



The

# Cyrano



Newsletter

## President's Note

*Donell Frank, Chapter President*



**F**ellow TMN Chapter Members,  
As Glenn Frye said... The Heat Is On! (If you don't know who this is Google "Eagles" band.)

As I look out the window my poor Texas native plants aren't looking too happy so I can't even imagine how the non-natives are handling this Texas heat. But I know the natives will return with all their glory once the temperatures cool down, but I probably can't say the same thing about most of the non-natives. While I sit inside the house trying to recover from the morning yard chores, I'm already working on making more adjustments to my native pollinator gardens. Which basically means adding more native plants. Perfect segue to the TMN Fall Native Plant sale. See Habitat Restoration and Maintenance section.

Sadly, due to the COVID-19 pandemic last year the board voted to cancel the 2020 new member training. While other chapters incorporated virtual new member training classes, our board decided that to get the most benefits of becoming a Texas Master Naturalist it was important to have face-to-face hands on training.

Therefore, our Brazos Valley Chapter is pleased to announce we will be having our new member training classes in person this fall starting September 7, 2021. All training classes will be held at the Biodiversity and Research Training Center (BRTC). The new member training committee decided to give our normal training location, the Brazos Museum of Natural History (BVMNH) a break this year since the Discovery Room at the museum, where we have our chapter meetings and training classes, did not allow for the CDC recommended

### The 2021 TMN Brazos Valley Chapter Board

*President*

Donell Frank  
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*Vice President*

Simon Burton  
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*Secretary*

Andrea Howard  
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*Treasurer*

Amanda Chau  
[treasurer@txmnbv.org](mailto:treasurer@txmnbv.org)

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social distancing of six feet. The BRTC has a large space which will allow six feet or more for social distancing to occur.

Thank you, Heather Prestridge, for allowing our chapter to inundate the BRTC for three months or more and don't worry Deborah Cowman we will be back at the BVMNH when the situation allows us to return.

The highlight of the year for our chapter has always been the first new member training class when all our seasoned members come to meet the new trainees. This year the board has decided that we will ask the seasoned members to not attend the first training class to keep the number of people down to a minimum. There will be many opportunities to meet the new trainees in the not-too-distant future.

If somebody you know would like to become a Texas Master Naturalist, please mention the 2021 new member training class starting September 7, 2021, at 6:00pm at the BRTC. You can also send them to the website to download the schedule and register online at [TMN 2021 New Member Training](#).

### COVID-19 Status

The TMN state program's [COVID Safety and Response Guidelines](#) remain unchanged as of May 21, 2021. I will keep the chapter informed and send out updated information as it becomes available.

### Chapter Presidents' & Advisors' Meeting Update

Our next scheduled meeting is Monday, September 27, 2021. I will send out a report summarizing what was discussed.

Don't forget to register to attend the [22nd Texas Master Naturalist Program Annual Meeting](#) from October 21-24, 2021. The annual meeting is being held as a hybrid event which means you can attend virtually or in person. All you must do is log on and register for the classes that appeal to you.

In our last board meeting one of the Directors brought to our attention the importance of the TMN Program by reminding us that becoming a Texas Master Naturalist is a rewarding and educational experience because we get to learn all kinds of cool and interesting things about wildlife, nature, and how to be in tune with the world around us.

But we must remember the TMN Mission Statement from the TMN website, <https://txmn.tamu.edu>

"The Texas Master Naturalist Program's mission is 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 for the State of Texas.

Many communities and organizations rely on such citizen volunteers for implementing youth education programs; for operating parks, nature centers, and natural areas; and for providing leadership in local natural resource conservation efforts. In fact, a short supply of dedicated and well-informed volunteers is often cited as a limiting factor for community-based conservation efforts."

As the new member training classes approach, we must remember the TMN Mission Statement and pass on the volunteer aspect of the program to the new trainees. Yes, we do get to learn all kinds of cool and interesting things, but we must also be able to pass on the knowledge we gain to educate our community and to help with the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our communities.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Cheers,

Ms. Donell Frank  
[president@txmnbv.org](mailto:president@txmnbv.org)  
 979-777-8177

# Chapter Field Trips

*Kathryn Sneed, Coordinator*

Save the dates! Come and join your fellow Master Naturalists on two upcoming field trips! Details will be emailed as the dates approach.

Other potential field trips include bat viewing, mitigation banking projects for habitat restoration, wildflower center or native seed farms. Stay tuned for more updates on these trips!



