



T E X A S



HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

Rare, Endangered,
and Threatened
in the four counties.



Baird's Sparrow
Ammodramus bairdii
Gillespie County

...collaborating to get
this project done...
Page 5.

June
2011



Volume 9
No. 6

JUNE MEETING ... CHAPTER PICNIC

**Don't forget the
Master Naturalist,
Hill Country Chapter picnic
Saturday, June 25 at
Cave Creek Schoolhouse.**

CHAPTER PICNIC

**We will get together around 11a.m. - rain or
shine! Come earlier if you want to hike and
bird before it gets too hot. Bring lunch and
water or soft drink. No alcoholic beverages.**

The historic Cave Creek Schoolhouse was built in 1881,
when many students rode horses or donkeys to school.
The school was named for a nearby creek with natural
caves.

The schoolhouse is a 20 feet by 36 feet wood frame building
with an embossed tin exterior and tin roof. The west porch
has axe-chopped rafters. A stone chimney is located on
the north exterior wall. The schoolhouse is one of twelve
Gillespie County country schools used as community
centers for voting, community club meetings, and 4-H
meetings. The Cave Creek Schoolhouse is the organizational center for the
largest youth hunting event in Texas sponsored each winter by Texas Wildlife
Association and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The twelve schools are
managed and maintained by The Friends of Gillespie County Country Schools.



**Cliff Steinbring, president of Cave Creek
School and Community Center, lives
across the road from the school and has
graciously offered access to his 400 acres
of pasture and woodland.**

We want to coordinate visits so that we don't have too
many vehicles there at one time. If you are interested
in hiking on the Steinbring place, please see Koy
Coffer, Bob McKinley, or Phyllis Muska.



Directions: take Main Street/Highway 290 E
through Fredericksburg. Turn left onto 1631 (road
to the landfill). In about 6 to 7 miles, stay on 1631
(left fork). Watch for Cave Creek Road on the
right. Turn onto Cave Creek Road. After the
road takes a hard right, watch for the sign to
Cave Creek Schoolhouse on the right.



THIS MONTH WE HONOR

<u>Milestones</u>	<u>2011 Re-Certification</u>	<u>Special First Year Re-Certification</u>	<u>First Year Certification</u>
<i>Brushed Silver</i> 500 hours	<i>Horned Lizard</i>	<i>Horned Lizard</i>	<i>Dragonfly</i>
Floyd Trefny (May 2011)	Gloria Costello	Debra Bond	Paula Smith
<i>Bronze 250 Hours</i>	Robert Hansen		Marian Worthington
Roger McRoberts	Guy Harrison		
	Marilyn Knight		
	Diane McMahon		

Some people worry that artificial intelligence will make us feel inferior, but then, anybody in his right mind should have an inferiority complex every time he looks at a flower.

Alan Kay

Do you know?

Cave Creek School has been a picnic site since 1882. School closings in May were community affairs. After graduation ceremonies, the men cooked BBQ, families brought side dishes, and blankets were laid on the ground for the picnic. A play and dance followed.

Learn more at historicschools.org.

Map and map link to Cave Creek Schoolhouse, 470 Cave Creek Road, Fredericksburg, 78624.

<http://maps.google.com/map470+Cave+Creek+Rd,+Fredericksburg,+Texas+78624>



The 10 Pin Club

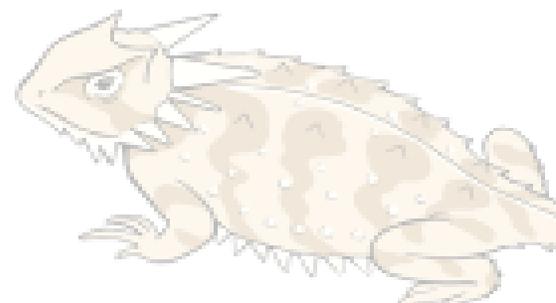
Kip Kiphart has been certified a Texas Master Naturalist every year since 1999, the first year for certification in the North Texas Master Naturalists - before a state organization existed.

