

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



Monarch migration: 2018 Update and a Visit to Magical Michoacán Overwintering Sites *By Diane Russell*

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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 25th of the month. Suggestions for the newsletter are also welcome. Thanks.

**Lynn Trenta,
Courier Editor**



In February I fulfilled my dream of visiting the fabled overwintering sites of the monarch butterflies in the state of Michoacán in Mexico. I went not just for my own personal enrichment, but also to record my observations to bring back to my butterfly-loving colleagues as none of us has ever seen a talk on this subject before.

The trip was hosted by a travel group led by Dr. Tom Emmel, a lepidopterist from the University of Florida. Our understanding of the phenomenon of migration - the currently understood biological underpinnings, and the challenges to its continuation, was enhanced with his nightly lectures. We visited El Rosario and Sierra Chinqua, two of the remaining 11 bioreserves protected by the Mexican government. My talk provided updates on these topics as well as videos and photos of the bioreserves.

In addition to these specific trips, our Holbrook Travel group visited culturally important locations in Mexico City, Angangueo, and Teotihuacan, which were included briefly in the presentation.

Monarch migration: 2018 Update and a Visit to Magical Michoacán
Overwintering Sites (Continued)



I really enjoyed giving this talk and the warm reception and interest from my friends and colleagues who attended. It has been submitted in a proposal to be given again at our annual TMN state conference in October.

June Field Trip to Sea Center and the Texas/Brazosport
Center for Arts and Sciences



Saturday, June 23rd, we will meet at the Sea Center in Lake Jackson for a tour. Sea Center Texas is a marine aquarium, fish hatchery and nature center operated by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. See saltwater aquariums showcasing the diversity of the Texas coast and tour the largest redfish hatchery in the world.

We will meet at 9:00am at 302 Medical Dr, Lake Jackson, TX 77566 or we will be carpooling from the Extension office in Rosenberg at 7:45am.

We will visit the Brazosport Museum of Natural Science at 400 College Blvd., Clute, Tx after Sea Center approximately 11:15. They have a large shell display among other items.

Several places for lunch are in the area.

Chapter Members Among Top iNaturalist Participants in City Nature Challenge 2018 Houston

City Nature Challenge 2018 took place From April 27th to April 30th, and Houston definitely brought it! Houston came in first for species identified in Texas and in SECOND for the WORLD for number of identified species (barely behind San Francisco Bay, the host of CNC). A special thanks to everyone that participated in observing and IDing our 22,000 observations. It is clear that Houston is home to a dedicated and talented group of naturalists!

Keep those iNaturalist skills fresh and get ready for City Nature Challenge 2019!

Thanks again to the partner organizations that helped host this event! And thanks to the over 60 cities around the world that made the event so much fun.

Houston had 715 observers and among these, 2 known chapter members ranked in the top 20 for number of observations, Amber Leung was 7th and Tony Huff was 19th. As not all the observers are identified, I can't be sure if other members weren't in there also. Susie Doe, our chapter's plant expert, identified 796 plants, coming in 8th for number of identifications out of 588 identifiers. Amber Leung came in 14th in the identifiers.

