

Wood Duck Whistler December 2024

President's Message by Wanda Rauscher



We ARE going to do it again! Kay Jenkins will be leading a "Spring" 2025 training class starting at the end of January and running through mid-April (mostly Saturdays with a few Tuesday evenings). If you have friends & colleagues who might be interested, please give them a heads-up. Jessica Coleman has the chapter web site ready!

For the December holiday party, we are having Cooksy's of White House prepare the brisket & turkey. All we need is you and your side dishes to make our festivity complete! Please RSVP to Hospitality- Caryn Vorsas, carynvorsas@gmail.com.

As I mentioned last month, we have Rodney Schroeder willing to serve as VP and Ann Reynolds willing to take the secretary role. We will have a membership meeting at the holiday party to confirm these candidates, BUT, with permission from any nominees, we do accept nominations from the floor. We will be leaving chapter dues at their current level \$20 for individuals and \$35 for couples. The Class of 2024 had dues included with their tuition. Note that the membership meeting portion of the holiday party may be counted as VSH.

I will want to have an officers + directors retreat in January to plan our year. I will be polling to find best date & time. Want to help your chapter with your service? Let Wanda know at the tmneasttxpress@yahoo.com email.

Hey! City Nature Challenge 2025 has dates April 25-28 for observations and April 29-May 4 for identifications. I have registered as the organizer for Tyler/East Texas with our 10 - county chapter catchment. I would love to have some enthusiastic volunteers help plan a two-pronged push: one push to get our neighbors observing the natural world around them and another push to get our master naturalists out in the field looking for our species of greatest conservation need. Got ideas or time to help plan? Let Wanda know tmneasttxpress@yahoo.com email. So far I have Carol Lanthrum and Keith Jones (Class of 2024) volunteering to assist.

I ran across a couple of potential new projects while I was at the State TMN Meeting. First is the Texas Raptor Monitoring Network. This program was presented at the March 2024 TMN Tuesday and can still be viewed from the State TMN website (for AT credit through the end of 2024). They want volunteers to observe details about raptor nesting using an app they created for our phones. I would like to have a project leader champion this opportunity and submit a chapter VSH form for review. The second opportunity is a short-term Spring event. You know we have "Big Dipper" *Photinus pyralis* fireflies in the chapter catchment, but we have other species too. I want master naturalists to help me watch for flashing lightning bugs in March and April. I have seen them along Texas State Highway 322 approaching Longview from Henderson. I have a scientist partner who has given me instructions to observe flash patterns and collect a specimen for sending in for ID. One of our goals is to become the experts on the flora and fauna of our area!

Hope to see many of you at the Dec. 7 holiday party!

Class of 2024

The following people received initial certification at the last class meeting:



Karen Hulene Bartell



David Shafer



Debbie Shafer



Keith Jones



Terri York-Linz



Bill Linz

(Not pictured Suzanne Ceglia)

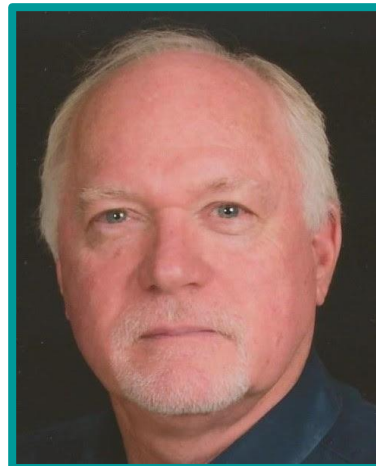
Member Spotlight

Ann Reynolds

Let's welcome Rodney Schroeder to the Member Spotlight.



Nigel Rogers



Victoria Settle



Where were you born/raised? Originally from Waco, Tx back before the Silos were a popular shopping destination.

Where do you live now? We have been in Tyler for 30 years.

Would you care to share with us about your family? I have been married to Bobbie, a retired school teacher, for 46 years who I met while at SFA. We have two children. Our daughter, Aubrey, is a PTA and lives in San Antonio and our son lives in Seattle where he has a small recording studio.

What is/was your career? Education? I am retired from a 45+ year career in forestry. After graduating from Stephen F. Austin in Nacogdoches with a B.S. in Forestry with a wildlife emphasis, I worked for the Arkansas Forestry Commission as a county forester for almost five years. After a brief stint as a mud engineer in the oil field I was a District Manager for Kirby Forest Industries and Louisiana Pacific managing all phases on company owned timberlands. The last 24 years of my career was with American Forest Management, first as a District Manager and retiring as a Regional Manager overseeing all timberland related operations for investment groups and private landowners on over 600,000 acres in Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.

