

Naturalist News



Vol. 19 Issue 6

June 2018

Publication from Texas Master Naturalist, Elm Fork Chapter



Jonathan Reynolds—Redwing Blackbird

On the web: www.txmn.org/elmfork

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/



Naturalist News



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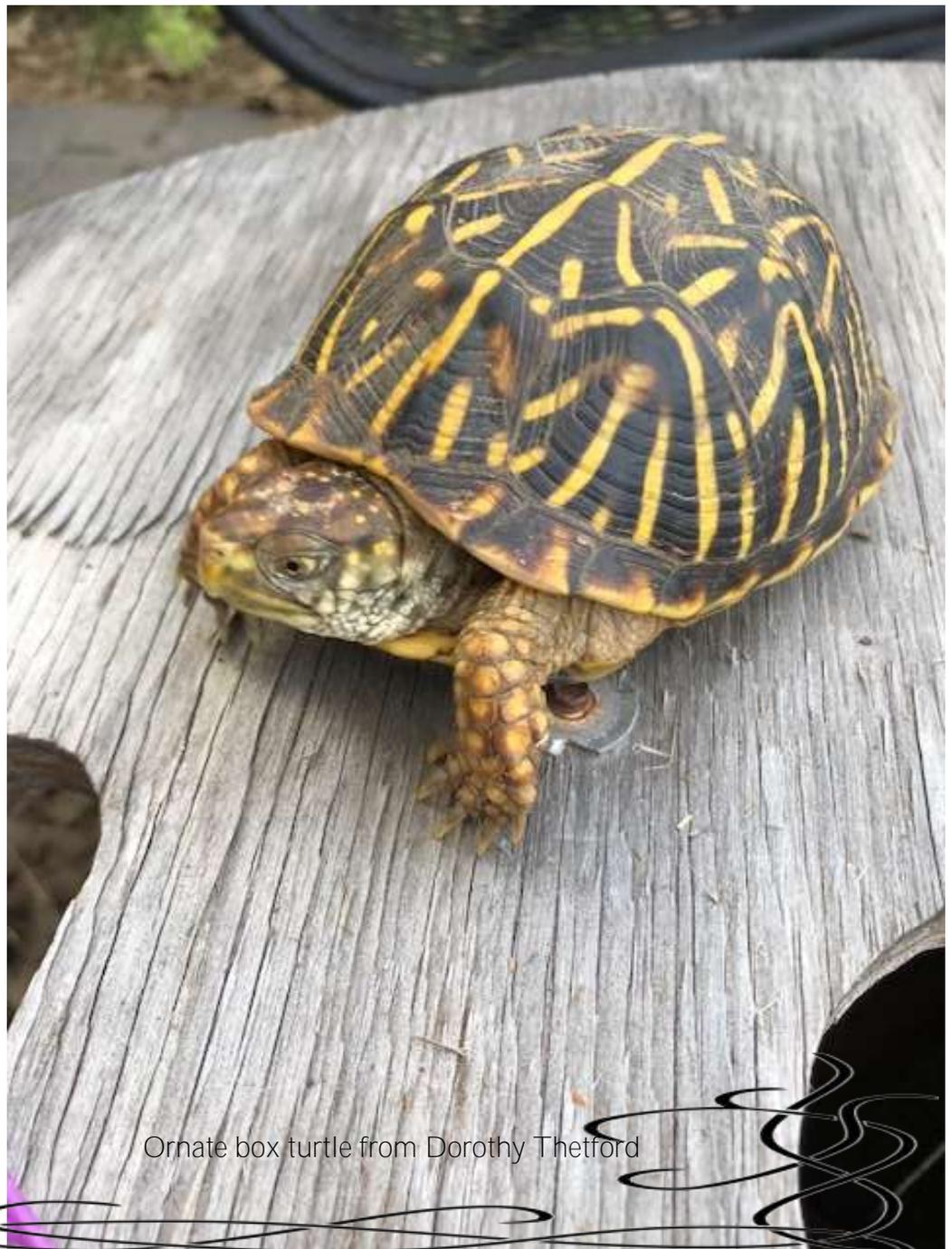
June 2018

Publication from Texas Master Naturalist, Elm Fork Chapter

- Chapter talents for June meeting
- Who is singing outside my window?
- More beautiful pictures in this issue
- Report from VMS team
- Remember to thank a contributor! We need them.