Kip doesn't have all ten pins though, because the Alamo Area Master Naturalists did not give them out them for a couple of years.

Congratulations, Kip!

We thank you for your volunteer service and dedication to the program.

We are fortunate to have another long-time Master Naturalist in our special chapter.



ADVANCED TRAINING

AT 11-073 L.A.N.D.S. TRAINING

June 20, 21, 22; Dobbs Run Ranch; Rocksprings.

Texas Wildlife Association annual L.A.N.D.S. (Learning Across New Dimensions in Science) teacher/volunteer training. Learn how to enhance classroom curricula and participate in hands-on activities.

Contact Koy Coffey, education program specialist, kcoffer@texas-wildlife.org or 830-792-3070.

AT 11-074 L.A.N.D.S. TRAINING

August 1, 2, 3; Camp Allen; Navasota; campallen.org.

Texas Wildlife Association annual L.A.N.D.S. teacher/volunteer training.

Contact Koy Coffey, education program specialist, kcoffer@texas-wildlife.org or 830-792-3070.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ... Phyllis Muska

How to Spend Your Summer Vacation

After what seemed to be an especially hectic spring, all of a sudden our volunteer activities and advanced training opportunities have slowed to a trickle. It's just too hot to spend much time outdoors right now, and it's not even summer yet!

When we get tired of complaining about the heat and the drought, what are our options? Maybe it's time to relax with a good book, or explore some new area of interest on the web. For most of us, it goes against our nature to spend our free time as couch potatoes, but maybe we can find some worthwhile pursuit without having to leave the air-conditioned comforts of home on these long afternoons.

How about picking up a work by or about a Texas naturalist? Here are a few suggestions.

- Ferdinand Roemer, known as the Father of Texas Geology, was a 19th-century scientist from Germany. He traveled through Central Texas studying and collecting the fauna and flora of the area, in addition to describing the geology. His book Texas describes the physical appearance of the state and gives insights into German immigration and Comanche culture.
- In Adventures with a Texas Naturalist, Roy Bedichek shares his observations of the natural world, concentrating on Texas plants and wildlife, with a special emphasis on birds.

- Del Weniger was a founding member of the San Antonio Botanical Center. He wrote several books on cacti of Texas and the Southwest, as well as his Explorers' Texas series, covering our lands and waters, and the animals that inhabit our state. His writings and teachings reflect his commitment to land stewardship and responsible, respectful use of our natural resources.

John Graves writes beautifully on the natural and human history of Texas. His love of our state is evident in his writing, which is part personal journal, part history lesson, and part poetry. Hard Scrabble is his thoughtful and humorous account of his experiences as a new land owner, questioning whether he owns the land or it owns him. I think many of us can relate to his struggle as he tries to be a good land steward.

This is just a small sample of the many naturalists who happened to target Texas in their studies and writings. Any of them would be worthy of a few hours spent curled up in front of the air conditioner.

And – since next month will no doubt still be summer – let's take a look at web sites and apps related to nature. Send me your favorites, and we'll share them with other refugees from the heat.

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Some of our best prospects for the new class come from member referrals.

ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO JOIN THE HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER AND BECOME A TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST.

Ask them to email our Director of Membership Koy Coffey at kcoffer@texas-wildlife.org and request an application, or they can visit our website at txmn.org/hillcountry and click **Become a Master Naturalist**.

Classes begin August 24 and end with commencement November 16.

Applications must be postmarked by July 15.

Chapter members are welcome to attend board of directors meetings. The board meets at RNC at 1:30pm on Wednesdays before monthly chapter meetings. Support your board as they guide the chapter.

A Butterfly Count is Coming to a Town Near You!

Want to participate? All you need to do is email the compiler and he or she will get you set up.

No butterfly experience is required. We can use extra eyes to help us locate, and all the butterfly knowledgeable folks enjoy helping you learn to identify the 40-plus species we usually find.