For more information about the project go to

<https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2018/journal>

Leaderboard Sort by: Observations | Species | Observers



View more

Volunteer Voice

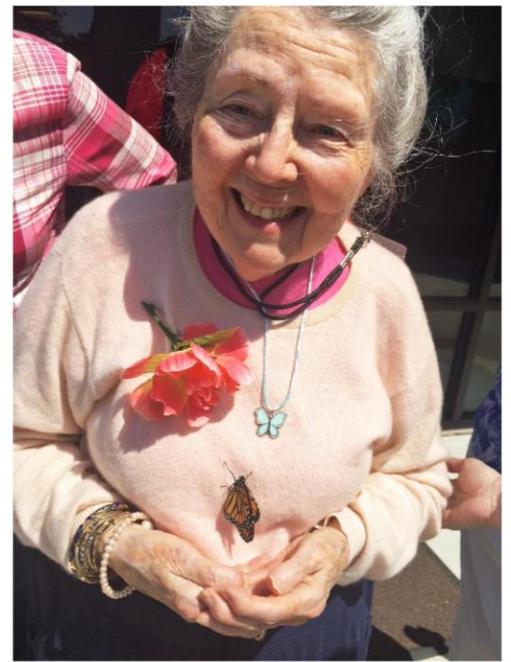
April Outreach *By Diane Russell*



April saw several outreaches into the community to raise awareness that the Master Naturalists not only exist, but that we also have great stuff to share with them!

I visited the Gathering Place, which is a monthly event at Living Word Lutheran Church in Katy dedicated to providing entertainment and fellowship for those with short term memory loss. They enjoyed seeing photos and videos of all the monarchs overwintering in Mexico. While I was there, three of my monarch butterflies emerged from their chrysalises, evoking so much joy and wonder! I asked several guests to help me release them afterward. It was a sweet moment.

Another highlight for me was taking our skins and skulls trunk to Willow Fork Park in Katy with Kim Farou, Nancy Huffman and Cheryl Garcia. We have a fabulous new carnivore skull addition - a feral hog skull complete with upper and lower tusks (thanks in part to the artistic sculpting work of Ramona Ridge). We can thank our own Boone Holladay for retrieving it for us from Bill Archer's property for this interesting piece.



April Outreach (Continued) By Diane Russell

This article isn't complete without mentioning our outreach to an underserved elementary school in far Waller County, Roberts Road Elementary School, spearheaded by Cheryl Garcia. The Gideon Lincecum Chapter had a presence at their science night but asked us to begin taking it over as this school is actually in our county of service. Cheryl, Debbie Wendt and I assisted them with a fairly complex game of nature bingo. The children were so sweet and grateful, but there were very few interesting displays for them. There is a real need at that school for more presenters next year. I hope our members will step up next year to do the best we can to share what we know with them.



I'll be returning to Willow Fork Park one Saturday morning in August, as they have requested us to put on a Nature Scavenger Hunt like we did at Seabourne Park. It's a lot of fun, so if anyone reading this wants to get on board with me, let me know. In addition to all the naturally existing objects there, the fossilized dinosaur eggs will be returning to be part of the hunt. I'm sure as Master Naturalists you are all aware that these eggs have spines and come in many colors as well as silver and gold.



Seabourne Creek Nature Park is on a Roll !

Newsletter Article Touts Seabourne—Sent in by Terri Hurley and

The Greatwood Monthly Newsletter and other local newsletters recently had a wonderful article about Seabourne Creek Nature Park and chapter members Jim Butcher, Diane Russell, and Linda Rippert were quoted in it. Thanks for getting out information about our signature project! Also, thanks to reporter Marquita Griffin for her fun article. To see the article go to

<https://bloximages.chicago2.vip.townnews.com/fbherald.com/content/tncms/assets/v3/editorial/4/01/40196b92-4d62-11e8-ae27-7fc0437e6d6b/5ae89f053cbff.pdf.pdf>



Seabourne Outreach *Text and Photos by Lynn Trenta*

Thursday, April 26th, a small group of children from a Montessori School in Richmond were invited out to Seabourne Creek Nature Park. Chapter members Diane Russell, Ramona Ridge and Jim Butcher delighted the school kids with a tour of the park and a scavenger hunt.

The tour began in the Prairie Demo Garden and proceeded around the wetlands pond behind it. Moving over to our newly established SNP Arboretum, the toothache tree, is always a hit and the kids loved seeing the result of chewing one of its leaves. The children then toured the Butterfly Garden and the lake. After enjoying the ducks, the group trekked down to the prairie area. On the way, Jim stopped by the large Mulberry tree by the wetlands and the group tasted the sweet fruit. Jim showed the children our chapter's prairie operation and then it was time for lunch.