Inside this issue:

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Ornate box turtle from Dorothy Thetford

May Meeting recap

Initial Certifications:

John Carpenter 2017; Phyllis Minton 2017

Recertifications:

Susie Bailey 2016; Valerie Beardsley 2011; Toni Benjamin 2015; Sherrill Campbell 2005; William Coleman 2013; Cheryl Ellis 2012; Dave Ford 2001; Janice Goetz 2016; Judy Guthrie 2005; Theresa Page 2005; Karen Peden 2017; Susan Pohlen 2007; CJ Solberg 2005; Elise Spain 2017;

Denise Thompson 2015; Kathy Webb 2017; Brenda Wellenreither 2014; Francine Witte 2017; Betty Zajac 2003



Milestone:

250 hrs Susan Yost 2017



What's Next?

From Rita Lokie



CJ

Special Treat for Regular Monthly Meeting on June 21, 2018

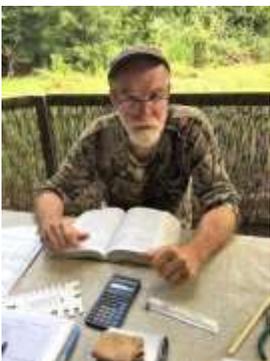
We have a trio of speakers in June! **CJ Solberg**, class of 2005, **Larry Brennan**, class of 2012, and **Ivy Doak**, class of 2013, will speak on Birdbanding at LLELA.

The presentation will include the following: Birdbanding is an important tool that researchers employ to further the understanding of bird populations and behavior, including dispersal and migration, social structure, life-span, survival rate, and reproductive success. Banding is also an instrument used to provide direct feedback on various results of



Ivy

habitat management. Analysis of banding data can play major role in monitoring the status of species of concern and threatened or endangered species. EFCTMN banders participate in several different projects at LLELA.



Larry



Projects around the community



Elise asked that this “thank you” be a part of her article in last month’s newsletter but there was no room. So, belated but gladly included here:

From Elise Spain and class of 2018

Thank you to everyone who helped. Mindy Anderson, MN 2015; Susie Bailey, MN 2016; Nadine Beall, MN 2013; Toni Benjamin, MN 2015; Shannon Bushong, MN 2017; Sherrill Campbell, MN 2005; John Carpenter, MN 2017; Bill Coleman, MN 2013; Maggie Dodd, MN 2013; Jane Duke, MN 2009; Cheryl Ellis, MN 2012; Tammie Gurley, MG 2014; Deborah Holyfield, MN 2017; Claire Kamego, MN 2012; Cynthia Keller, MN 2017; Cheryl Kesterson, MN 2005; Diane Kohlhase, MN 2008; Cindy Kraus, MG 2017; Alice Mankoff, MN 2016; Jean Mason, MN 2017; Sharon McAuley, MN 2016; Robert McLaughlin, MN 2017; Sharon Miggins, MN 2017; Phyllis Minton, MN 2017; Laurel Oyarce, MN 2017; Karen Peden, MN 2017; Susan Pohlen, MN 2007; Andy Shelton, MN 2017; Elise Spain, MN 2017; Steve Spurgin, MG 2017; Carolyn Trivette, MN 2017; Nancy Waldo, MN 2014; Kathy Webb, MN 2017; Kathryn Wells, MN 2017; John Williams, MN 2016; Fran Witte, MN 2017; Kim Wooten, MN 2017; Allen York, MN 2017

Very special thanks to the dream team who created the stations for this project and for the many hours (days!) they gave to make it such a success: **Toni Benjamin** – Pocket Prairie Station, **Shannon Bushong** – Prairie Art Station, **Claire Kamego** – Pelts and Tracks Station, **Robert McLaughlin** – Amazing Owl Station, **Phyllis Minton** – Plants and Animals Station, **Fran Witte** – Pecan Tree Station, and **Carolyn Trivette** – Volunteer Coordinator.