Counts are one day only. We count butterflies in a predetermined 15-mile diameter circle. A \$3.00 fee covers the **North American Butterfly Association**

costs to compile and publish count data.

Be sure to wear good shoes or boots, a full-brim hat, and bring plenty of water or drinks and a lunch.

Kenn Kaufman's **Butterflies of North America** is the recommended field guide for those who want to learn more and study butterflies before the counts. Close focus binoculars are useful, but not necessary. Visit eagleoptics.com to learn about sizing binoculars for your use.



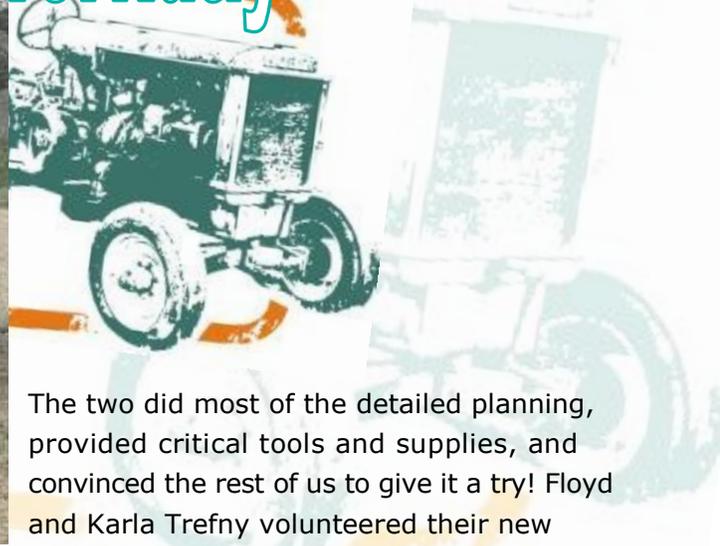
The Red Spotted Purple is seldom seen, but when found, is one of the most beautiful butterflies in our local counts. Photo by Thomas Collins, taken on Collins' Ranch.

Local counts, dates, and compilers:

- BOERNE – June 24 (Friday)
Cathy Downs, compiler - mzdowns@hctc.net
- LOVE CREEK PRESERVE (Bandera County) – June 28 (Tuesday)
Tom Collins - towhee@hctc.net and
Rebecca Flack - rflack@tnc.org - co-compilers
- KERRVILLE – July 15 (Friday)
Tom Collins, compiler - towhee@hctc.net

Love Creek Preserve Workday

by Bob McKinley
and Floyd Trefny



Our volunteer work team recently accomplished a task we had talked about for well over a year, but one that a few of us were reluctant to tackle. There was this perfectly good storage shed on the original property at the Preserve that we could not access except by a long, arduous hike down the creek. We needed just this size and type building on the newly acquired property to store tools and supplies for the many work projects.

Rebecca Flack, a project manager for Texas Nature Conservancy, has responsibility for Love Creek Preserve in far western Bandera County. Rebecca is also a member of our chapter and an active member of the Love Creek work team.

Floyd Trefny first suggested that we might be able to move the shed in defiance of the many obvious reasons why it could not be done. There was no longer any road access to it except through private ranch property adjacent to the Preserve. The shed sat alongside an old abandoned shack up a steep bank from the creek bed with no low water crossing potential. Even if there was a way to load it onto a trailer and get permission to use the private ranch road out to RR337, the roads were narrow, tunneled with overhanging trees, and restricted with multiple narrow cattle guards and gates.

When Robert Howell joined our team in 2010, he and Floyd started collaborating to get this project done (while some of the team continued to offer polite nay-saying!)

The two did most of the detailed planning, provided critical tools and supplies, and convinced the rest of us to give it a try! Floyd and Karla Trefny volunteered their new

John Deere tractor and 20 foot trailer to the cause.

