



Rolling Plains Chapter NEWSLETTER

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<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

October 2022

The Rolling Plains Chapter partners with River Bend Nature Center and Wild Bird Rescue, Inc. in Wichita Falls; Lake Arrowhead State Park in Clay County; Copper Breaks State Park in Hardeman County; Whiteside Museum of Natural History in Seymour; and Comanche Springs Astronomy Campus in Crowell. Our Chapter covers Archer, Baylor, Clay, Foard, Hardeman, Jack, Montague, Wichita, Wilbarger, and Young Counties.

OCTOBER 4: Rolling Plains Chapter Meeting - 7:00pm at RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER (RBNC), 2200 3rd Street, Wichita Falls (near the entrance of Lucy Park).

The program: We will have two presentations - *“Desert Ecology”* by *Erica Mitchell*, and then *Kevin Seman* (Lynn’s son) will take us on a tour of the conservatory and talk about *“The Plants & Animals of RBNC”*.

VT OCTOBER 7-23: Texas Pollinator BioBlitz
7th Annual Texas Pollinator BioBlitz returns in October. Mark your calendars now and get ready for some photographic fun and the opportunity to contribute to community science! All ages and abilities are encouraged to find pollinators and nectar-producing plants and take



Happy Fall! I hope everyone is enjoying the cooler temperatures and that you are seeing and tagging Monarchs as they come through our area. We didn’t see many on our September Hike but we still had a nice time.

We have a very important change for our meeting this month. **The October meeting will be at 7:00 pm at RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER (RBNC), 2200 3rd Street, Wichita Falls (near the entrance of Lucy Park).** We will have a short business meeting and then we will

have two presentations - “Desert Ecology” by Erica Mitchell, and then Kevin Seman (Lynn’s son) will take us on a tour of the conservatory and talk about “The Plants & Animals of RBNC”. Please note that we will NOT be at MSU. We also will NOT have Zoom capabilities for this meeting. This is going to be a great opportunity to see what our partner, RBNC is doing and you may be inspired to volunteer there.

October is a celebration of birds and like our avian friends migrating to the south, this year is flying by fast. Kick off your birdwatching with **Global Big Day** on Saturday, October 8th as Penny Miller leads the morning Bird Outing at Lake Arrowhead.

This month is also the **Fall Pollinator Bio Blitz**. The Bio Blitz will go from October 7th through the 23rd. On Saturday, October 15, we will have a Chapter outing at Lake Arrowhead to help Ranger L record pollinators at the park from 9:00 AM to Noon.

Also in October, we have the opportunity to help with the Not-So-Scary Halloween celebration at River Bend Nature Center the evening of Friday, October 28th. We plan to set up the screen to call in moths and nighttime pollinators and maybe call in some owls too. There will be an admission fee for the Hike unless you are volunteering to help with the event.

Don’t forget that our program for November will be Resource Sharing. We would like to know, what is your favorite nature book, guide book, podcast, nature app or other resource? If you would **send the title or link to Alex by October 24th** she will prepare a handout so we will all have the list of all the entries. Please be prepared to give a short review of the resource to the group at the meeting. As an added bonus, if you participate with at least 2 entries in the Resource Share, you can add **5 points** to the Scavenger Hunt card!

photos to share with friends! Post your pollinator photos during the event to your own Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook accounts (use #txpollinators). Add pollinator and flowering plant photos to iNaturalist during the event dates to be included in the 2022 Texas Pollinator BioBlitz iNaturalist project.

VT OCTOBER 8: *October Big Day/ Global Bird Weekend/World Migratory Bird Day* Go birding and enter your sightings on eBird. You must have a free eBird account to participate. Join us at the Bird Outing at LASP to learn how to use the eBird app.

VT OCTOBER 8: *Bird Outing at LASP 8:00-10:00* Join Penny Miller, other members and guests at Lake Arrowhead State Park for a bird outing. Look for and identify birds found at the park. This is a leisurely hike on level ground (handicap accessible). Binoculars helpful, but not required.

