October 15, 2014

COASTAL PRAIRIE COURIER

PRAIRIE MONTH AND MORE

Why I Love Prairies Mark Morgenstern

The reason I love prairies is they give me a spiritual connection to the land. Most people have lost this connection. They do not see themselves as a living part of their ecosystem. I once heard it put in perspective this way- an individual living in a high-rise in Manhattan NY is totally dependent on the Catskill Mountains for fresh air and water, the plains of North America & Brazil for food and clothing, and the oceans for seafood. Even our fossil fuel is energy from captured sunlight through photosynthesis.

When our ecosystems are degraded and threatened by non-native plants, invasives and uncontrolled growth we too are threatened. But there is hope for the future. When I became involved in the prairie community, I met a lot of people who are dedicated to turning back the tide. I inherited a green thumb from my father and started out with veggies. Then I went on to grow native plants and then prairie plants. There were lots of mistakes along the way. The way I learned to plant was by volunteering for Project Blazing Star in Herman Park at the Whistle Stop Prairie. I learned to grow plants by taking a class by Tom Solomon. My front yard prairie blooms almost year round. The stunning thing is not just the plants, but the sounds you hear walking along the edge. It's alive!

In 1832 Karl Anton Postyl wrote about the prairies west of Houston "In no park or artificially laid out grounds would it be possible to find anything equal to these natural shrubberies of pecan, plum and peach (laurel cherry) trees...the vine only is common to them all... I rode through several of these islands. They were carpeted with the most beautiful verdure it is possible to behold"

The prairie month activities have begun. One common thread among the volunteers is a willingness to share their knowledge. I encourage everyone to get involved with our activities. The cooler weather is inspiring me to get outside and get busy. Hope to see you at the Prairie Restoration Round Up and Prairie Heritage Day both at Seabourne Creek Nature Park. Thanks to all for your enthusiasm and inspiration, morgy@consolidated.net

Prairie Month Events

- **October 16, 2014** - **Restoration Roundup @ Seabourne Creek Park** from 9 am - 3 pm. Want to restore your land to coastal prairie? CPP's Restoration Roundup is focused on helping you better understand decision making, tools, and people available to you to help transform your land to prairie. Hosted by Texas Master Naturalists - Coastal Prairie Chapter and Coastal Prairie Partnership. **Flyer & AGENDA**. **Click here to register now**.

- **October 18, 2014** - **Prairie Pandemonium @ Armand Bayou Nature Center** from 8:00 am - 12:00 pm. This will be the 8th annual and oldest prairie planting event in the Houston area! Registration is required and participants need to register directly with Zach Roper as is posted in the following flyer - **click here to download registration flyer** or click here to go to ABNC's website.

- **October 20, 2014** - **Seed Collecting Trip** to the legendary Nash Prairie. Volunteers will work to collect seeds which support numerous conservation programs in southeast Texas. This is your way to have a big impact! Hosted by the Nature Conservancy of Texas. **Click here for registration and directions**.

- **October 23, 2014** - **Prairie by the Cemetery Halloween Event** in Deer Park, TX . Hosted by NPAT - Houston. **Click here to register** or Visit the HNPAT Official Website now.

- **October 25, 2014** - **Field Trip to Big Thicket Prairies & Savannahs** with Brandt Mannchen from 7:30 am - ~5:00 pm. Hosted by NPAT & Houston Sierra Club. **Click here to register now**.

- **October 29, 2014** - **Urban Prairies by Light Rail** from 4:30 pm - 7:00 pm. Join Jaime González on an inner city tour of prairies in the Texas Medical Center and in Hermann Park. Hiking required as well as transportation on the Metro Light Rail system. Hosted by CPP and HNPAT.
  Click here to register now.

- **November 1, 2014** - **Prairie Heritage Day @ Seabourne Creek Park** located in Rosenberg, TX. Join the celebration of prairies at Prairie Heritage Day - a day full of adventure and activities hosted by the Texas Master Naturalist - Coastal Prairie Chapter. **Click here to visit the official page.**

- **November 8, 2014 Prairie Plant-A-Thon @ Sheldon Lake State Park and Environmental Learning Center.** Join Texas Parks and Texas Master Naturalists for one of the largest restoration days on the Gulf Coast. Afterwards, see one of the most diverse and interesting state parks within the Houston region. **Click here to download the volunteer sign-up form now**.

- **November 13, 2014 Holiday Potluck, Prairie Plant Swap, & Learn Your Prairie Plants. – 6:30 pm.** Join members of the Houston Chapter of the Native Prairies Association of Texas for an evening of food, fun, and prairie facts. Please bring a covered dish, plus if you have them - your extra prairie plants for the Swap Table and prairie plants sprigs known and unknown for the Plant Learning Table. Time: 6:30

p.m. at 3015 Richmond Ave. (parking lot entrance on Eastside Street), 1st floor conference room, Houston 77098. RSVP will help us plan, but last minute deciders are welcome.

- **November 15, 2014 Putting Down Roots Restoration Day on the Katy Prairie**. Join in on the Katy Prairie Conservancy 1st Annual public restoration day. Volunteers will help restore a brand new 55-acre prairie restoration complete with trails. This site will be the center for education for the Conservancy for years to come. **Click here to register today.**

A & M AGRILIFE AND TXMN

Water information and videos

Water is an important issue for everyone. Texas A&M has some great videos about water issues in Texas. See what you can learn at http://texaswater.tamu.edu/

Easy Gardening fact sheets

Check out fact sheets that are available at Aggie Horticulture and the Argillite Bookstore websites . These publications cover over 40 vegetable crops as well as cultural practices and are also available in Spanish. These publications are in pdf format for ease of viewing and printing.

