

The Texas Star

Newsletter of the
Texas Master Naturalist
Hill Country Chapter

January 2017 Volume 15 Number 1



T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™



January 23 Meeting: Water of the Future: Desalination of Brackish Water

Roberto Macias, Manager of Production and Treatment of Groundwater at the San Antonio Water System (SAWS), will speak on the new desalination process that San Antonio is using to transform available brackish into potable water.

The monthly meetings of the Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country chapter are free and open to the public. We meet in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority's lecture hall, 125 North Lehman Drive in Kerrville. Socializing begins at 6:30; the program starts at 7:00

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Brenda Fest

Hello fellow Master Naturalists!

2016 was another great year for the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist. I am once again honored to serve as President for 2017 and look forward to working with everyone this year.

Here are some 2016 highlights. We successfully completed our first year of using the online Volunteer Management System (VMS) to record our hours. Our chapter trained 36 new Master Naturalist volunteers, for a cumulative total of 487 since the chapter's inception in 2002. The Class of 2016 completed 1,150 service hours and 393 hours of advanced training. Congratulations to a great group of new volunteers!

We celebrated important milestones for many of our Hill Country members. We had 15 members who completed 250 hours, 15 who completed 500 hours, eight who completed 1,000 hours, and two who completed 2,500 hours. Steven Bishop and Tom Riordan completed 4,000 hours, Paul Unger completed 5,000 hours, and Kip Kiphart reached his 15,000 hour milestone.

During this past year, 203 Chapter members have reported 2,922 hours of Advanced Training and 35,521 volunteer hours. As we participate in various volunteer service projects it is good to remember that we make a wonderful contribution. Each volunteer hour we enter counts for \$23 as an in-kind justification for Texas Parks and Wildlife's generation of funding. The value of that justification is \$816,983 for this past year! With VMS we are now better able to record our service so that the state gets that credit for what we do. Remember how important it is to report your service hours to VMS so we can maximize our contribution to Texas Parks and Wildlife.

We enjoyed a great time at our December holiday party with a lively game of Master Naturalist Family Feud. It was a pleasure to be with such a wonderful group of involved and dedicated folks.

continued on next page

On January 7, outgoing and incoming board members gathered for a retreat to exchange ideas and strategies as we make our transition from the 2016 to the 2017 board. Many thanks to our outgoing board members: Diana Armbrust, Rheda Boardman, Larry Eskridge, Bridget Langdale, Diane McMahon, Liz Ross, and Floyd Trefny. Thanks also to our incoming board members: Kris Bobbitt, Craig Childs, Reggie Cox, David Davies, Ann Dietert, Paula Harley, and Tom Harrigan. And of course, thanks to those board members who will continue on the board: Vern Crawford, Lisa Flanagan, Claire Mitchell, and Kathy Ward, as well as to our data manager, Sandy Leyendecker, and webmaster, Kristie Denbow. Their service is invaluable to our chapter. Remember that our board meetings are the fourth Monday of the month at Riverside Nature Center and are open to the membership. We welcome your input.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our monthly meeting on January 23 to hear Roberto Macias from the San Antonio Water System explain desalination of brackish ground water. Keep up the good work, and Happy 2017!

Brenda Fest

From Jim Stanley

In Memory of Sandy Pena

Shortly after Sandy and Raul moved to the Hill Country, Sandy became involved with Riverside Nature Center and the Kerrville NPSOT chapter, volunteering for both and spreading her passion for all things native. She was also one of the early volunteers helping with the native plant sales at RNC.

Then in 2002, Sandy, along with several of her friends and future Master Naturalists, organized the Hill Country chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist and presided over the first class in the fall of 2002.

Sandy was then elected as the first president in 2003 of the Hill Country Master Naturalist and for the next two years led the chapter and established many important rules and procedures that resulted in the well-governed operation of the chapter.

When Jim Stanley took over as president in 2005, he was fortunate to be able to follow Sandy's example as well as to have her on the Board to help the chapter address all the many issues that come up in such an organization.

