



Naturalist Notes



Pictures from the Bellaire Nature Center Bioblitz (left to right) - Cuban Anole with Western Wood Cockroach; Green Anole, Wasp (awaiting iNaturalist ID); Ring-legged Earwig. I was surprised by the number of non-native species I found.

TAKE PICTURES AT ANNUAL MEETING

Please take some pictures at the annual meeting and share them along with your thoughts for the November newsletter.

CHAPTER MEETINGS WILL BE EITHER IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

Look for a message from our president with information on the format of the monthly meeting.

KEEP TEXAS BEAUTIFUL FALL SWEEP

If you want to participate in an organized clean up event, check the events calendar at www.ktb.org . Events end Nov 20th.

Check with Mary Horn before participating for instructions on how to log your volunteer hours.

Our New Chapter Project - Pocket Prairie at Lantrip Elementary School

The Gulf Coast Chapter is partnering with Lantrip ES on a new pocket prairie. Preparation will begin this Fall, with installation projected to be complete before next summer.

What is a Pocket Prairie?

A pocket prairie is a small prairie, usually installed in an urban setting. While natural prairies are roughly 70% grasses and 30% flowering forbs, pocket prairies usually have a majority flowering plants. Pocket prairies provide habitat for insects of all kinds, both species that live there year-round as well as migrating species such as monarchs. They also support bird diversity. Depending on location, small animals such as rabbits and lizards may also use the space.

Why have a Pocket Prairie at a school?

“Cherish the natural world, because you’re a part of it and you depend on it.” – Sir David Attenborough

Children and adults are unlikely to cherish something they’ve never experienced. School pocket prairies expose the whole school community to one of Texas’ ecosystems. Through direct, sustained interaction, children learn about the prairie and become conservation partners. The prairie becomes a valuable part of the curriculum in science, math, art, and language arts.

Why Lantrip Elementary School?

Lantrip elementary school is an environmental science magnet within the Houston Independent School District. It serves about 515 students in grades pre-Kindergarten to 5th grade. Most students (91%) identify as Hispanic, and 77% qualify for free or reduced cost lunch.

Environmental science is present throughout the curriculum. The school has multiple outdoor areas used by different classes. Every teacher is expected to embrace the magnet focus and integrate it into their teaching.

How does our Chapter benefit?

A chapter project provides multiple benefits for both members in training as well as certified master naturalists. Each training class will have the opportunity to volunteer at the prairie. Depending on interest and season, this may include for example prairie maintenance or helping students with their assignment. Experienced members may participate in planting events as well as outreach to the community at a science night.

When the time comes, everyone is encouraged to share seeds and/or plants to help get the prairie established.

A school pocket prairie not only benefits wildlife, it also allows us to reach people who might otherwise never become part of the conservation conversation. Watch for updates on the progress of the prairie as well as upcoming volunteer opportunities.

ORGANISM OF THE MONTH

TERSA SPHINX MOTH (XYLOPHANES TERSA)

The Tersi Sphinx moth is found from Massachusetts to southern Florida, west to New Mexico and Arizona, and into parts of South America.

The moths have a wingspan of 2 3/8th to 3 1/8th in. The upper side of the forewing is pale brown with dark lines and a lavender base. The body is angular and hairy, with a pointed abdomen.

Caterpillars feed on Borreria, Manettia, Catalpa and Pentas species. In our area the adults fly February to November. They begin feeding at sunset.

Sources: butterfliesathome.com; butterfliesandmoths.org



Photo by Virginia Livingston



Photo by Anthony Rathbun

Buffalo Bayou Partnership Unveils New Bayou-Vac

Using the original boat's innovative technology, the Clean & Green team has been able to remove approximately 2,000 cubic yards of trash annually, the equivalent of about 167 commercial dump trucks.

This new boat is easier to operate and can reach a few feet up the banks to collect trash left behind after storms.