TOH Heritage workday has been moved from the 14th to a large parent workday on Saturday **June 23 at 8:00 a.m.** The school is asking for Master Naturalist volunteers to be there to mentor and supervise the PTA parent volunteers. We need a good turnout.

Janet Gershenfeld
9727549342



Our Energizer Bunny, Mary Morrow, will be your Naturalist News editor for the July issue. Please make sure she receives your contributions. However, I will be glad to forward anything I receive. Thanks all. wanda odum, editor NN



FIELD NOTES IN FOCUS



Pink Prickly Poppy—from the gallery of Harriett Powell

*Field Notes, so named by former member Alex Lieban, is a place
for photographers to showcase photos of flora and fauna*

JIMINY CRICKET

BY

Bob James

One of the great classic books for children is Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi. The book was written in 1883 when Collodi lived near Lucca, Italy. The story is about a woodcarver Geppetto who carves a wooden puppet. The puppet dreams of becoming a real boy, runs away from Geppetto and goes on a great adventure. The puppet, Pinocchio, lies a lot and gets into a lot of trouble. One character in the story is a cricket that becomes Pinocchio's conscience. Jiminy Cricket is, perhaps, one of the redeeming characters in the story.



Cricket box

My mother read Pinocchio to me when I was a youngster and I loved Jiminy Cricket. In the summer my family would sit out in the yard and I could hear the crickets chirping and as summer came to an end the crickets would gather under the streetlights. Usually, there would be eight or ten cats feasting on them. Since then, crickets have been one of my favorite insects and I have kept several in a cricket cage (see photo). Those crickets that survived the experience were finally released. In fact, you can buy crickets on the Internet to keep as pets.

World wide, there are over 900 different species and subspecies of crickets. In the United States there are 100 different species. These insects live between 55 degrees north latitude and 55 degrees south latitude with most living in tropical rainforests. The most common cricket in north Texas is the Field Cricket (*Gryllus pennsylvanicus*). They are related to grasshoppers but do not fly. These insects

are either black or dark brown in color. They show up in the spring, chirp and mate all summer and die during the cold weather. Females lay their eggs in the soil and the eggs hatch when the soil heats up. They emerge as nymphs and as they grow they molt many times until they are adults. These insects are nocturnal and the males chirp attracting the females. The chirping sound is the result of their rubbing one wing with a 'scraper' over a 'file' on the other wing (see the attached diagram). If you count the number of chirps in a 15 second period and add 40 it is a pretty accurate estimate of the Fahrenheit temperature. Counting the number of chirps in an 8 second period and adding 5 is an estimate of Celsius temperature. This relationship was derived by the American physicist Amos Dolbear in 1897 and is called Dolbear's Law. The cricket has an ear on the inside of each front leg so it can hear the others chirping and find a mate.