What are some of your hobbies? My main hobby is fishing, which began going with my dad when I was barely able to hold a cane pole by myself. I hunted on occasion but on a much more limited basis. Along with my wife we enjoy traveling and 4-5 years ago bought our first RV and like "camping" in various parks, especially State and COE parks primarily in Texas but have visited places in Louisiana, Oklahoma and Missouri. I try being a gardener, but the Texas heat usually cuts that short.

What do you attribute your love of nature? From an early childhood, as a family camping and fishing instilled a desire to explore the interactions within nature.

What was it that interested you in the Texas Master Naturalist program? I really did not know about the program until I had a conversation with Paul Wick and he thought would be a good fit for me after retirement considering my past career. Soon after retirement I felt there was a void where I no longer interacted with coworkers and clients, working towards a common goal of sustainable management of a part of the environment and felt the program would allow me to create new contacts covering a much broader range of interests.

What class were you in? 2023

What has been your favorite volunteer experience? When looking for ways to get me needed volunteer hours, I found out about the "Wild Bunch" and joined working on the trails at the Nature Center, Mineola Nature Preserve and Martin Creek State Park. Hearing about the varied interests of the other members of the group, I have been able to learn from them that there is more to nature than being able to identify and manage trees commercially on a sustainable basis.

Favorite nature activity? Watching a sunset or sunrise over water and experiencing the different sights and sounds.

Describe what would be your perfect, bucket-list natural science encounter or experience. Visiting up close and personal the Alaskan interior.

Advice for new master naturalists? Join the program with an open mind to the wide variety of points of view and interests that you will encounter. Early during my training for the program, several classmates, after hearing I was a Forester, said they thought that getting certified in the program would be easy for me. While many of the topics studied were basically a high-level review of much of what I learned during my career, I quickly found, especially when in the field with others, that my

career of timberland management was focused on a different path and that I was actually guilty of not seeing “the forest for the trees”.

Extra, Extra Read All About It!

Ann Reynolds

This newsletter marks the last for this editor! I want you all to welcome Class of 2024 member, Karen Hulene Bartell, as the new editor who will be appointed at the December meeting. Her email is: info@karenhulenebartell.com.

I have visited with Karen and given her contact information and important dates. She will be using a professional newsletter application and I think you all will be amazed at what she will publish. I hope you will respond when she asks for your input.

I do want to take this opportunity of thanking you for making my transition to editor five years ago easy even though I was paranoid I would have no articles. But you responded!! I have learned a lot about you from reading your articles and hope you have enjoyed getting to know other members through the Spotlight piece. Your articles have covered a wide range of topics and there has been a wealth of information for everyone. It is inspiring to see members receive certifications/milestones, be involved in numerous projects and be in attendance to groups with the same focus on nature (NPSOT, TAS, NETFO, NPAT). You all are making a difference in Texas!

I've got a long list of things I want to accomplish now that I have “free time” one of which will be to write some articles myself.

Again, thank you for making my job enjoyable!!

Tyler Nature Center Wildscape Update

Ann Reynolds

The beauty of native plants is that they require a lot less maintenance. Kay Jenkins spent one Sunday dead heading, cutting back and basically tidying up the space. Cooler temperatures signal the time is fast approaching to what we gardeners say “putting the garden to bed.” Luckily with natives, there is not much work to that chore

Watch the upcoming eBlast for dates/times for the Tyler Nature Center workdays for 2025. Remember **this is OUR demonstration garden** to show the community that native plants in a landscape can be beautiful and ecologically responsible.

Garden chores become pleasure when we work together.

Christmas Bird Counts

Mark Edmund – Longview area

- Longview CBC is Saturday, December 14
- Tenaha-Timpson (Lake Murval) Wednesday, January 1
- Lake O' the Pines (LOP) Saturday, January

Contact Mark Edmund at:
maedmund321@gmail.com

Christmas Bird Counts

Jessica Coleman – Tyler area

Tyler, Saturday, December 28
Contact Jessica Coleman at:
jcoleman@uttyler.edu

Coyote Coexistence: Living in Harmony with America's Song Dog

Karen Rueb-Hall

This was my favorite presentation at the annual conference in October. The speakers, Karin and Roberto Saucedo, are published wildlife conservation photographers who study wildlife behavior through observations and camera traps. Their images have been used to educate the public about coexisting with urban wildlife. Images courtesy of Roberto and Karin Saucedo.



Coyotes are a keystone carnivore playing a critical role helping to maintain healthy ecosystems and species diversity. They act as a top predator regulating the populations of smaller predators such as skunks, foxes and raccoons and control rodent populations. They are opportunistic scavengers and consume what is easily available—rodents, squirrels, carrion, gophers, frogs, and seasonally abundant berries. Their scat provides seed dispersal.

