



# Highland Lakes Steward

July 2011

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## MISSION

The Texas Master Naturalist program is a natural resource-based volunteer training and development program sponsored statewide by Texas AgriLife Extension and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The mission of the program is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the state of Texas

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## RAIN

by Billy Hutson

Remember it? I remember rain quite well as it was one of my favorite aspects of nature.

In the spring and fall when it was cold my Grandfather would take me out on the porch with a hot drink and we would sit with blankets covering ourselves and enjoy a rainstorm, with thunder and lightning if we were lucky. The sound was relaxing, the smell was fresh and whenever the wind drifted the rain onto the porch and we felt the spray we would both laugh. Actually, mine was more of a giggle. Much to their

excitement, I did the same with my kids and grandkids later in life.

In the summer I would hike or just dance around in it with my friends. We would get all muddy and then walk through the creek on the way home with water washing around our feet and running down our backs to rinse of the mud, all the time laughing out loud. We seldom missed a chance to go out when it was raining.

I remember all the winter snows in Pennsylvania and saying how beautiful they were. I would go out and track rabbits in the snow and come home and think that if it warmed up it would rain instead of snow and wishing for it

I remember in college being able to study better when it was raining because people weren't outside making noise and having fun while I was inside pursuing knowledge. Perhaps Shirley MacLaine summed it up best in her book "The Camino" when she wrote "It was nature's way of calling a truce for potential distur-



bances".

I remember sitting on my porch in the last few years watching cloud to cloud lightning and missing the rain it didn't bring and feeling somewhat disappointed

I remember reading how perfect it was for outdoor plants because it didn't have any calcium, sulfurs, minerals or other impurities and had possibly been ionized. Isn't that how plants evolved?

I remember recently installing a rainwater collection system and waiting, and waiting, and waiting.

Although I have taken it for granted all these years, I miss it now. They say you don't appreciate something you love until it's gone.

But even though I miss it I can still hope it comes back and I can still remember it!

Billy  
Colorado  
Summer 2011

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experience during the past year and the goals of the Central Texas Water Coalition.. Our meeting is at the Kingsland Library 1:00 til 3:00pm.

**MELANISTIC WHITETAIL DEER**

by Jerry Stone



Photo by Jerry Stone at the Trails of HSB on 7/7/11

Melanistic whitetails are the rarest of all in terms of coat pigmentation. They are far rarer than piebalds or albinos. Melanistic deer are dark chocolate to black in appearance. This abnormality is due to an overproduction of melanin.

Most people have never heard of a melanistic deer much less seen one. It turns out that eight counties in central Texas have the highest incidence of melanistic whitetails in the world. Those counties are Hays, Travis, Williamson, Blanco, Guadalupe, Burnet, and Caldwell. It is unknown why these deer produce more melanin in this area. Some theorize it has to do with adaptation to their surroundings to provide better camouflage in dark thick brush.

**AUGUST MEETING**

by Fred Franki



Our speaker on August 3 is Jo Karr Tedder of Burnet. She is the newly elected President of the newly formed Central Texas Water Coalition (ourwater-ourfuture.com). Jo is a retired school teacher and administrator who served on the advisory board of the local Water Management Plan which has worked for the last year

with LCRA and all stakeholders to develop a water-use plan for Central Texas. Jo will speak about her

**A Little Nature Trivia**

John & Rosalie Taylor, submitted by Lyn Davis

Ants will not cross a chalk line. Try it!

A pig becomes a hog when it reaches 120 pounds.

The world's oldest cultivated vegetable is said to be the cabbage.

## RIPARIAN PROPER FUNCTIONING CONDITION WORKSHOP



Photo by  
Sue Lilley

The Lampasas River Watershed Partnership in conjunction with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service hosted a Riparian Proper Functioning Condition Workshop at the Lilley Ranch on April 26th. Several of our chapter members attended. Pictured L to R: Earlene Thorne, Jerry Stacy, Jeff Stokes, Arlene Garey, Terri Whaley, Ed Lilley, Marjorie Dearmont, Hollis Neier, Jennifer Daniels, Billy Hutson, and Ray Zender.

Below is an article from the Lampasas newspaper about the workshop.

