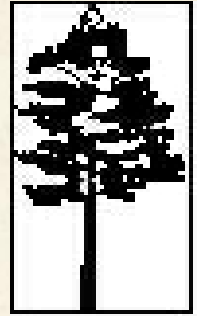


Lost Pines Master Naturalist



Volume II, Issue 5

May 2011



A Return to the Wild By LPMN member Susan Smith

By the time the spring sun raises its head to promise yet another bright, sun-lit day, I have already put out trays of salad, fruit and nuts for the ten Eastern fox squirrels (*Sciurus niger*) released on our property two weeks ago. The squirrels were given a soft release, meaning that shelter and food have been provided to support a successful return to the wild.

This group of fox squirrels, orphaned from different litters, is three months old. They learned to crack their own pecans – a prerequisite to release – and have now begun their mastery of aerial feats, springing from branch to trunk and back again on our oak and juniper trees. The squirrels scamper

and play and argue with one another, nap often, and eat heartedly.

The year 2011 marks the sixth year we have participated in a program in which wildlife rehabbers use our land as a release site. Through the years, orphaned and rehabilitated squirrels, opossums, raccoons, and cottontail rabbits have been returned to their natural home. To ensure their transition, most of the released animals were provided daily with fresh water and food until they learned the lay of the land. Once that happened, they dispersed. “A critical component to the release of ado-

lescent young is upon land that provides water, food, shelter and safety. These necessary components create successful releases.”

At release, orphaned mammals are typically two to three months of age – mere adolescents - and they must make their way in a world without the sage examples of their experienced mothers. Their lives are fraught with dangers: cats, dogs, roads, humans with rifles, traps and poisons, as well as nocturnal birds of prey, like owls, and of course, drought. Streams dry up and very little thrives out in the woods.

Where do these young animals come from? Mine have come mostly from Austin Wildlife Rescue Intake Center of Austin. Austin Wildlife Rescue is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. The Center’s mission is rescue, rehabilitate and release. Since 1977, the Austin center has been run by a network of volunteers who unstintingly give of their time and money to encourage survival of indigenous wildlife. Animals brought to the Center have often been injured or raised as pets. Mothers have been killed leaving young that would otherwise starve. The intake of these animals number in the thousands each year. The peak seasons are April – September. Depending upon the birthing schedule of different species, small mammals make up the largest numbers. Typically, three hundred babies, of one species or another, must be fed each morning at the Austin center. One hundred of those babies will often be squirrels and 50 can easily be opossums.



With the advent of spring, the first to arrive at the center are squirrels and opossums. By March it’s raccoons and rabbits, by April, it’s baby birds – from tiny wrens to great horned owlets. April is the month in which migratory

birds arrive as well. May brings skunk kittens, fawns and an occasional bobcat kitten.

My personal interest in the welfare and release of indigenous animals began fifteen years ago. At different times, I came across a grandfather red-eared slider turtle, a Muscovy duck and a pigeon, all hit by passing cars. Their immediate injuries brought me into contact with local

wildlife rehabbers, one of whom became my mentor.

At the time I taught high school in the Clear Lake area, south of Houston, so the natural progression was an invitation to rehabbers to bring their charges to either my classroom or to an assembly before the entire school. Rehabbers brought great horned owls, red-tailed hawks, barn owls, crested caracaras, opossums, and more. The more included 20-pound Freddie, absolutely un-releasable due to the fact that Freddie was a nutria rat (*Myocastor coypus*), an invasive. This being my students’ first exposure to anything wild, their delight was real as Freddie captivated his audience while scampering about their feet, begging for attention.

My students, likewise, pitied the great horned owl and the other birds of prey that were irrevocably damaged from gunshot



Myth #3. Every raccoon has rabies. *Not true.* In the Austin area, rabies has not been prevalent among raccoons for the past 15 years. In fact, raccoons released by the Austin Center have first been de-wormed and inoculated against rabies, distemper and parvo.

Myth #4. A little known fact about opossums is that even though they too are mammals, they cannot contract or spread the rabies virus.

wounds or collisions with cars. Along with the instruction came advice. Injured or orphaned animals should not be fed or given anything to drink, like cow's milk. The one exception to that rule is water. Such animals needed to be secured in a quiet, private place, preferably in a box with towels for warmth until a local, wildlife center could be reached.

