

LRMN News

Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalist's Newsletter



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



April's Training Classes

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What an awesome time to be a Master Naturalist in Jasper Texas!!

We are having a blast in the Training Classes. By the time you are reading this we will be half way through our class schedule of presenters from near and far.

Two of our chapter's naturalists shared their passions. Claire Boutee shared an interesting presentation on ornithology with an activity for the class which included different scenarios of what a bird might encounter in its lifetime. As birds, several of us met with untimely and not too pleasant deaths. Being a bird is harder than it looks....



Laura Clark gave us a lesson on the Nature of Naming that showed us why the common names for the plants that we know can be confusing and that most of the Latin names for the plants are not hard if you break the name down into familiar syllables.

We also used the binomial classification system to identify a leafy twig that she provided for us.



Matt Buckingham, a biologist and photographer shared his knowledge of the Ecosystems and Ecological Concepts of Texas using his outstanding photography collection. Check out his blog at <https://mattbuckinghamphotography.com/author/mattbuckinghamphotography/>

mattbuckinghamphotography.com/author/mattbuckinghamphotography/



Peter Loos, a botanist from the Nacogdoches area, was here with a presentation on the Native trees, shrubs, wildflowers, etc that he recommends adding to our landscapes to attract wildlife, birds and butterflies. He talks of plants and trees with such familiarity that its like he's discussing his neighbors and distant relatives. He knows the locations of most of the wildflowers scattered across Texas and the best times to visit each of them. His memory is phenomenal.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May —

- 4th—Big Sit—MDJSP Observation Bridge, Daylight(7ish) - Dusk (8ish)
- 7th—LRMN Class meeting 6pm-9pm, Robert Webb - **Entomology**
- 9th—LRMN Board meeting—Agrilife office—10am
- 10th—Invasives Workshop—St. Michaels Church, Jasper, TX—9am - 4pm \$10 fee at the door—Bring a lunch.
- 14th—LRMN Class meeting 6pm-9pm, Robert Webb/Laura Clark-**Citizen Science** / Randall Kroll - **Wetland Ecology**
- 21st—LRMN Class meeting 6pm-9pm, Todd Driscoll - **Ichthyology / Aquatic Systems**
- 25th—Training Class Field Trip #3— **E. O. Siecke State Park Field Trip**—details pending
- 28th—LRMN Class meeting 6pm-9pm, Sylvia Holmes - **TX Water Resources** / S. Lamoreaux - **Volunteers as Teachers**

June —

- 4th—LRMN Class meeting 6pm-9pm, Ranger Amy Kocurek—**Herpetology** / Ranger Chuck Hubbard—**Mammalogy**
- 6th—LRMN Board meeting—Agrilife office—10am
- 8th—Training Class Field Trip #4— **Fish Hatchery**
- 11th—LRMN Class meeting 6pm-9pm, Amanda Haralson—**Land Stewardship** / Neal Kocurek—**Laws, Regs, Ethics**
- 18th—LRMN Class Graduation



Head Start—Contact Claire Boutte - fdclaire@gmail.com
 Martin Dies Jr. State Park - Contact Ranger Amy at amy.kocurek@tpwd.texas.gov
 MDJSP Spring service projects—Contact Lori Horne—lori.horne1965@gmail.com



FREQUENTLY USED WEB SITES

- Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists web site..... <https://txmn.org/llr/>
- Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists FaceBook....<https://www.facebook.com/LongleafRidgeMasterNaturalists/>
- Martin Dies Jr. State Park events.....https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/martin-dies-jr/park_events
- Watson Preserve.....http://watsonpreserve.ning.com/?xg_source=msg_mes_network
- Big Thicket National Preserve.....<https://www.nps.gov/bith/index.htm>

Send your favorites to me at sherlmx@gmail.com

April's Training Classes continued:



We learned the steps included in a historical discovery and what can still be found from different cultural periods and in the different regions of Texas from Dr. George Avery, an anthropologist and archeologist that works in our area. He also shared the laws that exist for protecting historical findings and how Sanborn maps are used to help with plans of progress.

Gerald Langham, a Master Naturalist from the Sabine Neches Chapter of Orange, Texas attended to present a program on the Historical Master Naturalists. Gerald concentrated most of his discussion on Lance Rosier, "Mr. Big Thicket", a native of the area who became a big part of helping the Big Thicket become a national preserve.



Always fun to be around, Roger Erickson, Warning Coordinator Meteorologist for the National Weather Service out of Lake Charles, LA spoke on weather and climate conditions, how the types of clouds can forecast coming weather conditions, how to tell how far storm is from your location by counting, etc. See his predictions at <https://www.weather.gov/lch/>

Shawn Benedict is manager to over 5000 acres of the Big Thicket, including the Roy E. Larsen Sandyland Sanctuary near Silsbee, TX. He presented a slide show providing information on how they are trying to bring back the long leaf pine to those areas. Managing the underbrush with chemicals and prescribed burns, but still dedicated to providing cover and habitat for small woodland creatures.



Thanks to all of our speakers, those done and those to come. What an asset you are to our organization. Thanks to our members who are coming out to participate and encourage our students. And thanks to our students and your faithfulness to this class schedule. Your dedication will pay off in the long run. You'll see.

Lori Horne and Laura Clark planted four native Purple Muhly grasses and five Giant Rudbeckias to give the Hen House Ridge entrance at Martin Dies Jr. State Park a needed face lift.



On April 6th, with weather reports not too positive, several of our members and training class with Keith Stephens and Laura Clark in the lead, headed out on a field trip to Five Mile Prairie and were successful in their search for the

elusive *Schoenolirion wrightii*. Commonly known as Texas Sunnybells or Wright's Lily, it's found only in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas. Its habitat is disappearing, and it is listed as globally vulnerable, so finding it was quite exciting.

Several other species of flora were enjoyed as well, but the day was turning more threatening and the group had to circle back to the vehicles for cover. A visit to Black Branch Barrens was also planned for the day but will have to be rescheduled. A detailed report of the day from Laura Clark can be found on our website, <https://txmn.org/llr/>.



Schoenolirion wrightii

FRIENDS of the PARK

Ten Friends of the Park members met on April 18th with Ranger Chuck Hubbard. A financial report from treasurer Hugh Pickle states that the firewood sales are doing well, comparable to this time last year.

Discussions:

- ◆ There has been a turn-over of several employees lately with some positions yet to be filled.
- ◆ The Rangers have received money from the State to improve the trails by removing some of the wooden foot bridges this summer and replace them with culverts thus allowing their grounds equipment further access into the woods.
- ◆ Ranger Amy Kocurek is in need of a new spotting scope and stand for her hikes during Eagle nesting season and for star gazing night hikes. The members voted to fund her \$1200 for this purchase.
- ◆ According to Floyd Boyett of the Corps of Engineers, the water level at Dam B will be lowered from 84 feet to 72 feet by early July, 2019. This will be done to help with an inspection of several sites on the dam and will last approximately 3 months.
- ◆ Lori Horne and Laura Clark will be creating a website for the Friends of the Park. Details pending as they develop.



Ranger Amy of MDJSP has some new volunteers in her new puppet show presentations. Our members, Brenda Marshall, Claire Boutee, Janette Johnson, and Georgia Purdy are having lots of fun finding the voices of their characters while teaching students about animal habitat, etc.



“In the end we conserve only what we love. We love only what we understand. We understand only what we are taught. “

- Baba Dioum Dioum

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