

T E X A S



GOOD WATER MASTER NATURALIST
WILLIAMSON COUNTY

RIPPLES

VOL 2 No 6

November/December 2013

CHECK THE WEBSITE
AND SIGN UP GENIUS
FOR OPPORTUNITIES
FOR VOLUNTEER AND
AT EVENTS.

REMINDER: The Nov-
Dec. meetings are com-
bined for a potluck
dinner on Dec. 12 at
6PM

NOW YOUR KNOW

Dandelions attract at
least 93 kinds of insects.

Clover, tansy, and daises
are among at least 27
weeds/plants that **add**
nutrients to the soil.

All birds of prey are
carnivores and never fly
just for fun.

When cleaning a closet the other day I came across the following written by
Charles Osgood

EVERYBODY, **ANYBODY**, **SOMEBODY**, and **NOBODY**

There was a most important job that needed to be done
And no reason not to do it, there was absolutely none.
But in vital matters such as this, the thing you have to ask
Is WHO exactly will it be who'll carry OUT the task.
ANYBODY could have told you that, EVERYBODY knew
That this was something SOMEBODY would surely have to do.
NOBODY was unwilling. ANYBODY had the ability.
But NOBODY believed that it was his responsibility.
It seemed to be a job that ANYBODY could have done,
If ANYBODY thought he was supposed to be the one.
But since EVERYBODY recognized that ANYBODY could,
EVERYBODY took for granted that SOMEBODY would.
But NOBODY told ANYBODY that we are aware of,
That he would be in charge of seeing it was taken care of.
And NOBODY took it on himself to follow through
And do what EVERYBODY thought that SOMEBODY would do.
When what EVERYBODY needed did not get done at all,
EVERYBODY was complaining that SOMEBODY dropped the ball.
ANYBODY then could see it was an awful crying shame,
And EVERYBODY looked around for SOMEBODY to blame.
SOMEBODY should have done the job, and EVERYBODY would
have,
But in the end NOBODY did what ANYBODY could have.

THANK YOU to our board elect for next year: President: **Charles
Grimes**, VP: **Gene Chisim**, Secretary: **MaryJo Kleinert**, and treasurer:
Nancy Phillips.

For information contact: <http://txmn.org/goodwater> or goodwatermn2@gmail.com

Rain threatened the annual fall workday at Berry Springs Park, and it was just luck it was scheduled for Saturday, as the next day really was rainy. Eleven Master Naturalists appeared to work the morning away weeding, pruning, cutting and doing all sorts of chores needed to keep a park or garden neat and tidy. We were like little elves all over the park. Most of us had the opportunity to work with people, mostly Master Gardeners, who started out as strangers and ended up being friends when it was time for all to enjoy a wonderful potluck lunch.

It was a very humid day and as we gathered under the Tonkawa Pavilion at noon most everyone looked tired and sweat marks were obvious on most of our clothing. Wow, was that cold water and lemonade refreshing!

After lunch and good conversation as we got up from the tables, "I ate too much" was a common refrain. I, for one, was happy that the morning had gone so well and it was a good feeling to leave knowing the park looked so clean and inviting!

In early October six Master Naturalists plus a friend and spouse joined 26 other interested people at Selah, R. David Bamberger's ranch. Selah means relax, pause and reflect. Mr. Bamberger with his friend Mr. Church co-founded Church's Chicken, and in 1969 Bamberger turned his energy to ecological issues.

He started this journey by buying 5500 acres of the poorest ranchland he could find. There was no water on the cedar covered property. After clearing 3000 acres of cedar and sowing hundreds of pounds of native grass seed he slowly improved the land and eventually springs started flowing again, and running streams created a good size pond.

Our tour began by reading Mr. Bamberger's message to the human race inscribed on a granite rock:
A Memorial to Mankind

He who once dominated the earth destroyed it with his wastes, his poisons, and his own numbers.

Bamberger's interest in bats led him to construct an artificial bat cave. Build it and they shall come. Once called his folly, he now has 250,000 Mexican free-tail bats living in his cave. The summer evening bat flights are spectacular.

His second venture was an attempt to save the endangered African Scimitar-horned oryx. He obtained a genetically diverse population from zoos, carefully monitored their activities and progeny, as he reached a point of grazing capacity on the land he had specified for them. When he visited Africa for a site of return animals to the wild, he discovered a desert filled with hungry people. Thus, assured that zoos were well stocked with oryx he sells the overstock to leased hunting farms.

Mr Bamberger met the trailer as we returned to the parking lot. He has many wonderful tales to tell. When he bought the ranch there were 48 species of birds, now there are 215 species. We all appreciated his hospitality and the kindness of his employees. The learning experience was well worth the drive.

There are two 'open houses' a year. If you have not made this trip, you might want to mark it on your calendar for next year.

2013 ANNUAL STATE MEETING

Eleven Good Water Master Naturalists joined over 400 other naturalists from 40 of the state's 44 chapters in New Braunfels in late October for the 14th annual state meeting. Over the two and a half days more programs and speakers were offered than any one person could possibly attend. Because of our diverse interest group, between us we managed to attend most of them.

Many of us registered early enough to secure quarters on campus. MaryAnn presented two segments, one a full class and the other part of a panel. It was a productive and fun weekend. See the website for more information about the annual meeting/conference.

