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Find us on Facebook too!

Rolling Plains Chapter

Field Notes

News, Notes and Events

December 2025

From The President

As we enter the holiday season, I want to take a moment to say how thankful I am for all of our members who volunteer their time to make the chapter and our community better. I appreciate every one of you.

Our December hike and Christmas in the Park take place December 6. If you have the inclination, Lake Arrowhead SP would welcome a donation of cookies to give to park visitors that day.

Our holiday party is coming up next week. It should be a fun time. Lots of food and our Bad Santa gift exchange, which can be hilarious. We will have a 5-minute business meeting to elect two board positions for 2026. You will also be able to pay your 2026 chapter dues and pre-order Home and Garden tickets, if you wish.

We are ready to start promoting the next training class. We have gift certificates available if you have a friend or family member you would like to give the gift of nature this year. See Terry McKee or Debra Halter for information.

The board will be having our annual strategic planning meeting in January. If you have any ideas/suggestions for improving our chapter, please let one of your board members know (and you are welcome to attend the meeting--we'll have the time and date added to the calendar once arrangements are final). -- Penny

Give The Gift of Nature
Gift Certificates now available for the
2026 Training Class
Only \$120
See Terry McKee or Debra Halter
for more details.

Please make plans to attend the annual

Cookies, Coffee and Christmas

Tuesday, December 2, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Letter Carriers Union Hall

5310 Southwest Parkway

(next door to Wichita Valley Nursery and Landscaping)

We will NOT be meeting at MSU in December.

Members are encouraged to bring appetizers or desserts to share.
Tea will be provided.

After a short business meeting and officer elections, we will have our **"Bad Santa" gift exchange**. To participate in this fun free-for-all, bring an inexpensive gift (under \$20) to put under the tree. Gifts can be new, used or something you no longer want (recycled books and field guides are always favorites). Participation in the gift exchange is **NOT** mandatory, and we invite all members, trainees and their families to join us for a fun evening.

Volunteer Time With Chapter Partners

Our chapter has several chapter Partner organizations. Their missions align with ours, and they provide many opportunities for members to earn volunteer hours. However, be sure to keep in mind that not everything you volunteer to do for a partner may be counted for VT.

In general, if the task is administrative in nature, serving on a board, selling items in a store, or doing general tasks relating to fundraising, they do not count for VT. We still encourage you to volunteer with our partner organizations in any capacity, but only add approved items to VMS for hours. In remarks, include exactly what you did to show that the task directly supports the TMN mission.

For example, using IO: River Bend Nature Center. In Describe Your Service or Training, you might indicate "Assisted with nature activities for children in the Adventure Club!" You can be more specific if you wish, but we know what the Adventure Club is. However, something like "Served hot chocolate and cookies at ElectriCritters" does not support the TMN mission and would not count for VT.

If you have any questions, contact Larry Snyder or Penny Miller.

Celebrate at Lake Arrowhead Saturday, December 6th

Come kick off the holiday season
with a day at Lake Arrowhead

Saturday, December 6, 2025

Monthly Hike Outing

Mesquite Ridge Trail Hike

Starting at 3:00 PM

(Some steep terrain on this trail)

Meet Lynn at the parking area by the horn tunnel for the last Chapter sponsored hike of 2025.

See the campground sparkle with lights at

**Christmas in the Park
at Lake Arrowhead State Park**

Starting at 6:00 PM

On your tour of the campgrounds, be sure to stop by campsite #14 for a special treat from the RPCTMN!
(While supplies last)

Park fees apply for entry before 6:00 pm



Thank you, Monarch Taggers!

Thank you to everyone who tagged Monarch butterflies this season. This year was a great year for tagging and we used 190 of our 200 tags! All tags have been accounted for and the data has been recorded online at Monarch Watch. Don't forget to check back in a month or two and see if a butterfly you tagged has been found!

Money, Money, Money!

A Reminder that Dues are Due

It's time again and Chapter Dues of \$25 per person are due by January 31, 2026. Please turn all money in to Larry Snyder, Treasurer for confirmation and make checks payable to Rolling Plains Chapter TMN.

Home & Garden Show Tickets

Larry is taking pre-orders for Home & Garden Show Tickets. H&G tickets are \$8.00 each. Selling these tickets is our only fundraiser as the Chapter gets to keep a portion of each ticket sold. H&G tickets make great stocking stuffers!

In The Field



Looking for a great volunteer opportunity? We've got your bag!
We are still looking for a volunteer to coordinate the Adopt-A-Highway project. Contact Lynn or Penny to find out how you can contribute to this valuable and worthy project!



In The Field



*Fall at Three
Rivers Ranch*



Water Testing



December Events

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

Events and opportunities are subject to change at any time.

Due to issues with the website calendar, watch your email for the latest changes and updates.

