



The Tracker

The Central Texas Master Naturalist Newsletter

June, 2012

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CTMN Angler Education Instructors Receive Coveted Community Award

- Ursula Nanna

On Tuesday, April 10th, at the City Federation Foundation of Women of Temple, Ursula Nanna accepted on behalf of the CTMN Angler Education Instructors a grant for the amount of \$300.

The Federation received a grant proposal from Ursula with guidance from Ilene Miller without whom this grant would not be possible. After Committee review, CTMN AED was chosen for

the outreach work we do with Community in Schools

(CIS) and the ACE school programs. Our goal is to 'leave no child inside' by instilling in those we teach the love of outdoors and the ethical and environmental responsibilities that entails.

Each youth receives hands-on attention and tons of encouragement. We see the youth transform from shy and quiet to happy



Calendar at a Glance

- June 2, 8:15, Miller Springs Nature Event
- June 4, 8 am, Salado Sculpture Garden Workday
- June 12, 6 pm, Graduation/General Meeting/Bat Presentation
- June 21, 8 am, 4H Sports Fishing Event in Austin
- July 7, 8:30 am, Butterfly Count, Nolan Creek
- September 8, For the Birds, Miller Springs

Chapter Motto

**Earth Day,
Every Day**



Continued on page 9.



From the President's Pen

- Mary Ann

Isn't it hard to believe that the summer is upon us, and we have that hot, muggy weather again, same as last year? I note the outside temp at ten o'clock at night, and it has been hovering around 85 degrees. Working in the yard has given me some time to observe my purple martins in action. I love to watch their antics and enjoy their chit-chat as they are in and out of the two martin houses we have mounted on our fence, which is between our house and our neighbors, so they can also enjoy these wonderful animals. I watched as they left their nests and soared ever higher in search of insects. It is amazing how high they can get. Right now, at six in the morning, they are already at it with their distinctive calls. They will sometimes land on the high wires and watch me as I work in my yard.

Another bird I have seen in our neighborhood, but didn't recall them being here last year is the common nighthawk. It too has a distinctive call, as it soars to heights in search of insects. This bird is very well camouflaged. I was introduced to this bird while helping Reid Lewis at Temple College. These birds would hunker down in the parking lot by the nursing building, and you would miss them, if you didn't know what you were looking for, they blend in so well with the background. They have white bars on the end of their wings. You can go to allaboutbirds.org and read about them and play their call. I would bet you will have heard them when you play the typical voice.

Speaking of interesting nature items, we have happened upon very unusual insects. One was found living in a few pieces of cut wood by the grill. They happened to be carpenter bees, which have dense yellow hair on their abdomen and hind legs. The female is the one which bores into wood, preparing the nest, which these bees will use year after year in some cases. These nests harbor the nursery, and is supplied with nectar and regurgitated pollen. These in-

sects nest in a wide range of softwoods and hardwoods. They can also nest in the fascia of homes, and if you happen to be sitting outside, lounging on your favorite chair and feel something falling upon you, and looking like sawdust, chances are it is one of these pests. And while the males dive-bomb humans, which may cause alarm, they cannot sting as only the females have stingers, but even the females don't tend to sting, unless one tries to handle them.

Last but not least, I found a black moth with white edges on its lower wings, hanging on the fascia of home I visited Sunday. The owner said she had been killing many of these insects for days. I have caught one, and I just knew it was the Black Witch Moth, but now I don't think this is it. I have been diligently trying to identify this beauty, but as yet no such luck.

While out in nature, it is so easy to overlook even the smallest nondescript thing, but upon closer examination, a new world opens up. As so often happens, one tends to want to learn more about what is out there, as so much is as yet even identified, as with this black



moth. Just try 'googling' black moth with white edges on lower wings, and you will come to appreciate how many moths have yet to be identified, and how many truly beautiful color combinations are out there. So while you

are outside, try looking for the nondescript. You may just happen upon something that tweaks your interest and open a whole new world.



Top Photo by Jerry Oldenettel on www.earbirding.com
Bottom photo by Alan and Elaine Wilson on www.wildlifenorthamerica.com

Texas Turtle Watch

- Richard McCarthy

The Texas Turtle Watch was established at the Fort Worth Zoo through a grant from

the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. It is a citizen science program developed to collect data on three native turtle species whose population numbers are poorly understood.

