

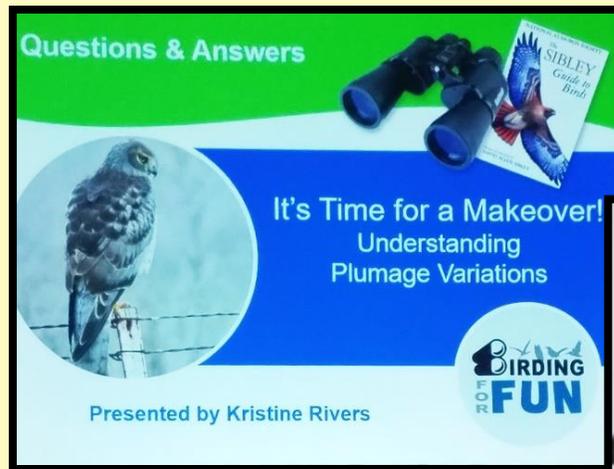


*We are a group of trained volunteers who share our appreciation and knowledge of nature with the community through outreach, education and conservation/restoration projects*

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## CPTMN Program “It’s Time for a Makeover: Understanding Plumage Variations” Summary by Lynn Trenta, Communications



*May 2<sup>nd</sup>, our chapter was treated to an invigorating and interactive program given by Kristine Rivers, President of the Cradle of Texas Master Naturalists, who is also an avid birder. She has participated in every Brazoria Christmas bird count since 1984. She also founded Bird for Fun in 2015, which provides educational services and guided tours to the public, has taught classes for several area cities and has participated in Featherfest as a presenter, liaison, and field trip leader.*

*With our bird guides in hand, we attempted to identify the birds on the PowerPoint slides. The birds were not always the adult versions and were both female and male birds. This was a fun exercise and kept us interested and involved. Rivers had on hand extra bird guides for the group.*

*What a delightful evening! We were shouting out names of the birds, some correct and some not, but we soon learned what bird we were looking at, whether it was immature, breeding, female or male and where it was located at different times of the year. We learned when it was in our area so that we could spot it when we got out to go birding.*

*Thanks to Kristine Rivers for a wonderful program!*

**Please send chapter events and nature-related articles, photos, and items of interest to the chapter to [Lynn](#) by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.**

**Suggestions for the newsletter are also welcome. Thanks.**

**Lynn Trenta,  
Courier Editor**

**CPCTMN Program for June 13<sup>th</sup> “Chronic Wasting Disease in Deer & Latest Info on Feral Hog Control” by Clint Faas, TPWD Wildlife Biologist and a Talk about Snakes by Amber Leung**  
*From Margo Johnson’s Publicity Write-up*

*Clint Faas is the Wildlife Biologist with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in Fort Bend County. He will provide background information and offer recent updates on the chronic wasting disease in deer in Texas as well as an overview of possible new control methods and issues with feral hogs. (Note that this event is not on the first Thursday of the month, it is on the second Thursday.)*



*Amber Leung, Past CPCTMN President, is also going to charm us with a presentation on snakes.*

**Membership Minute** *By Bert Stipelcovich*



*Congratulations to the following members who recently achieved certifications and milestones:*

**Initial Certification**

- *Bob Naeger*
- *Tracey Kolb*

**2019 Recertification**

- *Jim Butcher*
- *Margo Johnson*
- *Linda Rippert*



**500 Service Hours Milestone**

- *Bert Stipelcovich*

*Special thanks to Becky Waldo for closely monitoring member achievements. Note that the 2019 recertification pin, the golden-cheeked warbler, is not yet available.*

**Jimmie Brannon Tribute** *By Karl Baumgartner, Seabourne Creek Project Manager*

*Jimmie belonged to the strong Class of 2005, along with myself, Linda Rippert, Ed Plant, Gloria Scheel, Nancy Sparrow and John Cotterell. Many don't realize that he was such an active and important chapter member. He served on the Board continuously for many years, and in 2009 joined with Jim Butcher as a principal contributor to the buildout of Seabourne. There were no outbuildings or prairie restoration site when we started. He designed and oversaw most of the original structures and was then the Eagle Scout Coordinator to arrange for the volunteer construction of the original workstation, the benches, sheds, tables, parking lot pergola, etc. For the original planting in 2010 of the prairie restoration site, he and Jim and I drove to Bernardo, Texas and borrowed a no-till-drill, and then to the local Ford Tractor dealership to borrow (we had no money) a tractor which Jimmie drove cross-country back to Seabourne Park.*