To view the full list, go to http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/vegetable/easy-gardening-series/ . This link has the English version on the top half of the page, and the Spanish version on the bottom half. Also, these and many other extension publications are available at the AgriLife Bookstore http://agrilifebookstore.org .

Thanks to Brandy Radar Administrative Assistant
Horticulture and Agriculture/Natural Resources
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension- Fort Bend County

TXMN Annual Meeting Silent Auction

Items for the Silent Auction at the Annual Meeting (Oct 24-26) are being collected now by the Lindheimer Chapter, coordinators of this year's Silent Auction. Even if you are not coming to the Annual Meeting please consider donating an item and make arrangements for someone else to bring it for you. The goal is to have at least 8 members from each chapter donate an item.

Please contact the Lindheimer coordinators in advance to notify them of the item you are donating by filling out the header of a Silent Auction Bid Sheet (attached) and emailing it to LindheimerMN.Auction@gmail.com. Cash, checks and credit cards will be accepted for Silent Auction item payments so please plan on spending some time – and money – visiting the Silent Auction tables.

THE BIRD'S THE WORD

Susan Archer contributed this interesting story about doves.

I am attaching a link (below) that describes a tree that we have on our property. Apparently the white wing doves have discovered it and have been observed looking like they were "overserved" on fermented fruit. Our friend walked right up to a group of doves on the ground and they ignored him until he clapped his hands and then they flew.

Susan Archer

[Pigeon Plums, Dove Plums, Pigeon Seagrape, Tie-Tongue | Eat The Weeds and other things, too]

Bill Johnson forwarded this information about hummingbirds:

Bird Tip of the Month: Although the peak of hummingbird migration is past, don't take your feeders down. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds will still be passing through this month, but consider leaving your feeders up this winter. You won't keep the Ruby-throats here by leaving your feeder up and there are 7 or 8 western hummingbirds that spend the winter along the Gulf Coast and in the southeastern United States. You could have a Ruby-throat winter at your house but you're much more likely to host one of these: Black-chinned, Rufous, Allen's, Broad-tailed, Calliope, Buff-bellied, or Anna's. And then there's those odd ball hummers that have shown up in our area as well like Costa's, Violet-crowned, Magnificent, and Blue-throated. So keep your feeders up and let us know what you see!

MEMBERS' PHOTOS

Bill Archer shared his wonderful photos at this link

Bill Archer's Photos

NATIVE MILKWEED SEED

Linda Rippert sent this great link about **Native Milkweed Seeds**

http://monarchwatch.org/bring-back-the-monarchs/milkweed/seed-collecting-processing

Thanks, Linda!

SAN JACINTO TOUR

A small group of chapter members trekked to the San Jacinto Historic site and toured both the historic site and the prairie in the process of being restored. **Wayne Poorman** and **Diane Russell** contributed the photos above.

Wayne also sent the links below that provide extra information about the site Here are a few more links about the restoration project...

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/san-jacinto-battleground/san-jacinto-battleground-state-historic-site-marsh-restoration-and-boardwalk-interpretive-trail-guide

https://www.friendsofsanjacinto.com/

http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/pasadena/news/native-prairie-seed-to-be-used-to-restore-san-jacinto/article_ab1721a0-5efc-503d-9025-c5207aee4246.html

http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/pasadena/living/tree-planting-slated-for-san-jacinto-battleground-prairie/article_124e2058-5f57-5b33-a59a-17d3c94306fa.html

Anyone want to schedule another visit for the Chapter, maybe next spring?

Wayne

LDS VOLUNTEER AT SEABOURNE PRAIRIE AREA

Photos are courtesy of Rick Adams and Lynn Trenta.

A HUGE THANKS to a group of Latter Day Saint Volunteers who came out to help our chapter with the Seabourne Creek Park Prairie Area! They put down crushed granite and weeded in the demo garden, planted shrubs, organized and weeded the planting area, and weeded in the 2 prairie areas along the main pathway behind the sheds, among other tasks. **ANOTHER HUGE THANKS** to the CPTMN Volunteers who came out to supervise and work—Mark Morgenstern, Karl Baumgartner, Bruce Vest, Georgia Messemer, Linda Lourim, Jay Roussel (and daughter Jessie), Jimmie Brannon, Doug Simons, Rick Adams, Jim Butcher, Bill Johnson, and Lynn Trenta. **THANKS TO JIM** for bringing food and water!

ESTUARIES

MNs, would you be interested in participating in more training about estuaries? John O'Connell wants your input about arranging a field trip and some on-line training opportunities.
I have attended his in-person training on this twice and learned a lot! I encourage you to consider this opportunity and indicate your interest by taking the online survey. The LINK IS BELOW in John's email message. **NOTE: that it is due in just a few days, so please do it today!**

Teri MacArthur
Jesse H. Jones Park & Nature Center
tmacarthur@hcp4.net

The Survey Link is: https://agrilife.az1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_e5nMSpuWCCqed4F

Thank you!

John P. O'Connell, M.S.,Extension Agent, Brazoria County
p: (979) 864-1558 x.116 | f: (979) 864-1566 (Angleton)
p: (979) 388-1558 x.116 | f: (979) 388-1566 (Brazosport)
p: (281) 756-1558 x.116 | f: (281) 756-1566 (Alvin)
j-oconnell@tamu.edu | http://brazoria.agrilife.org/

The DEADLINE for articles, photos, and other much appreciated contributions to the November Courier is November 10th. Please submit these to *Lynn*. The Courier usually comes out once a month.

The Bulletin comes out every week and lets you know what chapter and community events are coming up. Any questions or suggestions for the bulletin go to *Susan*.

Thank you so much for all of your articles, photos, and links to articles. We can learn so much from each other and our community.