### SEMINAR ID'S CONDITIONS OF HEALTHY WETLAND AREAS

By DAVID LOWE Reprinted from the Lampasas Dispatch Record, 2011-05-03



Photo by David Lowe

Ricky Linex of the Natural Resources Conservation Service displays mint found along the bank of Sulphur Creek on the Lilley ranch outside of Lampasas. The ranch hosted the field observation portion of a

seminar last week about the proper functioning of riparian areas. The clear waters of Sulphur Creek gurgled as sunlight shone upon a group of naturalists and conservation specialists who picked their way amidst sedges, berry vines and sweet smelling mint.

About the only effect missing from the field trip was a yellow school bus.

The 30 or so participants who attended a workshop last week about riparian habitats were years past school age, but just like young learners do, they managed to combine education with some outdoor fun.

The workshop, sponsored by Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Blackland Research & Extension Center in Temple, featured morning lectures and an afternoon tour of both intermittent and perennial streams on the Lilley ranch east of Lampasas. Both sessions emphasized the features of properly functioning riparian zones -- the green transitional spaces between uplands and wetland areas.

*(Continued on page 4)*

A properly functioning riparian area, Natural Resource Conservation Service specialist Ricky Linex said, features a reliable source of clean water and offers habitat for fish, insects, birds and other wildlife. Adequate wetland vegetation, particularly strongly rooted plants like cattails, bulrushes, switchgrass, bald cypress and Eastern gammagrass -- which can occur in wet areas as well as upland pastures -- helps stabilize banks, trap sediment, prevent excess erosion and increase groundwater recharge.

Healthy riparian areas, Linex added, allow rivers and creeks to catch storm runoff. Proper catchment, the NRCS official said, ensures a good supply of fresh water to meet the state's needs.

As Texas' population grows and water consumption continues to increase, Linex said land stewardship will remain the key determinant of environmental health. Good management of riparian areas, the conservation specialist said, can help Texans respond to future water needs in a more economical manner than if the state relies exclusively on new dams, additional wells, pipeline or canal construction or desalination.

"Most people go for the expensive [strategies], but they overlook a solution that's right in front of them," Linex said.

Ranchers can protect riparian areas by fencing them off to prevent excess grazing, leaving buffers between crop rows and stream banks, and controlling the populations of deer -- especially exotics -- and feral hogs, Linex said. A Bureau of Land Management study of Bear Creek in central Oregon, Linex noted, found notable improvement in vegetation and habitat conditions along the waterway within 10 years of the beginning of a deferred cattle grazing system.

Although controlled burning is an effective management tool in upland areas, it should be avoided near wetlands, Linex added, as he said researchers have not determined the fire tolerance of many essential riparian plants.

The speaker also encouraged landowners to limit mowing, chemical spraying or landscaping next to creeks, to avoid excess foot or vehicle traffic by wetlands and to leave large pieces of dead wood in riparian zones undisturbed. Large rocks and dead wood, Linex and NRCS zone engineer Kenneth Mayben said, help control channel flow and reduce erosion.

Also at the recent seminar, Mayben, who is based in Weatherford, explained the principles of water flow and erosion. He emphasized that, contrary to popular belief, wide, straight streams are not the most effective water structures for controlling erosion and

floodwater speed. Meandering rivers and creeks typically are healthier and experience less loss of their bank edges than straight streams, Mayben explained.

In addition, Mayben countered what he called the myth that floods and droughts harm rivers and creeks. Floods, the engineer said, occur on at least a limited basis once every few years, depositing sediment and increasing the size of the "riparian sponge" that releases water over a long period back into streams. The gradual release of water, Mayben explained, cools water in the summer and warms it in the winter, improving habitat year-round for fish and wildlife.

The bane of farmers and ranchers, droughts nevertheless can benefit wetlands, Mayben added. As the water table lowers, roots move downward to find water. In the process, the engineer said, the roots create a "basket" that holds sediment in place and enhances the ability of the riparian zone to release water downstream.

Discussing property stewardship, Mayben encouraged land managers to try to prevent excessive width to depth ratios from developing on waterways. Streams that are too wide and shallow -- as portions of the Nueces River have become, the engineer said -- transport sediment poorly and contain too little dissolved oxygen to support robust fish populations.

