

T E X A S

Master  
Naturalist™



HIGHLAND LAKES CHAPTER



# Highland Lakes Steward

May 2013

Volume 4, Issue 5

## MISSION

The Texas Master Naturalist program is a natural resource-based volunteer training and development program sponsored statewide by Texas A&M 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

## OFFICERS

### President

Linda O’Nan  
onan.linda@gmail.com  
(830) 693-6126

### Vice-President

Pat Campbell  
pat.campbell@dishmail.net  
(512) 715-0176

### Secretary

Barbara Booth  
boothbarbara@hotmail.com  
(512) 470-5534

### Treasurer

Phillip Mitchell  
phillipmitchell@gmail.com  
(830) 693-0184

## WEATHER OR NOT

By Linda O’Nan

This spring has been a series of weather “events”. Colder than normal temperatures have been sweeping through regularly, allowing us to enjoy an extended spring. Unfortunately, along with these extremes, tornadoes, hail, and strong winds have pummeled our trees and gardens. Many of our fellow naturalists withstood devastating hail a few weeks ago, and we certainly hope they are on their way to recovery. The damage to trees and landscape plants will take more time. Despite an extended drought, we have had enough winter rains to bring on an abundance of wildflowers. Don’t you just love to see what unfolds each day? Despite all Mother Nature dishes out, we have a lot to be grateful for here in Central Texas. We had a mild winter and were able to enjoy our many outdoor activities and educational programs. GOP at Inks Lake State Park this year, thanks to the leadership of Terry Bartoli and a massive volunteer effort from our members, was a huge success. Several days each week gave us summer-like shorts weather, and when cool fronts blew through, some of the coldest temperatures ever for GOP! Thanks to all for persevering through. What a great group of folks. Also, special thanks to the Inks Lake State Park staff, particularly Terry Young, Chris Hall, Stefan, and Sean Jones for their efforts in the overwhelming success of the aquatics station. The squeals of the kids from the splashing fish could be heard all over the park!

We would like to welcome our soon-to-be graduates from the 2013 class. What a valuable addition to our chapter—you all will be major contributors to our success. I think the camaraderie we have as a chapter

keeps us all motivated because we have so much fun together. We’ve got some great projects coming up for you to get involved in. HOP at the Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery will provide fun educational stations on multiple days similar to GOP. Contact Phil Wyde if you would like to get involved. On May 25 at the “Carry the Load” celebration at Reveille Peak Ranch, there will be nature activities provided by the UHLNC, along with the opening of the new nature center trails. Get in touch with Billy Hutson if you would like to participate. Also, we hope to get the Inks State Park wildlife viewing station off the ground in mid-June. Watch for notices from Jerry Stacy and Ed Myatt for updates. Don’t forget the Burnet Co. Fair on June 15—HLMN will have a booth featuring our Watershed Exhibit. Sammie Childers needs lots of helpers for shifts throughout the day. We need you!

Don’t let our upcoming Texas heat scare you off from the fun stuff our chapter has planned for the summer. The field trip to Junction is coming up in early June. There will be a day outing to the Govt. Canyon State Natural Area sometime in July. Of course, there is still time to join up for the Caddo Lake excursion in September. I think we need some more “Swamp People”! Anyway, cancel the cruise to Tahiti, the lodge in Banff, and the wildlife viewing trip to Denali—there is plenty to do right here, with people who love you....! Bring on the summer (and the cold adult beverages). You know we do have four seasons—early summer, mid summer, late summer and NEXT summer! See y’all later. Can’t wait.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<b>Weather or Not</b>	<b>1</b>
Linda O'nan	
<b>April Meeting</b>	<b>2</b>
Pat Campbell	
<b>June Meeting Notice</b>	<b>2</b>
Pat Campbell	
<b>Friends of UHNLC</b>	<b>3</b>
Billy Hutson	
<b>Black and White Warbler</b>	<b>4</b>
Joanne Fischer	
<b>2013 Great Outdoors Program</b>	<b>5</b>
Terri Bartoli	
<b>Gallery</b>	<b>6</b>
Sue Kersey and Jerry Stone	

Please submit pictures, articles, reports, stories, announcements, 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.

## JUNE MEETING

by Pat Campbell

The next meeting will be back at the Methodist Church in Marble Falls on Wednesday, June 5 at 1:00. We have a treat in store as Flo Oxley, adjunct professor of biology at Austin Community College will be our speaker. Most of us have heard her before, and she is always entertaining as well as informative. I believe her topic will be dealing with plant conservation. Lunch will be at Francescas at 11:30. This will be our last meeting until August so let's all try to be there! See you at Francescas!

## MAY MEETING

by Pat Campbell

Photos by Jerry Stone

A big thanks to the Lilley's for having us last month. It was a great day and nice to be outside for a change. For those who missed it, you missed a fun day as well as a lot of great information.



## FRIENDS OF THE UPPER HIGHLAND LAKES NATURE CENTER (UHLNC)

by Billy Hutson

We had 90 kids/adults from the 5th grade Marble Falls class at the nature center for a field day on Thursday 4/11 followed the next day by 26 kids and some adults from a home school group. It was a busy two days but with help of Andrea Roach, Helen Smith, Pat Campbell and Susan Morgan, we survived. Andrea organized the class from M.F.'s and Gabe Jones organized the home school group. The kids had fun and learned a lot about nature.

The second water tank was delivered and put into place by the motley crew of Mike Childers, Bob Whaley George Brugnoli and me. This will be the water education building and will be part of the permanent structures along with the Geology building already in place. Both need to be retrofitted for their use in the coming months.

Our fence is almost finished with one or two days max to complete thanks to the nature strippers.