Where: Hidalgo Falls on the Brazos River near Navasota

When: Saturday, November 6, 2021

What: Cheryl Metz from Blinn College will speak on the geology of the river in that area and help us learn about the rock formations there. After, there will be a picnic, kayaking, wading, and exploring!

Where: McKinney Roughs Nature Park near Bastrop

When: Sunday, March 27, 2022

What: Our long-delayed kayak trip to McKinney Roughs Nature park has finally been rescheduled! We will have a two-hour guided program and float led by a naturalist from the park.

## 2021 Annual Meeting



**Texas Master Naturalist**  
**2021 Annual Meeting**  
October 21st-24th

The 2021 State Meeting will be held October 21-24 in Irving, Texas. Online registration is open! This year's event is hybrid, so attendees can view presentations remotely or in person! To register, visit:

<https://txmn.tamu.edu/2021-annual-meeting/>

# Texas Stream Team

*Kathryn Sneed, Coordinator*

The Texas Stream Team is a statewide citizen scientist program designed to monitor water quality for the protection of Texas waterways. We obtain water samples and test for *E. coli*, temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, conductivity, and turbidity along with field observations. This year our chapter will continue to sample the following four sites, with these members as site leaders:

- Bee Creek near College Station Cemetery: Kim Roese
- Wolf Pen Creek Tributary (Taco Bell): Tali Lewis
- Bee Creek at Brison Park: Vappy Severs
- Lick Creek at Lick Creek Park (bridge on Raccoon Run): Kathryn Sneed

We are looking to recruit two volunteers for each site to assist on a regular basis. You do NOT need to be a certified stream team member to assist. Watch the calendar on the Chapter website for the sampling schedules, and feel free to observe or just jump in and help! All stream team volunteer hours count toward Texas Waters Specialist hours.





On December 5, 2020, representatives from our chapter endured the cold December weather and helped to raise the walls of a new Habitat for Humanity home for the Ocampo Family. The volunteers worked to build this house in memory of Bonnie Weber, who passed in 2019, was a member of our Texas Master Naturalist chapter.

Although it was cold, the team spent four hours preparing the foundation, moving the walls into place, and positioning them to be secured. Before the shift was over, nearly all walls had been raised.

The dedication of the new Ocampo Family Home (1210 Dale St., Bryan) will be held on Saturday, September 11, 2021.

Bonnie's enthusiasm and love for the natural world were contagious. From building bluebird boxes (pictured) to teaching Junior TMNers about turtles, Bonnie was always there.



Bonnie Weber (left)  
TMN-BV Class of 2017

# Congratulations!

Congratulations to Cheryl Lewis for being the selected recipient of the 2020 Volunteer of the Year Award!

Cheryl served as our very first Director of Habitat Restoration and Maintenance and has done superb work at our Demonstration Gardens at the BRTC. Her work can definitely be seen! Thank you, Cheryl, for all of your hard work and dedication to our chapter!



## Kudos!

Members who have re-certified:

- Simon Burton*
- Amanda Chau*
- Bill Eisele*
- Donell Frank*
- Caron Henrichs*
- Andrea Howard*
- Julie Hunt*
- Bruce Neville*
- Susan Smith*
- Betty Vermeire*
- Sue Welfel*
- Liz Worsham*

## MILESTONES

### 250 Hours

- Katie Reed*
- Kathryn Sneed*

### 500 Hours

- Simon Burton*

## Habitat Maintenance and Restoration

*Donell Frank, Director*

The HRM team is continually looking to add additional members who are hardworking and energetic to assist with several projects currently in progress.

We not only need help outside, but we also need help designing native pollinator and demonstration gardens, organizing workdays, and planning and organizing plant sales. There are plenty of opportunities to receive those much-needed volunteer hours.

The HRM team has a total of seven pollinator/demonstration gardens. Four pollinator/demonstration gardens are already established and are currently being maintained with three pollinator/demonstration gardens currently proposed. Each native pollinator/demonstration garden is described below with wants and needs whether the gardens are in the proposed or working stages.

One goal that the HRM team would like to adopt for every pollinator/demonstration garden is to create signage informing visitors the common and scientific names of all native plants and some non-native plants that are beneficial for wildlife found within the garden.

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The HRM team meets the last Saturday of every month for scheduled workdays. Emails are sent out the middle of the month for reminders of where and when we will be working and what we will be doing.