After the morning informational sessions, seminar participants -- many of them members of the Highland Lakes master naturalist chapter -- traveled to Ed and Sue Lilley's property to identify plant species and make notes of vegetative quality and bank stability.

Lilley, whose family moved to Lampasas in 1946, said he and his wife are trying to preserve habitat and develop nature paths on their working cattle ranch. Over the years, the Lilleys have decreased the number of livestock they run to prevent overgrazing, and the couple have made plans to ensure their land retains its agricultural and environmental character for future generations.

On the tour, participants spotted flora ranging from watercress to pecan to sycamore. The Lilleys have identified more than 50 species of woody plants and at least 40 types of grass on their property.

"It's a work in progress," Lilley said of the couple's land management efforts. "There's always something going on out there."

For at least a few hours, though, as visitors ambled along the banks of Sulphur Creek, the only item on the agenda was learning about and appreciating a healthy wetland setting.

## CRESTED CARACARAS AND THE BLUE LIST

By Sherry Bixler



The Crested Caracara is found in the United States only in south and south central Texas, southern Florida and extreme south-central Arizona. Biologists may soon change its name to Northern Caracara and place it in the group “Crested Caracaras” along with the Southern and (extinct) Guadalupe Caracaras.

The caracaras behave like vultures but are structurally more like falcons and fall in the falconidae grouping. Caracaras cannot fly as swiftly as falcons and have a flapping, raven-like flight pattern with wings held almost straight out. Their diet consists mostly of carrion but they also eat fish, turtle eggs, small mammals, reptiles, invertebrates and even insects. Their long legs and flat claws enable them to run after some prey, especially snakes.

The Crested Caracara has a distinctive appearance; it is about 24 inches long with a 48 inch wing-span and is mostly black with white wing tips, white throat and bib, and a white tail banded in black. Juveniles are brown with cream markings.

Caracaras are aggressive birds, often harassing other birds until they surrender or disgorge their prey. Birds often harassed include vultures, pelicans and harriers. Males also fight in flight during mating season.

After mating, loose nests are built, usually in pines, palmettos or tall cacti. Two or three eggs are laid and

incubated for 28 days. After hatching, young birds fledge when they are one to two months old.

The nine caracara species are found only in the western hemisphere with four species found in both Central and South America: the Crested (Northern), Southern, Yellow-headed, and Red-throated. Four other species are found only in South America and one species only in Tierra del Fuego.

These birds prefer open country, especially semi-arid brushland and pastures. They are apparently declining due to loss of habitat to development and farming. The Crested Caracara was Blue-listed from 1972-1979 and 1981. It was a species of concern from 1982-1986 and continues to be monitored.

### THE BLUE LIST

In 1971, National Audubon Society's (NAS) American Birds field journal began publishing the Blue List to provide early warning of North American bird species undergoing population or range reductions. The list was designed to identify negative trends in bird populations, not to duplicate the U. S. Fish and Wildlife's (USFW) Threatened and Endangered Species Lists. Birds on the Blue List might still be locally common but were in overall decline and needed to be monitored before becoming statistics – birds on the USFW. list were often on their last legs and NAS hoped to alert those concerned before that happened. In 1981 NAS published a “decade” list that included 69 birds for 1981 plus all the species that had been listed in the ten-year study. Currently, the twenty common species of most concern UNFORTUNATELY include 13 found in the hill country. They are: American Bittern, Common Grackle, Eastern Meadowlark, Field Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, Horned Lark, Lark Sparrow, Little Blue Heron, Loggerhead Shrike, Northern Bobwhite, Northern Pintail, Rufous Hummingbird and Whippoorwill. (The other seven are the Black-throated Sparrow, Boreal Chickadee, Common Tern, Evening Grosbeak, Greater Scaup, Ruffed Grouse and Snow Bunting.)

