

Volume 20 Issue 2

Naturalist News



www.art.co

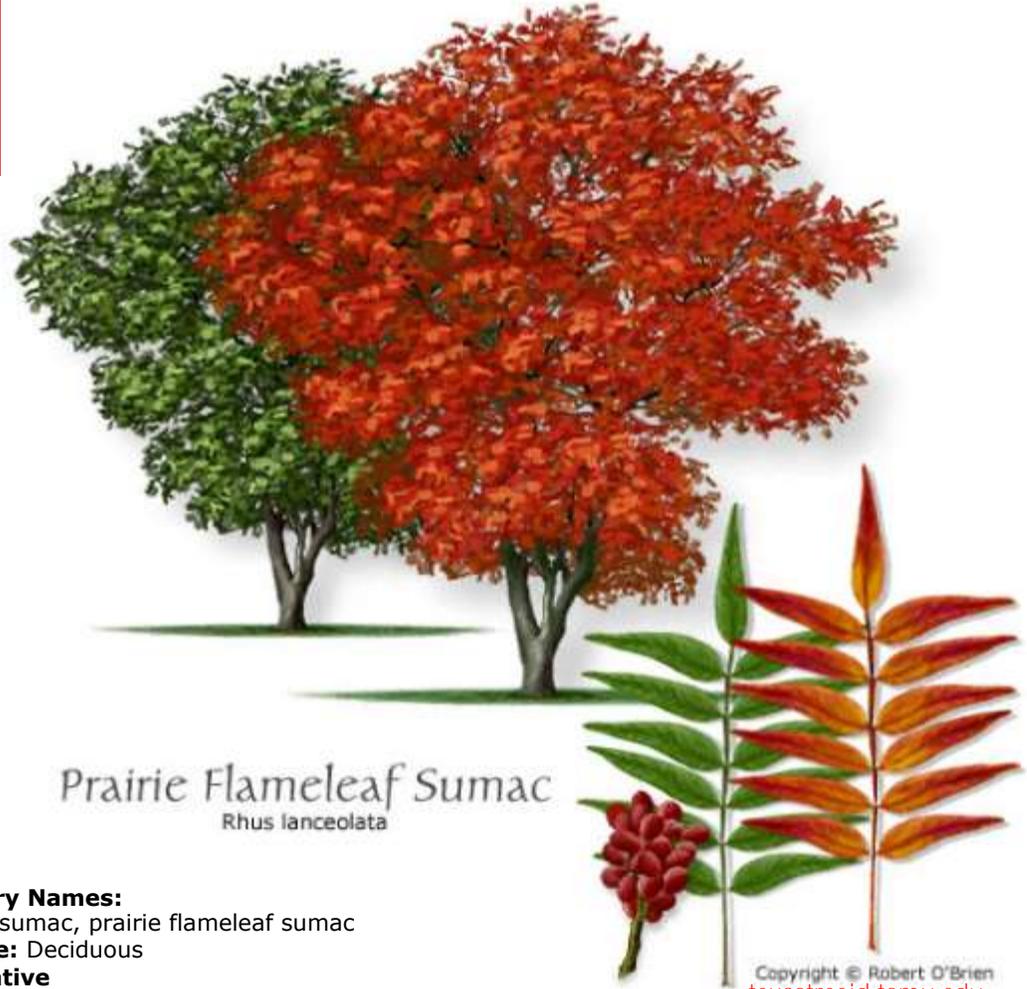
On Facebook: www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/

On the web: www.txmn.org/elmfork

Volume 20 Issue 2

Special Points of Interest

- Revisit the “friendly” snakes
- Opportunities to keep you involved
- Updates on 20th Anniversary



Prairie Flameleaf Sumac
Rhus lanceolata

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texastreeid.tamu.edu

Naturalist News

Secondary Names:
flameleaf sumac, prairie flameleaf sumac
Leaf Type: Deciduous
Texas Native

Tree Description:
 A shrub or small tree to 20 feet tall and one or more trunks to 8" in diameter, with irregular branching that forms a loose, rounded crown of shiny green foliage.

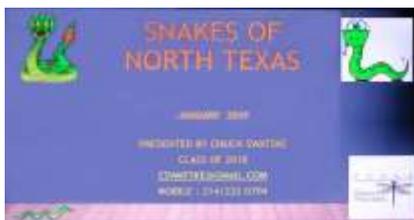
Range/Site Description:
 Disturbed sites, fencerows, and rocky limestone slopes in Central Texas, from the Balcones Escarpment north and west to the mountains of the Trans-Pecos.

texastreeid.tamu.edu

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January Meeting Recap

Program by Chuck Swatske
(2018) “Snakes of North Texas”



Awards

Initial Certifications, November 2018 & December 2018 (Initial Dragonfly):

Daniel Arenas-Richieri (2017), Jerry Betty (2018), Pat de Baca (2018), Larry Duncan (2018), Michele Rawleigh (2018), Steve Romaine (2018), Chuck Swatske (2018), and Russell Tyson (2018)