Coyotes are native to North America and have rich natural lives and deep social bonds to their pack and mates. A pack consists of the parents, pups and older juveniles from a previous litter. Coyotes mate for life and both parents contribute to the rearing. Coyotes are affectionate and enjoy time together as a family. They are only 20-40 pounds with long fur so appear to be larger.

They leave messages for one another by marking with urine and feces. They keep in

touch by howling like sirens. Their vocalizations are categorized as calls for each other; greeting calls, mournful calls, and distress calls after being chased. Coyotes can produce several pitches which is why they sound more numerous.

A coyote's territory is claimed and used by a family for its survival. They mark their territories as a message to other coyotes. This keeps others from moving in. They see dogs as interlopers. They hunt in urban and rural areas at night and during the day, whenever their intended prey is available. Don't be alarmed if you see them traveling during the day; they are diurnal and have mouths to feed. They are afraid of you and want to avoid you. Often being seen is considered a crime because coyotes are considered a threat.

Another frequent behavior is escorting, non-aggressively following a person, especially in the summer, because you have unknowingly walked close to the den, and being seen as a potential predator to their pups. Calmly give them space as you should with any wild animal.



Never feed coyotes! When fed by humans, coyotes lose their fear of people and may become aggressive towards humans and pets leading to conflicts. Human food is not healthy and can make them sick. Feeding coyotes can encourage other wildlife to congregating in large numbers, which can lead to territorial fighting, attacks by predators, and being hit by cars.

The Coyote is the flagship species for all misunderstood and exploited carnivores. Current challenges they face in a rapidly evolving human-centric landscape are habitat loss, fragmentation, humans trapping or killing, and rat poisoning, which leads to mange or death.

To discourage coyotes from property, eliminate attractants. Keep your pets secure on a leash while walking and don't panic if you see one. If encountering one, lift your arms so you look bigger and yell loudly while looking at the coyote. Never run from a coyote which encourages chasing.

Embrace our wild neighbors. Their habitat is shrinking and remaining areas only support so many coyotes. Please visit the links below to learn more about our misunderstood Song Dog.

[Coyotes – DFW Wildlife Organization](#)
[Songdog Watch](#)
[Project Coyote](#)

Stay Warm My Feathered Friends

Dale Wade

Well, Fall is here. No, really, according to the Earth's tilt and orbit the rays streaming down from the sun are less concentrated. All of those red oak leaves FALLing to cover my lawn means that winter is close. No, really, winter will come.



Myers, Patrick - NPS

Anyways, it got me to thinking, what do local fowl do to get through those cold (no, really, it is going to get cold) winter days.

Birds migrate, mostly. About two-thirds of bird species will fly from northern climes south to avoid the cold in search for food. An astonishing 98% of those come through Texas. There is something to be said about lounging beachfront with toes in the sand, watching the waves, sipping on an adult coconut flavored drink, munching on a mango... uh, wait, that is my vision, not the bird's. However, they migrate in search of the sun's warmth, a peck of tropical fruit, and a few southern bugs.

Anyways, different species make their own trip, either short, medium, or long range. Short range migrants may travel down a mountain to warmer valleys, making not much more than a change of altitude. That includes those fall familiars like gold finches, red-winged black birds, and robins.

Others travel medium distances down from Canada to southern US or Mexico. Look for the American White Pelicans in Atlanta and Purtils Creek State Parks. Then there are the long-range travelers, most notably the Ruby-throated hummingbird of which we are so familiar. These little beasts fly over or around the Gulf of Mexico for hundreds of miles.

What about those resident birds that hang around your feeder year-round. They do not have the urge to migrate. So, how do they tolerate winter in Texas? Some molt their summer plumage to grow a fluffier feather coat that adds an insulating layer. This usually happens between late July and early September. Who has never seen a "bald-headed" Cardinal at the feeder? Others, like chickadees, drop into a state of daily torpor. The body temperature drops and the metabolism slows to conserve energy during those frigid nights.

Habitat plays a role, too. The Pinewoods with its preponderance of short-leaf pines offers dense foliage throughout the year providing protection from the elements. Perhaps you have run upon a roost of Eastern Wild Turkeys in

Anderson or Cherokee counties huddled up in the pine tree foliage.



Photo courtesy of Nicholas, T

Regardless of the “how’s” or the “why’s” birds seem to know the way to winter survival. Whether birds migrate to the far reaches of warmth, prompt the body to adapt to the cold weather, or find that barrier against the wind, they will survive.