When Jim organized the training sessions for our LMAP, Land Management Assistance Program, in 2004, Sandy was not only supportive and enthusiastic, but went through the first training sessions. She then became an important member of our LMAP team for a number of years, helping landowners better understand and manage their property.

Sandy's enthusiasm, dedication and good judgement has been an important contribution to the fact that the chapter has grown from the original 25 to now over 450 volunteers, and the LMAP program has now visited over 420 properties covering over 35,000 acres. She set a good example for our chapter.

The native habitat of the Hill Country is better now because of her, and her passion and dedication lives on in the hearts and minds of all of her friends. We will miss her, but we will never forget her.



[Thanks to Raul Pena and Barbara Lowenthal for sharing this photo.]

Initial Certification

Joe Braley, Susan Clark, Richard Coleman, Reggie Cox, Cecilia Fuentes, Randy Fuentes, Judyann Goulet, Paula Harley, Sarabeth Mayfield, Lynda Nollkamper, Tom Redwine, John Sprowls, Francoise Wilson

Special Recertification

Cecilia Fuentes, Colette Nicholl, Tom Harrigan, Sarabeth Mayfield, Linda Nollkamper

Recertification

Gloria Costello, Bobby Gierish, Jan Grimes, Sharron Jay, Susan Longacre, Glenn Randow, Melissa Seymour, Nina Stieler, Karla Trefny, Joe VonRosenberg, Greg Walton

Milestones

Larry Altman, Deborah Windham - Brushed Silver Dragonfly, 500 hours



Congratulations to members who were recognized at the November meeting for reaching milestones:

From left: Sharon Hixson, Dan Carabin, Betty Clyburn



Congratulations to members whose recertification was recognized at the November meeting:

From left to right, in front: Vern Crawford, Betty Clyburn, Kathy Downs, Tyra Kane
Standing: Lenore Langsdorf, Jim Bobbitt, Nancy Grimes, Becky Leal, Bobbin Phelps-Gredell, Kris Bobbitt, Cay Russ

Recent Hill Country Naturalist Columns by Jim Stanley:

11/5/16	The Littlest Creatures can be Truly Amazing
11/12/16	A Glimpse of the Hill Country in 1846
11/19/16	Well Timed Rains
11/26/16	Is Our Land Healthy?
12/3/16	What Exclosures Can Tell Us about Our Native Habitats
12/10/16	Some Interesting Facts about Coyotes
12/17/16	Books for Last-Minute Christmas Gifts and Winter Reading
12/24/16	Observing Little Wonders of Nature
12/21/16	A Year in the Life of a Tree

These and all other previous Kerrville Daily Times columns can be found at www.hillcountrynaturalist.org

WELCOME

Members are welcome and encouraged to attend and contribute to Board of Directors meetings. The Board will meet this month at the Riverside Nature Center at 1:30 on Monday, January 23.

Town Creek Clean Up
Saturday, January 21, 2017
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Meet in the Riverside Nature Center Parking lot

If you plan to attend, contact the project coordinator, Anna Diemoz (annamdiemoz@gmail.com) so she can prepare adequate supplies.



From Reggie Cox

My Experience as a Member of the 2016 Master Naturalist Class

I was entertaining my visiting sister by taking her to garage sales. My neighbor, Gracie Waggener, was having a sale with neighbor Jill Bowen. I noticed the Master Naturalist sign in her yard and we started talking about native plants. Suffice it to say that Gracie and Jill are great ambassadors for the Master Naturalists. Next thing I know I had applied and been accepted into the 2016 class.

I was assigned a Mentor, Jill Bowen. She did a great job explaining the program and getting me through it. It all started with a bountiful reception at the Kerrville Arts and Cultural Center. I met a lot of people, including Diana Armbrust, who was the 2016 Class Director, and Michelle Haggerty, Texas Master Naturalist State Program Coordinator. What a wonderful welcome to the Hill Country Master Naturalists.