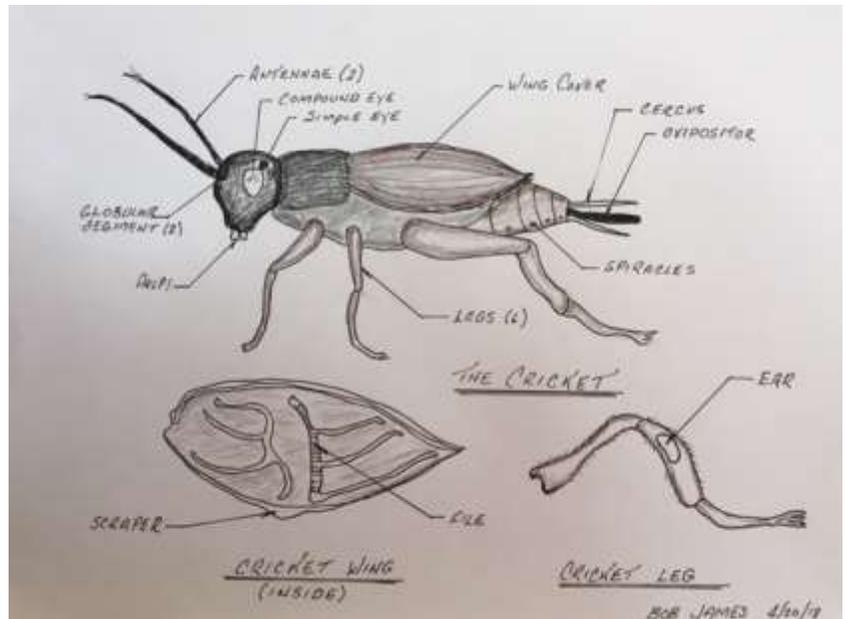


Diagram of the cricket

In the Orient crickets are considered good luck to have in the house and many keep crickets in cricket cages. Crickets are also considered a delicacy when deep fried in peanut oil and eaten with a mild soy sauce. I have yet to try them fried, however, I did eat a live cricket at the Lone Star Drive Inn when I was a senseless teenager in Fort Worth. It was rather crunchy and disgusted my girlfriend who promptly dropped me.

We don't see as many crickets today as in the past, mainly due to the use of pesticides. Crickets try to invade the house when the weather starts to turn cold and if they succeed they can disturb your sleep unless you are use to the chirping. Try to think of these harmless creatures as a good luck sign or as a possible delicacy served with a mild soy sauce.

Splinter

The voice of the last cricket
across the first frost
is one kind of good-by.
It is so thin a splinter of singing.

—*Carl Sandburg*



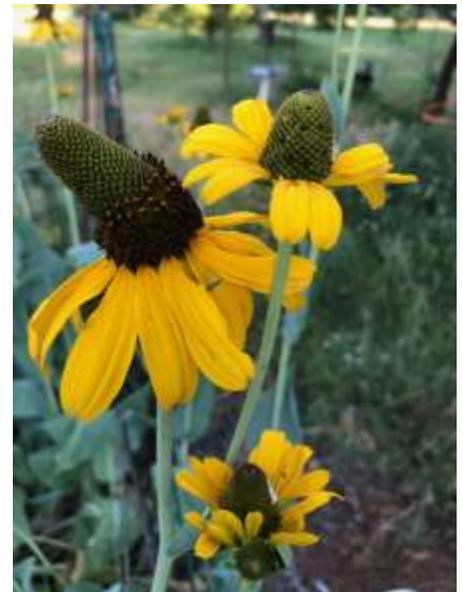
“Come and take it if you dare”!

I took this down the street from my house. This hawk was NOT leaving his dinner!! I was in my car, and pulled over to look at him; I was probably about 8-10 feet away and he didn't budge. Amazing! *Jean Mason*

Article and photos from Dorothy Thetford,
class 2001

GIANT CONEFLOWER (*Rudbeckia maxima*)
Named for Swedish botanist Olaus Johannis Rudbeck (1630-1702)

Reigning above all other native wildflowers, this coneflower is regal in its majestic height. With adequate soil and moisture, this native coneflower can reach 9 feet in height; in poor conditions, it can max out at 3 to 4 feet. The most adequate conditions tend to be east of our north central Texas location, so the ditches are lavishly covered with these gorgeous yellow flowers in late May to June, and then get mowed by TxDOT in July. However, as a perennial, the colonies of beauty reappear again the following year.



Moonlight on the prairie with giant
coneflowers keeping sentry!

Listen to the Mockingbird

Sue Yost, class of 2017

*Do you hear it?
That melodious song...
in the morning?
In the afternoon?
And even in the middle of the night?
Over and over, then wait, it switches tunes,
Over and over, then wait,
Is that a car alarm?
A whistle?
A "beep beep beep" of a truck backing up?
No, what you have just experienced the "many-
tongued mimic" Northern Mockingbird!*

M

ockingbirds are in the mimi-
dae family that are remarka-
ble vocalist sometimes called the mimic thrush-
es, which also includes Catbirds and Brown
Thrashers.