Rebecca got permission from ranch owner Jim Calloway to access the site through his property. We convoyed in the early morning of Tuesday, May 31. Floyd and Robert led the task to bolt extended skids to the existing skids beneath the shed, and the modified support structure was fastened by chains to the bucket of the tractor. The rest of the team emptied the contents of the shed and found a wealth of unexpected tools and materials which were immediately committed to the Love Creek work.

With the skids in place, the shed was dragged by backing the tractor down the hill and across the creek to a narrow but relatively flat staging area. Then the back end of the shed was lifted by more deft rigging with chains and tractor and supported by specially constructed, glorified 'sawhorses' courtesy of Robert. Finally, the front end was lifted by the tractor positioned so as to suspend the shed about three feet off the ground. The plan was to back the trailer under the shed and lower the shed onto the side rails of the trailer. It worked... with about three quarters of an inch clearance to spare!

We secured the shed to the trailer and started the trip out through Mr. Calloway's ranch, taking special care to avoid damaging the overhanging limbs. The caravan moved along RR337 and onto Elam Creek Road to the new Preserve property. Actual mileage was probably close to six miles. (As the crow flies,

the new location for the shed is less than one mile from where we started.) Rebecca selected the specific spot for the structure, and a bit more tractor and chain magic had the building on the ground in short order.

A long day's work by seven volunteers and a good result! Amazing what can happen when folks focus on what can be done, instead of why it can't be!



On the trailer at last - Bob McKinley guides the shed into place.



Where we started - Robert Howell advises placement, as Floyd Trefny operates the tractor.



On the road again - Rebecca Flack manages the convoy.



And we're off - Bob McKinley, Rebecca Flack, Robert Howell, and Floyd Trefny make progress.



Special delivery.



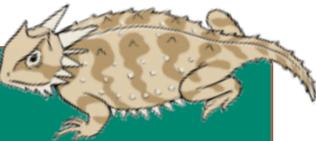
How many engineers does it take?



The team - Gary Farek, Stephen Kieval, Bob McKinley, Karla Trefny, Rebecca Flack, and Floyd Trefny. (Robert Howell not pictured.)



Awards abounded in April. 21 members completed recertification requirements. 14 members are pictured, front row: Cathy Downs, Julie Clay, Gracie Waggener, Ward Miller; back row: Alexis McRoberts received the 250 hour bronze dragonfly, Sandy Leyendecker received the 500 hour brushed silver dragonfly, Phyllis Muska, Cynthia Burgin, Richeanne Frauenberger, Richard Adams, Ginny DeWolf, John Sloane, Ron Hood, and Glenn Randow.



Wow!

We had a crowd of 130 in attendance at our April chapter meeting. 82 members/58 guests.



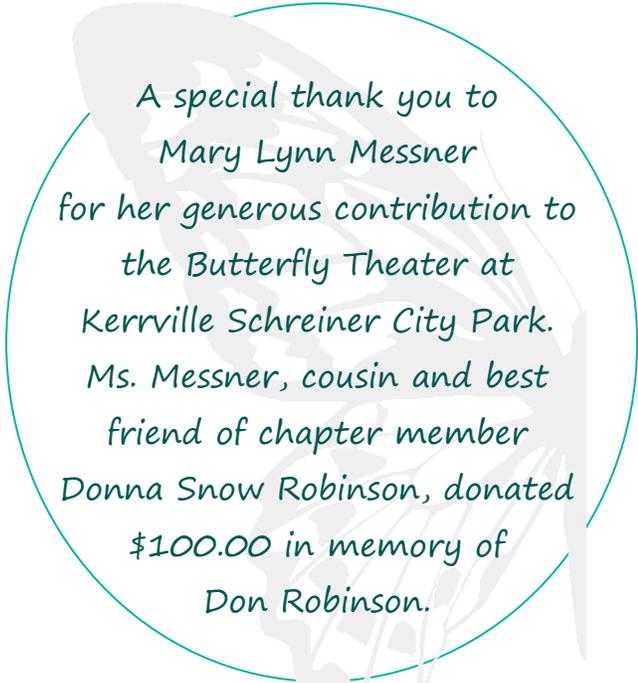
from Mike Quinn

Buprestids or metallic wood-boring beetles are one of the few groups of beetles that are large, showy,

and commonly encountered on flowers. Those in the genus *Acmaeodera* are particularly common on flowers. I put together a page with images of over half of Texas' 300 plus species to facilitate their identification.

