and share its beautiful flora and fauna with the citizens of Denton County.



Special points of interest:

- > Wildflowers—what’s in it for us
- > Visiting Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge
- > Lurking in the woods—hmm, alligators, tent webs
- > Meet Ron Fellows “downunder”

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*From President
Susan Pohlen*

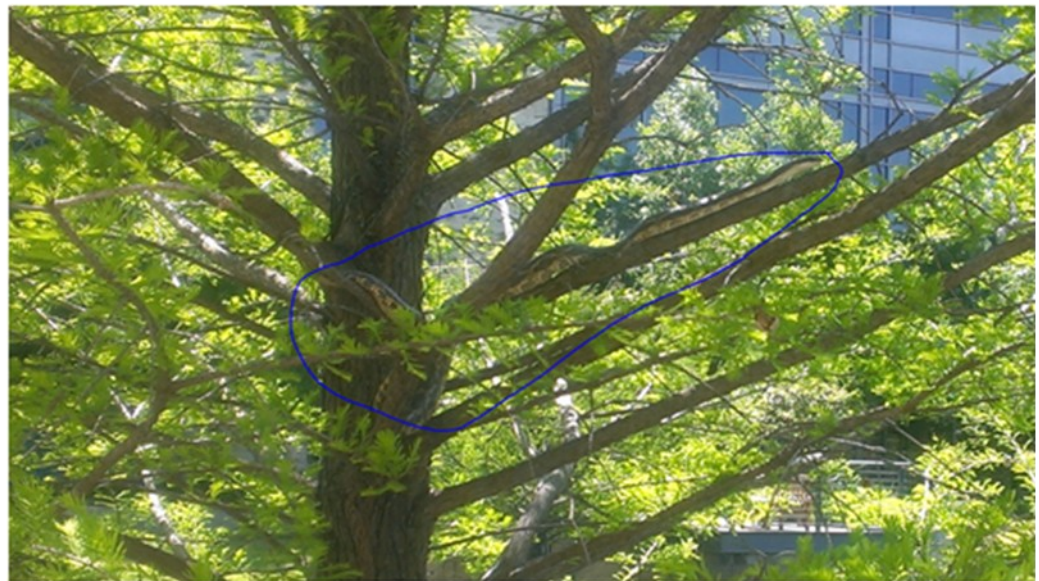
W

e hear so many stories of nature losing out to man when habitat becomes destroyed or fragmented. We've also been told that individuals and small groups can make a difference. Well here's a nature success story resulting from a Master Naturalist chapter that got involved in just such a situation.

I haven't been able to track down the person(s) involved, but apparently at least one Master Naturalist helped plan the landscaping around the Ericsson building in Plano as construction came to a close. The high rise building is located just West of the Dallas North Tollway on Legacy Drive. This congested location seems like a foreign environment for nature. However, the landscaping is very inviting to, and supports, all sorts of wildlife.

**...one more
example of
Master
Naturalists
making a
difference.**

The snake photo below was taken by an employee on his lunch break. The snake was in a tree above several of them. The image makes identification a challenge, but the snake appears to be either a Texas Rat snake or a Bull snake. Both species typically reach 4-5 feet in length. Associate Wildlife Biologist Ryan Blankenship checked the record for the Texas Rat snake which is 83 inches. This snake is clearly larger than average, and probably felt larger than life to the employees that spotted it.



This is one more example of Master Naturalists making a difference. Thank you all for your time and commitment to the program, but mostly to Elm Fork Chapter. You do make a difference!



Susan Pohlen

*Photo-D.
Thetford*



There was a time for “catch-up”...



...to recognize visitors
and a new member

...to “set up”



...for announcements and committee reports

...many member accomplishments, so...



...to present



...to receive



... to see who reads the news-letter!



...then a special “thank you” to Dr. Homayoun for an outstanding program on Bird-Friendly Communities for Texas Migrants



NOTICES AND REMINDERS



A notice of correction of any **factual errors** in current newsletter will be published the following month.
wodum10043@reagan.com — or contact the author of the article.



Diane Wetherbee has provided some answers on the ID's of Karen Schoeve's three photos in April newsletter:

1. **Damselfly larva**—could be dragonfly larva; but it appears to have gills, so that would make it a damselfly.
2. The little critter with the paddle like rear appendages is a **copepod**. Just had a picture and note about copepods on LLELA's Facebook page on April 4.
3. This one is tougher. My first thought was that it's a **scud**, but if it is, it was caught in a weird position and not all of its characteristics are visible. If it scooted along on its side, looking something like a tiny shrimp, it's a scud. If it's not that, I don't know what it is.



Thanks to **Diane** and **Karen**
Interesting indeed!