The Data Report Form; Turtle Watch Curriculum and Training Guide; and The Texas Turtle Watch brochure are all available online at: www.fortworthzoo.org/texas .

Turtles are fun to watch even though they are very elusive. Any pond, stream, river, lake or wetland may have a turtle or turtles.

Watching turtles requires only patience, field glasses, and a love of nature. The only physical effort being the trip to the site.

The information gathered at the site is recorded on “Texas Turtle Watch Sighting Report Form”. This information is used to establish a base line of the turtle population and determine impact of urbanization and commercial harvesting activities on the various species.

The focus of recorded data is only related to sliders, cooters and softshells. Any additional information relating to other species is recorded in the “other notes” section of the report form.

To assist you in your identification of turtles you might

www.txmn.org/centraltexas



want to contact “Texas Parks & Wildlife” for their booklet,” An Introduction To Texas Turtles”, by Mark Klym.

So put on your floppy hat, pick-up your binoculars, a Turtle Field Guide, a bottle of water and have a great day outdoors.



Miller Springs Project

- Mary Ann Everett

Since there have been a lot of questions about our chapter's partnership with Miller Springs Alliance, I have decided to shed some light upon this wonderful nature area we have in our Bell County area.

We formed a partnership with Miller Springs Alliance several months ago. The Alliance has been struggling, and has been trying to help the ranger. Yes, it is amazing that they operate on such a shoe string. There are two Rangers: Artie, and then Murray, who is a District Ranger now. They are with the Corps of Engineers, who own the park.

The Alliance has been trying to get things going as far as making this nature area into something. There is a vision here, to make this into a place where folks can come and enjoy nature. As master naturalists I think this is right up our alley. Helping the community build something in which everyone can enjoy the outdoors. Actually I had thought about the idea about doing some nature series, copying what HOT has done at Speigleville Park and Salado does at the library, but this is in an outdoor setting.

We envision having folks come to the covered 'pavilion' area right off the parking lot, and start there. Maybe have Ray and Laura give an overview of the area, and then take a walk down into the valley, but not to the extent that we do with the MN. Make it an overall fun experience. Maybe two hours at most. I am hoping we will have children in addition to adults.

The Alliance has also said we could sell the nature guides.

In addition to the nature series, there are also other opportunities to help: Trail Work Days, maintaining blue bird houses, serving on the Alliance, helping with fundraising, as with all things, money is needed to help with various projects, help with PR, helping with the nature series.

What's coming up at Miller Springs? Please add these dates to your calendar.

Saturday, June 2, 8:15 a.m., "The Good and The Bad - Can You Tell The Difference? Invasives," led by Lynn and others of our invasive trained Master Naturalists. This will be an opportunity to make this into a working day, getting rid of some of those invasives we have at the Springs.

Saturday, September 8, 8:00 a.m., "For the Birds," with Gil Eckrich and any of our birding Master Naturalists.

Please join us for a fun-filled year at Miller Springs!

The First in the Series!

- Zoe Rascoe

Miller Springs Nature Walk, first in a series of "walk and talks" sponsored by CTMN and open to the public. Geology was the topic on May 5th with Ray Kozusko and Laurie Fitzgerald, our CTMN member geologists, as instructors and tour guides through the interesting geological sites at Miller Springs. There were 13 CTMN members onsite to help with the event and to sell naturalist merchandise as a chapter fundraiser.



Photos by Zoe Rascoe

Thomas Arnold Elementary School in Salado Celebrates Earth Day

- Debbie Blair

On Friday, April 20, under threatening skies, with rain forecast all day long, CTMN braved the elements for an outdoor Earth Day event at Thomas Arnold Elementary School in Salado. Principal, Lisa Nix, cheerily said "It's a go!" as we gathered our supplies and set up before classes started. We did decide to move the after-lunch presentations inside. Luckily, the morning rain held off and we had a hugely successful event.

We had ten Master Naturalists volunteer with several parents and some community members rounding out the core group. Five of the CTMN volunteers included new members, Miriam Jordan, Marjorie Lewis, Kristin Hamilton, Sandra Summers and Tom Olsen. Boy, these newbies are just raring to go! Founding members, Louann Height and Mary Ann Everett were as dependable as ever, as they organized the Leaf

Rubbing and the Butterfly Lifecycle stations. Marilyn Whitworth and Lyna Pitts provided help throughout the day.

