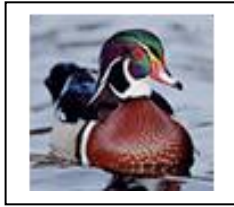


Wood Duck Whistler



East Texas Chapter Master Naturalists

August 2020 Volume 20, Issue 8



Unexpected Times

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Well, summer continues for a little while. Time to be grateful for trees while it's hot out there.

Of course the weather is bringing some hitch to that. The rain may be nice for some. But we hope that people caught up in the trouble of two hurricanes going on

close together come out safe.

Another surprise (if only because all this being apart has kept us from getting our heads together and the fellowship with it) a reminder of history that can give us something to think about while we cannot share each other's company.

While we are uncertain about how the future will play out in the times ahead, at least we have a chance to move forward online with meetings and even with planning a new class next year. Stay tuned because the annual meeting of the Texas Master Naturalists is coming online, too, so that we can share some time across the state.



A Little History on Our 20th Anniversary

We haven't been able to spend much time as fellow Master Naturalists together this year.

We still have reason to celebrate, even if we can't be together. In 1997 the beginnings of the Texas Master Naturalist program was born in San Antonio. It grew from there to what it is today. Along the way

our chapter had its start.

Thanks to Kevin Herriman who reminded some of us in a recent email. This month of August is marks our 20th year since our founding. And according to Mr. Herriman, we held our first course in August of 2000 at Camp Tyler. Four people helped set up that first course: Irene Hamel

(Sierra) and Kevin Herriman our advisors from TPWD, Brian Triplett from the Texas Agrilife Extension Service, and Ann Brown, a former member of another TMN chapter that had moved to East Texas. Yep, Kevin Herriman has been with us from the beginning. A big thank you for all those from back then and those who might still be (continued on page 7)

East Texas Seeds Project by Wanda Rauscher



(Photos by WWR)

Female Cloudless Sulphur Butterfly enjoying the Spotted Beebalm

Hopefully, you have seen the e-blast that includes the description of one of our latest chapter projects: East Texas Seeds! I want to encourage those of you with land of your own to start looking for the plants on the list at <https://www.ckwri.tamuk.edu/research-arch-programs/texas-native-seeds-program-tns/about-us/east-texas-natives-project>.

For those of you on the edge of development, consider asking for permission to harvest seed before new housing/buildings sprout up. I asked for permission from the developer in my neighborhood, noting that all collecting is at my own risk, and got permission! There are two plants on the “what’s next list”: Spotted Beebalm also called Spotted Horsemint (*Monarda punctata*) and Longspike Tridens (*Tridens strictus*). Another plant will soon be added Roundleaf Thoroughwort (*Eupatorium rotundifolium*), found in damp soils, and we’ve been asked to watch for it.

Let’s look at Spotted Beebalm. In my neighborhood it begins to bloom in late May and finishes up late July.

And this is what it looks like when seeds have started to drop. This is actually a little past optimum seed harvest, but I was able to gather a few tablespoons.

I noticed that Crystal Mann just captured a photo of a current bloom on iNaturalist, August 8 in Cherokee County, so some stands are still blooming and can be watched for seeds to ripen. The yellow petals with the spots fall off and stalks begin to turn

brown. Seeds ripen about 2-3 weeks after the plant blooms. Other folks on the web have suggested that putting a bag over the stalk and bending it with a shake is a way to find out if seeds are ripe (beige to brown seeds, not green ones). Since I knew these were ripe, just wasn’t sure if there were many seeds remaining I used two methods: 1) I clipped stalks and put them in a paper bag overnight and then shook the bag and sorted through leaf matter to find seeds with tweezers (yep, the hard way) and 2) I set some of the less crispy stalks on a white paper towel protected from wind but NOT in the house overnight. Method two yielded just as much seed from fewer stalks. I say not in the house because there is a lot of insect wildlife in and among the stalks.

Seeds are tiny: roughly 1 millimeter by 0.5 millimeters. Here is what the seeds look like:



The leaves of this plant when crushed smell like oregano, another way to verify you have the correct species identified.

I have a reference to make a homemade seed sieve using a PVC 4 inch “spigot adapter” and hardware cloth. I’ll let you know next newsletter how the sieve project went.

(continued on page 8)



August 3, 2020
Longview, Texas

The President's Message by Paul Wick

What is a Naturalist?

Remembering what Barney Lipscomb taught us in his first lecture, he said that a naturalist has an eye for nature and a heart for exploration, adventure, expectation, passion, curiosity, investigation, wonder, and belief. While we may differ in what aspects of nature most attracts us, a naturalist simply cares about the natural world around us.

During these days of the COVID-19 pandemic, I would have to add that a naturalist has to be adaptable, resourceful, and innovative. Maybe some of you have discovered these in your search to gain volunteer hours. We know that some are having difficulty and others are finding ways to get volunteer hours. As I have

heard it said about the pandemic, "We are all in the same storm, but we are not all in the same boat." If you need suggestions, let us know.