After lunch, the scavenger hunt proved to be the highlight of the day. The kids scurried to find the items on their list. Among these items were some dinosaur eggs. Hmm....Jurassic Park coming up?

Thanks to Diane, Ramona and Jim for putting this together!



Susie's Plant Walk *Text and Photos by Diane Russell*

Susie Doe treated us to another informational botany session at Seabourne Creek Nature Park on Saturday morning, May 12. As someone who used to shun all things botanical, I am beginning to appreciate some of the fascinating information Susie offers FOR FREE on these morning teaching sessions and walks. I probably only remember 5% of what she says, but that ends up being WAY more than most people will ever know.

In this photo, we see the cruel and analytical Susie displaying one of hundreds of disk flowers that comprise the center of a sunflower. It is impaled on her pencil. The closeup shows this little thing is the actual flower, with its typical parts of a stigma (bilobed), style and white ovary at the base. Peripheral ray flowers (not shown) comprise the yellow petals we all associate with sunflowers.

It's such a treat to be able to walk around the prairie with experts like Susie, Karl Baumgartner and Jim Butcher, learning better how to distinguish native from non-native plants we see all the time but aren't quite familiar with - dogshade, dicantherium grass, vasey grass, hedge parsley, brown seed paspalum, gamagrass, to name only a few.

Many thanks to Susie, a true naturalist and teacher who gives of her time so generously to provide more depth of knowledge to our chapter members.



New Signage at Seabourne

Several new signs have been established at Seabourne Creek Nature Park in the last month. The first one to be installed was the Seabourne Lake Sign. Next a new prairie sign leading from the outer lake path into the prairie from the north side was installed. Finally, the Seabourne Arboretum and Prairie Demo Garden Sign were installed in their places out in the park.

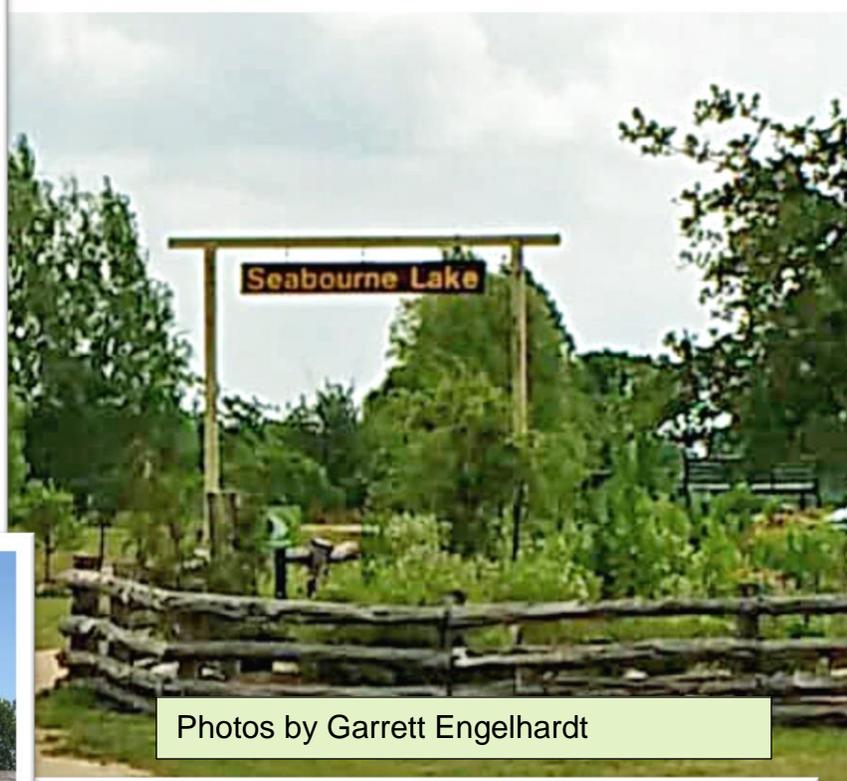


Photo by Terri Hurley

Photos by Garrett Engelhardt



More Seabourne Happenings

For the last couple of months, we have been lucky to have been helped by 5-6 LDS sisters and elders. They have helped plant prairie plants, bumped up plants, weeded at the butterfly garden and the prairie demo garden, spread gravel, trimmed and mulched trees for the arboretum, worked at the bird sanctuary and helped with the pergola.

