

# The Steward

Spring 2023 Highland Lakes Master Naturalists Volume 14 Issue 1



## Congratulations Class of 2023

Reed Armstrong, Bill Blevins, Karen Brents, Wendy Cambridge, Barbara Fugler, Duncan Hopkins, Jill Hopkins, Cathy Houston, Ed Houston, Meghan James, Beth Lillis, Holly Morris, Susan Neans, MaryLynne Norman, Charles Powell, Chuck Purcell, Gigi Rostomily, Peggy Schatz, Rick Schatz, Liz Smith, Lisa Stripay, Gary Sullivan, Pam Sullivan, and Becki Vavrek.  
Rick Vance and Paula Richards, Coordinators

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### Message from our President

By Roy Appleton

Our June chapter meeting will focus on the past in this 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year for HLMN. Members of the groundbreaking Class of 2003 will join the chapter's organizers and others in recalling the early days, talking about what they have done, learned and gained as master naturalists.

But first, a few back stories (sort of way back) that might help prime some memories: Wade Hibler heard about the new Texas Master Naturalist program through his work as a Burnet County extension agent. Chapters had formed in Travis, Bexar and a few other Texas counties. The concept was solid, promising: Create groups of volunteers to provide education and service for people, natural areas and conservation. He was interested.

So was his friend Bill Luedecke, a Burnet County master gardener who had read about master naturalists in the Austin newspaper.

"I called Hibler and asked him, 'What is this? Why can't we do this?'" Bill recalled.

They could, and they did – along with more than a dozen other local pioneers.

Wade and Bill attended a three-day meeting at the Bamberger Ranch held to promote the budding state master naturalist program. They joined extension agents and others in tours of the ranch and group discussions. They talked about land stewardship and conservation practices at Bamberger, and about applying such efforts elsewhere.

"Bamberger brought it together," Wade said. "We got really interested, and it took off from there."

He, Bill and their teammates launched the Highland Lakes chapter in 2003, after word of this new opportunity with the outdoors was shared with master gardeners, the local native plant society chapter, the Hill Country Trekkers and like-minded groups. Early HLMN boundaries included Burnet and Llano counties. Blanco County was added several years later and Lampasas County in 2022.

Wade had worked for years with the Burnet County master gardener program, which became a master naturalist model of sorts.

"The master gardener volunteers were educators. They were doing programs, putting together presentations, but their work was based on horticultural sciences," he said.

Master gardener Bill wanted to work beyond yards, work with nature, with "water, bees, rocks, animals and all. I wanted the total experience. ... I didn't want to stop with plants. ... If you are interested in growing things, then you are interested in what makes them grow and what makes everything else grow."

Bill was among the first 14 HLMN graduates. Wade lined up the speakers and taught four of the 11 classes, building a curriculum with the help of state master naturalist program leader Michelle Haggerty, who had organized, and invited him to, the Bamberger meeting.

The focus was natural resources in and near Burnet County, starting with plant identification and water conservation, he said. "We had no guidelines, not even a book."

Class training subjects also included a "history of the naturalist movement" and "ecology and a changing world," soil science and aquifers, rangeland restoration, geology of the Llano Uplift, archaeology and history of the Highland Lakes area, and "volunteers as teachers."

"We were going to create a team of people who could go to Inks Lake State Park" and introduce schoolchildren to the outside world, Wade said. "A lot of programs emerged from that."

That first team, and those that have followed, kept learning, sharing, getting out there for good.

"It was the volunteers who stayed active that made this work," Wade said. "When they started winning awards at the state meeting for the newsletter and other projects, it was obvious we knew what we were doing."

And when Wade's wife died in 2003, class members "stepped up and helped dig me out of that dark hole," he said. "They helped me take care of things" and brought his daughter Haley into the fold as teammate and friend.

Six members of that first class are still HLMN members: Marvin and Judy Bloomquist, Linda O'Nan, Ellis Winkler, Karen McCurley and Bill Luedecke. Wade Hibler retired from extension work in 2014 after more than 33 years as an agent, mostly in Burnet County. He remains active as a member of the Hill Country Conservancy board, a master naturalist and master gardener training instructor, hunting guide, gospel radio show disc jockey and church guitar player, among other pursuits.

Marvin and Judy learned of the master naturalist program through their native plant society chapter. They signed up and began leading weekly hikes at Inks. "Sometimes three people would show up, and then one time Judy stayed home and when I got out there we had 100 people, including a Boy Scout troop," Marvin recalled with a chuckle.

