



Naturalist News



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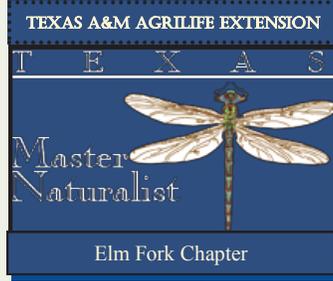


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Naturalist News



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

S ummer hosts Summer Tanagers!



Immature male Summer Tanager—a close-up from Susan Pohlen



Mature male beauty comes from Sharon Barr

The only completely red bird in North America, the strawberry-colored male Summer Tanager is an eye-catching sight against the green leaves of the forest canopy. The mustard-yellow female is harder to spot, though both sexes have a very distinctive chuckling call note. Fairly common during the summer, these birds migrate as far as the middle of South America each winter. All year long they specialize in catching bees and wasps on the wing, somehow avoiding being stung by their catches. http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/summer_tanager/id (w. odum, editor)

Van's Views



Have you ever wondered what the Board does? I keep a running list of topics we have addressed this year and there are 46 items on the list. It covers everything from members asking for assistance, chapter programs, routine operations and attempts to introduce more technology to increase our effectiveness. I knew we did a lot of things, but was shocked at the volume and now the reason for many phone calls and emails is apparent.

I have come to the realization our Board / Chapter Administrative activities are just as important as our projects. However we treat them as something no one wants to talk about except a few "admin nerds". Many times when someone is elected to serve the first words out to them are "my condolences". True, it is usually said in jest, but the stigma is there which turns people away.

During my great adventures with the Training Committee, I had a chance to see several classes up close and personal. We push projects hard. Even our membership drive is centered on project displays. But the question always nagged at me: Why is there no interest in chapter admin? The reason was very clear. We don't talk about the fun and important opportunities. If we are not articulate enough to say why we think our admin jobs are important and fun then why would anyone want to consider them?

We lobbied and got a chance to present to the 2013 class. In my humble opinion, it worked well because several members of the class said the presentation helped them find a niche since being outside on 100 degree days wasn't for them. The training committee is a good example as several people stepped up and are making good things happen for the chapter. Others wanted to run for office in 2014 and for the 2015 Board. And others are taking on project management responsibilities and doing a good job.

The interest in our chapter has grown large enough that we are having our membership drive off-site this year. It will be held at the Trinity Presbyterian Church, 2200 North Bell, Denton. Your support and assistance to make this happen are most appreciated.

We are getting calls from the public for assistance and our advisors are sending opportunities our way.

- Bob Ross has been assisting the City of Flower Mound and some home schooled children to get signage at a local park to help identify wildlife indigenous to the area. The city will display the MN logo and recognize us as contributors to the project.
- Marilyn Blanton, Fritz Poppe, Dorothy Thetford and Betty Mullenweg and I will be assisting residents of the Good Samaritan Society-Denton Village with a question and answer session about plants that do well in our ecosystem. They want to attract butterflies and birds to the village. Janet Laminack sent this opportunity our way.
- Jonathan Smith, Shirley Holland, Penny Bell, Nadine Beall and Dorothy Thetford are being advocates for Clear Creek and are very active with Dave Rowley, Sherrill Campbell and Cheryl Kesterson to promote hikes, prairie restoration and nest box management. Kathryn Barnett, Sustainability & Special Project Administrator for Denton, recently told me the MNs are doing a great job and she is glad to have them being active again.
- The Junior Master Naturalist program is doing so well that this year's class was full. Plus, it has expanded to Trophy Club with the help of Veronica Ruangskul. Jan Hodson leads the effort with her mighty band of MNs: Linda Cox, Susan Pohlen, Veronica Ruangskul, Nadine Beall and many others.

Meeting attendance is fairly consistent with about 50% of our members attending each meeting. Active members on record are 117. The six month attendance average is about 64 members (54.7%) and 8 visitors per meeting.