One last mention of our grand opening of the nature center trails on Saturday May 25th. There will be thousands of people attending the memorial day event at RPR and we will take advantage of the crowd by ushering the families with kids onto the trails for a nature adventure through 12 exciting stations. The military/law enforcement exhibitions are from 11 am to 1 pm and the trail stations will follow. Go to <http://www.rprtexas.com/> and scroll down to May 25th for information.

More people are getting excited about the nature center every week. We now have 114 members and enough construction material to build four or five satellite buildings. Work is progressing for the funds for the main building since we received our 501(C)(3) status and the advent of the Carry the Load event on May 25th.

Try to take the time to join the 35 or 40 members that are volunteering that day to come and enjoy our opening with your kids, grandkids and friends.



## BLACK-AND-WHITE WARBLER

By Joanne Fischer



Although there are about 50 species of wood warblers in North America, very few breed in Texas and fewer yet in the Hill Country. Wood warblers are of the family Parulidae and are small to medium-sized songbirds that are very active and often brightly colored. Because they are insectivorous birds, they are partial to wooded habitats and characteristically, they have short, slender, pointed bills.

The Black-and-white Warbler is one of the Hill Country breeding warblers (along with the Golden-cheeked Warbler, the Northern Parula and the Louisiana Waterthrush). It was once called the little “black-and-white creeper” because of its specialized foraging habits. With a longer, decurved bill and strong legs and claws the Black-and-white Warbler forages by trunk-creeping. It creeps along the bark of tree trunks and large branches, gleaning insects, caterpillars and spiders in a fashion similar to nuthatches. In fact, its shape and behavior is so similar to that of a nuthatch that it can be mistaken for one if all one sees is the profile. It is the only North American warbler to feed this way. The Black-and-white Warbler actually has an unusually long hind toe and claw on each foot and it is this adaptation that allows it to move securely both up and down the tree bark surfaces.

The Black-and-white Warbler ranges across eastern North American, from Canada to the Gulf States and winters from the Gulf southward through Mexico,

the West Indies and into northern South America. The Black-and-white Warbler is streaked black and white all over. Its crown has a central white streak bordered by two black streaks. The male has a black throat and its underparts have bold black stripes while the female (and immatures) have dull whitish or gray chins and throat and underparts with gray streaks.

The Black-and-white Warbler is one of the first of the warblers to return from the tropics in the spring. Because it forages for insects on the bark of trees, it has no need to wait until the trees have leafed out. It nests in mature and second-growth deciduous and mixed forests. Despite the fact that it forages for food high in trees and shrubs, the Black-and-white Warbler builds its nest on the ground at the base of a tree or shrub, concealing it under fallen leaves or branches. The nest is an open cup of dry leaves, grass, bark and pine needles, lined with fine grasses and moss and can be almost impossible to detect. The female lays four or five white to creamy eggs speckled with brown. The female incubates the eggs which hatch in about 10 days. Both parents then feed the young which leave the nest in 10 – 12 days. Unfortunately, the Black-and-white Warbler is a frequent Cowbird host.

When seeking a Black-and-white Warbler remember to look along the trunk and branch surfaces, versus looking for a bird hidden in the leaves!

# GREAT OUTDOORS PROGRAM 2013 ANOTHER SUCCESS

by Terry Bartoli

Photos by Sue Kersey

Another Great Outdoors Program is now in the books! No one is sure how many years this has been held, but my best estimate is that this was its 16<sup>th</sup> year. It's grown a lot over those years from a small games-oriented program to one in which a lot of age-appropriate information is presented in an informative and entertaining format.

This year we had 530 students and 227 parents and guests taken through the program. The program was supported by 55 members of HLMN along with Ricky Garcia and his wife at the Native American station. Each station got a facelift this year to better inform the 1<sup>st</sup> graders and smooth the flow of the day. Cathy Hill added a popular feature this year by creating "Passports" for each of the students. I believe she sin-

gle handedly assembled almost 650 of the passports that were given to each student, who then had their passport stamped at the conclusion of the program at each station. We quickly found out the kids got very attached to their passports and were anxious to take them home to show their families.

We had one of the coldest days of weather that we've had this year, as well as one of the largest (7 classes) and smallest (2 classes) groups since anyone can remember. But each day went off with no major hitches!

To the great group of folks who made this a success this year, I want to say a heartfelt THANK YOU! It's really wonderful to see folks support such a great program!



# GALLERY

by Sue Kersey



Great Egret



Screech owl



Scissor-tail flycatcher



Hummer on nest



Ruby-crowned kinglet

## GALLERY

By Jerry Stone



Purple Bindweed (*Ipomoea trichocarpa*) taken 5/3/2013 at Enchanted Rock



Firewheel (*Gaillardia pulchella*) taken 4/30/2013 near Granite Shoals



Scudders Bush Katydid Nymph taken 4/27/2013 in Horseshoe Bay



Rockrose (*Helianthemum georgianum*) taken 5/3/2013 at Enchanted Rock

Fox-Glove (*Penstemon Cobaea*) taken 5/3/2013 near Cave Creek. Notice the filaments of the four stamens are curved and rigid in order to prevent the corolla tube from collapsing as they are pollinated by large bees. The long style sticks out past the lip of the corolla.



# GALLERY

By Jerry Stone



Pink Evening Primrose (*Oenothera speciosa*) taken 5/1/2013 in Horseshoe Bay



Giant Spiderwort (*Commelina erecta*) taken 5/3/2013 at Enchanted Rock



Prickly Pears (*Opuntia macrorhiza*) of various colors taken 5/4/2013 in Horseshoe Bay