Just to highlight a few of the many Advanced Training and Volunteer Service Hours projects which are sent out in the monthly eblast, note the following:

- TMN Virtual Volunteer Fair, September 2nd (time TBD)
- TMN Annual Meeting, October 14-17, 2020, is offered online with 90+ sessions on a variety of topics. Many AT hours and no travel.
- The Great Fall Texas Birding Classic, October 1-31, which can be done with teams or individually should

be fun to enjoy the fall bird migration.

- Workdays at Faulkner Park in Tyler will meet next on September 8th with Hue Adams and the "wild bunch".
- Vickie Hoppis has offered to lead a new group for minor trail maintenance and iNaturalist projects if there is interest.

Check the monthly eblast for details and many more offerings.

Stay safe.



Book Reviews by Lance Homeniuk



Clip art

The Kids Book of the Night Sky by Ann Love and Jane Drake, illustrated by Heather Collins. 2004, Kids can Press, Tonawanda, NY.

I was looking for astronomy books to mine for activities, crafts, and information to use in a summer day camp when I found this book in a Wichita Bookaholics store. I also had three others but this is the one that I used the most and I could not have been successful without it. How do you share the wonders of the night sky with children you meet with between 8 am and noon? Projects and homework! It helped that a comet visited just after sunset so I could assign homework.

The projects I liked best were making a planisphere (star chart) that is adjustable for time and date, a planet plotter, and a star clock. Interspersed among the games, models, recipes, and educational articles are stories from

various cultures. The stories are mostly myths collected from classical Greeks, native Americans, northern Europeans, and the Philippines. I will nevermore be able to discern the Man in the Moon, it is now obviously a jackrabbit; but Hjuke (Jack) and Bil (Jill) are there too, and you can watch them disappear one after the other.

A short glossary and index are included in this 144 page book. Illustrations are either black & white or midnight blue & white, though some have a bit of both. It is paperback, almost square at 8 ½ inches by 9 ½ inches and opens to lay flat which is handy when teaching, building, or skywatching occupy both hands. Of course, I paid less than the full price of \$16.95

A Tippy Canoe And Canada Too: An adventure in animal antics and wilderness wisdom, by Sam Campbell, 1946, Simon & Schuster. Reprinted 1974 by

A.B. Publishing Inc., Ithaca, MI.

This is volume 4 in the "Living Forest Series." The author is described as "the Philosopher of the Forest" and during his life had written some 21 books, made several nature films, produced a radio show, and lectured across the country. Though he passed away in 1962, two websites devoted to his life and work, and a biographical film is in the works. I guess I won't run out of material to research!

This smallish paperback (250 pages, about 4" X 6") has been reprinted and copyrighted by his wife, Giny. Set in the North Woods of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ontario in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, the story is a loosely connected series of adventures centered around the author and his wife returning to their cabin on an island in a northern lake. In the latter half of the book (continued on page 9)

Mike Price on *Undaunted Courage* by Steven Ambrose

I recently read this book and thought it would be an informative read for Master Naturalists. In summary, it is the story of the Lewis and Clark expedition authorized by then president, Thomas Jefferson, to explore the land west of the Mississippi and to find an all water route to the Pacific Ocean. As part of the expedition Lewis was expected to collect samples of animals and plants not known to science and identify medicinal plants used by the native peoples they encountered as well as document different languages he encountered and any unusual customs of the local inhabitants. About a third of the book deals with the training Lewis received to enable him to do the scientific work expected and his preparation for a 2-year journey into an area of America that had never been explored. Everything you took you had to carry, move by boat, or use a horse to

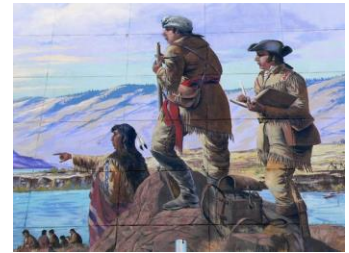
carry. Things back then were heavy. In addition to survival items, he needed presents for the native tribes he expected to meet as well as things for those he was unaware of. The number one thing was not to run out of gunpowder or bullets as they were to live off the land as much as possible. The remaining two thirds of the book was a day by day account of daily life based on his journals and journals of the other people in the group. It was very informative to read about their journey into a never before explored land. The wildlife numbers were unbelievable and they were overwhelmed by the size and height of the Rocky Mountains.

A few of the more interesting things to me were:

- Some of the native tribes described were extinct 2 decades later due to exposure to European

diseases brought in by people following the L&C expedition. The L&C journal notes are the only written descriptions of those tribe's language and customs.

