



Rolling Plains Chapter NEWSLETTER

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<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

April 2023

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.

APRIL 4: Rolling Plains Chapter Meeting - 7:00pm at MSU's Bolin Science Hall, room 209. If you would prefer to attend via Zoom, watch for the link to the meeting in your email. Either way, I hope you will join us.

AT The program: Debra Halter will be showing us all about the iNaturalist App

VT APRIL 8: Monthly Bird Outing 8:00-10am 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 APRIL 11: TMN Tuesday 12:00-1:00pm TMN Tuesdays webinar series are on the second



Spring is here! The Meadowlarks and Martins are singing and wildflowers are popping up all around us as the world celebrates renewal and new beginnings.

Our Chapter will also undergo a few changes as Spring blooms. As of March 31, our TPWD Advisor, Robert Mauk, has retired and he will celebrate a new chapter in his life as he moves to Iowa. Robert has been our advisor for the past twelve years, stepping in after the unexpected passing of Mark Howell. We will miss Robert's quiet, thoughtful leadership and we wish him all the best as he moves north of the Red River.

As soon as we get all of our ducks in order, we will be voting to accept a new Chapter Advisor. We will let you know more as soon as we can.

The Spring Training classes are continuing on Thursday nights and members are more than welcome to come sit in on any or all of the classes and come to the field trips. With the exceptions of the new classes noted below, you can't count any hours for coming but it is a great way to review the content, learn something new, and meet the new trainees.

(Spring Training Class Exceptions: Members may count any of these four classes/1 field trip as Advanced Training:)

April 13: General Botany, Dr Timothy Pegg;

April 20: Ecological Concepts, Dr. Kashif Mahmud;

April 29: Wildflower Field Trip (Copper Breaks State Park) Steve Lefevre;

May 18: Paleontology, Dr Steven Rosscoe;

May 25: Texas Law, Ethics & Wildlife Conservation, Dillan Conley, TPWD Game Warden.

Our volunteer opportunities continue to pop up like wildflowers along the roadside so please watch your email for notes and check the calendar for times and places.



A page from my "Walks with Abby" sketchbook. I am always excited to see the Fringed Puccoon booming.

Tuesday of the month through the 2023 year. This is the only webinar that you can count watching the recording.

AT APRIL 14: *Texas Stream Team Water Testing 9:00-11am*
Water testing will be conducted at Lake Wichita and the Wichita River. This event will be held the second Friday of each month, unless noted otherwise.

AT APRIL 20: *Mountain Cedars: the Limestone Junipers of Texas 6:30-7:30pm*
Since 1939, we have misunderstood the role of Mountain Cedars as they spread across Texas. Learn why we need to stop fighting Mountain Cedars and learn to work with them because they are not the problem—they are part of the solution.

AT APRIL 20: *Bumble Bees of Texas 7:00-9:00pm*
Prairie Oaks Master Naturalists Chapter meeting - Program by Dr. Russel Pfau. Nine bumble bee species are currently known to occur in Texas. With some patience and study, you should be able to familiarize yourself with the bumble bees that occur in the state.

AT APRIL 27: *Herbi-*

Our next meeting will be April 4th at 7:00 PM. We will be in person at Bolin Science Hall, Room 209 at Midwestern State University and also on Zoom at the same time. (Watch for a link in your email.) This month, Debra Halter will be showing us all about the iNaturalist App so we will be ready to go for the *City Nature Challenge* later this month.

I hope to see you somewhere soon! —*Laura*

Rewarding Youth Excellence in Research with Texas Natural Resources

Text and photos by Lynn Seman

A team of Texas Master Naturalists from all over Texas came to Texas A&M, College Station on Saturday, March 25, 2023, to choose our Texas Master Naturalist Conservation Awards from the talented young scientists at the Texas State Science and Engineering Fair for 2023. Mike Stecher (Brazos Valley Chapter) and Art Siebert (South Texas Chapter) helped with narrowing down the almost 100 projects to our final selections for the interview process, then they were then recruited to work on the category judging of the fair. Betty Vermeire, Bruce Neville, and Amanda Chau (Brazos Valley Chapter) interviewed the finalists for the senior category. Tiffany Herring, Leslie Cusick-Fernandes (Rolling Plains Chapter), Susan Conaty (Cradle of Texas Chapter), and Anne Blount (Heartwood Chapter) interviewed the junior finalists. Lynn Seman (Rolling Plains Chapter) organized the judging and assisted with interviews. A special thanks also, to Mary Pearl Meuth for guidance in our selection process!

