

# The Tracker

The Central Texas Master Naturalist Newsletter

October, 2012

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## Texas Stream Team Training

- Richard McCarthy

Seventeen new water quality monitors were certified at the training session on Saturday September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Waco Wetlands.

Representatives from eight Texas Master Naturalist Chapters attended.



## Calendar at a Glance

October 5, 9 - 11 am, Tyler Elementary at Blackland Center

October 6, Bend of the River Event

October 8, November 12, Killeen Hike & Bike cleanup, 8 am

October 9, 6 pm, General Meeting, Bumble Bees of Texas, Belton Church

October 19, 9 am, Nature Fest Meeting, Extension Center

October 26-28, State MN Conference, Navasota

November 2 - 4, TX SER Conference

The morning session consisted of an overview of the Texas Stream Team Program, a demonstration of the proper procedures and a hands on sampling exercise where the students sampled water for pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and temperature. The students results were compared to results that the instructors had obtained from the same water sample.

The afternoon session was devoted to the students acquiring an actual sample from the wetlands and testing for the parameters taught in the morning session. In addition students had to

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*Chapter Motto*

**Earth Day,  
Every Day**



# From the President's Pen

It's that time of year again, with the return of cooler weather, but I can't seem to get enough of the coolness. With this warm south wind drying out everything and the temps remaining in the 80s until late in the evening, it just doesn't seem like full-fledged fall is quite here. I have noticed our hummingbirds aren't around as much, but there is a proliferation of the white winged doves. I counted 30 sitting on the utility line in my back yard yesterday.

Much is happening in our community. We just had our last nature series at Miller Springs Nature Area, with a bird walk, which didn't generate a lot of birds, but we had three people express interest in our next Master Naturalist class. Among other activities were the Nature/Ecology Merit Badge weekend spent with two Boy Scout troops at the local Boy Scout camp, Stream Team training, and coming up the Bend of the River Botanic Garden event where the community is invited to roam the grounds. There was a really nice interview yesterday with the city of Temple Park and

Rec Department and Jennifer Graham, who gave a little history of the place. This is indeed an exciting time for our chapter to be able to help with a botanic garden right here in our back yard.

Whether it be monitoring water quality in our local streams and rivers, teaching children to fish or scouts about nature, or any of the myriad other opportunities that are available, our chapter comes out to support our community. I thank all our wonderful volunteers for their hard work. Hope to see you at the Bend of the River, and happy fall.

- Mary Ann



Photo below by Zoe Rascoe, above by Terrie Hahn



# Amazing Bats

- Ray Hughes

I spent a Saturday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, in Fort Worth attending The Essential Bat Symposium. Through the lecture, demonstrations, and display of live bats, the incredible contributions of bats to the ecosystems of Texas, the United States, and the world were explained. The presentation lasted seven hours.

Bats comprise about 25% of all mammal species on earth, some 1100 species in all. In Texas we have at least 32 of the 46 known species of bats in the U. S. and more than any other state. Bats have tremendous significance because of their essential contributions to agriculture through protection of crops from insects. They also pollinate crops and distribute seeds in their droppings.

About 80% of all bats eat insects. Another almost 20% eat fruit or nectar. Nearly 1% of bats are carnivorous. A few eat fish. Finally, three species of vampire or blood sucking bats are found in Central and South America. Contrary to popular mythology humans are bitten only as a last resort. Their preferred prey includes cattle and chickens.

Bats are usually nocturnal. They vary in size from several inches long and weighing less than an ounce to about 15 inches and weighing about 2 lbs. They are termed microbats and megabats based on size. Microbats may have a wingspan of around 6 inches and megabats a wingspan of up to 6 feet. Another method of categorization terms bats either crevice or foliage dwellers. The most familiar bat in Texas, the Mexican or Brazilian Freetail bat, is a crevice dweller because they live in caves, buildings, and anywhere a crevice can be found.

Insectivorous bats can eat about 5,000 insects a night per bat. Pregnant or breast feeding mothers will eat over 10,000 insects per night. Bats have excellent eyesight and many species use echolocation to find their prey. Bats vocalize to communicate with each other and for mothers to find their pups. Bat mothers share a unique call with their pups to identify individual pups in colonies sometimes numbering in the millions.

For further information beyond this overview I recommend two websites: batworld.org and bci.org. Batworld of Mineral Wells, Texas presented the symposium. Bat Conservation International or BCI is based in Austin, Texas. Both groups are world renowned organizations dedicated to conservation and rehabilitation. BCI owns Bracken Cave near San Antonio home of the largest Mexican Freetail colony in the world. Batworld has a rehabilitation facility in Mineral Wells and a wild bat sanctuary for releasing rehabilitated bats. A new book called The Essential Bat was published by Batworld in August and is available on their website.

Things we can do to help the bats include building bat houses, providing education on the bat's place in our environment, and possibly becoming a member of these organizations. Unlike birds who have legal protection from migratory bird legislation, bats have no legal protection for habitat and roosting or colony sites. Encouraging Congress and our state legislature to remedy this will help bats in the long term.