Book Reviews

Lance Homeniuk

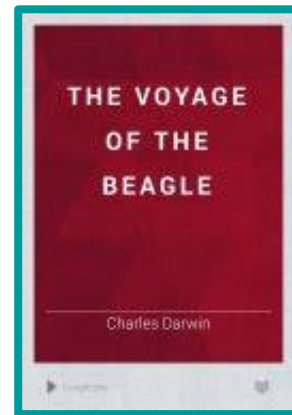
Appalachian Spring by Marcia Bonita. 1991 by University of Pittsburgh Press, Pittsburgh, PA. Paperback 187 pages.



A naturalist's account of life on a mountaintop 'farm' in central Pennsylvania from January through June, featuring the birds, mammals,

insects, amphibians & reptiles, flowers, ferns, trees and vines. I don't know if she narrates a single calendar springtime or has conflated twenty years of observations. Out in all weathers, walking the trails that crisscross her 500-acre property and surrounding mountain the author observes and muses on the lives she encounters. And she seems to discover more on each ramble. A truly delightful book. I read it in installments of a week at a time just to make it last til the end of my June.

The Voyage of the Beagle by Charles Darwin, edited and annotated by Leonard Engel. 1962 by Anchor Books, Doubleday New York, NY. In co-operation with the American Museum of Natural History. Paperback, 524 pages.



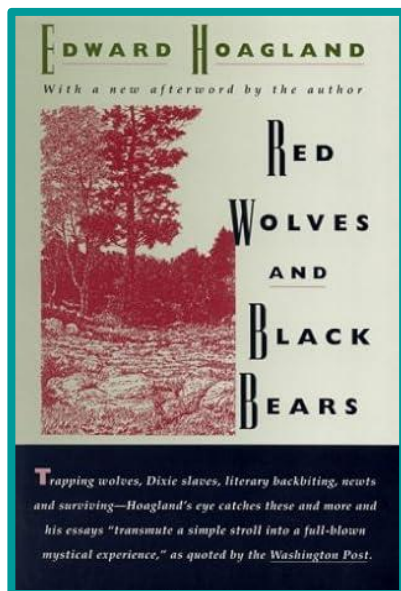
I reckon every great figure from history has been presented to the elementarily educated public in an encapsulated, even caricatured form. Darwin has been digested, labelled, iconified and lampooned more than most. But of course, he did and wrote much more than come up with “evolution by means of natural selection”. Even his four-year trip on the Beagle provided much more than a stop in the Galapagos islands. Why is he not also known as a premier naturalist of Brazil, Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina, the Falkland Islands, Chile, Ecuador, etc, etc.?

As it took me this long to read his accounts, I should be happy that the reading is worth the wait. And the narrative of the Pampas puts me in mind of something else I just read by another naturalist whose name and which title I cannot recall!

And writing of the tropics in lyric prose worthy of Wordsworth (who wrote much the same message about daffodils 34 years previously):

In my last walk I stopped again and again to gaze on these beauties, and endeavored to fix in my mind forever, an impression which I knew sooner or later must fail. The form of the orange-tree, the cocoa-nut, the palm, the mango, the tree-fern, the banana, will remain clear and separate; but the thousand beauties that unite these into one perfect scene must fade away; yet, they will leave, like a tale heard in childhood, a picture of indistinct, but most beautiful figures.

Red Wolves and Black Bears by Edward Hoagland. Published 1983 by Penguin Books, Markham, ON. Paperback, 273 pages.



This is a collection of essays by an author of nature and travel writing. They are of uneven quality – or maybe some are not as interesting to me so I don't rate them well. I will own my subjectivity. Some read as almost stream of consciousness writing by someone with ADD,

jumping from image to comment to non sequitur sentence by sentence. The best, of course, are the pieces referenced in the title; he really is a good nature writer. I learned as much about black bears from one essay as I have in everything else, I've read on the subject. The piece on red wolves is dated as the surviving members have since been relocated from Texas to North Carolina's Alligator River Wildlife Refuge. The essay on dogs is a blend of the two styles. Surprisingly, the passage that stuck in my mind is from the article on people, 'Other Lives':

But much of my own feeling of permanence has been grounded in the wildness of the natural world. Wildness is permanence because it is what is unaltered, an infinity of particulars which are changing only very slowly without special reference to man.

While it's a truism that you can't judge a book by its cover (I lost out on years of enjoying Lord of the Rings because I thought it was a sci fi adventure set on Saturn), I am glad I chose this because of its title and cover photo.

Note from Lance: This is about the 200th book I've reviewed. My wife wants me to make room (for more books? I hope).