And while I worked with Principal

Nix to oversee the volunteer effort, Ursula Nanna held an after-lunch hands-on presentation about Marine Debris. A parent, Jim Giocomo, a bird specialist (and also a very knowledgeable expert on many wildlife topics) joined Nanna in the afternoon presentations to second grade and pre-K students. He displayed (legally he is authorized to handle these) and explained his bird nests exhibit.

Beth Correra, with the Central Texas Council of Governments also participated in the afternoon presentations by bringing her mobile water run-off and ground pollution display. It's an active display of the ground with several sample locations of how anything poured on the



Clockwise from top: Second graders looking at birds' nests; leaf rubbing: students learning about marine debris.

Photos throughout this article by Debbie Blair and Richard McCarthy.

Earth Day Celebrated...continued

ground can seep down and/or run off into the water table. She pours examples of oil, harmful chemicals, etc. (displayed with colored water) onto the top of the display and children can see it trickle down underneath into the water table. Her goal is to educate young people



about how easily anything that is poured onto the ground can end up polluting our environment.



Needless to say, with the help of our CTMN and parent volunteers, and the organization of Principal Nix, we spent a little over five hours educating about 250 children (pre-K to Second grade) and adults about our environment and how to help take care of it. Plus, several of us got to have a great and inexpensive lunch at the school cafeteria! And to top it all off, we got to get to know each other better.

Just a note: the administration, staff (teachers and maintenance), parent volunteers and the students were truly a joy to work with! We hope to do something like this again next year.



Clockwise from top right : Miriam Jordan reading *Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle; afternoon volunteers:

Debbie Blair, Marilyn Whitworth, Marjorie Lewis, Ursula Nanna, Lyna Pitts, Miriam Jordan, Louann Hight; Mary Ann Everett displaying butterflies as some students wait for leaf rubbing; Marjorie Lewis with kids looking at marine debris; Marilyn Whitworth helping first grader.



2012 Earth Day Events in Salado

- Ursula Nanna

On Friday and Saturday, April 20th and 21st, the youth at Thomas Arnold Elementary, including the pre-K class, were knee-deep in Marine Debris. From what it is to how to make it better, the youth were enthusiastic and full of questions.....and answers. I never cease to be amazed at the intuition of our youth and the depth of their questions. Approximately 100 youth participated in my class. Miriam Jordan, Marilyn Whitworth, and Marjorie Lewis were terrific helpers.

Then on Saturday, April 21, at Salado Earth Day 9am to 5 pm, CTMN Angler Education Instructors Kathy Cantu, Ursula Nanna, Lyna Pitts, and Liz Pool partici-



pated in teaching Knots and Tackle and Bait and Lures. Gail Christian took her usual, great photos. Many of the youth that visited our Docks remembered us from the day before at the school. Here we were visited by 130 family and youth asking questions about fish teeth and the best knot to know how to tie.

There were many other CTMN's running the Master



Naturalist booth that day selling our hand-made Bluebird houses and Nature Guides along with providing lots of valuable information.

Becky Denton and Debbie Blair put together a wonderful Earth Day for us.

Photos by Gail Christian

NOTABLE NATURALISTS

By Darla Horner Menking

As the Central Texas Master Naturalist chapter, let's honor those who have gone before us- by reviewing their "notable" accomplishments in each newsletter. Please take the time to glance over the brief bio presented in this column, in appreciation for those early (and recent) contributions by naturalists who really were "masters"!



Roy Bedichek

I chose for this newsletter to introduce Texas Naturalist Roy Bedichek. He wasn't born a native Texan, but he lived his life as if he was. I can tell, by what I read about him, that he loved Texas, moving to this state from Illinois when he was only five years old, in 1883.

He grew up in Eddy, Texas, loving the Blackland Prairie area. He seems like he was such a "down-to-earth" kind of guy, as he taught high school English after graduating from The University of Texas, as well as being a newspaper editor in San Antonio. He began writing later in life, with his fourth book being published after his death in 1959.

His books seem to emulate his love of nature and of others who do as well. He spent time outside, walking, gardening, camping, noticing, appreciating... like, well like us, fellow Master Naturalists.

If you have a chance to check out his books, the titles are: *Adventures with a Texas Natu-*

ralist, Karánkaway Country, Educational Competition: The Story of the University Interscholastic League of Texas, and The Sense of Smell.



