



Rolling Plains Chapter NEWSLETTER

Vol.15, No. 9

<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

September 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 Count,; 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.

SEPTEMBER 5: Rolling Plains Chapter Meeting - 7:00-9:00pm 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: Monarch tagging review and training session.

AT SEPTEMBER 7: Return of the Natives: Restoring Native Grasslands in Non-native, Invasive Bluestems & Bermudagrass
**\$35.00 fee required
** 12:00-1:00pm

This presentation will provide an overview of the history of non-native invasive grasses, identification, and three levels of management approaches for restoring native grasslands.

FR SEPTEMBER 8: Texas Stream Team



The monarchs are coming! The monarchs are coming! And I hope the cooler temperatures and some rain come along right behind them.

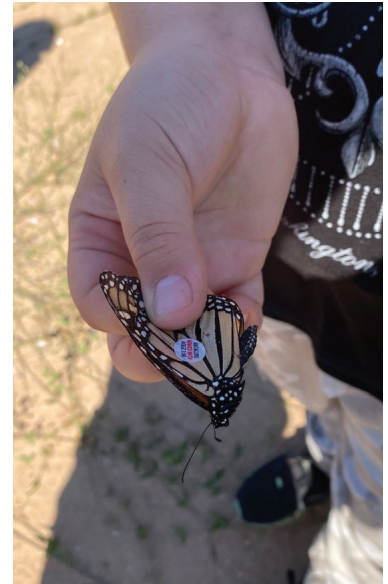
Our September meeting program will be a tagging review & training session after which, we will pass out the tags and start tagging! There's no way to know at this point when the peak migration will happen, but we are hoping there will still be some coming through for our

Monthly Hike on September 30 at Lake Wichita. If not, I'm sure we will find something to pique our curiosity and keep us entertained.

Don't forget our yearly Sikes Lake Cleanup project on Saturday, September 9 at 9:00 AM. This is a great event



where we get to go out, meet lots of people and spread the TMN love all while making a difference in our community.



I hope everyone has a safe and happy Labor Day weekend and I look forward to seeing you all at our Monthly Meeting on Tuesday, September 5 at 7:00 PM.

—Laura

Water Testing 9:00-11am Water testing will be conducted at Lake Wichita and the Wichita River. Meet at the Lake Wichita boat ramp at 9 am.

PO SEPTEMBER 9:
Monthly Bird Outing 8:00-10am Join Penny Miller, other members and guests at Lake Arrowhead State Park for a bird outing. Meet at Lake Arrowhead State Park at the building by the boat slips and fishing pier. Look for and identify birds found at the park.

RM SEPTEMBER 9:
Sikes Lake Cleanup 9:00-11:00 am Meet at Sikes Lake on the MSU campus. MSU will supply drinks and snacks for all volunteers. Bags, grabbers and gloves will be supplied by the chapter. Come join the crowd and help out at the cleanup.

AT SEPTEMBER 12: *TMN Tuesday 12:00-1:00pm*
“Safer Skies for Migrating Birds” - learn how artificial light and window collisions are impacting migratory birds.

PO SEPTEMBER 16:
Best Dam Run - TMN booth 6:30am-12:00pm
Meet at the TMN table at Lake Wichita Park, near Murhpy’s Mound

These Giant Rats Once Took Over a Fort Worth Park.

by Megan Cardona • Amanda McCoy/amccoy@star-telegram.com

Three years ago a Fort Worth park had a literal giant rat problem.

A large population of nutria rodents, that weigh between 17 to 20 pounds, made their home at Krauss Baker Park in 2020 and grew in number as people fed them.

Nutria are large, grayish-brown rodents that are nearly as large as beavers and have a long, rat-like tail and webbed hind feet.

Native to South America, the nutria were introduced to the southeastern United States in 1938, according to the Texas Tech University Natural Science Research Laboratory.

The swamp rodents are considered an invasive species, building burrows that can weaken roads, stream banks and dams. In coastal areas they can destroy wetland areas and encroach on the North American native muskrat.

Because the swamp rats are an exotic spe-



cies and would only damage other environments if relocated, the fate of the Fort Worth nutria was extermination.

Are nutria still a problem in Texas?

Nutria, also known as coypus, have appeared

throughout Texas around aquatic habitats, mostly in the eastern two-thirds of the state, however their population is spreading.

They are listed among the “most unwanted” animals in the state, according to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The swamp rodent’s population is moderately high and on the rise in Texas, according to Texas Tech University’s research laboratory. The nutria’s range is expanding and could likely spread to more areas in the state.

The Texas Invasive Species Institute estimates the average loss from damage to sugarcane and rice crops caused by nutria ranges from several thousand dollars to over a million each year.

Volunteer Opportunity on September 16 at Lake Wichita (by the big hill)

The chapter will have a booth set up to share educational information on beavers and TMN.

We will have a craft activity for kids and information for the people that show up that day for the *Big Dam Run - sponsored by the Wichita Falls Runners Club*. They have a beaver theme since the run takes place on the

Lake Wichita dam.

If you want to participate in the run, you can do so by going to this link:
<https://runsignup.com/Race/TX/WichitaFalls/BESTDam-Run2023>

YOU DON’T HAVE TO RUN!! We just need people there to talk to the public and share information about

beavers and their importance to the environment and hopefully recruit new possible members.

I would think the busiest times would be between 6:30am and 7:30am, and then again at around 9:00am to 11:30am.

If you want to help at the booth contact Lynn Seman.

(the big dirt hill). You do not have to stay the whole time.

AT SEPTEMBER 20:
The Importance of Texas Insect Collections and Their Use in Conservation Status Assessment
12:00-1:00 pm A Texas Wildlife Diversity Webinar. More information to come.

AT SEPTEMBER 26 & 28: *Angler Education Instructor Training*
7:00-9:00 am Two day Angler Education program. You must attend both days to be certified. No make-up sessions will be offered. Participants must have a computer or tablet with a camera and microphone to participate in this interactive training.

PO SEPTEMBER 30:
MONTHLY HIKE Join us for a hike at Lake Wichita Park/Chat Trail to view and learn about the Monarch Butterfly. Members will be tagging butterflies as well.
Time to be announced.



**What are you doing to keep Texas beautiful?
If the answer is "not enough", now is your chance!**

Join the Sikes Lake Cleanup Saturday, September 9

**Volunteers will meet at 9:00 AM
on the east side of Sikes Lake.
Free snacks and drinks will be provided.**

Event sponsors:

Rolling Plains Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist
Midwestern State University
American National Bank & Trust
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department



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