So, if anybody would like one that I have reviewed in the past 8 or so years I am willing to let some of them go on "long-term" loan. Or I'll trade at the rate of 2 for one (2 of mine for 1 of yours). email me. Character references and a photo of your bookshelf are requested but not required.

East Texas Chapter Master Naturalists Projects

Ann Reynolds

The last class for the 2024 ETCMN trainees featured some of the many projects that are available for volunteer service hours. If you are

interested in being involved in any of these projects, contact the project coordinator or the Volunteer Service team.



Wanda Rauscher – Project Feeder Watch



Speaker's Bureau – Greg Marshall



TNC Wildscape - Kay Jenkins



Mineola Nature Preserve – Wanda Rauscher



Bat Monitoring – Sara Emry-Arthur



The Wild Bunch Trail Maintenance – Vicki Hoppis – leader, Vickie Betts - presenter



City Nature Challenge – Wanda Rauscher

There is also a great gift shop called The Silver Canoe with lots of interesting outdoor items. The ranger there said that this shop was unique to the state park system - nicer and more extensive than any other park.

I highly recommend that you visit if you have not done so recently

Prescribed Burns Kay Jenkins

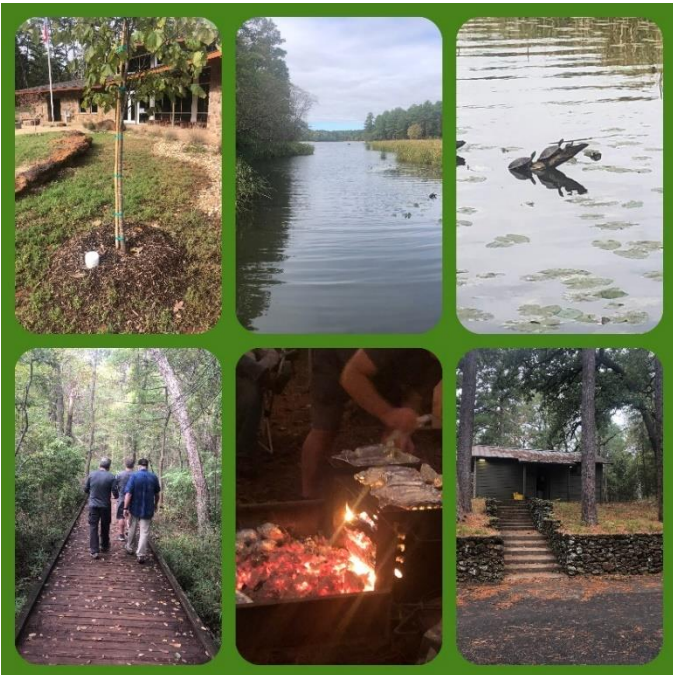
Interested in volunteering to on prescribed fires conducted at Tyler Nature Center and on Texas Parks and Wildlife Department wildlife management areas?

When Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) Region 3 Wildlife Fire Coordinator, Toni Aguilar presented to the Fall 2024 initial training class, several trainees expressed an interest in learning how they can volunteer on prescribed fires. Toni provided some follow up information about how if we get enough people interested in gaining fire certification, she can hold the training. The required entry level training for a Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2) is a 40-hour long blended training consisting of 32 hours in online training and eight hours in an in-person field day. The training consists of 5 online courses from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG). A PowerPoint presentation further describes the process to sign up for the courses.

In addition to taking the courses and participating in the field day, you must see your medical professional to have them sign a health care provider certificate stating that they have conducted a health risk assessment of you and that you are approved to take a pack test. Once the document is signed then you will need to pass the moderate pack test (walk 2 miles in 30 minutes with a 25 lb. pack). These physical requirements are set for all TPWD fire staff (full time employees and volunteers). Annually, all wildland firefighters

Tyler State Park – Update Stephen Thompson

Recently I camped out at Tyler State Park for two nights (over a weekend). I have done a visit here before, but not overnight camping. What a nice place! The brand-new entry building is very well done with small almost museum-like displays about the park. We only hiked the 2.1-mile trail around the lake. Animals we saw were friendly raccoons who appeared whenever we ate, and turtles sitting on a log in the shallow part of lake.



are required to attend a full day refresher and pass the pack test to keep qualified.

TPWD requires a minimum of 10-15 folks who have taken the online courses and are ready for a field day before Toni will put on a field day training. She asked me to keep a roster of chapter members and trainees who are interested so she can keep us informed about the feasibility of holding a field training day.