During the talk, Rehabbers dispelled myths about wild animals: #1. If you touch a baby bird, the mother will abandon her nest. *Not true.* Song birds have a poor sense of smell. If mother is alive, she will never abandon her young. A strong wind will sometimes throw a nest to the ground. In that case, a Cool Whip box works well. To make one, punch holes in the bottom if there is any chance of rain. Put the box (with nest and babies) in the fork of the tree or somewhere close. Mother bird will find them.

Myth #2. Deer are neglectful mothers. They abandon their young. *Not true.* A doe will leave her fawn in high grass with instructions not to move while she searches for food all day. She then returns at dusk to feed and guard her fawn.

The reason is that their body temperature is too low at 93 degrees.

All-in-all, wildlife rehabbers created a bridge for questions and answers about wildlife. I had long suspected that exposure and education amongst the young, young children, that is, fostered a lasting respect for animals and their ways.

Most people think that organizations like wildlife rehabilitation groups are funded by the State of Texas. Another myth that is not true. Funds come from the public. Dedicated facilities, like Austin Wildlife Rescue, are always in need of funds. Money buys food, medicine, towels, and blankets. The complete list of needs can be found on their web site. Donations are always welcomed at Austin Wildlife Rescue.

For further information, visit www.austinwildliferescue.org Volunteers at the Austin Wildlife Rescue Intake Center also maintain a Hotline at (512) 472-9453. The Center is currently located at 5401 E. Martin Luther King at Blair Woods Preserve in Austin. At this time, the Center is searching for land outside of Austin to create a rehabilitation center.

A Walk on the Dry Side

By LPMN member Liz Pullman

Images by LPMN member Andy Butler



The Biocensus Hike of 4/29/11 at McKinney Roughs included Kathy McAleese, Andy Butler, Al and Patty Hoerig, Gene Moulden.

We six headed down Riverside Trail from the headquarters building about 9 am. Looking up - a perfect morning - cool, sunny, birds flitting through green leafy trees and a welcome by a Painted Bunting. Looking down toward out feet - not so perfect. The extended drought had impacted the emergence of the abundant annual and perennial wildflowers that normally carpeted both sides of the trail. In desperation we would have loved to see a few DYCs but we saw the remnants of the 2010 plants, some still standing tall and dead with very little green showing anywhere. Plants with blossoms were rare. The desiccated Prickly Pears (*Opuntia* sp.) had a few yellow/orange flowers and two species of Primrose (*Calylopus berlandieri* and *Oenothera laciniata*) offered an occasional spot of yellow. I noticed a few struggling legumes hiding under all the brown. With only a bit of foliage visible I was only able to make a wild guess at species. We did see some Red.! Several Cardinals and a Summer Tanager were flying around in the trees. A very welcome sight alongside the trail was a small tree with trailing branches covered in yellow flowers in riotous bloom - a Paloverde (*Parkinsonia aculeata*)!!!

Just before the trail took a plunge down a steep slope someone spotted a fresh looking green shrub loaded with dark purple berries (and lots of wicked thorns) which seemed unfazed by the lack of rain. We ID'ed it as a Lotebush (*Ziziphus obtusifolia*), tentatively tasted the berries for edibility but soon discarded the idea of a snack.

The low-lying Cypress Trail near the river was indeed fresher and greener and yielded some past-bloom Rough-leaf Dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*) and Rusty Blackhaw (*Vibur-*

num rufidulum), some pre-bloom Black Snakeroot (*Sanicula canadensis*) and Round-leaf Greenbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*) plus an actually blooming Pigeonberry (*Rivina humulis*). This is the general area where we also found the Six-spotted Tiger Beetle (*Cicindela sexguttata*) (left image) on which Andy counted the spots and found eight! Of interest is the fact that the Lost Pines area is the westernmost habitat for this beetle. Kathy spotted a fuzzy Yellow Bear (*Spilosoma virginica*) and very shortly afterwards stopped to examine what seemed to be a white egg-case. The "egg case" flew away when she disturbed it and we saw a white moth (image below) which is probably the Virginian Tiger Moth - the adult phase of the Yellow Bear.