Diana started the 2016 class with more enthusiasm than I had seen for a while. From the first class, it was apparent that I was in for a lot of learning and being in the company of some very fine folks. Many of these people have become my good friends. The speakers and their presentations were first-rate. I learned so much about native plants, local animals, pollinators, fish, snakes, amphibians, urban ecology, grasses, and ways to repair the damage that human mistakes and cruel droughts have wreaked upon our beautiful Hill Country. I firmly believe that with education and volunteer efforts to provide more people with enthusiastic examples of how they can help, we can move forward on working with nature to heal our land. The class was a wonderful trip from a room full of strangers to a room full of friends.



In addition to the classes, we explored a newly created river gorge and visited the Kerr Wildlife Management Area. Also, we toured the Love Creek Preserve (a new Nature Conservancy property), and both the Kerrville and Fredericksburg Nature Centers. It was a privilege to learn from the best teacher: the land itself.



The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has experienced deep budget cuts, and in order to be able to continue many of their educational and conservation projects, there is a need for well informed and educated volunteers. A great program was born to fill this need. The Master Naturalist classes are designed to provide the education necessary for the participants to emerge as volunteers in many programs in our 10 county Hill Country Chapter. Perhaps the most telling part of the depth of commitment to that goal was the tears in the eyes of a Texas Parks and Wildlife employee explaining his greatest goal in life to be the chance for his son to see a Texas Horned Lizard, as he did as a child. He challenged us to find a project we loved and get busy. I will never forget the speakers in our classes and what they taught.

From Virginia de Wolf

Monarch Larva Monitoring Project (MLMP)



Kip Kiphart has had a leadership role in starting many monarch activities in our area, including training many volunteers for the Monarch Larval Monitoring Project (MLMP) (<http://monarchlab.org/mlmp>).

Cathy Downs has been involved in various monarch activities, including educating youths about monarchs through a webinar entitled “Meet the Monarchs” and “Bring Back The Monarchs To Texas” (a program of the Native Plant Society of Texas.)



An article by Monarch Joint Venture, “Hope for the Monarchs: Education and Outreach in Texas” (<http://monarchjointventure.org/news-events/news/hope-for-the-monarchs-education-and-outreach-in-texas>) features Cibolo Nature Center and contains more information about the contributions of Kip and Cathy.

Many of us (including myself) took Kip’s class and still are actively involved in the MLMP. In addition to the Cibolo Nature Center project, MLMP volunteers collect data at Kerr Wildlife Management Area (KWMA), Kerrville-Schreiner Park’s (KSP) Butterfly Garden, Albert and Bessie Kronkosky Natural Area, and Guadalupe River State Park. All five locations would welcome new MLMP volunteers. Several individuals in our Chapter collect MLMP data on their own property. If you are interested in getting involved as a MLMP volunteer, consider joining the MLMP training class that begins on February 15, 2017, at KWMA. Seating is limited to 50; contact Gracie Waggener (gwaggener@flow-apps.com) to register. All of the locations listed at the beginning of this paragraph would welcome new MLMP volunteers.

NPSOT Boerne Chapter Monthly Meeting

On Tuesday, February 7, Rufus Stephens and Jan Wrede will discuss their new book, *Attracting Birds in the Texas Hill Country -- A Guide to Land Stewardship*. Copies of the book will be available for author signing. Socializing at 6:30pm, program at 7pm
Cibolo Nature Center, 140 City Park Road, Boerne

NPSOT Fredericksburg Chapter Monthly Meeting

On Tuesday, January 24, our speaker will be Jennifer Lorenz, who will provide an overview of the Hill Country Land Trust mission and approach, tag-teaming with an area landowner who has done an amazing job of bringing back native grasses.
Social at 6:30pm, program at 7pm
Fellowship Hall of Memorial Presbyterian Church
601 North Milam Street, Fredericksburg

NPSOT Kerrville Chapter Monthly Meeting

On Tuesday, February 14, at 1:30pm, George Cates from Native American Seeds will be our speaker.
Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street, Kerrville.

All of these programs are free and open to the public.



