

T E X A S



Prairie Oaks Chapter Spring 2026 Initial Training

Our initial training class is held in collaboration with Tarleton State University, with students and community participants experiencing the training side by side.

The Basics:

Training Dates: January 14 - April 23, 2026

- In-Classroom Sessions (in person or on zoom)
 - Wednesday Nights 5:15 – 8:15PM
 - Location: Tarleton State University, Stephenville
- Field Experiences (in person only)
 - Several opportunities available in March and April
 - Various Days/Times: Wed afternoons, Weekend mornings & afternoons
 - Locations: Varies by activity
- Optional In-Classroom Sessions intensely focused on Interpretation and Outreach
 - Mondays 5:15-6:15pm
 - Note: At least two Wednesday night sessions will focus on Interpretation and Outreach.



Applications accepted October 1-November 20, 2025

- Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Because space is limited, we recommend submitting your application early.
- Paper application available upon request.
- Note: Participants must be at least 18 years of age before January 14, 2026

Registration Payment Options:

1. Individual Registration with Textbook \$100/person
2. Couple Registration with shared Textbook \$75/person
3. Individual Registration with borrowed Textbook \$65/person
 - a. Limited quantities of the textbook are available to borrow.
4. Financial assistance options available, with limited availability.



The Fun Stuff!

Week	EXAMPLE In-Classroom Topic Schedule (Wednesday Evenings)	
1	Orientation	Texas Ecological Regions
2	Mammals of Texas	Forest Ecology and Management
3	Ecology and Diversity of Insects	Plant Biology
4	Fish Ecology	Wetland Ecology
5	Bird Ecology	Historic Naturalists
6	Urban Ecosystems	Citizen Science
7	Geology	Soil Science
8	Public Outreach	Volunteer Opportunities
9	Ecological Concepts	Interpretation
10	Archaeology	Rangeland Management
11	Ecosystem Management	Weather and Climate
12	Aquatic Systems Ecology	Texas Groundwater Resources
13	Laws, Regulations, and Ethics	Land Stewardship
14	Reptiles and Amphibians	Makeup/Ice Day
15	Initial Training Graduation and Celebration	

Activity	EXAMPLE Field Experience Schedule (Wednesday afternoons or weekends)	
1	Local Geology	
2	Soil Morphology and Ecology	
3	Aquatic Ecology and Assessment	
4	Birding and Bird Ecology	
5	Forest Ecology	
6	Rangeland Plants	

PLEASE NOTE:
Participants will receive updated class schedules on the first night of initial training.

This page is just to give you an idea of the topics that we will be covering during the training.

In the Weeds: *Details!*



Certification Requirements:

The minimum requirements for certification as a Texas Master Naturalist include completion of a minimum of 40 hours of Initial Training, a minimum of 8 hours of Advanced Training, and 40 hours of volunteer service.

It is the intention of this course to provide opportunities for all 40 hours of initial training to be completed during the time frame of this course.

It is also possible that some participants will acquire advanced training and volunteer service hours during this time frame.

Participants are encouraged to complete all certification requirements by the end of the calendar year, December 31, 2026.

Initial Training Hours Available:

This course will include opportunities for at least 45 in-classroom hours (Wednesday evenings) and at least 15 field hours (various days and times in March and April).

A live Zoom option will be available for in-classroom sessions, but we encourage participants to attend in person whenever feasible. We understand that life happens and also respectfully ask that participants utilize the Zoom anytime they may have a contagious illness.

There will likely be one or more cancellations due to weather that may or may not be rescheduled; please plan accordingly.

Volunteering:

The mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the state of Texas.

Certification requires 40 hours of volunteer service annually. Volunteer opportunities must be pre-approved by the chapter in order to be logged.

Participants in the Spring 2026 training class may begin volunteering immediately after their Volunteer Management System (VMS) is setup, their background check is completed through Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and after attending orientation.

All hours must be logged within 45 days of service.

Make-up/Absence Opportunities:

If you cannot attend an in-classroom session (in person or live zoom), recorded Zoom make up opportunities will be available for up to three sessions, for a total of nine initial training hours.

The make-up opportunities will require participants to watch the class recording and complete a short assignment.