Upon our arrival at a combination horse and hiker rest area plus a picnic table and with an unobstructed view of the Colorado River, we decided it was a good time to take a break and rack up a few birds. There were White-eyed Vireos, Red-eyed Vireos, Acadian Flycatchers and (Wow!) a Rose-breasted Grosbeak (although since the the Grosbeak was in immature plumage we had to wait until we



checked it out in Sibley up at the headquarters bookshop because we needed to be sure it was not a Black-headed Grosbeak). Not only did this rest area yield good birds, but we found various flies, damsel flies, butterflies (one of them a Northern Oak Hairstreak [*Satyrrium favonius*]) and I should not forget to mention a big turtle sunning on a log across the river during the entire time we were there.

After checking the time we agreed to head out. Up we went along the dry and dusty trails which reminded us of walking on a beach and rivaled the very accurately named Deep Sandy Trail in another part of McKinney Roughs. Along the Bobcat Ridge Trail we realized we had climbed back into extreme drought. As I write this on May 1, the weather forecast is for a "good" chance of rain this weekend and Monday. Question: will the dormant wildflowers spring forth?

Mississippi Kites

By LPMN member Sue Arcy

For the last several summers, I have enjoyed watching a flock of Mississippi kites frequent my area. Last spring I was excited to observe a pair build a nest in a large pine tree right next to my house in Pine Forest subdivision in Bastrop. I was able to watch them from start of construction through sitting on eggs to feeding new hatchlings. Unfortunately, they have built their nest in the top of a very tall pine tree and I was not able to directly observe the eggs or the hatchlings. I have read they lay between two and three eggs per nest. And I was not able to be around for the fledging, although I did observe the parents apparently feeding the new babies.



I am happy to report the pair have returned this spring and are currently in the process of refurbishing their nest in preparation for, I hope, another successful nesting. I can only assume it is the same pair as they have returned to the same nest and are merely adding new material to it.

I have also been fortunate this spring to observe a pair of roadrunners frequenting my yard along with a brief visit from an indigo bunting a few days ago. Plus, I was delighted to observe a red shouldered hawk, if my identification is correct, taking a bath in my backyard water tub. All in all, this has been a very good spring for bird watching from my kitchen window. Now, if we could just get some rain!!!

May Match & Quiz

By LPMN member Carol Reidy

Match – Ups

A smack of	tadpoles
A parliament of	lizards
A lounge of	zebra
A crossing of	wallabees
A mob of	jellyfish
A cloud of	owls

Answers: A smack of jellyfish, a parliament of owls, a lounge of lizards, a crossing of zebras, a mob of wallabees, a cloud of tadpoles

Quiz

What do Rosebud, Blossom, Cactus, Cottonwood, Cypress and Live Oak have in common?

Answer: They are all Texas cities.

A Cloud of Tadpoles

by Jim Arnosky

Thousands of tadpoles, tiny black specks,
Scattering as you approach.
A cloud of tadpoles in the shallows.



Participants in April 30 Advanced Training at the Cedar Creek Bamboo Farm. Thanks Minoo!

Eve's Necklace

By LPMN member Louise Ridlon

A pink blossom caught my eye as I returned from an early spring walk. The lacy green tree was growing in a dry wash in the back of our property. Closer inspection revealed hanging series of pea-like blossoms, similar to wisteria. Eve's necklace is a small tree which grows in full sun (to 18 feet) or as a smaller under story tree. It gets its name from the seed pods, which look like strings of black pearls. We usually associate Eve's name with apples, and I doubt that she ever wore a necklace, at least not until after the apple incident; but the chain of pearls, like the fruit in the Garden of Eden, can be harmful to humans.



Clarence A. Rechenthin @ USDA-NRCS PLANTS Database

A legume, Eve's necklace is an attractive tree with a spreading form, two-toned compound leaves, and reddish-brown bark. Originally named *Sophora affinis*, the name has been changed to *Styphnolobium affine*, due to its lack of nitrogen-fixing bacteria on the roots. Also known as Texas Sophora, Pink Sophora, or Necklace Tree, it grows readily in well-drained soils and is drought-tolerant. It is closely related to Texas Mountain Laurel (*Sophora secundiflora*), both having toxic seeds that germinate more easily after being scratched or scarified. Small mammals eat the seeds, and deer browse the foliage. The flowers attract bees and other pollinators.