Recertifications, November 2018 & December 2018 (TMN Ocelot):

Jerry Betty (2018), Sheri Bratton (2015), Tonya Cauduro (2016), Sharon Clark (2014), Mike Danner (2014) Roy Davenport (2016), Pat de Baca (2018), Brent Farler (2016), Faith Fielder (2011), Mike Hagan (2010), Sue Hudiburgh (2018), Denver Kramer (2018), Sharon McAuley (2016), Carolyn Norgaard (2002), Cecily Pegues (2015), Fritz Poppe (2001), Steve Romaine (2018), Sharon Sahn (2016), Jonathan Smith (2013), Sue Stunich (2015), Suzanne Sweeney (2014), Chuck Thetford (2011), LeeAnn Weaver (2004), Norma Wilkerson (2011), Donna Wolfe (1998), and Diane Wetherbee (2000)

250 Hour Milestone:

Sheri Bratton (2015), Janice Goetz (2016), Karen Peden (2017), Carolyn Trivette (2017), Allen York (2017)

500 Hour Milestone:

Sarah Goodrich (2016), Robert James (2003), Jonathan Smith(2013)

2000 Hour Milestone:

Carolyn Norgaard (2002)

2500 Hour Milestone:

Susan Pohlen (2007)

3000 Hour Milestone:

Adelaide Bodnar (2007), Jan Deatherage (2011), Marian Kester (2007)

RECIPIENT STARS



All photos courtesy Denise Remfert

What's Next

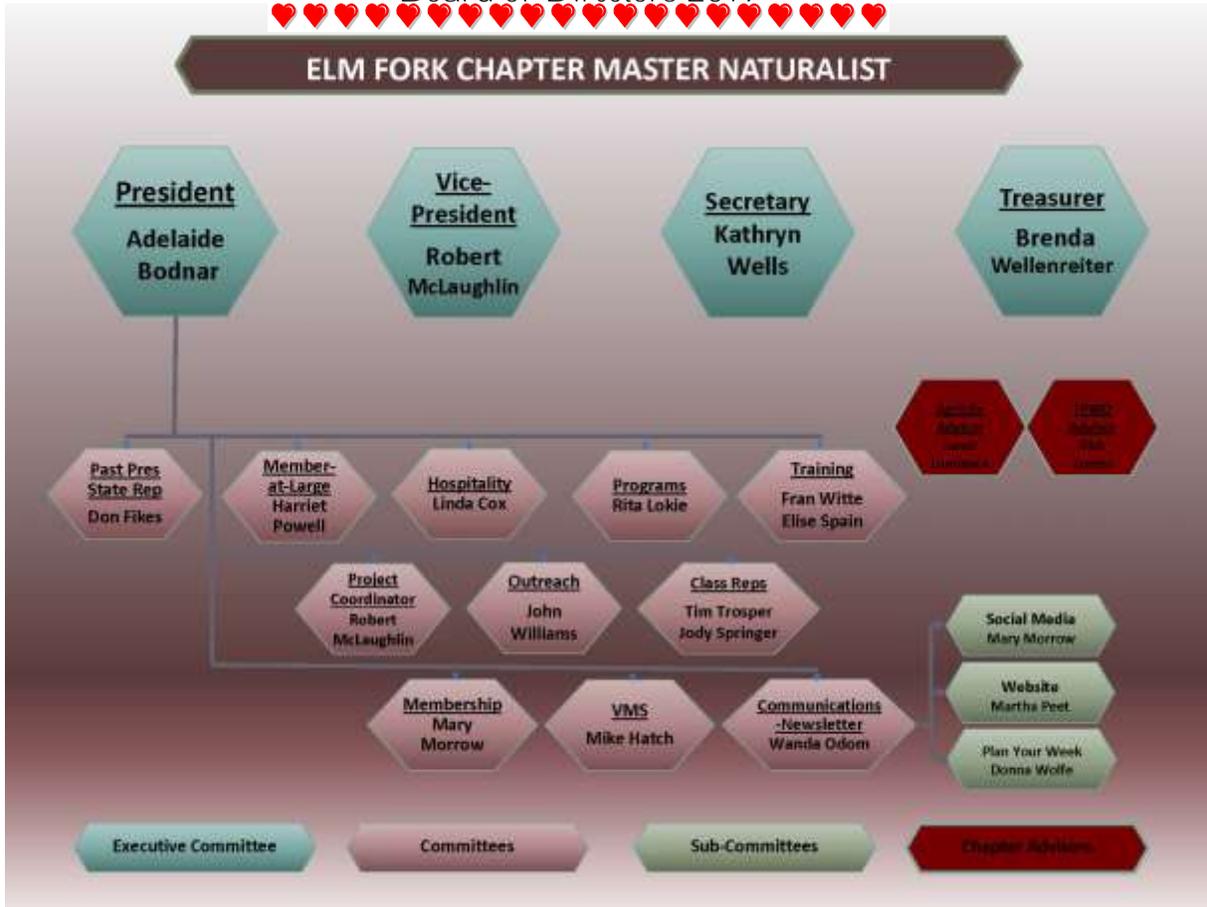


Invitation

To participate in the Annual Awards Event
 Place: Elections Building, 701 Kimberly Drive, Denton, TX 76208
 Date: February 21, 2019
 Time: 9:30 a.m.

