



We are a group of trained volunteers who share our appreciation and knowledge of nature with the community through outreach, education and conservation/restoration projects

Long Acres Ranch Center Chapter Field Trip

By Jim Butcher, Past President

In keeping with the Chapter's mission statement to inform the public about the natural areas and resources in Fort Bend and Waller counties, the Chapter took a field trip to Long Acres Ranch Center.

Mr. Jim Kidda with Texas Agrilife Extension Service was our host to 13 chapter members, including Bill and Margo Johnson, Wayne and Vicki Poorman, Doug Simons, Sharon Smith, Diane Russell, Kristi Johnson, Lynn Trenta, Roger Hathorn, Sal Cardenas, Jim Butcher, and Jaci M. Elliott. Mr. Kidda stated that the 750-acre facility, located in Richmond, was owned and administered by the Henderson-Wessendorf Foundation. He also revealed that the land it occupies was part of an 1839 Stephen F. Austin Land Grant and once belonged to Jane Long, often called "The Mother of Texas".

The current contract with Agrilife is being allowed to lapse and the foundation is changing the mission from that of Eco Tourism to a curriculum-based format to support the Lamar Consolidated Independent School District. Planning is currently under way to offer courses in earth science and to target at risk students. Some examples offered were erosion, predator/prey relationships and surveying and mapping. An interpretative center on site with classrooms is in the early planning stages.

Chapter members enjoyed the talk, the tour, and visiting with fellow MNs. The group agreed that we should include the Long Acres Ranch on our list of partners and allow our members to accrue V.S.P. Mr. Kidda welcomed the support of our members throughout the build out and into the operational phase of the operations time at the facility. Subsequently, the CPCTMN Board has voted to add Long Acres Ranch to our list of partners.



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Chapter events and nature-related articles, photos, and items of interest to the chapter need to be sent to [Lynn](#) by the 15th of the month. Suggestions for the newsletter are also welcome. Thanks.

**Lynn Trenta,
Courier Editor**

The next Chapter Program will be on Thursday, August 4th, at the Fairgrounds, in the front of Bldg. D, with refreshments at 6:30pm and the program from 7:00 to 8:00pm. Our Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Advisor, David Lobpries, will be speaking to us about animal tracking.



Chapter Outreach by Diane Russell, Chapter President

Almost 2000 people in our community were reached in about a month by friendly volunteers representing our Chapter.

The first was on May 28 at Cross Creek Ranch Earth Day in Fulshear. At that event, using live caterpillars and Monarch life cycle displays, young guests were drawn like magnets to our caterpillars on sticks (see below) while parents learned what our Chapter is about and how important it is to have butterfly-friendly plants in their backyards. We handed out milkweed seeds as well. Kids and parents both went home excited about this topic and we all felt great that we are living into our mission statement. Thanks to Diane Russell, and to two true Pied Pipers, Reene Spahr and Carol Schwartz. Ron Spahr helped us as well and took photos. If you want to understand the joy of outreach, just look at this boy's eyes in the third picture. He looks like he stumbled upon a pot of gold – or candy!



Chapter Outreach by Diane Russell (Continued)



For the annual 4th of July Celebration at Seabourne Creek Nature Park in Rosenberg, Chapter volunteers were involved in two ways. Some acted as wagon masters for horse-drawn carriages, explaining about our work at the park and its variety of eco-systems and attractions, and also stories of the history of the area. New wagon masters for this year were Carol and Mark Dylla and experienced story tellers were Jim Butcher, John Cotterell, Sharon Smith, Hal & Mary Fuglaar and Bill Johnson. Top photo by Wayne Poorman.



Other volunteers manned 2 tables presenting Chapter information and crafts. The crafts included coloring butterfly fans and making hanging pine cone bird feeders using peanut butter and bird seed. These were both wildly popular with children of all ages. Thanks to everyone who helped with this – Margo Johnson, Mark & Carol Dylla, Linda Lourim, Jeff Wellman, Ron & Reene Spahr, and Diane Russell.

Photo below by Diane Russell.



In Our Own Backyards

Hummingbirds will soon be migrating south! By Diane Eismont

Fill your feeders the easy way:

Fill a 2 cup glass (microwave safe) measuring cup with water almost to the 2 cup line. Microwave for 3 minutes. Add one half cup granulated sugar (4:1 ratio). Stir until dissolved. Let cool & pour into clean feeders. Redo every 3 days.

For more info on the Hummerbird Celebration in Rockport.