Ken Agee

In November, 1926 the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs nominated the Northern Mockingbird as the state bird of Texas. In January, 1927 the legislature adopted the resolution unanimously noting that the Mockingbird "is found in all parts of the state, in winter and summer, in the city and in the country, on the prairie and in the woods and hills, and is a singer of distinctive type, a fighter for protection of his home, falling if need be, in its defense, like any true Texan." It is also the state bird of Florida, Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi.

Mockingbirds form long-term pair bonds. The male starts building the cup-like nest with twigs and the female lines it with soft grasses and plant fibers. She will lay 3-5 bluish green [brown spotted] eggs. She incubates them for about 12 days. After both parents feed the nestlings, they then fledge in about 12 days. Mockingbirds on average nest 2 times a season but have been known to have upwards of 3 or 4 a season. Mockingbirds are fierce and aggressive when defending their nests and will not hesitate to attack even the largest predator {humans!}.

Northern Mockingbirds are fruitivores and insectivores. They will valiantly defend "their" Possumhaw or Yau-pon Holly tree against the hoards of wintering Cedar Waxwings! They will sometimes come to backyard feeders stocked with live mealworms or apple halves, grapes and raisins.

As Carly Simons sings....
Everybody have you heard?
He's gonna buy me a mockingbird
And if that mockingbird won't sing
He's gonna buy me a diamond ring

Sorry Carly, no such luck for a Mockingbird not singing!

Diamond Petal Primrose

Article and photos from Marilyn Blanton

The Diamond Petal Primrose, *Oenothera rhombipetala*, is a native biennial or winter annual that has to overwinter to bloom. It is sometimes called Four Point Primrose. It's four wide petaled yellow flowers are 2 - 3 inches across. They bloom on spikes mainly in June although their bloom time is sometimes extended through the summer depending on conditions. They grow in sandy or loamy well drained soils. They reseed freely but need bare areas where there is not competition. They do not transplant well because they have a long tap-root. They attract flying insects and are especially valuable to bees. The Diamond Petal Primrose is a very showy plant that does well in difficult areas with dry sandy soil.



Here's a large patch of flowers and a close up of a single bloom with a flower moth (Genus Schinia).





Columbine *Aquilegia* —Shari Brand

Indian blanket/Blanketflower
(*Gaillardia pulchella*)—Dorothy Thetford



Beep! Beep! Roadrunner—Dorothy Thetford



Texas thistle
(*Cirsium texanum*)—Dorothy Thetford



En garde—Jonathan Reynolds



Regal Mr Mallard—Jonathan Reynolds



Greetings from the 2018 VMS Team!



We are busy approving hours and wanted to pass along a few tips to make your VMS experience go smoothly. If you have any questions on logging hours please contact the VMS Team at efctmn.vms@gmail.com

VMS TIPS

CHAPTER MEETINGS

BUSINESS MEETING: Counts as **Service**, log under **Chapter Administrative Work**,

Enter Date/Hour – 1*,

Select 'Chapter Meeting' in the drop-down box under Chapter Administration in the middle of the page,

Description of Service – 'attended Chapter meeting',

Click 'OK'.

HOSPITALITY: Counts as **Service**, log under **Chapter Administrative Work**,

Enter Date/Hour– time spent preparing, set-up, take-down,

Select 'Hospitality' in the drop-down box under Chapter Administration in the middle of the page,

Description of Service – made 6 dozen brownies, ate 3 dozen, took remainder to meeting.

PRESENTATION: Counts as **Advanced Training**, log under **AT: Chapter Meeting**,

Enter Date/Hour – 1*,

Description of AT – 'Effects of Wind Power' on Bats and Birds,

Click 'OK'.

* Any change to the amount of time will be announced by the Chapter President at the end of each meeting.

Who is approving your VMS hours:

If your last name begins with A – L, Kevin Frerich, kevrer@verizon.net. If your last name begins with M – Z, Ray Kruetzfeld, rekdtx@verizon.net. Mary and Denise will back-up Kevin and Ray if needed.

VMS STATS MAY YTD:

Service Hours: 11,539

Advanced Training Hours: 1,488

140 of 169 active members have hours logged.