If anyone would like to contribute a brief bio for this column, please feel free to do so and email it to Terrie Hahn at moompie45@hotmail.com for future publications. Thanks!

Central Texas Master Naturalists

Please join us
As we honor our new graduates
Old Fashioned Ice Cream Social

Tuesday, June 12, 2011
6:00 - 8:00pm

Harris Community Center
401 N. Alexander Street
Belton

Family Members of Graduates are Welcome

Followed by Texas Bat Presentation
By Cindy Bolch



Coveted Award...continued from page one

and enthusiastic within a very short time. Their joy is our reward ten-fold!!!!

There were 10 additional grants awarded and as a CTMN Angler Education Instructor,

Ursula was both proud and humbled to have our little niche chosen as a contributing entity to our community and local environment.

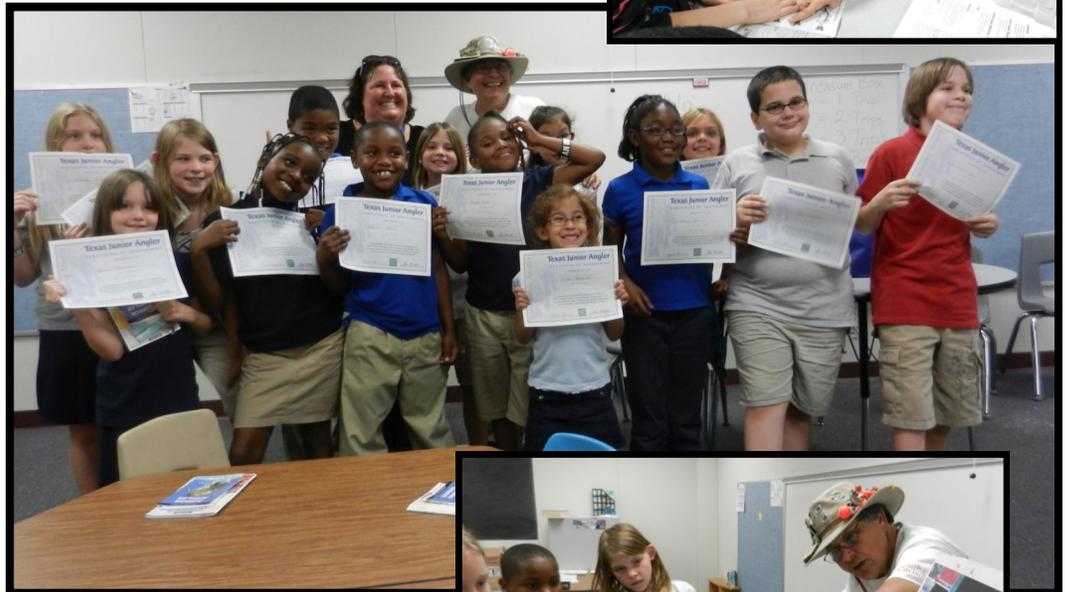
Thank you to all the CTMN AED Instructors and volunteers for your constant contribution to AED and raising the teaching to the exciting level it is now. Your impact, through Angler Education, is being felt and seen in the community.

Angler Ed News

CIS Graduates 14 Youth

- Ursula Nanna

Community In Schools (CIS) Teacher and Certified TPWD Angler Education Instructor, Michelle Champlin, and CTMN Angler Education Instructor Ursula Nanna worked together at Clear Creek Elementary, Killeen, to graduate 14 - 3rd graders as TPWD Junior Anglers. Michelle is the very first of 45 CIS Angler Instructors, certified this past September, to graduate an Angler class.



The classes presented in two sessions, April 4 and April 11, 2012, with the first session teaching the Docks of Fishing Safety and Regulations, Knots and Tackle, and Fish Habitat. The second Docks were of Bait and Lures, Angler Ethics and Responsibilities, and Casting.

Everyone had fun. The youth were hands-on and enthusiastic and ready to go !!!

A special 'thank you' to Gail Christian for her photo talents.

The graduation was electric and everyone applauded for everyone!!! How fun !!!!

CONGRATULATIONS to Michelle Champlin.

More Angler Ed News on next page.