Eve's necklace is dainty, graceful, and makes a lovely ornamental. Look for it on hill-sides, along streams, or scattered through mixed woods. But don't be tempted to taste the fruit!



http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Picnic_in_Columbus.jpg

Annual Picnic

The chapter annual picnic and monthly meeting will be **June 18** from 1 pm until everyone leaves. We will meet at the McMahan Community Center located in McMahan Community on farm road 713 just East of the intersection with highway 86. The building will be opened at noon. See Hospitality Committee for details.

Reading List

List excerpted from an article written by Henry Chappell, in the November 2010 issue of Texas Wildlife, a publication of the Texas Wildlife Association, Pgs. 46-50.

Goodbye to a River by John Graves

Adventures with a Texas Naturalist by Roy Bedichek

The Great Plains by Walter Prescott Webb

Land of Bears and Honey: a Natural History of Eat Texas by Joe C. Truett and Daniel W. Lay

The Indians of Texas by W.W. Newcomb, Jr.

Prairie Time: A Blackland Portrait by Matt White

Trees of Texas: An Easy Guide to Leaf Identification by Carmine Stahl and Ria McElvaney

Texas Land Ethics by Pete A.Y. Gunter and Max Oelschlaeger

The Sportsman's Guide to Texas by Dick Bartlett and Joanne Krieger, edited by David Baxter

Big Thicket Legacy by Campbell and Lynn Loughmiller

Volunteer Opportunities

New Volunteer Activities

Interpretive Hikes. Bastrop State Park. Saturdays, starting Feb. 26 through June. The spring 2011 series of Saturday morning interpretive hikes has been led by our chapter since 2000 and TPWD depends on us to do this. The hike starts at 10 am, is about 1 mile long (a loop) and takes about an hour. Please contact Sue Fischer at smfischer@mdanderson.org.

Alum Creek Interpretive Hikes. Bastrop State Park. 2 pm Saturday, May 21. 2.6 mile hike that includes great dogwood groves and lots of wildflowers. Contact Andy Butler at : abutler@mac.com.

Ongoing Volunteer Activities

Project Bud Burst. Monitor the budding and blooming of a variety of plants. This is a great citizen scientist project! <http://neoninc.org/budburst/index.php>

The Great Sunflower Project. Plant a few seeds of select flowers and then count the number of bees that visit one flower over a 15 minute period twice a month. Helps to monitor wild bee populations. <http://www.greatsunflower.org/>

Nest Watch. Report on egg number, babies and fledglings in an active bird nest near you. Data is used to estimate breeding success rates and other

things - run by scientists at Cornell Lab of Ornithology. <http://watch.birds.cornell.edu/nest/home/index>

Outreach Booth Volunteer. Motivated individuals have a wonderful opportunity to meet people, discuss the Master Naturalist program, and the personal satisfaction gained by being a member. Explain the many and varied volunteer projects and the ways they support conservation, education, and recreation in our communities. Demonstrate the chapter's rainfall absorption simulator and discuss the importance of proper land cover in water conservation. Discuss the CoCoRaHS program and its benefits to science, the public, and to the individual volunteer. No previous experience is necessary. Training is available. For more information and to volunteer contact Jim Estes at jestes@ionet.net

Spring Beauty and the Bees. Volunteer request to help in a pollinator monitoring program. Duties are to observe local pollinators of spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica* and *Claytonia caroliniana*) - which is found in our area as one of our spring wildflowers. The goal is to document changing pollinator populations to determine how pollinator communities change depending on the year, the location, and the season. Only 2 hours of observations over the course of three weeks are required. For more information, go to: <http://springbeauties.wordpress.com/>.

