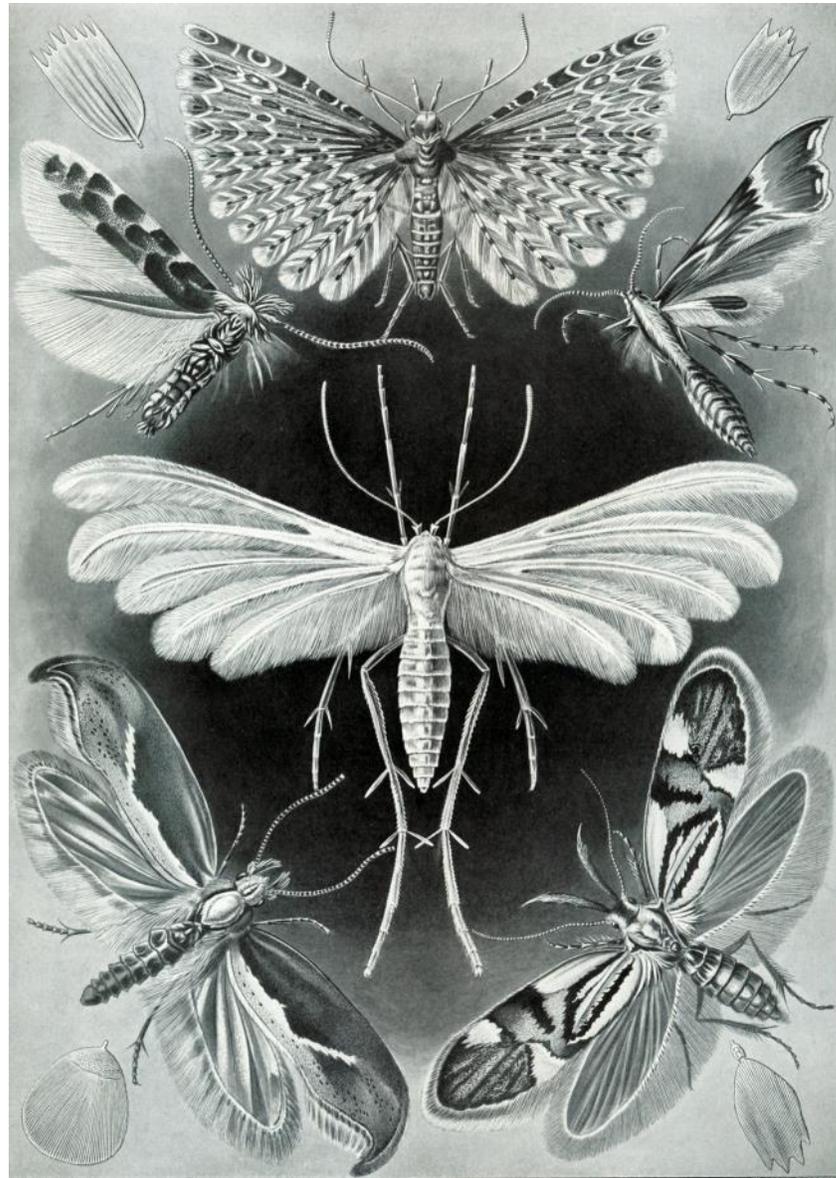


Naturalist News

Texas Master Naturalist,
Elm Fork Chapter

Volume 20, Issue 8
August 2019



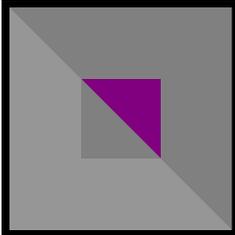
bing.com

Ernst Haeckel



By ecology we understand the total science of the connections of the organism to the surrounding external world.

AZ QUOTES



Naturalist News

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Jonathan Reynolds: Probably a polydamas swallowtail (*Battus polydamas lucayus*) — many found on Texas thistle along the Elmfork of the Trinity River

Swallowtail butterflies are large, colorful butterflies in the family **Papilionidae**, and include over 550 species. Though the majority are tropical, members of the family inhabit every continent except Antarctica. The family includes the largest butterflies in the world, the birdwing butterflies of the genus *Ornithoptera*.

