

THE TEXAS STAR

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HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

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

OCTOBER PROGRAM

“Native and Priority Plant Conservation”.

Jan Wrede, well-known author and native plant authority, will be the featured speaker at the October 22 meeting of our chapter. The meeting will be held at Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street in Kerrville, Monday October 22 beginning at 7 pm.

Ms. Wrede is the author of **Texans Love their Land** (1997) and **Trees, Shrubs and Vines of the Texas Hill Country** (TAMU Press Nature Guide Series 2005), and a weekly newspaper column. She has 15 years of classroom experience teaching biology, marine science, chemistry and environmental studies.

Since 1992 she has served as Director of Education at Cibolo Nature Center in Boerne,

where she has founded many programs including Outdoor Classroom, Art and Conservation and Tour of Yards. She directs CNC’s citizen science field research project in May and October and manages their land stewardship education programming for the Texas Hill Country.

Ms. Wrede is also a founding member of both the statewide Informal Science Education Association (ISEA) for museums, zoos, aquariums and nature centers, and the San Antonio Area Informal Education Association (SAAIEA).

As always, the public is invited to our chapter meetings, so bring a friend!



AWARDS, CERTIFICATIONS, AND MILESTONES...



Certified Texas Master Naturalist – Leanne Beauxbeannes, Marguerite Belec
500-hour (Brushed Silver) – Bob Tanner
250-hour (Bronze) – Nancy Vaughan
Special 1st Year Recertification – Karen Millikan
2007 Certification – Dan Behringer (August), Bill Frodyma, Diane McMahon, Nancy Vaughan

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we head into the holidays (how did it get to be October already?), we're coming into a busy time of year for the Chapter as well. We've got a number of important issues and events coming up, and I want to make sure all of you take the opportunity to mark your calendars and plan to participate.

Our meeting next month on November 26 will be our last general meeting of the year, since our holiday party will replace the December meeting. At the November meeting, we'll hold elections for our 2008 Board officers. As some of you already know, I am dealing with some health concerns and have decided not to place my name on the ballot for another term as president. This resulted in a somewhat unusual situation in that the nominating committee, composed of Jim Stanley, Myrna Langford, and Virginia Sawin, approached a number of qualified prospects for the presidential slot, and all declined for various reasons. After some discussion, Jim Stanley agreed to return for a 1-year term as president. All of us know Jim as an excellent teacher and a capable leader, and I welcome the return of his vision and experience in heading up the Board.

The other candidates proposed by the nominating committee are Warren Ferguson as VP, Priscilla Stanley returning for another term as secretary, and Martha Miesch as treasurer. As always, nominations from the floor will also be accepted at the meeting.

The five directors will be appointed by the president following the election of officers, and the new class representative will be elected by the Class of 2007 within the next month. And I plan to continue on the Board as past president.

The other important issue facing us at the November meeting is the adoption of our Chapter Operating Handbook. As our Chapter has grown and matured, it has become increasingly important that we have a written reference for our guidelines and policies. I am pleased with the efforts of a committee headed by Sandy Peña to develop this document, and now the document will need to be reviewed and adopted by a majority vote of the membership attending the November Chapter meeting. Once a few final touches are added, I'll be distributing it via e-mail so that you all have a chance to review it before the November meeting.

Once we've taken care of our Chapter business, we'll be ready to celebrate another successful year. Our holiday party this year will be hosted by our Gillespie County members. The get-together is scheduled for Saturday evening, December 1, at the Club House in Fredericksburg's Lady Bird Johnson Park. Details will follow, but in the meantime be sure to mark your calendar for what promises to be an enjoyable evening.

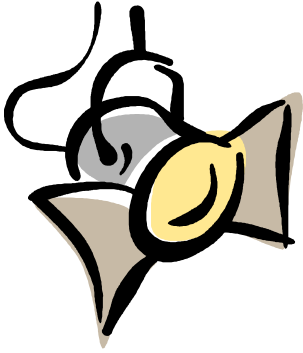
And, in closing, I am happy to announce that our Chapter is in sound enough financial condition that the Board has been discussing the idea of accepting project proposals from members. I'll be sending out more details on what information we'd like to see in your proposals, but I hope you'll all start thinking of some worthwhile ways to spend some of the money in our treasury. This should be a great opportunity to take our Master Naturalist message home to our communities, so let's all get creative!

