

Texas Master Naturalists ROLLING PLAINS CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

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<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

February 2014

Hawks, Falcons and Owls! Oh My!

Advanced Training

Learn more about the Outdoors at the Hackberry Flat Center's Saturday Program Series – "It's All about Raptors" Identification Program



The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and Friends of Hackberry Flat are offering a series of Saturday Programs at the Hackberry Flat Center located south of Frederick in southwest Oklahoma. On Saturday, February 8th the 2014 series begins with a program for those interested in learning more about identifying the hawks, falcons and owls that hunt the grasslands at

Hackberry Flat. If you have ever wondered how to tell the difference between a red-tailed hawk and a rough-legged hawk this is the program for you! Greg Stipp, a falconer with the Oklahoma Falconers' Association, will display some live birds to help participants gain a better understanding of these avian predators. Program begins at 9:30 am and includes some classroom time in the Center to learn about raptors, falconry, and how to identify the variety of raptors in the area. The classroom time will be followed by a trip out in the wildlife management area to try out your new identification skills, weather permitting. A limited number of binoculars are available for participants to use. Please be sure to dress warmly. Program will end at noon and is suitable for ages 12 years to 99. Participants will each be given a free laminated hawk identification fact sheet. There is no fee but reservations are required. For more information, or to make your reservation please email: mhickman@zoo.odwc.state.ok.us or call Melynda Hickman at 405-990-4977.

Other programs currently scheduled for the Saturday Program series include the annual Hackberry Flat Day, a fun-filled day for the entire family on April 19th, a night walk on August 30th, and a Monarch Tagging Program on October 11th. Please note that participants at any of the Saturday Programs are exempt from requiring a current hunting/fishing

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FEBRUARY 4: Rolling Plains Chapter monthly meeting is at River Bend Nature Center. **Location:** 2200 3rd Street, Wichita Falls, Texas. **Time:** 7:00 p.m. **Program:** Kimberly Beck, a Biology Graduate Assistant at MSU She will be speaking about her field, Local Paleontology.

FEBRUARY 15, 2014: Great Backyard Bird Count **Location:** Lake Arrowhead State Park by the fishing piers **Time:** 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

FEBRUARY 16, 2014: Great Backyard Bird Count **Location:** Wild Bird Rescue, 4611 Lake Shore Drive **Time:** 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

FEBRUARY 22-23, 2014: Arts Alive! 2014 Home and Garden Festival **Location:** Ray Clymer Exhibit Hall, 1000 5th Street. Larry has tickets available for the Home and Garden Show. Tickets are \$5.00 with \$4 from every ticket sold going into our chapter's treasury. Get your tickets early! Don't forget to sign-up to man our booth.



license or Wildlife Conservation Passport while on the Wildlife Management Area.

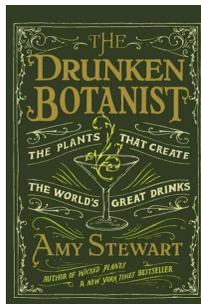
The Hackberry Flat Center offers amenities for visitors, a meeting facility for events, wetland and other outdoor classrooms for school children and programs to help develop outdoor skills. For more information about the Hackberry Flat Center and Wildlife Management Area including scheduled events go to www.wildlifedepartment.com/education/hackberry_flat.htm.

An Afternoon with the Drunken Botanist



Amy Stewart, author of the New York Times best-seller *The Drunken Botanist*, will be holding a seminar at the Dallas Arboretum, February 22, 2014. She will explore the array of plants that humans have distilled, fermented, infused and imbibed. Join Stewart for an entertaining lecture celebrating the history and lore of the trees, flowers and fruits that have brought many fine cocktails to life. Amy will discuss some of the unusual and surprisingly common plants that have produced the world's greatest spirits and share some of the most delicious ways to consume them. In the afternoon, join Amy as she demonstrates how to create your own cocktail ingredients using plants from your garden. Sample some of the delightful concoctions and go home with ingredients to inspire your next happy hour. What better way to spend a day than learning how to make unique drinks created from your very own garden? A book signing will take place after the lecture. Space is limited.

The seminar is \$40 per person to attend lecture held from 1pm-2:30pm. At 3:30-4:30 Amy Stewart is also holding a workshop on simple syrups and cocktails. This workshop is \$75 per person to attend (In addition to the seminar price). Groups of 10 or more receive a 10% discount.



Youth Leadership Development Looking for Adult Volunteers

San Antonio, TX – The Texas Brigades program is looking for a few good adult leaders. Actually, they are looking for 32 adult leaders. The Texas Brigades' mission is to educate and empower youths with the leadership skills and knowledge in wildlife, fisheries, and land stewardship to become conservation ambassadors for a sustained natural resource legacy. This will be the 22nd year of the Brigades.

The application deadline is March 15, 2014 and may be found at <http://www.texasbrigades.org/Applications/applications.html>.