Swallowtails have a number of distinctive features; for example, the papilionid caterpillar bears a repugnatorial organ called the osmeterium on its prothorax. The osmeterium normally remains hidden, but when threatened, the larva turns it outward through a transverse dorsal groove by inflating it with fluid.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swallowtail_butterfly

Inside this issue:

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Special points of interest:

- See who earned recognition last month
- Read and learn throughout
- Ever been to the Big Country? See for yourself



What Happened Last

Photos from Denise Remfert



Marilyn Neal presented a program called "Bee Guardians"



Award recipients recognized:

Initial certification: Mary Thomann

Re-certifications: Patti Barry (2017); John Bodnar (2007); Cheryl Ellis (2012); Sheri Fenter (2015); Janice Goetz (2016); Mike Hatch (2014); Ray Kreutzfel (2014); Dale Meyer (2011); Sharon Miggans (2017); Cecily Pegues (2015); Harriet Powell (2015); Renee Province (2008); Carolyn Richard (2006); Judy Riley (2014); Lisa Rosenbert (2018); Veronica Ruangskul (2013); Dooley Rucker (2018); Elise Spain (2017); Susan Tartaglino (2009); Jim Terry (2017); Erin Tran (2015); Carolyn Trivette (2017); Nancy Waldo (2014); LeeAnn Weaver (2004); Kathy Webb (2017); Joyce Yarnell-Smith (2018); Allen York (2017)

Mike Hatch and Irene Hanson



250 Hour Milestone: Gale Bacon (2018)

500 Hour Milestone: Toni Benjamin (2015); Kim Wootton (2017)

1000 Hour Milestone: Irene Hanson (2014); Mike Hatch (2014)



Mary Thomann



Re-certifications



What Happens Next

From Rita Lokie—August Chapter Meeting
Speaker will be Dr. Alexandra Ponette-Gonzales

Bio:

Title: Urban Oak Trees Provide Air Quality and Climate Benefits in Denton, Texas

Presenter: Dr. Alexandra Ponette-González

Short Description: In urban areas, vehicles are a major source of fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) to the atmosphere. Black carbon, also known as ‘soot’, is a particularly harmful component of PM_{2.5}. Tiny soot particles absorb solar radiation, warming cities, regions, and the globe, and when inhaled, contribute to respiratory and cardiovascular disease. Our laboratory’s National Science Foundation-funded research demonstrates that planting and conserving trees can mitigate these effects. We estimate that together post oak and live oak trees in the City of Denton potentially accumulate 3.5 tons of soot per year, equivalent to ~32% of annual vehicular soot emissions from the city.

Short Bio: Dr. Alexandra Ponette-González (PhD 2009, Yale University) is Associate Professor of Geography and the Environment and Director of the Ecosystem Geography Lab at the University of North Texas. Her research focuses on human-atmosphere-biosphere interactions in the context of global change. She explores how human activities influence ecosystem processes, including water and elemental cycling, via ‘bottom up’ changes in vegetation distributions and ‘top down’ changes in emissions sources. Her work spans diverse ecosystems from tropical forest to urban, and advances understanding of the causes and ecosystem consequences of changing land use and atmospheric drivers.

Website: <https://ponettelab.cargo.site>

Dr. Ponette-González



From Dale Meyer—Blue jay’s “blast off”!

Features

Article, poem and photos
from Marilyn Blanton



Liatris

Gayfeather and Blazing Star are familiar common names for Liatris. There are 43 Liatris species native to eastern and mid-western north America. Liatris punctate var. mucronata is the most common in our area.

Liatris is a stiff upright perennial belonging to the aster family. Its unbranched stems grow from 1 to 3 feet. The plant forms a wide-spreading clump that grows from a corm. It has narrow leaves that become smaller as they go upward.

It blooms in August and September and may continue later into the fall. It has small tufted lavender or purple disk flowers on long spikes that attract butterflies, bees and hummingbirds.

Liatris is drought and heat tolerant and likes full sun. It grows naturally in prairies and open woods. It grows in calcareous, rocky, gravelly, sandy and limestone based soils.