Phyllis Muska



COMING UP

Ranch Heritage Weekend – October 26-28, Hill Country State Natural Area. Free to the public, this event will take place at the Hill Country State Natural Area in Bandera where participants “will enjoy programs and displays that celebrate the rapidly disappearing Ranching Heritage of Texas in a beautiful Hill Country setting.” Including Cowboy story-telling, trick roping, and cowboy singers and poets, drill team performances, free trail-rides and interpretive tours, a live band and dance Saturday night, and MUCH MORE. For more information check out www.hcsnap.org or call 830-393-7037.



VOLUNTEER PROJECTS OF THE MONTH

Kerrville-Schreiner Butterfly Theater-- *PROJECT CC-09-0A*

The **Kerrville-Schreiner Park Butterfly Theater** was designed and installed in 2000 by the Friends of Kerrville –

Schreiner State Park. Ernest Tremayne, who passed away this past year, was responsible for the vision, design and installation of the garden and the irrigation system. The garden is approximately 104' x 104' and is enclosed by a deer-proof fence. In the center of the garden is a fire ring with seating, which the scouts and other interested parties use. A raised circular bed separates this area from the remainder of the garden. A circular crushed granite pathway further separates it and allows for viewing the garden on both sides. There are several mulched paths marked by flags for the milkweed which are used for data collection.

The vegetation consists almost entirely of Hill Country native plants including trees, shrubs, annuals and perennials. Both nectar and larval plants have been donated by the Texas Master Naturalists, the Native Plant Society of Texas, local nurseries and private citizens. In addition to the butterfly population one can expect to see a variety of birds, including hummingbirds, being drawn to the habitat.

Now that Kerrville-Schreiner Park is owned by the city, there are a number of opportunities for master naturalist volunteers throughout the park, and three in particular at the Butterfly Theater:

Maintaining the Milieu

The garden is maintained by a group of dedicated volunteers and native plant enthusiasts. This group prunes shrubs and trees, weeds flower beds, collects seed, digs and propagates new plants and contributes to overall design. The workday is Thursday, usually beginning after 8 a.m. and

continuing 2 – 3 hours. Volunteering with this group provides a great opportunity to learn about identification, care and cultivation of native plants while contributing to the maintenance of the garden as a whole. For information on volunteering for work at the Butterfly Theater contact Cathy Downs at mzdowns@hctc.net or 830-377-1632.

PROJECT KR-01-B

Monitoring the Monarch Motel

In 2006, the garden was certified as a Monarch Way Station by the Monarch Watch Program, an educational outreach program based at the University of Kansas. In 2007 a group of volunteers began to collect data at the garden for the **Monarch Larval Monitoring Project**. This citizen science project, sponsored by the University of Minnesota, involves volunteers from across the US and Canada in monarch research by collecting data on larval monarch populations and milkweed habitat.

The MLMP also meets on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. Volunteers with this group collect data on milkweed, monarch larvae and monarch eggs. The data are then sent electronically to the University of Minnesota and contributes to the research conducted on monarch population health and movement. For further information on the MLMP contact Ginny deWolf at dewolf@ktc.com or 830-896-2545. ***PROJECT KR-01-E***

Measuring Migration

The garden is historically included in the **North American Butterfly Association (NABA) annual July 4th Count for Kerr County Circle**. Volunteers in this group count the type and number of butterfly species for submission to the NABA database. For information on volunteering for the NABA count contact Cynthia Johnson at carljohn@ktc.com or 830-895-5173.



Handicapped Accessible Trail -- PROJECT GL-04-A

One of the candidates for the 2006 Class Project was the construction of

a handicap-accessible trail at the Fredericksburg Nature Center in Lady Bird Johnson Park.

The idea had its roots in a conversation between Tina Cohorn and Virginia Sawin, both members of the 2006 class. Virginia then offered the concept to the Gillespie team during its brainstorming session prior to voting on the class project. Although the class did not choose this project, the idea never lost its appeal. The sense of it, especially the aspect of the chapter's service to the community, prompted Virginia to contact Bill Lindemann, President of the Friends of the Fredericks Nature Center about realizing the dream.

Once in Bill's sights, the goal of having a handicap-accessible trail at the park never lost focus. The Fredericksburg City Parks & Recreation Director, Jimmy Alexander, signed-on with his approval and immediately provided authorization for funding and materials the city has graciously provided since construction began. The cooperation among the FNC (Fredericksburg Nature Center), the TMN, and the City of Fredericksburg has been exemplary. All parties will benefit greatly from the goal.