April is Finished on a High Note

-Ursula Nanna

On April 28, 2012, Angler Education Instructors finished up the month by teaching both youth from Belton 4-H and a group of Harker Heights Cub Scouts from Pack 248.

Parents and youth participated in every aspect of the teaching Docks sharing their experiences and fishing stories. Because of their excellent contribution to the class, parents were given honorary Junior Angler certificates and pins.

Many remained after the graduation to just talk or to thank us for a great Saturday morning. Monday we got a phone call thanking us for a great way to have spent family time.

Instructors were all certified Angler Education Instructors: DJ Campbell, James Anderson, Gail Christian, Tom Christian, Don Wyatt, Liz Pool, Lyna Pitts, Ray Machovsky, Kathy Cantu, Ursula Nanna, and Gail Hughling.



We are packed with events for the month of May and hope to complete the year in June with the Sportsfishing Event in Austin on the 21st and a 1st time surprise event on November 3rd. Volunteers are always welcomed. Let Ursula know: fishingpole16@gmail.com Join us and become a CTMN Angler Education Instructor by taking a short class.

Angler Instructors in Rockdale, Texas

- Ursula Nanna

On Saturday, 4-14-12 Angler Education Instructors James Anderson and Tom Christian, CTMN Volunteers Marilyn Whitworth and Richard McCarthy, and CTMN Angler Education Instructors Gail Christian, Lyna Pitts, Kathy Cantu, Don Wyatt, and Ursula Nanna presented Angler Education in a tornado....well, it felt like one !!!

Too windy for a pop-up or to display our posters, we duct-taped everything we could to our tables, and then duct-taped at least 4 more times before day's end. Casting in the wind took on a whole new meaning and Fish Habitat



Continued on next page...

Anglers in Rockdale...continued

and Identification was next to impossible. Once again, Kathy Cantu managed to forge out and surmounted the wind in her own uncanny way with her hand-cart and masking tape. Marine Debris and Environmental Ethics were 'gone-with-the-wind', LOL....

We spent more time laughing at the way we faced the challenges of the wind and chasing hand-outs and sometimes a hat or two and a table once, than we did at most anything else.



Casting fish were caught in trees and on pavilion roofs and one was lost for a time. 222 people braved a path in the wind to visit our demonstration tables. It was an inaugural day at being an angler Education Instructor for Tom and James and Gail, newly certified on April 13th, 2012. We were well spent by day's end but we had fun anyway.



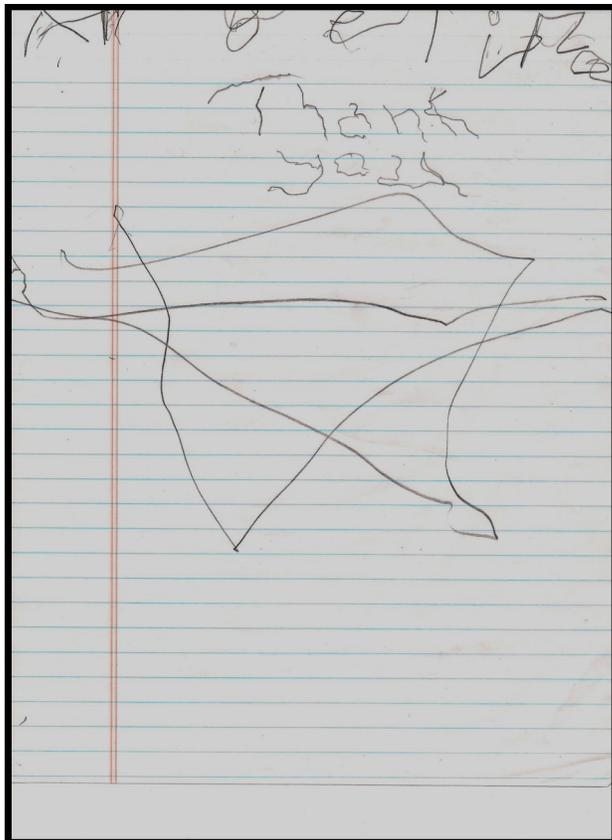
More Angler Ed News on next page.

CTMN Angler Instructors Finish up the Season

- Ursula Nanna

May began on the 3rd, 8am - 2pm at Trimmier Elementary teaching 224 - 3rd and 5th graders about Knots and Tackle, Fishing Safety and Regulations, and Fish Habitat and Identification.