## FYI

### San Antonio Bat Fest

Texas' rich natural history is celebrated at San Antonio Bat Fest 2012. The Bat Fest will occur October 6 - 14 with many events and activities including:

**Oct. 14th: San Antonio Bat Fest Symposium at Trinity University** - Join BCI and partners for an afternoon of fascinating bat talks discussing everything from the value of bats to the many threats they face. The San Antonio Bat Fest Symposium at Trinity University features leading bat conservationists, including keynote speaker and BCI Founder Merlin Tuttle. List of confirmed speakers and topics is on the following website.. Admission is free, but registration is encouraged.

[http://www.sazoo-aq.org/events/bat\\_fest/](http://www.sazoo-aq.org/events/bat_fest/)



# Banding White Winged Dove

- Mary Ann Everett

An interesting activity that several of us in our chapter did this summer during July and August was banding white winged doves. The white winged dove has become more prolific of late, but that has not always been the case. In the 1920s and 1930s this bird dropped in numbers due to loss of habitat due to agriculture and irrigation practices in the Lower Rio Grande Valley and they were aggressively hunted, with as many as 35-40,000 hunters traveling to that area of our state for that purpose.

This bird has made an amazing come-back, adapting to other habitats and moving steadily northward. Texas Parks and Wildlife has been monitoring the white winged population since the 1950s. The majority of nesting occurs within the cities. The nesting white-winged doves seem to prefer the older more established residential neighborhoods with large live oak, pecan, and ash trees. This may be due to better protection from predators and a consistent food and water sources due to watering of lawns and bird feeders. I can certainly attest to this, as we have a water feature and numerous bird feeders in our backyard.

I had people ask me why band this particular species, and here is the answer: Between 2007 and 2010, Texas A&M University, in collaboration with Texas Parks and Wildlife have banded over 60,000 white-winged doves at a variety of locations across Texas. Over this time, white-winged dove hunters in Texas have harvested and reported over 2,000 of our banded white-winged doves. We are using the data collected from the banded and harvested individuals to estimate survival and recovery rates for white-winged doves in Texas to better assist Texas Parks and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with regulatory planning.

I was able to band around 35 of them, and finally got it down to fine science. When you bait the cages , it



is comedy in motion watching these doves walk all around the outside of the cages, walk into the entrance, peck the bait, and then back out of that entrance. It got to be where I finally would just walk away and just let them get caught eventually. Another problem that was encountered was the cardinals that would inevitably get trapped in the cages also, which meant I had to go outside and set them free, and wait until things settled down, so the doves would once again return.

Each numbered band is attached to the leg and recorded in a log. Derrick Wolter collected the cages and data collected before August 15. I am certainly learning a lot from doing this activity, and hope to do so again next year. One thing to remember is that in order to do this and most other nature watches is having a permit . The permit allows you to do the activity and gather data, and usually last 2-3 years.

# A Visit to the HawkWatch

- Kathy Cantu

Since 1997 HawkWatch International has been counting migrating hawks at Hazel Bazemore County Park near Corpus Christi. Hawks from the eastern states detour around the Gulf of Mexico on their way to their tropical winter home. Birds are counted from 9 am to 5 pm from August 14 to November 18. Most are broad-winged hawks and Mississippi kites (more than 24,000 kites so far this season.) There are also peregrine falcons, osprey, American kestrels and other hawks.

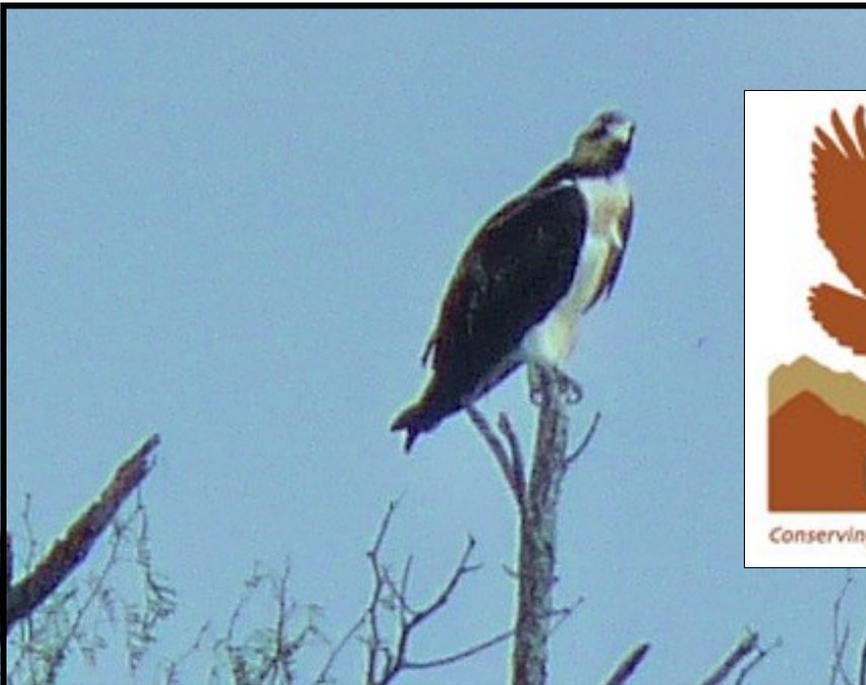


I arrived at 9 am and coming into the park I saw an osprey and a northern harrier, probably local residents. As the volunteers settled into their chairs, we saw a distant thunderstorm approaching from the north. Eventually, the storm reached us and the count was suspended with a count of zero. I hung around hoping the rain would end but finally left with my personal hawk count of 2.

