

The Texas Star

Newsletter of the
Texas Master Naturalist
Hill Country Chapter
2016 Volume 14 Number 8



photo by Vern Crawford

T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™



AUGUST 22 MEETING: RECEPTION FOR THE CLASS OF 2016

Each of the new trainees will be introduced at this reception on Monday, August 22, 6:30 p.m., at the Kerr Arts and Cultural Center in Kerrville. Classes begin on Wednesday, August 24, at the Texas Lions Camp. Our regular monthly chapter meetings will resume on September 26.

President's Message Brenda Fest

Hello fellow Master Naturalists!

The dog days of summer are here. In spite of the heat there are still ways to enjoy our beautiful Hill Country: early morning bird counts, early evening walks, or just sitting on the couch and watching the bird feeders outside. Sometimes it's nice just to know that cooler weather and hopefully some rain is ahead.

The 2016 Texas Master Naturalist Annual state meeting will be held at Montgomery, Texas on Lake Conroe from October 21-23. Start now to make plans to attend. This is a wonderful opportunity to participate in a variety of excellent programs and training as well as mingle with our fellow Master Naturalist throughout the state.

We are pleased to announce that the Class of 2016 is ready to begin. The trainees have met with their mentors and received their training materials. This year we have received a much improved revision of the Texas Master Naturalist curriculum. It is a hard bound book and is an absolutely wonderful resource for our trainees. On August 22 we will hold the reception and mentors will welcome the trainees to our chapter. Our chapter advisor and state coordinator, Michelle Haggerty, will provide a brief presentation of what it means to be a master naturalist and give some insights about what to look forward to. Much thanks to our New Class Director, Diana Armbrust and her class committee members. They have worked tirelessly for several months to prepare for this excellent training. In addition, Membership Director, Lisa Flanagan has contacted all trainees and connected them with their mentors. And finally, thanks to those chapter members who have volunteered to be a mentor. We have a wonderful group of eager trainees who are eager to begin their journey. We welcome them!

Join us at our September 26 chapter meeting to learn about Viticulture in the Hill Country from Andrew Labay with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Brenda Fest

This Month We Honor



Recertifications

Jane Crone, Terri Criswell, Steve Dodge,
Jim Jones, Chris Keeting, Tony Plutino, Linda Ross

Milestones

Chris Keeting, Barbara Marquer - Bronze Dragonfly, 250 hours

Kris Bobbitt - Brushed Silver Dragonfly, 500 hours

Lisa Flanagan, Bob Wiedenfeld - Gold Dragonfly, 1000 hours

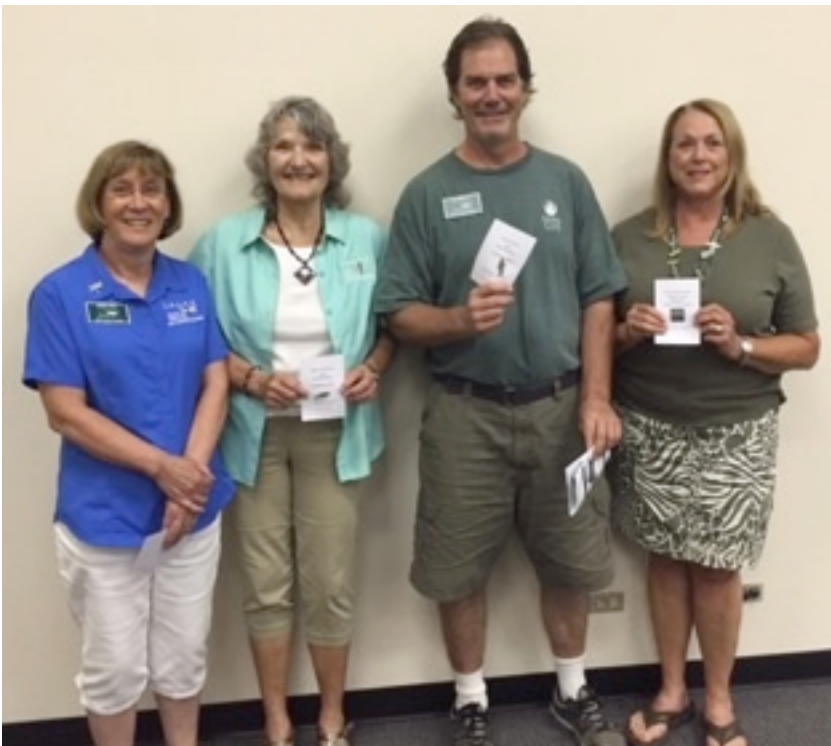


photo by Floyd Trefny

Congratulations to members who received awards at the July meeting:

From left to right: Robin May,
Diane McMahon, Jay Munson,
Rheda Boardman

Recent Hill Country Naturalist Columns by Jim Stanley:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 7/2/2016 | Cedar: 'More Complex than We Think |
| 7/9/2016 | Watching Nature in the Backyard |
| 7/16/2016 | Grasses, Soil, Erosion, Water Capture—All Connected |
| 7/23/2016 | Beauty, and Nature, in the Eye of the Beholder |
| 7/30/2016 | Native Woody Plants with Long Bloom Periods |

These and all other previous Kerrville Daily Times columns
can be found at www.hillcountrynaturalist.org

SAVE THE DATE! Saturday, October 1, 2016

Fall Native Plant Sale & Festival

Co-sponsored by

Hill Country Master Naturalists & Riverside Nature Center in Kerrville

Our expert volunteers are gathering beautiful native plants from local nurseries. Native plants require lower maintenance – saving you time, money, and precious water. Plus, they create a habitat for our native wildlife and pollinators. Experts will be available to answer questions and to help you select plants for your particular landscape conditions.

All net proceeds benefit RNC and HCMN education efforts.

Check back next month for additional details.

Texas Hill Country Plants - Medicinal and Edible

Daneshu Clarke, a Hill Country herbalist and edible plant expert, is coming to Fredericksburg on August 23 to speak at the regular monthly meeting of the Native Plant Society of Texas - Fredericksburg Chapter in the Fellowship Hall of Memorial Presbyterian Church, 601 North Milam Street, Fredericksburg. The meeting will begin with refreshments and a social gathering at 6:30 p.m., followed by the program at 7:00. The meeting is open to the public and free of charge.

When early explorers came to the Americas, they arrived with their Old World knowledge of plants. When their medicinal products ran out, they tried to find plants similar to what they already knew. Most failed dismally, but some indigenous people helped by sharing their knowledge of plants. Today some people are returning to natural medicine products.

The purpose of the Native Plant Society of Texas is to promote the conservation, research, and utilization of the native plants and plant habitats of Texas through education, outreach and example.



NATIVE LANDSCAPE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

hosted by the

Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter

Learn the value of including and preserving native plants in your landscape in our day-long Native Landscape Certification Program (NCLP) class. **Level 1, "Introduction to Native Landscapes"** is recommended for homeowners, native plant enthusiasts, landscape architects, landscape designers, plant nursery personnel, maintenance workers, park employees, Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, teachers, and more.

When: Saturday, September 24, 2016 – 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

Where: Cibolo Nature Center (later we will move to the public library) 140 City Park Road, Boerne, TX 78006

**Cost: \$37 – Snacks are provided.
Lunch not included - bring your own, please!**

Check out class descriptions, class schedules, or register online at
<http://npsot.org/wp/nlcp>

For more information, or to complete a mail-in registration, contact Meg Inglis at nlcp@npsot.org or 512.589.1316

2nd Annual
**RUN FOR
Riverside
5K**



Run & Walk

September 10th @ 8am

Registration prices:

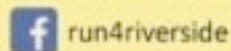
- \$30 until Aug. 12
- \$35 Aug 13 - Sep 9th
- \$45 Sep 10th race day

Contact:

Valeska Danielak for info

830-370-2464

run4riverside@gmail.com



Registered entrants are guaranteed a race T-shirt!

Will be yoga, refreshments, music, awards, and door prizes!

Strollers and dogs are welcome

Proceeds will benefit the Riverside Nature Center, a non-profit nature center providing community education programs for the public utilizing acres of native plants and trees, rainwater harvesting, and river trail access.