If you grow Liatris in your garden, you can also enjoy them as cut flowers. However, you might want to leave them and hope to get more plants from their seeds and let them provide food for winter birds.



Cont'd

Features

Article, poem and photos
from Marilyn Blanton—cont'd

Liatris

*With attractive purple spikes made of many small flowers
Lovely Liatris attracts insects through the days long hours*

*Sweet nectar draws wasps, bees and butterflies
To pollinate the blooms as they claim their prize*

*A native perennial sprouting new growth each year from a corm
With narrow alternate leaves on upright stems adding
their charm*

*It's a sun loving plant that calls the prairie home
But it's just as pretty in a garden you create as your own*

*It's late in the summer when the blooms appear
Foretelling that the season of autumn is near*

*It blooms through the fall before going to seed
Providing food that the winter birds will need*

*Gayfeather is a fitting common name
Having flowers like feathers some proclaim*

*Others like to call it Blazing Star
Perhaps the most descriptive name by far*

*A prairie plant swaging in the breeze at night
Like a pretty star touched by the moon's silver light*



Features

NIGHTINGALES OR MOCKINGBIRDS

by Bob James

I grew up in Fort Worth before the middle of the last millennium. During the summer we had no air conditioning and in those sweltering summer nights we slept with all our windows open. My bedroom was in the back of the house and one night in early summer I was awakened by a silly bird singing in the back yard. I looked out the window and saw him sitting on a light pole near our garage just singing away. He finally lulled me back to sleep.

The next morning I told my sister about the bird and she said it must be a Nightingale. Well, this “Nightingale” returned and sang to me every night for several weeks. I later found out this singer was not a Nightingale but a Mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*). I have heard them sing at night on many different occasions. They are named because of their ability to ‘mock’ the songs of other songbirds. In fact, their name polyglottos means many tongued.



Mockingbird

My father was quite a hunter and he took me hunting with him as a boy and my dream was to have my own gun. On my eighth birthday, I received this long package and when I unwrapped it I saw the most beautiful thing I had ever seen up to that time. My dad had given me a Daisy Lever Action Red Ryder BB gun and I was excited about taking it out and shooting it. At that point fun went out the window when my Dad insisted that I have safety lessons first. I learned not to point the gun at anything unless I was going to shoot it, not to point it at anyone, keep the muzzle up, how to load it, clean it and then we had target practice. I was to always treat the gun as if it were loaded. Finally, my Dad told me that I was to never ever shoot Mockingbirds or ‘Redbirds’. He actually meant Cardinals (*Richmondena cardinalis*). He said I could shoot Chi Chi’s, which I later found to be sparrows of various varieties. I really didn’t know what a Mockingbird looked like. My Dad told me to talk to my Grandmother who was a birdwatcher and she could educate me. I discussed Mockingbirds with her and she showed me a picture of a Mockingbirds (see photo 1). She even gave me a copy of Peterson’s “A Field Guide to Western Birds” copyright 1941, which I still have in my library. To my knowledge I have never shot a Mockingbird or a Cardinal.

A number of years later I was working in Virginia and our group secretary heard I was a ‘Birdwatcher’. She told me there was a grey and white bird terrorizing their neighborhood; she said it was a Shrike and wanted to know if it was a Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) or a Northern Shrike (*Lanius excubitor*). I went to her house the next Saturday morning to identify the bird and after coffee we finally saw it perched in their persimmon tree. It was a Mockingbird. A shrike (see photo 2) is somewhat smaller with a slightly curved beak and the black mask otherwise they are quite similar in appearance.

After moving back to Texas I lived in southwest Arlington. Early one morning I was sitting in the dining room looking out into our backyard and I saw a Mockingbird walking around on the grass. Every minute or so, he would extend his wings out from his body. Then he would retract his wings and walk a few more steps repeating the wing extension. As I watched him I thought this was some sort of mating dance. As he extended his wings I thought, perhaps, he was drying his wings after being in the birdbath. Then, after watching him closely for several minutes, I realized what he was doing. With the sun at his back he was extending his wings, which caused the shadow of his wings to flash across the new mown grass. The shadow falling on the grass caused insects to fly up out of the grass where he would dart forward, catch them in his beak and gobble them down. I thought this was really amazing and incredibly intelligent.

