

THE TEXAS STAR

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HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

Chapter Website: <http://www.hillcountrymasternaturalist.org>

APRIL PROGRAM:

The Natural Texas-Right Here at Home

Monday, April 23

Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street in Kerrville

Refreshments at 6:30, program at 7:00

Bring a friend. Come early

If you know someone who has expressed interest in the TMN program, this is the time to invite them to our meeting. Michelle Haggerty, The State Coordinator for the Texas Master Naturalist program, will be the featured speaker. She will focus on the Texas Master Naturalist program, what it means to the community, and how to become part of it. And wait, there's more!...Two of our founding Chapter members, Sandy Pena and Jim Stanley, will highlight the chapter's history and accomplishments.

Many of us know Michelle. For those who don't, here's just a brief rundown of her experience and accomplishments. She took over as coordinator of the Texas Master Naturalist program shortly after its statewide implementation in early 1998. Since then, she has led this international award-winning program to include 38 chapters with over 4000 members. These members provide valuable hours

of volunteer service to their Texas communities; 136,500 hours in 2005 alone.

Michelle graduated from Michigan State University's Fisheries and Wildlife Department and is a Wildlife Biologist with Texas Parks and Wildlife. She has coordinated programs for Michigan State University Extension, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Michigan Private Lands program and the Michigan Natural Heritage program. She is currently Vice-President of the Board of Directors of the Alliance of Natural Resource Outreach and Service Program, which includes state coordinators of Master Naturalist-type programs nationwide.

This is one program you won't want to miss. See you there!



NOTICE: EARLY MEETING IN MAY

Because our regular meeting date would fall on Memorial Day, our May meeting will take place one week earlier, on Monday, May 21. The Board will meet early, as well, on Wednesday, May 16. Please note this change on your calendars.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY PHYLLIS MUSKA



Earth Day 2007

The Earth Day Flag

"May there only be peaceful and cheerful Earth Days to come for our beautiful Spaceship Earth as it continues to spin and circle in frigid space with its warm and fragile cargo of animate life."

– United Nations Secretary-General U Thant, March 21, 1971

Earth Day started in 1970 as a way of celebrating our planet and drawing attention to the environment. Many important laws were passed by Congress following the 1970 Earth Day, including the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act. Earth Day quickly became a global celebration, now observed in 175 countries.

It seems, however, that after the initial flurry of activism surrounding the early Earth Day celebrations, the goals of changing human behavior and affecting policy failed to maintain their momentum, and popular support faded. Sometimes it seems that all the news on the environmental scene predicts gloom and doom. But I take heart in knowing that at least the major issues are finally receiving increased coverage from the media, and some of our biggest concerns are finally beginning to be taken seriously. This gives me hope that we may be seeing a renewed interest in our planet's well-being.

And the existence of groups like Master Naturalist reminds us that there *are* people who care about

our impact on the world and are willing to get out and do their part to improve the situation.

There's always room for improvement, even for the most conscientious among us. I would encourage each of you to not only do your part to make our world better, but to use your efforts to reach out and set an example for others as well.

Riverside Nature Center in Kerrville will hold its annual Earth Day celebration on April 21 (see page 3 for details), and our chapter will take an active role. We will have a table set up with our display and staffed by members who can answer questions about what we do. This also coincides with the start of our 2007 application period, so it will be a good opportunity to spread the word and give information to those in our community who are interested in joining our organization. If you're signed up to help, thanks for participating; if not, be sure to stop by to see the exhibits and visit with our ambassadors.

And for more information on Earth Day and ideas on how you can do your part, see the official web site www.earthday.org.



AWARDS

Congratulations to the members who have achieved these milestones recently:

1st Time Certification (From Class of 2006) – Norma Bruns, Lloyd Hemmert, Mary Ellen Terrell

2007 Recertification – Ginny de Wolf, Angelo Falzarano, Barbara Lowenthal



EARTH DAY 2007 CELEBRATION

Saturday, April 21, 2007 8 am. - 4 pm

at Riverside Nature Center.

