

The GLC Tidings

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PHOTO, ART & MEDIA CONTEST

Share your art or photos by entering the annual contest **Deadline:** October 26, 2018
<https://txmn.org/files/2018/08/Annual-Photo-Art-Media-2018.pdf>

Question? email Michelle Haggerty at
mmhaggerty@tamu.edu

Our Mission

Volunteers dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources through education, outreach and service in our community

From the President

Betsy Palkowsky

What a long hot summer it's been. From what I've read about the changing climate we need to get used to this kind of hot dry summer for years to come. It's probably time we started learning about planting plants that are more tolerant of this heat. I have a lot of native, heat tolerant plants in my yard and many of them are wilting in the temperatures we've had lately. Additionally, the trees are not happy with the conditions as some of you have posted on our Facebook page. I'm sure I will lose more post oaks before the year is out.

Speaking of losing something, I am going to miss having Dave and Jan Redden in the chapter. If you haven't heard, we are losing them to the beautiful state of South Carolina. A big thank you goes to Dave and Jan for all they have done to get our chapter started and continued since 2002. Dave's dedication, hard work, patience, knowledge and kindness have made this chapter one people can't wait to join. These are tough shoes to fill but we have had good success over the years recruiting new talent and I'm confident Dave will find the chapter thriving in the years to come.

Regarding new talent, our 2019 Training program planning will get kicked off in the next few weeks. We already have over 6 students registered and paid for. Stay tuned for information on how you can help make the next class successful.

Chapter Survey

If you haven't already done this, please spend a few minutes letting me know how things are going in the chapter. Your input is appreciated

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/K25Y9GJ>



<https://masternaturalistendowment.org/20th-anniversary-gala/>

Fundraiser for the
[TMN Foundation](https://www.txmn.org/tmn-foundation/)



<https://txmn.org/2018-annual-meeting/>

September Chapter Meeting

Attend the chapter meeting, Sept 15, 2018 from 9 - 10:30, followed by advanced training from 11 – 1:30. The meeting is being held at the Winedale Historic Center, 3738 FM 2714 Round Top, TX.

Advanced Training

Chapter meeting training program

You are in for a treat with this month's advanced training program which occurs after the chapter meeting. David and Patricia Lewis, of the Gulf Coast Mycology Society are back to teach you about the 'Fungus Among Us'. The class begins with a presentation called "Mushrooms 101" which provides the basics on fungi. This will be followed by a hands-on microscope workshop will show features that help in the identification of fungi. Dried specimens will be provided if the instructors can't find any fungi fruiting on their property on Friday.

Attendees are encouraged to bring specimens from their own properties. Be sure to include the stem of the fungi as it often helps in proper identification of the fungi.

David P. and Patricia Lewis

David is a retired chemist and dedicated mycologist, with a B.S. and M.S. from Lamar University, Beaumont, TX. David is currently a Research Associate with the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, an honorary staff member of the SM Tracy Herbarium at Texas A&M University and President of the Gulf States Mycological Society since 1998. He has served as Technical Co-Leader for many Mexican Mushroom tours and offered his fungal knowledge to many naturalist groups. David has received The North American Mycological Association's Award for Contributions to Amateur Mycology, and the R.E. Jackson Conservation Award from the Big Thicket Association.

Patricia Lewis is a retired accountant, whose first love was native plants is currently treasurer for four non-profits, and the facilitator for the Gulf States Mycological Society.

Why do Pecans trees lose their limbs?

Ann Ray

In the five years we have owned our one acre of old native pecan trees we have gotten fairly used to their random limb loss. But the one that broke last month "won the prize". Apparently, the bark was breached many years ago and water has been entering the branch about 30' up the trunk. The 46' branch was about 30" in diameter where it broke off and yielded lots of interesting milled boards and lots of firewood.

If you or your neighbors have pecan trees and you have wondered about their frequent branch losses, I recommend: "PECAN TREES AND WHY LIMBS BREAK" written by Larry Stein, Professor and Extension Horticulturist, Texas Cooperative Extension.



Carpenter Bees – Look like bumble bees

Dave Redden

As I prepare to move to my new home in South Carolina, my biggest single task is to clear out over 20 years of stuff accumulated in my “shop” or barn. Some of that involves pieces of wood from old projects I started and never finished, like large slabs of oak I cut from my house in Houston before we moved to Washington County. There are other examples of pieces of wood that have sat silently and unnoticed for many years.