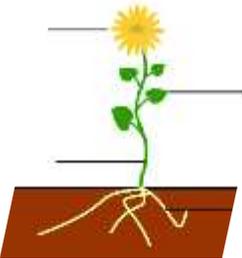
56 members have Re-Certified in 2018.

Of Interest

From Becky Bertoni

AT APPROVED

Texas Discovery Gardens Native Plants Symposium



Saturday, July 14

A one day series of talks featuring regional plant specialists! Celebrate the wealth of plant diversity in the Lone Star State!

\$50 for nonmembers

<https://txdg.org/workshops/native-plants-symposium>



AT APPROVED



Butterfly Gardening

June 21 at 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

MCL Grand, 100 N. Charles Street, Lewisville, TX 75057

<http://keeplewisvillebeautiful.org/garden-secrets/6-21-18-butterfly-gardening-gs-class/>



AT APPROVED

Webinar – Have you Checked your Trees Lately?

June 26 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

Significant benefits to our homes and communities, but they may also become liabilities when they fall or break apart, causing property damage, personal injuries, and power outages. Learn how to inspect trees by identifying 7 of the most common structural tree defects that often result in failures.

You do not need to pre-register for this webinar. Space is not limited; however, plan to join the webinar no more than 15 minutes early so that you can register and successfully join the presentation interface. Approximately 15 minutes before this webinar's start time, the "Join" button will be activated at this site: <http://www.conservationwebinars.net/webinars/have-you-checked-your-trees-lately-a-routine-check-up-of-trees-saves-lives-and-property>



Once the "Join" button is available, you may click the join button and begin the registration process.



MONTHLY PLANNING MEETING AND ADVANCED TRAINING

DATE: THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 2018

TIME: 9:30 A.M.—11:30 A.M.

**LOCATION: JOSEPH A. CARROLL BUILDING
401 W. HICKORY ST., DENTON, ROOM 115**

**BUSINESS MEETING AT 9:30-10:30 A.M.
FOLLOWED BY ADVANCED TRAINING**

**YOU ARE
INVITED!**

The SWAt Team extends this personal invitation to you to join us at our upcoming meeting. Come learn more about us and how you might fit in! Our program is ongoing throughout the year and we are always in need of additional volunteers.

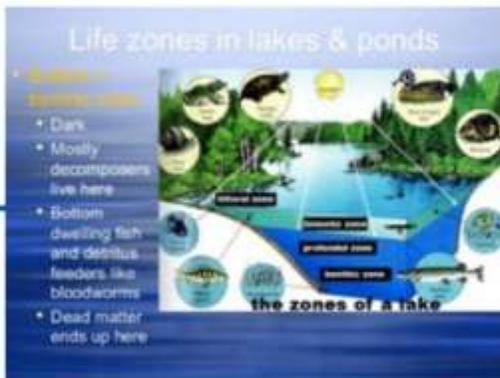
For more information, please contact Marion Arndt at science-withattitude@gmail.com or visit our webpage: dcmga.com/all-about-dcmga/swat-science-with-attitude-educational-outreach/

▶ Training

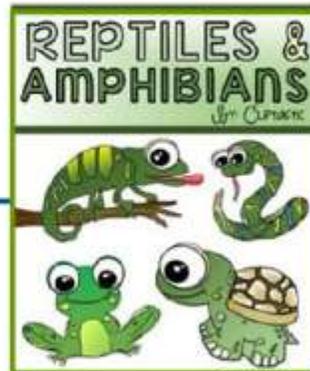
This month's Advanced Training will focus on two popular Master Naturalist kits used in the classroom:

Aquatic Ecosystems & Benthos Education* and *Amphibians & Reptiles

PRESENTED BY THERESA PAGE (MASTER NATURALIST—CLASS OF 2005)



Objective: To help students understand the importance of managing our water resources and have a better understanding of the anatomy of benthic organisms.



Objective: To help students have a better understanding of the anatomy, physiology, behavior and habitat for a specific class of animals. A variety of preserved amphibians, turtles and snakes are available for display.