I must digress here and tell you about a 5th grader



who was profoundly blind. She attended Fishing Safety and Knots and Tackle as they are "Hands-on". After the rotation, she, along with her interpreter, left the class roomshortly thereafter, they returned....went quietly to a side desk....remained there for a short time and then came up to me.....In Angeliqua's sweet little hands was a picture she drew of a fish to thank us for having her participate in our classes. This is a real treasure.....

Thanks go to Lyna Pitts, Liz Pool, Ursula Nanna, DJ Campbell, and Kathy Cantu.

May 5th we were invited to participate in the Salado Library Naturalist Series. We had an hour and the whole lawn in front of the library to teach Casting, Knots and Tackle, and Fish Habitat and Identification. This

More Angler Ed News on next page.



Anglers Finish Season...continued

was very interesting and we had our youngest participant of 2 1/2 years old....she loved the casting!!!! Tom Christian, Gail Christian, Kathy Cantu, Lyna Pitts, Liz Pool, Miriam Jordan, Don Wyatt, and Ursula Nanna gave new meaning to Angler Education !!!



May 9th, Clear Creek Elementary invited us back for Science and Career night from 4:30 – 6:30 pm. Here, Richard McCarthy, Marilyn Whitworth, Gail Christian and

Ursula Nanna demonstrated Bait and Lures, Marine Debris, and Fish Habitat and Identification for 263 youth. It was a fun time and we answered about a zillion fishing questions from: Do fish have teeth? to Why don't fish drown living in all that water?

On this note, Angler Instructors have completed their outreach education and deserve a much needed rest.....Some of us will appreciate just being at home more; some will go to the coast and fish more, some will visit their children and grandchildren; some will take a risk III – IV white-water rafting trip.....

Thank you to all who have participated and made this a year of learning and teaching wonderful and memorable. To the new TPWD certified Angler Instructors, welcome aboard and watch emails for upcoming events.



Angler Ed photos by Gail Christian, Ursula Nanna and Richard McCarthy.

Orienteering Class Fun

- Zoe Rascoe

A new training class has been added to the CTMN Training curriculum: Orienteering and Map Reading.

Zoe Rascoe provided instruction on various maps, legends and map resources (but not on how to fold a map) and how those handy compasses work. Phil Everett, local Boy Scout Troop leader and husband to Mary Ann, carefully mapped out a mile long course through Lions Park in Temple in which participants utilized their new-found orienteering skills to get from the "start" to "finish." Orienteering, by definition, is finding your way using a map and compass. Not as easy as a Boy Scout might have you think! Attendees



emerge. It REALLY took the whole team carefully



communicating and working together to complete the task. The first team to make a successful transfer of "toxic" material was made up of Bill Messer, Sandy Summers, Tom Olsen and Louann Hight. Success was defined as "no one died, only got a little sick." It was a formidable

challenge, Lynn! The class was open to all CTMN members and nearly 25 were in attendance.



were also challenge with a team activity engineered by Lynn Fleming and assisted by Darla Menking. Teams of 4 were instructed to move the contents of a large red can into a small red can without touching either. As a matter of fact, the content of the large can was considered highly toxic and no one could get within 8 feet of the container. Each team was only given rope and a few pieces of inner tube with which to work.

After considerable head scratching and some failed attempts, successful procedures began to



Elementary School Field Trips to the Waco Wetlands

- Richard McCarthy

Waco Wetlands Program Coordinator, Nora Schell, provides guidance, coordination, scheduling and instruction to elementary school field trips to the wetlands. These field trips are provided free to the area elementary schools. The youngsters participate in a variety of scientific tests and hands on exercises in wetland and water related activities.

Groups are usually exposed to two or more activities including; Water Testing, Arthropod Adventure, Water Cycle, Watersheds and Functioning of a Wetland.

- **In Water Testing**, the student procures a sample from the wetlands and tests it for: Dissolved Oxygen, PH, Clarity, Temperature and other characteristics.

- **For Arthropod Adventures** the student collects samples by using dip nets and collecting trays. These samples of arthropods are sorted, and identi-

fied. Counting and recording the macro invertebrates will provide the student sufficient data to make a judgment as to the health of the wetlands.



Volunteers from the Heart of Texas Master Naturalist Chapter, Jeanene Betros; and Central Texas Chapter, Richard McCarthy and Marilyn Whitworth are assisting Nora with the program when large classes are scheduled.