Many thanks to these wonderful young men and women! Their work has been exemplary and accomplished with politeness and respect.

There is never a dull moment out at Seabourne! Activities occur every week. Below are our 2 bee houses and the new pergola. Terri Hurley and Pauline Zinn are in the demo garden with the new plant labels Pauline put together. Garrett Engelhardt has been working on several projects and keeping the birds fed.



Laura Bush Helped Found “Texas by Nature “ *Sent in by Susan Archer*

An article in the Texas Coop Power, put out by the Bandera Electric Cooperative, reveals what Laura Bush and 2 other women have accomplished through their organization called Texas by Nature.

This organization was “founded in 2011 by former Texas and U.S. first lady Laura Bush, Katharine Armstrong and Regan Gammon. The three friends share a mutual interest in the natural resources of Texas and some serious conservation chops: Bush served as honorary chair of the National Park Foundation; Armstrong previously chaired the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission; and Gammon had been on advisory boards for the National Park Foundation and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.

Right away, the women decided not to reinvent the wheel but to find successful conservation work and encourage more of the same. The organization’s official mission became “to spur Texan-led conservation that produces tangible benefits for people, prosperity and natural resources.” Or, as Bush says, ‘to keep Texas, Texas, for the benefit of Texans and wildlife.’ ”

To read more of this article go to <https://www.texascooppower.com/texas-stories/nature-outdoors/naturally-protective>



Plant of the Month, Saltmarsh Mallow (*Kosteletzkyia virginica*)

By Mark Morgenstern

Our plant of the month is Saltmarsh mallow. The scientific name is Kosteletzkyia virginica. The 2" wide flowers are white or pink. I was told a while back that the pink flowers are found in more brackish areas. This year we saw all pink flowers at the dunes on Follet's island west of Galveston and at the Brazoria wildlife refuge road to Salt Lake. I'm going to collect seed soon with caution, due to rattlesnakes that inhabit these areas. I have provided these perennials at the Native Plant Society of Texas's Wildscapes Workshop the past several years and most of mine are white.

Don't let the word "salt" scare you away from this plant. They inhabit Brazos Bend State Park in Fort Bend County. They grow 3' tall and are deciduous. I simply cut back the dried stem in the spring. They will grow in regular garden soil. The blooms last from June through October, adding color plus attracting butterflies and hummingbirds! The ancient Egyptians used the roots of a different species of mallow to make candied delicacies for their gods, nobility and pharaohs. It was a crime for anyone else to eat the treat!

Photos courtesy of Lady Bird Johnson Wildlife Center



In Our Own Backyards and Other Places

Indigo Bunting Migration *By Diane Eismont*

This photo shows 7 male Indigo Buntings, 3 females and 1 Rose-breasted Grosbeak at one of our backyard feeders. April is their migration month through here, when we also have Painted Buntings and Orioles.

In the feeders, I use a fruit and nut mix as well as black oil sunflowers and extra raisins. It also helps to have fruiting trees nearby. My first choice would be a White Mulberry tree, which fruits early & also attracts Cedar Waxwings.