Early on, "I could probably count the number of plants I could identify on one hand," he said. But he started photographing plants in the field, would upload to his computer and use a guide book to learn names.

"I got into plant identification and the first thing you know, people thought I was an expert," he said with another chuckle. "Little did they know."

Marvin put together a class on photographing plants, which he taught at the master naturalist state meeting. He has led classes for the chapter and other groups and has been our Land Management As-

sistance Program photographer from the start. So what has he gained through 20 years with HLMN?

“A lot of friends. Our best friends are nearly all master naturalists,” he said. “It’s also given us an appreciation for nature. Being able to identify plants gave us a new interest in life that has persisted. It’s been a life-changer.”

Linda O’Nan first heard about master naturalists when Wade talked up the organization in a master gardener class.

“He said with master gardeners you’re interested in your little world, but master naturalists are concerned about learning about everything else in the world,” she said. “It was quite eye-opening, what this chapter would be involved in and what we would be learning.”

She and other applicants had to commit to volunteer work and finishing the chapter’s training program. “We were excited about it,” Linda said.

Her early HLMN memories include the teachings of Barron Rector, a Texas A&M professor and AgriLife Extension specialist. He, like Wade, also led classes for this year’s chapter trainees.

“He brought the program to life for many of us with his knowledge of native grasses and rangelands. He made the plain facts come to life,” Linda said of Barron.

Her classmates Ray Hufford and Jim Cox, both now deceased, were standouts as well.

“You were a sponge when you were around Ray,” she said of the native plant society leader and owner of a native plant nursery.

Jim’s Oatmeal Creek Ranch was the setting for one of the first classes and “kind of our clubhouse,” Linda said. “We met out there for all of our parties and a lot of classes. When you have a small group like that you get to know each other really well. We had such a good time and learned a lot.”

And as when Wade lost his wife, chapter members helped Linda after the death of her husband.

“It’s been a wonderful experience. Learning, meeting people, sharing time,” she said. “When you look out at stuff and you don’t know what it is, you just see brown or green. But when you learn about something, its name and the reason we have it and what pollinators are attracted to it and what wildflowers it supports, it makes everything special.”

Linda was chapter president in 2013, Marvin in 2005. They have been among the chapter’s leading volunteers, each with thousands of hours of service. We’ll hear from them and others, and learn more about HLMN’s roots, at our June 7 meeting at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Marble Falls. Hope to see you there, if not before. As we look back, and perhaps ahead.

“The love for all living creatures is the most noble attribute of Man” ~Charles Darwin

# ...a few Memories over the years..... Thank you Sue Kersey



## Class of 2023 Adventures

Photos by Karen Parker



INTREPID students still learning in the pouring rain at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center



Classroom Training in the auditorium at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

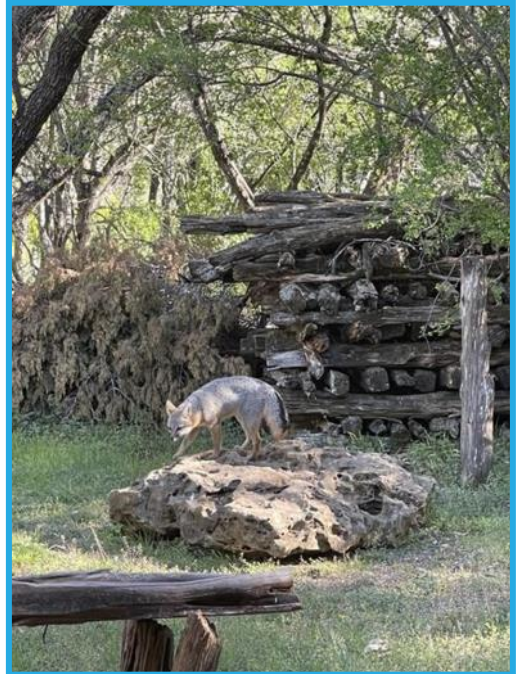
## Spring Volunteer Training at Pedernales Falls State Park with Ranger Steve Garmon

Photos by MJ Hansen



HLMN Training Group—  
Roy Appleton, Mary Lott,  
Lisa Stripay, Becki Vavrek,  
James Reimer, Betty Cruik-  
shank, George Vavrek,  
Ranger Stephen Garmon,  
Jeanne Kregel, MJ Hansen,  
Jill Goff.