- The culture of many of the native tribes was one of battle with neighboring tribes. Chiefs and leaders were selected by how many scalps they took from enemy tribes. If peace was established selection of tribal leaders would need to change.
 - The daily diet east of the continental divide consisted mainly of game killed by the 31-person expedition. The average meat consumption per man was 7 to 9 pounds a day. The primary animals killed and eaten were deer, buffalo, elk and antelope. When they crossed the
- (continued on page 9)





A Caroline Metallic Tiger Beetle just expired at my front door (after a happy 6 week life I hope).

I have found another group of insects to explore that fit my target criteria of being possible to identify to species by observation (as opposed to requiring death & dissection) and *not* having an impossible-to-learn number of species present in North

America: tiger beetles. In North America north of Mexico there are 116 species and 153 recognized subspecies/ geographically distinct races. You may have seen Ross Winton's TPWD article Oct. 2019 (https://tpwmagazine.com/archive/2019/oct/scout8_wildthing/index.phtml#:~:text=Texas%20is%20home%20to%20more,species%20are%20still%20being%20discovered.). Mr. Winton says there are over 60 species in Texas. When you want to take a look at what's been seen in our area (the 10 counties in our chapter) iNaturalist's explore tab easily provides the information. Just put "Tiger Beetles" in the species box and whatever county you like in the location box. There are 14

Tiger Beetles by Wanda Rauscher

species observed for our area. I have only seen three of these species so far.

The Six-spotted Tiger Beetle I have seen multiple times in Gregg County and Harrison County.



Recently I observed the Ocellated Tiger Beetle.



Some of these beetles are eye-catchingly beautiful and they do not chew up plants but rather eat other arthropods in their adult form and as nymphs. Although they have wings, they mostly race along the ground at speeds up

to 5 mph in spurts stopping abruptly to let their blurred vision clear. When they fly it's usually not far: 20 or 30 feet. They are fun to watch!

They are fun to learn about, too. Try typing Cicindella and chemistry or ultrasound at your Google search bar.

The first edition of *A Field Guide to the Tiger Beetles of the United States and Canada* published in 2006. Six years later it was out of date.

The authors credit this to the data contributed by new enthusiasts changing what we thought we knew about distribution, behavior, and ecology. Now there is a second edition to the field guide published in 2015. The authors also recommend the website <https://askabiologist.asu.edu/tiger-beetle-watcher>.

One caution. Do not try to pick them up bare handed. They can bite!

A Little History in Our



around—and everyone since. I've only been in the chapter since 2013 when I took classes though I had my first one about birds the fall before. I've loved it ever since.

Kevin has taught a number of classes over the years for the chapter, Mammalogy especially, though he had to cut back to spend more time with his family. In his email, Kevin said that, “At that time there was no State Curriculum. Everything developed from scratched based on what the other chapters had done. I believe there were 7 chapters in the state at that time.

In 1999 the first statewide TMN program coordinator was hired, Michelle Haggerty. At that time, I was the Wildlife District 5 Leader (there was no WMA Project at that time) and Michelle was one of my technicians. She left from East Texas to head up that program.”

Here is a bullet from the Texas Master Naturalist 10th Anniversary Program Report 1998-2008:

- In 2000, four chapters known as the East Texas, Lindheimer, Lost Pines and Mid-Coast chapters were established. The first TMN statewide meeting and advanced training was held, and the program received its first international award with the Wildlife Management Institute's President's 2000 Award.

Again from Mr. Herriman: “Another interesting factoid relating to our Chapter. It regards TMN receiving the Wildlife Management Institute's President's 2000 Award. In 2000 we were looking to come up with our Chapter name and a logo for our chapter newsletter the Wood Duck Whistler. I found an illustration of a Wood Duck that we liked in my copy of *Ecology and Management of the Wood Duck*. This is a Wildlife Management Institute Book so I called them to see if we could get permission to use the illustration. I began explaining what the Texas Master's Naturalist program was and they were intrigued. They asked more and more questions until they were getting into specifics that I knew Irene was more knowledgeable about, so I “tagged out” with her and she continued the conversation. Irene in turn got them in contact with Michelle who had just become the TMN program coordinator. TMN was honored with the award and if I recall correctly our Chapter ended with approval to use the illustration.”

Perhaps we will get to celebrate together sometime. Either way we can go and celebrate our love of the wild and our chapter where it fits best—outdoors. And don't forget the TMN Annual meeting. The first one was held the same year our chapter was established and now it is going to be held online. Things may change. That pretty much defines the natural world. But some things don't. Our chapter will endure just like our love for the outdoors.

East Texas Seeds Project
by Wanda Rauscher
(continued from page 2)

The second plant on the list is a bunchgrass Longspike Tridens. This grass flowers from July to November and produces seed in fall.
See photo below.