Board of Directors 2019

ELM FORK CHAPTER MASTER NATURALIST



Projects in the Community

Announcement and photos from Marilyn Blanton, Project Manager



The Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition 2018 is now at UNT at the Elm Fork Education Center in the EE-SAT Building. The exhibit will be at UNT through February. All of the winning artwork is grouped by school and displayed. It will brighten your day! Don't miss this opportunity to see it!



Projects in the Community

DISD School Days at Clear Creek

From Sharon Betty

It was a great year for DISD School Days at Clear Creek thanks to Elise Spain, SWAt, AgriLife, 4H, and over 50 EFC master naturalists. With such success, we anticipate an exciting and busy spring. Second Graders will begin their field trips on April 1. We hope to add stations on birds, snakes, trees, and more. If you would like to join the planning meetings for the spring events, they will be held in Room 625 (507 for the first one) on 1/29, 2/12, 2/26, 3/12, and 3/26 at the Carroll Courts Building. We will also need volunteers for the activity stations during April and the first part of May. There will be training for these stations at the March 28 SWAt meeting. Sign-Up will be available beginning February 21 to volunteer at Clear Creek. If you have questions about any of these opportunities email Jerry Betty at jranger5050@yahoo.com or Sharon Betty Sharon.betty56@yahoo.com.



Clip art photo

TPWD FLY FISHING CERTIFICATION CLASS

Photos from Richard Johnson



Something to Watch For — From Mary Morrow



Elm Fork Chapter

EFCTMN DIRECTORY

JOHN COOPER - FOUNDER/ADVISOR

JEANNE ERICKSON - 1998

DONNA WOLFE - 1998

MARILYN BLANTON - 1999

KAREN MANGUM - 2000

DAVE ROWLEY - 2000

DIANE WETHERBEE - 2000

DAVE FORD - 2001

BETTY MULLENWEG - 2001

FRITZ POPPE - 2001

DOROTHY THETFORD - 2001

JAN HODSON - 2002

CAROLYN NORGAARD - 2002

Field Notes in Focus



Northern Cardinal — from the
Trees of Dorothy Thetford

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

Read and Learn—Features

In the Beginning

From Marilyn Blanton

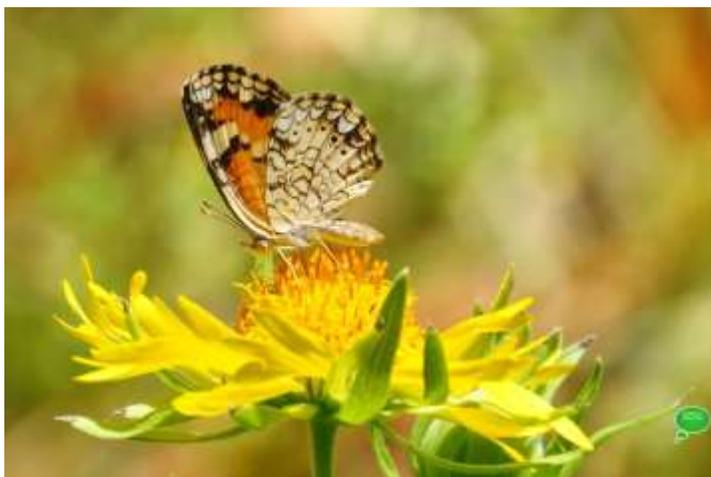
The Elm Fork Chapter began in 1999 when Denton County offered its first Master Naturalist class. I can't believe it's been 20 years! I was in that first class. My husband saw an ad in the Denton Record Chronicle about the Master Naturalist Program and thought it would be something I would like. I really didn't know what to expect. What was a Master Naturalist? I decided to apply for the class and find out. I wasn't retired then; so, I arranged to take one vacation day a week so I could attend the classes. I remember filling out the application and wondering if I knew enough to be a Master Naturalist.

I had loved nature since I was a child and I wanted to learn more about the natural world. I grew up playing outside and exploring. I chased butterflies during the day and caught fireflies, which I called "lightening bugs," at night. I climbed trees, picked wildflowers, carried around little horned toad lizards, known then as "horny toads," in shoe boxes, and tied bacon on strings to go fishing with my brother for crawfish, which we called "crawdads." I was fascinated with everything from seed pods to ladybugs. Still, I didn't know if I could really be a Master Naturalist. I've long since learned that the most important thing about being a Master Naturalist is being observant and wanting to learn. The program offers so many opportunities to learn and there is always something new.