Features



Shrike

When I lived in the Woodlands fifteen years ago I saw two Mockingbirds terrorize a cat. I was sitting in the living room when I saw a Mockingbird walking in the neighbors yard without a concern in the world. I thought he might be trolling for insects as I had previously witnessed. Then I saw a large cat under a bush eyeing the bird. I thought, "Oh, oh! That cat is going to kill that Mockingbird". As the cat lunged from the bush toward the bird on the ground another Mockingbird dived from the eave of the house and struck the cat in the back with fur flying. The cat quickly retreated to the bush. Then the birds traded places and when the cat lunged after the second bird, now on the ground, the Mockingbird on the eave dived and struck the cat. This continued for several episodes with the birds switching places until the cat finally got tired of being dive bombed and slinked off into the bushes.

If you have a Mockingbird in your neighborhood spend some time watching it. They are a playful delight and if you are lucky enough one will perch on a telephone pole outside your bedroom and sing you a lullaby or keep you up all night.

A Minor Bird

I have wished a bird would fly away,
 And not sing by my house all day;
 Have clapped my hands at him from the door
 When it seemed as if I could bear no more.
 The fault must partly have been in me.
 The bird was not to blame for his key,
 And of course there must be something wrong
 In wanting to silence any song.

Robert Frost



Lemon balm from
Jonathan Reynolds



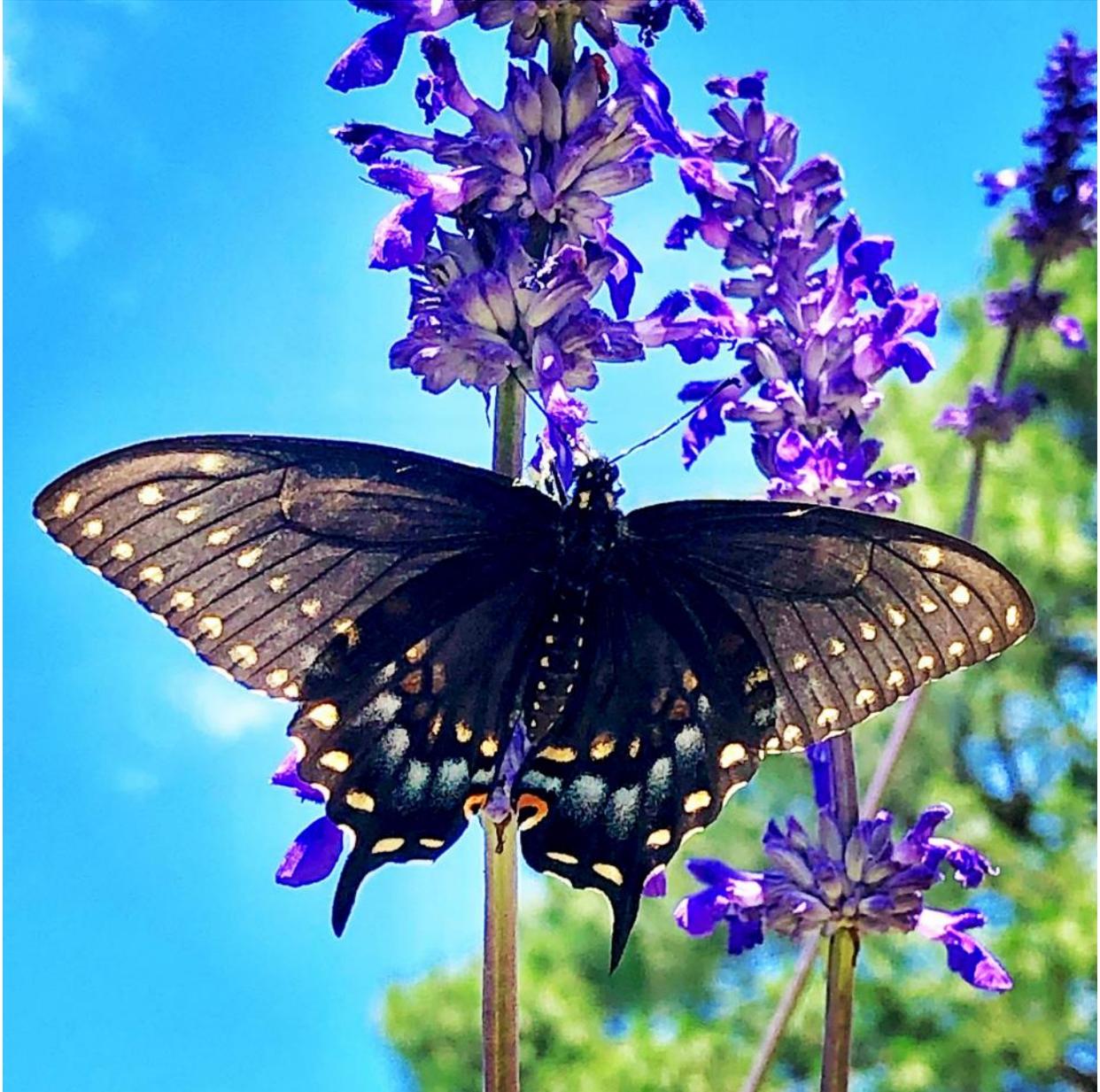
Standing winecup from
Jonathan Reynolds

Field Notes in Focus



Caterpillar of Tiger Swallowtail
(*Pterourus glaucus*) from Gallery of
Dorothy Thetford

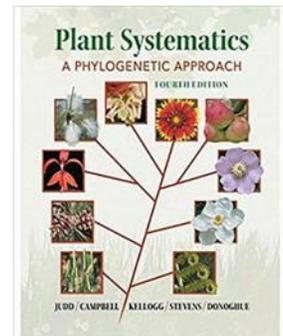
Field Notes in Focus



Black Swallowtail (*Papilio polyxenes*)
