

Good Water RIPPLES

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UPCOMING EVENTS

08/11	NPSOT
08/22	NPAT
08/22	Austin Butterfly Forum
08/25	GWMN Chapter Meeting
09/12	NPSOT
09/22	GWMN Chapter Meeting
09/26	NPAT
09/26	Austin Butterfly Forum

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!

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Master Naturalist Training Class Registration



Adults, become a certified Texas Master Naturalists and join a group of dedicated volunteers committed to preserving, protecting, and enjoying our natural spaces. The Texas Master Naturalist program is jointly sponsored by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension. Training includes soils, backyard habitats, prairies, rangeland management, forest ecology, birds, mammals, fish, insects, botany, climate, geology and archaeology.

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Fall 2016 Good Water Master Naturalist Training Class

<http://tinyurl.com/GWMNTraining>

September 6 – December 13, 2016

40 Hours Classroom Training

40 Hours Community Service

8 Hours Advanced Training

Cost: \$150 (includes manual)

Junior Master Naturalist Registration

Students in grades 4-6, explore Earth's Wonders in the 2016-17 Junior Master Naturalist program. Topics include invasive species, paleontology, nature's music, wild flowers, aquifers, and geology. Field trips visit Waco Mammoth Site, Cedar Park Planetarium, Booty's Crossing, and Camp Tejas. Hands-on activities and Master Naturalist led presentations provide in depth learning and fun.

2016-17 Junior Master Naturalists 4th-6th Graders

September 8, 2016 – May 20, 2017

<http://tinyurl.com/GWMNJunior>

12 Thursdays at Georgetown Rec

4 Saturday Field Trips

Cost: \$65 (resident), \$85 (non)

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Grasses by Heather Allen from "Leaving a Shadow"



*So still at heart,
They respond like water
To the slightest breeze,
Rippling as one body.*

*And, as one mind,
Bend continually
To listen:
The perfect confidants.*

*They keep to themselves,
A web of trails and nests,
Burrows and hidden entrances -
Do not reveal*

*Those camouflaged in stillness
From the circling hawks,
Or crouched and breathless
At the passing of the fox.*



Yellow-Billed Cuckoo by Jim Hailey



The Yellow-billed Cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) is another breeding species in our area. They like the Blue and Painted Bunting tend to arrive here from mid-April to early June. Their range is much broader in the eastern and mid-western US than the Blue Bunting but more restricted in the western portion of our country, limited to southern New Mexico and Arizona, with a few spotty locations in California. The cuckoo is a medium sized bird with a de-curved bill that is dark on the upper mandible and yellow on the lower portion. It is a rich dark brown above with a white underside and a long tail. They also have a yellow eye ring and they have large white spots on their tail when seen in flight and from below. They lay three to five green to yellow eggs in a small saucer like nest built from twigs in a small shrub or sapling. They have a harsh, rapid rattling followed by a ka-ka-ka-ka-kow-kowp-kowp. Once you have learned their song you can instantly recognize it in the field, even if the bird is not evident. They prefer deciduous woods with low shrubbery and riparian settings and are often found along the San Gabriel.

Good Water Chapter Texas Master Naturalist Fall Training Class

The Texas Master Naturalist Program is a volunteer program that develops a corps of well educated “Master Volunteers” who provide education, outreach and service dedicated toward the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas.

Through the Texas Master Naturalist Program you will:

Support conservation education and stewardship efforts throughout Texas

Join a statewide network of trained volunteers in natural resource education, conservation and stewardship.

Increase understanding and appreciation of the natural world.

Is the Master Naturalist Program for me?

To help you decide if you should apply to be a Master Naturalist, ask yourself these questions:

- Do I want to learn more about the culture and history of our state?
- Am I eager to participate in a practical and intense training program?
- Do I look forward to sharing my knowledge in my community?
- Do I have enough time to attend training and complete the volunteer service?

If you answered yes to these questions you could be accepted into the Master Naturalist Class.