I loved taking the classes and becoming a Master Naturalist and I've loved being one ever since. I've seen our chapter grow and get better every year.

In the beginning we were starting from scratch. John Cooper, the Denton County Extension Agent, and his assistant, Donna Wolfe, led the way. We had so much fun in that first class. One of the most fun experiences was our canoe trip. We launched our canoes on the back side of the Lake Ray Roberts Dam and went all the way down the Elm Fork of the Trinity River to the takeout at Hwy. 380. It was quite an adventure! I didn't tip over the canoe, some did, but I have to admit that my canoe partner and I bounced off one side of the creek bank and then the other. We even went part of the way facing backwards but we made it! I don't think a 10 mile canoe trip was ever planned again.

John Cooper



Pearl crescent—Marilyn Blanton

Read and Learn—Features

“In the Beginning” cont’d

The other volunteers in that first class were all enthusiastic and everyone hated to see the classes end. We started having monthly meetings but it was awhile before we got very organized. There wasn't an example to follow but we found our way. Each following year brought new volunteers and new ideas. It has been a pleasure to see how our chapter has grown. I've always enjoyed being with others that share my interest and I've made so many good friends all along the way.



Proud winner at Native Plant Art Exhibition

Three special friends from those early days are gone now but I would like to pay **tribute** to them. They were **Shirley Lusk, Elizabeth McMath and Buddy Cole**. I already knew Shirley and Elizabeth through the Native Plant Society of Texas and I met Buddy as a Master Naturalist. Shirley and Elizabeth had taken the class in 1998 before it was offered in Denton County. All three were an inspiration to me. One of the early projects that we worked on together was benthic monitoring. We would meet at a little stream north of town, wade in, collect our samples and then take them to the lab at UNT to identify using the microscopes. Although Shirley's first love was native plants, she was very good at identifying the tiny invertebrates with a microscope.

My very first project was a native plant seed collection. I collected seeds and seed pods, identified them and set up displays. My next project was working on Cross Timbers Park. The project was started by Brenda Phillips but Joan Wells and I became the project managers when she moved out of state. It was an exciting experience working with the City of Denton, other organizations and other Master Naturalists to develop the park and see it become a reality. All of the projects I've been involved with have been rewarding and I'm grateful for all the opportunities I've had over the years as a Master Naturalist and to help make a difference in our community. I look forward to participating in new adventures as a Master Naturalist, spending time with my friends and making new ones as we all learn more about our natural world, share what we learn and continue our journey.



Photo aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu

Texas redbud, (*Cercis canadensis* var. **texensis**), grows as a **deciduous** small tree or multi-trunk **shrub** achieving a height of about 15-20 feet. The Texas redbud differs from the Eastern redbud in that the leaves are rounder, thicker, and very glossy.



'Oklahoma' Redbud is a **deciduous tree**, native to southwestern North America including Texas, which reaches 30 to 40 feet in height with a 15 to 20-foot width, and grows slowly into a rounded or vase shape. (Scientific name: *Cercis reniformis* 'Oklahoma')

—Photo by Jonathan Reynolds in Oklahoma

Read and Learn—Features

Make me a List!

Sue Yost Class of 2017

Are you a “lister”. Some are and some aren’t. Lists have been around forever. Even Santa keeps a list of who’s naughty and who’s nice! As I get older I find myself making more and more lists. An everyday, every week “To do List.” Then there is another “To Do List” but not as important as the first “To Do” list, sort of a “when I get around to it” list. There is just something satisfying about crossing off that “LIST”. That line crossed thru that item gives me motivation to tackle the rest of “The List”! I have a list of everyone’s birthdays. I have a list for the grocery store but then I don’t always buy just the listed items! Same goes for the Christmas list of who wants what and what sizes do they all wear list.



In the world of birding you will find the most variety of “listers”. I only have 2 birding lists. One is a “Yard List” in which I write down every single bird species that has been in my yard, flown over my yard, flown past my yard, within eyesight of my yard and heard in or from my yard. That list sits at 104. No.104 was the American Woodcock that stayed all day long last winter. Best part was I got great photos and videos plus I got to count it on my Cornell Feeder Watch day! My second bird list is my “Life List”. That list has every bird I have ever seen or heard since I started to keep a list, about 30 years ago. I also write down in my field guide the date & location of listed bird. That list sits at 611.

The Scaly-Breasted Munia #611, now considered “countable” by the American Birding Association [<https://www.aba.org>] was added to my life list in June of 2018 in San Jose, California. As the number increases it gets harder and harder to add new ones to the “life list”. Ah, and then there are the near misses. “It was just here” or “You missed it by 30 minutes”..... I should keep such a list! My life list only includes birds I have seen in North America [including Canada]. I have trip lists of birds I have seen internationally like in Costa Rica and Europe but it’s not an official list for me. I couldn’t tell you how many are on that unofficial list.