on Mealy Blue Sage (*Salvia farinacea*)
— from the gallery of Kathryn Wells

Book Review from Abigail Miller*Judd, Campbell, Kellogg, Stevens, and Donoghue***Plant Systematics: A Phylogenetic Approach**

2nd Edition

ISBN-13: [978-0878934034](#)ISBN-10: [0878934030](#)

Amazon.com

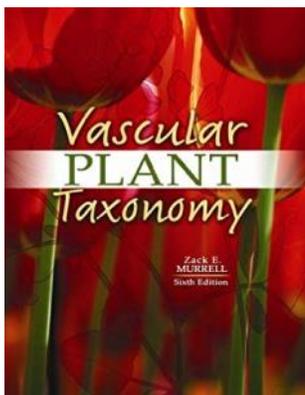
A few weeks ago I posted the following plea to the Texas Flora group on Facebook
 "Help! I seem to be way out of date, and need to stretch my brain.

"Almost 50 years ago I was a botany major at Pomona College. Lyman Benson was department chair, and in Plant Tax we used his *Plant Classification*.

"Fast forward a few years. I studied for a while under Arthur Cronquist at The New York Botanical Garden, and became familiar with his *Integrated System of Classification of the Flowering Plants*. Pretty much the same families, many of the same orders. I do regret the loss of the "conserved names" of the eight families - Gramineae instead of Poaceae, Compositae rather than Asteraceae, etc.

"I haven't been involved with academic botany for thirty-six years. Now I hear family and especially order names totally new to me. Seems there is an Angiosperm Phylogeny Group that has turned things upside down in the last twenty years. I want to catch up. What are the Intro Plant Tax courses using for a textbook now?"

I got several recommendations. The newest, that just came out last year, is

**Zack E. Murrell****Vascular Plant Taxonomy****6th Edition**ISBN-13: [978-0757576157](#), ISBN-10: [075757615X](#)

It is \$178! Well, if I am almost four decades behind, I decided that I didn't have to be that up-to-the-minute.

Amazon.com

Book Review from Abigail Miller *cont'd*

My new book, **Plant Systematics, 2002** (\$33 plus shipping), arrived at the beginning of this week, and I have started going through it.