The day after I visited, 7891 broad-wings and 47 Mis-

issippi kites and other hawks were counted. The average count for fall is around 730,000, the highest count of any hawkwatch in the country. The peak occurs the last two weeks of September.

Visitors are welcome. There are nectar and seed feeders where numerous hummingbirds and some green jays were seen. A pond holds herons, egrets, spoonbills, sand pipers and a few ducks. Peccaries roam the park. If you go, take a chair and check the weather forecast!



Photos by Kathy Cantu, HawkWatch logo from [www.hawkwatch.org](http://www.hawkwatch.org)

# Spotlight on Invasives



## ZEBRA MUSSELS

- Ursula Nanna

“AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE” certainly cannot be just an old-world adage. Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone felt invested enough in our environment to really care about the fact that what we do individually has a very profound impact on all of us collectively?

Again, that from which the New World suffers has been imported from the Old World.

Detrimental organisms are brought to our shores by boat, plane, and people. And this is exactly how Zebra Mussels were introduced to the USA from Poland and the Baltic Regions.

*Dreissena polymorpha* are mollusks and eukaryotic – they have a true nucleus. Without natural enemies, they can really multiply, and we help them spread. They travel very well from one body of water to another ‘hitching’ a ride. Once established in our water ways, they are impossible to eradicate even with current technology.

Lake Texoma presented with the first detectable Zebra Mussel in the spring of 2009 as well as in streams feeding Lake Lavon. Lake Ray Roberts is also involved. Currently some Trinity River tributaries are now involved.

At this point, all we can do is have boaters and water recreational vehicle users always wash, clean, drain, and dry their water craft as they go from one body of water to another. Inspect the boat but remember that the larval stage of a zebra mussel is microscopic and unde-

tectable by the naked eye. Wash the boat and the trailer and any gear that was in the water.

The use of a high pressure spray of 140°F is excellent.

Drain all the water from the boat before leaving the lake. Drain the bilge, engine, live wells, bait buckets too. Be sure the boat and wells dry before going to another body of water.

Did you know that the possession or transporting of zebra mussels in Texas is a TPWD Class C misdemeanor with a fine from \$25 - \$500?

The economic and environmental impact caused by Zebra Mussels is enormous and only exceeded by the cost of control. They are filter feeders and compete with bait fish for available forage. If the bait fish are impacted, so are their predators such as the bass and catfish. Zebra Mussels colonize on our native mussels suffocating them.

They will clog public-water intake pipes, infest boats and motors if moored. They will, in fact, cover anything below the water surface. Ultimately the clean-up cost is unprecedented and we will pay the price as it's reflected in the cost of water.

Sources: [www.TPWD.org](http://www.TPWD.org) [www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov](http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov) [www.protectourwaters.net](http://www.protectourwaters.net)



# Thank Goodness They Are Gone!

- Ursula Nanna

After 4 years of being harassed by **English Sparrows** and telling everyone I know how sick of them I am, words fell on a listening ear. I will not tell you who loaned me the English sparrow trap, but the trap set me free!!!!

There was E. sparrow poop on garden 'art', plant leaves and flowers, the rim of my pool, garden furniture under the porch, shrubs, bird baths, mail box, the sidewalks, the house eaves, and the picnic tables. Nests were being built in every conceivable open cavity including in the mouth of a large garden-art fish. If you could see it, touch it, or walk on it, there was sparrow poop!!!! Oh! and they perfected the art of pooping on the vertical so that the window screens were soiled too. If not troublesome, it was unsanitary.

These birds also chased off the Wrens, the N. Mockingbirds, the Cardinals, Chickadees, Robins, Titmice, woodpeckers, friendly Sparrows, the Jays.....just E. Sparrows.....

I am really getting into Purple Martins and can house 128 pair of mating Martins. I'm also getting into banding them and recording their yearly returns and tagging the young and adults alike. The E. Sparrows would peck out the top of the newly hatched Martins' heads, occupy all the available cavities so Martins had to nest elsewhere, and even build their nests right over Martin young killing the young in the process. E.



Sparrow nests resemble round hay bales with a small hole in the center. They are messy and very difficult to dislodge once built. I have cleaned out hundreds of E. sparrow nests, hundreds of times to keep the Martin houses open and available for



Martins. I have removed all feeding and all water that can be removed and blocked up all bird house entrances that Martins did not use to nest to get rid of the E. Sparrows...ZOOM...they can build a nest in 2-3 days. You have to start the process all over again... You cannot raise Martins and also have E. Sparrows...won't happen.

Ya, Right !!!! the E. Sparrows moved into the shrubs and vines as happily as can be!!!!!!!!!!!!

Ok, now I am blessed with a Sparrow trap and had to study to identify the nuisance sparrows from the other sparrows. That done, I had to decide how to get rid of the trapped E. Sparrows, if any. I decided on cervical dislocation. Not fun but it was successful. The trap caught 52 E. Sparrows in one day and 154 in 2 days. I had to get bread (used for bait) from the neighbors.



I had to clean out the trap every 15-20 minutes and took in the trap at night. It is said that spring is the best trapping time, but I had no trouble end of July.