From Martha Miesch

Learning About Mountain Laurel and Making Jewelry With Their Seeds

Angelo Falzareno started by explaining some basic facts about Mountain Laurel, a native plant that can survive in rocky soils with erratic rain. This past year's heavy spring rain made copious purple blooms and resulted in numerous seeds. Angelo brought materials for a craft program using mountain laurel seeds that he had prepared by drilling holes in the seeds and stringing them on a stretchy band that could be made into a bracelet or necklace. He had prepared a sack for each of the second grade students and a few older students who asked to take part in this activity. Master Naturalists Jill Bowen, Theresa Coleman, Pam and Chris Leinhard, Martha Miesch, and John Sloan assisted in the craft activity.



After the jewelry making project was completed, the second graders lined up to go for a nature walk along the paths at the Kroc Center to search for Mountain Laurel growing in the landscape that looked like the branches Mr. Angelo had brought as examples. No specimen was found among the many native plants on the grounds, but there were other fun discoveries: caterpillars and a dead Gulf Fritillary butterfly, which was exciting. The students enjoy discovering new aspects of nature each time we meet.



On Saturday, March 18, Hays County Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist will host the 2nd Annual Texas Night Sky Festival, a free celebration of the Texas Night Sky! Attendees can join in fun citizen science activities, learn from engaging speakers and exhibits, see examples of good lighting for their home or business, view school projects and competition entries focused on protecting the night sky, feast at the food trucks, take home a book or work of art inspired by the night sky, earn a related scouting badge, or explore the stars. The intent of the Festival is to increase the appreciation of the night sky and the world around us. This goes hand in hand with increasing awareness about the type of lighting that provides needed light while it reduces glare, saves money, eliminates light trespass, protects the health and safety of living things, and saves our common view of the night sky. Vendors and exhibitors will be sharing displays and demonstrations related to the night sky, things inspired by the night sky, or how to protect the night sky. Displays of shielded outdoor lighting, light pollution reduction efforts, educational materials about our natural world, literature relating to the night sky, astronomical equipment, and other items relevant to the night sky are just a few of the aspects of the exhibits. If you have any questions, please call 512-858-4725.

Cibolo Nature Center Commencement Walk

The 2016 Class Commencement was held on November 16, 2016 at the Cibolo Nature Center. Following the commencement program and a wonderful lunch, many of those attending enjoyed a tour of the center. Ben Eldredge, Director of Education at CNC, led the group on a very informative tour of the four ecosystems. The following is only a sample of what Ben shared with us.

The first ecosystem to visit was the Tallgrass Prairie. Prairie land is one of the region's most endangered ecosystems. Grass species in the prairie include switch grass, Lindheimer's muhly, and Little bluestem. A diverse mix of forbs, including Engelmann's daisy and Maximilian sunflower, are also scattered throughout the prairie systems.

The next stop was the Spring-Fed Marsh. The Wrede March is primarily composed of switch grass, bushy blue stem, button bush, cypress trees, sedges, and a variety of forbs and aquatic plants. Ben explained how biodiversity in the marsh was stimulated: two weirs were installed to vary the water level appropriately throughout the year. Moist soil vegetation is able to establish while the water level is low, while more aquatic plants establish themselves when the water level is high. The outflow from the marsh water flows over the nature center's prairie with the purpose of creating more wetland habitat.

We followed the board walk to the Riparian Forest region. Cibolo Creek is a critical habitat for wildlife and an important source of recharge for the Edwards Aquifer. The creek is tested regularly for water quality and is part of the Texas Stream Team monitoring program. It is mostly composed of trees and woody plants, including bald cypress, sycamores, walnuts, and many other woody species. In the Riparian Forest are sycamore leafed snowbells, spice bush, big-red sage, Virginia creeper and a multitude of other forbs. Commonly seen are Red-eared slider turtles, Guadalupe bass, several species of birds, barred owls, great blue herons and water snakes.

Our final ecosystem to visit was the Live Oak Savannah. Oak and juniper create a dense cover of shade while the American beauty berry, elbowbush and Mexican buckeye provide understory. The savannah provides habitat for deer, rabbits, armadillo and birds. Where the canopy opens, native grasses spread in lush meadows among the trees, providing grazing for deer and other animals. An area of the savannah is being restored with a variety of prairie plants, including sideoats grama, indian grass, indian blanket and Texas bluebonnet.