# JACOB'S WELL FIELD TRIP

By Mike Childers



Photo by Jerry Stone



Photo by Mike Childers



Photo by Cindy Sterling

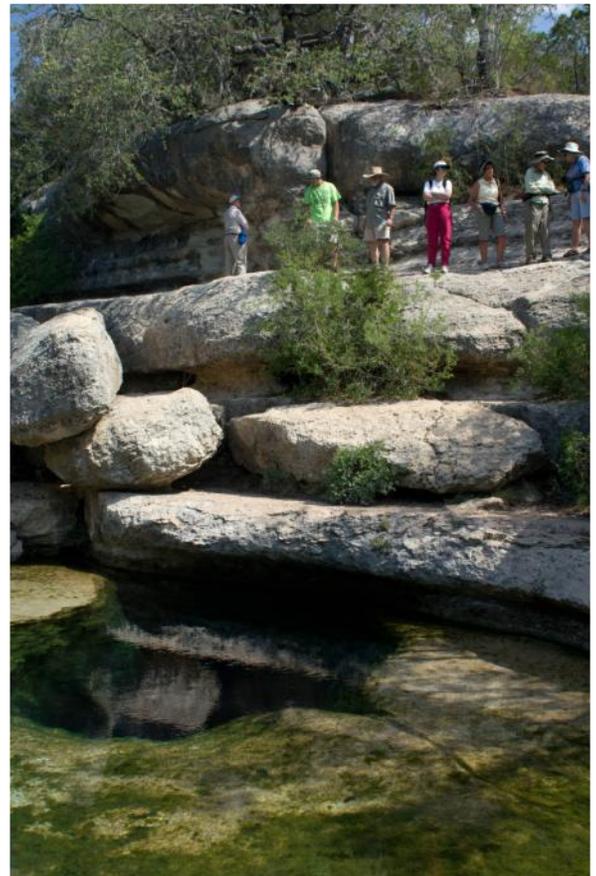


Photo by Mike Childers

A great outing and education were the reward for going on the Jacobs Well Field Trip. Our hosts from various conservation organizations in the area and the Hays County Master Naturalists began with a series of short lectures on the history and current state of Jacob's Well (drought stressed) and the ongoing efforts to save and improve the habitat surrounding the well. A walking tour through the Jacob's Well habitat demonstrated the beautiful and vital resource at risk here. We ended the morning with a wrap-up Q&A then proceeded to Blue Hole Park downstream from the well for lunch.

Photos Clockwise from top right. A view of the stream below the well, looking over the bluff to the well., Cooling off at the well, and a wrap-up talk and Q&A.

Continued on page 6

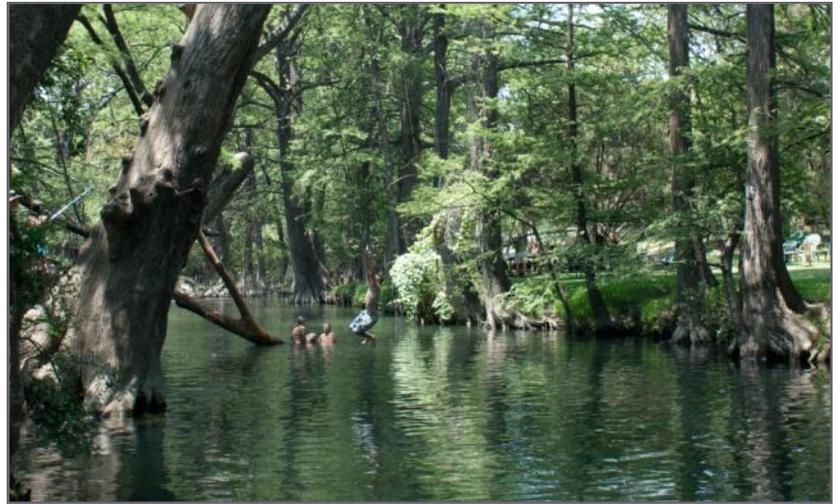


Photos by Mike Childers

At Blue Hole Regional Park, fed by Jacobs Well, we had a picnic lunch and enjoyed the beauty of this great swimming hole and developing natural area.