Trinity River Audubon Center

On June 7, fourteen Elm Fork members braved the heat, humidity and Dallas traffic to visit the Trinity River Audubon Center.

The center is only 10 miles from downtown Dallas. It is on 130 acres of land along the Trinity River that was an illegal dumping site, that has been reclaimed back to native grasses and wild flowers. The building at the center was built to be ecofriendly. Recycled milk jugs and blue jeans were used to make the leaf patterned ceiling and walls. The floor to ceiling windows around the Visitor's Center are slanted inward to reduce bird strikes.

The members were led on a guided hike through the area surrounding the Visitor's Center, much of the hike included views of the Trinity River, through Cross Timbers and Blackland Prairie. Our tour guide thought we were much better behaved than the Third Grade students that normally accompany him on hikes. Just a few members had a tendency to wander and not keep up with the rest of the group. We had many opportunities to observe wildlife, wildflowers and will return during bird migration in the fall.



The Audubon Gang!

Adelaide shows off EFC member, Val Beardsley's notecards that are on sale at the Gift Shop. There was only one left!



White-eyed Vireo's nest!

Article submitted by Brenda Wellenreiter and Marv Morrow. Photo by Marv Morrow.

Becky Bertoni Receives Keep Texas Beautiful Award

Keep Texas Beautiful presented Becky Bertoni with the O.P. Schnabel Senior Citizen Award for demonstrating positive, dynamic, selfless, public-spirited leadership in enhancing the Texas environment during her lifetime. Nominated by Marilyn Lawson of Keep Flower Mound Beautiful, Becky was recognized at the June 13th Keep Texas Beautiful Conference Awards Luncheon in Georgetown, TX for her work at Green Acres.

PHOTO CAPTION:
Presenting Becky Bertoni (center) with the O.P. Schnabel Senior Citizen Award are Keep Flower Mound Beautiful President Marilyn Lawson (left) and Keep Texas Beautiful Executive Director Suzanne Kho (right).

(Photo courtesy of Kathryn Wells)



“Sneaking” Pete—w odum



Seeking approval for an AT opportunity? Send request to: elmforkat@gmail.com



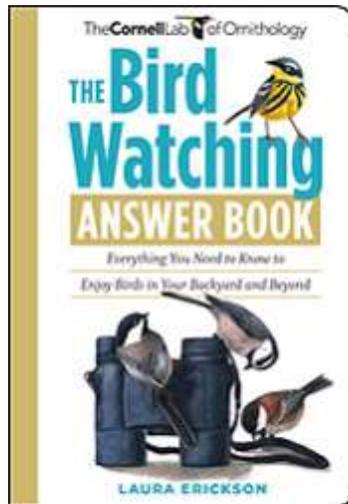
Into the Reading Nook



From Betty Zajec:

The Bird Watching Answer Book

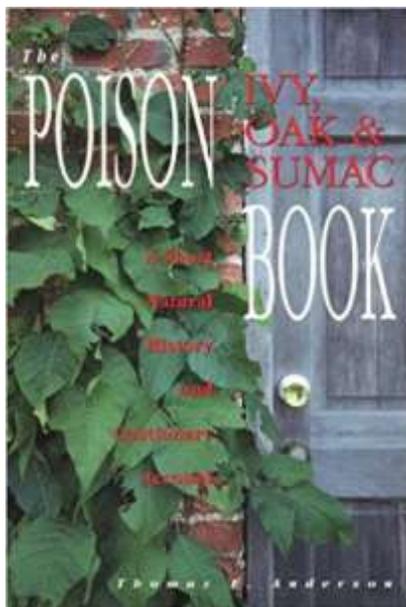
By Laura Erickson



....The end product is *The Bird Watching Answer Book*, a pocket-sized reference that reads like a casual conversation with your friendly neighborhood “bird lady.”