It was a beautiful day for a walk in the prairie, marsh, riparian forest, and savannah ecosystems. We thank Ben for sharing his knowledge of this wonderful nature center with us.

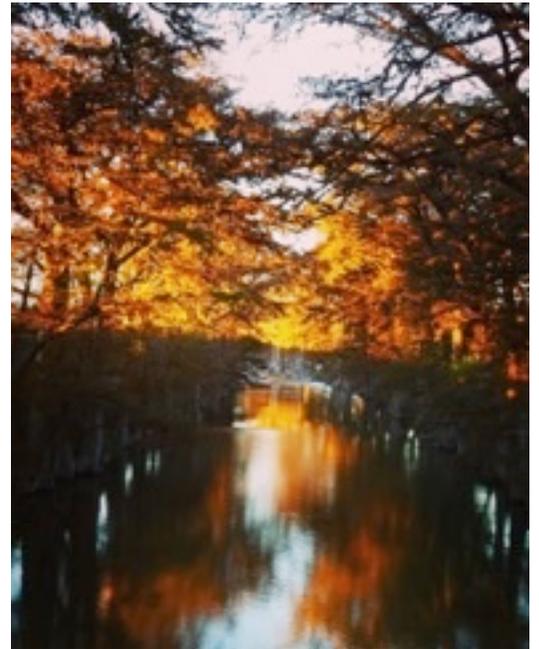


The View From Rusty Bend

Dear Daddy,

It's Thanksgiving morning and if you were still with us, you and I would be up early. You'd put on that faded camouflage jacket and its funny little cap to keep your bald spot warm. I'd get something roasting in the oven while you had a quick bowl of Cherrios, with half a banana. We'd bundle up and I'd shuttle you to the blind in the 4-wheeler. While you got settled, with your plaid thermos of coffee, I'd throw out some alfalfa to draw in the Axis deer.

I'd come later to pick you up and listen to your stories of everything you saw: armadillos rooting in the leaves, turkeys nearby in the roost, planning their day with twenty rusty hinge sounds, Red-shouldered hawks overhead notifying their whereabouts with their raucous scree. I imagine you marveling at the snowstorm of white butterflies that greets the warmth of the sun as it hits the dry grasses.



River reflections

You seem more of a watcher than a hunter these days, happiest settled on the front porch with a blanket over your shoulders, birdbook and binoculars, to hand, as you would say. A whole 'nother country to watch. You'd be in heaven and probably quote Robert Frost:

“Not yesterday I learned to know,
the love of bare November days...”

For with the leaves down, fine games of Spot the Raptor can be had. Osprey, Zone-tailed hawk, Red Tail, Northern Harrier. I'd point out four Turkey Vultures trying to share the top of our utility pole, heads together. I imagine them comparing notes on roadkill and gutpiles. A dark panel discussion on the largesse of hunting season in the hill country.

We'd see that the neighbor's sheep have dropped their lambs. Watching them across the river and in the distance, at first only the ewes would be evident, but then trailing behind are what we call “ghost lambs”, barely visible. A whisper of a lamb.

We see an old doe in the yard. She's lost a lot of teeth and looks like rawhide stretched over bones. An eight-pointer is still interested, nonetheless and we'd watch the particulars of white-tail love. He licks his lips, his neck is swollen, but finally she's had enough of his low head chasing. She keeps an agarita between them as a discourager.

