



Special Interest Articles:

- MN Class of 2015
- Prairie Heritage Festival
- Seabourne Creek Park

Individual Highlights:

Graduation Dinner and General Mtg.....	1
Prairie Heritage Festival	2
NWF Monarch Plan. 3	
Don /Penny Johnson 4	
TMN 2015 Mtg.....	5
Seabourne.....	6
SCNP Bird	7
Norvells' Outreach... 8	
Insects in the City....	9

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

New Training Class Graduates



Photos by Ron Spahr

The Class of 2015 has been an active and lively class. Saturday, November 14th we celebrated the newest chapter member at this year’s graduation dinner. Than Colvin, one of the 3 training chairs, asked each person in the class to say what they liked about the training and what they didn’t like about the class. By doing this the “old” members got to know something about each one. The new class members were very forthcoming and full of enthusiasm and good humor. We welcome the 2015 Class and look forward to working with you. We do also have fun!

Than stated that 17 New Class members participated in the training this year and that ten of the 17 attended or made up all classes. Alternative classes have been identified for most of those missed. There were very few absences and the individual members are eager to complete the course. We also had 6 from the 2014 class who attended makeups and completed their course this year. Getting through these classes is no small feat as many in the class work and/or have other commitments. We do congratulate these new members! We also thank Than, Wayne Helbert, and Lisa Feighery for their great work on the training program!

Following the graduation potluck dinner, hosted by Georgia Messemer, Diane Russell, President, gave a wonderful wrap-up of the year complete with a beautiful slide show. We have had an active, productive year of outreach activities, Seabourne projects, chapter programs, and progress. Several prominent chapter members in the community were mentioned as well. Thank you, Diane, for putting together this tribute and year in review!

Prairie Heritage Festival 2015

The weather was gloomy but the spirit of our 37 chapter members was sunny and bright. This year's premier outreach event was held on November 7th at the Seabourne Creek Nature Park. This year featured the usual horse drawn wagon and Golf Cart tours along with additional presenters appearing for the first time. Many members in the new class got their taste first of how we do outreach. Due to the rainy afternoon, the attendance was down from previous years but we still entertained and educated hundreds of visitors. Sharon Smith and I wish to thank the brave souls that assisted us and if you were not able to come out, we will see you next year.

Jim Butcher, PHF Chair Thanks to Jim and Sharon for all of their hard work!!

Photos by Ron Spahr



National Wildlife Federation's TX Plan Added to State's Monarch Plan

Last week, the [Texas Monarch and Pollinator Conservation Plan](#) was announced by the Carter Smith, director of Texas Parks and Wildlife. The announcement was made in concert with former First Lady Laura Bush, Dan Ashe, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Collin O'Mara, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. The [plan](#) calls for an inventory of needs, new pollinator protocols for state and agricultural lands and more. There are many actions aimed at improving habitat for monarchs and other critical pollinators. Because of Texas's key location on the central flyway, Carter Smith describes his state as "ground zero" for monarchs.

The announcement took place in Dallas and there is a [terrific video](#) covering the event and the key speakers. National Wildlife Federation was honored to have its Communities and Gardens plan for Texas included as an addendum to the State's overall plan and was successful in recruiting 10 mayors in Texas, including Austin, to take the [Mayors' Monarch Pledge](#) outlining steps that will be taken locally to improve habitat for monarchs. There are many amazing organizations that contributed to the Texas plan and they are listed in the report.

NWF has, in just the past couple of weeks, recruited 23 mayors across the U.S. to lead the charge for monarch butterflies in their cities, counties and towns. If you would like to help your chief executive (counties too) in your locality to take the pledge, here is our [Mayors' monarch pledge page](#). Please help us spread the word.

Best,
Kevin

Kevin J. Coyle, JD.

Vice President, Education and Training
National Wildlife Federation
703-989-6020
coylek@nwf.org



Photos by (L) HMNS (R) Wayne Poorman

Don and Penny Johnson Featured in HGAC Newsletter (Courtesy of HGAC Water

Resources Volume 2015 Issue 3)

They taught and when they retired they wanted to learn. That's how Don and Penny Johnson became involved with Texas Stream Team.

Don was a hands-on science trainer for Fort Bend ISD and Penny grew up on a Minnesota truck farm where the environment was critical to its livelihood. Their teaching careers included stops in Hawaii, the Philippines, Japan, and Germany before they settled in Texas. Valuing nature and a clean environment is important to them.

To scratch that itch, the Johnsons became certified as Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists. It was through the Coastal Prairie Master Naturalist Chapter (Fort Bend Co.) that they learned about TST training. They were curious about the testing process and learning more about the quality of water in their local area. They wanted to become involved in a volunteer project that would make a meaningful contribution to the community and also participate in a state-wide program.

For the past nine years, they have done volunteer monitoring at site #80386 (Sugar Creek at Nails Drive, see Spotlight Photo) and, in October 2015, added a second monitoring site in Missouri City. Monitoring water sometimes requires creativity to get the job done. At the Johnsons' site, during drought conditions sometimes the water level is so low that it is difficult to collect the water needed to run the tests. At other times, high weeds along the shore present problems just getting to the creek.

