

## The Gentler Side of Birds of Prey

Cooper's hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*)



*Photos and article from Dorothy Thetford*

On July 12, two mostly white feathered baby Cooper's hawks dropped from a 30 foot nest in our side yard. They waddled and took their first steps from the uneven grass to the concrete driveway. With a little bit of practice, they gained their balance and walked around inspecting every leaf and twig. Their next venture was a feeble lift up to top of neighbor's fence, and then back to concrete. After accomplishing that challenge, they moved to the security of our fenced back yard and continued practicing.

The following day they were perched on tree branches alongside driveway and feebly hopped among branches while screeching for food. From then on, they practiced balancing and screaming for parents to bring food with voices and volume that could be heard throughout the neighborhood.

Eventually the screeching sounds moved to neighbors' trees, and by 3rd week, their screeching could be heard from neighborhood trees farther down the street. As the screeching sound diminished, we randomly spotted each hawk swooping from tree top down into open space and then lifting up into another tree. We concluded that they were mature enough to begin searching for their own food and began traveling independently in different directions even though they temporarily returned to their homestead trees or the back alley utility poles (while learning to spot their prey from height).

Yes, after 4 weeks, our educational entertainment ended. We can only assume that each selected and adopted his own territory for survival even though we honestly admit that we miss the loud screeching conversations among the treetops.



## Another Look at a Gentler Side of a Bird of Prey (Until You Go Behind the Scenes)



*Photos and the following fun tale comes from Susan Pohlen*

“ **T**his Barred Owl stayed in the backyard for over an hour and a half. We had to leave the house, so I don't know how long it actually stayed. During the hour and a half that I was home I took a lot of photos.

“ **I**nitially the owl seemed intently focused on my resin bunny. It looks very realistic and I'm sure the owl was just waiting for it to move. The song birds went about their business going to and from the feeders, a couple of hummingbirds buzzed the owl, and a squirrel actually climbed up the tree to within a few feet of the owl. When the owl looked over at the squirrel, it just scampered along a branch and hopped to the next tree.



“ **A**pparently this owl didn't have any interest in small birds or squirrels.”

.....

However, Susan followed up with this Youtube link that may explain the owl's patience and why the fish in her pond have been “freaking out”!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QhXm6WAjyEg>



**Update on the Green Lynx spider (*Pecucetia viridans*) comes from Susan Pohlen:**

“Remember the green spider that was on the ladder ...? Well apparently it crawled onto the car, unbeknownst to me. Our daughter, Hilary called ... to let me know she was unexpectedly available for lunch or shopping, so I drive out to meet her in Addison. From our house that’s about a 40 minute drive, I think. I was driving 70-80 mph on the tollway at times, but when I arrived in Addison, Hilary found the spider sitting by her door handle. I was amazed. Hilary brought down an empty pasta box from her place and I held the spider captive until I could return home yesterday.”

(Editor note: Hmm...lunch or shopping. What’s for lunch said the spider to the fly, perhaps?)



It’s time! Registration is **NOW OPEN** for the Texas Master Naturalist 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting!

Registration Open - <http://txmn.org/2016-annual-meeting/>



Rain lily—Susan Pohlen

CORRECTION—left is Rain lily, right is Western iron weed (your editor switched the labels on the photos)



Bumble Bees on Western iron weed (*Vernonia baldwinii*)—Susan Pohlen

---

## Friends of Coppel Nature Park Guest Lecture Series

### Tree Identification

Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, 10am-12pm

Presented by Courtney Blevins, CF, CA

Fort Worth Regional Forester, Texas A&M Forest Service

[www.ctufc.org](http://www.ctufc.org)

Additionally, the FCNP Guest Lecture Series has been approved for advanced training credits for any North Texas Master Naturalist. The Texas Master Naturalist(TM) volunteer program is coordinated by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and supported by a variety of local organizations. Volunteers receive 40 hours of in-depth training in wildlife and natural resource management customized to focus on local ecosystems. In return, volunteers provide at least 40 hours of service in the form of community education and demonstration projects, while pursuing a minimum of 8 hours of advanced training in areas of special interest.

The Biodiversity Education Center at Coppel Nature Park is a "green" constructed building with more than 5,800 square feet under roof. The Center receives power from 96 solar panels and includes a cistern that captures 9,400 gallons of rain water. Landscaping around the center is being designed to feature Texas native and adaptive plants while reducing water consumption and providing a habitat for wildlife such as butterflies, hummingbirds, birds, and bees.

The Biodiversity Education Center is only open to the public during center program offerings.

The Biodiversity Education Center (BEC) at the Coppel Nature Park is situated on 66 acres of nature preserve within Wagon Wheel Park. The vision for the Center is to promote and provide hands-on environmental education. Its purpose is to facilitate adult and youth education at all levels—from academic to professional to hobby. Participants of the education programs, for both school and the community, observe and learn about local flora, fauna, and environmental sustainability issues, as well as develop a deeper connection to their environment through nature.

---

From Becky Bartoni—for more information see:  
<http://www.coppelltx.gov/bec>