## Archery Training at Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery



Photos by Karen Stewart









## Grounded! at Pedernales Falls State Park

The Golden-Cheeked Warbler eats almost entirely insects. During breeding season they can usually be found searching for food in the top two thirds of the tree canopy. They rarely visit the ground, likely for fear of predators, and because there is usually plenty of food higher in the trees and flying by. We've seen them drink and bathe at the water features at the bird blinds, but on this occasion we found one on the grass in the picnic area, possibly because it saw the Northern Cardinal find an insect to eat.

Photos: Stephen Garmon, Park Interpreter/Volunteer Coordinator, Pedernales Falls State Park



# Leopold Live!

By Patty Harrell

Early into the pandemic, Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute (NRI) realized they needed to get creative as to how they engaged with the public. Traditional face-to-face meetings with a friendly handshake were a thing of the past and a new approach for disseminating information was required so they turned to the use of social media.

In September 2020, the NRI launched “Leopold Live!”, a 5-week series conducted in partnership with the Bamberger Ranch Preserve. These first programs focused on in-the-field demonstrations of Aldo Leopold’s five methods of wildlife management: axe; cow; plow; gun; and fire.

In “The Axe”, ranch staff not only showed how and when to use an axe but also introduced modern versions of the axe such as the brush trimmer, chainsaw, and drum mulcher. While this first session was conducted in a livestream format with an on-the-spot chat capability, there were production challenges such as the overhead sound of planes and spotty internet connections that caused the NRI to reconsider the live aspect of this program. Nonetheless, all parties were committed to finishing this series.

The next episode, “The Cow”, shows an outside expert from the Texas Agricultural Land Trust using a Robel range pole to measure vegetation and discuss what these measurements mean in terms of grazing management. There were many thoughtful questions from viewers at the end of this episode.

In “The Plow”, both ranch staff and an agent from Texas A&M Agrilife Extension talk about the uses of the traditional plow, mechanical plow, and chemical plow (i.e., herbicides). Numerous before and after shots demonstrated the use of each method and showed how the affected areas had changed over time.

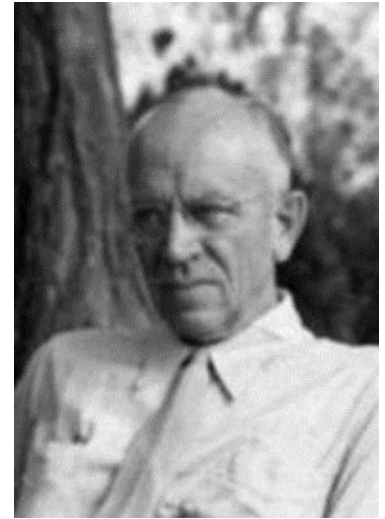
The fourth session was “The Gun” and a retired biologist from Texas Parks & Wildlife Department discussed hunting as another wildlife management practice. He explained the importance of hunting regulations as a means of ensuring sustainable harvesting. Ranch staff also discussed the use of feral hog traps as a means of managing an invasive species.

For the final episode of original series, ranch staff and a representative of the Texas A&M Forest Service discussed “The Fire”. There was an extensive discussion regarding prescribed burns and ways to develop a “go or no-go plan”. This live episode concluded with a prescribed burn on the ranch with a full crew and fire instructor in attendance.

At the conclusion of the five weeks of live, on-camera demonstrations, the decision was made to continue this program in a prerecorded manner so as to improve the production quality. Since the launch of “Leopold Live!” the NRI has completed 16 more episodes and there are 3 more episodes in production.

All 21 programs completed thus far can be found on YouTube at [Leopold Live! - YouTube](#). Additional topics include wildlife valuation; bluebird boxes; brush clearing and brush piles; food stations; game cameras; supplemental water for wildlife; herbicides and brush management; cowbird trapping; grassland preparation for pollinators; rainwater harvesting for wildlife; erosion control; deer harvest record keeping; beneficial plants for wildlife; bat boxes; I-D-I wildlife tax valuation process; and introduction to beekeeping. Check it out!

Aldo Leopold 1946 Courtesy of Wikipedia



### **A Wolf Spider, She Lies Dead**

*A wolf spider, she lies dead  
I'm really glad she was not in my bed.  
I feel sorry that she didn't have anything to eat.  
And now she lays dead here down at my feet.*

By Karen Stewart

## The Secret's Out There's a Gem in Those Hills

By MJ Hansen

One of the best kept (unintentional) secrets in our Chapter is the Gem of the Hills—a 25-acre non-profit community center in Blanco, a straight shot down Highway 281 from Burnet County.