[http://www.rockport-fulton.org/media/uploads/files/2016%20HB%20Mailout\(2\).pdf](http://www.rockport-fulton.org/media/uploads/files/2016%20HB%20Mailout(2).pdf)



Birds Need Water in Summer (From Jade Hems via Facebook)

Summer is a crucial time to keep your backyard birds supplied with water for drinking and bathing. Birdbaths set at different heights serve a great variety of birds. A wide, shallow birdbath that deepens a bit in the center will suit a broad range of birds - including this Orange-crowned Warbler. Most important of all? Keep it clean! You can learn more about birdbaths at Cornell's AllAboutBirds. Your local Audubon can help, too.

We're growing Maypops! By Lynn Trenta, Communications

In my backyard garden the purple passionflower is growing profusely and we discovered that we had over 50 maypops!

Jelly time!



How one man repopulated a rare butterfly species in his backyard

Updated by Zachary Crockett July 6, 2016, 1:10 p.m. ET Both Wayne Poorman and Sharon Smith shared this amazing story.

The life cycle of a California pipevine swallowtail butterfly

1 Butterflies find pipevine plant



2 Eggs laid in clutches of 5 to 30



3 Eggs hatch in 7 to 10 days



4 Caterpillars grow (5 stages)



5 Caterpillars form chrysalis



6 Emerge weeks (or years) later



The California pipevine swallowtail butterfly is a wonder to behold. It begins its life as a tiny red egg, hatches into an enormous orange-speckled caterpillar, and then — after a gestation period of up to two years — emerges as an iridescent blue beauty. Brimming with oceanic tones, the creature's wings are considered by collectors to be some of the most magnificent in North America.

*For centuries, the California pipevine swallowtail — or, *Battus philenor hirsuta* — called San Francisco home. As development increased in the early 20th century, the butterfly slowly began to disappear. Today it is a rare sight.*

But one man's DIY efforts are starting to bring the butterfly back. His story reminds us that we can all contribute to conservation efforts — sometimes even from our own backyards. As an aquatic biologist at the California Academy of Sciences, Tim Wong rarely has a dull day. Whether he's hanging out with an albino alligator, swimming with Javanese stingrays, or treating a hungry octopus to a hamster ball full of shrimp, Wong is constantly caring for one of the science museum's 38,000 animals.

But outside of work, the 28-year-old (Tim Wong) devotes the bulk of his free time to raising butterflies, a hobby he picked up as a kid. "I first was inspired to raise butterflies when I was in elementary school," Wong says. "We raised painted lady butterflies in the classroom, and I was amazed at the complete metamorphosis from caterpillar to adult. "In an open meadow near his home, Wong spent his days catching, studying, and raising any butterflies he could find. Years later, he learned about the pipevine swallowtail — which had become increasingly rare in San Francisco — and he made it his personal mission to bring the butterfly back....."

Source: Tim Wong (@timtast1c)

Vox

How one man repopulated a rare butterfly species in his backyard (Continued)

Via Tim Wong, California pipevine swallowtail butterflies typically lay their eggs in "clutches" of five to 30. He researched the butterfly and learned that when in caterpillar form, it only feeds on one plant: the [California pipevine](#) (*Aristolochia californica*), an equivalently rare flora in the city. "Finally, I was able to find this plant in the San Francisco Botanical Garden [in Golden Gate Park]," Wong says. "And they allowed me to take a few clippings of the plant."

Then in his own backyard, using self-taught techniques, he created a butterfly paradise. "[I built] a large screen enclosure to protect the butterflies and to allow them to mate under outdoor environmental conditions — natural sun, airflow, temp fluctuations," he says. The specialized enclosure protects the butterflies from some predators, increases mating opportunities, and serves as a study environment to better understand the criteria female butterflies are looking for in their ideal host plant. Tim Wong's backyard butterfly enclosure includes the California pipevine plant, along with other native flora, to make the butterflies feel at home.

Though the California pipevine butterfly had nearly disappeared in San Francisco, it was still common outside the city, in places with more vegetation. With permission, Wong was able to source an initial group of 20 caterpillars from private residences. He carefully transported them to his backyard and set them loose on the plants to feed. "They feed as a little army," he says. "They roam around the pipevine plant from leaf to leaf, munching on it as a group." Once situated, the caterpillars began their long, drawn-out process of maturation.