Buprestidae of Texas with Notes on Texas Types
texasento.net/TXBuprestidae.htm

Check out Texas Entomology, texasento.net.



A special thank you to Mary Lynn Messner for her generous contribution to the Butterfly Theater at Kerrville Schreiner City Park. Ms. Messner, cousin and best friend of chapter member Donna Snow Robinson, donated \$100.00 in memory of Don Robinson.

Report your hours every month!



sandy325@windstream.net

smartphone apps for naturalists



Evernote



AccuTerra Unlimited



Liquid Measure

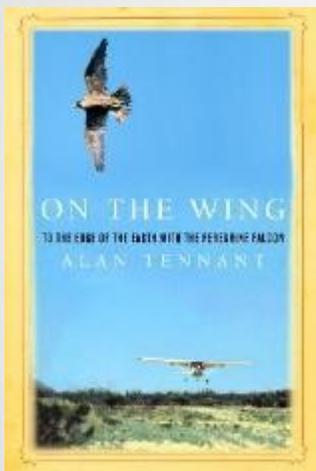


What's your favorite app?
Share it with us at denbow@gvtc.com.

HEY, WHAT IS THAT ?
Be first to discover what creature is in the image below and you will find yourself with the psychedelic dragonfly next month.
[ENTER TO WIN!](#)



NATURE OF READING BOOKS FOR NATURALISTS



On the Wing:
To the Edge of the Earth
with the Peregrine Falcon

Alan Tennant
2004

*The more you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.*
Dr. Suess

Plant Trees in Texas State Parks

The Odwalla Juice Company's annual Plant A Tree program asks residents to take 30 seconds to plant a tree online in their home state.

Odwalla then donates \$1 per virtual tree to plant real trees in state parks.

Last year this program raised \$15,000 to plant trees in Garner State Park.

Visit odwalla.com/plantatree to plant your tree today.



from Tom Collins

I recently became interested in some of our early season butterflies, such as the Henry's Elfin *Callophrys henrici*, and where they go after their early season appearance.

Based on several articles I found, the Henry's Elfin overwinters close to its host plant in its chrysalis

"...we should be cautious about being too tidy in our butterfly gardens..."

stage allowing the adults to emerge early in the spring as its host first flowers - usually a Texas redbud *Cercis canadensis var. texensis* or Mexican buckeye *Ungnadia speciosa*. The



The two color forms of Henry's Elfin larvae.

literature says its chrysalis can be found in the leaf litter close to the base of its host plant. The Henry's Elfin emerges from its chrysalis in early March as Texas redbuds first flower out. It mates and deposits eggs on the leaves of the redbud. After some time, a caterpillar emerges, progresses through its instars stages feeding on the still fresh leaves, then heads south to

the ground where it returns to its chrysalis stage and remains there through the rest of spring, summer, fall, and winter, hopefully beginning



Henry's Elfin at Collins' Ranch - about 1/2-inch from head to tail.

over again in early spring. The butterfly that first emerged and mated soon dies - one brood (30 days or so) is all we get each season for such a cute little bug.

After you read the article, think about those

butterflies still in the leaf litter you are about to rake up and deposit in a bag or mulch pile. As the author of the article says, "...we should be cautious about being too tidy in our butterfly gardens..."

wildlifegardeners.org/forum/butterflies-moths-hummingbirds/5218-how-do-butterflies-survive-winter.html

Interesting notes in this article show how each species has developed its own stage of winter survival - eggs, caterpillar, chrysalis, and even adult.

