

Good Water RIPPLES

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

Editor: Mary Ann Melton
 Layout: Lisa Ward

Volume 5 - Number 2 April 2016



UPCOMING EVENTS

| | |
|-------|------------------------|
| 03/28 | NPAT |
| 03/28 | Austin Butterfly Forum |
| 04/14 | NPOST |
| 04/25 | NPAT |
| 04/28 | Austin Butterfly Forum |
| 04/28 | GWMN Chapter Meeting |
| 05/09 | WAG |
| 05/12 | NPSOT |
| 05/23 | NPAT |
| 05/23 | Austin Butterfly Forum |
| 05/26 | GWMN Chapter Meeting |

Check the website for additional events including volunteer and training opportunities. The many events are way too numerous to even think about posting all here!

IN THIS EDITION

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Pollinator Garden | 1 |
| United Way MLK Service | 2 |
| Book Club Review: Longhorns | 3 |
| Bird Walk | 4 |
| Zika Virus | 5 |
| Meet Good Water Members | 6 |

Pollinator Garden by Mary Ann Melton

Nineteen volunteers from the Good Water Chapter Master Naturalists and the Williamson County Native Plant Society met February 19 at the Williamson County Pollinator Garden. The garden is at the entrance to the landfill and was in need of some maintenance prior to the upcoming wildflower bloom. With so many eager and hardworking hands much was accomplished. The stepping stone path was lengthened and new mulch spread to create an easy way to walk through the garden plants. Waste Management provided the mulch. A new bed was created along the extended pathway and plants were transplanted. Invasive and undesirable plants were removed. New bird feeding stations were installed. New bee houses for native bee species were put up. A new bluebird house is ready and waiting for inhabitants. Plants that needed to be pruned were cut back. New signs for the garden were put out.

The native wildflowers and perennials are beginning their spring bloom. With the new memorial bench for Sterlin Barton, this garden will be a beautiful place to spend time watching the bees and butterflies visiting the plants.

The Williamson County Pollinator Garden is a joint project of Good Water Master Naturalists, the Williamson County Native Plant Society and Waste Management.



United Way of Williamson County "Day of Service" MLK Holiday by Susan Blackledge

Once again we had a great turn out for our United Way Day of Service. With the help of Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, and a Southwestern University Service organization we continued to maintain and develop the Berry Springs Nature Trail.



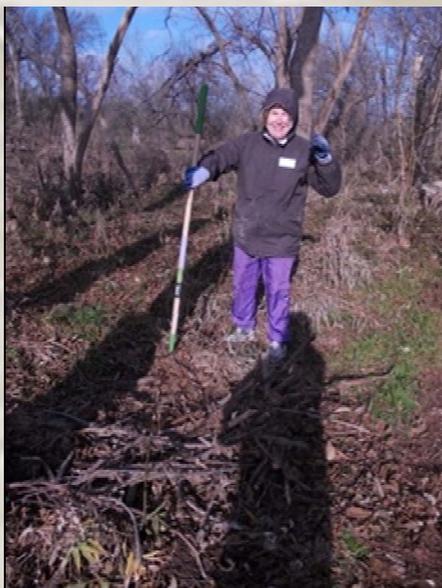
The Nature Trail suffered damages from the Memorial Day floods in 2015. The trail was flooded both on that Friday and then again on Memorial Day. Large limbs were knocked down and washed down Berry Creek and came up onto the banks of the nature trail and covered the trails as well as being wedged into the tree limbs. After the water receded and the land dried we could see what we needed to do.

With the help of volunteers the Nature Trail Native Plant Garden was weeded. Chinaberry, Ligustrum and other invasives were removed and stumps

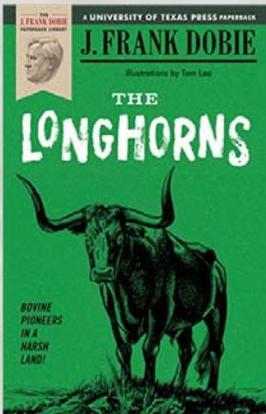
treated. Road base was put down to establish one section of the trail again. One section of the trail had to be rerouted due to flood debris being too much to remove. Limbs and brush were cleared off the trails and in areas so that plants could have a chance to see sunshine and grow. Garbage that comes down from IH 35 was removed. Invasive Bastard Cabbage was dug up and removed.