Volunteer Commitment

In exchange for training, participants are asked to volunteer time to their Extension or TPWD Program. At least 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of advanced training are required to earn and retain the title of “Texas Master Naturalist”.

The type of service done varies according to community needs, abilities, and interests of Master Naturalists.

- Berry Springs Park and Preserve
- Champion Park
- Hutto Lake Park
- Gault Archeology Site
- Taylor Regional Park
- Pollinator Garden at County Landfill
- Texas Parks and Wildlife Angler Education
- Junior Master Naturalist

Become A Master Naturalist

Register online and find additional details at:

www.txmn.org/goodwater

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

Tentative Schedule

Tuesday meeting times: 6:00pm to 9:30pm
Saturday morning meeting start times will vary

GHF 2425 Williams Drive, Georgetown
AgriLife 3151 SE Inner Loop, Georgetown

September 6 - GHF:

Citizen Science

September 13 - GHF:

Archeology with Dr. Clark Warneke

Bats with Diane Odegard

September 17 - GHF:

Wildscaping with Kelly Simon

Urban Systems with Kelly Simon

September 20 - GHF:

Aquatic Ecosystems with Dr. Weston Nowlin

September 27 - Agrilife:

Ichthyology with Dr. Linam

October 4 - Agrilife:

Ecologic Management with Dr. Barron Rector

October 11 - GHF:

Mammalogy with Pamelo Owens

Paleontology with Pamelo Owens

October 15 – Booty’s Crossing

Native Plants with Wayne Rhoden

October 18 - GHF:

Herpetology with Travis LaDuc

October 25 - Agrilife:

Ethics with Richard Heilbrun

Trees with Heather Brewer

November 1 - TBD:

Weather with Bob Rose

November 12 - Agrilife:

Soils Geology with Dr. Matthewson

November 15 - GHF:

Entomology with Wizzie Brown

November 19 - Camp Tejas (8am-4pm):

Prairies with Nancy Webber

November 29 - Agrilife:

Riparian with Nikki Dictson

December 3 - Agrilife:

Ornithology with Jim Hailey

December 6 - Agrilife:

Botany and Keys

December 13 - Agrilife:

Heritage Interpretation with Clark Hancock

Junior Master Naturalist 2016-2017 – Earth’s Wonders

The **Junior Master Naturalist program** for 4th-6th grader is a three year program. Each year there is a different theme with different topics and field trips planned. Because the Master Naturalist program is a volunteer effort, we plan a service project for the Junior Master Naturalists each year.



The program aims to instill a sense of excitement, passion, and concern for nature, to offer students core knowledge of the natural world in Williamson County, and to bring children and their families into the natural world more frequently. There are 16 sessions – twice a month that include field trips. Junior Master Naturalists will explore the nature in Williamson County through presentations by Master Naturalist volunteers, hands on learning activities, and field trips.



According to the Texas Children in Nature organization (<http://texaschildreninnature.org>), studies have shown that children who spend time in nature:

1. Are healthier physically and mentally
2. Do better in school
3. Have higher self-esteem
4. Have good self-discipline
5. Feel more capable and confident
6. Are good problem-solvers
7. Are more cooperative with others
8. Are more creative
9. Feel connected with nature
10. Are tomorrow’s conservation leaders



2016-2017 Junior Master Naturalists 4th-6th Graders

Thursday classes 6:00pm-7:30pm at
Georgetown Recreation Center

Times vary for Saturday Field trips



Earth Wonders

Sept. 8 Paleontology

Sept. 24 Field Trip Waco Mammoth Site

Oct 6 Archeology

Oct 20 Geology

Nov. 3 Odonates

Dec. 8 Soils

Jan. 5 Aquifers

Jan. 19 Invasives

Jan. 21 Service Project

Feb 2 Worms & Earth Critters

Feb 16 Music of the Night

March 2 Astronomy

March 25 Field trip Planetarium

April 6 Wildflowers

April 22 Field Trip Booty’s Crossing

May 4 Native Grasses

May 20 Field Trip Camp Tejas

Register:

Georgetown Recreation Center

1003 N. Austin Ave.

Georgetown, TX 78626

<https://parks.georgetown.org/junior-master-naturalist-program/>

Spiders: When Nature Comes Indoors by Mary Ann Melton

My friends and family sometimes think I am a little strange. Since I took my entomology training, when I see a spider I reach for the closest available container to capture it so I can identify WHICH spider it is. It is easy to leave the outdoor garden spiders alone because we know they help reduce garden pests. But what is the story behind those spiders that end up inside: friend, foe, or pest?