Yesterday I got to some of those and was surprised to see a bumblebee (I thought) sitting quietly on the bottom of a piece of 2x4 that used to support my canoe. It wasn't moving. I thought it was dead. So, I touched it, expecting it to fall. Instead it wiggled a little, but it did not fly away. Okay, so maybe it was sleepy. What was a bumblebee doing in a building with no flowers around? I took the board down and laid it on the floor. When I did, about 10 other bees came out of several holes along the board that I had not noticed. They all crawled a short distance and then flew off, except the sleepy one. The holes were almost perfectly round and about a half inch in diameter. Strange behavior for a bumblebee, I thought.

Then it came to me that these might not be bumblebees. Earlier that morning I had received one of the inspection reports for my new house in South Carolina. This inspection was for termites and other wood-destroying insects or WDIs, as the report referred to them. This was a big concern for me because the house is a log cabin. I was mainly concerned about termites. There were none found, but they did report seeing evidence of carpenter bees, like small round holes, with sawdust below them. My first reaction was, “So what's the problem with a few bees around the house? Aren't they good pollinators?” My real estate agent convinced me to request the house be treated.



Then I looked up carpenter bees online and found that he was correct in trying to keep them out of the house. See this report, <https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef611> from the Univ. of Kentucky telling more about the entomology of carpenter bees. Wikipedia also has a good description of carpenter bees, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carpenter_bee.

Carpenter bees (*Xylocopa*) can be easily distinguished from bumblebees because they have a shiny black abdomen (see picture above) whereas bumblebees are hairy all over. Female carpenter bees also do not have bare corbicula (pollen sacs on their back legs). Instead they have hairy hind legs. Unlike termites, the carpenter bees do not eat the wood. They just make burrows to raise their young in the wood and apparently will use them for multiple times. This is what causes the damage to the wood, because the burrow structure continues to grow. Although not normally social bees, sometimes mothers and daughters will share the same burrows. The males serve no real purpose except to reproduce. They just hang around the burrow entrance and pretend to be guarding it, but they have no stinger.

The Beautiful Ocelot – More than Just a Pin



Lori Buffum

Many Texas Master Naturalists have added the 2018 re-certification pin to their collections and it's a beauty – the Ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*).

But how many of us really know anything about this **endangered** spotted cat? An article in the recent *Texas Wildlife Association* (TWA) magazine (August 2018 – “Ocelots on the Brink” by Henry Chappell) whetted my appetite for more information and I'd like to share a bit of what I learned with you.

Did you know

- The Ocelot is a medium-sized spotted cat (30-41 inches long and 15-30 lbs.) – similar in size to a bobcat but more “elegant”
- Its long tail, 18 inches, is ringed or marked with dark bars
- Typical habitat is mixed, thorny, dense brush, ideally with a canopy cover of trees
- They are nocturnal as they hunt for rabbits, rodents, birds, and sometimes amphibians or fish
- They are good swimmers and climbers, including the ability to climb *down*, unlike most cats
- During the day, they rest on branches or in tree hollows
- Home range may be 1-2 square miles for females and 3-4 square miles for males
- The female makes a den for her one or two kittens in a shallow depression in thick brush or dense bunchgrass and keeps her kittens with her for up to a year
- Predators include humans, mountain lions, bobcats, and some eagles. Note: They cannot be legally hunted since 1972 when Ocelots were added to the Federal Endangered Status
- The Ocelot once occurred throughout South Texas, the southern Edwards Plateau Region, and along the Coastal Plain. Only 13 counties can be identified as Ocelot habitat – primarily in the rugged lands of the Lower Rio Grande Valley and Rio Grande Plains. The loss of ocelot in other areas is due to loss of habitat, predator control activities, and fur trade
- “[December 2017] A rare ocelot was spotted on a game camera at the [Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge](#) near Brownsville, Texas. The ocelot that was spotted was determined by Wildlife Refuge officials to be a previously-unknown female, which is encouraging to researchers.” [Photo credit: LANWR website]



As described in detail in the TWA article mentioned earlier, the Ocelot population in Texas (estimated at around 80 cats distributed in 2 main areas) is at a critical juncture and this magnificent cat is in danger of extirpation from the United States. How tragic that would be if the only Ocelots left in Texas were just the enamel pins worn by Texas Master Naturalists!