If you were in the HLMN Class of 2022, you're already familiar with the Gem. One of your training classes was held in the Activity Center, which was originally built by volunteers and completed in 1995.

Did you notice the 26 ft. high native limestone fireplace? It was built by one of the founders, a 90-year-old stonemason, and his 70-year-old helper!

A local artist hand-painted the 8' x 40' mural on the west wall depicting a hill country image in full bloom.

What makes the Gem truly special to us, and probably THE BEST KEPT SECRET OF ALL, is what's outside on the 25-acre grounds behind the Activity Center. This is what you'll discover there: nature trails with a meditation garden, a birding station and pollinator garden, plus a large, covered pavilion and picnic areas.

Opportunities abound to accrue HLMN volunteer hours with trail clearing and maintenance, pollinator garden upkeep, hosting 3rd graders on the trails—just to name a few activities.

Nature trails and birding station are open to the public.

The 2,400 square foot covered Pavilion set in a wooded grove is an ideal spot for outdoor meetings and gatherings.

Future HLMN Advanced Training opportunities at the Gem will include Water Conservation, Land Management programs and naturalist presentations.

While most programs at the Gem are open and free to the public and everyone is welcome to attend, the Gem relies on membership dues to keep it operational. Check out Gem [membership opportunities](#).

In 2022 the Gem hosted a Forest Bathing session with Texas A&M Forest Service that attracted participants as far south as San Antonio!

Past and future programs include sponsors such as Hill Country Alliance, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension and Blanco Friends of the Night Skies.

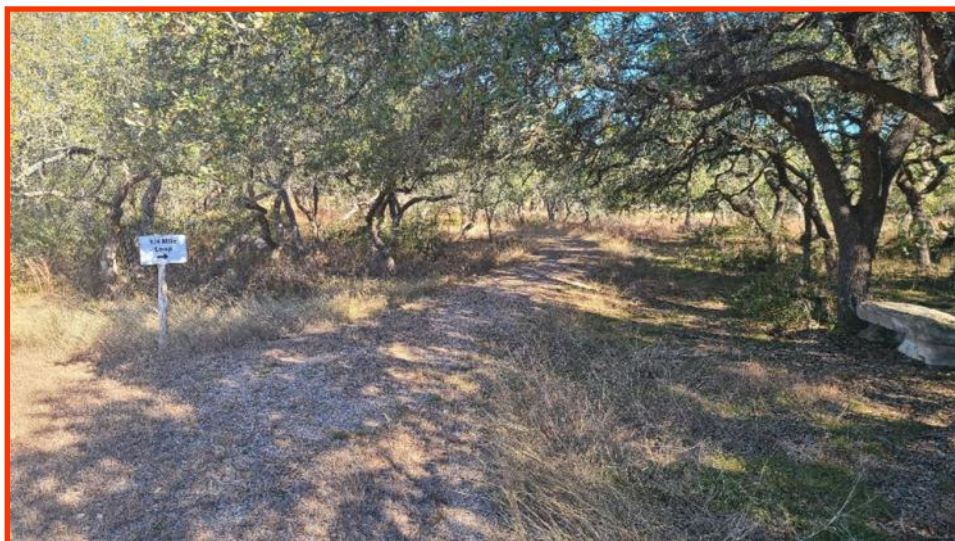
In addition to meetings and events, the Activity Center is where fitness and yoga classes take place for members, and pickleball competitions. Check out the [Gem's calendar of events](#) at the link below for all their fitness and social programs.

Now that the secret's out, you'll be seeing and hearing more about Gem of the Hills volunteer and training opportunities in our monthly meetings and email posts. We're counting on our amazing HLMN members to help out and volunteer at this hidden gem!



For questions and comments about HLMN's interactions with the Gem, email MJ Hansen.

For questions and comments about the Gem, not specific to HLMN activities, contact Amy Crowell.



For more history and general information of the Gem, go to [gemofthehills.org](http://gemofthehills.org) and [membership options](#).