Participants are selected through a competitive application process. Helen Holdsworth, Executive Director, says they are looking for adult volunteers ages 21 and up. No experience is necessary, but applicants should have a strong interest in learning about wildlife, natural resources, livestock, and the environment and with working with high achieving youth. "We are looking for those adult volunteers who want to learn while mentoring," reports Holdsworth.

The 4.5 days camps are held on private ranches across the state. Exact dates and locations are listed on the website.

For more information, call 855-TXBRIGS or 210-556-1391 or email hholdsworth@texas-wildlife.org.

Walking Stick

Kingdom:	Animalia
Phylum:	Arthropoda
Class:	Insecta
Superorder:	Exopterygota
Order:	Phasmatodea

- Can range anywhere from 1 inch to 12 inches in length. Females are larger than males.
- Nocturnal insects, but if out in daylight, their eyes will change to tolerate the rays.
- Has suckers and hooks on their legs which allows them to hang from objects. They use a swaying motion mimicking the wind if a predator is near. If they feel in danger they will fall off whatever they are hanging on and play dead.
- Some species in Florida shoot out a milky substance into the predators eyes causing a stinging sensation and can cause temporary blindness. They are known for having precise aim, even to humans.
- Females will lay anywhere from



100 to 1,200 eggs after mating. She will lay eggs in the ground or on plants. Virgin females will produce female eggs only who are exact replicas of their mother. If a male mates with a female,

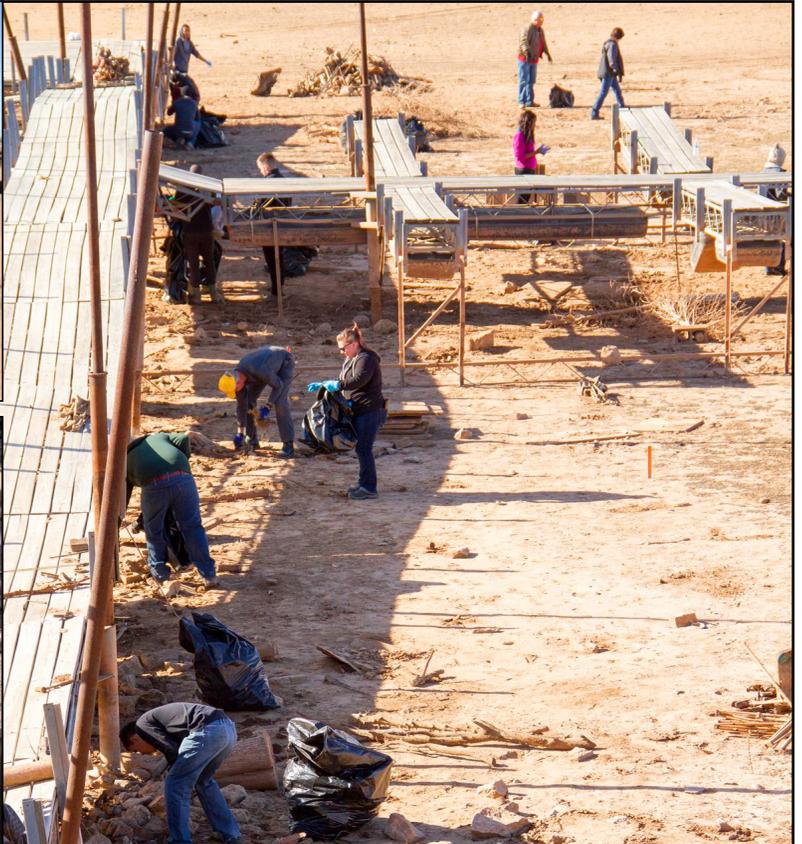
she will then produce male eggs. Lifespan is one season.

- Mating couples can be joined together for 79 days. This will sometimes happen if the male feels there is another male moving in on his female. This shows dominance and will act as a defense mechanism.
- Walking sticks can regenerate lost limbs.
- One in 1,000 walking sticks are males.

January 25th Lake Arrowhead Clean-up

Photos by Terry McKee, Larry Snyder and Tami Davis

Laura Joss, Terry McKee, Betty Brown, Laura Gillis, Rebecca Herd and Jonathon Alfano pose with a portion of the estimated 22,000 pounds of trash hauled out from under the fishing pier at Lake Arrowhead State Park, January 25. No, we did not pick it up by ourself, we appreciate the help of the state park personnel, the 335th training wing (all 50 of them) from SAFB, the Science Club at MSU, the Caribbean students from MSU and Friends of Lake Arrowhead State Park along with concerned citizens. Not pictured is Larry Snyder who was busy cooking burgers for all involved!



Just a Few Reminders from Larry Snyder

Hey y'all,
Now for a gentle nudge, dues for 2014 are now payable. I've received dues from about half of our current membership. If you're attending the meeting and haven't paid your dues, please bring them to the meeting. Sometime after the meeting, probably about midmonth, I will be sending out an email to those who haven't paid. That'll be my final request. Please remember, dues are supposed to be paid by March 1st. Annual dues are just \$15 for a single and \$25 for two. If you prefer you can mail a check to me at: 1020 Pawhuska Ln, Burkburnett, TX 76354.