Now, some birders I know get a little list crazy. Yard lists. Site lists. County lists. State lists. Life lists. Year lists. Big year lists [movies have been made and books have been written about THOSE crazy listers!] Dead birds along the road lists; yes, dead birds. Bird poop lists. Pelagic lists. 100 birds in 100 counties in one years time list. The LISTS go on and on.

Majority of birders use the American Birding Association a.k.a. ABA, which considers all North American birds north of Mexico, including regular breeding species, regular visitors, as well as casual and accidentally occurring species from other regions of the world as a guide. ABA checklists includes ABA-area breeding species, regular visitors, and casual and accidental species from other regions that are believed to have strayed here without direct human aid, and well-established introduced species that are now part of our avifauna. Species total: 1112. <http://listing.aba.org/aba-checklist/> I am half way there!

Then there are the “list chasers”. Those are the listers that travel sometimes hundreds and hundreds of miles just to get that rare bird checked off their list. I’ll admit, this I have done. Usually they are birds that are not where they are supposed to be and have been listed on the local rare bird alerts. Like the Snowy Owl in Rowlett or the Snow Bunting in Lewisville. {Both of which I first saw in Alaska BUT if I was keeping a state list...bam!} Right now there is a Mexican vagrant, the Rufous-backed Robin, I would love to see down in Uvalde....a mere 5.5 hours one way. Vagrants like to show up down in the Rio Grande Valley to which is like 10 hours one way!! Why does Texas have to be SO BIG?!

I’m old school and keep paper lists but with these new fangled computers and phones some people now use the internet to maintain their lists. There are programs such as eBird and iNaturalist that keep track of it all at the push of a button. You just have to input it. No thank you.

Now that we are 1/2 way through the first month of the new year, how many things on that resolution list have YOU crossed off? Hummm. Exactly. That is one list I DO NOT make! But I can cross off the line item TXMN newsletter article off my “To DO List”! BAM!

Happy Birding! And Happy Listing!



The Rest of the Story....

Sue YOST class of 2017

That life list of mine just went from 611 to 612. Yes. I did it. I told you I sometimes can be classified as a “chaser”. My birding friend Mike [from Blackland Prairie Chapter] and I got up and were on the road by 4 a.m. The drive was not 5.5 hours but more like 6.5 hours. Either way it was a long! When we finally got to the end of the caliche road I parked. We were getting our gear on and there is a couple who we found out had driven 10 hours from Amarillo to “chase” the bird, waving her hands to “come ! come! It’s here” {that’s bird sign language!}. We hurried the short distance down to the river and BAM! There it was. The Mexican bird who crossed the wall and ended up in Uvalde, Texas. ...the Rufous Backed Robin. A beautiful bird. #612. I wonder what #613 will be.....I shall have to make a “list” of what birds I need and where to find them. Another LIST!!



BEDICHEK’S ROCK

By Bob James

Back in the middle of the previous century when I was 8 or 9 years old, my Mother and Dad took my Sister and me on a short vacation to Austin, Texas. They wanted us to see the Capital, the Governor’s mansion, The University of Texas and become familiar with the capital of our state. We drove south from Fort Worth through Hillsboro, Waco, Temple, Georgetown and Round Rock finally arriving in Austin after what felt like a 12 hour drive. Interstate 35 was still in the future. We checked-in to a motel and the next day we made all the rounds and even had an opportunity to visit Scholtz Garten, the oldest continually operating saloon in the state. My Dad had a huge schooner of German beer. My sister and I had Dr Pepper, very popular at the time.

The next afternoon my Dad told us we were going to the park and to bring our swim suits. We were going to visit Zilker Park and swim in Barton Springs pool. I remember we drove south down Congress, crossed the Colorado River and turned west into a beautiful park. The magnificent Oak trees were striking and the grass was green and carefully mowed. People were playing ball and having picnics and just lounging in the shade of the trees. We drove over to the bath house and changed into our swimsuits. The pool seemed huge and the water was ice cold. My Dad told me the water came from a natural spring at the west end of the pool. We had a wonderful time there before leaving for home.



Barton Springs pool

Zilker Park is named after Andrew Zilker who donated the land to the City of Austin in 1917 but it was not made into a park until much later. The park is over 350 acres. Barton Springs pool was originally constructed in the 1920s but there have been many modifications. Barton Springs was considered a sacred area by the Native Americans who lived in Central Texas. The pool is nearly 300 yards long and almost 150 feet wide with depths up to 18 feet (see photo 1). The pool is closed during flash flood warnings. It has been only within the last 25 years that the pool has been closed on occasion because of a high fecal coliform count. This is the result of construction and homes built upstream above the Edwards Aquifer.