Sponsorships Needed for TMN Annual Meeting

For the first time the state office is seeking sponsorships and support for the annual meeting. Your support would help us schedule top-rated speakers and trainers, and allow us to keep registration costs to a minimum.

Chapter and/or individual contribution levels:

Gold - \$500

Silver - \$250

Bronze - \$150

Individual Supporter - \$75

Sponsorships will receive special recognition through conference communications, fliers, announcements, and programs. Gold Level contributors will receive discounted registration.

Contact Michelle Haggerty at mhaggerty@ag.tamu.edu or 830-896-2504.

A New Project

Texas Stream Team is a network of trained volunteers and supportive partners working together to gather information about the natural resources of Texas and to ensure that information is available to all Texans.



Texas Stream Team
Caring for Our Waters

Volunteers are trained to collect quality-assured information that can be used to make environmentally sound decisions. Texas Stream Team is administered through a cooperative partnership between Texas State University, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, and the Environmental Protection Agency.



Texas Stream Team Certified Water Quality Monitors go through three phases of training and complete a monitoring plan using a test kit that measures physical and chemical parameters in water.

Statewide Monitoring Coordinator Josh Oyer requested a team monitor the Guadalupe River near Kerrville, but other areas may be included.

Project Code CC-15-A
Coordinator: Floyd Trefny, ftrefny@dishmail.net.



Gracie Waggner, Steve Clyburn, and Koy Coffer led the L.A.N.D.S. educational event at Stonewall Elementary. 100 students made discoveries in natural science from hands-on activities: Web Of Life, Skins & Skulls, and Oh Deer. Photos by Koy Coffer.



3rd Grade Field Day

Lady Bird Johnson Park



Children learned about birds from Phyllis Muska and Sandy Peña.



Cathy Downs and Gracie Waggener explained area geology.



John Huecksteadt taught about the importance of prairie ecosystems, assisted by Russell Vowell.



Myrna Langford engages the students with bat behaviors.



Mary Francis Watson assisted Dr. Jim Dobie at the turtle presentation.



Butterflies were identified by Stacy Johnson and Virginia Sawin.

May 13, 2011

Riverside Nature Center Weekly Fauna Census

Three new species:



Rough-winged Swallow
Stelgidopteryx serripennis



Canyon Towhee
Pipilo fuscus



Cave Swallow
Petrochelidon fulva
(nesting under the new bridge)

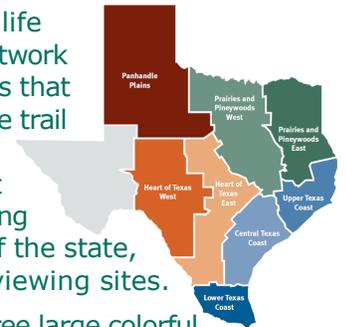
143 species for the site.

Daniel George
Cynthia Johnson
Stephanie Perry
Oliver Perry
Ann Rich

Marian Worthington
Susan Sander
Joan Walker
Tom Collins

Celebrate the Completion of the Great Texas Wildlife Trails

The Great Texas Wildlife Trails is a statewide network of wildlife-viewing trails that launched its first wildlife trail 15 years ago. Today there are nine different trails, each corresponding to a different region of the state, with more than 950 viewing sites.



TPWD is giving away free large colorful trail maps that make it easy and fun to plan a driving trip to go wildlife-watching anywhere in Texas. Pickup free trail maps at any state park or TxDOT travel information center while supplies last. tpwd.state.tx/wildlifetrails



Take the 5 in July Park Pledge

There are five weekends in July 2011 - five Fridays, five Saturdays, and five Sundays!

Create a healthy weekend habit by getting out to a park, trail, natural area, or other public space every weekend. Make your commitment to get outdoors by accepting the 5 in July Park Pledge. Have a great time!