Richard Johnson receiving the graduation certificate for his wife, Georgann on March 21.

The photo in April newsletter was labeled "Hilton Dickerson". My apologies to both gentlemen.

Marian Kester is asking that "Suggestion Box" submissions include your name, please.



Who does what with communications?



Email communication: **Monica Chaffin**

Facebook: **Sharon Barr**

Website: **Martha Peet**

Newsletter: **Wanda Odum**

Who keeps Chapter Directory information?



Send **contact information changes** to: 1) **Monica Chaffin** chaffincasa@gmail.com; 2) **Susan Pohlen** pohlensusan@gmail.com; 3) **Rob Roy** robt_t_roy@msn.com; and 4) **Donna Wolfe** donna.wolfe@dentoncounty.com

NOTICES AND REMINDERS cont'd

Naming of the Newsletter

The Board has chosen three possible names that will be voted on at the May meeting. A total of 29 suggestions were submitted, and, as you can imagine, narrowing to these three was both a fun and difficult choice. The prospective names, in alphabetic order, are:

(1) [The] Current

(2) Naturalist News

(3) Nature Notes

Be prepared to cast your vote next Thursday!



To "entice" more readers, at each monthly meeting a question taken from the newsletter will be prominently displayed at the registration table just outside the meeting room door. A drawing will be held at the conclusion of the meeting, and the person who submitted the correct answer will receive a prize. Our thanks to **Betty Mullenweg** for volunteering to be responsible each month for this fun activity. It is hoped that your purpose for reading the newsletter will be rewarded by its contents as well!

From Peg La Point

GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

At our May meeting, Dr. Tom La Point will review the issue of climate change. In the two years since he spoke to us on the subject there has been a great deal of new information and our climate situation has deteriorated more quickly than projected.

Climate science is difficult and complex but only a tiny fraction of scientists think that human activity is not the primary cause of global warming. Dr. La Point will give us background and bring us up to date on the most recent developments. He will also discuss our individual role in contributing to the problem and how each of us can work to lessen our impact on the environment.

Tom La Point earned his B.S. in Zoology from the University of Wyoming, his M.S. in Biology from the University of Houston and his Ph.D. from Idaho State University. He has been in research and administrative positions with the E.P.A. and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



He returned to teaching and research with Clemson University. He joined the UNT faculty as Senior Scientist and Professor of Biology in 1999. His areas of specialty include aquatic toxicology, population biology, and biostatistics. He is on the E.P.A. Science Advisory Board and frequently speaks to the public on issues of water and climate change.

Upcoming Field Trip

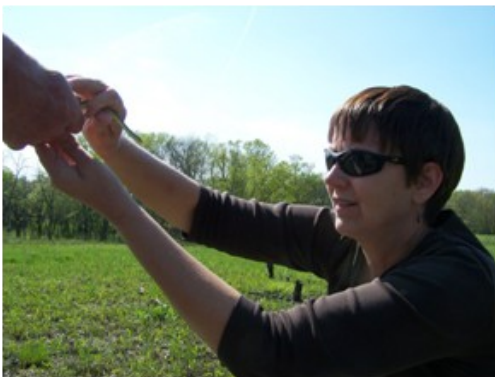
From Peg La Point

On Saturday, May 25th, Suzanne Tuttle, Manager of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge, will host a special field trip to the FWNC&R. The field trip will begin at 9:30 at the Hardwicke Interpretive Center at the FWNC&R and will conclude around lunch time. Feel free to pack along a sack lunch to enjoy at one of the several picnic areas.

The field trip will focus on the ecology of the native Fort Worth Prairie and Western Cross Timbers habitats found at the FWNC&R and will include a special visit to the resident bison herd pasture and prairie dog town. As a bonus a special exhibit, The Snakes of Tarrant County, will be underway all weekend so field trip participants will be able to experience this as well.



Bluebonnets on Hardwicke Hillside



Susan Tuttle with Chicago Rouch Green Snake

*About your tour leader: **Suzanne Tuttle** has been a happy staff member at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge for 20 years and has served as the park's manager since 2005. She is a graduate of The University of Texas at Arlington (Biology) and Tarrant County Junior College (Horticulture). She has instructed the Cross Timbers Chapter of TMN in Prairie Ecology since the chapter's inception in 1998 and was recognized as a Fellow of the Native Plant Society of Texas in 2007.*



Controlled burn



The two bulls meet

FELLOWSHIP

Recently, I received an email from Sydney, Australia asking that I pass along a congratulatory message to our Ron Fellows. As you can see from the extracted email below the sender is also named Ron Fellows. WOW! What a coincidence!