These pesky birds were brought over from....GUESS.....yep, Europe from 1850 - 1875. They were intended to manage and rid trees of inch worms. They were also used as sensational events during Shakespearian plays. It wasn't long before these birds caused crop destruction, parasites to livestock, equine encephalitis, New Castle's disease, transporting lice and fleas.

These birds can raise 35 - 60 young in a few years. They have few predators such as cats, hawks, owls, other predator birds.

In the last few weeks, I have hardly seen an E. Sparrow on the property. Since the trapping, the remaining E. sparrows have disappeared. The wonderful beneficial birds are returning, and the place is clean and without droppings everywhere. I look forward to a peaceful spring with the return of the Purple Martins.  
references: [www.chuckspurplemartinpage.com](http://www.chuckspurplemartinpage.com);  
[www.sialis.org](http://www.sialis.org); [icwdm.org/handbook/birdspics](http://icwdm.org/handbook/birdspics) from various cited references

# National Moth Week

## Update

- Rehanon Pampell



The following is a link to the Discover Life photo album page (<http://pick14.pick.uga.edu/pa/ph/>) where I submitted our moth photos. Scroll down the page and click on "Pampell, Rehanon" to view our photos. I believe you have to actually click on the photo to see location data. Some I have identified, but most of them I have no idea and am awaiting species id's from BAMONA (Butterflies and Moths of North America website - where I also submitted photos). I submitted our photos to NMW.org (National Moth Week's official website) as well. Lastly, I am going to submit our data to the Texas Natural Diversity Database. Please note that I am on the TPWD Invertebrate Biological Inventory Team, so if you see a cool insect please take a picture and note the location (preferably a GPS coordinate or address) and email me (especially native bees). If it's a species we are tracking, I can submit the data to the Texas Natural Diversity Database. Even if it's not a species we are tracking, I can find some biodiversity group to submit the photo to.

*Amorpha juglandis* from the website



Above photo by Rehanon Pampell

Photos to right by Richard McCarthy

## Stream Team Training...continued

evaluate field conditions; flow severity, algae cover, water color, water clarity, water surface condition, water odor, depth, turbidity and current weather conditions. Upon completion of the outdoor exercise students returned to the laboratory to fill out a Texas Stream Team "Environmental Monitoring Form". Again students findings were compared to instructors findings from a sample from the wetlands. The comparisons were to ensure that the student findings were within Stream Team Quality Assurance Objectives. All were.

MANY THANKS TO:

The Instructors: Melissa Mullins and Penny Wimberley

The Certified Water Quality Monitors: Marilyn Whitworth and Jenna Jones

The Waco Wetlands Coordinator: Nora Schell

And to all the students that worked so hard.



# Out and About With CTMN's

## College Station

An Advanced Training trip was hosted by the El Comino Real Chapter to the Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection and to the S.M. Tracy Herbarium on the TAMU campus in College Station on Sept. 7th. Lyna Pitts and Linda Mahaffey were our members that attended.



The Texas Cooperative Wildlife Collection is a natural history collection of specimens including amphibians, reptiles, fishes, mammals, birds, parasites, and marine invertebrates held in the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences at Texas A&M University College Station. Specimens and their data are deposited with us by faculty, students, researchers and affiliates. These resources are available for use by the scientific community.

The S. M. Tracy Herbarium holds archives of plant biodiversity over time and space. Herbarium specimens and living populations comprise the basic research material of plant taxonomists. These records are important to botanists who are interested in a broad range of research to include: systematics, rare and endangered species, biogeography, and invasive species. Herbaria are also consulted by foresters, agronomists, and ecologists to determine the identity of a plant and to document the past and present ranges of plants. The S. M. Tracy Herbarium originated in the early 1930's based on collections of several individuals, including the outstanding botanist-agriculturist Samuel Mills Tracy (1847-1920), for whom the herbarium is named. Of the 188 extant herbaria in the southern United States, the S. M. Tracy Herbarium ranks 10<sup>th</sup> in size, and is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest herbarium in Texas. The collection currently houses nearly 300,000 specimens and adds approximately 2500 - 3000 new accessions per year.



Above: Linda and Lyna with a dried baboon. Lyna says, "This was like a nerd dream come true! I would do this for a living, but well it might be too late! What I really loved was the spectroscope and the camera attached- IT WAS ART! This is what life might be about! "

## Killeen Senior Market Day

- Sandy Summers

Sandy Summers and Linda Mahaffey helped out at the Killeen Senior Market Day booth on August 10th. Dale and Gail Hughling were also working.

Photo by Sandy Summers. Above photos by Katherine Bedrich.



# Waco Mammoth Site Field Trip

- Zoe Rascoe

Nearly 50 Master Naturalists from 3 Central Texas chapters merged at an archeological dig site near the Bosque River in north Waco on July 30, 2012 for a private tour and a chance to dig for fossils of their own. Most of the visitors had never been to the site, but many knew of its existence and the amazing story it holds. In 1978, two local fossil hunters went on a search for arrowheads near the Bosque River. To their surprise, the men stumbled upon a large bone eroding out of a ravine. Recognizing the unusual nature of the find, they removed the bone and took it to the Strecker Museum at Baylor University for examination. The bone was identified as Columbian mammoth (*Mammuthus columbi*) and Museum staff members quickly organized a team of volunteers and excavation began at the site. Not long after that discovery, I arrived at Baylor and began working at Strecker Museum designing and building new exhibits. What I remember of the mammoth project was the large amount of space the castings were taking up in our already cramped work area!