Gem of the Hills  
 2233 US Highway 281  
 North  
 Blanco, Texas 78606

## Should Hill Country Naturalists Take A Break In Winter?

by Phil Wyde

Photography has edged out fishing and become my favorite hobby. Happily this hobby fits in extremely well with my naturalist inclinations. However, today is January 26<sup>th</sup> and it is 25 degrees Fahrenheit outside. There is hardly a flower or insect in sight. Indeed, there is very little color of any kind to be seen – or at first sight, to be photographed! Back in November I began to think that maybe this was a good time to take a break from my naturalist activities and wait until spring when nature will explode and photographic opportunities will become limitless? I am glad to say that I did not take a break. Instead I continued to go outside, travel about, visit local parks and refuges and see what I could see and “shoot.” What I found was that winter here provides some special opportunities that are not possible at other times of the year. Read on, and see if you agree.

In Figure 1, you see a squadron of White Pelicans flying low across Inks Lake. This species is just one of many bird species that migrate to this area during our winter months. More importantly, I saw these very large, beautiful birds gliding long distances, effortlessly, just a couple of feet above the surface of the water. It was surreal and enthralling! They were so graceful, defying gravity. I was delighted. Of course I may have seen them and this activity somewhere else, and at some other time. But I got to see them here and at this time.

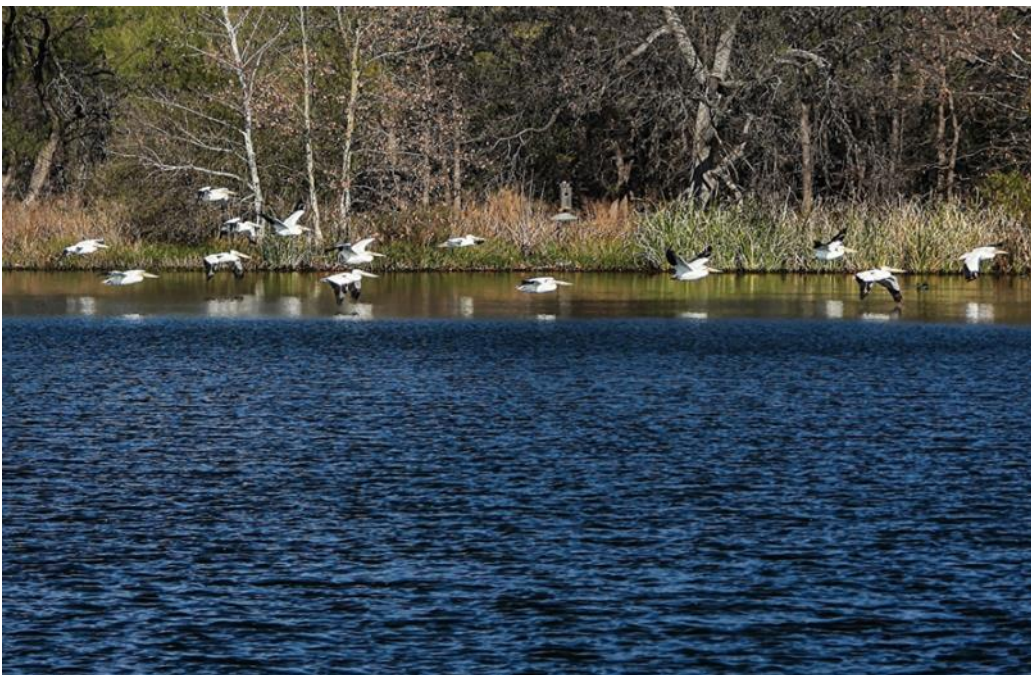


Figure 1. Low Flying White Pelicans at ILSP. Image taken 12/17/2023



A close up shot of one of these White Pelicans is seen in Fig. 2. He has the same expression that I see on all pelicans: one of serious, wise thought. I keep hoping that my features will grow to have such a look. However, that has not happened. That aside, it was wonderful seeing them flying, gliding and up close.



Figure 2. White Pelican Close Up. Image Taken 12/17/2023



Figure 3. American Goldfinch seen at IDNFH Bird Blind on 12/24/2023

Another winter surprise happened when I visited the Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery (IDNFH) Bird Blind in late December. As shown in Figure 3, I saw an American Goldfinch. It is another bird that migrates here in winter – and whose colorful presence is worth seeing. It made my day.

Then in January I got a shot of another species of Goldfinch (Fig. 4), a Lesser Goldfinch. He was in a small tree in my yard. As with the American Goldfinch, the Lesser Goldfinch really stood out on the dreary background. Neither of these Goldfinch species was rare. I saw numerous other American and Lesser Goldfinches in the area.