Ever since the publication of Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1859, biologists have considered that all and only the descendants of one species in the past should be classified as one group. The problem has been figuring out exactly which organisms are related, by descent, to which. Until recently we could study only the *effects* of the genes, either in morphology, which is reasonably easy to see, or in chemical characters, which data are fairly well established. Now we are beginning to be able to study the gene sequences directly.

Genetic data are being accumulated at the University of Florida (Drs. Douglas & Pamela Soltis and Walter Judd), the Missouri Botanical Garden (Dr. Peter Stevens), Kew Botanical Gardens, and elsewhere. These data are being used by the botanists who have formed the Angiosperm Phylogeny Group to restructure over a century's worth of understanding of the relationships, and thus, the taxonomy of flowering plants.

This text is written very clearly. There are many large line-drawing illustrations. A CD of color photographs was not included with this used book, however it, and a similar online resource are available (for the purpose of illustrating detailed plant characteristics, I find the drawings preferable). This second edition is dated 2002, the fourth edition appeared in 2015. There are comparisons to previous systems of classification, such as Cronquist's, which is very helpful.

After I digest this, and particularly if I get involved with the BRIT volunteer herbarium program (if BRIT has changed to the new ordering of their specimens), I may get a newer book. But this is excellent for getting up to speed on the last few decades of botanical progress.



Soft Golden Aster (*Chrysopsis pilosa*) from Dorothy Thetford—
"Native wildflower of Texas blooming now in open prairies."



Those who contributed to this issue of Naturalist News—Thank you!



Editor, wanda odum, class 2005



Dorothy Thetford class 2001



Abigail Miller class 2003

Sue Yost class 2017



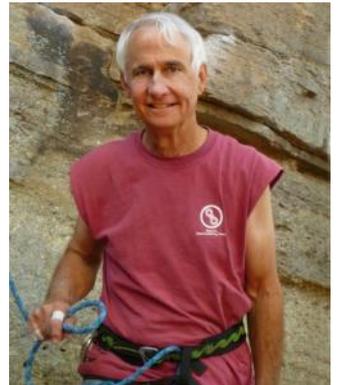
Marilyn Blanton class 1999

Dale Meyer class 2011 with Deborah class 2012



Rita Lokie class 2013

Jonathan Reynolds class 2014



Judi Elliott class 2009



Denise Remfert class 2015



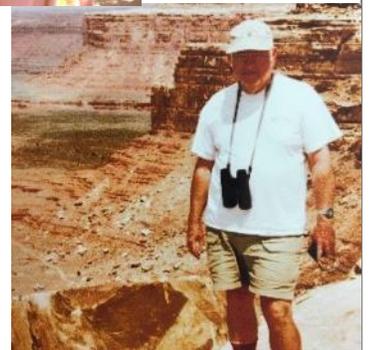
Kathryn Wells class 2017



Don Fikes class 2013



Diane Wetherbee class 2000



Bob James class 2003

You Can See Forever!



From Don Fikes (our favorite “roving” MN)

Greetings from the Big Country! Don Fikes shares his photos that he took in and around Abilene TX in early July while working out there. “The last picture you can see,” says Don, “is the sky line of Abilene in the distance. They call it the Big Country for a reason.”



“It’s opener there,
in the wide open
air.” DR.SEUSS
(OH THE PLACES
YOU’LL GO!)



Meet a Master

Interview by Sue Yost



Meet a Master: Betty Zajac

Where are you from? Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Grew up in Chicago moved to Texas in 1996.

Marital status? Married to my husband Ed for 44 years.

Kids, Grand kids Have 2 sons and three grand children 5, 3 and 10 mos. The 2 oldest are on their way to becoming nature lovers!

Pets Grand dog Ella

Work history Taught high school in Illinois and elementary school here in Texas.

Schooling Received a BA in Education from Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago.

How long a MN? 16 years What class year? 2003

Favorite pastime Traveling, reading and time with my grand kids.

Favorite food Brownies

Favorite place to visit Any National Park

Favorite animal Bears

Favorite MN volunteer opportunity Roving Naturalist at Fort Worth Nature Center.