In 1968 I returned to Austin to work and go to the University of Texas. One weekend a good friend invited me to go with him to Barton Springs to swim. We drove south down Congress, crossed the Colorado River and entered Zilker Park. It brought back many old memories. After going to Barton Springs we changed into swim suits in the bath house and entered the pool area. The water was just as cold as I remembered. After an initial swim we walked along the south side of the pool toward the springs. As we approached the springs my friend told me I had just walked on Bedichek's Rock. I said, "Who on earth is Bedichek?" He told me that Roy Bedichek was a teacher, naturalist, writer and philosopher and was quite an icon in Austin. He was a good friend of J. Frank Dobie and Walter Prescott Webb. The three of them swam at Barton Springs almost every afternoon in the summer and Bedichek would lie down on this large flat limestone rock and soak up the sun. It finally became known as Bedichek's Rock.

J. Frank Dobie was the author of many popular books about Texas and the Southwest. Dr. Walter Prescott was an historian and taught history at the University. His classic work, *The Great Plains* is still available. Dr. Webb and his wife died in a car wreck in 1963.

Dobie and Webb finally convinced Roy Bedichek to write about his experiences as a naturalist. He took a leave of absence in 1946 from his work at the University Interscholastic League (UIL) where he had been Director for 26 years. The final result was his first book *Adventures with a Texas Naturalist*. This book has been reprinted many times and is considered a classic of Texas literature. In fact, every Texan, native or otherwise and certainly Texas Master Naturalist, should read his book.



Philosopher's Rock at Barton Springs

When Mr. Bedi died in 1959 the weekly newspaper *The Texas Observer* devoted an entire issue to his memory. As H. Mewhinney wrote in the introduction to the book, "Mister Bedi was a man who could look at a rose, even at that lovely nuisance from China, *Rosa bracteata*, that has damaged so many pastures on the Gulf Coast, and remember what Homer, Herodotus, Ausonius and Herriek had written about roses". Mister Bedi was an accomplished and observant field naturalist – ornithologist, mammalogist, botanist, ecologist and philosopher; his book has much to tell about the birds, mammals and flowers of Texas but it also enlarges a man's awareness of the world around him.

J. Frank Dobie died in 1964 in Austin. Dobie, Webb and Bedichek have been commemorated by a statue which pays homage to the three renowned Texas writers who met together at Barton Springs. This statue is named "Philosopher's Rock" (see photo 2). It sits in a Pecan grove at the entrance to Barton Springs pool.

It is a memorial to their legacy of introducing an open-minded and critical thinking culture to Texas.

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun?
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Board Meeting Dates

Jan 10	Aug 8
Feb 7 (Changed from 2 nd Thurs)	Sep 12
Mar 14	Oct 10
April 11	Nov 14
May 9	Dec 5
Jun 13	
Jul 11	

Dates and Locations to Remember

2019 ELM FORK CHAPTER MEETING DATES/LOCATIONS		
January 17	DCAC Election's Bldg	
February 21	DCAC Election's Bldg	
March 21	Election's Bldg	
April 18	Southwest Courthouse – FM	
May 16	DCAC Election's Bldg	
June 20	DCAC Election's Bldg	Open House-set up Wed, June 19, 1 pm.
July 18	DCAC Election's Bldg	
August 15	DCAC Election's Bldg	
September 19	DCAC Election's Bldg	
October 17	Carroll Courts Bldg, Room 115	
November 21	DCAC Election's Bldg	
December 12	DCAC Election's Bldg	Holiday Luncheon-set up Wed, Dec 11, 1 pm

Of Interest

AT APPROVED



Trail Guide Training Workshop Agenda

Saturday, March 30, 9 am - 3 pm

Bring a refillable water bottle, a lunch, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a hat. We advise long pants and closed-toe shoes for protection from the sun and biting insects.

- 9:00—9:20 am: Introduction to LLELA
- 9:20—10:15 am: Introduction to nature interpretation and guiding
- 10:15—11:00 am: The trails, one by one
- 11:00 am—1:30 pm: Lunch and Blackjack Trail interpretive hike (bring a sack lunch and drink)
- 1:30—2:30 pm: Cicada Trail interpretative hike
- 2:30—3:00 pm: Volunteer paperwork
- 3:30—4:00 pm: Optional back-40 tour for those interested

This workshop is for volunteers who are planning to lead hikes and educational programs at LLELA. For Texas Master Naturalists, this counts as 5 hours of advanced training.

Please contact Lisa Cole at 469-635-5481 or lcole@cityoflewisville.com with questions.



