

THE TEXAS STAR

SEPTEMBER 2007 VOL. 5 No 9



HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

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

SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

“Monarchs, Milkweed and More”

Our own Kip Kiphart will be the featured speaker for the Texas Master Naturalist-Hill Country Chapter September 24 meeting. A long-time Texas Master Naturalist, Kip (formally Ridlon J.Kiphart) was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio. He has a B.A. in Bio-Chemical Sciences and a Doctorate of Medicine. Until he entered medical school, Kip was called Skip by family and friends. He felt that most people would shy away from a doctor called “Skip,” so he became “Kip.” Since his retirement from the private practice of Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery, he has actively pursued his lifelong interest in studies of nature, plants, animals, and the relationship between living things and their environment. Kip has served as president of the Dallas chapter of NPSOT and as the State Education Committee



chairperson. In 1998, he became involved with the Texas Master Naturalist (MN) program in Dallas and served as the chapter’s first president. Kip is currently an active member of the Hill Country chapter MN. Kip and his wife, June, moved to suburban Bergheim in 2001. Kip and June have been trail guides at the CNC, and Kip participates in and leads research projects. Working with the University of Minnesota, he studies, records and reports local monarch populations and lectures throughout South Texas.

As always, the meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street, in Kerrville.



AWARDS, CERTIFICATIONS, AND MILESTONES...

Certified Texas Master Naturalist	Annie Rendon
Special 1st Year Recertification	Lloyd Hemmert, William Lange
250 Hour (Bronze pin)	Colleen Everson (July)
2007 Certification (Shrimp pin)	Myrna Langford (July), Maggie Tatum (July), Wilma Teague, Ron Hood (April), Kip Kiphart (July), Nyta Hensley, Stephen Dodge, Rebecca Shupp

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Seeing the enthusiasm of the members of our new class has made me stop and think back to the folks in my own class a few years ago and wonder what happened to some of them. Going through training and participating in field trips together helped us form a cohesive group, further cemented by working on our class project as a team. But graduation was the last we've seen of some of these folks, and others have become scarce over the years since then.

I'm sure this has been the experience of other classes as well, and I wish we had a good way of keeping more of our group members active. I'd like to see those of us who have stayed involved in chapter activities reach out and see if we can re-involve some of our missing classmates. Think about someone you got to know in



class and whose company you enjoyed, and get in touch via phone or e-mail to see how they're doing and what they've been up to. And while you're at it – you might invite them to join you on one of the chapter projects you've been working on

Riverside Nature Center's *Down By The Riverside* festival is coming up in October and would be a perfect opportunity to buddy up and renew a friendship from your MN training. The plant sale at this event is also our only fund-raiser each year.

What this means is we haven't had to impose dues like many other TMN chapters, so there's an added incentive to help make this event a success!

Phyllis Muska

COMING UP...

Looking for Landscape Inspiration? Look no further. The Cibolo Nature Center (CNC) and the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT) Boerne Chapter are hosting their annual **Tour of Yards** event on Saturday, September 29, 2007, from 9AM until 4PM. This event allows interested visitors to tour homeowner yards and view native and adapted plants that do well in the Hill Country and South Central Texas.

The project is part of a collaborative effort of the CNC and the NPSOT to demonstrate the many ways water-wise, low maintenance plants can be successfully used in landscape design

Visitors to the yards are sure to be inspired by the butterfly gardens, water features, or backyard wildlife habitats. Tour maps and directions will be available in the near future on the CNC website (www.cibolo.org), at the CNC Visitor Center, and at local sponsoring locations.



Ten homeowners are opening their yards to visitors who share an interest in promoting the use of native and adapted plants in their landscapes.

Tours and one-on-one discussions with the owners, who have developed and, in most cases actually completed the work themselves, will be part of the offering.

FYI... The Kerr County Prescribed Burning Chapter will meet on Monday, September 24 at 6:30 p.m. at the historic "union Church" just north of the Schreiner University campus.

ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Plant ID Classes

Once again, Jim Stanley and Scott Magee will present classes on identifying tree, forbs, and grasses. They will be at 1:30 on Wednesday afternoons (after the regular class session ends) at the Texas Lions Camp. Here's the schedule:

September 26 – Tree ID (Jim Stanley)

October 17 – Forb ID (Scott Magee)

October 24 – Grass ID (Jim Stanley)

Even if you have taken one of these sessions the past, they will qualify for advanced training, as long as you can say you continue to learn from them.