Using hand tools such as brushes and bamboo scrapers, crews slowly excavated a lost world. Between 1978 and 1990, the fossil remains of 16 Columbian mammoths were discovered. The excavation work was believed to be complete, so the remains were wrapped in plaster jackets and placed into storage.



But the discoveries continued and between 1990 and 1997, six additional mammoths were excavated, including a large male bull. Crews also uncovered the remains of a camel (*Camelops hesternus*) and the tooth of a juvenile saber-tooth cat (*Smilodon fatalis*). How the animals died is still a mystery. No evidence of human involvement was found, and most of the remains did not appear disturbed by predators or scavengers. One of the first hypotheses was that the animals perished in a catastrophic tragedy. However, recent geology research indicates the animals died in a series of natural events spread across many years.

Though the first bones at site were discovered in 1978, the site remained closed to the public until the end of 2009. As a former Strecker Museum employee (and having kept in touch with the project manager) I was able to visit the dig site in the early 1990's. It was an amazing labyrinth of holes and mounds with bones exposed in many places - and mostly open to the elements with just a few tarps partly covering an area here and there. In 2006, plans were initiated to make the site a public park. With the support of the Waco Mammoth Foundation, this goal became a reality and now the Waco Mammoth Site sits in a 100-plus acre stretch of wooded parkland along the Bosque River covered in sprawling oak, mesquite and cedar trees.

The Waco Mammoth Site includes a large high-tech Dig Shelter that has the atmosphere of an art gallery. Natural light floods into the shelter from all directions and a suspended walkway provides an overhead view of the mammoth remains. The

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# Waco Mammoth Site...continued

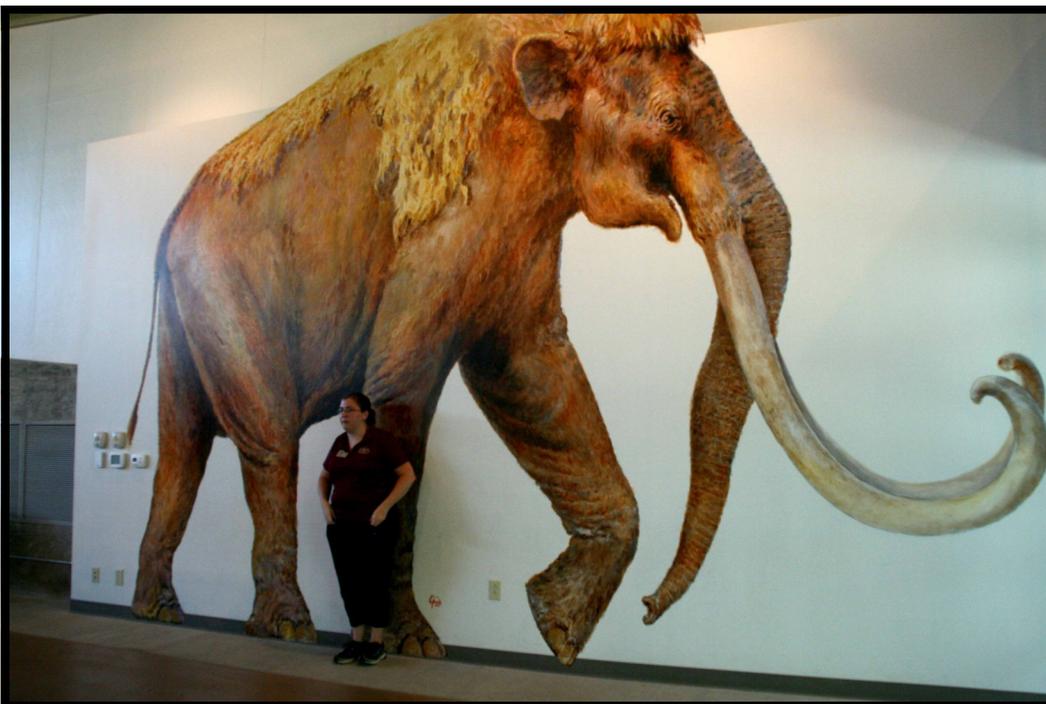
discovery of additional fossil material during the construction of the Dig Shelter will help further the research into when and how the Waco mammoths lived and died.

As an added bonus, we were also able to participate in a fossil "dig" of our own. We each were given gravel material from two different sites in the eastern US and instructed how to sort through the rocks and spot fossils - both plant and animal... land and marine. Once we focused on the tiny particles, we did indeed begin to find fossils of all sorts. Each major find was accompanied with a shout of "I found a fossil!!" Almost like a bingo game. Clearly identifying what the fossil was ended up being a little more difficult - even with the pictures on the ID guide provided. The fossil search was great fun and most of us came home with a few sharks' teeth as souvenirs.

If you haven't been to the Waco Mammoth Site, take a drive to Waco and it will be a trip WAY back in time. It's a great adventure for people of all ages.

Resource used:

[www.wacomammoth.org](http://www.wacomammoth.org)



Top: Shirley Watts spots a fossil; Executive Director tells us how to ID marine fossils; left: Ever wonder how tall a Columbian Mammoth was?