Journey North is requesting sightings of Monarch butterflies and milkweed! For more info, go to <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch/index.html>

Chimney Swift Sightings. As in past years we will be plotting the swifts' movements northward over the next few months. Please contact the folks at the following site when you see the first ones! <http://www.concentric.net/>

Native Plant Garden - Kerr Community Center, Bastrop. There is a small native garden which has a sign depicting the species planted there. Most of the plants have died or are in poor condition. Upon speaking to Linda Greene who lives across the street and is keeper of the keys, I learned that they would be happy to have Master Naturalist volunteers come and plant some new natives there. Maybe a butterfly garden.? They have quite a bit of land in that neighborhood so we might be able to do more planting on the property. Please let me know if you are interested in pursuing this project. Carol Reidy reidycarol@yahoo.com

McKinney Roughs Nature Survey - Kathy McAleese is coordinating a long-term project to survey trails through the burned-out areas of McKinney Roughs. Plans call for at least two surveys per month, one during the week and one on a weekend. Actual days and times will vary based on the weather and Kathy's schedule. Please contact her at (512) 718-1313 or kmcaleese@austin.rr.com if you are interested in leading or participating in either weekday or weekend surveys, or both.

Hornsby Bend - Ecological Literacy Days - Last Saturday of every month, 9 am - 1 pm. Combining volunteer work with learning about local ecology, the Ecological Literacy Day at Hornsby Bend begins with several hours of outdoor work - ranging from trail maintenance to habitat restoration to work in the native plant nursery - and ends with at least an hour of learning about local ecology - birds, bugs and more! Wear boots and work clothing and bring your binoculars. For more information, contact Kevin Anderson at coordinator@hornsbybend.org or 512-972-1960.

Hornsby Bend - Monthly Bird Survey - Second Saturday of each month. Meet at the Center for Environmental Research at 7 am for the morning survey (coffee and donuts at 6:30 am) and 4 pm for the afternoon survey. All levels of birders are welcome - the survey is a great way to improve your skills since we form teams matching experienced and novice birders. For more information, contact Eric Carpenter at ecarpe@gmail.com.

Advanced Training

Caterpillar of Eastern North America. May 23, 7 pm. Zilcher Botanical Center. Austin. David Wagner, Ph.D is speaking about his book. Entrance is \$5. Monthly meeting of the Austin Butterfly Forums.
<http://www.austinbutterflies.org/>

Pipevines and the Butterflies that Love them. June 27, 7 pm. Zilcher Botanical Center. Austin. Dan Hardy is presenting on the fascinating ecological relationship between this group of butterflies and the unusual plants they use as caterpillar food plants will be explored. Monthly meeting of the Austin Butterfly Forums.
<http://www.austinbutterflies.org/>

Luling Foundation's 84th Annual Field Day – May 19. 7:30 am to 3 pm. Luling Foundation Farm, Luling. For more info call 830-875-2138, lulingfoundation@sbcglobal.net, www.lulingfoundation.org. No fee. Topics include Gardening for Groceries, Agriculture Industry Dynamics, Brush Control, The Weather, Economic Impact of the Oil & Gas Industry, Land Fragmentation & Conservation Easements.

Capital Area Landowner Stewardship Series – Water Management . May 26, 10 am to 2 pm. Hornsby Bend Wastewater Facility. Registration is \$25. RSVP by calling 512-854-9610 or email SACarrasco@ag.tamu.edu. Topics include Rainwater Harvesting, and Basic Look at Pond Construction and Management.

Capital Area Landowner Stewardship Series – Wildlife Management. June 9, 10 am - 2 pm. Hornsby Bend

Wastewater Facility, 2210 S. FM 973. Registration is \$25. RSVP by calling 512-854-9610 or email SACarrasco@ag.tamu.edu. Topics include Establishing Wildlife Habitat and Predator Control, and Benefits to Wildlife Tax Valuation.

East Texas Plant Materials Center Field Day and Luncheon. May 24, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm. Nacogdoches, Texas at the SFA Experimental Forest. Events at the Field Day will include tours of the Plant Materials Center's evaluation and seed production fields and facilities, along with information sessions about plant and seed collecting, wildlife, and pollinators. Please register for the Field Day before May 10th by contacting Nancy Posvar at 254-742-9880 or Nancy.Posvar@tx.usda.gov

Nature Nights - Butterflies and Moths. May 20, 6-9 pm. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Visit discovery tables to learn how butterflies and moths behave and what they eat, create your very own butterfly mask and enjoy walks and talks in the Center's Butterfly garden led by Staff Gardener Samantha Elinton and volunteer experts on these winged insects. \$1 entrance fee.
<http://wildflower.org/nature/>