Simple Beauty—Dorothy Thetford



Of Interest

AT Opportunities (for details go to Elm Fork Chapter website—www.txmn.org/elmfork)

May 29-30 – [WET and WILD Summer Camp for Educators](#)

Ongoing AT Opportunities

[2018 Monarch Conservation Webinar Series](#)

[Cornell Lab Bird Academy](#)

[Raptor Rapture Online Course](#)

Any of the [Native Landscape Certification Program](#) Classes offered by the Native Plant Society of Texas

SWAt Meetings – Fourth Thursdays 9:30 am

Friends of Furneaux Creek Nature Trail – Fourth Monday 7 pm **Pre-approved webinars: Habitat Restoration Fundamentals:** Time-tested approaches and new advancements in creating monarch butterfly habitat (Eric

Lee-Mäder, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation –

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gij_gjCsGHQ&feature=youtu.be&list=PLZb5DyVcCk955KQKL4J_Ca7aVmzBbM7prOn the Wings of Monarchs: A 10,000 foot view of species conservation –

<https://fws.rev.vbrick.com/#/videos/fc559008-1640-457e-933c-90d868147dfa>

Meadow Establishment in the East (Larry Weaner, Larry Weaner Landscape Associates; Ann Aldrich, Dumbarton Oaks Park Conservancy) <https://monarchjointventure.org/resources/monarch-conservation-webinar-series> (No direct link, but it is on the page towards the bottom.)

APPROVED FOR AT:

Field trip organized by David Hunter of Denton's water utilities division. <https://txmn.org/elmfork/event/tour-of-dixon-water-foundation-leo-ranch-josey-pavilion-at/>

APPROVED FOR AT:
SKYWARN TRAINING
Saturday March 2, 2019 in Denton, TX
TWU MCL 101; 9-12 noon (basic); 1-4:30 p.m. (advanced)
<https://www.weather.gov/fwd/skywarnsch?sptersch>

AT APPROVED

Saturday, March 23, 2019
from 10am - 4pm
Limit 25 RSVP
Hike & Learn
Pemberton's Big Spring Preserve & Crawford Memorial Park
Join us for a hike to explore 2 natural history gems in Dallas County: Pemberton's Big Spring Preserve & the prairie remnant at Crawford Memorial Park.

www.eventbrite.com/e/hike-learn-pembertons-big-spring-preserve-crawford-memorial-park-tickets-55787986369
From Diane Wetherbee

Additional programs for LLELA Lecture Series have been added to the **Approved AT** page on website:
Feb. 23 – Winter Tree ID with Suzanne Tuttle
April 13 – Itchy Business with Amy Martin

<https://txmn.org/elmfork/staying-connected/advancedtraining/>

AT APPROVED



Of Interest

Plant Identification

Tuesday March 19, 2019
5:30pm-8:30pm
401 W. Hickory St. Suite 115
Denton, TX 76201

Speaker: Dr. Barron Rector
Texas A&M Associate Professor &
Extension Range Specialist

Cost: \$20.00
A light meal will be provided.

This program will help you identify good plants for whatever interest you have. We will identify beneficial grasses and forbs. Come out and test your knowledge, we will have an ID contest!

Call 940-349-2894 to sign up today!

This program is Coordinated by The Denton County Ag Committee

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, birth, origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the meeting should contact Denton County AgriLife Extension office at least a week in advance of the meeting to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.



AT APPROVED



Of Interest



MARCH 20, 2019 10AM-NOON

WILDLIFE IN THE CITY

This FREE webinar will feature Texas A&M Assistant Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist, Dr. John Tomecek. Dr. Tomecek will discuss the increasing interaction between urban citizens and wildlife. This 2-hour program will discuss animal biology, management practices, and state laws regarding coyotes, feral hogs and vultures.

This presentation can be viewed from the comfort of your own home or in our office at 401 W. Hickory St. Suite 507, Denton, TX 76201.

To receive the presentation link and password, email robin.hill@dentoncounty.com.

If you will be attending the presentation in our office please RSVP by email or call 940-349-2894

This program is coordinated by the Denton County Ag Committee and the Denton County Horticulture Advisory Committee.

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in the meeting should contact Denton County AgriLife Extension office at least a week in advance of the meeting to request mobility, visual, hearing or other assistance.



 Of Interest

AT APPROVED

Texas Stream Team (TST) Training

March 23, 2019

8 am to 2 pm

Flower Mound Town Hall

Link: <https://www.flower-mound.com/1667/Texas-Stream-Team>

Description: *The Texas Stream Team (TST) is a voluntary group of citizen scientists which seek to protect our state's water resources. The TST is a collaboration between Texas State University, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and the Environmental Protection Agency.*

Currently, the Texas Stream Team is dedicated to understanding and protecting the 191,000 miles of Texas waterways. The program brings together community members, students, educators, academic researchers, environmental professionals, and both public and private sector partners to conduct scientific research and to promote environmental stewardship.

This citizen scientist program seeks preservation of our state's waterways through trained volunteers who conduct water quality monitoring on their local lakes, rivers, streams, and estuaries across the state. The volunteers submit their data to a database maintained by the Town of Flower Mound and The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University.

If interested in finding a training session in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, please contact our Stormwater Management Division at 972.874.6354.