AT OCTOBER 11: *TMNTuesday 9:00 am-1:00 pm Project Fair Contest.* Save 9am-1pm tentatively in your calendars. We will update the time of October's webinar soon! List of

The ballot for new officers will also be presented at the November meeting so if you have been thinking that you might like to serve the Chapter in an office, please let a Board Member know. We still have an opening for President.

And finally, looking ahead, the Chapter will be participating in the Christmas In The Park event on Saturday, December 3rd. We have two campsites reserved to decorate and Kevin & Janice Scanlin have volunteered to make a lighted sign, wooden birds and maybe a selfie station for us. We are also planning to pass out gift bags to visitors that stop by. The park will be serving hot chocolate and cookies in the Administration Building. We will have more information on this event as we get closer to time.

As always, please watch your email and the calendar on the website for more information and events. We have a busy fall coming up!

Please Remember! The next meeting is at 7:00 pm, Tuesday, October 4th, at **RIVER BEND NATURE CENTER, 2200 3RD STREET, WICHITA FALLS.** ***There will be NO ZOOM LINK for this meeting!***

I hope to see you there!

—Laura

PS: If you have filled out your Monarch tag data sheets, feel free to turn them in early! Otherwise, the final due date is the November meeting.

FROM ENDANGERED TO EXTINCT

By Rachael Bale, *ANIMALS* Executive Editor, *National Geographic*,
e-Newsletter published September 30, 2021

There have been no confirmed sightings in the U.S. since 1944. And its last confirmed sighting anywhere was in Cuba, in 1986. Still, enthusiastic birdwatchers reported seeing the infamous ivory-billed woodpecker into the early 2000s, with some faithful fans convinced the Lord God Bird still lived. Perhaps it'd been transformed into "a creature as shy as Bambi, as silent as a Trappist monk, as anxious to avoid photographers as a Mafia stool pigeon in a witness-protection program," wrote Mel White for *National Geographic* in 2006.

Finding the ivory-billed woodpecker alive (above, a



photo of a specimen collected around 1900) has always been unlikely—akin to finding Elvis—but on Wednesday, the U.S. government said it unequivocally: It's extinct. The Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing to take the world's third-largest woodpecker off the endangered species list, along with 22 other species, "due to extinction."

The list also includes Bachman's warbler (pictured below), a songbird last documented in Cuba in 1981, a small fruit bat native to Guam, eight species of freshwater mussels, two freshwater fish, a plant, and a handful of Hawaiian birds.

projects coming soon! We are so excited to share the great projects our members have been working on. For most, you must watch the webinar live. TMNTuesdays are the exception to the rule. You may watch this webinar live or its recording at a later date (as long as it is watched within the calendar year it was recorded).

AT OCTOBER 14: *TMNTuesday 9:00 am-1:00 pm Pollinator Habitat 101: webinar Series: Session 1:* Doug Tallamy: “Pollinators’ Best Hope: A New Approach to Pollinator Habitat That Starts in Your Yard” . First in a series of free, weekly webinars from Ohio State University running from October 14th through November 11th. sessions are on Fridays at 9 am (CST) and will last for approximately 60 minutes plus questions. The same link will allow you to join each session (see Chapter calendar for link).

VT OCTOBER 15: *Bioblitz at Lake Arrowhead State Park 9:00-12:00* Be a part of Texas Pollinator BioBlitz by joining members at Lake Arrowhead State Park. We will meet at the Administration Building by the fishing

My colleague, editor John Hoefel, put it this way: “The Ivory-billed woodpecker was long a symbol of

hope that we had not killed off some of the country’s most extraordinary animals.” But by letting go of this par-

ticular hope, we’re acknowledging what we’ve lost—and making room to focus on what we can save.

Weighing The Good and The Bad

reprinted from the September 2022 issue of *iWire*

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Environmental Impact Classification for Alien Taxa (EICAT) is a global standard framework developed to categorize and assess negative impacts of alien species on native biodiversity. Yet believe it or not, alien species can sometimes have positive benefits. They can provide a food source or habitat provisions that were not previously available. So why is there no system to measure these positive correlations or impacts? There is now.

