



COASTAL PRAIRIE COURIER

January 3, 2014

COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER- WHAT DID WE ACCOMPLISH IN 2013?

- The Prairie Demo Garden and Prairie Restoration—the Prairie Demo Garden has been revived through the efforts of Mark Morgenstern and many others and is now in good shape.
- The Wetlands Project created a wonderful environment by improving retention of water in the wetlands area. Also under the direction of Karl Baumgartner, Barbara Willy, Pat Mollere, Carol Pawelek, Bob Swartz, and Hal and Mary Fuglaar were involved in planting wetland plants. This project has increased the number of water birds, other animals, and people as well.
- The Wednesday Monthly Bird Hike, led by Wayne and Vicki Poorman, has become very successful and has increased recruitment for our group. (See notice below about the TPWD Coastal Birding Trail Map)
- Eagle Scout Projects have benefited SCNP in many different areas. Rick Adams and Hal Fulgaar are involved in these projects.
- The Butterfly Garden, with Linda Rippert as the coordinator, is our most mature asset at SCNP and one of the most visited areas in the park. Diane Russell has been instrumental in encouragement and providing resources for Monarch Butterfly gardens and husbandry.
- The improvement in CPTMN Programs, with Diane Russell as Program Chair, has increased our monthly meeting attendance
- Publicity, chaired by Carol Pawelek, has been very effective in getting chapter information out to the public.
- The Bulletin, put out by Susan Walther, as well as the Courier and the CPTMN website, maintained by Communications Chair Lynn Trenta, have consistently provided relevant information out to the chapter members about upcoming and past events.
- Our outreach activities have included a school event at BBSP, which involved 400-500 kids and a cub scout day camp which worked with 1300 scouts
- Our training efforts, spear-headed by Lisa Marler, greatly increased our class size and enabled a spring class as well. Class times changed to nights and weekends to allow people who worked to participate.

Doug Simons, President

SEABOURNE CREEK PARK ON THE TPWD GREAT TEXAS COASTAL BIRDING TRAIL MAP!



Message from Jim Butcher, Past President CPCTMN

I have just received the latest edition of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail map and was pleased to see that our own Seabourne Creek Park is included for the first time. We are only the third one, behind Brazos Bend and Cullinan Park to be listed in Fort Bend County. I appreciate the efforts of Angela Fritz in making this a reality and know that this will be a big step in showcasing the Parks offerings and increasing the volume of Eco tourists at the park. This has been a truly historic year for our partnership. We have completely revamped the wetlands, doubled the attendance at the Prairie Heritage Festival and enhanced many other areas of the park. I truly appreciate all of your support.

CHRISTMAS PARTY



Thank you to Georgia Messemer and Karen Showalter for making the Christmas Party a wonderful success! You are appreciated very much. It was a great party and enjoyed by all.

CPTMN MONTHLY MEETING ON HWY 36A ON FRONT PAGE



Carol Pawelek's article publicizing our January meeting on Super Highway 36A made the front page of the Fort Bend Herald! See attachment to read the article.

FERAL HOG FUN AT SEABOURNE CREEK PARK

Karl Baumgartner, SCNP Project Manager

Photos by Jimmie Brannon



December 14th, Doug Simons, Jim Butcher, Jimmy Brannon, Donna Pisani, Barbara Willy, Hal Fuglar, Karl Baumgartner supervised a Latter-Day-Saint missionary group at Seabourne Prairie. The group consisted of about twelve volunteers, young men and women aged 18-21.

Our native prairie restoration area has been riddled with feral hog wallows. As an experiment we scattered native prairie grass seed in the potholes left by the hogs. 50 of the wallows were marked with re-bar stakes and surveyor ribbons, and seed was also scattered in another 50-disturbed by the hogs. The wallows were all of very recent vintage—almost all made within the last two weeks, many of them made within the past two nights of the planting.

Also, with material provided by Barbara Willy, a portion of the seed was mixed with perlite, vermiculite, and potting soil to provide water retention and root-friendly aeration to the clay soil. In addition to the Coastal Prairie Mix we cast out seeds rescued from our demo garden including swamp sunflower and yellow Indian Grass et.al.



HOG TRAP and RESULTS. Also on Saturday, December 14, 2013, the following built a Corral Hog Trap adjoining the southeast corner of the Prairie Restoration: Jim Butcher, Jimmy Brannon, Chad Norvell, Hal Fuglar, Mary Fuglar, Karl Baumgartner. We were assisted and directed by Major Stevenson with Agrilife.

December 24th Update. The Hogs are here! We constructed the trap Saturday 12/14 and have been baiting it with corn and a magic potion, and yesterday Jim Butcher and I discovered hog tracks inside the trap for the first time. Something had taking the corn, probably raccoons, but the hogs have found it now. We are going to

leave it open and continue to bait it before setting the trigger, after the new year.

THE LOST LADYBUG PROJECT (Photo by M. Merchant)

Provided by *Lan Shen, President NPAT*



The seven-spot lady beetle is the most common lady beetle in Europe. After repeated introductions to the U.S. it can now be found in backyards throughout the U.S.

Certainly one of the most beloved of all insects is the ladybug, or more correctly, lady beetle. And a new citizen science web project may be just the thing for adults and kids with an interest in lady beetles or cameras or both. [The Lost Ladybug project](#) started because of concerns about dwindling numbers of one kind of lady beetle, the nine-spotted lady beetle, in New York State. It appears to have evolved into a bigger project where people from any part of the country can participate. Find a lady beetle? Photograph it and document the site, time and date of picture. Then upload the information and contribute to science!

What a great way to have fun and do something worthwhile. In addition to recording your observation, visitors can view and print posters of different kinds of lady beetles, read interesting lady beetle facts and (teachers) can download lady beetle lesson plans. Scientists will benefit from the photographic record, which should allow more up-to-date range records for common and rare species. Perhaps most important, over time the project may allow scientists to document changes in range or distribution or abundance of different species. The scientists are especially interested in rare lady beetles in out of the way locations, like state parks or little trodden trails. But any site will do. The thing is, you never know what's going to happen when thousands of people are looking and clicking.

FERAL DUCKS CARRY VIRUS

David Lobpries, TPWD Wildlife Biologist, CPTMN Advisor



A common practice on private ponds, lakes, subdivision lakes and golf course lakes is to release Muscovy ducks and domestic mallards. Also some hunting clubs and private properties have released pen-reared mallards thinking they are enhancing their duck hunting opportunities.

Releasing of Muscovy ducks around private ponds and lakes is not a healthy procedure to follow. Muscovy ducks are not very attractive and cause unsightly and unsanitary conditions around ponds. They are also carriers of a disease called duck plague or duck virus enteritis, DVE.

Duck plague is an acute, contagious, and often fatal disease caused by a herpesvirus. Outbreaks are thought to be primarily a result of infection and disease among susceptible waterfowl. Bird to bird contact and contact with virus that has contaminated the environment perpetuate an outbreak. Over the last several years there have been several outbreaks of DVE in Muscovy ducks in subdivision lakes in the Dallas area. If Muscovy ducks are placed in ponds that wild waterfowl frequent there is a good risk of spreading of duck plague to wild populations. The largest outbreak of duck plague in wild mallard populations occurred in South Dakota in 1973 when 40,000 mallards died. *To read the entire article, please see attachment.*

PARAKEETS CAN SURVIVE WINTER

Two Parakeets this morning at my feeders (below)



Who said they can't survive in the winter?
Would these be included in the Christmas Bird Count?

Johnny Fife, Class of 2011