Photos for this story by Zoe Rascoe

# Bend of the River Botanic Garden Receives Much-Needed Help

- Zoe Rascoe

Central Texas Master Naturalists have jumped in with both hands to help the new Bend of the River Botanic Garden organization prepare for its first public event on October 6th. Dale Hughling agreed to serve as project manager to refurbish the large, intricately designed gazebo on site. Mary Ann Everett, Linda Mahaffey, Louann Hight, Sidney VanLoh, Cathy Foreman, Darla Menking and Marilyn Whitworth all volunteered on one or more occasions to help Dale prep and complete the task. The gazebo will be used as a backdrop for portrait photography.



A second task was only for those who like hard labor and don't shy away from rats, snakes, wasps, lizards and other critters jumping out unexpectedly as they work. People who carry thick, well-worn leather gloves in their care and know how to duck and cover. Although we actually have a number of those kinds of folks in our midst, there were three that were available to work with City of Temple Parks Department employees on a warm day to clean out the old horse barn at Bend of the River. Part of the difficulty of the job as people who are very adept at repurposing rather



than disposing of items, was figuring out what to keep and what to toss. Although the petrified horse poo was a pretty easy decision. A hearty thank you to Liz Pool and Tom Olsen who joined Zoe Rascoe in some heavy lifting in hot and dusty conditions! At the end of the day, we had a nice, empty horse barn to showcase at Bend of the River.

Working on the Gazebo, top right, clockwise: Dale Hughling and Marilyn Whitworth; Sidney VanLoh gets the lowdown; Darla Menking; Cathy Foreman; and Linda Mahaffey and Louann Hight.



Continued on next page...

# Park Receives Much Needed Help...continued



Zoe, Tom Olsen and Liz Pool worked out in the barn. The Owner of Bend of the River used to also own a funeral home...

Photos for this story by Zoe Rascoe



## MN's Learn About Bees

Clint Walker of Walker Honey Farm speaks with the CTMN's during the August General Meeting.

Photo by Zoe Rascoe



# August Awards



Above: Linda Young and Mary Ann Everett are scorekeepers. Below: Carole Mattson receives graduation certificate and dragonfly pin. Pearl Fellingham and Bill Messer also are graduates (not pictured)



Sidney VanLoh receives his 250 hour milestone award (reached earlier in 2012).

Left: Tom Olsen and



Miriam Jordan from 2012 class become Certified Master Naturalists.



Below: 11 Members recertifying for 2012: Mary Ann Everett, Kathy Cantu, Jerry Lewis, Becky Denton, , Louann Hight, Gail Hughling, Dale Hughling, Linda Mahaffey, Lyna Pitts and Don Wyatt (Gail Christian not pictured.) Left: Terrie Hahn receives her 2012 recertification.



