



NATURALIST NOTES

October 2024

"When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world." John Muir

YOUR Chapter Needs YOU

The Gulf Coast Chapter needs the following board members to function effectively:

- **Treasurer** – handles money
- **Membership Director** – approves hours and gives recognitions
- **Communications Director** – manages outreach as well as internal and external communications
- **Training Class Director** – oversees training
- **Volunteer Services Director** – finds and approves volunteer opportunities

Texas State Parks Offer
Free Entry Nov 3rd

Visit any State Park on November 3rd and receive a free day pass. This originated with the centennial celebration in 2023.

Check out our website

<https://txmn.org/gulfcoast/>



Patterns in Nature - Conclusion

This column discussed common patterns in nature, from bilateral and radial symmetry to spirals, waves, fractals, bubbles and foam, and cracks. Some of the patterns are readily apparent, others require a change of scale and perspective.

Over the last few years, I've explored clouds and water in addition to patterns. Although I began a series on soil, that didn't work out. I'm considering "Weather" as the topic for 2025. However, I am open to suggestions.

“Soon, summer’s drum will shake the earth no longer,
will raise no blood to bubble in the throat
of beast or bird.”

D.S. Savage, 1936

Organism of the Month

Goldenrod (*Solidago sp*)

Between 100 to 120 species of *Solidago* are found across the world, though most are found in the Americas. It is considered a keystone species. As it blooms later in the year, it is a critical nectar source for bees, wasps, butterflies and more.

Some goldenrods get over 6 feet tall. There are other species, however, that fit more readily into a garden.

Goldenrod is sometimes blamed for hay fever. Goldenrod pollen, however, is too heavy to be blown far from the plant. The more likely culprit is ragweed, whose pollen travels easily through the air.

Source: wikipedia



National Wildlife Federation® Leave the Leaves Month

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“... Across much of North America, it’s a fall tradition: raking and bagging leaves. Even if you live in a region that doesn’t have this annual chore, you may make it a habit of tidying up other organic matter like pine needles. There’s a new way of thinking when it comes to this fall activity; don’t do it! It’s good for the birds and other wildlife (not to mention your back). Here are a few good reasons to Leave the Leaves:

1. Fallen leaves serve as an overwinter habitat for lizards, birds, turtles, frogs and insects. In turn, these living creatures help keep pests down and increase pollination in your garden.
2. Leaves create a natural mulch that helps to suppress weeds while fertilizing the soil as it breaks down.
3. Most butterflies and moths overwinter in the landscape as an egg, caterpillar, pupa or adult. In all but the warmest climates, these butterflies use leaf litter for winter cover.
4. Bumble bees also rely on leaf litter for protection. At the end of summer, mated queen bumble bees find holes or burrow an inch or two into the earth to hibernate for winter. An extra thick layer of leaves is welcome protection from the elements.

While the idea is to “leave the leaves” permanently, if you do decide you need to clean up the garden and remove the leaves in spring, make sure you wait until late in the season so as not to destroy all the life you’ve worked to protect. Your local wildlife will thank you...”