The youngsters seem to enjoy the wetlands and the total experience as well as having fun. The volunteers enjoy it as much as if not more than the youngsters.

New Class Update

- Zoe Rascoe



Above, Class Tahuaya Sandy: Sandy was a good sport when she volunteered to be the Cow for the rangeland demonstration with Dalton Merz. And yes, that's a real (dried) cow tail sticking out of her jeans; Below, 7th Class monitoring equipment: Bill Messer and Darla Menking take a turn operating the monitoring equipment as Tom Olsen looks on.



Left, Class Tahuaya Yvonne: Trainees Yvonne Eele studies the plant samples and clues provided by Dalton Merz as she completes the ID quiz. Bill Messer won the prize for most items correctly identified! 6th Class Sara connects with turtle.



Below: 6th Class Rob K: Rob Krueger, Herpetologist and HOT Master Naturalist, brought totes and bags

full of reptiles and amphibians to share; and 6th Class Herp Cathy: Cathy Foreman ain't skerd!



Above, Darla Menking's photos of the Ichthyology class.

Got Fossils?

- Zoe Rascoe

Dr. Pamela Owen, Sr. Paleontologist for the Texas Natural Science Museum was the instructor for a Fossil Identification Class for 36 Master Naturalists from three area chapters on May 22nd. Dr. Owen also has a mammology background and has taught that course for Master Naturalist trainees a number of times. She said, however, this was the first time she's been asked to teach Fossil Identification to Master Naturalists. She had a very enthusiastic group of learners. With the number of times CTMN members and El Comino Real chapter members have been to the bottom of New Canyon at Miller Springs and seen the great number of fossils just lying about, we were all anxious to figure out exactly what sorts of sea creatures from long, long ago we were holding in our hands. Dr. Owen walked us through the various geologic periods for Texas and showed us the types of fossilization processes that take place with critters and plants. Each table had a bag of fossils for us to study more closely as she moved through her slides, but the stand-out item was a saber tooth tiger skull. Not an actual one mind you, but a replica. Close enough to garner oo's and ah's, from us fossil hunter amateurs, though.

There was great interest in having Dr. Owen return to teach us more about Fossils and Fossilization and she agreed to do so. If you missed the fossil class and had hoped to attend, it may seem like a million years until the next one, but time flies if you're not a rock!



April's Awards and Certifications



- Zoe Rascoe

Right, Mary Ann Everett awarded recertifications to Linda Young, Richard McCarthy, Marilyn Whitworth, Ursula Nanna and Liz Pool.

Below from left, Ursula Nanna receives 500 milestone pin. She's been doing tons of Angler Ed events! Louann Hight receives 250 hour milestone pin; bottom photos are of Pearl Fellingham, Class of 2011 receiving her badge and Janis Holmes, Class of 2010 receiving her certification and first year pin.



Becky Denton and Sidney Van Loh were not present to receive their 250 hour milestone pins. Barry Culwell also earned his certification, but was not present to receive it.



The Presentation for the April Meeting was given by Mary Ann Everett, Louann Hight and Linda Young on Texas Forest Service Firewise Program.

Photos by Zoe Rascoe

Announcements

May General Meeting/Graduation

- **Zoe Rascoe**

It's that time of year again! We are graduating our newest class of Master Naturalists on June 12th.

Note that our location has moved for this meeting - we will be at the Harris Community Center (401 N. Alexander Street in Belton) due to a conflict at our usual location.

We will have the graduation celebration and chapter awards starting at 6:00pm followed by ice cream sundaes. Graduates are encouraged to bring your families! At 7:00 everyone is welcome to stay for a presentation on bats by Cindy Bolch from the El Comino Real Chapter Master Naturalists.

Hope to see you at the Harris Community Center that night! **AT**

Salado Sculpture Garden Work

- **Becky Denton**

Our regular monthly gardening day at the Salado Sculpture Garden will be Monday, June 4th, at 8am.

This event is always scheduled for the first Monday of each month; if you are interested in this project please put it on your calendar. I will no longer send monthly reminders.

Please contact me with any questions at 254-718-5374, 254-947-5626 or bekydenton@embarqmail.com.