Nature Nights - Bees. June 30, 6-9 pm. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Come watch bees through a transparent hive; hear the Bee Lady, Kim Lehman, tell stories about tiny treasures; meet local beekeepers with the Williamson County Area Beekeepers Association; make beeswax candles and taste wildflower honey and other fun. Entrance for summer programs is FREE.
<http://wildflower.org/nature/>

Bamberger Ranch Tours and Workshops - Public Tour - June 15 and September 17, 9 - 12:30. This fills up fast, register now. additional information for all programs at the ranch can be found at <http://www.bambergerranch.org/tours/#tour>

Water Workshop. May 22. Visit lakes and dams and learn about their design and function, and how they were constructed. Identify soils, and learn their potential use in dam and pond construction, and also how to identify sites on your land that can hold water when ponds are properly constructed. Inexpensive projects, some that you can do yourself, to help you develop hidden water resources. Cost - \$100 per person.
<http://www.bambergerranch.org/tours/#water>

Wildlife for Lunch webinars provide sound, science-based wildlife management options delivered by experts to you in the comfort of your own home or office. It's Easy! All you need is a modern computer with a quality Internet connection and a bag lunch. Just point your browser to <http://forestrywebinars.net>, click on the "Wildlife for Lunch" link in the "Upcoming Webinars" section, and follow the instructions.

Dates (all times are 11 am to Noon Central Time)

May 19 – Dove Management, Dale Rollins.

June 15 - Forestry in the 2008 Farm Bill.

July 20 - Carbon impact of forest products.

The other topics and dates are listed on the website listed above.

Just For Fun

The next two items are all at a plant nursery in Austin - It's About Thyme Garden Center. <http://www.itsaboutthyme.com/>

'How to Incorporate Edible Plants into your Landscape' May 15, 2 pm. by master gardener Amanda Moon. Learn about fruit trees, pecans, dewberries, rabbiteye blueberries, fruiting peppers and bright lights chard... and lots more. **FREE!**

'Rainwater Harvesting 101,' May 22, 2 pm. Presented by Scott Stewart (Horizon Distributors). Easy techniques for collecting and storing rainwater. Learn how to save money on water bills, how to apply to the City of Austin for a rain barrel rebate, and learn how this fresh water will make your plants flourish like never before! **FREE!**

www.horizononline.com

Stargazing at the Roughs. May 27, 9:30 - 11:00 pm. Fourth Friday of the month through August. Explore the galaxy together as our astronomer takes you on a tour of the Milky Way that's truly out of this world! Learn about the constellations and marvel at the beauty and mystery of the universe in this spectacular **free** program for the whole family. Program will be canceled in the event of inclement weather.

http://www.lcra.org/parks/parks_calendar.html

Inside Austin Gardens Tour. May 14, Austin. This will include gardens that feature rain-water collection systems, drip irrigation, xeric and native plant selections, rain gardens, shade gardens, and water-conserving practices. Each garden will feature educational sessions throughout the day. Cost is \$10 for the entire tour or \$5 for an individual garden.

<http://www.tcmastergardeners.org/what/gardentour.html>

Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.

~Rachel Carlson



Image Andy Butler

Eat Your Bugs!

<http://www.backyardfoodproduction.com/>
If you're interested in eating a few bugs for dinner - this is the event for you. May 15, 5 - 7:30 pm. Red Rock. Pre-registration required.



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bumble_bee

Texas Bumble Bees

Bee decline affects more than just European honey bees. The Honey Bees of Texas are also greatly impacted - yet little data exists on their current population status. If interested in helping, go to: <http://texasbumblebees.com/>. They are looking for folks to record sightings and take pictures. There's even a Facebook page where you can stay up to date on the effort.



President's Column

By Louise Ridlon

May is a month of transition. Schools are winding down the academic year. Folks are looking ahead to summer and its opportunities. Spring wildflowers are going to seed in anticipation of eventual rainfall. Other plants are setting fruit that will lead to propagation of the species as well as sustenance for people and critters alike. Wildlife species are raising and fledging young. And our 2011 Training interns will be wrapping up their classes. The relaxing of schedules and opportunities for recreation are accompanied by a collective sigh of relief.

