



Upcoming Master Naturalist highlights

- **March 21 at 1 p.m. to about 5 p.m.,** Mark Klym, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, "Wildscaping"
- **March 26-28,** Alamito Creek camping trip with the Permian Basin Outing Club, advanced training available
- **April 3 at 8:30 a.m.,** the annual plant sale, volunteer opportunity
- **April 10 at 8 a.m.,** 70 miles away, field trip to Monahans Sandhills State Park

Thanks, R.L. Orth for suggesting the newsletter name!

2010 class visits Hoak's ranch *Day ends with good news*

With a foray into the hillside before lunch and another afterward, the 2010 MN group wandered all over the Hoak Ranch near Iraan on March 6 to study the canyon and breaks habitat.

Feeding the group of about 20 or more as many sandwiches and homemade desserts as they could eat, Cathy and Terry Hoak also opened their home so the curious could explore.

The property had a pond, hills, caverns, and Joe Reed

discovered that Indians had spent time there, so MNs collected burned stones and flint to give the Hoaks as evidence.

The group watched groups of cedar waxwings fly around, joined by lots of robins. There

were a few plants flowering, and although it was windy and chilly on top of the hills, once explorers went down into the breaks, the wind let up, and they could concentrate on what they saw

-- and there was plenty to see: algerita, mountain laurel, juniper, several varieties of cactus -- to name some finds.

An unusual find that Cathy led the group to was the tickle tongue plant. Burr said Indians and early American settlers



Joe Reed, and Cathy Hoak watch Burr Williams try the tickle tongue.



Burr gets us going

(Please see p. 2)

Quarterly meeting outlines volunteer opportunities, big plans for 2010

(Thanks goes to Steve Shaw for his meeting notes!)

The Master Naturalists held the first quarterly meeting of 2010 on March 2. It had previously been cancelled because of snow.

After a dinner of sandwiches and desserts, attendees heard President Chris Cherry lead the meeting.

Treasurer Sammy Hunnicutt reported that the group has \$2,500.67.

Several volunteer and advanced training opportunities are available. The Permian Basin Outing Club will meet March 26-28 at Alamito Creek south of Marfa and eight hours of advanced training is offered with that.

The Scharbauer-Lineberry House has volunteer opportunities.

Chris talked about the Tahoka Lake Pasture project. He is helping Clyde May begin to turn the area into a center for playa research and education. More chances for Master Naturalists to volunteer may come up with this work.

The Sibley Center needs docents for May 21 to lead donors on the nature trail. May 22 is the re-dedication of the Sibley Center.

The annual plant sale on April 3 also needs volunteers to work. Contact Burr for more information.

Chris talked about beginning and continuing some commit-

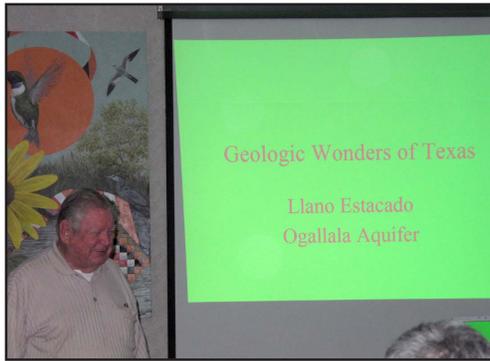


Photo by Annette Moellering

Dr. Don McGookey spoke about geology.

tees. Right now, Burr is in charge of Training and Advanced Training, Sammy -- Membership and Historian, Chris -- Program, Barbara Cherry -- Newsletter, Lucy Thames and Debbie Pelham -- Host, Dave Taylor and Burr -- Acceptable Volunteer Opportunities, and people are needed for an Audit Committee and a Nominations Committee.

(If you were left off of this list, or if you want to volunteer, please email Chris at cherrycw@sbcglobal.net.)

Chris expected to have \$1,800 to \$2,000 at the end of the year.

He wanted to begin an ad hoc committee to consider starting a scholarship from the Master Naturalists. Volunteers for this are Rick Gamen, Cathy Hoak, Annaliese Scoggin, and John Drissel.

On March 23 and 24, Mark Klym will talk about hummingbirds at the Carver Center. There will be advanced training on the Sunday before that, March 21.

Annaliese said that an additional volunteer opportunity is available through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. She said they are trapping and banding doves. There is a photo essay about this activity on the

Sibley website.

Another volunteer opportunity is April 10 at the butterfly garden at Monahans Sandhills State Park. It involves working with children from 9:30-10:30 a.m., and then taking the Monahans people on guided tours. The Chamber of Commerce is feeding everyone. That afternoon a Master Tracker from TPWD will lead training.

After this, Burr introduced Dr. Don McGookey who talked about Llano Estacado geology and also that concerning the Haiti earthquakes.

If other Master Naturalists are interested in submitting an article or photo for publication, please email them (photos as jpegs, please) to cherrytree@sbcglobal.net. Remember, writing may be edited and photos may be cropped. :)

If you haven't read "El Despoblado" for March, then take a look!

Photos by Chris Cherry and Joe Reed accompany several of Burr Williams' articles which include -- among other topics -- *algerita*, *crested caracara eagles*, *claret cup cactus*, *selenia jonesii*, and the pond larvae the Master Naturalists found at the Sibley Center during the February meeting.



Nathan Taylor at the February lesson.

I-20 pond cleanup allows nature to take its course

Trashbags were filled quickly at the I-20 pond cleanup Saturday, March 13. About 25 Master Naturalists volunteered and picked up old tires, wood pieces, and plenty of just plain trash.

Members also chopped trees and trimmed plants to clear the trail.

Debbie Pelham fed the group tailgate sandwiches and shamrock cookies accompanied by a lot of Handi-Wipes. Lots of those ...



Volunteer Nancy Kirk ready to begin work.

Photo by Leslie Harman

Photo by Leslie Harman

Several children helped with the area cleanup.



Using some photography advice that Malcolm McElvaney gave out in the January meeting, Stephen Shaw and Annaliese Scoggin take pictures at the Hoak's ranch. Steve had a gray card to help the camera get color correctly, and he also had a graphed 1" card to help measure the size. They are surrounded by juniper and algerita.