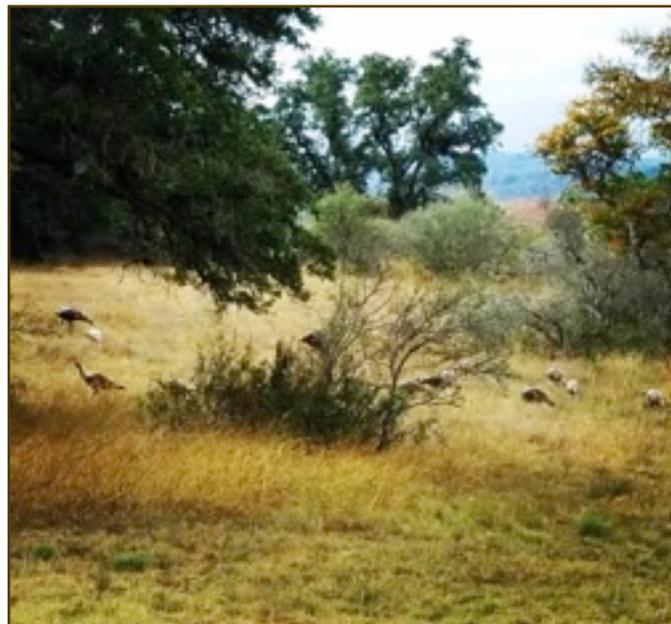
I leave you to your watching while I explore the pasture for table centerpiece fixings: Brushy Bluestem, Little Bluestem, gaudy Spanish Oak leaves, Buckeye pods. Nature's plenty saves me from shopping trauma at Walmart.

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When I get home with my armload of color, you show pride in the grasses I gathered. I get out the species lists and show you all we have found in our Rusty Bend immersion project. More than 170 species of birds, 19 mammals, 47 types of trees and woody plants, 34 grasses, and 65 forbs. So far. Stewardship taught, stewardship rewarded. Gratitude for miles.

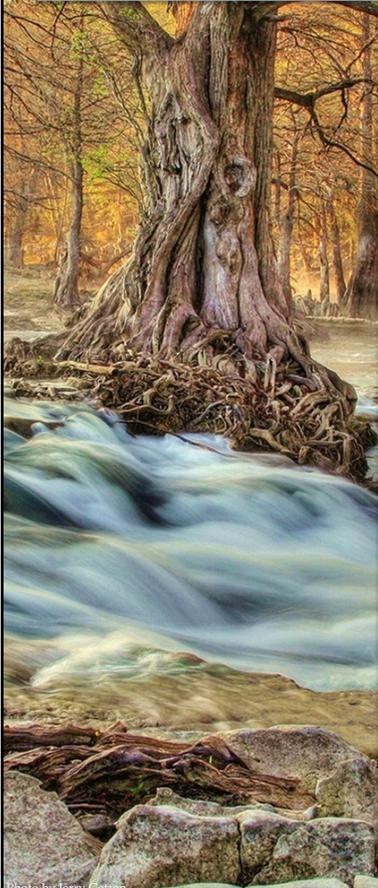
Smell that? Time to take out the turkey.

Lucy Griffith, PhD co-manages the Rusty Bend Ranch with her husband, Andy Robinson. She also writes poetry and her muse is a tractor named Ruby. Both Lucy and Andy are certified Master Naturalists from the Class of 2013. Comments welcome at doctorluz@hctc.net



Thanksgiving strollers

CONSERVATION EASEMENT WORKSHOP



**FRIDAY,
FEBRUARY 10, 2017**

\$20 REGISTRATION

**KERR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
BASS CONFERENCE FACILITY
138 Kerr WMA Rd W, Hunt, TX 78024**

**REGISTRATION @ 1:30 PM
WORKSHOP • 2-5 PM**

WORKSHOP TOPICS

- What is a Conservation Easement (CE)?
- Donation of a Conservation Easement
- Landowner Income and Estate Tax Benefits
- The Role of the Land Trust Organization
 - Discussions with CE Donors

**REGISTER ONLINE @
WWW.HILLCOUNTRYALLIANCE.ORG
Walk-ins Welcome**

*For information, please contact:
Workshop Coordinator Carolyn Vogel
Texas Conservation Connection
carolyn@texasconservationconnection.com*

Hosted by:



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Advanced Training

THURSDAY, JAN. 19 RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER, KERRVILLE (RNC)

AT17-005 8AM-5PM URBAN WILDLIFE: HABITS AND HABITATS

Topics include Ticks and Other Dangerous Insects, Bats, Encountering Animals Along the River, Chagas Disease, Wildlife Rescue, Encounters with Snakes and Safety, and Rabies. To register, call 830-257-4837; cost: \$45, including lunch and snacks.