Testing variables are also challenging. The pair has observed wide variation in conductivity (200-710) that did not match what they would have predicted. The subjectivity of the colors on the pH scale sometimes results in inconsistent pH scores. The Johnsons strive to better understand the factors influencing these variations.

They appreciate that their small efforts fit into the larger state water quality monitoring picture. They encourage Master Naturalist friends to consider TST volunteering. They have definitely earned bonus points for using their citizen scientists' skills to help protect our valuable water resources!



Texas Master Naturalist 2015 Annual Meeting



TMN 2015 Participants Photo by Lynn T

The Annual Meeting was held at Horseshoe Bay Resort this year October 23rd -25th. This beautiful resort provided spacious meeting rooms, comfortable rooms and apartments, and a grand ballroom in which we ate our meals and had our all chapters meetings. Chapter attendees were: Diane Russell, Barbara Willy, Bob & Carol Schwartz, Lynn Trenta, Karen Showalter; Bill & Carol Brookshire, Georgia Messemer and Karl Baumgartner

Several of our chapter members participated in the TMN Contests and the silent auction items we submitted, the Fort Bend County Basket and the wind chimes sold for \$55 and \$70, respectively.

In the art/crafts category, President Diane Russell entered her "Sacrifice of the Innocents" painting (below) and Communications Chair Lynn Trenta entered "Dragonfly on Gaura" (shown in last month's Courier.) Gloria Scheel entered her stitchery "Girlfriends" (below). Bob Schwartz entered 2 photographs, one of a green anole and the other of a passionflower, both shown in last month's Courier and Gloria Scheel entered her photograph "Cecropia Moth" also(left). Diane competed in the video contest with the "Seabourne Creek NP Wetlands Project" video and Lynn Trenta entered her September Courier in the newsletter category. We didn't win any prizes this year, but there's always next year!

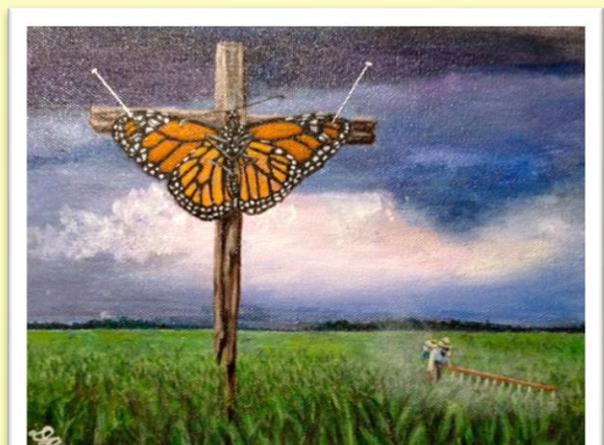


Cecropia Moth by Gloria Scheel

Also, at the meeting, Georgia Messemer was awarded her 250 hour pin and Pat Mollere awarded her 500 hour pin (in absentia). Our Kay Czach was noted in memoriam.



Girlfriends by Gloria Scheel



Sacrifice of the Innocents by Diane Russell

Seabourne Creek Nature Park Alive with Activity

Wednesday, November 4th, Seabourne Creek Nature Park was abuzz with MN Volunteers. The Butterfly Garden Volunteers were working hard to make the garden a haven for butterflies and human visitors alike. The volunteers did great work and got a lot accomplished under the guidance of Linda Rippert. Volunteering were Roger Hathorn, Cyd Johnson, Diane Russell, Gloria Scheel, Jane Schnell, Linda Rude, Debby Wendt, and Kathy Moore.

The Prairie Restoration Project took on a rustic new fence and Seabourne Prairie Entry Gateway that frame this growing prairie. Also, in the prairie, chapter volunteers supervised Latter Day Saint Youth Volunteers who planted around 400 prairie plants from the Chapter Prairie Nursery. These plants will be lining the "Prairie by the Path" which will wind through a portion of the Seabourne Prairie.



Photos by Diane Russell



Photos by Karl Baumgartner



Bird List Adds 189th Species

Mark spotted a Sprague's Pipit for us on the bird hike this morning, bringing the total number of species identified at Seabourne Creek Nature Park to 189 species. Below are photos from Cornell's Webpage. Cornell's Webpage also stated: "A rare and declining songbird of the northern prairie, Sprague's Pipit is a small bird of the open grasslands. Though it feeds and nests exclusively on the ground, the species performs the longest known flight display of any bird." Thanks to Wayne and Vicki Poorman and Mark Scheuerman for leading our chapter's bird hikes on the 1st Wednesday of each month November through May.