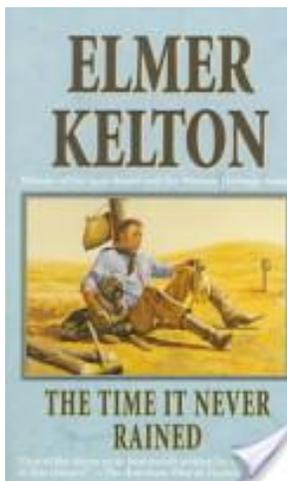
For more information refer to:  
[www.jacobswellspring.org](http://www.jacobswellspring.org)  
[www.wimberleywatershed.org](http://www.wimberleywatershed.org)  
[www.friendsofbluehole.org](http://www.friendsofbluehole.org)

**A great outing!**



## THE TIME IT NEVER RAINED—A BOOK REVIEW

by Kim Bacon



This year I gave myself a challenge to read 52 Books in 10 different categories. Two of those required categories were *Books Suggested by Friends* and *Books about Texas*.

Lucky for me, I have friends who love to suggest books for me to read. And so a friend suggested *The Time It Never Rained* by Elmer Kelton. What a great read!

*The Time It Never Rained* is not a book about natural

history or weather. Set during the long drought during the 1950's in West Texas, Elmer Kelton doesn't write much about the effect of drought on the native animals and plants of West Texas. Rather, he chronicles the efforts of fictional rancher Charlie Flagg to save his ranch during the drought years. It is a story of the clash between the Texas of the past and the Texas

that was to come, between Hispanic and Anglo, and between freedom and regulation.

Born-and-raised Texans will recognize the people who populate *The Time It Never Rained*. They will remember the small-town banker who knew everyone and was responsible for the success or failure of many a farmer/rancher; they will recognize the small-town businesses once dependent on the cattle farmer for their own financial success; they will recognize the rancher's enduring belief that the rains will eventually come.

Texans take pride in their strong wills and their independence. Ranching during a drought was for men and women who, according to Elmer Kelton, "*retained an old frontier heritage of fighting their own fight, testing one strategy and when it failed trying another, but, above all simply enduring, and enduring.*"

Maybe we are entering a period of drought, and maybe not, but I thought some of you might enjoy this wonderful read about the Texas that used to be and *The Time It Never Rained*.

## TEXAS BARBERRY (*BERBERIS SWASEYI*)

By Mike Childers

At Jacob's Well we were shown an interesting native plant, a cousin of Agarita (*Berberis trifoliolata*), the Texas Barberry (*Berberis Swaseyi* also known as *Mahonia Swaseyi*) which is endemic to the eastern and Southern Hill Country from Williamson county to Real County. Texas barberry has compound leaves with 5-9 leaflets which differs from Agarita which has compound leaves with 3 leaflets. But similar to Agarita, the leaflets have several sharp points along the leaf edges. Barberry has small yellow flowers, followed by little berries that are yellow with red wash. In the fall, barberry leaves turn deep purple-red. There is commonly hybridization between Texas Barberry and Agarita which has resulted in many variants.



Photos by  
Mike Childers



## HORSETAIL

by Phil Wyde

I know so many things. Ordinarily you would think that would also make me smart. However, you need to know that I learn much of what I know by accident – or by making stupid mistakes. I guess that makes me dumb. Either way I would like to tell you about my becoming acquainted with, and learning about, the plant horsetail (Family: *Equisetaceae*).

It all started two years ago when I stood looking at a spot in front of the house that would not support well any of the plants that I planted there. It was a damp spot that did not get much light and that was bordered on one side by the house (stone wall), another side by the front porch (concrete) and on a third side by a sidewalk (cement). I went to the store to see what plants were available and as I was walking through the plant department I saw 4 inch pots containing a very interesting looking plant called horsetail. In my “wisdom” I decided to buy ONE pot and plant its contents in the spot that I have just described. Well imagine my pride when in one summer the horsetail flourished and totally filled up the 5X30 foot area. (See picture.) Everybody that saw the horsetail-filled area commented very favorably on it. My heart grew two sizes too big.

Foolish me. Whatever made me feel that anything that grew that fast would stop growing and spreading! The horsetail was getting everywhere! I tried digging it up, spraying it with things that said nothing would grow in the sprayed area for a year, and things that guaranteed that it would kill the toughest plants. Ha! The herbicides had NO effect and digging was only marginally effective. The horsetail even showed up on the other side of the sidewalk – and I won't be surprised if it appears on the other side of the house.

Well, enough of the whining and sniveling. I will continue my war on the horsetail, but during my battle I hit the literature to see what information there was available about horsetail. I would like to share some of



what I learned with you since horsetail is – as I had already guessed-- no ordinary plant.