Indoor spiders eat pests such as roaches, earwigs, mosquitoes, flies, gnats and clothes moths. They can actually eat most of the insects in your home, providing natural and chemical free home pest control. Spiders also will kill other spiders in gladiator style combat with the winner eating the loser. Best of all spiders reduce the spread of diseases transmitted by other household pests such as mosquitoes, fleas, cockroaches, and other disease-carrying insects.

There are several ways to reduce the number spiders that enter your home. Caulk and block points of entry such as cracks and crevices around your home. Reduce the debris, plants, trash, and mulch from touching the structural parts of your home. Store things in plastic tubs with tight-fitting lids instead of cardboard because cardboard boxes attract insect pests that then attract spiders. Store firewood outside to prevent transporting spiders inside in the wood. I personally avoid using pesticides as much as possible because while they may get rid of the spiders or the insect prey, the pesticides will also get rid of other beneficial insects I want around my yard.



Triangulate Cobweb Spider

Pretty much everyone has at least one spider inside their homes. It is always best practice to avoid touching a spider. I always use a container to catch my spider before relocating or curating it. Spiders are going to avoid humans as much as possible, but if the spider feels threatened or endangered, they will bite. Only two spiders are venomous to humans, but anyone can have an allergy to a spider bite that could cause problems. Spider bites may cause a stinging sensation, a red mark, localized swelling. Bites from black widow spiders or brown recluse spiders should be seen by a doctor.

There are spiders that are specific to homes and rarely found anywhere else. The most frequent spider I find inside



Twinflagged Jumping Spider

my house is the Triangulate Cobweb Spider, *Steatoda triangulosa*. It is a small spider (1/8 to 1/4 inch long). with a spherical abdomen. On the abdomen are triangular markings that create zigzag lines. These spiders build small webs in the dark corners around your home or in your outdoor sheds. They seem to rely on the vibrations from their web to find the prey that is snagged in their webs. They eat other spiders including the venomous Brown Recluse. They are not aggressive toward people.

The most beautiful spider in my house is the Twin flagged jumping spider, *Anasaitis canosa*, with beautiful golden shiny markings.

Blue Grosbeak by Jim Hailey

The Blue Grosbeak (*Guiraca caerulea*) is a local breeder in our area. They return to our area from mid-April to early June. This species can be found west to California and east to Pennsylvania. Their northern limit is South Dakota. A striking bird, the Blue Grosbeak has a purple-blue body with chestnut wing bars and a small black mask that surrounds the eyes and base of the beak. The female and immature hatch year birds are a dark brown. They feed on insects and forage for seeds on the ground. They lay three to five blue eggs in a cup like nest concealed in weedy vegetation. This bird can be distinguished from the similar colored Indigo Bunting by noting its larger size and, in the males, by the very evident chestnut wing bars. They sing a melodious song, somewhat similar to that of the Painted Bunting, usually from a high perch, and they are a persistent singer. Most often one will hear them before they see them.



Join the Learning Fun – Fall Master Naturalist and Junior Master Naturalist

Texas Master Naturalists are people who still like to play in the dirt and are willing to get their feet wet and their hands dirty. Adult Master Naturalist training starts with over 40 hours of expert instruction about the natural world with a focus on Williamson County and provides volunteer and advanced training opportunities. Junior Master Naturalists runs throughout the school year with learning activities and field trips. See the insert on pages 3 and 4 or visit <http://txmn.org/goodwater> to join in the learning fun.



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