We had breakfast snacks and it was great weather. A huge success. I hope everyone gets a chance to see the results of their labor while the wildflowers, trees and shrubs are in bloom now.

Please mark your calendars for United Way of Williamson County's "United Way Day of Caring" Friday Sept. 16th 8:30am till noon. We will continue to work on the Nature Trail.



Book Club Review: The Longhorns by Rana Sanders



GWMN Book Club meets every other month in one of the members' homes. After a pizza and salad lunch, the book discussion begins. Chapters are assigned or chosen for each participant which means that a lengthy book requires more than one session to discuss as it is a small group.

J. Frank Dobie's *The Longhorns* was most recently read. It was published in 1941 and Mr. Dobie still had access to the men who lived and worked with the cattle on ranches and on trail rides. Each chapter begins with a dedication to one of these men, always with a connection to the topic at hand. "Notes" contains three pages of lists of those he talked with and a disclaimer that this listing represented "less than a majority" of all who gave him information.

Twenty chapters describe the longhorn's contribution to Texas and its history. Brought by the Spanish first in 1521, as they escaped from traveling herds or strayed from the unfenced ranges, there were soon incredible numbers of wild cattle, prized mostly for their hides and tallow. They were considered game animals, along with deer, antelopes and buffaloes. There was no significant development of the range cattle industry until after the Civil War.

The introduction of more cattle from immigrants to Texas, along with "selective breeding", made the Texas longhorn "rangier, heavier and mightier-horned".

The "cowboy", unknown as such before 1836, developed from raids into Mexican-held ranges as well as from defending their new homes.

There are chapters on mavericks, on characteristics of the longhorns: their sense of smell, their thirst, their horns; on the uses of rawhide, of tails and on the longhorns' propensity for stampeding, on hiding in thickets and on leading teams.

Robustly presented by J. Frank Dobie, *The Longhorns* has many surprises about this part of Texas's past.

Carrots for Berry Springs Donkeys by Susan Blackledge

We are very pleased to announce that Berry Springs Park now has raised carrot beds for the Donkeys to enjoy fresh vegetables. Mitt Price, park maintenance worker built three raised beds using donated tin shingles and misc. leftover wood. The beds were filled with compost that contains decomposed aquatic vegetation and donkey manure. The donkeys keep us well supplied. Cynthia Edgar, and Jennifer & David Lord seeded the beds. We hope for organic carrots in the spring. Can these donkeys be any more spoiled?



Daddy Long Legs by Ted Kooser

Here, on fine long legs springy as steel
a life rides, sealed in a small brown pill
that skims along over the basement floor
wrapped up in a simple obsession.
Eight legs reach out like the master ribs
of a web in which some thought is caught
dead center in its own small world,
a thought so far from the touch of things
that we can only guess at it. If mine,
it would be the secret dream
of walking alone across the floor of my life
with an easy grace, and with love enough
to live on at the center of myself.



"Daddy Longlegs" from *Flying at Night: Poems 1965-1985*, by Ted Kooser © 2005. All rights are controlled by the University of Pittsburgh Press. Pittsburgh, PA 15260. Used by permission of the University of Pittsburgh Press.

January Bird Walk by Mary Ann Melton

On January 13, Jim Hailey led a Sparrow ID Bird Walk at Tejas Camp in western Williamson County. It was a cold brisk morning, but the participants were eager and enthusiastic to find sparrows. Eighteen bird species were seen by members of the group:

Turkey Vulture
Red Tailed Hawk
Eastern Phoebe
American Crow
Carolina Wren
Bewick's Wren
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Northern Mockingbird
Yellow-Rumped Warbler
Harris's Sparrow
White-throated sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Lincoln's Sparrow
Spotted Towhee
Red-winged Blackbird
House Finch
American Goldfinch



The group enjoyed their hike along both the north and south sides of the San Gabriel River watching for birds, especially sparrow species.

Zika Virus by Wizzie Brown

Zika virus is transmitted by Aedes mosquitoes and there is no specific treatment or vaccine currently available. The best way to avoid getting the virus is to avoid being bitten by infected mosquitoes. About 20% of people with Zika virus actually get ill. Severe disease, requiring hospitalization, is uncommon and death due to the virus is rare.