Horsetail is a very primitive perennial plant with dark-green hollow, jointed (segmented) stems, 1/4 to 1/2 inch thick, with no apparent leaves. The stems may be singular or have whorls of branches, but only single stems produce the cone-shaped spore producing body at the tip. As will be discussed in more detail below, horsetail stems contain silicon crystals (i.e., sand) embedded in its tissue. This gritty texture gives it a common name of “scouring rush.” Horsetail species are widely distributed throughout North America and three species are found in Texas, *Equisetum hyemale*, *E. laevigatum* and *E. arvense* (the latter apparently is found only in the Panhandle). These plants live mostly in moist places, swampy areas and sandy stream banks. They readily hybridize and are difficult to distinguish.

Horsetail has one of the longest fossil records of any genus of plants. It is in the plant family *Equisetaceae*, which in turn is the only family in the plant division *Equisetophyta*. The history of this group goes back 350 million years when the group included immense woody trees 60 foot high with two foot thick bases.

(Continued on page 10)

Today's survivors are much smaller, very rigid with upright, cone-tipped stems that seem to make up the entire plant. The stems have internodes that are spaced throughout the stems which are hollow, like bamboo. The plant actually does have leaves. However, they are greatly reduced and fused into a sheath that encloses the base of each internode. Interestingly, it has been shown that the detached internodes can form new plants simply by floating on the surface of water. It has been noted that the stomata (tiny openings used by plants for air exchange) on the stems are "perhaps the most complex stomata in the entire plant kingdom" (Turner, M.W. 2009. Horsetail, *Equisetum* species in Remarkable Plants of Texas, pages 214-216, Univ. of Texas Press, Austin.) The rhizomes (underground stems, not roots) of *Equisetaceae* have been noted in some species to form multiple horizontal layers connected by vertical rhizomes; a feature that may also be unique to this group of plants. These subterranean stems may grow more than 6 feet below the surface -- and may well explain both how the genus survived the Permian extinction and why farmers as far back as Pliny—and as recent as Wyde-- have considered this plant to be an obnoxious weed. I ASK YOU, HOW CAN ONE STOP SOMETHING THAT HAS 6 FOOT DEEP STEMS AND RHIZOMES AND HAS SURVIVED NUMEROUS CYCLES OF ICE AGES AND GLOBAL WARMING?!

You may already think that this group of plants is extraordinary. But there is more. *Equisetum* species have an unusual relationship to the element silicon. It actually requires silicon as a nutrient in order to grow (the only plant known to have this requirement). Apparently the silicon helps keep the stems erect and functions much like lignin does in woody plants. Indeed, large quantities of the silicon compound, silica, appear as wart-like tubercles on the surface of the stems. These make the plant rough to the touch and perfect for a scouring agent or polisher. Apparently, both Native Americans and early European settlers used horsetail stems for cleaning and polishing pipes, bows, arrows, bone tools, fingernails, tin ware, pots and pans. Apparently scouring with the silicon laden stems results in higher glosses and smoother surfaces than can be obtained with commercial sandpaper (Turner, M.W. 2009). The silicon in the *Equisetum* apparently also protects the genus against some pathogens and predators. Solutions made from boiled *E. arvense* have been shown to protect different plants

from damping off and powdery mildew fungus (Turner, M.W. 2009).

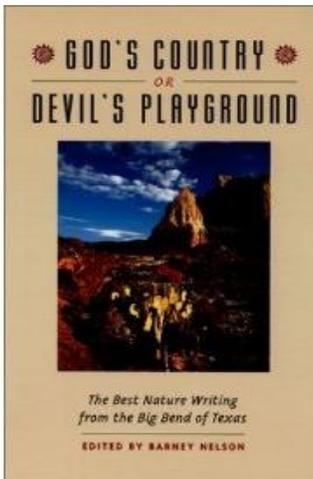
When I went to the WEB to see what I could find on horsetail, I was surprised. There was relatively little information about the biology of the genus or specific horsetail species. Instead there was a lot about the "medicinal" value of horsetail. Apparently horsetail concoctions are sold for "fluid retention" (edema), for kidney and bladder stones, urinary tract infections, the inability to control urination, and more! There MAY be some basis for these claims. *E. arvense* was eaten raw by the Kiowa. Also, Indian tribes living in southern Appalachian used roots (technically, rhizomes and tubers) of at least some species for food and maybe medicine. (They also constructed mats from the stems.) However, horsetail has no known direct food value to wildlife. Several species have been shown to be good biological monitors for heavy-metal pollution present in the water or for gold in the soil. (I need to follow up on the latter). I would like to end the scientific portion of this discussion, as did my major source (Turner, M.W. 2009), with an ironic endnote. Members of the horsetail genus are reportedly poisonous to horses.