Two bits of information about Goldfinches that you may not know: 1) I believe that unlike the American Goldfinch, Lesser Goldfinches do not migrate, but stay in the Hill Country all year round; and 2) the term “lesser” is used by birders to mean smaller, i.e., Lesser Goldfinches are generally smaller than American Goldfinches. No matter, it brought me significant pleasure seeing both of these bird species, in full color, on drab winter days.



Figure 4. Lesser Goldfinch Seen At Oak Bend 01/19/2023



Figure 5. American Kestrel seen at IDNFH 12/17/2023

In mid December (12/17) I photographed an American Kestrel that I saw at the IDNFH perched in a tree going up the hill to the Education Building. Kestrels are the smallest member of the Falcon family, and smaller than most raptors. Indeed because of their small size they are commonly called Sparrow Hawks. Don't let a true birder hear you call them that since they are not true hawks, and according to the "Birds of Texas" handbook (Fred J. Alsop III author), sparrows are apparently not a significant part of their diet. As an aside, I once witnessed a pair of Kestrels courting, spiraling around and touching claws in the air. It was truly impressive! Small as they are, they are beautiful birds and I always am delighted when I see them.

One more point, American Kestrels, like the White Pelicans and American Goldfinches, are migratory and mostly seen here during the winter months.

Unlike the American Kestrel, the Red Tail Hawk, the Red Shouldered Hawk, and Osprey shown in Figures 6 - 9 live in the Texas Hill Country all year round. (Apparently there is some migration of Red Tail and Red Shouldered Hawks, but mostly in northern populations.) Note that I could have shown just one figure of a Red Shouldered Hawk, but I just had to show both. Indeed, the shot of the Red Shouldered Hawks mating in Figure 6, was (for me) a once in a life time shot. I was just pushing the shutter button on my camera to take the picture of the female Red Shouldered Hawk when he flew in.

I felt like a voyeur!

The image of the Red Shouldered Hawk in Figure 7 was taken just a short distance from my house in Kingsland. He was sitting on a branch lying on the ground, apparently surveying the area for rodents. As you can tell he was pretty close.

The photograph of the Red Tail Hawk in Figure 8 was taken at Inks Lake State Park and the image of the Osprey in Figure 9 was taken at IDNFH. I often see this Osprey at the hatchery, almost always in the same (his favorite?) tree. On both of these days, the lighting and sky was near perfect.

Ospreys are also called Fish Eagles because fish make up the bulk of their diet. I have many times seen them dive for fish. I find it interesting that they have a great degree of success catching the fish despite the significant refractory quality of the water. It is also notable that they always fly away with their prey in their claws with the head of the fish, aerodynamically, facing forward. I have seen them numerous times perched in a tree, or tall stump, eating their catch. My question to you is why this Osprey likes to hang around the hatchery and looks so well fed?



Figure 6. Red Shouldered Hawks Mating at IDNFH. Shot taken 01/12/2023



Figure 7. Red Shouldered Hawk Seen in Kingsland 01232023



Figure 8. Red Tail Hawk Seen At Inks Lake State Park 01/15/2023



Figure 9. Osprey seen IDNFH 01/20/2023

In Figure 10 I show an image of a Northern Cardinal. I included this image in this report to remind you that you do not have to travel far to see color and interesting things in the winter.

There are plenty of birds, squirrels, raccoons, and other things to see on, and around, your feeders even during winter. It must be getting to mating season as this individual, and many of the Northern



Figure 10 Northern Cardinal Near Feeder At Oak Bend. Shot 01/19/2023

Cardinals that I see, are looking resplendent.

By now you must be thinking that only birds provide interest and color during winter in the Texas Hill Country. Figures 11 through 13 will show you that you would be wrong. In Figure 11 is an image of a Longhorn steer. I saw this Longhorn (and the rest of his herd) on a back road in Marble Falls. (It is amazing what you will see on the back roads of Texas.) I think that he was both colorful and interesting. He also exuded strength and power. (I can see why the University of Texas picked a Longhorn as their symbol.) I was very happy to see him and be able to take his picture.