THURSDAY, JAN. 19 12-1PM WEBINAR

AT17-017 FROM BLACK-AND-WHITE TO HIGH DEFINITION SATELLITE OBSERVATIONS

We will discuss new products we expect to see from GOES-16 satellite data, explain how and why scientists use different kinds of light to study the Earth, and how those observations can be used to improve our ability to forecast the weather, including severe thunderstorms, dust storms, tornadoes, and hurricanes. The website is <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3893855937554879491>.

SATURDAY, JAN. 21 9AM-4PM J.J. PICKLE RESEARCH CAMPUS, 10100 BURNET ROAD., AUSTIN

AT17-008 SIXTH ANNUAL BEEKEEPING SEMINAR

The mission of this daylong seminar is to educate people of all experience levels in sustainable bee husbandry and to provide funding for The Texas A&M Honey Bee Lab. Six different educational presentations running concurrently in each time slot throughout the day will provide many beginning and advanced subjects to choose from. A separate beginner track covers a variety of startup topics for soon to be or very new beekeepers. Cost: \$60. Register at <http://aabaseminar2017.eventbrite.com>; for additional information, email Lance Wilson at lance@beekeepinghelp.com.

SATURDAY, JAN. 21 12:30-3PM RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER, KERRVILLE

AT17-012 THE WHITE SHERMAN MURAL

The prehistoric hunter-gatherers of the Lower Pecos Canyonlands of Texas and Coahuila, Mexico, created some of the most spectacularly complex and enduring rock art of the ancient world. Perhaps the greatest of these masterpieces is the White Shaman mural, an intricate painting on the wall of a shallow cave overlooking the Pecos River. The presenter is Carolyn E. Boyd, Research Director, Shumla Archaeological Research and Education Center. Seating is limited to 50; go to kkbobbitt@gmail.com to register.

MONDAY, JAN. 23 7PM UPPER GUADALUPE RIVER AUTHORITY LECTURE HALL, KERRVILLE

AT17-003 DESALINATION OF BRACKISH GROUNDWATER

Roberto Macias, Manager of Production and Treatment of Groundwater at the San Antonio Water System (SAWS), will speak on the new desalination process that San Antonio is using to transform available brackish into potable water at the monthly chapter meeting.

TUESDAY, JAN. 24 1-2PM WEBINAR

AT17-022 DESIGNING HABITATS FOR MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Speakers will highlight designing to improve soil health, prevent run-off into waterways, be attractive to pollinators and other beneficial insects, and sequester carbon. Instructors: Jessa Kay Cruz, Senior Pollinator Conservation Specialist, The Xerces Society, and others. The website is <http://www.forestrywebinars.net/webinars/designing-habitat-for-multiple-benefits-wildlife-soil-water-and-carbon>.

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 25 1-2PM WEBINAR

AT17-018 INVASIVE SPECIES, FIREWOOD, AND FOREST HEALTH

Leigh Greenwood of The Nature Conservancy will speak on people's attitudes and knowledge about invasive species' relation to firewood. The website is <http://www.forestrywebinars.net/webinars/the-people-have-spoken-using-forest-and-firewood-national-polling-data-to-promote-forest-health>.

SATURDAY, JAN. 28 8AM-3PM CIBOLO NATURE CENTER, BOERNE (CNC)

AT17-021 FIRE ECOLOGY WORKSHOP

Experts in prescribed burning will cover everything you need to know to conduct a prescribed burn. If weather permits, this will be a hands-on with fire equipment event. Please bring a sack lunch. Cost: \$25, CNC Members; \$30, Non-Members, \$20 for Hill County Prescribed Burning Association members. To register, go to <https://ciboloorg.presencehost.net/experience/events/calendar.html/event/2017/01/28/cnc-fire-ecology-workshop/144457>.

TUESDAY, JAN. 31 9AM-2PM CIBOLO NATURE CENTER, BOERNE**AT17-020 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM GUIDE TRAINING**

Become a Nature Educator in our Outdoor Classroom program: Since its inception, school children from throughout the region have attended our award winning Outdoor Classroom program, learning about the natural world and the benefits of healthy ecosystems. For more information, contact Stephanie Colvard, Director of Children's Education, stephanie@cibolo.org .or 830-331-8596.