82°F

BIRDCAM PRO

01 MAY 2018 02:10 pm

In Our Own Backyards and Other Places (Continued)

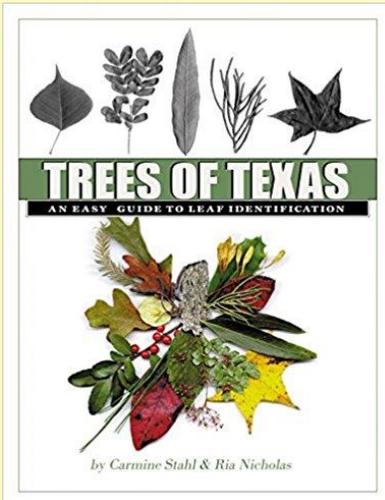


John Donaho captured 2 great photos of monarchs on Rosinweed at Nash Prairie.



Roger Hathorn took this wonderful Memorial Day Photo. The cardinal seems to be standing at attention!

Book Corner

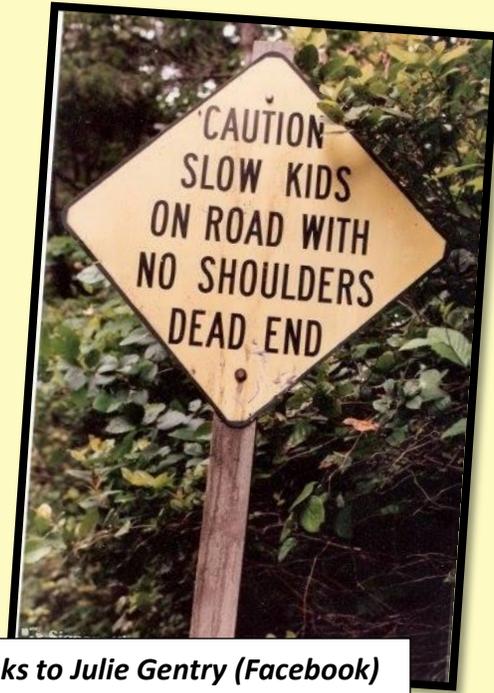


Trees of Texas

By Carmine Stahl and Ria
McElvaney

*Texas is long overdue for a new, accessible, innovative tree book. This guide to the identification of just over two hundred of Texas' most common native and naturalized trees brims over with life-sized, black-and-white photographs of leaves, fruit, flowers, and bark. Scanned directly from actual specimens, these images accompany species descriptions that include height, growth rate, commercial or wildlife value, family, and vegetation region of the trees, alongside captivating folklore and interesting cultural and historical annotations. To aid in identification, the authors have organized the book by leaf shape and provide a simple but clear, illustrated key to help the reader match the leaf he or she is looking at to the pertinent description. For the more knowledgeable reader who may not need help with actual identification, scientific and common names appear in the index. Appendixes list trees by family, by scientific and common names, by region, and as introduced species. Just for fun, the authors have added appendixes for wild edible recipes, light and water requirements, and butterfly host trees. A brief introduction and a glossary are also included in the manuscript. McElvaney and Stahl's *The Trees of Texas* is innovatively organized and friendly to the novice, using life-sized illustrations as a visual guide to common native and naturalized trees. Perfect for people who want to learn to identify trees without wading through confusing technical terms, it makes a handy reference for libraries, schools, and nature centers. It is also suited for people with interests as diverse as the historical uses of plants, native plant gardening, attracting wildlife, and Texas history.*

The Lighter Side



Thanks to Julie Gentry (Facebook)

Thanks to John Donaho (Facebook)



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- Seabourne--Vacant

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://txmn.org/coastal>

Attwater Prairie Newsletter Sent in by Margo Johnson



Check out the latest edition of the [The Boomer](#) . This issue includes Mike Morrow's latest APC Update and one of the newest refuge employees is spotlighted. The results of this Year's Student Art Contest are presented and you learn about "Tracking Interns". All this and more in the May issue.

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

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

Also, share our chapter Facebook entries with your friends on your Facebook Page



COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER OF THE TEXAS MASTER NATURALISTS

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We also have a **Chapter-Only** Facebook Page that allows chapter members to post items. You can join by going to the website below and clicking on "Join". The administrator will allow you access. This is for chapter members only.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1882734648662315/?ref=bookmarks>