Just for your interest. I have read that Longhorns evolved from cattle that got loose from the herds brought over by the Spanish explorers and other early settlers. These herds were kept on the open range, without fences, and some escaped to become wild. For more than 100 years these cattle had to evolve to survive the numerous predators that lived on the plains with them; and longhorns were one of more obvious defense mechanisms that resulted. Apparently the development of longhorns was hastened through some crossbreeding with other cattle, some with somewhat longer horns, brought over by Scottish and other immigrants to the “new world.” Regardless, I included the image of a longhorn in this report to indicate that they are not only birds to see and shoot here in the winter. Indeed, I have taken photographs of bucks, does, colorful vines, giraffes (at the Johnson City Wildlife Zoo), turtles, etc.



Figure 11. Longhorn Seen  
On A Marble Falls Back  
Road 01/22/2023

My last 2 images (Figures 12 and 13) are of 2 dawns seen and photographed in front of my house. Of course, dawns and sunsets occur all year long. However, at this time of the year, I appreciate them even more as they do add color and photographic opportunities.

Another point that I would like to make about dawns and sunsets is that they change color extremely rapidly (often less than minutes). You need to be ready if you want to see and photograph them at their most colorful. And even more important, to see and photograph a dawn you need to be awake.



Figure 12. Dawn at Oak Bend 12/21/2023

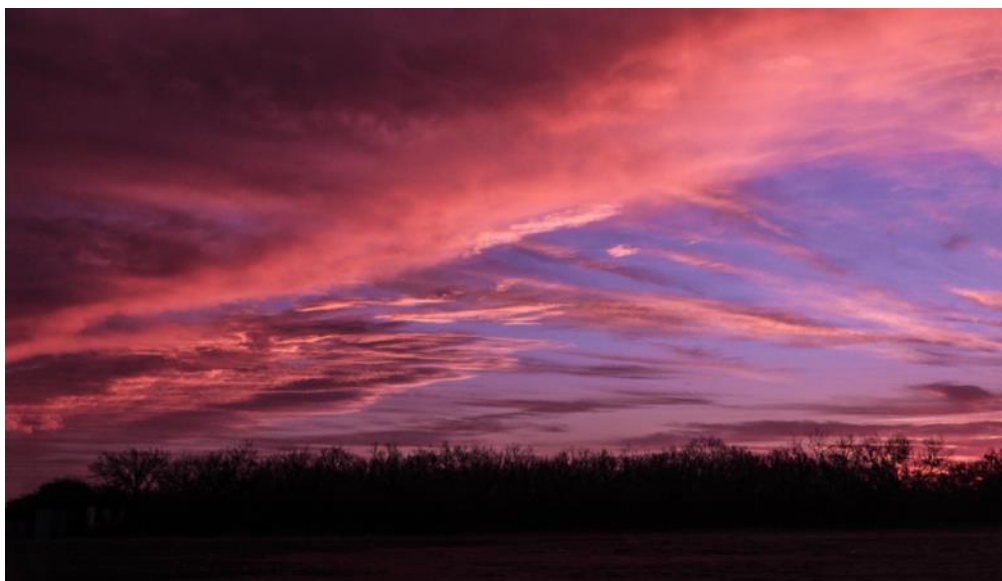


Figure 13. Dawn Across From Oak Bend 01/1/2023

I am going to end here. I could have included in this article many more images that I took in recent weeks. However, I think that I have with these few images answered the question posed in the title of this article: Should Hill Country naturalists take a break in winter? I think that the answer is **HECK NO!** There is still much to see, observe and photograph here in the Texas Hill Country, even in the dead of winter. Indeed, winter afforded me opportunities that I would not have readily seen at other times of the years:

Migratory birds that are not here at other times of the year;  
The chance to get clear images not obscured by foliage; and  
Obtain images that stand out because of the stark backgrounds behind them.

My very last thought, for now, is that you don't have to be a photographer to be a happy naturalist in the Texas Hill Country in the winter. Even if I had not captured their images with my camera, my mind would never forget the wonderful, graceful White Pelicans gliding low over the water, the eye popping Goldfinches, the magnificent raptors, the powerful Longhorns, the mating hawks or the vivid dawns. I also won't forget the adventure and satisfaction I had being out and about.

## Have alot of Gall

By Becky Breazeale

Becoming a Master Naturalist awakens the wonder of nature in most of us and we discover things which otherwise wouldn't have been noticed. As a fledgling Master Naturalist, I came upon this leaf on one of our "class outings" and it piqued my curiosity.



Identifying this oddity was difficult because iNaturalist wasn't around when my observation was made. After several unsuccessful google search attempts, I saw an article in Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine, *Gallmakers and Leafminers*. The photo which accompanied the article resembled my specimen. I found it is easier to research something when I had a name for it.