To learn more about Ocelots and conservation efforts:

- Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD)
https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_w7000_0013_ocelot.pdf
- Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/laguna_atascosa/wildlife_and_habitat/ocelot.html
- YouTube: Phantom Cat of the Chaparral: Endangered Ocelot
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0t9zAnY71c>

The Thrill of a Not-to-close Encounter

Lori Buffum

near Bellville Texas, August 11, 2018 about 9 am

I am absolutely thrilled by my sighting of a Timber (or Canebrake) Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*), a threatened species. I spotted it draped languidly along a tree limb at about eye level just off the road along which I was walking. Pictures are best I could do without getting too close, but you can see the rattle and that along with the markings clinched the ID for me. It was very fat and quiet, most likely digesting breakfast. Although this is my neighborhood, the property adjacent to this part of the road is a wooded, shrubby vacant lot so seems ideal habitat for this magnificent creature.



Read more about the Timber Rattler from TPWD <https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/species/timberrattlesnake/>

Use Our Sales Tax Status Advantage

Leada Dietz

Gideon Lincecum Chapter's 501c3 designation means we do not have to pay state sales tax on purchases. How do you accomplish this? Simply download, print and fill out the [sales tax exemption form](#) from the website (found in members section under Chapter Policies, Procedures and Forms) and present it to the vendor.

Thanks to Sherry Wilcox, our sales and use tax exemption number, 32021004992, has been added to the form so that those vendors who insist on having a number can see it right there.

Many of the receipts for May and June show sales tax was paid, and while not a large amount, \$22.32 every two months would add up to \$133.92 per year. Let's think ahead when making purchases—or keep a few forms in your car for those “too good to miss” sales of something we need that you encounter while driving around.

Cicada Killer Wasps

Betsy Palkowsky

I had another one of those ‘What the heck is that’ moments earlier this summer. This happened when I saw a HUGE wasp on the back porch. After taking a few photos and looking in a variety of places I learned they were called “Cicada Killer Wasps”. One of the sources I found is the website Cicada Mania <http://www.cicadamania.com>.



It explains how the wasp captures the cicada and drags them to their burrow to lay an egg on the cicada as food for the larvae. You can see in these photos I was able to witness the capture and dragging to a burrow myself. The wasp was not going to let the cicada go despite the cicada being bigger. I had a tough time keeping up with the wasp as it travelled across the garden.



Did you know

- *Sphecius speciosus*, often referred to as the cicada killer or the cicada hawk, is a large digger wasp species
- Cicada killers are large (0.6 to 2.0 in long), solitary wasps in the family Crabronidae, the tribe *Bembicini* Latreille, and the genus *Sphecius* Dahlbom
- Female wasps predetermine the sex of their larvae to ensure there are more females than males to create future generations
- The cicadas only use their burrow once as they die about a month after they emerge
- Not all *Sphecius* wasps in the world kill cicadas, but all *Sphecius* in the Americas do
- Cicada Killer Wasps are often confused with European Hornets (*Vespa crabro*). European Wasps are a more vibrant yellow color, feature more yellow than black and are smaller
- There are 5 species of Cicada Killer Wasps
- They are not aggressive wasps. They won't sting you, unless you really irritate them as they are more interested in finding a cicada than bothering you

Additional information can be found on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sphecius_speciosus

GLC and Austin County 4-H Scholarship - Rewarding in More Ways Than One

Tom Shaughnessy



There is a growing disparity between the time kids spend indoors wired to technology and the time they spend outside enjoying nature. The vast majority of today's kids use a computer, watch TV, or play video games daily, but only about 10 percent say they are spending time outdoors every day, according to a new nationwide poll from The Nature Conservancy (The Nature Conservancy n.d.).

Personally, I have a passion for seeing our youth connected to the outdoors whether it be for educational purposes, as part of their vocation or for recreation. I am involved or have been involved in many outdoor oriented programs for youth and have seen personally the changes and effect an outdoor environment on kids.