Thanks to all who have helped with this project. If you haven't been on this team. I hope you will find time to visit the sculpture garden and enjoy. **AT**

V Approved for Volunteer Hours
AT Approved for Advanced Training
MA Must Apply for approval of hours

Miller Springs Nature Event

- **Mary Ann Everett**

We have our second nature event at Miller Springs this Saturday, June 2. Beginning at 8:30 a.m. Plan on being there at 8:15 a.m. We will sell our nature guides and hand out an invasive plant publication to each family who attends.

Wear: long pants, long shirts. (There is lots of poison ivy.)

Bring: gloves, loppers, pruning saws, drinking water.

I will also have bottled water on hand.

Let me know by email or phone (721-0931) if you plan on coming. I have already heard from some of you!

AT

Butterfly Count

- **Mary Ann Everett**

Please mark Saturday, July 7, 8:30 a.m. Butterfly Count at Nolan Creek Hike and Bike Trail, led by Gil Eckrich

The Butterfly Count is held yearly in conjunction with Audubon and you will count what butterflies you see along the trail. You know it is a lot of fun, if you have participated in the past. **AT**

Texas Military 4H Sports Camp

- **Ursula Nanna**

We're looking for 6 volunteers to assist in the 4-H Ft. Hood Sportsfishing Event of June 21, 2012 8am - 5pm in Austin. We will carpool from the AgriLife Bldg in Belton. Please let me know if you can help at: fishingpole16@gmail.com so I can let them know how many will assist.

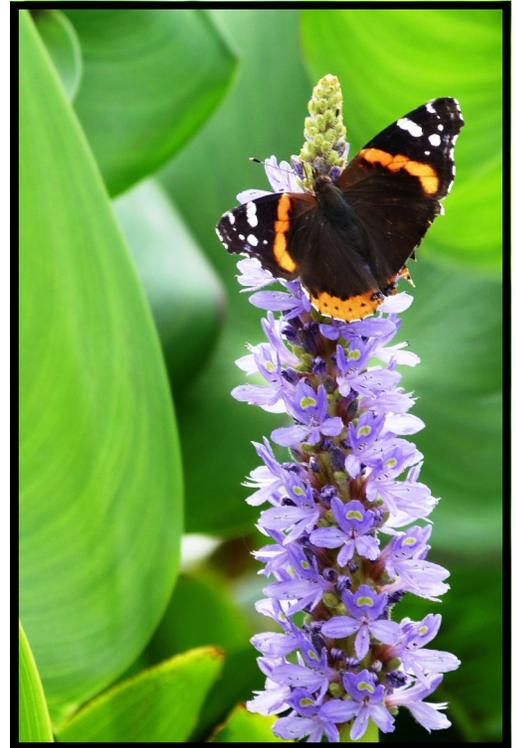
We are asked to help put fishing poles together, assist with knots and tackle, help with casting, and get into hooking a worm and doing some fishing. This is a terrific introduction for the newly certified Angler Instructors and is approved for Volunteer Service Hours. **AT**

This and That



Left, Bird House Count for the Rockdale Nature Fest; Right, Red Admiral on Purple Pickerel; Below, Checkered White on Gaillardia.

Photos by Darla Horner Menking



MARTIN MANIA

- Ursula Nanna

This was going to be an article on what I've learned about Martins and their housing. But there's so much clicking and gurgling and noisy boasting happening in and around the houses I thought photos would be appropriate.

6"x6" houses have only 2-3 eggs maximum while the new 10"-11" gourds have at least 6 eggs in each. Seems like the more space the more eggs.....that translates into more Martins.

Let's do the math....5 houses totaling 46 nesting cavities(6 cavities occupied by the dreaded House Sparrow)...say 2 of the 3 eggs hatch x 46 = 138 and say 8 fledglings don't survive=130 successful fledges or as called in Martin lingo "subies".

Then there are 32 gourds and say 5 are not occupied and 3 are housing the dreaded House Sparrow = 24 Martin nests.....say 5 of the 6 eggs hatch x 24 = 120 "subies." 130 + 120 = 250 "subies" to leave the nests in June.....That is Awesome!!!!



Photos by Chuck Albare

Newsletter Mission Statement

"Our mission is to inform and educate Master Naturalist members and the general public about our local environment and resources, and what we, as caretakers, can do to protect them."

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Please send any news of events, articles or photos of what you're doing or what's going on in your yard or area to:

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