TUESDAY, FEB. 7 7-8PM CIBOLO NATURE CENTER, BOERNE**AT17-030 ATTRACTING BIRDS IN THE TEXAS HILL COUNTRY**

This monthly meeting of the Boerne NPSOT chapter will begin with refreshments, socializing, and book signing at 6:30 pm, followed by the program at 7:00. Biologist Rufus Stephens and Educator Jan Wrede will discuss common problems and possible solutions for developing optimum habitat for birds. This presentation will be based on their practical guidebook, which in turn is based on their years of working with landowners, land managers, naturalists, county officials, and others on using wildlife management and land stewardship to improve habitat for birds on both small and large properties throughout the Hill Country.

SATURDAY, FEB. 11 9AM-6PM CIBOLO NATURE CENTR, BOERNE**AT17-023 HONEY I'VE GOT THE BEES WORKSHOP**

This is a workshop where you will learn how to start beehives and maintain them, without spending a lot of money, and how to keep bees healthy without chemicals. The instructor is Dr. Don Frazer, VP of Alamo Area Beekeepers. Cost: \$100, including lunch. To register, go to <https://cibolo.org.presencehost.net/experience/events/honey-ive-got-the-bees-february-11.html> or contact Ben Eldredge, ben@cibolo.org or 830-331-4616.

THURSDAY, FEB. 23 1-2PM WEBINAR**AT17-027 INTRODUCTION TO PLANT IDENTIFICATION**

The goal of this webinar is to provide participants with a basic understanding of plant ecology and a framework for determining the identity of plants. Participants will learn about the major groups of plants, how and when to look for distinguishing traits, how to collect and preserve specimens, resources available to determine plant identification, operation of a simple plant key, and limits on the precision of plant identification. The instructor is Ricky Linex, Wildlife Biologist, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The website is <http://www.conservationwebinars.net/webinars/introduction-to-plant-identification> .

FRIDAY, FEB. 24 3-4PM KERR WMA IN THE BASS CENTER, 2625 FM 1340, HUNT**AT17-015 NEW MONARCH MONITORING PROJECT INITIAL MEETING**

Join this first meeting to plan the new Monarch monitoring project, orient new volunteers to the property, and plan locations for monitoring stations. This training will be limited to volunteers participating in this KWMA project; for Monarch lovers who haven't had the MLMP training yet, or those who need a refresher, there is a MLMP training on March 16.

SATURDAY, FEB. 25 8AM-4PM LADY BIRD JOHNSON WILDFLOWER CENTER, 3801 LACROSSE AVE., AUSTIN**AT17-031 NPSOT SPRING SYMPOSIUM**

Online registration is now open; go to <http://npsot.org/sp/story/2016/9491> for information. Registration includes entrance to the gardens and a boxed lunch. Cost: \$55 per person, or \$50 for NPSOT members and members of the Wildflower Center.

The newsletter's publication schedule does not allow listing all AT events in each issue.
Check the chapter calendar on our website for additional AT.



We meet on the fourth Monday of most months at 7:00 PM in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Join us at 6:30 for our social half-hour.

Everyone is welcome.

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.

Board of Directors 2017

- Brenda Fest -- President
- Craig Childs -- Vice President
- Kris Bobbitt-- Secretary
- Ann Dietert -- Treasurer
- Tom Harrigan -- Advanced Training Director
- David Davies -- Communications Director
- Lisa Flanagan -- Membership Director
- Claire Mitchell -- Volunteer Service Projects Director
- Reggie Cox -- 2016 Class Director
- Paula Harley -- 2015 Class Representative
- Kathy Ward -- Immediate Past President

The Texas Star is a monthly publication of the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. News, essays, comments, and ideas are welcome.

Please email them to:

Lenore Langsdorf, Editor
LenoreLangsdorf@gmail.com

The Hill Country Chapter does not recommend or endorse organizations or commercial sources mentioned in our newsletter. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and editor.



Questions about our chapter?

Email Lisa Flanagan,
Membership Director
hillcountrymembership@gmail.com