The incubation period of Zika virus is thought to be a few days to a week, but is still unknown. Symptoms include fever, skin rash, conjunctivitis, muscle and joint pain, and headache. Symptoms tend to be mild and last from 2-7 days. Zika virus can be contracted through the bite of an infected mosquito, through blood transfusions, through sexual contact, and from mother to child during pregnancy.

The mosquitoes that are able to transmit Zika virus are also able to transmit dengue and Chikungunya viruses. These mosquitoes are daytime biters, but can also bite at night. Aedes mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water- buckets, tires, tree holes, animal water dishes, etc.

To protect yourself from mosquito bites, wear light-colored clothing that covers as much skin as possible, use insect repellent (read and follow label instructions), use screening on doors and windows, use mosquito netting (if needed) while sleeping, and reduce standing water areas.



Repellent should only be applied to clothing and exposed skin. Do not apply it underneath clothing. If you want to apply repellent to your face, spray your hands with repellent and rub it onto your face. Do not spray repellent directly into your face or near eyes or mouth. Make sure to apply repellent outdoors. Do not allow children to handle repellents. Wash hands before eating, smoking or using the restroom.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommends using a product registered with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) containing one of the following active ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535 and some of the products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus.

Many things can help to reduce mosquito problems around the home. Eliminate all sources of standing water. Containers such as watering cans, buckets and bottles can turn into mosquito breeding grounds. Water should be drained from birdbaths, rain barrels, gutters, flowerpots and pet dishes at least once a week. Children's wading pools should be emptied of water at least once a week and stored indoors when not in use. Tree holes should be filled in with sand or mortar, or drained after each rain. Leaky faucets and pipes located outside should be repaired.

Areas that cannot be drained, such as ponds, can be stocked with mosquito fish that eat mosquito larvae. Dunks can also be used in these areas. Dunks are a small, donut-shaped product that contains *Bacillus thuringiensis israeliensis*. The donut disrupts the life cycle of the mosquito and is non-toxic to humans, amphibians and fish. Dunks are not for use in drinking water sources.

Meet Good Water Members

Martin Byhower



I am a former 7th grade life and environmental science teacher (32 years), professional birding guide, and habitat restoration specialist who moved here from Southern California last July. Before that I have been a marine invertebrate taxonomist, abalone aquaculturist and commercial diver. I am a lifelong environmental activist, having held positions as board member or President of local and national chapters of Audubon, American Cetacean Society, and others, and was a founding member of Heal the Bay (an ocean protection group in So. CA). I am excited to be learning about, exploring, sharing, and helping preserve and protect the remarkable biodiversity of central Texas, and am grateful for the "boost" that going through the GWMN program has given me! I have become involved in Native Plant Landscaping and now head up the Native Plant Garden at the Sun City Horticulture Center. I will soon be co-leading birding trips for the Williamson Audubon Group, and am coordinating the installation of Eastern Bluebird nestboxes on all 3 Sun City golf courses for the Community Association there. And I can't wait for the birds to get here in Spring; I have 56 species on my yard list so far, and 190 on my Williamson County list. Think globally, bird locally!

Mary Long



Once upon a time, there was a fiery headed wild child named Mary who loved to stomp around the backwoods of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. She loved all that was green and butterflies and adventure. She was always outside and always finding ways to get into trouble. Eventually she grew up and adventure spirited her away in the form of the love her life, Joe. In the summer of 1999, she snatched her art portfolio and guitar case and fled to Texas with him. Feeling that she had moved to the "land of dirt and rock" those preconceptions were forever changed with her first experience of spring Texas wildflowers. She decided she'd stay. Joe persuaded her to get married in Las Vegas, Nevada and later having a family seemed like the next logical step. (Mary claimed she was allergic to babies when she was younger.) She has held various jobs over the years too, always focused on helping others and is currently taking a few college courses. You might catch her and her three boys, two are as fiery headed as she is, fishing and swimming in the San Gabriel River or hunting butterflies at their neighborhood park in Hutto. She feels lucky to share the knowledge gained from joining the Texas Master Naturalist Good Water Chapter and aspires to educate others so they can appreciate the beauty that is right here in Williamson County.

For information about the Good Water Chapter
<http://txmn.org/goodwater> or goodwatermn2@gmail.com