Photo by R. Alan Shadow, USDA NRCS
East Texas Plant Materials Center

And these are the ripe seeds:



Longspike tridens seed (Photo - M. Brakie)

Information needed for all seed collections include: GPS coordinates for plants (can use your cell phone's compass feature), elevation (again from the cell phone compass), rough number of plants in the grouping (ideally a strong population with 30-50 plants in the same area), soil type (sand, loam, clay...), county, landmarks or roads nearby, date of collection, and identifications for any plants growing alongside (can take photos for later identification). Best seed storage is a paper lunch sack which is kept in the air conditioning until submitted.

Only collect where you have permission!!!!!! Let me know (email) when ready for a seed form and/or need to have seeds submitted.

I hope that lots of you have fun with this project! We can have impact in helping get seed sources for pipeline and other land restoration in East Texas. Right now, this is an individual or family project but let's hope we can do group activities down the road.

Book Reviews
by Lance Homeniuk
(continued from page 4)

the author, his wife, their young friend Squoip, and canoe Buddy (every bit as much a character as the humans and animals) quest through rivers and lakes northward to find their dream "sanctuary lake".

Sam has been long gone, but his legacy is fresh - some of his films are available on blue ray! Most of the story is narrative and anecdotes but one passage stands out on its own:

"Sometimes we forget in our habits of living that insulation works both ways. The fine structure of homes that keeps out weather and temperature, keeps us in as well. Seldom can we think beyond our walls. The seething, natural world of winds and wild ways is pictured as a kind of enemy against which we must fortify ourselves. The thicker the walls the greater our protection – but the deeper our confinement."

Campbell admits a house is less confining than an apartment or hotel, a cabin less so than a house, a tent less than a cabin, but the freest abode is a sleeping bag on the ground under the stars, in the right weather. My wife and I have progressed the opposite direction in the past 40 years. My soul yearns to be unencumbered, my spine joints demand relative comfort. So I will adventure vicariously.

At 8 ½ X 5 ½ inches, 250 pages this was an easy read. And it includes the "Sanctuary Lake Song", to the tune of the Marine Corps Hymn.

Mike Price on *Undaunted Courage* by Steven Ambrose
(continued from page 5)

continental divide the diet changed from meat to roots. Everyone got sick with stomach problems for about 2 weeks.

- Lewis had special instructions from Jefferson to personally send him seeds from unknown plants he encountered. Many of these plants are still growing today at Monticello.
- Most of the first Presidents of America were Virginia farmers. Because of this they were by necessity Naturalists with Jefferson at the top of the list. They had to have a good knowledge of plants, animals, geography and how these things interconnected with each other.

2020 Officers & Committee Chairs

Paul Wick –President
Wanda Rauscher – Vice President
Bob Lumpkins – Secretary
Phil Guthrie – Treasurer
Lance Homeniuk – Immediate Past President

Mike Price – Volunteer Service Projects Director
Beverly Guthrie – Advanced Training Director

Vickie Hoppis – Membership
Beverly Guthrie – Training Director
Carl Strange –Volunteer Management System

Jan Barth – Historian/Archivist
Vacant – Librarian
Karen Rueb-Hall – Hospitality
Quita Russell – Hospitality
Terry Smitherman – Hospitality

Lindsey Smith – Communications Dir
Kathy Riffe – Public Relations
R. Dale Wade – Website
Greg Marshall – Social Media
Tamara Kratzer - Newsletter Editor

Kevin Herriman - TPWD Advisor
Clint Perkins – Agrilife Extension Agent-Smith County Advisor

Monthly Programs

We meet the **Fourth** at 308 N Broadway Bring a friend.
Thursday in Tyler Invite a guest.
at the Discovery Join us at **6:30 PM** Everyone is
Science Place Annex for socializing before welcomed.
Bldg our meeting.

Directions and Dues

East Texas Chapter
Master Naturalists
Meeting Facility:
**Discovery Science
Place Annex Bldg
308 N Broadway Ave
Tyler, Texas 75702**

Directions:
On Broadway Ave on
the left from the south
or right from the north in
downtown Tyler near
Line Street (N of
Locust)

Please send \$20.00
individual (\$35.00
couple)
Annual Chapter dues
to:
ETCMN Attn: Treasurer
Box 131184
Tyler, TX 75713-1184

*Your news, stories, comments, photos,
and ideas are needed. Tell us about where you
volunteer and what you're doing,*

Deadline is 15th of every month!

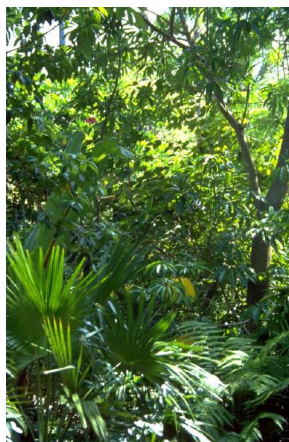
Please send items to Tamara Kratzer.



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