Links to online courses (recommended order):

1. ICS-100, Introduction to ICS for Operation First Responder (**2 hours** to complete)
 - a. Link:
https://emilms.fema.gov/is_0100c/curriculum/1.html
 - b. Course information:
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=is-100.c>
2. IS-700b, National Incident Management System (**3 hours** to complete)
 - a. Link:
https://emilms.fema.gov/is_0700b/curriculum/1.html
 - b. Course information:
<https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-700.b>
3. L-180, Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service (**4 hours** to complete)
 - a. Link:
<https://wildlandfirelearningportal.net/enrol/index.php?id=734>
 - b. Course information:
<https://www.nwccg.gov/training/courses/l-180-human-factors-in-the-wildland-fire-service-2008/course-delivery-information>
 - c. Student workbook:
<https://training.nwccg.gov/dl/l180/l-180-sw.pdf>
4. S-190, Introduction to Wildland Fire Behavior (**6-8 hours** to complete 3 modules)

- a. Link:
<https://wildlandfirelearningportal.net/enrol/index.php?id=669>
 - b. Course information:
<https://www.nwccg.gov/training/courses/s-190-introduction-wildland-fire-behavior/course-delivery-information>
5. S-130, Wildland Firefighter Training (**~25 hours** to complete 11 modules)
 - a. Link:
<https://wildlandfirelearningportal.net/enrol/index.php?id=798>
 - b. Course information:
<https://www.nwccg.gov/training/courses/s-130-firefighter-training-2021/course-delivery-information>

You must have the course certificates or certificate for each unit to complete the Wildland Firefighter field day. At the end of each S-130/S-190 module is a Challenge Review or course test. It is recommended to use the Snipping Tool or save the results of the quizzes you passed, as sometimes completed course certificates have not been issued. Each Challenge Review/certificate must have your name and a passing score on it.

If you want more information about the wildland fire programs, Toni provided the following links that explain prescribed fire well.

1. Business of Burning (TPWD), 6 minutes:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iizneuHZ2Ew>
2. Using Prescribed Fire in Oklahoma (OSU), 18 minutes:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAQaAmJpbQk>
3. *Optional* additional information:
 - a. Texas Extension (link to 20 additional videos):
<https://agrillifeextension.tamu.edu/solutions/living-with-texas-fire/>

- b. TPWD (additional videos & links):
https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/land/wildland_fire_management/
- c. Texas Forest Service:
<https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/prescribedburns/>

Nature Center and Refuge, as a science interpreter with the Fort Worth Museum of Science and History, as a botanist with BRIT, and as an instructor at Weatherford College. He has a master's degree from Tarleton State University studying the genetics of pocket gophers.

Galveston Island Trip – Chance Encounter with a Master Naturalist Celebrity

Meleena Byram

I just returned from a camping (I have to admit...actually glamping) trip to Galveston Island. Early morning walks on the beach looking for shells is very therapeutic. Of course, I was also soaking up all the local flora and fauna. Always on a quest for iNat observations, I was walking a path in a small nature preserve when I ran into a Master Naturalist celebrity, Sam Kieschnick and his wife Elizabeth!!! They were camping at Galveston Island State Park. How random! Sam taught my Botany class and led us on a field trip to the Mineola Nature Preserve during my 2023 training. He is fun and so knowledgeable. A great instructor. I love to check out his voluminous iNat observations. His wife, Elizabeth, is so lovely and gracious. We looked for tree frogs in the cattails together. She helped this old girl find them for pics. She pointed out a pair of Roseate Spoonbills I would have missed across from the path. Excited to see them!

While most East Texas Master Naturalists are very familiar with Sam, I've included a bio write-up I found.

SAM KIESCHNICK– TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE
Sam Kieschnick is an urban wildlife biologist with TPWD serving the east side of the DFW metroplex. He previously worked as a nature educator with the City of Mansfield at Oliver Nature Park, as a naturalist at the Fort Worth



Green Tree Frog: *Hyla cinerea*
Blue Dasher: *Pachydiplax longipennis*
Roseate Spoonbill: *Platalea ajaja*



MAPLE TOUR

Wednesday December 04, 2024

Time: 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Location: Rose Garden Center

420 Rose Park Dr. Tyler, Texas 75702

*Tour will begin at the
Heritage Garden Pergola

Experience an exclusive private walking tour of the Japanese Maples and other plants growing in the Tyler Botanical Garden. The tour will be led by Mr. Keith Hansen, Smith County AgriLife Extension Service Horticulturist Emeritus. As a special treat, the Smith County Master Gardeners will be on hand to provide detailed information featuring the maples and other shade loving plants in the shade garden beds.