Sponsored by **Riverside Nature Center** and
Kerrville Chapter of the **Native Plant Society of Texas**

NOTE: Thanks to those of you who have volunteered to support this nature fair and plant sale for our nature partner Riverside Nature Center. Please report your volunteer hours under Project R-02-A. There are still additional opportunities for volunteering. Contact Priscilla Stanley at jpbstan@kctc.com or 257-2094 for more information

MOSTLY NATIVE PLANT SALE – 8 am - 3 pm

An enormous variety of native and adaptive perennials, shrubs and some ornamental and shade trees have been specially selected from nurseries all around the Hill Country for this event. Knowledgeable plant docents will be available to help you find a plant for any location, sun or shade, wet or dry. Here's just a sampling:

--*Mealy Blue Sage* is the most deer-resistant perennial plant we know. Its blue flowers appear periodically from April through October.

--*Zexmenia* is a perennial with cheerful yellow daisies from spring through late fall and deer usually leave it alone.

--*Gregg's Blue Mistflower* is the ultimate butterfly magnet plant.

--Our *native orange milkweed* attracts orange Monarch and Queen butterflies from May through September.

--*Gaura* is a perennial with either pink or white flowers that look like whirling butterflies.

--*Maximilian sunflower* is a tall, spreading perennial with showy, yellow daisies in the fall that attract goldfinches and other seed eaters.

We'll also have hard-to-find ornamental trees, including:

--the *Anacacho orchidtree* has delicate white spring blooms.

--*Mountain sage* is an uncommon, west Texas shrub with spectacular vermilion flowers from August through October---great for attracting hummingbirds

--*Possumhaw* is a deciduous shrub that holds its red berries to add color to the winter landscape.

You'll find many plants at the sale, in sizes from 4 inch pots to 5 gallon pots. We hope to see you there!

SPEAKERS SCHEDULE:

10 am – “Texas Water Issues” by Mike Mecke of Texas Water Resources Institute at Texas A&M University – How to manage with more people, greater demand and less water.

11:15 am – “Hill Country Water Sources” by Feather Wilson, Hydrologist - Where we get our Hill County water: the water cycle, aquifers, groundwater management and how you can help.

12:30 pm – “Rainwater Harvesting: System Design & Practical Experience” by John Kight, Professional Engineer. Mr. Kight's system provides for all his home and landscape water needs even through a severe drought, as occurred in the 1950s.

1:45 pm – “Healthy Land, More Water” by Jim Stanley, TMN – How to manage your land to better capture, retain and conserve all the rainfall you receive. How much rainfall you receive is less important than how much you are able to keep on your land to sustain your grass, flowers, shrubs and trees.

Come see the Natural Resources Conservation Service **Rainfall Simulator** and the **Little Bluestem** exhibit on the effect of mowing or grazing on native grasses.

Kids' activities and water-related displays will continue throughout the day.



WILDLIFE FIELD RESEARCH AT CNC – APRIL 30 – MAY 5

Suzanne Young of CNC says: “This is WFR #16! We still have openings. Deadline for sign-up is: **April 27** (if you have not already done so).

Camping is allowed for researchers on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. The park is closed to the public. We have added two Texas Parks and Wildlife Training Classes: Amphibian Watch (May 3) and Mussel Watch (May 4). **Only these two TPWD training classes charge \$10 for supplies needed.** We need **RSVP ASAP** for all training classes. Be sure to look over our Friday afternoon seminar. We have great presenters and a great dinner planned.

“Remember to bring field gear (good walking shoes, long pants, long sleeve shirt, rain gear, change of clothes, hat, sunscreen, insect repellent, sunglasses and water bottle). If you have a hot/cold cup, you can help us reduce waste. Be sure to write your name on your cup. We do provide light breakfasts, lunches and Friday night volunteer appreciation dinner.”