### Biodiversity and Research Teaching Collections (BRTC):

This garden is under the tutelage of Cheryl Lewis. She has been the champion of this garden for many years, and she continues to maintain, expand, and improve this garden to keep it in tip top shape. This is also the location of our TMN greenhouse.

### Lick Creek Park (LCP) kiosk pollinator garden:

A watering schedule has been created to water the LCP pollinator garden. If anyone would like to join the fun, please let me know and I will send you the watering schedule so you may sign up to take a turn. We still have many openings available for watering. The plan is to water until October depending on the temperatures and amount of rainfall.



**THANK YOU, Jim and Kitty Anding**, for keeping the hummingbird feeders clean and full of tasty sugar water. The kiosk has even received a fresh new paint job. Someone has generously placed some walking sticks next to the TMN bulletin board for the public to use on their hike through the park and replace once their hike is finished. I wonder if the painting of the kiosk and the creation of the walking sticks is the work of our very own Jim and Kitty Anding? I think we all know the answer to that question. A resounding YES is what I hear. Jim and Kitty have been the champions of this garden for many years, and it definitely shows. **THANK YOU, Jim and Kitty**, for all your hard work at the LCP garden!!

### Invasive species removal at LCP:

The chapter has also been involved with removing invasive species such as Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), privet (*Ligustrum spp.*), and Chinaberry trees (*Melia azedarach*) at LCP. This had been put on hold since the closure of the trails due to the installation of a new sewer trunk line that runs through Lick Creek Park. The trails have since re-opened, and the plan is to reinstate this program once we receive clearance from the College Station Parks and Recreation Department.

### Gabbard Park pollinator garden:

This small College Station garden needs to be checked about once a week for weeding and deadheading spent flowers. No watering is required for this garden because an irrigation system is already in place. In the beginning native drought resistant plants were planted but never survived because they were being overwatered. We decided if you can't beat them just join them and plants that liked water were planted instead.

Plant identification signs were eventually added to let park visitors know the common and scientific names of the plants in the garden.

### Butterfly Garden at Andy Anderson Arboretum Creek [Bee Creek Park]:

This large butterfly garden was added to the HRM list in June. The butterfly garden was started by The Butterflies in the Brazos organization ([ButterfliesintheBrazos](http://ButterfliesintheBrazos)) and the communities of Brazos County. Our chapter has had two workdays at this garden beginning in July. We will continue to add native plants to the garden as the seasons allow and remove the invasive privet which surrounds the garden.

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**Moore Wild Bird demonstration garden (proposed):**

The management at Moore Wild Birds approached the chapter about designing and installing a native demonstration garden. The current landscape at the establishment consists of a few native plants with mostly non-native plants. The design and list of native plants has been finalized but the difficulty is now finding established plants large enough to maintain a finished garden appearance.

**Lake Bryan pollinator garden (proposed):**

In 2018 our chapter was contacted by Bryan Texas utilities (BTU) to create a pollinator garden and conduct surveys along a new trail being developed at Lake Bryan. We have been in contact off an on with BTU over the past couple of years. We need to finalize the garden design with a list of native plants to present to BTU. Once we receive approval for the design and the list of native plants from BTU we will be ready to get started on this long awaited project.

**Lake Somerville pollinator garden (proposed):**

This garden is located at the Birch Creek Unit at Lake Somerville. Andrea Howard will take on the leadership and organization of this garden.

**Jay Pritchard Trail (maintenance):**

The Jay Pritchard Trail is located at the southeast corner of the parking lot of the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History. Jay Pritchard passed away in 2014. He was a dedicated TMN member and devoted many hours sharing his knowledge with children at the Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History.

In 2018 the chapter decided to make the Jay Pritchard trail the new member class project. Each new member training class will be responsible for trail maintenance and invasive species removal on the trail. The location and ease of access to the trail