Registration link @
riversidenaturecenter.org



Riverside Nature Center

150 Francisco Lemos Street Kerrville, TX 78028

The View From Rusty Bend



Cypress vault at Rusty Bend; heat refuge

Early Riser's Prayer

*On the porch. In the dark.
Shooting stars and owl songs
tend my awakening.*

*Still dark. Still cool.
Dew drops on a tin roof:
tiny lying hints of rain.*

*Armadillos stir dry leaves.
The earth breathes light,
and I sip a cup of dawn.*

Dear Daddy,

I wandered out early this morning, searching for a bit of respite from the warm blanket of July. The wind was brisk from the southeast and you could smell a bit of Port Aransas. It was so cool on my skin that I was struck by a fifty-year-old memory. The body remembers first, it seems.

I am 15, it is 1966 and we have just bought the ranch and three cow horses. I see a flyer in Ingenhuett's Store in Comfort:

Hill Country Trail Ride
July 5-10
100+ miles
Meals and feed provided
Bring a cot

After meeting with Jack Lawrence, the trail boss, you give me the okay. Me, 15 years old, and Red, my bay gelding, outside for almost a week, with fifty other riders. No parents. I would be the youngest.

I pack a sack with an old quilt, t-shirts, a bathing suit, and a toothbrush. I want to travel light like the old cowboys. I find an ancient green canvas cot in the garage. I borrow your old fedora.

We start early in the morning east of Fredericksburg. Cool and very dewy. I smell hay and horsepoop and wet limestone. Our gear gets thrown in the back of a rusty pickup by a guy named Rowdy, of all things. I'm in heaven. He will drive ahead to our campsite and put up a huge open-sided tent that will shelter us all. Another truck pulls a trailer outfitted as a kitchen.

That first day, I remember the scrunch of hooves on red roads and smells both herbal and flinty, changing in the low spots to something wet and froggy. Saddles creak rhythmically, miles unfurl and before noon we ride into a ranch where we will sleep for the night. There is a creek and a big tank. The tent is up and our things are in a pile.

continued on next page

I unsaddle Red by the picket line. I change into a swimsuit and grab a curry brush. Then I grab a hank of mane as I swing up on his back to head for water. We wade out to where it is chest deep and I slip off to wash him down. His coat is essence of horse, hot and wet. I scrub off all the sweat and salt. He gives a mighty shake. The water trembles with it. I swing back on and take him back to the picket line for his well-earned flake of hay.

Each night after miles of riding, I grab my little green cot and position myself on the east edge of the tent where I can see stars as I go to sleep. Each night I count meteors. I aim for 20. I always need the quilt before morning.

The journey unfolds. We learn what a wagon ride to get groceries might have been like. Long and hot. We trace a big hill country triangle, Fredericksburg, Comfort, Kerrville and back to Fredericksburg. The peaches are ripe, the creeks are full, grass seed heads are heavy, the breeze is fresh.

The rest of the trip is full of lessons. How to make a salad for fifty people, how to sit quietly and learn from a horse whisperer, what the hands of a calf-roper feel like. But mostly I learn how to listen and smell and pay attention to the earth and creatures around me. I learn how the best times are those outside. I learn many of the things that serve me well as a steward for Rusty Bend. I am still not sure why you decided to let me go, but I am grateful, Daddy. I think, like the father you were, this trail ride formed me.

Lucy Griffith, PhD co-manages the Rusty Bend Ranch with her husband, Andy Robinson. When she is not on a tractor named Ruby, she practices Clinical Psychology. Both Lucy and Andy are certified Master Naturalists from the Class of 2013. Comments welcome at doctorluz@hctc.net

Poem, essay, and image by Lucy Griffith Copyright 2016



Riding Ruby instead of Red

Image by Andy Robinson

Life Off The Grid

Stephanie Ertel, attorney, mediator, and environmentalist, will speak about her experiences living in a home with only solar energy, rain water, and composting toilets. Stephanie and her husband, Rick, have long hooked up to electricity, water, or sewer services. They believed that they have a responsibility to care for the environment. After long careers in law, they took a bold step toward living that belief. Confident that they could live entirely "off the grid" they built their new home near Mountain Home but did not hook up to electricity, water, or sewer services.

Find out how solid that confidence is now, seven years later! Stephanie will share the pros and cons of living off the grid and offer the audience tips on living an environmentally friendly lifestyle even if you live in a more traditional home.

The program will take place at the Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street in Kerrville, August 23 at 6:00 PM. Refreshments will be provided. There is no charge for this program but seating is limited. Reservations are required. RSVP to barblynnns@gmail.com by August 19.