The positive Environmental Impact Classi-

fication for Alien Taxa, or EICAT+, uses five semiquantitative scenarios to categorize the magnitude of positive impacts, and describes underlying mechanisms, building off the existing framework that currently only accounts for the negatives. The new system uses a standardized and evidence-based system that can be applied to all alien taxa at different spatial and organizational scales. Originally, the framework was designed to categorize decreases in performance of individuals, population size, and area of occupancy through local population extinction. Ecosystems are often made up of a tangled

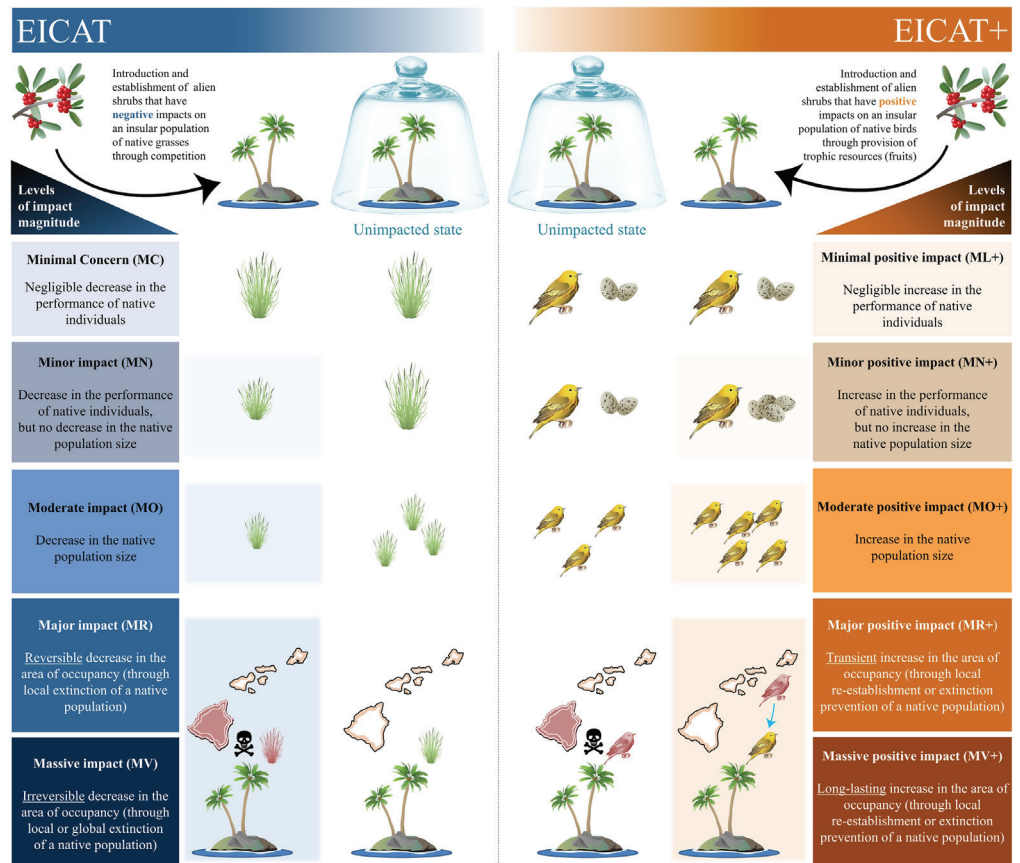


Illustration of EICAT and EICAT+ scenarios: negative impacts (left) and positive impacts (right) caused by a focal alien taxon (shrub species) on native taxa of interest (grass and bird species). Credit: Vimercati et al., 2022, figure 1.

pier. If you have them, bring butterfly nets, bug jars, etc. We'll scour the park for pollinators (and anything else!). Park fees apply.

AT OCTOBER 21:

TMN Tuesday 9:00 am-1:00 pm *Pollinator Habitat 101: webinar Series: Session 2:* Harland Patch of Penn State University on "Creating Pollinator Gardens: the Role of Plant Choice and DesignFree".

AT OCTOBER 28:

TMN Tuesday 9:00 am-1:00 pm *Pollinator Habitat 101: webinar Series: Session 3:* Heather Holm, Author and Biologist on "Creating and Managing Habitat for Native Bees".