I still have lots of tickets to the Home and Garden Show to sell. These tickets are \$5 each. Of that \$5, \$4 is money that goes to our chapter. (We pay \$1 per ticket.) Tickets will cost \$7 at the door.

We will begin to take orders for t-shirts as well. The back of the design selected for the shirt shows an Owl sitting on a branch on the back with a full moon in the background. On the front is the TMN logo and the Rolling Plains Chapter designation. We need to try to get at least 20 shirts ordered to keep the cost down. If

we can get that many the shirts will cost \$15 each. So, if you want a shirt, bring another \$15 with you.

To recap, money for dues, money for Home and Garden Show tickets and money for t-shirt(s). \$\$\$\$\$

See you Tuesday.

2014 Rolling Plains Chapter Officers



Jim Hensley
President



Rebecca Herd
Vice-President



Cynthia Archibald
Secretary



Larry Snyder
Treasurer



Terry McKee
Activities Chair

FACTS
OLD
FUN



The Hooded Pitohui was the first poisonous bird to be discovered by science—but the native people of Papua New Guinea knew about it far sooner. They call it the “garbage bird” because of its unpleasant smell, and avoid eating it because of the bitter taste and a tendency to make people sick. The Hooded Pitohui has batrachotoxin (BTX) in its dander, and in its skin and feathers, a neurotoxin identical to that used by deadly poison frogs in Colombia, South America.

A ‘Positive Giant’ is a bolt of lightning that strikes the ground up to 20 kms away from the storm, carrying more power than regular lightning. It seems to come out of clear sky, so the saying has arisen, ‘a bolt from the blue’.



Cameroon is home to a bizarre creature, *Trichobatrachus robustus*, that’s straight out of a sci-fi or horror film. The bizarre, hairy frog with cat-like extendable claws can



break its own bones to produce talons that puncture their way out of the frog’s toe pads.

Coming Soon: An Updated TX Invaders App!

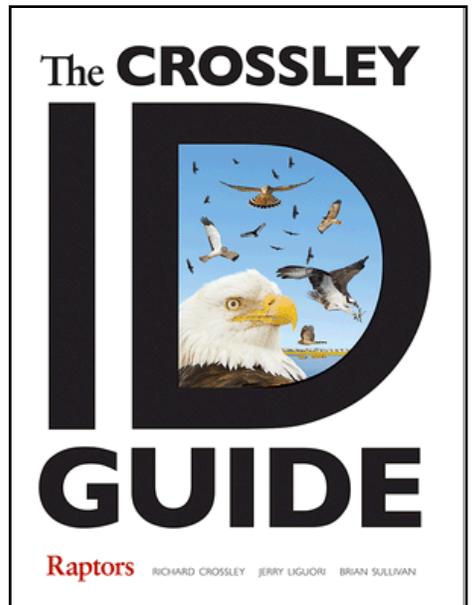
The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center has been awarded \$18,400 from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Wildlife Diversity’s 2013-2014 Horned Lizard License Plate Grant Program to upgrade the TX Invaders mobile app. The new app will include several new features and replace the existing TX Invaders app, already in use by over 1,900 trained citizen scientists statewide.

Funds received from the sale of Horned Lizard License Plates provide support for conservation projects in Texas. To learn more about the Horned Lizard Conservation License Plate, or to show your support for natural resource conservation projects in Texas, visit www.conservationsplate.org.



RESOURCE CORNER

Crossley Id Guide: Raptors
by Richard Crossley
Flexibound: 288 pages
ISBN-10: 0691157405
ISBN-13: 978-0691157405
Price:\$22.47



Comprehensive and authoritative, *The Crossley Id Guide Raptors* covers all thirty-four of North America’s diurnal raptor species (all species except owls). Each species is featured in stunning color plates that show males and females, in a full spectrum of ages and color variants, depicted near and far, in flight and at rest, and from multiple angles, all caught in their typical habitats. There are also comparative, multispecies scenes and mystery photographs that allow readers to test their identification skills, along with answers and full explanations in the back of the book. In addition, the book features an introduction, and thirty-four color maps accompany the plates.

Whether you are a novice or an expert, this one-of-a-kind guide will show you an entirely new way to look at these spectacular birds.

Chapter Contacts:

Jim Hensley, President 569-4713; Rebecca Herd, Vice President 232-5607; Cynthia Archibald, Secretary 704-8474; Larry Snyder, Treasurer 569-4534

Committees Chairperson:

Leslie Fernandez, RiverBend Liaison 767-0843; Paula Savage, Newsletter Editor and Designer 691-0231, pasavage@sbcglobal.net; Tami Davis, Website Manager 224-0131; Activities Chair: Terry McKee 766-4097; Dian Hoehne, Communication Chair 692-7234

Advisor: Robert Mauk, TPWD Advisor 766-2383