That’s because, sprinkled liberally throughout the text, readers will find quirky asides and amusing stories that make for great “Hey, did you know?” conversation starters. <http://www.birds.cornell.edu>

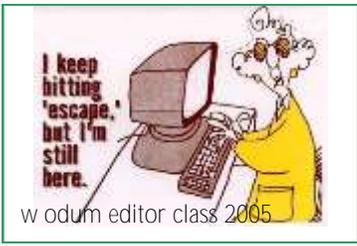
The Bird Watching Answer Book is available through [Amazon](#) and is published by [Storey Publishing](#)



The Poison Ivy, Oak and Sumac Book: A Short Natural History and Cautionary Account by Thomas E. Anderson

This is the first book with seasonal color photographs of all five North American Toxicodendron species: poison ivies, poison oaks, and poison sumac. It discusses more fully than any other the history, botany, pathology, and control of these troublesome shrubs. Full of often surprising information, it may also provide a rare chance to have some fun with them. [Amazon.com](#)

Thank you to all who helped this month



Rita Lokie class 2013



Dorothy Thetford class 2001



Betty Zajac class 2003

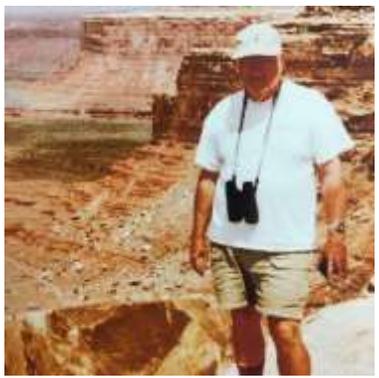
Jean Mason class 2017



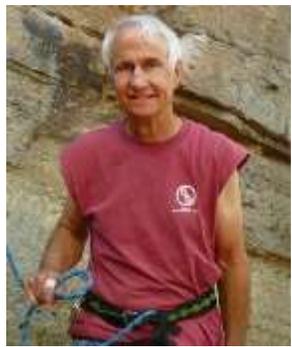
Becky Bertoni class 2015



Judi Elliott class 2009



Bob James transferred/refresher with 2017



Jonathan Reynolds class 2014



Harriett Powell class 2015



Marilyn Blanton class 1999

Shari Brand class 2012



Sue Yost class 2017



Kathryn Wells class 2017

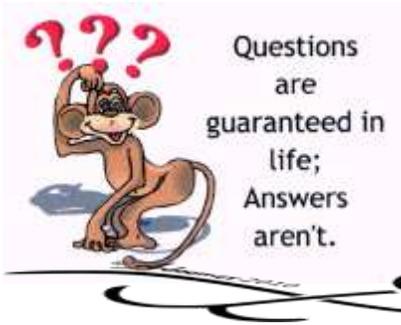


Elise Spain class 2017

Mary Morrow 2014



Mostly the Last Word



What is the universe made of?

Astronomers face an embarrassing conundrum: they don't know what 95% of the universe is made of. Atoms, which form everything we see around us, only account for a measly 5%. Over the past 80 years it has become clear that the substantial remainder is comprised of two shadowy entities – dark matter and dark energy. The former, first discovered in 1933, acts as an invisible glue, binding galaxies and galaxy clusters together. Unveiled in 1998, the latter is pushing the universe's expansion to ever greater speeds. Astronomers are closing in on the true identities of these unseen interlopers.

www.theguardian.com/science/2013/sep/01/20-big-questions-in-science



Google

*Thank
you*

TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS. Please remember, I will not be preparing the Naturalist News in July but if desired, I will forward anything you have to contribute to the guest editor, Mary Morrow.

Send your idea for "Mostly the Last Word" to wanda odum, Naturalist News editor



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”

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.”

*Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension
Joseph A. Carroll Building
401 W. Hickory Street
Denton, TX 76201—9026
940-349-2883*

We're on the web!
www.txmn.org/elmfork

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- Resource Room: President

Regular Monthly Chapter Meetings

Regularly, 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 is June 21, 2018
Birdbanding at LLELA—Larry Brennan, CJ Solberg, Ivy Doak

Meeting at: **Southwest Government Bldg,
6200 Canyon Falls Dr., Flower Mount, TX**

Board Meetings

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met June 14, 2018. Next monthly Board meeting is July 12, 2018.

Monthly Board meetings are open to members.