Where do the Hill Country Master Naturalists fit into the picture now? It is safe to say that without the many hours spent by HCMN chapter volunteers the trail would never have happened. Among the chapter members who have given their time are Virginia, Jane Crone, Mary Ellen Terrell, Annie Rendon, William Lange, Gene Smith, Steve Dodge, Elin Elisofon, and John Huecksteadt. Others, closely associated with the chapter that figure prominently in its construction, are Trailboss-Bill Lindemann, John Crone, and Fredlin Kaderli.

HCMN volunteers have logged over 350 hours on the trail since its inception.

Specifically, the trail consists of a 5-foot wide 500-foot long path that winds along the north overlook of Live Oak Creek from the bird feeding station west to near the entrance to the Live Oak Trail. The trail meets Americans with Disabilities Act specifications in that it is within the 12% grade (1 foot elevation change for every twelve feet traveled) guidelines for such trails. The surface will be packed crushed red granite except in select spots where concrete will better support adequate water drainage and erosion control. Its entire length is curbed with landscaping timbers, railroad ties, and/or large rocks to prevent accidents and to control drainage. Highlights of the trail are its inclusion of the Nature Center butterfly garden, several scenic overlooks, and the newly-constructed bird-watching blind at the bird feeding station.

The past few months of wetness have delayed completing the trail, but weather permitting it should be complete soon. The handicap-accessible trail gives testimony to the spirit and power of volunteering and the generosity and hard work of our chapter members. Fredericksburg, which already has a park and nature center it can be proud of, can now offer a broader range of visitors and residents, alike, a beautiful new trail along which to enjoy the Hill Country.

Editor's note: This project was the subject of the Hill Country Master Naturalist chapter's entry in the Chapter Display Competition at the annual meeting in San Antonio where, it is reported, it was well-received. You can see the display at the October meeting, so check it out.



*If you have a favorite project, or know of one that should receive more attention (even if the project is not now currently active, but will resume in the future), please send me a few paragraphs describing what it is, how it came about, what tasks are involved, when the work happens, and any additional information, such as tools to bring, shoes to wear, who to contact, etc. And please include the **project number**. dsr*

ADVANCED TRAINING

On Wednesday October 24, Jim Stanley will present his thorough and informative **Grass ID class**. As you may know, the Board has determined that repeating a class may qualify as Advanced Training as long as you feel you have learned something new. (I have taken Jim's class three times now, and I'm still learning! *dsr*) The class will begin at 1:30, or whenever the current class finishes lunch, in the meeting room at the Lion's Camp.

AND...

If you attended any of the three presentations at the **Down By The Riverside** event on October 13, you can report that as Advanced Training hours. They were: "**Native Trees That Grow Well in the Hill Country**," by Susan Sander; "**How to Create Wildscapes and Backyard Habitat**," by Rufus Stephens; and "**Back Yard Critters**," by Conn Carson.

AND...

The HCMN Board of Directors has approved as one hour of advanced training the Monarch presentation given by Kip Kiphart at the HCMN September chapter meeting



WALK SOFTLY... Reducing the carbon footprint

On Saturday, October 6, the San Antonio Express-News published a special section called "Living Green." Some things they suggest:

Stop the flow of junk mail. "Americans receive 100 million trees worth of junk mail every year—enough to deforest Rocky Mountain National Park every four months." Write to the Direct Marketing Association Mail Preference Service (Box 643, Carmel, NY 10512). They will ask for \$1.00 for processing. To make it easy, you can go to <http://www.the-dma.org/>. In the left column there is a tab labeled "Remove my name from mailing lists" – and from there the rest is easy.

"Recycling one aluminum can saves enough electricity to run a laptop computer for four hours."

Waste Management

"Use a push mower or electric mower to cut your grass. A conventional gasoline-powered mower pollutes as much in one hour as driving a car as much as 70 miles."

CPS energy



FROM THE HERBARIUM



Bur Marigold/Smooth Beggar's Ticks



Family: Composite/Aster

Species: *Bidens laevis*

There are 12 species of Bidens in Texas. *B. Laevis* ranges across the southern US up into New England. Another Hill Country species, *B. frondosa*, does not have ray flowers.

Category Annual to short-lived perennial

Bloom Time Fall

(now in bloom along Guadalupe River)

Height 2-6 feet, branching

Habitat moist edges of rivers/creeks

Sun Exposure Sun to part shade

Bloom bright yellow ray & disk florets, often covered with a variety of butterflies.

Seeds Small, black, flat achenes with small barbs that stick to shoelaces and socks.

Photo and text by Susan Sander



Lindheimeria texana: Texas Star

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