VT OCTOBER 28:

Not-so-scary Halloween 6:00-9:00 pm Assist River Bend Nature Center with their Not-so-scary Halloween celebration. Help lead nature hikes, man the moth light and assist in other activities. Contact River Bend Nature Center if you would like to help out.

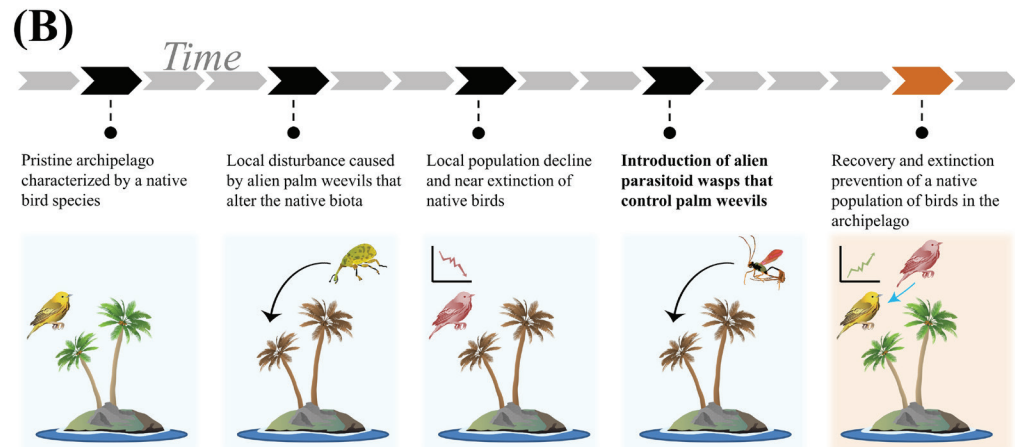
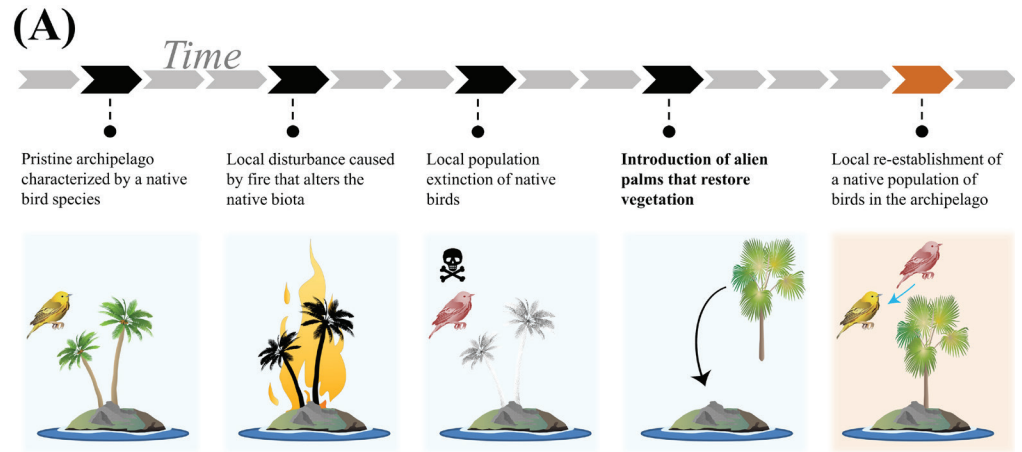


Illustration of EICAT and EICAT+ scenarios: negative impacts (left) and positive impacts (right) caused by a focal alien taxon (shrub species) on native taxa of interest (grass and bird species). Credit: Vimercati et al., 2022, figure 1.

web of relationships and delicate balances. With multiple alien invasive introductions taking place, it is not always as easy as complete eradication with zero consequences once a population is established and the 'damage' has been done, or once the ecosystem has started to adjust. With the combination of the two frameworks working in tandem, a more complete picture can be

formed. It can be used to look at the good and the bad involved in alien species so the best conservation approach can be determined. Those involved do not deny how detrimental some invasive species are, they just feel that all the information should be gathered so the best decisions can be made, especially when recourses and funding is limited.

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