From: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department <tpwd@service.govdelivery.com>

Winter Migration - Whooping Cranes

Whooping Cranes are one of the rarest species of birds in North America. They breed during the summer in Canada, and then migrate south for the winter, spending November through March mostly in marshes along the Central Coast of Texas. These endangered birds are also the tallest birds in North America, reaching 5 feet in height.

Whooping Crane Festival

The Whooping Crane Festival in Port Aransas (Feb. 21 - 24) celebrates the annual return of the cranes to their wintering habitat at the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge. Festival activities include boat tours to view the Whooping Cranes, interactive workshops and seminars, birding and nature boat and bus tours, a painting and wine tasting class, and a free nature-related trade show.

Is it a Whooping Crane?

There are many birds, that at a distance, appear similar to Whooping Cranes. Review this [handy guide](#) to help you determine if it's a whooper.



Whooping Crane. Photo: Karen Willes/Audubon Photography Awards

Architects of this Issue of Naturalist News



W. Odum, editor NN, class 2005

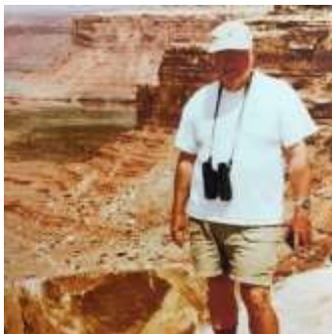
Mary Morrow class 2014



Sharon Betty class 2018



Sue Yost class 2017



Bob James class 2003



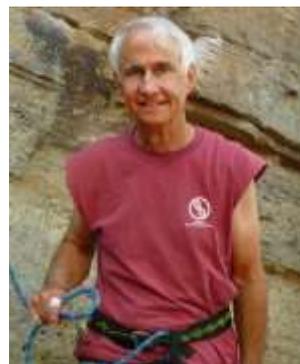
Judi Elliott class 2009



Denise Remfert class 2015



Dorothy Thetford class 2001



Jonathan Reynolds class 2014



Diane Wetherbee class 2000

Marilyn Blanton class 1999



A (Most) the Final Word

Dawn Hewitt

www.watchingbackyardbirds.com/wbsite/article/fun-feather-facts.php

Feathers:

1. All birds, and only birds, have feathers, although a few species of dinosaurs had them.
2. Feathers are essential to flight; they provide insulation, sunblock, and waterproofing, and can be important in providing camouflage, social dominance, and reproductive success.
3. A bird's plumage usually weighs more than its skeleton.
4. Adult birds molt—replace their feathers—at least once a year. For most songbirds, molting takes five to twelve weeks, shedding only a few feathers at a time. For hawks, a full molt can take several years.
5. After breeding season, most male duck species in North America replace all their flight feathers at once and are flightless for two to four weeks.
6. Birds that winter in cold areas can have 50 percent more feathers in the winter than they do in the summer.
7. Hummingbirds have roughly 1,000 feathers; swans have 25,000.
8. Penguins have more feathers than most birds: about 100 per square inch.
9. Woodpeckers have two stiff tail feathers they use as a prop to stabilize their head banging on tree trunks.
10. Late during the egg-laying process, most birds that incubate lose feathers from their abdomen to provide skin-to-egg warmth during incubation. Feathers are good insulation, after all, and those eggs need body heat! The bald spot is called a "brood patch," and lots of blood vessels there are very close to the surface. In species in which both parents incubate, such as white-eyed vireo, both male and female develop a brood patch, but if only one parent incubates, such as with most songbird species, only the female develops one. When the nestlings fledge, feathers regrow on the brood patch.
11. Owls can fly silently because the forward edge of the first feather on each wing is serrated, rather than smooth. This affects the flow of air over the wing and disrupts the vortex noise created by non-owl wingbeats.
12. The shape of the feathers on many owls' faces into a disk helps them locate prey even in complete darkness. The concave shape channels sounds into the ears.
13. The color of most colorful feathers is caused by pigments, which are chemical compounds. Blue feathers, however, are not the result of pigment, but minute structural particles in the feather that scatter short wavelengths, making the feathers appear blue.
14. A flight feather contains a central vein (rachis), ending a quill; barbs extend off the rachis and branch into barbules, which end in tiny interlocking hooks, called barbicels.



About Dawn Hewitt

Dawn Hewitt is the managing editor at *Watching Backyard Birds* and *Bird Watcher's Digest*. She has been watching birds since 1978, and wrote a weekly birding column for *The Herald-Times*, a daily newspaper in Bloomington, Indiana, for 11 years.



TO ALL THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS
EDITION OF NATURALIST NEWS.

If you have a "final word", send to wanda odum, NN editor



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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"

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."

Regular 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 on February 21, 2019
February meeting at:
701 Kimberly Drive
Denton, TX 76208-6301
Denton Elections Technology Services Bldg.

Board Meetings
The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met February 7, 2019. Next monthly Board meeting is March 14, 2019
Monthly Board meetings are open to members.

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