Advanced Training

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20 9AM-12PM CIBOLO NATURE CENTER (CNC), BOERNE

AT16-148 HARVESTING RAINWATER & SOLAR ENERGY

John Kight, engineer, rainwater catchment and solar panel owner, gives the latest technological information and the most practical advice. Tuition: members, \$25/person; nonmembers, \$35/person. Preregistration required; contact Ben Eldredge at ben@cibolo.org.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 23 7-9PM MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FREDRICKSBURG

AT16-143 TEXAS HILL COUNTRY PLANTS- MEDICINAL AND EDIBLE

Daneshu Clark, a Hill Country herbalist and edible plant expert, will speak at the monthly meeting of the NPSOT Fredricksburg chapter. The meeting begins with a social gathering at 6:30, followed by the program at 7; it is open to the public and there is no charge.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31 1-2 PM WEBINAR

AT16-150 AN OVERVIEW OF NRCS'S PLANTS DATABASE AND ACCOMPANYING WEBSITE

Participate to learn the basics of these sources. The database is an international standard for plant information. The presenter is Gerry Moore, Ph.D. Go to <http://www.conservationwebinars.net/webinars/an-overview-of-nrcs-plants-database-and-website>

FRIDAY, SEPT. 2 1-5PM TTU/JUNCTION CAMPUS PACKARD HOUSE, JUNCTION

AT16-151 NEW LANDOWNER WORKSHOP: WELCOME TO KIMBLE COUNTY

Speakers include the Kimble County Judge, Chief of the Appraisal District, local law enforcement, game warden, Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Kimble County Groundwater District, Texas Parks & Wildlife biologist; information on grazing leases and beekeeping. Cost: \$10. Seating is limited; pre-register by calling 325-446-2722 ext 103 or go to upperllanos@swcd.texas.gov.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 9 9AM-3PM CNC AUDITORIUM, BOERNE

AT16-152 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM TRAINING

The field trip program is for pre-K through 12th graders at the nature center. There are volunteer opportunities every weekday. For more information, contact Stephanie Colvard at Stephanie@cibolo.org.

MONDAY, SEPT. 19 8:30-10:30AM HILL COUNTRY STATE NATURAL AREA, BANDERA

AT16-229 BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Ranger Leanne Beauxbeannes and Texas Master Naturalist Scott Magee lead this guided birding walk for both beginners and experienced birders. Come to learn or teach. Bring binoculars, comfy/sturdy shoes, layered clothing, and water. If you wish, bring a picnic lunch and stay after the walk to enjoy our 5000-acre natural area on your own. Come early to register; regular day-use fees apply: Texas State Park Pass, no charge for everyone in the vehicle; Seniors (65+), \$3 with Bluebonnet Pass; kids 12 and younger, always free. RSVP appreciated; 830-796-4413.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 21 1:15-2:15PM TEXAS LIONS CAMP, KERRVILLE

AT16-113 Tree Identification Class

Jim Stanley is the presenter.

MONDAY, SEPT. 26 7PM UPPER GUADALUPE RIVER AUTHORITY AUDITORIUM, KERRVILLE

AT16-156 VITICULTURE

Andrew Labay, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service viticulture specialist, is the speaker at the monthly meeting of the Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter.

**The newsletter's publication schedule does not allow listing all AT events in each issue.
Check the chapter calendar on our website for additional AT.**



We meet on the fourth Monday of most months (but not August or December) at 7:00 PM in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Join us at 6:30 for our social half-hour.

Everyone is welcome.

Texas Master Naturalist mission:

To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.

Board of Directors 2016

- Brenda Fest -- President
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- Rheda Boardman -- Secretary
- Diane McMahan -- Treasurer
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- Bridget Langdale -- Communications Director
- Lisa Flanagan -- Membership Director
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- Diana Armbrust -- 2016 Class Director
- Larry Eskridge-- 2015 Class Representative
- Kathy Ward -- Immediate Past President

The Texas Star is a monthly publication of the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. News, essays, comments, and ideas are welcome.

Please email them to:
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The Hill Country Chapter does not recommend or endorse organizations or commercial sources mentioned in our newsletter. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and editor.



Questions about our chapter?
Email Lisa Flanagan,
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hillcountrymembership@gmail.com