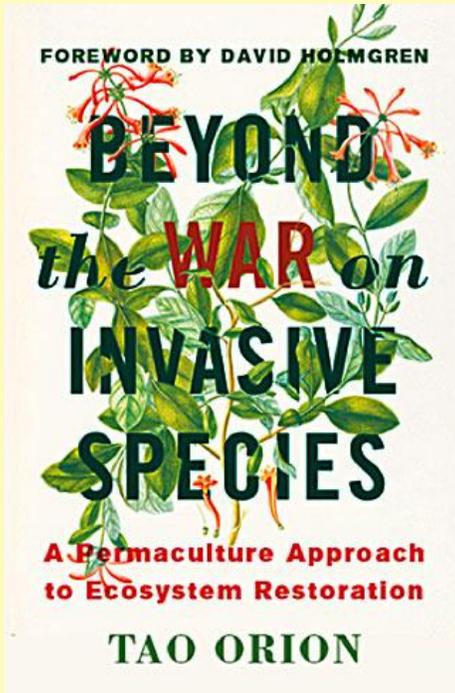
After about 3-4 weeks, a caterpillar [pupates](#) and forms a chrysalis (or outer shell). The insect liquefies itself inside, and either develops into a butterfly in about two weeks, or stays dormant for up to two years (this delayed development is called "[diapause](#)"). "It's like a long hibernation," says Wong. "And when it's over, they emerge as adult butterflies."

Typically, the adult pipevine butterfly hatches from its chrysalis in spring, but it can be seen flying from February to October. Depending on temperature, predation, and food availability, the butterflies live for two to five weeks. During this time, the females lay tiny red eggs on the pipevine plants. Wong carefully collects these and incubates them indoors, away from natural predators like spiders and earwigs. "From there," he says, "the cycle continues. Various stage of pipevine swallowtail growth."

To read the whole article go to: <http://www.vox.com/2016/7/6/12098122/california-pipevine-swallowtail-butterfly-population>



The Book Corner



“Beyond the War on Invasive Species” Offers Whole-Systems Guidance for Ecological Restoration [this review does not reflect an endorsement by the Courier or the CPCTMN]

Tao Orion’s “Beyond the War on Invasive Species: A Permaculture Approach to Ecosystem Restoration” (Chelsea Green Publishing, 2015) approaches head on, with smarts, honesty and the authenticity that comes from lived experience. Orion, who holds both a degree in agroecology and a permaculture certificate, manages a 6.5-acre smallholding with her husband. She also teaches at the University of Oregon and is on the staff at a non-profit sustainable living institute, Aprovecho. She knows whereof she speaks. Her book is a worthwhile entry in the ongoing discussion about how to carry on the very real and most urgent tasks of ecosystem regeneration in human-occupied areas, which is to say nearly everywhere. She criticizes the vocabulary and approach of the field of invasion biology, which, according to her, is ideology driven, demonizes non-native species and features an increasing reliance on toxic pesticides to eliminate invasive plant species in natural areas, which in her view repeats the mistakes of industrial age agriculture. She proposes that healthy ecosystems more readily resist aggressively opportunistic species; instead of treating symptoms of extreme disturbance using extreme measures, we should look at the larger causes that enable invasive species to take hold, begin to remedy those, and while we are doing so, adopt management techniques drawn from permaculture ideas and practices. What we would be left with would be human-managed ecosystems that might not necessarily duplicate those that existed pre-European settlement and would include not-historically-native species—but would be healthy, diverse and well-functioning.

For purchasing information and more reviews go to <http://www.chelseagreen.com/beyond-the-war-on-invasive-species>



Chapter Training Class is Rescheduled to Spring 2017

Training classes for the Coastal Prairie Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists have been **RESCHEDULED** to Spring 2017 due to the unavailability of venues affected by the recent flooding and feral hog damage in Seabourne Creek Nature Park. We will be posting information about the classes on the chapter's Facebook and the chapter's website at <http://txmn.org/.../about-our-chapt.../tmn-training-information/> as it becomes available. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused and look forward to welcoming new class members to our chapter. Contact [Margo "Mac" McDowell](#) for more information.

Monarch Gateway Volunteer Opportunity for CPCTMN Members

By Barbara Willy

Due to our acceptance of the Monarch Watch plants, Monarch Gateway has need to quickly transfer about 5000 plants from plug tray to cup or bands depending upon size. All of the materials will be provided. Volunteers are needed to scoop dirt into cup or pot, plant seedling, then fill with soil mix. Monarch Gateway will continue to store and care for transplanted plants. In return for this assistance, Monarch Gateway will donate a 2-year old established milkweed plant for every 100 transplanted to CPTMN to offer at Prairie Heritage Days.