- Project Feeder Watch continues!** Through 4/30/26
\$18 fee required to participate.
- 12/2 6:00 pm **Chapter Meeting Cookies, Coffee & Christmas!**
No program, just a short business meeting followed by party.
5310 Southwest Parkway. See page 1 of this newsletter for more details.
In person only – No Zoom option available.
- 12/6 3:00 pm **Monthly Hike** - Lake Arrowhead, Mesquite Ridge Trail.
Park fees apply.
- 12/6 6:00 pm **Christmas In The Park** - Lake Arrowhead State Park, Campsite #14 or at the Administration Building to pass out treats. No park fees to help or to drive through and see the lights.
- 12/9 12:00 pm **TMNTuesday webinar**
- 12/10 10:00 am **“Plant Party” webinar - “Identifying Plants Without Leaves or Flowers”.** See website calendar for link to register.
- 12/12 9:00 am **Texas Stream Team Water Testing** Lake Wichita & Lucy Park
This event will be held the second Friday of each month, unless noted otherwise.
- 12/13 8:00 am **Bird Outing: Lake Arrowhead State Park**
2nd Saturday of each month. You must pay Park entry fees.
- 12/19 9:00 am **Water Testing at Lake Gordon, Iowa Park:** Meet at the parking lot just off of the access road near Taco Bell. 3rd Friday of each month.
- 12/20 all day **126th Annual Christmas Bird Count:** Count birds all day long (or just a few hours)! Participation is free but you must be assigned to an area by one of the count leaders. Contact Debra Halter for more info.
- 12/29 5:30 pm **Board of Director’s Meeting:** Wilson Office Supply, 8th and Lamar.
All members are welcome to attend.
- 12/30 5:00 pm Newsletter deadline. Please send any photos or stories to Laura!

Looking forward to 2026...

- 1/1/26 9:00 am **First Day Hike:** Lake Arrowhead State Park, Dragonfly Trail
Park fees apply

Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season as we close out an eventful 2025! I hope to see you on a trail somewhere soon! – Laura

On The Bookshelf (All books available on Amazon.com)

Outdoor Explorers: Take A Hike Field Journal Activity Nature Book with Stickers for Adventurous Kids,
Ages 5 and up Board book – Sticker Book,
by Carmen Crowe (Author) Katie Melrose (Illustrator)

Explore the magic of nature on the trail, in the trees, at the pond ... and maybe right in your own backyard. With this book you'll discover interesting facts about nature all around you, and you can use it to record what you see in the book's observation logs — just like a real explorer! Designed for kids to take out into nature and explore firsthand, the book includes interesting facts, observation logs, reflection prompts, activities, games, crafts, and more! Also includes a magnifying glass and stickers to use while exploring.

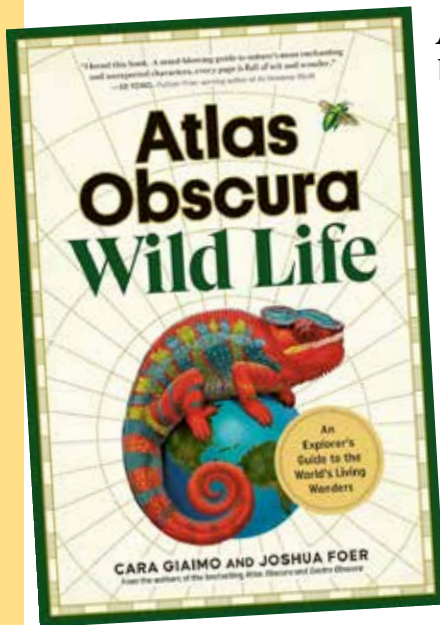
Loaded with fun activities: Scavenger hunts, hiking and observation logs, drawing, crafting with nature, building a bird house, reflective journaling, bird bingo, and more!



Atlas Obscura: Wild Life: An Explorer's Guide to the World's Living Wonders
by Cara Giaimo, and Joshua Foer

Learn how dung beetles navigate by the stars, and trees communicate through their roots. • Meet one of the strongest animals in the world: the puny peacock mantis shrimp. • Pay your respects to a 44,000 year old shrub, float along flying rivers, and explore a garbage dump overseen by endangered storks. • Examine old examples of bird song notation written on sheet music. • Also, first person interviews: hear from a honey hunter and his avian partners, a scientist working to find the world's only ocean-dwelling insects, and an offshore radio DJ who is at the heart of the local fishing community.

Featuring over 500 extraordinary plants, animals, and natural phenomena, with illustrations and photos on every page, the book takes readers around the globe—from Antarctic deserts to lush jungles, and into the deepest fathoms of the ocean and the hearts of our densest cities. Teeming with detail and wildly entertaining, Wild Life reinvigorates our sense of wonder, awe and amazement about the incredible creatures who share our planet.



Bird Trivia: Funny, Strange and Incredible Facts about North American Birds by Stan Tekiela

You love birds. They're beautiful. They're graceful. They're a wonder to observe. Yet even seasoned bird watchers don't know everything about our feathered friends. Acclaimed naturalist, author and award-winning wildlife photographer Stan Tekiela has taken a deep dive into the magnificent world of birds – and you won't believe what he's uncovered!

Why do some birds like to cover themselves with ants? Which birds can mimic the sounds of humans? Why don't woodpeckers get concussions? In Bird Trivia, you'll discover plenty of amazing tidbits you didn't know that you wanted to know about birds. Paired with Stan's famous bird photography, the information provides hours of enjoyment. You're sure to impress your friends and family with all of the knowledge contained in this book!