There are a million things running through my mind I would like to tell you about. However, my choice is to respect your time and avoid information overload. Our past presidents told me how difficult writing these articles can be because of not knowing for sure what you want to hear about. Soooo, if you are interested in something and want to see it addressed here next quarter drop me an email or phone call. Your feedback and input is welcomed. **Thank you for your time and for choosing to be a member of our chapter.**

Article submitted by: Van Elliott

Photo Courtesy: Larry Brennan

Submit date: 07-01-14



From Peg La Point

Regular Meeting July 17

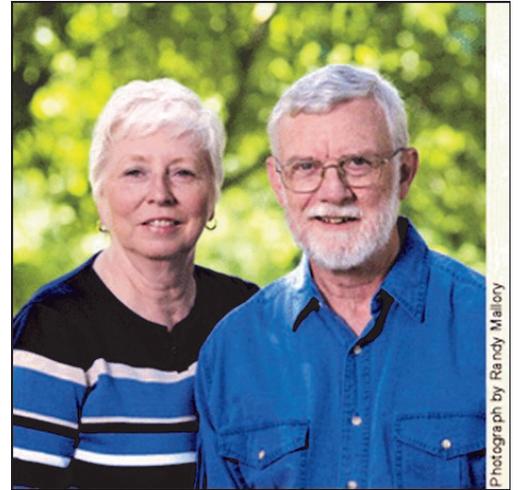
On July 17, Walt and Isabel Davis, fellow Master Naturalists, will present to our group a program based on their book, *Exploring the Edges of Texas*. It will be an account of their 4,000 mile long, three century deep journey around the Lone Star State.

The border of Texas, longer than the Amazon River, winds through ten distinct ecological zones as it outlines one of the most familiar shapes in geography. Driving its every twist and turn would be like driving from Miami to Los Angeles by way of New York.

In 1955, Frank X. Tolbert, well-known columnist for the Dallas Morning News, accompanied by his nine-year-old son, left on a trip to circumnavigate Texas. He sent back dispatches to the newspaper that were eagerly awaited by his readers, including a thirteen-year-old Walt Davis. Fifty years later, Walt and his wife Isabel have replicated Tolbert’s exploration of the boundaries of Texas.

Each of the sixteen chapters opens with an original drawing by Walt and represents a segment of the Texas border where the authors selected a special place—a national park, a stretch of river, a mountain range, or an archeological site. Using a firsthand account of that place written by a previous visitor (artist, explorer, naturalist, or archeologist), they then identified a contemporary voice (biologist, rancher, river-runner, or paleontologist) to serve as a modern-day guide for their journey of rediscovery. This dual perspective allows the authors to attach personal stories to the places they visited, to connect the past with the present, and to compare Texas then with Texas now.

Whether retracing botanist Charles Wright’s 600-mile walk to El Paso in 1849 or paddling Houston’s Buffalo Bayou, where John James Audubon saw ivory-billed woodpeckers in 1837, or running the rapids of the Lower Canyons of the Rio Grande first mapped by Robert T. Hill in 1899, the Davises will pay homage to the passionate and determined people who wrote the natural history of Texas.



Photograph by Randy Mallory




Wash behind the ears . . . COMPANY'S COMING!
ARRIVING ON AUGUST 21, 2014!
MEMBERSHIP DRIVE GETS INTO FULL GEAR!



PROJECTS—
knowledge is application



Photo and article from Van Elliott

CLEAR CREEK NATURAL HERITAGE CENTER — ON STAGE 1



On June 24, 2014, **Jonathan Smith** and **Dorothy Thetford** led a plant ID class at Clear Creek. Jonathan did the organizing for a sign project that he is working on; and Dorothy shared her knowledge of wildflowers and some grasses with us. It was a great adventure, and we learned much. Thirty-six plants were viewed and discussed during the two-hour tour.

Pictured left to right are:

Veronica Ruangskul; behind Veronica is Nadine Beall, Shirley Holland, Angelica [a friend of Jonathan's who is prospective trainee], Dorothy Thetford and Jonathan Smith. My apologies for not getting Nadine Beall in the picture.



from Van Elliott

Day one —

PLANNING MEETING FOR ESTABLISHING NATURAL HABITATS PROJECT AT GOOD SAMARITAN VILLAGE — ON STAGE 2

There were six Master Naturalists in attendance on July 2: **Betty Mullenweg, Marilyn Blanton, Fritz Poppe, Jan Deatherage, Judi and Van Elliott. Dorothy Thetford** had agreed to participate but had an emergency arise and was unable to attend.

There were eight residents, two facility managers and one donor from Good Samaritan Society—Denton Village.

It was agreed **Elm Fork Chapter** could serve as advisors to help plan and acquire correct plants to establish natural habitats for wildlife, aesthetics and personal enjoyment for the residents of that campus. The donor will be giving \$500.00 toward plant purchases.

Betty is serving as the Coordinator for the advisory team made up of Marilyn, Fritz and, possibly, Dorothy Thetford. Betty, Marilyn and Fritz participated in a walk/ride through the Village on July 3 to identify interest areas and mark them on a campus map. After the viewing session, a plant list will be generated and suggested places to purchase the plants will be provided by the team.



*Good-Sam's most colorful resident
—w. odum*