Many kids from infants to young adults will never experience these benefits. That is why I was honored to present, on behalf of our Chapter, the scholarship award to an over-deserving Austin County High Schooler on August 18.

All my life I've heard of 4H but really never knew what the program entailed. I now know that the 4 H's stand for: "The 4-H name represents four personal development areas of focus for the organization: head, heart, hands, and health. ... The goal of 4-H is to develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility and life skills of youth through experiential learning programs and a positive youth development approach." To be able to witness firsthand what the benefits of this youth program are was truly a highlight of my volunteering as a Certified Texas Master Naturalist. All the kids (from 3rd grade to high school seniors) were genuinely enthused to be part of the banquet that night and it warmed my heart to know that their efforts were not going unnoticed.

This year's scholarship recipient is a young man named Hunter Spacek. Hunter and his family live just north of Bellville. Hunter is a senior in high school this year and after graduation he is planning on attending technical school most likely to pursue a welding career.

Immediately after the banquet Hunter made it a point to introduce me to his parents and thank the chapter for their generosity. It wasn't until after I had the opportunity to visit with the Spacek family that night that I knew he was the right candidate for the scholarship. When I told Hunter that we would be in touch with him to follow up his reply was "if you call and I don't answer just leave a message. I'll probably be on the tractor. I'll call right back".

I trust that the rest of our chapter and friends of the chapter will join me in welcoming Hunter and the other county's recipients to the future meeting(s) when they will have the opportunity to introduce themselves and share with us their future career goals.

References

The Nature Conservancy. n.d. <https://www.nature.org/newsfeatures/kids-in-nature/kids-in-nature-poll.xml>.

The Nature Conservancy. n.d. <https://www.nature.org/newsfeatures/kids-in-nature/kids-in-nature-poll.xml> (accessed August 29, 2018).

2018 4-H Scholarships

Donna Mueller

The **Fayette County** 4-H Awards banquet was held August 5th at the Historic Casino Hall in LaGrange. Thank you to Nita Tiemann & Cindy Hobbs, our Fayette County-GL Chapter representatives.

The Scholarship recipient is Cole Brothers. After completing a semester in college, Cole will be updating us at a Chapter meeting on his achievements and accomplishments.



The **Lee County** 4-H Awards Program was held August 19th at St. John's Lutheran Church Family Center in Lincoln. Thank you to Karen Woods for being the Lee County-GL Chapter representative.

The Scholarship recipient is Logan Perry. After completing a semester in college, Cole will be updating us at a Chapter meeting on his achievements and accomplishments.

The **Washington County** 4-H Awards banquet was held August 3 at the Washington County Event Center in Brenham. Thank you to Dr. Jim Wilson, our Washington County-GL Chapter representative.

The Scholarship recipient is Laura Zibilski. After completing a semester in college, Laura will be updating us at a Chapter meeting on her achievements and accomplishments.



Washington on the Brazos State Park

Julie and David Itz



Bees, lots of bees, and a few butterflies! With Partridge pea taking over and Maximillian sunflower beginning to bloom, the bees were enjoying the pollinator garden. The Red Passion vine that froze last January was finally coming back and the fire ants were busy again!

At the July 28th Washington on the Brazos (WoB) Workday, Sheri Wilcox, Julie and David Itz weeded the beds and thinned the Partridge pea, while collecting 5 bags of weeds. We were also able to introduce ourselves to Jon Failor, the new interim director of Washington on the Brazos State Park.

On August 26 David and Julie Itz found that yellow is definitely the color for August at WoB – Partridge pea and Maximillian sunflowers with bees and butterflies flitting busily from flower to flower.

If you live in the Washington County area, please consider joining us at one of the upcoming WoB Workdays this fall. It's a great marketing opportunity for Texas Master Naturalists, since almost every visitor to the park walks by the GLC Pollinator Garden.



A busy American Bumble Bee (Bombus pensylvanicus) inside a Maximillian Sunflower



And a Cloudless Sulphur (Phoebis sennae) flits through the Partridge pea



While a Yellow Garden Spider (Argiope auratia) waits patiently for his next victim!