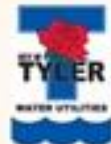


Cost: \$20.00 dollars per person

- Pre-Registration is non refundable
- Tour is limited to 25 people
- Payment will be invoiced and must be completed by December 03, 2024
- Last day to register is December 02, 2024
- Tour will take place Rain or Shine

To register or for more information, please contact the Smith County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension office at 903-590-2980.

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other classification protected by federal, state, or local law and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.



Please join us with your spouse or significant other for our Annual ETCMN Holiday Party and Celebration on Saturday, December 7, 2024, at the Tyler Nature Center Tyler, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Smoked turkey and brisket, and drinks will be provided. Please bring your favorite salad, vegetable side dish or dessert. We typically are heavy on the desserts so would like a variety of healthy sides. Please type up your recipe to post with your contribution. This allows everyone to photograph and make your recipe in the future and also helps those with food allergies.

While out and about look for a fun gift item (\$15.00 range) related to nature for a white elephant gift exchange. This is always the highlight of the party. It could be a cool gadget for outdoors, a nice nature related book, yard art, nick knock made from natural ingredients. The possibilities are endless. Be creative! You want your contribution to be the gift that everyone steals. Make sure to bring a gift for any guest attending. We want everyone to join in the gift exchange.

We will be celebrating all the accomplishments of our chapter as well as voting on our nominees for officers next year and will also accept nominations from the floor with the consent of the nominees.

Please RSVP right away to Caryn Vorsas at carynvorsas@gmail.com. The deadline is Friday, November 29. We need numbers for the food and drink count.



East Texas Chapter

WHEN

January 28 - April 12, 2025

WHERE

Tyler Nature Center

11942 FM 850, Tyler, TX 75707

And other sites in the East Texas region!

FEATURING • 40+ hours of training on the natural resources of East Texas • Great field trips • Engaging speakers • Hands-on activities

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY:

Email: tmneasttxpres@yahoo.com

Visit: [HTTPS://TXMN.ORG/ETWD/](https://txmn.org/etwd/)

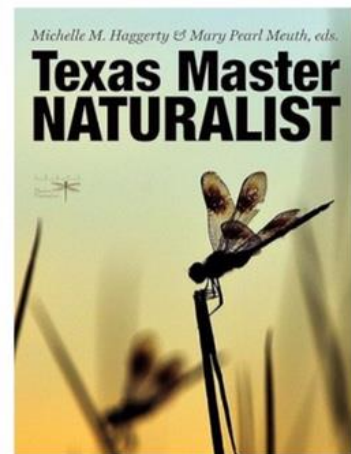
NEW MEMBER TRAINING



COST

\$150

\$100 if you already own the book



LEARNING IS FUN!





Project FeederWatch

Friday, November 1, is the first day to count birds for FeederWatch's 38th season. Thank you to everyone who has signed up. If you haven't signed up yet, [join today!](#) Remember, you don't need feeders to participate, and you can count for as little time as you want.

1. **Sign up** – [If you have not yet signed up, join today!](#) During the season, it takes a few weeks from when you sign up for print materials to arrive, but you can begin counting right away.
2. **Select your count site** – Choose a portion of your yard that is easy to monitor, preferably an area that is visible from one vantage point. Even if you don't provide feeders, you can still count birds for FeederWatch.
3. **Choose your count days** – Project FeederWatch runs from November 1 through April 30. For each count, select two consecutive days as often as once a week. We recommend that you leave at least five days when you do not count between each of your two-day counts. Counting less often is fine. Even if you only count once all season, your data are valuable.
4. **How to count** – Watch your count site as much or as little as you want during each two-day count. For every species you can identify, record the maximum number of individuals visible simultaneously during your two-day count. *Keep one running tally across both days. This way you won't count the same bird twice.*
5. **What to count** – Count all birds you see in your count site during the day that are attracted to resources that you provide, even if they don't visit feeders, but ignore birds that simply fly over your count site.
6. **Optional additional data** – There are several types of additional information you can record and submit with your bird counts: 1) mammals that you see in your count site, 2) sick birds and bird mortality, 3) behavioral interactions and predation events, 4) management activities that you do at your site, and 5) feelings about things you see during your counts.
7. **Report your counts** – Submit counts through the Your Data section of our website or the FeederWatch mobile app.