Those brown spheres on the leaf picture are galls which are abnormal swellings of plant tissue. They come in all sizes and shapes and can be found on different parts of plants or trees. Galls are an example of symbiotic animal/plant relationship. Tiny larvae from moths, flies, beetles, and mites excavate the leaf's epidermal layers to feed themselves. Normally in the spring or early summer, an adult female gall maker selects a plant and inserts her ovipositor "egg laying organ" into a tender part of the leaf. As the female lays her eggs, she also secretes a chemical which causes the gall to begin growing around the eggs. When the eggs hatch, the larvae continue to release a chemical that keeps the gall growing.

Galls come in two types – open and closed. Insects with chewing mouth parts live in closed galls and can chew their way out of the gall when it is time to emerge. Open galls either partially splits when it is time to emerge or insects are able to suck their way out.

Some gall makers are harmful and considered pests to farmers, but most are not. Except for deforming a plant host or destroying its looks, gall makers can be useful. They make a fine meal for mice, squirrels, and birds. Some animals even use the empty galls for shelter. Some people even collect galls.

Next time you see an oddity like the one I saw, do a little research and see what is or could be. You might be surprised.



Oak Gall Photo courtesy of Texas A & M Forest Service





Maple Gall Photo courtesy of Maine.gov



Grape Leaf Gall Photo courtesy of Oklahoma State University

[TPWD: Plant Galls -- Young Naturalist \(texas.gov\)](https://www.texas.gov)  
[Web.tamu.edu](http://Web.tamu.edu)

## Horseshoe Bay Nature Center

By Vicki Adcock  
 Horseshoe Bay Park Board Member

Horseshoe Bay Nature Park is showing off an abundance of bluebonnets as well as other wildflowers. Look around at the park and you'll see blue! Look down and see bluebonnets as you approach the entrance and throughout the park. Look up at the right time and you'll see bluebirds as they are scoping out the nest boxes for the right home for raising their families.

Horseshoe Bay is located in the central bird migratory pathway for the U.S. and this year's migration for our area started March 1st and



goes through June 15th. Bring your binoculars and sit quietly and you may see birds from the bird blind or from a bench. The brush piles in the park were placed for birds and small mammals, so be on the lookout. Best times to see the most birds are just after sunrise and late afternoon before dusk. Some migrating birds will only be here for a short time before continuing their journey north. Record your observations on the eBird app and you'll be contributing to Cornell University research!

## ***Backyard Bass at Marble Falls Children's Festival***

Photos by Karyn Parker



# Cub Scouts at Inks Lake State Park Learning to Make Yucca Cordage

Photos by Karyn Parker



# Inks Dam National Fish Hatchery Tour

Photos Courtesy of James Reimer and Ingrid Hoffmeister

Many thanks to FOIDFH volunteers, Jim, Bill, Phil, James R, Greg, Ingrid, Kaye, Jerry, for their support of outreach activities for 15 homeschoolers (plus siblings & parents). We had a new activity at Pollinator garden w/pipe cleaners & dried cheese powder—Ingrid can tell you we were even able to show how the wind is a pollinator today! “Feed the fish” closed down the house—always a crowd pleaser .

Thanks all.



**Exploring the Pollinator Garden**



**Fish Production**



**Birding**



**Hiking the Overlook**



**Master Casters**



**Top of the Hill**



**Feeding the Fish**



Top of the Hill



Ruby Crowned Kinglet waiting for feeder to be filled February 1, 2023  
Photo by James Reimer

## The Dirty Dozen

February Adopt-A-Highway Along Park Road 4



Thanks, George, for organizing—thanks ladies, Ingrid & Lori, for bringing gator from ILSP. Great job—James, Lori, Jim, Jerry, Bill, Carol, Greg, Roy, Ingrid, Mike, George—Linda O’Nan

T E X A S

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:** Roy Appleton III (214) 208-3624 cell
- V.P.** Jill Goff (817) 773-7711 cell
- Secretary** Bill Edwards (210) 274-4496 cell
- Treasurer** Lynn Davis (830) 385-1115 cell

False Eye Spots  
A USEFUL ADAPTATION

Oh man, I had the CRAZIEST dream last night! I was in the meadow, except it wasn't really the same meadow, you know, and suddenly there were all these bad guys! And you and I were fighting them using these swords made of flowers. And then suddenly I realized I wasn't wearing any clothes-

Uh huh. Wow. Great.