Quebe Prairie Update

Charlotte von Rosenberg



Sideoats Grama and Little Bluestem

October is Prairie Month. That's when the warm season native tallgrasses bloom and set seed. It's the best time to identify grasses. Each species has a very distinctive color, shape and growth habit. Sideoats gramma is the Texas State Grass and is the first to bloom. Next is Eastern Gamma grass. Already these can be seen along roadways. In October the predominate Indiangrass, Switchgrass, Big and Little bluestem will bloom.



Quebe Prairie, Quebe Switchgrass in foreground.
Maintenance Challenge in the background.

At Quebe this is the year for prairie maintenance. The prairie must be regularly burned, mowed or grazed to remove dead litter and woody plants which always threaten to invade. In early July I had the prairie mowed and 32 large round bales removed. These were forage bales not seed bales. Switchgrass was left to make seed. My objective for the prairie this year is maintenance including removal of small trees and weed/dewberry/johnsongrass control. Access to the prairie is good right now while the prairie regrows after hay-making. Some good rainfall would be most welcome.

Next year is in the planning stage. During October I'll post prairie progress and site visit opportunities via our Googlegroups. Private tours for chapter members are available by appointment any time. Call Charlotte at 512-924-3068. See you on the prairie!

Membership Memo

by Chris Morrison

Several topics have come up lately that I would like to review with you:

- **Travel time for volunteer hours** – There is no written policy, that I have been able to find, about how much travel time you can claim vs. the time you put in on your project. For those citizen science projects that you might combine several days of observation into one entry, there is no limit to the total amount of travel time per week. Be reasonable, though. If you are driving in from out of our area to volunteer, use the time it would normally take you from your place in one of our 5 counties.
- **Where to find the VMS category for your volunteer or AT hours** – Look on our website, TXMN.org/GLC.
 - [Volunteer Opportunities](#) page (under Members Section tab)– Volunteer Management System (VMS) category and leader (if any) are listed for each approved volunteer activity
 - [Upcoming Events](#) list (Calendar) on home page – VMS category listed for volunteer and AT opportunities – click on “View More” for the complete list or the individual event for more info on that
- **What if the opportunity on the calendar doesn’t have an AT category listed?**
 - If you believe it should count for AT, fill out the [request form](#) on our website or send detailed info about the program (prior to the class), by submitting the information to the chapter’s [AT committee](#) (see below)
 - If you feel it should be a volunteer opportunity, fill out the [project request form](#) and email [Cindy Rodibaugh](#), the GLC Volunteer Opportunities Director
- **The 45-day limit for submitting hours** has not gone away. Please, please submit those hours ASAP after an event. I may not approve them right away, but you have put them into the system and that’s what counts. If I have questions about an entry, please respond to [my email](#) in a timely manner.
- **The Advanced Training (AT) committee** has been expanded to include Cindy Hobbs (past president) is our chapter’s Advanced Training Director, Betsy Palkowsky (president) and Pam Green (member at large) are members of her committee. They will review and approve/deny any request for AT designation based on whether it meets the criteria for AT for our chapter. Requests must be submitted prior to attending the class. Committee email: tmnglcat@googlegroups.com
- **Google Groups news:** I’ve gone through the list of GLC Google Groups (tmnglc@googlegroups.com) members and removed those who are no longer chapter members, except a few who have asked to remain on the list. If you know someone who would like to continue getting correspondence through Google Groups, I can put them back on if I know who they are. If you know of a member who isn’t getting the GG emails, please let me know. Please continue to keep the chapter apprised of any changes in your phone number, email, or address.
- **How did we spend our summer?** The heat didn’t slow us down. From June 1 – Aug. 31, **692.25** hours of volunteer work and **81.25** hours of Advanced Training were entered VMS. What a dedicated group of volunteers and learners you are!

HOURS	ACTIVITY
227.9	Administrative Work
129.05	Winedale
61.5	Stephen F Austin State Park
30-40/each	Attwater, Citizen Science (other), Schubert House and Washington-on-the-Brazos
20-30/each	CoCoRaHS, Colorado River Watch, and Indian Creek.
10-20/each	Adopt-A-Highway, Nest Watch, and Outreach Booth
under 10/each	Austin County projects, BISD Outdoor Learning, Educational Group Presentations, Mill Creek Watershed, and Monument Hill

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Submit articles and photos to Editor Lori Buffum
(buffumhl@gmail.com)