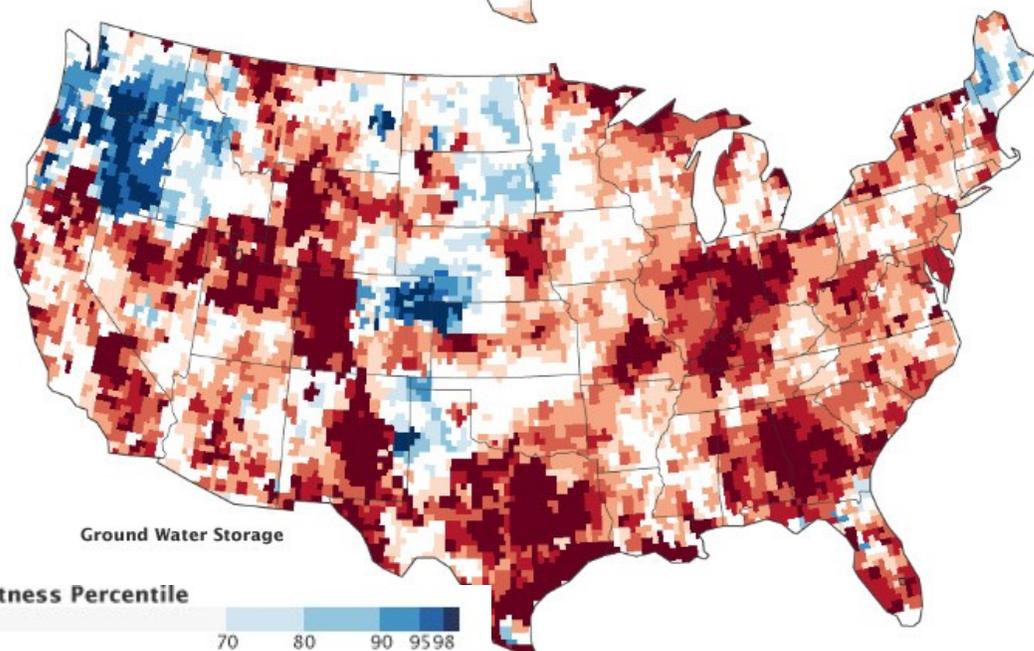
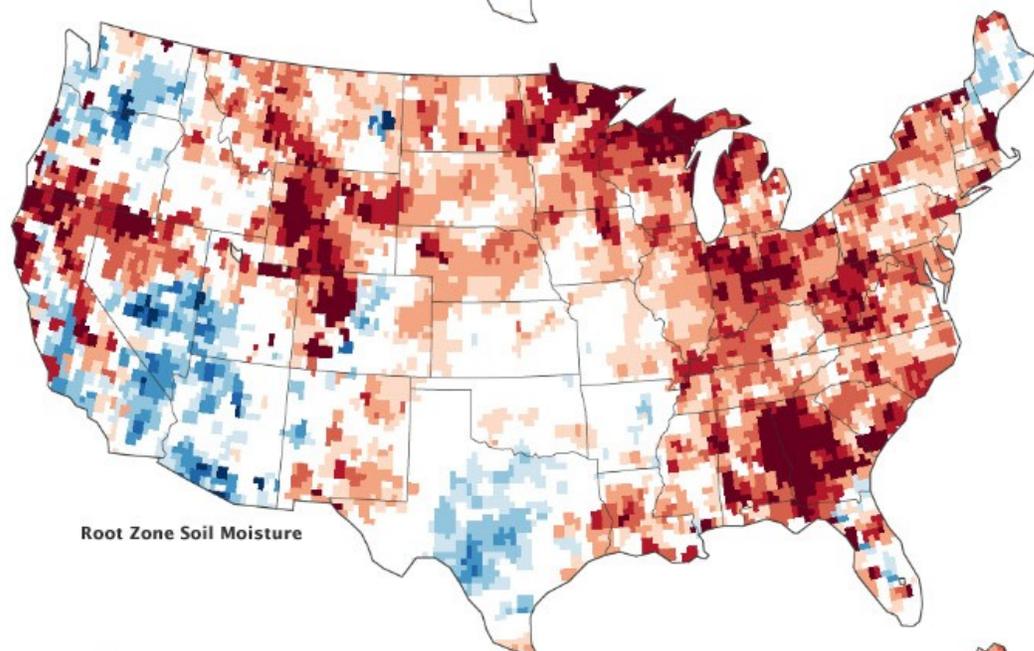
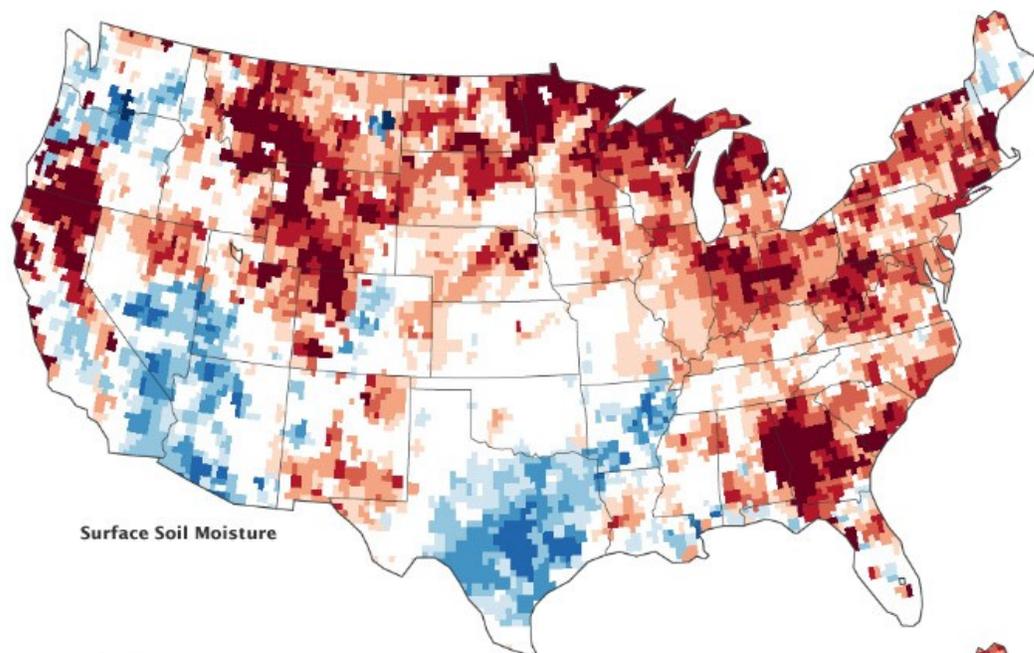
Photos by Zoe Rascoe

# Signs of Drought Are Underground

*Michelle Haggerty forwarded this information from Kip Kiphart.*

The NASA Earth Observatory has released these maps of Surface Soil Moisture (top 2 centimeters of soil), Root Zone Soil Moisture (top meter of soil) and Ground Water in Aquifers. These maps were acquired September 17th, 2012. For more information, go to:

<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/IOTD/view.php?id=79228>



# Announcements

## Angler Ed

- Ursula Nanna

Wonderful News !!!!! Laurie Fitzgerald and her husband David participated in the Angler Instructor Course in Buddha the weekend of September 15th. Angler Educators welcome them both, HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER !!!!

## Class of 2013 Open

The Class of 2013 is now open for registration! The Central Texas Master Naturalist Chapter is now accepting registrations for the Master Naturalist Class of 2013. Last date to submit registration materials is February 15, 2013. Orientation is tentatively scheduled for February 26, 2013, 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm with classes tentatively being scheduled weekly on Saturdays beginning March 2, 2013 and running through early May (excluding major holidays and Spring Break.) Spread the word!