Share a funny story or antidote about being a MN. I have met MN in Yellowstone, Maryland, Arizona & California in our travels.

Tell us something we'd be surprised to know about you. I have been to a game in every major league ball park.

Opportunities for Training

Ongoing AT Opportunities

- [2019 Monarch Conservation Webinar Series](#) AT
- [Cornell Lab Bird Academy](#)
- [Raptor Rapture Online Course](#)
- Any of the [Native Landscape Certification Program](#) Classes and most of their programs offered by the Native Plant Society of Texas
- The Citizen Forester Class
- Skywarn class
- [NOLS Wilderness First Aid classes](#)
- Second Saturday Events at the Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge-Saturday, August 10 6465Refuge Rd, Sherman, 10 a.m. -11:30 a.m. Free & open to public. Presentation, slides and possible field trip within the Refuge. Topics which are geared to 11 years – adult interest vary monthly. For more information 903-786-2826.
- SWAt Meetings – Fourth Thursdays 9:30 am
- Friends of Furneaux Creek Nature Trail – Fourth Monday 7 pm
- Bird and nature walks offered by nature centers, such as LLELA and Clear Creek

Coming up:

August 14 – [Protecting Our Water, Air, and Habitat](#) AT

August 24 – [Growing Native Plants](#)

August 28 – [Plateau Summer Webinar – Five Tools of Wildlife Management: The basic tools necessary for successful wildlife management](#)

Mark your calendar:

 AT

From Diane Wetherbee:

Prairie restoration project right here in Denton County:

Skip Barnett Ranch, Denton County Field Trip on 10/12/2019 at 9:00 a.m. Description at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/skip-barnett-ranch-field-trip-denton-county-tickets-66123967567>

<http://connemaraconservancy.org/wordpress/profile-barnett-ranch/>

Website: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/skip-barnett-ranch-field-trip-denton-county-tickets-66123967567>

Opportunities for Training

AT

Plant Identification Part II: *Cool Season*

Thursday October 24, 2019
5:00pm-6:30pm
Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center
3310 Collins Rd, Denton, TX 76208

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

Cost: \$20.00

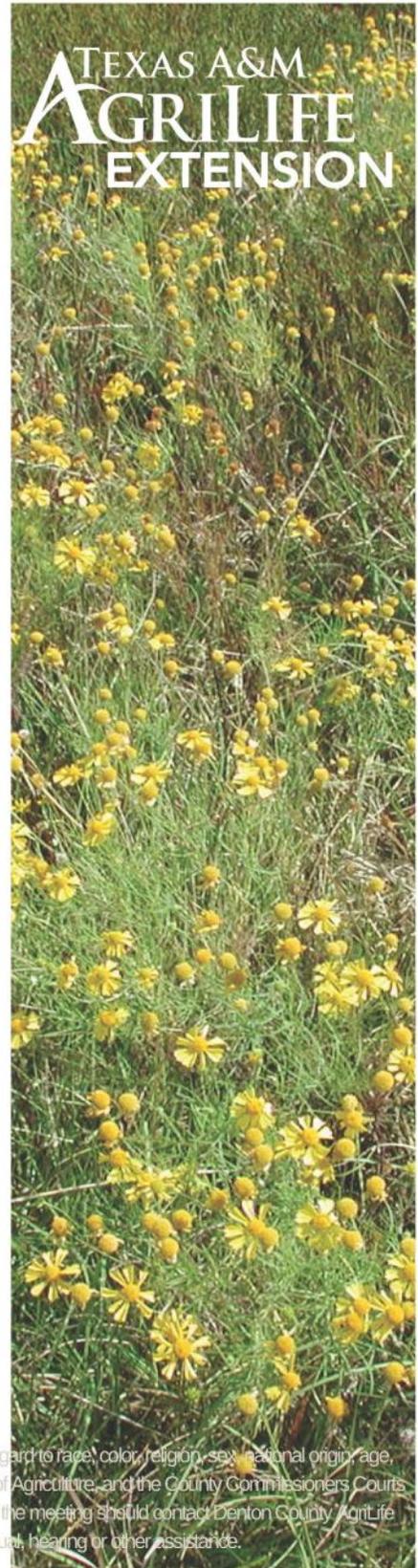
Refreshments will be provided
This class will be outdoors. Please dress
accordingly.

