



Call for Proposals for the Texas Master Naturalist 17th Annual Meeting

October 21-23, 2016

La Torretta Lake Resort on Lake Conroe

Now Accepting Proposals: <http://txmn.org/2016-annual-meeting/>

This year's event will mark the Texas Master Naturalist Program's 17th Annual Meeting and will be the 18th year of the program. This year's meeting will be held on the edge of the East Texas pineywoods, where the pines and the metropolis of Houston meet. La Torretta Lake Resort & Spa on the shores of Lake Conroe, with award winning amenities, a grand conference center and critically acclaimed banquet services, will play host to the Master Naturalists as they engage in educational training opportunities throughout the weekend.

The Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting is geared toward Texas Master Naturalist volunteers, their chapters, agency advisors, representatives of partner organizations and supporters of the statewide TMN Program. The meeting provides an opportunity for our volunteers and affiliates to receive all of their Advanced Training requirements for the year within one weekend. It's also an opportunity for program participants and supporters to network, share new ideas and projects and to learn from one another. As a workshop presenter, you would have the opportunity to inform and train TMN members from across the state on various natural resource topics providing more in-depth information than their initial core training and curriculum. You are also encouraged to make this an opportunity to enlist and train our program volunteers to assist you, your program, and your work as part of their annual volunteer service commitment.

Proposals Requested

Proposals for workshops are being requested for the Texas Master Naturalist 17th Annual Meeting. All training workshops relevant to the Texas Master Naturalist mission will be considered. Special consideration will be given to proposals that address one or more of the following themes:

- **Special topics for 2016 include** – *Developing and utilizing social media resources; Non-game species and the roles they play in conservation across the state; engaging diverse audiences in the Master Naturalist programs – as members and as an audience; leadership skills for managing groups of volunteers when conflicts arise; the shared roles of hunters & recreational natural resource users in the larger game of Texas conservation plans*
- **Citizen Science programs**—*hands-on, train the trainer type workshops strongly encouraged. Workshops covering iNaturalist, other apps, and technology resources for volunteer monitoring programs also strongly encouraged. Taking the next step with citizen science tools and linking them together.*
- **Program and Chapter Management topics**-- *including marketing, branding, local program evaluation and assessment, building and maintaining effective partnerships, leadership skills, volunteer and group management techniques and educational technology relevant to natural resource conservation, education and outreach.*
- **Interpretation and communication**-- *including working with diverse audiences, techniques and developing interpretive programs for all ages, incorporating storytelling as an interpretive tool, targeting non-traditional audiences for natural resource programs.*
- **Traditional disciplines of a naturalist**-- *botany, entomology, ornithology, mammalogy, herpetology, paleontology, geology, archaeology, ichthyology, etc.*
- **Management of natural systems and systems management tools**-- *including forest, rangeland, wetland, aquatic and urban ecology & management, hunting and prescribed fire, and other management tools.*

TMN Advanced Training Sessions:

SESSIONS

Advanced Training Sessions include training on a specific skills, technique, or process and may involve one or more instructors. Sessions are intended to emphasize learning through participation, discussion, and hands on interactive presentations on natural resource topics that model good interpretive methods. Advanced Training Sessions should also aim to provide participants with new skills to apply in their area of service or better prepare them to provide service in the topic area you are teaching. These could also include presentations introducing a natural resource topic or program to solicit the interest of TMN volunteers or to present resources and partnerships that may assist Master Naturalist chapters in their communities. They are also typically hands-on Sessions are scheduled to run concurrently with other conference events and topics and are open to all meeting registrants on a walk-in basis. Training sessions may range from 1 hour to 4-hour blocks. Typical attendance at sessions can range from 10 to 50 registrants.

Additional Characteristics of TMN Advanced Training Sessions may include:

- Promotes continued learning and development of naturalist skills
- Provides Master Naturalists with practical information, knowledge and skills to apply in volunteer efforts
- Directs trained volunteers toward specific programs/partnerships in need of their services
- Takes advantage of state and local partnerships
- Provides TMNs with an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few specific topics
- Builds on the core curriculum initially provided by the program and the local chapter
- Provides information applicable to current natural resource management issues in Texas
- Applies to and addresses a broad range of TMN volunteers (geographically, etc.) across the state.

Examples of previous years' TMN Annual Meeting agendas with workshop and session titles and descriptions can be found on the Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting archives website, <http://txmn.org/past-meetings/>. A few examples of past titles are:

- Natural Resource Laws, Regulations and Ethics for Every Master Naturalist
- Biodiversity: Putting Concept to Practice of Ecosystem Management
- Marketing & Identity for Master Naturalist Chapters, Becoming an Effective Messenger
- Geology and Soils of Texas; The Foundation of Nature
- Feral Hogs: Friend? Foe? or the Ultimate Survivors?
- Tackling those Confusing Composites
- Monarch Beg for Your Help

Information required for a Proposal:

- **Presentation Title** (make it catchy!)
- **Presentation Abstract** – A short description of the session--3-5 sentence paragraph (about 100 words) describing the session, what volunteers will learn, what they will need to wear and/or bring with them. (This information will be used directly in our Full Agenda)
- **Presentation Theme** – taking a cue off the themes of the TMN program curriculum
- **Duration** – Length of time (in hours) requested for presentation
- **Presentation Environmental** needs for presentation: Indoors classroom? Outdoors? Field Trip?
- **Technology Needs** for presentation and participants where applicable (i.e. bring your own device): WiFi? Projector? Laptop? Microphone?
- Contact Information for primary presenter/training team lead: Organization, email
- Additional Trainer(s)/Presenter(s) names, titles and organization(s)
- **Maximum Class Size** (12 - 60 or more)
- Are there additional needs you have for your presentation?

Submission Requirements

The Texas Master Naturalist Program welcomes your proposals as contributions to our agenda! Individuals wishing to present are invited to submit their proposal on the Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting website: <http://txmn.org/2016-annual-meeting/>.

The deadline for submissions is **June 3rd, 2016**. A notice of receipt will be automatically generated and sent by e-mail. If you do not receive notification of receipt within 10 days or have any questions about proposal submission, please contact Mary Pearl Meuth (mpmeuth@tamu.edu). Proposals received after the deadline and before registration opening may be considered if space is available.

Proposal Evaluation and Notice of Decision

All training proposals will be considered and evaluated on timeliness of the subject, importance of the training to a broad range of TMN volunteers and their further contribution to our program's mission. Applicants will be notified whether their proposals are able to be accepted or not.

About the Texas Master Naturalist Program

The Texas Master Naturalist Volunteer program is sponsored statewide by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The program, celebrating its 18th Anniversary, has the mission *to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas*. The program currently supports 9,000+ volunteers in 46 local chapters across the state. Last year, TMN volunteers provided over 398,000 hours of service. Many

communities and organizations rely on these citizen volunteers for implementing youth education programs; for operating parks, nature centers, and natural areas; and for providing leadership in local natural resource conservation efforts. Texas Master Naturalist volunteers are required to receive 40 hours of basic training, obtain a minimum of 8 hours of advanced training and perform 40 hours of volunteer service prior to being certified as a Texas Master Naturalist volunteer. To keep their certification current each year, TMN's are required to obtain an additional 8 hours of advanced training and provide 40 hours of volunteer service annually. For more information visit our statewide website at: <http://www.txmn.org>



Any additional questions about the Texas Master Naturalist 17th Annual Meeting or the Program in general can be directed to Michelle Haggerty (mmhaggerty@tamu.edu) or Mary Pearl Meuth (mpmeuth@tamu.edu).



Improving Lives. Improving Texas.