This July, I pledge to get outdoors to a park or recreation area every weekend. I will embrace parks and the outdoors, because they:

- Improve my health and wellbeing.
- Contribute to the economic and environmental welfare of my community.
- Make my life extraordinary!

from Tom Collins and Cynthia Johnson

The Four-striped Leaf-tail gets its "four-stripe" name from the thorax marking. If you read from left to right you can see the 'U'. If you count the two legs of the 'U' plus the two '\', you have four stripes.

On the Five-striped Leaf-tail you would see "U U \ " - again, count the two legs of each 'U' plus the '\ ' to equal five stripes.

Both species have leaf like flangers or collars (Leaf-tail) at S8-S9 of the abdomen. There are 10 segments on a dragonfly abdomen and they number starting from the thorax - S1 to S10.



fire news

Since fire season started on November 15, 2010, Texas Forest Service and area fire departments have responded to 11,362 fires that have burned 2,838,428 acres.

- Remove flammable materials from around your home.
- Develop an evacuation plan for your family. Resources are available on the Firewise website and at texasfirestorm.org.
- Obey outdoor burning bans. Do not burn trash or debris when conditions are dry or windy. Unsafe burning of leaves, brush, household trash and other debris is the #1 cause of wildfires in Texas.
- Keep lawn mowers and agricultural equipment in proper working condition and avoid rocks and other materials which might cause a spark.
- To report suspicious activities, call the Arson Hotline at 888-501-3850. If possible, safely obtain an accurate description of the person and/or vehicle (including the license number) before calling the hotline.
- **Humans cause more than 90 percent of all wildfires.** Do not weld or cut without a spotter, a water source, and a shovel.

firewise.org is a resource for residents to protect their home and property from wildfire.

Detailed fire information can be found at inciweb.org.

Texas Forecast Fire Danger Map can be found on the Texas Interagency Coordination Center website.

USDA Forest Service active fire mapping at activefiremaps.fs.fed.us/lg_fire2.php.



Birding: A Year-Round Pastime

The epic annual spring migration has ended for northward bound bird species. For birders who just can't stop looking, the fun rolls on through summer. Texas is rich with birding treasures all year. While some species quickly move northward, others spend the summer in Texas rearing the next generation. Along with our resident species, they guarantee fascinating summer birding before they head south. The

spring and summer birding calendar, tpwmagazine.com/archive/2011/, from *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine, describes weekly and monthly guided birding events around the state.

"For many people, chasing birds is tantamount to searching for hidden treasure."



Volunteers Worth Millions

Volunteers in 2010 provided close to 955,000 hours of service worth an estimated \$16.9 million to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Volunteers support 90-plus state parks, help teach activities such as angling and hunting, assist with events and workshops, work as interpreters and citizen scientists, and more. Now is a great time to volunteer in a state park, as explained in this "Passport To Texas" radio story.



T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™



Hill Country Chapter

a 501(c)(3) corporation

Board of Directors 2011

Phyllis Muska - President

Bob McKinley - Vice President

Anne Cassidy - Secretary

Cathy Downs - Treasurer

Steve Clyburn - Director of Advanced Training

Lisa Williams - Director of Class Training

Susan Longacre - Director of Communications

Koy Coffey - Director of Membership

Reidun Hilleman - Director of Volunteer Service Projects

Vern Crawford - 2010 New Class Representative

John Huecksteadt - Immediate Past President

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!
TXMN.ORG/HILLCOUNTRY

We meet the fourth Monday of each month (excluding June and December) at 7:00p.m. in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Join us at 6:30p.m. for a fun social half-hour.

We welcome anyone interested in our meeting topic or the Texas Master Naturalist program.

Questions about our chapter?

Contact Koy Coffey

Director of Membership

kcoffer@texas-wildlife.org

Texas Master Naturalist mission:

To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.



Texas Star
Lindheimeria texana

The Texas Star is a monthly publication of the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program. News, stories, comments, and ideas are welcome. Please contact Kristie Denbow, denbow@gvtc.com.

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TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