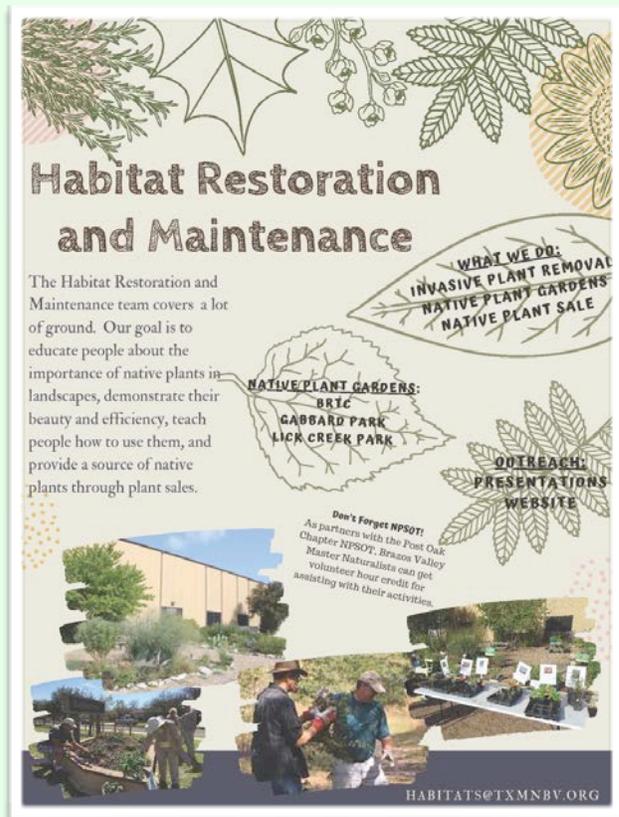
provides a way to keep the new members involved as a group and gives them the

opportunity to start earning their required 40 hours of volunteer service. Which means the upcoming new training class of 2021 will be responsible for maintaining the trails.

**TMN Fall plant sale:**

The plant sale is scheduled for October 2021 and is usually held at the BRTC. If anyone is interested in helping plan this event, please email [habitats@txmnbv.org](mailto:habitats@txmnbv.org).

If you would like more information or are interested in any of the projects listed above, please email me at [habitats@txmnbv.org](mailto:habitats@txmnbv.org).



# A Note from the Cyrano Editor

Megan Konarik

**W**elcome to a new era from your new Cyrano editor! I'm sure we are all excited to be emerging from our quarantine spaces and ready to get back to what's important: nature! Maybe some of us never really left nature to herself. Maybe some of us found new places to explore and became more in tune with our favorite songbirds. Or, maybe some of us retreated and searched our souls to find what really matters to us. As we ease back into a new normal, I hope that this fresh, new issue inspires all of us to go out there with a renewed sense of purpose. After all, we have been through a lot in the past eighteen months, and we have so much to look forward to. This issue is loaded with new projects to get your hands dirty and help make a difference!

This newsletter cannot exist without a team effort, so I'd like to thank each and every one of you who contributed. The submissions are not limited to officers, directors, or chairmen, but to anyone that has anything nature-related to

share. Have you been to a great new state park lately? Or do you have a particular topic that you are knowledgeable about? Then send a piece my way! We welcome a variety of submissions.

Since this is my first issue as Editor, I'd like to briefly introduce myself. I'm a Texas native, growing up not far from here on prairies of Milam County. I've had a life-long love for nature; as a kid, I always wanted to be outside. I spent some years at Sam Houston State in Huntsville (Eat 'Em Up, Kats!), and learned to love the Piney Woods. I have been in Brazos County for 7 years, and I'm incredibly lucky to be within quick reach of both natural worlds. I am a graduate of the TMN-BV Chapter Class of 2017, and you'll often find me snapping photos at our events. I hope you enjoy this issue and let it inspire you to come join us in our many projects, and if you have questions, comments, or ideas for the newsletter, please send them my way! Or if you have questions for a specific project, see the last page for contact information. Enjoy!

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## Lake Somerville: A New Project in the Works

Andrea Howard, Chapter Secretary and Contributor

**N**estled behind the headquarters at Lake Somerville State Park is a 1400 square-foot area ready for the planting. A plan in the making for the past year, this barren mulched area will soon become the park's pollinator garden. As part of the parks mission to restore native habitat and educate the public about the local Eco region, this garden will showcase a number of pollinator plants which grow in the area. To help bring awareness to less well-known pollinator plants, staff at the park have been collecting seeds from plants around the park to propagate in the greenhouse for use out in the garden.

The pollinator garden is a large undertaking and could always use the help of volunteers, like the Master Naturalists who are passionate and dedicated to the work they do.

For more information, watch your email for updates, check our website's calendar, or email: [secretary@txmnbv.org](mailto:secretary@txmnbv.org)



## Upcoming Events

### September Chapter Meeting

When: Thursday, September 16, 2021 @6:30 p.m.