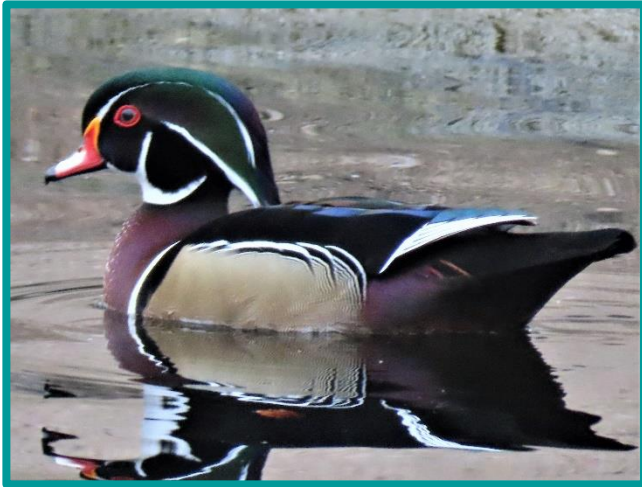


Photo courtesy Ann Reynolds

If you are interested in learning more about the business side of the chapter, all ETCMN members are invited to attend the quarterly chapter Board meetings. You can also access the Board meeting minutes on the chapter website under Members Only section, select Board of Directors and enter the current password.

The Wood Duck Whistler is a monthly publication of East Texas Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. News, essays, comments, and ideas are welcome. Please email them to Ann Reynolds at ann@etex.net.

Photos for Book Reviews are courtesy of Amazon. Unless otherwise noted, all other photos belong to the author of the article.

Upcoming Events

December 7, 11:00 am, Chapter meeting and holiday party, TNC

December 10, TMN Tuesday, noon – 1:00 pm, Training Class Mentors Showcase.

December 20, articles for the chapter newsletter due to Karen Hulene Bartell, at info@karenhulenebartell.com



IN THE COMMUNITY

NETFO – 1st Wednesday 6:30 pm, New location to be announced soon!

Tyler Audubon Society, 2nd Tuesday, 6:30 pm, St. Francis Episcopal Church, Education Room, 3232 Jan Avenue.

NPSOT-Tyler – Thank you to all Master Naturalists who attended the 2024 NPSOT Tyler meetings. If you would like to join our email list of program events and meeting dates, please send a message to Kimberly Smith, at kimsmithatx@gmail.com. **Please note, our program meetings for 2024 are complete. We look forward to seeing you in January 2025 when our meetings resume.**

NPSOT – Wood County – 1st Wednesday, 2:00 pm Sorrelle Farm, Mineola

NPSOT – Longview – 4th Thursday 2:00 pm, Longview Arboretum



WHERE YOU CAN FIND US

You can find East Texas Chapter Master Naturalists here:

<https://txmn.org/etwd/>

<https://www.facebook.com/EastTexasMasterNaturalist/>

<https://www.instagram.com/easttexasmasternaturalist/>

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

<https://agriflifeextension.tamu.edu/>



<https://tpwd.texas.gov/>

Texas Master Naturalist – East Texas Chapter Monthly Chapter meetings are held the **fourth Thursday of the month at the Tyler Nature Center, 11942 FM 848, Tyler, TX 75707**. Meet and greet 6:45 pm; meeting at 7:00 pm.

Everyone is welcome.

Safety Guidelines from TMN: Safety is our guiding principle. Follow all federal, state and county guidelines for TMN activities. Virtual platforms are useful and should remain an important consideration for planning meetings and events. Masks and social distancing considerations are encouraged. (July 2021)

ETCMN CHAPTER ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

****President: 2024-2025** Wanda Rauscher

****Vice President: 2023-2024** Cindy Smith

Hospitality Co-Chairs: 2023 Caryn Vorsas, Joe Vorsas; Bonnie Edwards

****Secretary: 2023-2024** Carol Lanthrum

Historian/Archivist: TBD

- ****Treasurer: 2024** Robert Lumpkins

Immediate Past President: 2022-2023 Paul Wick

DIRECTORS:

Advanced Training (AT): Lead – Karen Rueb-Hall, with Amy Cumbie and Cindy Smith

Volunteer Service Projects (VSH): Lead – Dawn Bahr with Lance Homeniuk and Greg Marshall

Community Education/Outreach: Lance Homeniuk

Speakers Bureau: Greg Marshall

Diversity and Inclusion: TBD

Training Class 2024: Kay Jenkins

Membership: Donna Smith

Volunteer Management System Director: Lindsey Smith

Communications Support:

E-Blast: Wanda Rauscher

Newsletter: Ann Reynolds

Photography: Lindsey Smith

Public Relations: TBD

Social Media: Lead - Greg Marshall, Dawn Bahr and Julie Davis

Website: Jessica Coleman

State Representative: Wanda Rauscher or appointed alternative

2023 Class Representatives: Natalie Curley

Chapter Advisors:

Clint Perkins – A&M Agrilife Extension Agent-Smith County

Boyd Sanders – TPWD Advisor

**** = Officers & Executive Board Members**

Revised 4/30/24