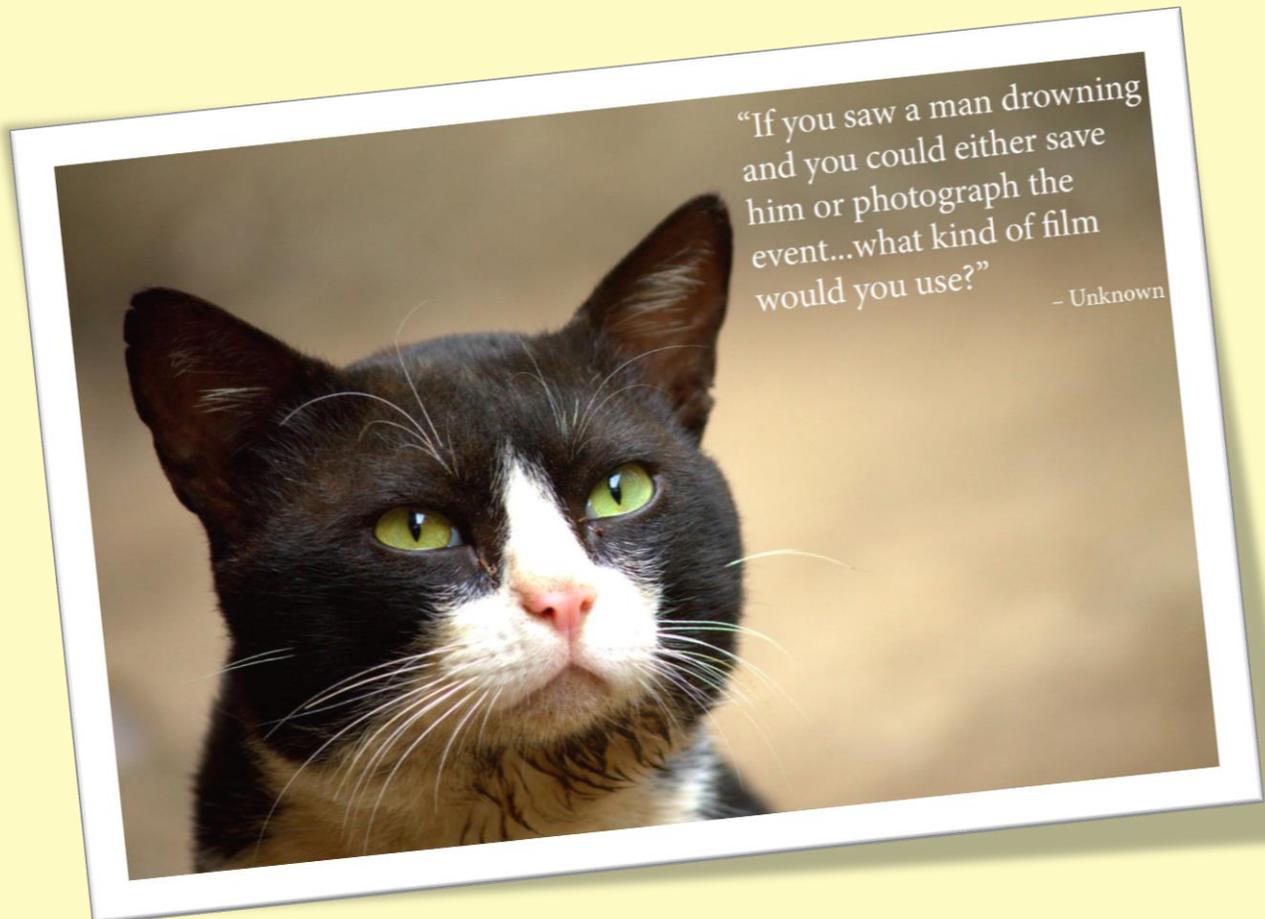
If there are people interested in learning how to grow milkweed themselves, we have opportunities for several people to work with our year-long milkweed propagation cycle, a senior internship, if you will. We have 200,000 seedlings growing for 2017 donation which we will work on leisurely throughout the year.

A committee consisting of Botanists, biologists, scientists from various agencies and non-profits will select sites for all Monarch Gateway milkweed. This is a worthy project to help the monarch and would count for VSP.

Contact Barbara Willy at barbaraankeller@aol.com if you are interested in helping with any of these Monarch Gateway Projects. Look for possible volunteer dates for this on the calenda.



The Lighter Side



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- State Representative [Carol Schwartz](#)

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://txmn.org/coastal>

**John Woods Seabourne Herpetology
Walk Video**

To view a video by John Woods of the chapter's latest herpetology walk go to

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKCW7IKlhUg&feature=share.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iKCW7IKlhUg&feature=share) Photos below by Diane Russell



Check out our Facebook Page at
[TXMN Coastal Prairie Chapter Facebook](#)

To post photos and information, email
[John Donaho](#) or [Lynn Trenta](#)

*Also Share our chapter Facebook entries
with your friends on your Facebook Page*

**COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER OF THE
TEXAS MASTER NATURALISTS**

1402 Band Rd
Extension Office
Rosenberg, TX 77471—8678
Phone: 281-633-7033