So you see that I now know a lot more about horsetail than I did two years ago. Moreover, I no longer look at this plant as I once did, as a unique looking, interesting plant. I also can no longer look at horsetail with the pure frustration as I did more recently. Now when I look at the surviving horsetail plants, I look at them with a GOOD DEAL OF AWE mixed in with the frustration. It is clear to me that horsetail is certainly no ordinary plant. ....I wish that I could have learned all this more easily.

Main reference: Turner, M.W. Horsetail, *Equisetum* spp. (pages 214-216) in Remarkable Plants of Texas. 2009. Univ of Texas Press, Austin.

## GOD'S COUNTRY OR DEVIL'S PLAYGROUND: A BOOK REVIEW

by Margy Butler



**God's Country or Devil's Playground: An Anthology of Nature Writing from the Big Bend of Texas (Corrie Herring Hooks Series, Number Fifty-Four)**

Barney Nelson, Ed. (2002)  
University of Texas Press,  
Austin

If you're planning on going on the Trans-Pecos trip with HLMN this fall, here's a great book you'll want to read in preparation to experience that extraordinary land. The contributions from close to 60 authors in this excellent anthology run the gamut from homesteaders' reminiscences to scientists' observations, and most likely will introduce you to some tales about the "Big Lonesome" that you haven't heard before. If you aren't planning on making the trip out this fall, or if you've never been to the Trans-Pecos but always wanted to go, or if you've never heard of the place before, this book will still intrigue you with its broad range of historical viewpoints and the wide timeline included in the reporting from this remarkable part of our great state, the Big Bend.

Editor and compiler Barbara "Barney" Nelson, who is a Professor of English at Sul Ross State University, has gathered work from an impressive array of authors for this anthology. Some of these contributors, like J.

O. Langford, were original homesteaders. Others, like Aldo Leopold, were visitors who had great appreciation for the unique and wide open country. The Edward Abbey contributions are vintage! You will not want to miss reading Abbey on the subject of the Big Bend. Nor will you want to miss the story our own late Texas naturalist, Roy Bedichek relates, in his inimitable way, about the swallows – it will leave you with a smile.

Renown botanist Barton Warnock's essay on Capote Falls, beautifully written, is so descriptive of that gorgeous area around the Chinati's. We'll be visiting the Barton Warnock Museum in Lajitas before we go into Saucedo at Big Bend Ranch State Park this fall and may be able to see part of his collection of over 1600 pressed plant specimens from Big Bend Ranch that he donated to TPWD.

Those of you who heard Ro Wauer speak this past April at the Highland Lakes Birding and Wildflower Society will especially want to read his piece on the Maderas Del Carmen. His elegant writing and thorough knowledge of subject make excellent reading.

And there's so much more. Quoting from the publisher's Product Description, "...the collection includes...a wide range of voices that includes explorers, trappers, cowboys, ranch wives, curanderos, college presidents, scientists, locals, tourists, historians, avisa-dores, and waitresses. ...the pieces are grouped thematically to highlight the distinctive ways in which writers have responded to the Big Bend."

The book is available from Amazon and other booksellers, at several local libraries, or from UT Press (which provides a web discount.)

A highly recommended read!

### A Little More Nature Trivia

John & Rosalie Taylor, submitted by Lyn Davis

When a frog or a toad swallows a toxic insect, it regurgitates its stomach and while its stomach hangs outside of its mouth, it scrapes the offending morsel off its stomach with its right "hand".

