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Farmer's Market Booth

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Newsletter

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November's Chapter Meeting

Our November meeting was a doozy. We started things off with the elections of our officers for 2020. Nominations were: Sharon Lamoreaux for a second term as president, Richard Peters for Vice-President, Brenda Marshall for Secretary and Joanie Kochanek for a 7th term as Treasurer. Robert Webb made a motion that all be accepted in one vote. The officers were voted in unanimously. As president for another term, I appreciate your confidence in me and this team and I know that with your input and support we will have a great year, as always.



Longleaf Ridge
Chapter

Texas Master Naturalists

JASPER, TEXAS

Our chapter heads reached out to our group for submissions for a LRMN logo design that can be used as a patch, letterhead, t-shirt emblem, etc to represent us as Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists. Brenda Marshall came up with the winning design. The next step is to get it to a company that can use it to create what we want.

And the winners are... (drum roll please)

This group is the 2019 winners of our LRMN Trash-off contest. Accumulating a whopping total of 25 trash bags, these brave souls collected a multitude of worm boxes, drink cans, plastic bags, etc from the steep slopes below the Sam Rayburn Dam that are a favorite location for local fishermen.

Congratulations Team!!



More November's Chapter Meeting events on page 3

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 2019

- 5th— LRMN Board meeting—Agrilife office—10am
- 5th— Jasper Christmas parade at 5:30pm then MDJSP party 7:30 @ the Belle-Jim
- 10th—Foot bridge removal at MDJSP, 9am—noon
- 10th—LRMN Christmas party, 6pm MDJSP Dining hall, bring and dish and a gift to exchange
- 14th— Project Wild & Aquatic Wild Certifications course at MDJSP, check with Ranger Amy for more info
- 22nd— Re-Certification hours are due to Laura Clark for the 2019 year (to be reviewed and submitted before the 31st)

January 2020

- 9th—LRMN Board meeting—Agrilife office—10am
- 14th—LRMN Chapter meeting 6pm , MDJSP Dining Hall, Joanie Kochanek—Pollinators/2020 Round table
- 18th— Guided Canoe Trip to Eagle nesting site—MDJSP, 9:30am- noon
- 18th— Guided Eagle Hike—MDJSP, 2-3pm



“There is something incredibly honest about trees in winter, how they’re experts in letting things go.”

Jeffery McDaniel



- Head Start—Contact Claire Boutte - fdclaire@gmail.com
- Martin Dies Jr. State Park - Contact Ranger Amy at amy.kocurek@tpwd.texas.gov
- MDJSP service projects - Contact Lori Horne at lori.horne1965@gmail.com
- Farmer’s Market Booth - Contact Richard Peters at bethshebaherps@yahoo.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

November's Chapter Meeting continued

Ranger Amy Kocurek came bringing tubs, tubs and more tubs full of goodies from the Martin Dies Jr. State Park Nature Center that she uses as activities for the park's visitors.

Critters from the puppet show were presented by Georgia Purdy, Janette Johnson told us all about how to teach a class fish printing, Yvonne Goss shared tips on how to lead nature hikes of all different flavors, and Fred Lyons told about teaching kiddos how to identify the microscopic organisms that can be found by lake dipping. These and many other activities were shared by Amy to introduce us to what she does and has on hand for us to use when we come to volunteer at the Nature Center. Even Big Foot showed up!!!

Ranger Amy is expecting her 2nd child which should be delivered around mid March which is a busy time for the park. She will need all hands on deck to help for Spring break. It's not too early to sign up. Contact her at

amy.kocurek@tpwd.texas.gov



Creating a longleaf pine forest



Historically, longleaf pine communities dominated the southern and central areas of Angelina National Forest on the hilly and droughty sandy soils. In the 1900s, excessive harvest of the overstory led to a decline in the longleaf pine presence and increasing the loblolly

pine representatives across the forestland. The goal of the Angelina and Sabine National Forests is to restore the longleaf pine ecosystem through loblolly pine plantation conversion to longleaf pine.

On November 16th, 10 of our members volunteered to help with these efforts. After proper instruction on utilizing the dibble, a metal bar to poke a hole which received the seedling, they teamed up. One person stepped off the designated spacing, then plunged the hole, after which the partner dropped the seedling in and pressed it into the ground snugly. They worked a 64 acre tract in Angelina County that had been mechanically prepped last summer for the restoration efforts.

Volunteers included Brenda and Lanny Marshall, Claire and Doug Boutte, Phillip Hight, Sue Singletary, Fred Lyons, Lori Horne, Keith Stephens and Laura Clark.