As our trainees finish their classes, I want to encourage each one to consider volunteer projects that interest them, target areas for further study, and select an LPMN chapter committee on which to serve. Having their fresh ideas, enthusiasm, and new perspectives will enhance the effectiveness of our committee work. I hope all members will consider getting involved in this way, also.

Meanwhile, some projects and programs carry on, summer and winter. The Colorado River Refuge/Lost Pines Hiking Trails "cedar busters"

are on a roll with their bridge and trail building, adding accessibility to new areas of the refuge. The wetlands restoration at the refuge has begun, and soon Master Naturalists will be called on to help develop this area. Bill Brooks is gearing up for the summer "Go Fish!" sessions sponsored by TPWD at Bastrop and Buescher State Parks.

The *ad hoc* committee to organize new landowner plant surveys in Caldwell County met and came up with a plan. Dave Radke agreed to head up this group. If you feel confident in identifying a good number of plants in our local region, or would like to learn to identify them, consider joining this team.

Everyone is welcome to attend the "graduation" of the training class on May 23 at Bastrop State Park. The speaker, Michael Warriner, who had to cancel in March, will be presenting the training module on Entomology. Come out and support the group as they receive their permanent badges. Speaking of badges, remember to notify Paulette Boudreaux (pboudreaux@eccwireless.net) if you need a new badge. They can be ordered along with those for the new class.

Remember to be on the lookout for new volunteer opportunities and share that information with the officers, newsletter, or volunteer committee.

Our May 16 chapter meeting, to be held at the Red Rock Community Center, will feature Pamela Owens delivering the TMN curriculum on Mammals. June's meeting will be our summer picnic; bring your significant other and join us for a potluck meal on June 18 at the McMahan Community Center. VP Walt Elson has arranged a great lineup of speakers for our summer and fall chapter meetings, including Paul Yura on Severe Weather, Mark Klym of TPWD on Hummingbirds, and Matt Warnock Turner, author of Remarkable Plants of Texas. Meanwhile, continue to pray for rain and enjoy the last of spring!



Lost Pines Master Naturalist Monthly Meeting Schedule

May 16, 2011. 6:30 -9:00 PM. Red Rock Community Center. Pamela Owen will talk about mammals. (Joint meeting with 2011 training class.)

June 18, 2011. 1 pm - ? McMahan Community Center. Annual Chapter Picnic.

July 18, 2011. 6:30 - 9:00 pm. Red Rock Community Center. Paul Yura of the National Weather Service will give a presentation on "severe weather".

Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the next issue is **May. 27, 2010**. We welcome relevant contributions, photos, announcements, or other material relating to the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program, particularly those pertaining to our local area. Please send information to Jeannie Jessup: magicgenie@gmail.com. **PLEASE send text either in an email or in doc format. I cannot open any other form! Pictures should be sent as attachments of jpgs as big as you can send them. Please do not imbed images in the email. Doing so greatly helps in the newsletter creation! Thank you!**

STATE PROGRAM CONTACTS

Website: <http://txmn.org/>

State Coordinator: Michelle Haggerty,
mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu; (979) 458-2034.

The Texas Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

SPONSOR CONTACTS

Caldwell Co. Extension Office: Jeff Watts;
Caldwell-tx@tamu.edu; (512) 398-3122.

Bastrop Co. Extension Office: Rachel Bauer, CEA-AG/NR; Bastroptx@tamu.edu; (512) 581-7186.

Bastrop/Caldwell Co. TPWD Wildlife Biologist: Meredith Longoria, 804 Pecan, Bastrop,
Meredith.Longoria@tpwd.state.tx.us; (512) 332-7280.



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Officers

President

Louise Ridlon
(512) 985-5064
flridlon@hotmail.com

Vice President

Walt Elson
(281) 382-5593
Walt.elson@gmail.com

Secretary

Susan Crone
(512)-303-1884
smcrone48@gmail.com

Treasurer

Rik Martinez
(979)-236-0994
martinez_rik@hotmail.com

Past President

Mark McClelland
(512) 281-5516
markmcc@prodigy.net

State Representative

Michal Hubbard
(512) 303-5976
michal_photog@yahoo.com

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[Bill Brooks](#)

512-332-0851
512-321-7400
512-772-3654
512-321-1308
512-589-3438
281-382-5593
512-985-5823
512-620-0322
512-581-0377