After interviewing many exceptional projects, the committee of TMN judges is pleased to announce our award recipients for this year, which both appropriately involved one of our greatest Texas resources – water. The Senior Winner received a plaque and a \$500 scholarship check. Junior Winner received a plaque and a \$250 scholarship



check. Both award winners have been invited to attend the 2023 TMN Annual Meeting in McAllen, TX as our guests for the Saturday luncheon. Congratulations to our award recipients!

Junior Texas Master Naturalist Conservation Award 2023



Aditi Pinnenti – 7th Grader from Keystone Middle School, San Antonio, TX

Aditi's project was designed to see the effects of urbanization on the water quality of the San

Antonio River. She tested water quality in three locations on the river to see how the results changed as it passed through the city. Aditi demonstrated the skills and passion of a community scientist and shows a great concern for the water resources of Texas.

Senior Texas Master Naturalist Conservation Award 2023

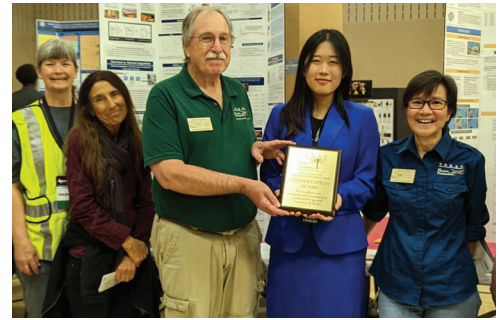
Katherine Lee – 11th Grader from Plano West Senior High School, Plano, TX

Katherine's project tested an accessible,

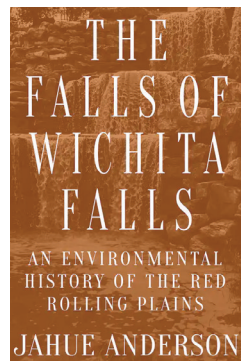
cides: A Double-Edged Sword? What We Know about Herbicide Impacts on Pollinators 12:00-1:00pm Join Emily May, Pollinator Conservation Specialist with the Pesticide Program at Xerces, to get up to speed on what's currently known about the direct and indirect effects of herbicides on pollinators.

VT APRIL 28-MAY 1: City Nature Challenge all day Help find as many species as possible within the ten county area that makes up the Rolling Plains Chapter's service area. More information will be available as we get closer to the event. There is nature all around us! By participating in the City Nature Challenge, not only do you learn more about your local nature, but you can also make your city a better place – for you and other species!

environmentally friendly method to remove heavy metal pollution from industry and agrichemicals from water in the treatment process. She did extensive research and tested her method to improve the current chemical coagulation process and replace it with a natural process using a plant-based solution. Katherine designed an environmental safer solution to help protect the valuable resource of water.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY PRESS



In Texas, Wichita Falls lies at the nexus of many strains of American environmental history. Covering Progressive Era land ethics, water management, boom and bust oil towns, colorful municipal boosters, and many other topics. *The Falls of Wichita Falls* analyzes a local history with dramatically national implications.

Beginning with Teddy Roosevelt's famous wolf hunt in Frederick, Oklahoma and covering the long twentieth century up through the emergence of Indian Casinos, Jahue Anderson's incisive book challenges the myth of rugged individualism as the central feature of the Red Rolling Plains cultural landscape.

Crucially, Anderson examines how local indigenous environmental knowledge was washed out by moonshot plans to irrigate a valley, a project that ultimately failed to improve living conditions. The dreams of an "irrigated valley" gave way to a cultural landscape of oil derricks, military installations, suburbs, and a complex system of reservoirs and pumping stations built on the Little Wichita River to bring water to people living in the Big Wichita River Valley.

The Falls of Wichita Falls sketches an environmental blueprint that encapsulates a thirsty city and its people, the commodification of natural resources, and the endemic ideological postures shaping how Americans attempt to subdue the land of the American west.

The Falls of Wichita Falls

An Environmental History of the Red Rolling Plains
by Jahue Anderson

Published by: Texas Tech University Press

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e-Book: Amazon

Price: \$19.95

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