-article excerpt from LRMN website



Holiday Outreach

November 16th was a busy day in Jasper, as well. Richard Peters and Janette Johnson set up the LRMN Outreach booth at the Farmer's Holiday Market. Among the many vendors selling jams, jellies, hand-made items, etc. the booth visitors were offered information about our organization and the surrounding area. Children were treated to an opportunity to create a bird feeder with pinecones, peanut butter and seeds. Be a part of this by contacting Richard Peters.

bethshebaherps@yahoo.com



Hair, Fur and Feathers



Sandy Creek heads up several miles south of Highway 255, and flows east of and parallel to Highway 96, heading towards the City of Jasper. From the point where it reaches the urban area of Highway 776, close to the Sheriff's office, all the way to where it eventually discharges into Steinhagen Lake, aka Dam B, the water is classified as impaired due to elevated levels of E. coli bacteria. This bacteria is found in the fecal matter of humans and other animals – basically, anything with hair, fur or feathers.

The federal EPA has rules that require these elevated levels of bacteria be addressed, and they delegate their authority to oversee that matter to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Texas' favorite method of achieving compliance with federal government standards is through public participation, so they were in Jasper on November 21 to seek out stakeholders in the area and gather their thoughts and opinions about the best management strategies to bring those bacteria levels down.

The levels are not extremely high, but they are high enough to affect “contact recreation” - activities such as wading, swimming or paddling or anything that increases the risk of water ingestion that could lead to contracting a gastrointestinal illness. The standard we need to reach for safety is 126 colony forming units per 100 mL of water, and the current average is 173.

The Longleaf Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists was represented at the meeting, and is now actively participating as a stakeholder to help decide a plan of action. As the process proceeds and projects are identified, we will have the opportunity to volunteer. These projects could involve helping to diagnose the problems and implementing solutions such as reintroducing native species, eliminating invasive species, removing trash from the area, water quality testing, and working with landowners and the public to educate them. Depending on the plan that is developed, we may also open the door for federal grant money for larger projects to address flooding and build wildlife habitat.

Several City representatives and landowners attended the meeting and will be participating, but much more involvement will be needed. Representatives of local government, permitted facilities, agriculture, business, environmental, and private citizens – anyone with an interest in the health and viability of Sandy Creek is welcome and encouraged to participate.

Connect with Laura Clark to get involved. lauralucillemorgan@yahoo.com

-Article submitted by Laura Clark

Make Texas Bear Friendly!



Jerry Clark at the Black Bear Alliance information booth

Are you ready for black bears to be in Texas? Well, you'd better be. We learned that the populations in Arkansas and Oklahoma that were brought in from Minnesota years ago have been expanding so much that they have open hunting seasons in both states already. As their numbers increase, it's inevitable that they will spill over into Northeast Texas. Parks and Wildlife speakers estimated that within a decade, we will have a breeding population in that part of the State, and from there, based on sightings in recent years, it seems that they like to travel beside rivers in search of food and mates. Longleaf Ridge is bordered by the Neches and Sabine Rivers, so lookout.

If you see bears, it's important to report the sighting. A picture, of course is best, to verify what you saw. In East Texas, call Parks and Wildlife at (903) 566-1626. And of course, don't shoot them! Bears are still protected in Texas. We learned at the Infobooth display that the chances of being killed by a domestic dog, bees or struck by lightning are significantly greater than being attacked by a black bear. If you do see one – talk to the bear, make yourself look as big as possible. Don't run away! They can travel at 35 mph. Don't climb trees – they can climb much better than you. If you are attacked, fight back. They're more likely to leave if they encounter resistance. Carry pepper spray as a deterrent if you're worried walking in the woods. But learn not to be afraid – this will help make Texas bear friendly, too!

If you own larger tracts of acreage, you might want to check out conservation easements. There are tax advantages to doing so, and these easements provide a permanent guarantee that future development cannot occur on the land, so that it will be a wildlife sanctuary and corridor. The Nature Conservancy and several other organizations can provide you with details on conservation easements. They are helping to make Texas more bear friendly, too.

Richard Peters worked the registration at this year's very well attended Texas Black Bear Alliance Annual Meeting held at SFA Campus in Nacogdoches, and Jerry and Laura Clark attended. President Adrian Van Dellen hosted the event.

-Article submitted by Laura Clark

The Search for Mushrooms at Watson Preserve

- an article by Heather Goodman

It was a beautiful blue sky and cool weather for our mushroom walk in Watson Preserve in Warren. David Lewis and his wife Patricia showed us some great specimens of mushrooms. David is the president of Gulf States Mycological society. He has discovered many new specimens of mushrooms in which three are named for him. He showed us ones we could eat and ones that were highly toxic. He showed us fungi balls that have orange slime in them.



We got to meet several ladies from our sister chapter in Livingston. And who can go to Watson Preserve without looking around at all the different specimens it has to offer. Laura and I saw a strawberry bush (*Euonymus americanus*), plenty of pitcher plants, Ladies Tresses (*Spiranthes cernua*), and Barrens Silky Aster (*Symphyotrichum pratense*). The crowning jewel for me was getting to see the Indian pipe (*Monotropa uniflora*). Laura and I had looked for them before but couldn't find them, this time was a success though. I highly recommended going on one of these walks.