For information and the full schedule, contact Suzanne (830-249-8240)

TEAMS/LEADERS:

1. Prairie vegetation Survey - Richard Dulany **RSVP ASAP**
2. Prairie Vegetation Photo Points - Cindy Sims and Tom Rust
3. Bird Point Counts - Rufus Stephens **RSVP ASAP**
4. Aquatic Survey - Anne Adams/Ernest Moran
5. Small mammal trapping - Richard Heilbrun/Sarah Abernethy/Rebecca Shupp
6. Ant Survey - Nathan Riggs/Mary Kennedy
7. Water Snake Trapping and Reptile Search - Dave and Tom Barker
8. Monarch Larva Monitoring - Kip Kiphart **RSVP ASAP**
9. Riparian Woody plant survey - Bill Ward
10. Butterfly Incidental Survey - Paul Miliotis
11. Weather Station - Alice Bulechek
12. **NEW!** Amphibian Watch - Mary Gomillion and Marsha May **RSVP ASAP**
13. **NEW!** Mussel Watch - Mary Gomillion and Marsha May **RSVP ASAP**

ADVANCED TRAINING

Jim Stanley will once gain offer the **Tree ID** class, on Saturday, April 28, 9am – noon at RNC. If you plan to attend, please notify Jim (jstmn@ktc.com or

830-257-2094) soon. He would like to make the session available to members of related organizations (NPSOT, Master Gardeners) if space is available.

VOLUNTEER

Monarch Monitoring

Last year our chapter got the Kerrville-Schreiner Park's Butterfly Garden certified as a Monarch Watch Waystation (<http://www.monarchwatch.org>). This year we are starting , the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project (MLMP) at the Butterfly Garden. The MLMP began in 1997 at the University of Minnesota (<http://www.mlmp.org>). It involves citizens in collecting data that will help to explain the distribution and abundance patterns of monarch butterflies in North America. Our first MLMP project

is to collect information about the density of milkweeds and monarchs (including their eggs and larva) at the Butterfly Garden. Early in April, Cynthia Johnson found five monarch eggs on antelope horn milkweed!

(continued on page 5)

(continued from page 4)

If you are interested in participating but haven't had the training course, you are in luck! Kip Kiphart will offering the two-part MLMP training course at the Cibolo Nature Center's **Spring Wildlife Field Research Program** (see page 4, above). If you have taken the MLMP training course in the past

and want to help we would love to have you join us in the new effort. Please contact either Ginny de Wolf (dewolf@kctc.com; 896-2545) or Don Robinson (robinsod@kctc.com; 257-9452). The project's number is KR-01-E.



FROM THE HERBARIUM

Perfume Ball

Gaillardia Suavis

(Fragrant Gaillardia, Sweet Firewheel, Rayless Gaillardia, Pincushion Daisy, Gyp Indian)

Family: Asteraceae (as-ter-AY-see ay)

Genus: Gaillardia

Species: *suavis*

Category

Perennials

Bloom Time

Mid Spring

Height

24-36 inches

Foliage

Herbaceous

Sun Exposure

Full Sun

Propagation Methods

From seed; direct sow outdoors in fall

Bloom Color

Red

Red-Orange

Seed Collecting

Allow seed heads to dry on plants; remove and collect seeds

Perfume Ball is a mid spring perennial with red or red-orange blooms growing to 36 inches tall. Blooming repeatedly, Perfume Ball is found on open, dry rocky sites preferring sandy or gypsum soils. The flower has a sweet fragrance and is attractive to butterflies and / or birds. Perfume Ball requires average water and full sun.

Please send newsletter contributions and comments to Donna Robinson at dsrassoc@kctc.com or to the return address below.



Lindheimeria texana: Texas Star

Hill Country Master Naturalist
Newsletter Editor
431 Timber Ridge
Kerrville, TX 78028