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

Call 940-349-2894 or email
robin.hill@dentoncounty.com
to sign up today!
Space is limited to first 50 registrants.

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, 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.



<https://txmn.org/2019-annual-meeting/>

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN! Texas Master Naturalist 2019 Annual Meeting, October 18-20 @ Hilton Rockwall



Join us for our **20th Texas Master Naturalist Program Annual Meeting**, where we'll gather, learn and celebrate another year of the Texas Master Naturalist program. This year's event, taking place in Rockwall, Texas, will run from **Friday, October 18th through Sunday, October 20th**. The event will be hosted at the **Hilton Dallas/Rockwall Lakefront Hotel** on the shores of Lake Ray Hubbard just east of Dallas.

The year's Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for Texas Master Naturalist volunteers from around the state to gather, participate in hands-on educational seminars, and receive all of their Advanced Training requirements for the year within one weekend. It's also an opportunity for program participants and supporters to network, share new ideas/projects, and to learn from different chapters from different regions of the state. This year's meeting will also include day trips and training workshops to many local, state and even national refuges/parks, many of which will focus on the diversity of geography, flora, fauna and history this unique area of Texas.



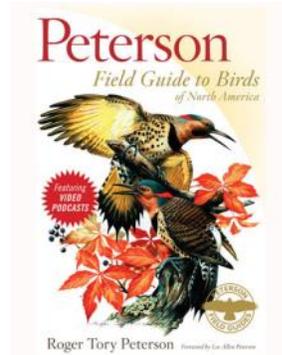
Those who are looking for ways to make nature more accessible and understandable for children, should check this out.

Friend and former Elm Fork Chapter president, Alex Lieban, from his home in Colorado sends his greetings to all and shares this link:

<https://denverite.com/2019/08/02/raspberries-crawdads-and-a-creek-are-the-stars-of-denvers-newest-playground-in-green-valley-ranch/>



Almost the Last Word



You Might be a Master Naturalist.... Sue Yost class of 2017

You might be a Master Naturalist if....

YOU Keep a pair of boots and gloves in your car; just in case.

YOU Have a tattoo of an animal somewhere on your body.

YOU Stop to examine animal "poop".

YOU Have dead bugs in your freezer.

YOU Catch and release insects, etc.

YOU love to sit outside and be serenaded by the frogs and cicadas.

YOU Have more pictures of "nature things" on your Facebook page than humans.

YOU hear someone yell "SNAKE" you run towards it instead of away from it

YOU Have enough field guides to open a book store.

YOU Track in more mud and dirt than a 7 year old.

YOU Often hear the phrase..."It's just a bug, bird, etc."

YOU Get calls from family & friends to "remove" a dead animal in their yard.

YOU Have more cans of bug spray than perfume/cologne.

YOU Your phone screen saver is a picture of something nature related.

YOU learned what poison ivy and chiggers were the hard way.

YOU rise before dawn to enjoy the sunrise and tranquility.

YOU joined EFMN and realized this is where I belong.



How many of these things can you relate to?

How many new ones can you add?

We ARE Master Naturalist and are proud of it!

Even though our friends and family think we are a bit weird at times!!

Embrace it. Share it.



**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

We're on the Web
[www.txmn.org/
elmfork](http://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 will be August 15, 2019 at Elections Bldg, 701 Kimberly Dr. Denton TX 76201

Board Meetings

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met August 8, 2019. Next monthly Board meeting is September 12, 2019.

Monthly Board meetings are open to members.

OFFICERS OF THE BOARD:

PRESIDENT—Adelaide Bodnar

VICE-PRESIDENT/PROJECTS—Robert McLaughlin

SECRETARY—Kathryn Wells

TREASURER—Brenda Wellenreiter

MEMBER-at-LARGE—Harriet Powell

CLASS REPRESENTATIVES—Tim Trospen, Jody Springer

ADVISORS:

Janet Laminack, Extension Agent

TPWD—Ricardo Torres



Loggerhead shrike— w odum