The Texas Water Symposium, a cooperative effort of Texas Tech University and Texas Public Radio will present the first of four forums in September. Each of these sessions will qualify for TMN

Advanced Training.

Thursday, September 20, at 7:00 p.m. the discussion will be *“More precious than gold: The ethical, economic, legal and environmental implications of supplying 40 million people with water by 2050.”* It will be held in the Floyd & Kathleen Cailloux Campus Activity Center on the Schreiner campus.

Other sessions will be:

Thursday, November 8, *“H2O: The science of water issues,”* at Texas Tech University—Hill Country in Fredericksburg.

Thursday, January 24, *“Conservation: Taking action for your children’s children”* at Texas Tech University – Hill Country in Junction

Thursday, March 6, *“Policy, Planning, and Politics: Where do we go from here?”* at Schreiner University. More details can be found at www.schreiner.edu/water/programs.htm.



Is the Water Clean?
Monday, October 2, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon:

This mostly outdoor, on-the-creek workshop includes water chemistry

tests, aquatic macro-invertebrate sampling, and an introduction to what these tests can tell us about clean water for different uses. Cost: \$15 for CNC members, \$20 for non-members. Preregistration required: 830-249-4616 or Nature@Cibolo.org,

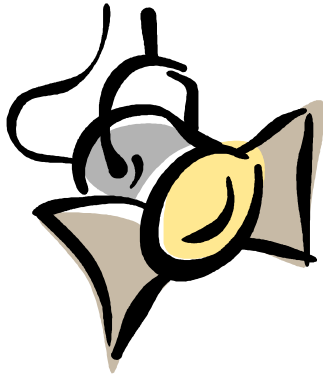


Basic GPS for Beginners and Intermediates, Wednesday, October 3, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon, at CNC Park. Class will be informal, and outside. GPS units will be provided. There is no fee for this class. Preregistration required: 830-249-4616 or Nature@Cibolo.org.

Intermediate GPS Workshop, Saturday, November 3, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon, at CNC Library and Park. Cost: \$5 for CNC members, \$10 for non-members. Participants should have some basic GPS skills including viewing pages, using the main menu, and entering navigation settings. GPS units will be provided, or participants may bring their own. Preregistration required: 830-249-4616 or Nature@Cibolo.org.

Hill Country Ranch Eco-Tour, Friday, October 19, 8:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. Cibolo Nature Center. We will be touring a local ranch and focusing on **Riparian Management, Water Impoundment/Wetland, Unique Hill Country Geology, and Management Under High Fence.** The tour is limited to 80 persons. Participants will travel in groups of 20 to the four stations on trailers/hay bales. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m., coffee and doughnuts provided. Trailers will leave for the tour promptly at 8:45 a.m, and meet back at CNC at 1:00p.m for a box lunch (included in the fee). Cost is \$20 for one person, \$30 for two, and \$10 for students. Deadline for registration is October 15. Contact lissie.schneider@tx.nacdnet.net or call 830-249-2821 Monday through Thursday, 9:00- 12:30.

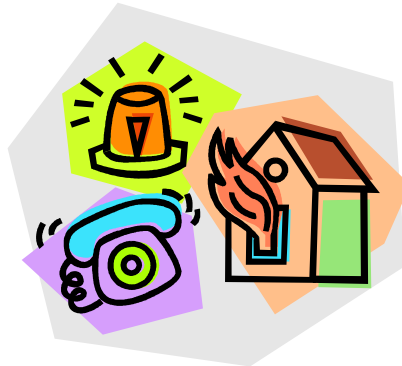
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VOLUNTEER PROJECT OF THE MONTH

Master Naturalists from the Hill Country Chapter are active in helping educate their communities about the dangers of wildland fire and the

actions that homeowners can take to help mitigate these risks. Three members of our chapter - **Cynthia Johnson, Priscilla Stanley, and Nancy Vaughan** - have led their communities' efforts to become recognized as Firewise Communities. They - along with other chapter members **Colleen Everson, Warren Ferguson, Lloyd Hemmert, William Lange, Annie Rendon, Rebecca Shupp, Bob Tanner** and **Walter Workman** - have completed the study and work to become Certified Wildfire Ecology Specialists by the Texas Forest Service. In addition to attending three days of training, class members completed specific work projects based upon the course content.



protect people, property and natural resources from the risk of a wildland fire - before a fire starts. The goal is to reduce wildland fire losses by building and maintaining communities in the urban-wildland interface in ways that are compatible with our natural wildland surroundings. The program emphasizes advance planning for an effective emergency response as well as individual homeowner responsibility for building and maintaining a more firewise home and landscaping to protect not only themselves but their neighbors in the event of a fire. Communities work with the Texas Forest Service and their local Fire Department to prepare their Comprehensive Wildfire Protection Plan and members of the community contribute work each year to achieve the goals of their plan and maintain their recognition as a Firewise Community. Each community also holds a Firewise Education Day each year for its residents.

