



Rolling Plains Chapter NEWSLETTER

Vol.15, No. 6

<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

June 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.

JUNE 6: 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: Kevin Scanlan will present a program on "Bird Vision".

FR JUNE 9: 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.

PO JUNE 10: 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 iden-



Happy Summer! I hope everyone is ready to get outside and have some fun in the sun. The Mark Howell Fishing Rodeo and National Trail Day will kick off our busy month on June 3rd at Lake Arrowhead State Park. We will also be wrapping up our Spring Training classes in June. Everyone is welcome to attend the last class on June 29th. We have invited our partners who will come and share the opportunities they have available for us. Please come and see what's new!

Since we won't have a meeting in July, mark your calendars for our "Trail Mixer" celebration at River Bend on Friday, July 7th at 7:00 pm. Bring your family and make your own trail mix, walk the trail, and celebrate the accomplishments of the 2022 and 2023 training classes. We might even stay up late and see some moths and evening insects.

Don't forget about the Summer Scavenger Hunt. Download your scorecard from the Chapter website and start adding up your points.... get 60 points or more by July 31 and you will be put in a drawing for your own Monarch Tagging Kit. Turn in your scorecards and we will draw for the winner at the August 1st meeting. (The Monarch Tagging Kit will be delivered at the September meeting.)

As always, watch your email and check the website calendar for more events and opportunities.

Our next meeting will be June 6th 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, Kevin Scanlan will present a program on "Bird Vision".

Happy Trails!
Laura



tify birds found at the park. This is a leisurely hike on level ground (handicap accessible). Binoculars helpful, but not required.

AT JUNE 10: Copper Breaks State Park
10:00am-11:00am

Join a park ranger on a guided hike through the hidden gem of Copper Breaks: the Texas Longhorn pasture. See the rugged beauty of the Pease River breaks in an area only accessible by tour. Bring 2 liters of water, sunscreen, hat. This is a roughly 2 mile round-trip, out and back hike on uneven terrain. It will take about an hour and a half but could be longer.

AT JUNE 13: TMN
Tuesday 12:00-1:00pm
TMN Tuesdays webinar series are on the second Tuesday of the month through the 2023 year. This is the only webinar that you can count watching the recording.

Invasive Spotlight: Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*)

Reprinted from the May issue of iWire

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), also called purple lythrum, is an invasive perennial plant found growing in wet soil habitats. These plants grow 3-10 feet tall, at an average of 5 feet. The angular hairy stems are covered with unstalked leaves and crowded 'spikes' of pinkish-lavender flowers toward the top. The leaves are lance-shaped and grow at a 90-degree angle. Lavender flowers are arranged in petals of 4-6, growing ½" long and ¼" wide, attached to purplish calyx-like tubes with several pointed teeth. These flowers grow in clusters or pairs.



Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) flowers. Credit: Linda Wilson, University of Idaho, Bugwood.org

These plants can root in a couple feet of water or in dry soil along the water's edge. The flowers grow during a longer than usual season (June-September), which allows them to produce a large quantity of seeds. Each plant can grow as many as thirty flowers capable of producing up to three million seeds a year. Purple loosestrife likes to grow in dense patches that easily out-compete or replace native grasses, sedges, and flowering native plants. The abundant

flowers produced by these patches provide a plentiful source of nectar preferred by pollinators. Purple loosestrife patches can also reduce waterfowl habitat.

This wetland invader can also reproduce vegetatively through underground stems. Many stems can emerge from a single rootstock and grow up to one foot per year. Cultivated purple loosestrife that is "guaranteed sterile" are capable of crossing freely with purple loosestrife and other native *Lythrum* species. Therefore, even cultivated purple loosestrife should be avoided

outside of the native habitat.

Purple loosestrife has been reported in 42 out of 50 US states, with Texas included in this group. It can thrive in freshwater and brackish water. To learn more about managements options and additional information, see the Texas Invasive species info page. If you believe you have identified a suspected purple loosestrife, please take a picture and email it to invasives@shsu.edu.

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