Where: Brazos County Extension Office, 4153 County Park Court, Bryan

Speaker: Dale Kruse, curator of the S.M. Tracy Herbarium at Texas A&M University, presentation titled: Understanding the common grasses of the Post Oak Savannah.

### Native Plant Sale

When: October 2021

Where: To Be Determined

What: Volunteers needed to help gather plants to fill orders and hand them to customers. Please stay tuned for specific dates and times!

### Boonville Days

When: Saturday, October 16, 2021

Where: Brazos Valley Museum of Natural History

What: Volunteers needed to help staff booth with information and children's crafts. Stay tuned for specific times!

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**HHW is a FREE EVENT for the residents of Brazos Valley.**

Please visit our website for updates about our upcoming events!

<https://txmn.org/brazos/>

# Biodiversity Research and Teaching Collections/S.M. Tracy Herbarium Update

*Cheryl Lewis, Contributor*

The Brazos Valley Texas Master Naturalists have had a longstanding commitment to maintain the BRTC (Biodiversity Research and Teaching Collections) garden for our sponsor, curator Heather Prestridge. The Tracy Herbarium garden was created as an extension of the BRTC garden and to show our gratitude to curator Dale Kruse for his years of dedication to the Texas Master Naturalist program as a lecturer at annual meetings and various chapters.

The BRTC garden's purpose is to provide an outdoor classroom and respite for Texas A&M students and faculty. Students from various departments are encouraged to participate in maintenance on the first Friday of the month under the leadership of Dwight Bohlmeyer. Dwight was party to the garden's creation and continues to help improve and maintain it. This year he

added bird feeding stations which have increased bird visits and provided opportunities for students to practice bird identification and study bird health. Dwight also planted the beautiful obedient plants that have been blooming around the feeders and attracting bumblebees.

In 2020, Post Oak Chapter Native Plant Society of Texas was given permission to set up a native plant nursery on the garden grounds. In return, the nursery provides plants for both gardens. Host plants for lepidoptera and nectar plants for spring and summer are needed.

Plans for monthly maintenance days are in the works, so stay tuned for more opportunities to earn volunteer hours. You may also earn volunteer hours when you help out in the nursery.

Questions? Email: [cheryl77845@gmail.com](mailto:cheryl77845@gmail.com)

Texas A&M Biodiversity Research  
and Teaching Collections

3380 University Dr. E  
College Station, TX 77845



# Getting Back to It!

Katie Reed, Outreach Director

After about a year of paused in-person activities due to COVID-19, we participated in our first outreach event at St. Thomas Early Learning Center for their spring festival on May 22, 2021. This was the first time our chapter had a presence at this event, and it was a great success, despite some weather interruptions. Our team of five volunteers ran three interrelated centers, all focused on the theme of seeds, hosting over 270 adults and children at our activities.

Since the event was outdoors at the Early Learning Center's playground, we focused on learning activities for kids. We had several different options for visitors to learn about seeds. One activity allowed kids to get their hands a little dirty by planting their own seed to take home. We had an assembly line set up where visitors could select the seed they wanted to plant—wildflowers, or various fruits and vegetables—and our volunteers helped them pack it in the dirt and give it a little water. We also had a seed matching activity where visitors had to decide which seed came from which fruit.

Here they learned that the size of the seed isn't necessarily related to the size of the fruit it produces. Lastly, our more active visitors could go on a seed journey in our obstacle course, where they learned about some of the ways seeds travel. To make it through the journey, they had to float across water (get a ping pong ball across a tub of water), travel through the digestive tract of a large animal (crawl through a tunnel with googly eyes on the front), across the fur of a mammal (roll along a fur blanket), and get blown across a prairie (weave through a line a pinwheels). Our afternoon was cut a little short by a sudden rainstorm, but thanks to the small-but-mighty group of volunteers that day, we were able to share our information with the community and make it home safely despite the downpour.

If you're interested in volunteering at future outreach events, please contact Katie Reed, Outreach Director ([outreach@txmnbv.org](mailto:outreach@txmnbv.org)) or watch your email for notices about upcoming events.



## Contact Us:

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### Historian

*Wendi Gibson*  
[historian@txmnbv.org](mailto:historian@txmnbv.org)

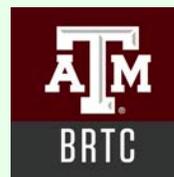
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