Following the meeting on April 18, 2013, Jan Deatherage put together an excellent article for press release on EFCTMN Ron Fellows for his presidential award on achieving 5,000 service hours. However, there were many big events happening: Boston Marathon terrorist, fertilizer plant fire at West, Texas and capture of the assassins of the Kaufman County District Attorney, his wife and assistant. With all of this buzz our chance of getting coverage was slim to none. What a shame if Ron's good presidential recognition should go unnoticed.

On the evening of April 19, I got an email and wasn't sure if it was a scam, hoax or a virus. After some consternation, I forwarded it to our Ron and he responded to the contact. There followed a string of enjoyable emails from another part of the world that most of us see only on television.

The long and short of this story is that we must be careful about the articles we send for publication in our newsletter because you never know where they will be going! With the power of the Internet it can go "global" in an instant. In this case we were able to have some fun and meet a new friend 15 hours flight time and 8,500 miles away. Thanks to Ron and Jan our chapter now has a global presence.

Thanks to Australia Ron for allowing us to use your email in our newsletter.

From: Ron Fellows <[removed per request of sender](#)>

Date: April 19, 2013, 6:19:45 PM CDT

To: velliott2105@msn.com

Subject: Ron Fellows

Hello Van

Would you please pass this on to your Ron Fellows.

Ron

Hi Ron

Congratulations on your recent Presidential Award.

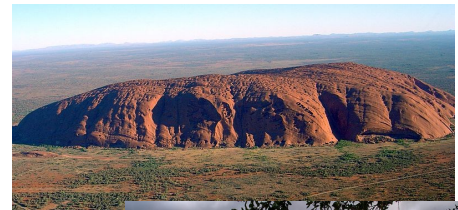
I receive updates from google whenever our name gets into the web and it is usually for the Canadian Race car driver, so yesterday your award came up and I thought I should send my best wishes. What also surprised me was in your bio that you worked for GE Info Services and so did I from 1980 to 1985. I seem to remember some people asking me whether I was the Ron Fellows working on some particular project but it was for you, the US Ron Fellows.

Keep up the good work of protecting the heritage of Texas.

Ron Fellows

Sydney, Australia

Photo Wikipedia



Australia
Ayers Rock, Uluru



Texas
Enchanted Rock

photo TPWD

Article by: Van Elliott

A hearty group of Master Naturalists visited **Thomsen Nature Preserve** on the April 24, 2013, field trip.



Their guide was **Dr. Lisa Bellows**, Director of Thomsen Nature Preserve—photo from Dr. Bellows

w. odum

What is the difference between a raven and a crow?

Ravens differ from crows in appearance by their larger bill, tail shape, flight pattern and by their larger size. Ravens are as big as Red-tailed Hawks, and crows are about the size of pigeons.

The raven is all black, has a 3.5-4 ft wingspan and is around 24-27 inches from head to tail. The crow is also black, has a 2.5 ft wingspan and is about 17 inches long. The raven weighs around 40 oz while the crow is 20 oz - half the weight of a raven.

Raven Calls: The common raven makes a variety of calls including these sounds: "croooaaak", "cr-r-ruck", "tok", and "wonk-wonk."

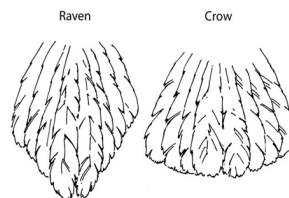
Crow Calls: The normal crow call is a loud caw or awk. The call is often vocalized in a short series - "caw caw caw." They also produce a variety of rattles, coos, and clear notes.



Common raven calling



American Crow (*Corvus Brachyrhynchos*) showing its patriotism, taken by [Dori](#) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin (public domain).

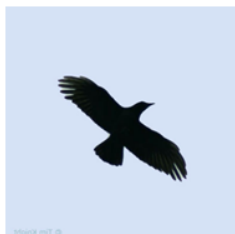


Tail Feathers: Ravens have wedge-shaped tails and crows have fan-shaped tails. When you see the bird flying overhead, you can often get a good look at the shape of the tail. (Drawing by Jenifer Rees. Courtesy of WDFW.)

Common Raven (*Corvus corax*)



American Crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos*)



http://naturemappingfoundation.org/natmap/facts/crow_vs_raven.html

Photos: Lantz; Tim Knight; [Natures Pics](#)—except as noted

This article and photo come from **Joanne Fellows**. Sometime back Joanne sent to the newsletter a treasure trove of articles and photos that I have not been able to work in, so this is the first of a series that will appear periodically throughout the coming months. Thanks, Joanne!

Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge

Ron and I recently made a couple of day trips to this wonderful refuge hopefully to see the Snow Geese. We were not disappointed.

“Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge, a haven for migratory birds and other wildlife, lies on the Big Mineral Arm of Lake Texoma, on the Red River between Oklahoma and Texas. The refuge is made up of water, marsh, and upland habitat and visitors can hike, observe wildlife, hunt, fish at various times throughout the year.

The main focus at Hagerman NWR is providing a winter home for thousands of waterfowl. Foremost among the waterfowl are Canada geese. During fall, winter, and spring, numbers can reach 7,500 or more. Other geese include white-fronted and snow geese, with a scattering of the smaller Ross' geese.”

http://www.stateparks.com/hagerman_national_wildlife_refuge_in_texas.html

The best description I read about Snow Geese is it is like being in a snow globe when they descend to feed in the fields. It is true. I made a short movie to prove this statement. You can see for yourself by clicking this link to You Tube <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjZdCr9gZNA>



Photo: Great Blue Heron in shallow pond beside the road. In the background is a small flock of Snow geese feeding. The winter light made photography challenging and interesting.

All photos and information
from Dorothy Thetford

Wildflowers—What's in It for Us?

Aside from beautiful vistas, wildflowers provide food for birds, butterflies and beneficial insects that need a helping hand.



Fragrant phlox



Gulf-coast penstemon

From Dorothy's "wildflower garden"

Master Naturalist Featured Speaker at Local Community Event

On March 16, 2013, **Dorothy Thetford** shared her expertise with an enthusiastic group at the **Crossroads Wildflower Workshop**. The purpose of the workshop was to encourage involvement in planning and promotion of wildflowers in the community.



cluster of Blue-eyed grass

*2 little Herbertia flowers**



* *Herbertia* normally has only 3 petals. Yesterday I photographed one with 4 petals, and then found another one with 5 petals. Sumpin' diff going on!



Prairie spiderwort



cluster of Spiderwort



*Alligator tracks,
Lewisville Lake —
Photo Joanne Fellows*

For more information Link to:

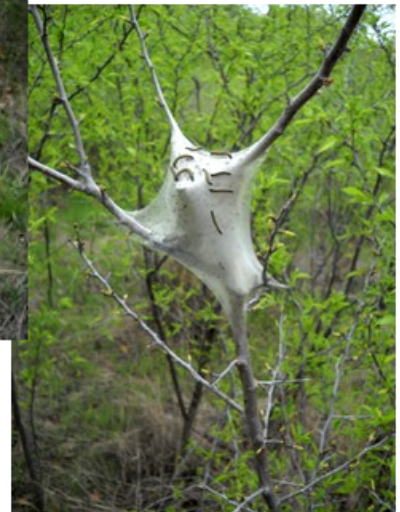
<http://www.wfaa.com/news/local/denton/Gator-spotted-in-Lewisville-Lake-176683931.html>



TENT CATERpillARS *Photos—Dorothy Thetford*

Tent caterpillars are moderately sized species in the genus *Malacosoma* and in the moth family Lasiocampidae. Species occur in North America, including Mexico, and in Eurasia. Twenty-six species have been described, six of which occur in North America. They are often considered pests due to their habit of defoliating trees. They are among the most social of all caterpillars and exhibit many noteworthy behaviors.

Tent caterpillars are readily recognized because they are social, colorful, diurnal and build conspicuous silk tents in the branches of host trees. Whereas tent caterpillars make their tents in the nodes and branches of a tree's limbs, **webworms** enclose leaves and small branches at the ends.



“FIELD NOTES IN FOCUS”



*Honey bee on Indigo blue spires — from the gallery
of Paula McCormick*

*Featuring Master Naturalist photographers—flora
and fauna as you see them*

We're on the web

www.txmn.org/elmfork

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"

Volume 14, Issue 5

Texas Master Naturalist
Elm Fork Chapter
Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension
Joseph A. Carroll Building
401 W. Hickory Street
Denton, TX 76201-9026

940-349-2883

*Education, Conservation,
Preservation, Restoration*



*Bullnettle —
from Karen
Schoeve*

NOTICE: The newsletter will be on sabbatical for the month of June. It will go out but will be much more condensed and/or have fewer frills! w. odum

Board of Directors

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Kelly Lauderdale, TPWD

Monthly Chapter Meetings

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

Chapter meetings are open to the public.

Next meeting May 16, 2013—Dr. Thomas La Point, Professor Biology at UNT, Climate Disruption

Meeting June 20, 2013—City of Denton Forester, Angie Kralik, outlines the Urban Forester Program

**Location: Joseph A. Carroll Bldg., 401 W. Hickory Street,
Denton, TX 76201-9026**

Board Meetings

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met May 9, 2013. Next meeting June 13, 2013.

Board meetings are open to members.