Priscilla became involved with the Firewise Communities/USA project in 2003 and was instrumental in leading her community of Tierra Linda Ranch to recognition as a Firewise Community. As class members, Cynthia and Nancy chose to work on a Firewise Plan for their community, The Horizon, which has also now also achieved recognition as a Firewise Community. At this time, there are only 239 recognized Firewise Communities in the United States, located in 33 states. The Horizon is only the fourteenth recognized Firewise Community in Texas.

The Firewise Communities/USA program is a multi-agency effort designed to involve homeowners, community leaders and others in the effort to

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Wildlife Field Research Days, October 4-6 at Cibolo Nature Center. Master Naturalist volunteers from four regional chapters help survey the birds, mammals, fish, insects, reptiles, grasses, trees – all the flora and fauna in the environs of Cibolo nature Center. For information, and to sign up, contact suzanny2@aol.com. The Project ID is KL-02-B.

AND, SPEAKING OF VOLUNTEERING... IT'S GOOD TO BE GOOD!



The Corporation for National and Community Service reported in May that a review of recent research (The Health Benefits of Volunteering) found that “volunteers have greater longevity,

higher functional ability, lower rates of depression, and less incidence of heart disease.”

http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/role_impact/performance_research.asp#HBR.

Research suggests that volunteering is particularly beneficial to the health of older adults and those serving 100 hours annually. According to the report:

-- A study of adults age 65 and older found that the positive effect of volunteering on physical and mental health is due to the personal sense of

accomplishment an individual gains from his or her volunteer activities.

-- Another study found that volunteering led to lower rates of depression in individuals 65 and older.

--A Duke study found that individuals who volunteered after experiencing heart attacks reported reductions in despair and depression, two factors that have been linked to mortality in post-coronary artery disease patients.

-- An analysis of longitudinal data found that individuals over 70 who volunteered approximately 100 hours had less of a decline in self-reported health and functioning levels, experienced lower levels of depression, and had more longevity.

-- Two studies found that volunteering threshold is about 100 hours per year, or about two hours a week. Individuals who reached the threshold enjoyed significant health benefits, although there were not additional benefits beyond the 100-hour mark.

...BUT DON'T FORGET TO REPORT YOUR HOURS



Every January we report the total Volunteer hours and Advance Training hours for our chapter to the State TMN Office, which uses our hours to **obtain matching grants**

to help support the State TMN Program. Our hours are currently valued at \$18.77/hr based on a value published yearly by a national volunteer organization, the Independent Sector/Research. The aggregate value of volunteer hours for all the chapters in Texas makes other states eager to implement their own MN programs so that they too

can benefit from skilled MN volunteer work. Nearly all states have more needs than funds to provide needed services. Our natural resources, including our parks, animals, native plants, children's nature education and more often suffer as a result. TMNs can help bridge this gap, but we really help most when we report our Volunteer and Advanced Training hours to Nyta Hensley, our Chapter Data Manager.

If it has been a while since you reported, it will take longer to do. If you need help in figuring out how to report your hours, please contact John Huecksteadt, our Membership Director at Johnh@beecreek.net. And if you have developed an efficient system for keeping track of and reporting your TMN volunteer hours, consider sharing it with your fellow members.





FROM THE HERBARIUM

Gregg's Mistflower
(*Eupatorium greggii*)

Family: Asteraceae (as-ter-AY-see ay)
Genus: *Eupatorium*
Species: *greggii*

Category
Perennial

Bloom Time
March to November

Height
2-3 feet

Foliage
Herbaceous

Sun Exposure
Full sun to part shade

Bloom Color
Lavender-blue

Blooming from spring to fall, Gregg's Mistflower is a "must" for butterfly gardens. Throughout the prime blooming period of the summer months, the fuzzy flower clusters will be covered with Queen Butterflies. This perennial spreads by rhizomes, so give it plenty of room. Flower heads measure approximately 1/4" and consist of disc flowers only (no ray flowers).

The plant grows in a variety of soils, including caliches, and may need extra water in especially dry periods.



Lindheimera texana: Texas Star

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