## More Opportunities

- Rehanon Pampell

Blackland will be having Tyler Elementary fourth grade students out a Friar's Creek Park on **October 5<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 am – 11:00 am**. The students are currently learning about lab practices and the scientific method which is a huge part of what goes on at Blackland. The students are going to visit with some of our scientists and learn how they do research outside the lab as well as participate in an Eco-Scavenger Hunt.

I need 8 Master Naturalists to guide groups on Eco-Scavenger Hunts to observe nature. The students will use their senses to search for different types of leaves and rocks, evidence of animals and food chains, various components of habitats, etc.

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

Please respond via email to Rehanon Pampell at [rpam-](mailto:rpam-)

[pell@brc.tamus.edu](mailto:pell@brc.tamus.edu) if you are interested in volunteering. **V**

## Killeen Hike and Bike Trail

- Mary Ann Everett

Andy K. Wells Hike and Bike Trail in the Killeen Community Center Complex is one of our parks to clean up. Richard and Marilyn were instrumental in working on this project. It is nice that it is in west Bell County.

Location for the start is the parking lot on the East side of W.S. Young Drive about a quarter mile north of the intersection of Business 190 and W.S. Young Drive. Come **October 8th at 8 am**.

Bring: gloves, hats, sunscreen, insect repellent

Other dates for cleanup at **8 am**:

November 12, December 10 **V**

## General Meeting

- Zoe Rascoe

An Advanced Training opportunity will be available at the next CTMN Chapter meeting on Tuesday, **October 9th** at 6:00pm (Belton Church of Christ.) We will have a presentation on "**Bumblebees of Texas**" by TPWD Invertebrate Biologist, Michael Warriner. Most of you are aware of the serious issue of declining bumblebee populations on several continents. Michael is very involved in researching the cause of the decline and is using the Biological Inventory Team to collect data - some of our members are trained participants! You are welcome to invite guests that might be interested in this topic or in our chapter in general.

**AT**

## State MN Conference

Thirteenth Annual Statewide Texas Master Naturalist Conference and Advanced Training

October 26 - 28, 2012,

Camp Allen, Navasota, Texas **AT**

## Change in Nature Fest Meeting

- Mary Ann Everett

Change in **Nature Fest** Meeting. Our big event at Bend of the River is just a week away. At the board meeting earlier this month I had scheduled a Nature Fest meeting on **Friday, Oct. 5**. With all that is happening at Bend of the River, I have rescheduled this meeting for Friday, October 19, 9:00 a.m. at the Extension Office.

Everyone is invited to attend and give input on the Nature Fest, which has been hosted by Milam County for the last three years, and also the coming year. We will host it in 2014. It is not too early to begin the planning of this, and we need you.

If you would send me an email letting me know you will be coming, or if you want to send your ideas, please do so. We will see you soon. Thank you. **V**

## TX SER Conference

The Texas Society for Ecological Restoration has been busy making arrangements for our 2012 Annual Conference in the beautiful Lower Rio Grande Valley. The Conference will be held **Friday, November 2, 2012 through Sunday, November 4, 2012**.

The Conference will kick off with a full day of field trips near Weslaco, Texas. Participants can choose from three field trip options. All field trips highlight the unique flora and fauna of the Rio Grande Valley and the land management challenges of this diverse ecoregion. Field trip options include visits to three state parks within the World Birding Center, one nature preserve owned and managed by the Nature Conservancy, wildlife management areas owned and managed by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the National Butterfly Center.

Saturday, Keynote Speaker Jaime Flores, Executive Director of the Arroyo Colorado Conservancy will begin a full day of presentations about ecological restoration research being conducted across the state. For

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

more information, go to [www.txser.org](http://www.txser.org)

**MA**

## Bend of the River Opportunities

- Zoe Rascoe

Hello Master Naturalists!

With the first public event at the site of the future **Bend of the River Botanic Garden in Temple** coming up in early October, there are opportunities for Master Naturalists to participate in getting the property ready for a showing.

In full disclosure, the needs over the next 30 days mostly involve manual labor including painting, plant removal, tree installations and other property repairs and improvements. There is also a request going out for temporary storage of fencing material (both lumber and plastic cross bars) if anyone has a shed or barn that could house this until a permanent storage location can be secured.

If you are interested in participating in the very early stages of what Temple plans to be a regional showcase, please let me know as soon as you can. I can also give you additional information on the specific tasks for which help is needed. I asked that the Master Naturalists get first option at helping before the call goes out to other service groups. Hope some of y'all are able to help!

Future opportunities will be varied and will include assisting with plant identification, plant installations and removals, property improvements and repairs, working at events (such as helping with public plant sales, information booths and educational classes), design input, installation and/or construction of conservation management tools. Opportunities will grow as the facility goes through design, development and construction.

Zoe, 254-913-1013 **V**

## Horny Toad Movie

The Horned Lizard Conservation Society invites you to join us for the Central Texas premiere of "Where Did the Horny Toad Go?", a full-length documentary, October 13 at The Corral outdoor theater in Wimberley, Texas. Movie starts at 7:30 pm. Admission is \$5.00. **MA**

## *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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