Here at home many GWMNs have participated in a varied and large number of projects. Listed in no particular order they include: Berry Springs: Archeology Day, trail creation and maintenance, both Spring and Fall annual clean ups, bird counts and surveys, blue bird nesting boxes, seed harvesting and cleaning, and plant surveys; JMN program in Georgetown, Spring break and summer camp at Georgetown and Hutto, Cub Scout summer camp, Youth Educational Programs at Georgetown, Hutto, Taylor and Elementary Schools, Youth Camp at TAS and Baker Sanctuary; Trail creation, native plants and bird surveys at Cemetery; bat interpretation, national and state weather reporting, dove banding, whooper watch, purple martin monitoring, amphibian and invertebrate watch, multiple angler programs, cactus moth project, nature programs for seniors at Rec Cen, Taylor Garden Expo and ZestFest, landscaping at Thrall HS, pollinator garden at landfill, Common Ford Park, Boy Scout leader training, seed balls and starters in numerous places, Wildflower Center and Zilker Park Botanical Gardens. Of course we did a new class training also. My, our members have been BUSY!!!

DADDY LONGLEGS

MaryAnn Melton

The common daddy longlegs may look like spiders but only are distant relatives. Both are in the Arachnida class and both have 8 legs, fang-like parts and appendages near the mouth.. The seven-joint long stilt-like legs allow daddy longlegs to run rapidly over leaves and grass. A second longer pair of legs, with special sensors allow them to taste and feel the ground ahead---acting as nose, tongue and ears---touch the ground first.

In the order *Opiliones*, Daddy longlegs are actually harvestmen. 200 of the 3,200 species of harvestmen are native to the United States. Spiders have two primary body parts; harvestmen have only one as the head, thorax and abdomen are fused together. Spiders have eight eyes, harvestmen two. Harvestmen do not spin silk and cannot spin webs. Spider venom, held in the chelicerae, paralyzes prey. Like spiders harvestmen have chelicerae, but no venom. Harvestmen use their chelicerae to grasp food and are omnivores and scavengers with no need for venom. They can eat food in chunks taking it in their mouth, while other arachnids regurgitate digestive juices to dissolve their prey into a liquid before consuming. They find small insects, eggs, dead material on the ground. They also eat fecal material from birds and other animals and sometimes the juices from fruits and vegetables. Most are nocturnal, but a few species are active during the day.

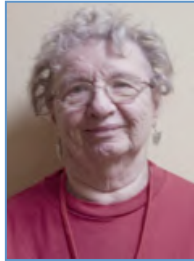
Harvestmen produce strong defense chemicals from pores near their eyes that taste and smell bad to predators. They also congregate in large groups often so close that their legs are interwoven. These large groups concentrate the defensive chemicals. Grouping together may help them control temperature and humidity. When disturbed one will start a slow up and down vibrating motion. As the rest begin to vibrate it intimidates or confuses predators. They also play dead. They may detach their legs to escape. The detached legs continue to move distracting the predators.

Living in fields and forests, harvestmen lay their eggs in moist soil often under rocks or logs. The eggs survive winter's cold hatching in warmer spring weather. They only lay one batch of eggs per year; lifespan is short.

1000 HOUR VOLUNTEER MILESTONE

Winnie Bowen

MaryAnn Melton



CONGRATULATIONS



A member of first GWMN class in 2010, she was the chapter's first secretary and continues to be on the board undertaking the newsletter in 2013. She also was membership chair in 2010 and secretary in 2011.

Loves birds, but as chapter's oldest member her eyesight is not what it once was and makes identifying birds difficult.

Has a passion for flowers and has spent many hours at Berry Springs, a city favorite.

Member of the Youth Education Com from the beginning. Attended the state meeting four years. Keeps on learning and adding to her notebook for reference as the computer in her head gets slower and slower.

Mary Ann is interested in all elements of the natural world, calling herself a Jack of all trades and master of none. Her strongest knowledge is about birds and bats. Trained at the Lost Pines Chapter in 2009. Member of the Good Water Steering Committee and was the first Vice President for the Chapter. Served as President in 2011. Currently serves as Advanced Training Chair, Youth Education Committee chair, Webmaster, and Project Coordinator for the McNeil Bridge Bat Interpretation. Mary Ann will be making her second presentation at the State Meeting this year. She lives in Hutto.

HEARD FROM

- ❖ A Mammalogist: Mule deer thermo-regulate body temperature through vascular ears.
- ❖ A Zoologist: cats are induced ovulators, so artificial insemination fails.
- ❖ A Wildlife manager: Feral hogs have no sweat glands, so they wallow in mud, rest, seek shade and hunt at night. Their excellent smell can detect something 5-7 miles away or 25-feet underground! They can jump a 3-foot fence and swim up to two miles.
- ❖ An Ornithologist: Sparrows are found in every state.
- ❖ And also warblers are insect eaters so feeders are not useful.
- ❖ An Entomologist: Only female mosquitoes bite.
- ❖ And Dragonflies are sometimes referred to as mosquito hawks.
- ❖ A herpetologist: The only snake that can float in water is the cottonmouth.
- ❖ A Botanist: Indian paint brush roots and stems are toxic.