Go to the page on the website for the latest bird list at

<http://txmn.org/coastal/signature/seabourne-creek-park/scnp-flora-and-fauna-lists-and-bird-hike-information/>

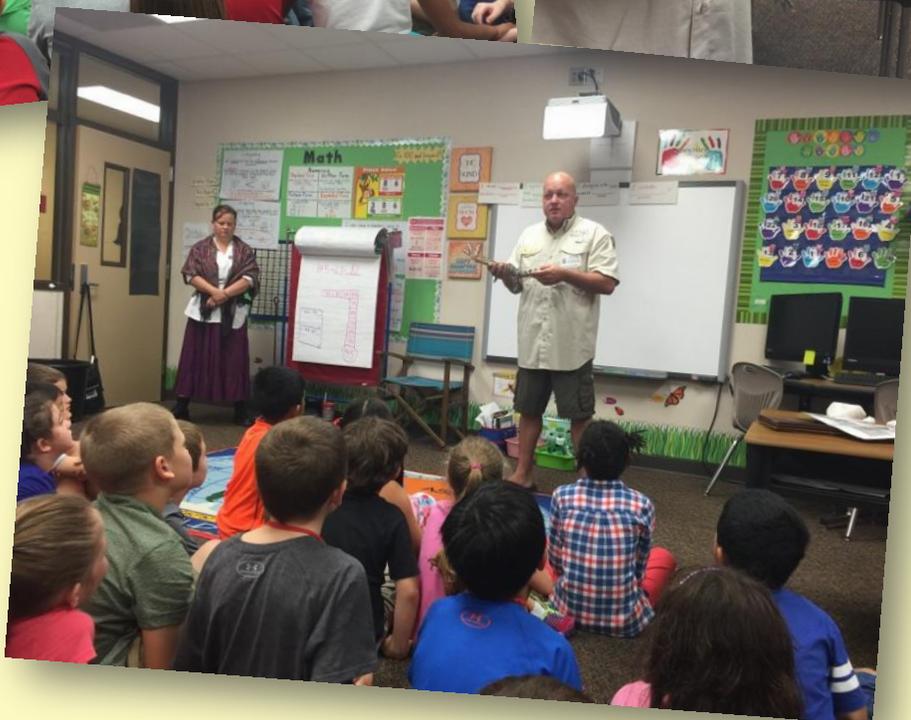
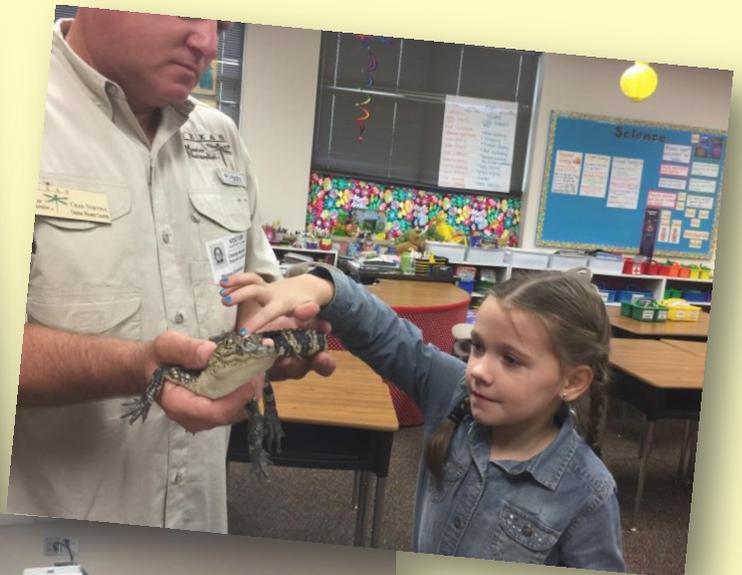


Chad and Amy Norvell Reach Out

Chapter Members Chad and Amy Norvell spoke to 260 elementary students at Wolman Elementary School recently about snakes and other reptiles. Also on hand was a baby alligator, which, of course, was a big hit!

Chad and Amy "had a great time and might have recruited some teachers and parents to the next TMN class."

Kudos to you, Chad and Amy!



CPTMN 2015 Board Members

2015 Officers

- President [Diane Russell](#)
- Vice President [Carol Schwartz](#)
- Secretary [Sharon Smith](#)
- Treasurer [Linda Lourim](#)
- Past-President [Jim Butcher](#)

2015 Committee Chairs

- Programs [Georgia Messemer](#)
- Communications/Website [Lynn Trenta](#) and [Susan Walther](#)
- Publicity Open
- Volunteer Service Projects [Michelle Sullivan](#) and [Julie Near](#)
- Membership [Reene Spahr](#) and [Carrie Sample](#)
- Training [Than Colvin](#) , [Lisa Feighery](#) , [Wayne Helbert](#)
- Advanced Training- [Jimmy Brannon](#)

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://txmn.org/coastal/>

Insects in the City



Chair of the FBMG Entomology Group, Nancy Schaefer, shared a great link to "Insects in the City" about the "million pollinator challenge".

If you want to subscribe for their newsletter, there is a place to sign up. It only comes once a month and is always interesting. Check it out!

<http://citybugs.tamu.edu/2015/10/19/sharing-the-million-pollinator-challenge/>

<http://millionpollinorgardens.org/>

Please send in chapter activity and nature-related articles, photos, and items of interest to the chapter by January 15th to [Lynn](#). Suggestions for the newsletter are also welcome.

Thanks.

Lynn Trenta, Courier Editor



Check out our Facebook Page at

[TXMN Coastal Prairie Chapter Facebook](#)

COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER OF THE TEXAS MASTER NATURALISTS

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