What else would you expect from an animal that swallows with its eyes? Well, toads and frogs do use their eyes to swallow food. Watch one eat. When it swallows, it closes its eyes then presses its tough eyeballs down to force morsels back into the throat and down into its

# PHOTO GALLERY



Barred Owl in Sue Kersey's front yard by Sue Kersey



Juvenile Barn Swallows

Photo by Jerry Stone



Green Heron

Photo by Jerry Stone



Where's the water?  
Great Blue Heron  
Photo by Jerry Stone

**PHOTO GALLERY** Photos by Jerry Stone



Black Vulture



Ironweed - Now in Bloom



Jimson Weed—Now in Bloom



Cedar Waxwings  
Seen this March

**INKS DAM NATIONAL FISH HATCHERY  
QUARTERLY BIRD SURVEY**

**JULY 3, 2011**

**SHERRY BIXLER**

**Birds counted, in order of abundance:**

**37 species**

Cave Swallow	45	Lark Sparrow	3
Black Vulture	32	House Finch	3
Painted Bunting	17	Carolina Chickadee	2
Turkey Vulture	15	Orchard Oriole	2
Northern Cardinal	14	Wood Duck	2*
House Sparrow	13	Killdeer	2
Mourning Dove	11	Barn Swallow	2
Black-crested Tufted Titmouse	8	Carolina Wren	1
Purple Martin	8	Lesser Goldfinch	1
Bewick's Wren	7	Summer Tanager	1
Northern Mockingbird	5	Great Crested Flycatcher	1
Great Blue Heron	5	Common Ground-dove	1
Green Heron	4	Osprey	1
White-winged Dove	4	Common Yellowthroat	1
Black-chinned Hummingbird	4	Golden-fronted Woodpecker	1
Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	3	White-eyed Vireo	1
Eastern Phoebe	3	Black-throated Sparrow	1
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	3		
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	3	*One adult and one young	
Red-tailed Hawk	3	Wood Duck were counted.	

Note that the Black-throated Sparrow is at the edge of its range in the hill country and is not usually seen.

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AND AT/EVENTS CALENDAR**

Mike Childers

<b>JULY EVENTS &amp; VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES</b>	
Helping Center Garden Project - Breakfast in the Garden	20th
Helping Center, 1315 Broadway, Marble Falls (Broadway and Ave. N)	8-10am
<b>FUTURE EVENTS &amp; VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES</b>	
HLMN Monthly Meeting - Jo Karr Kedder - Central TX Water Coalition	Aug 3
Kingsland Library	1-3pm
August Refuge Talk Instead of Walk w/Diane Sherrill	Aug 14
Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge	8:30am
Burnet Kids Day Out - HLMN Tree Give-Away	Sep 10
Burnet County Fairgrounds	7:30am-3pm
Burnet Kids Day Out - Kids Kayaking	Sep 10
Inks Lake State Park	9am-3pm
Native Plant Society of Texas Symposium	Oct 14-16
Houston, TX	
Native Plant Garden Tour	Oct 15
Burnet County	
Texas Master Naturalist State Conference	Oct 21-23
Mo Ranch, Hunt TX	
Big Bend State Park Field Trip	Oct 30-Nov 4
Big Bend State Park	
Fall Outing at the Lilly's	Oct 27 or 30
Ed and Sue Lilly's Ranch, Lampasas	

For volunteer opportunities and events scheduled at Inks Lake State Park, Blanco State Park, and Balcones Canyonlands, check these websites for information:

[http://beta-www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/parks/find-a-park/inks-lake-state-park/park\\_events/](http://beta-www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/parks/find-a-park/inks-lake-state-park/park_events/)

[http://beta-www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/parks/find-a-park/blanco-state-park/park\\_events/](http://beta-www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/parks/find-a-park/blanco-state-park/park_events/)

<http://friendsofbalcones.org/>

### Stewardship

An ethic that embodies cooperative planning and management of environmental resources with organizations, communities and others to actively engage in the prevention of loss of habitat and facilitate its recovery in the interest of long-term sustainability

Please submit pictures, articles, reports, stories, calendar and event entries, etc. to [chili865@gmail.com](mailto:chili865@gmail.com). Photos should have captions and appropriate credits. The deadline for submissions to each month's newsletter is the 10th of the month and publication will be by the 15th.