*We did a lot of stuff together and accomplished a lot. Jimmie became one of the most liked members of the Chapter. He was always cheerful, he was always helpful, he didn't have a personal agenda, and he didn't have a mean bone in his body. What more do you want?*

## Jim Butcher: 5000 Hours! *By Bert Stiplecovich*

*On April 26, James R.M. Butcher became our first chapter member to reach the 5,000-hour service milestone—a monumental achievement. The state organization will recognize him with the coveted diamond dragonfly pin.*

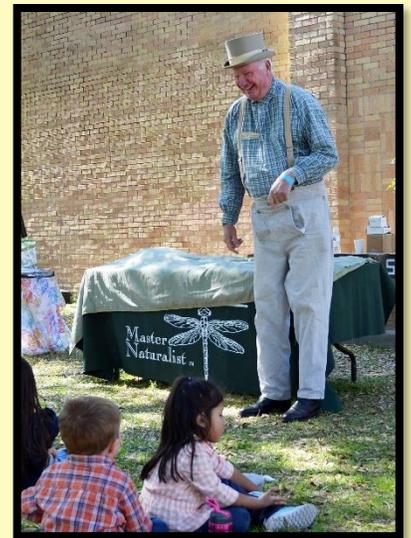
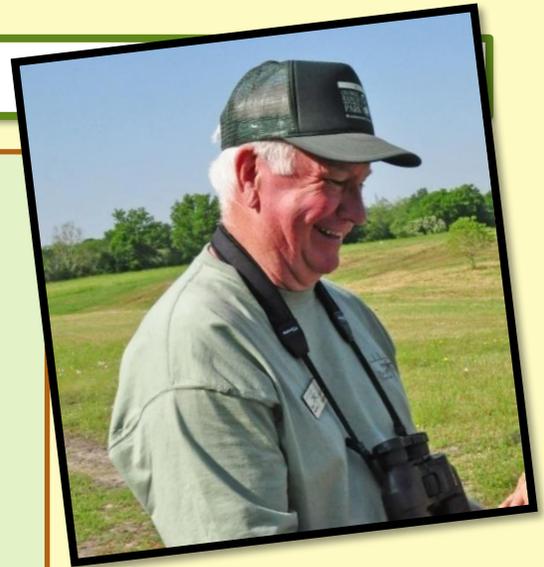


5000 Hour Pin (Diamond)

*Jim joined our chapter with the class of 2008 and went on to serve in many capacities, including two years as president and past president. He also led the annual Seabourne Nature Fest (formerly known as the Prairie Heritage Festival) for eight years (2011–2018) and continues to provide guidance. He is a force of nature, seemingly always working at Seabourne volunteer days, public outreach events, Earth Day, July 4, training classes, and the list goes on. He continues to provide strong leadership and to set a great example.*

*A man of many talents, Jim noted in the volunteer management system (VMS) under Licenses/Certifications/Skills: "I can walk and chew gum at the same time." And, after 30 years in management with AT&T, he can use a flip phone exceptionally well.*

*Always quick with a smile and a joke, he shines most brightly while interacting with young people. Whether identifying a skull for a curious child or directing teams of young volunteers at Seabourne, Jim brings warmth, knowledge, and sure guidance. He embodies what it means to be a Texas Master Naturalist. It continues to be my honor to work with him and to count him as a friend.*



## Earth Day Presentation on Bats *By Linda Lourim*

*On May 18, Keep Sugar Land Beautiful, the City of Sugar Land and Town Square hosted an Earth Day event titled “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Rock.” This event was rescheduled from April, due to bad weather. There was a large turnout and my exhibit attracted lots of visitors.*

*The tri-fold display on the right was titled “Bats: Small Mammals Doing Big Jobs”. These include insect eaters, pollinators, and seed dispersers. However, Texas bats are all insect eaters. The information on the left panel gave more quantitative information about what they do – save US farmers \$22 billion annually in reduced pesticide application, the 20 million bats in Bracken Cave near San Antonio eat 100 TONS of insects nightly! The center panel showed photos of bats doing what they do – catching insects, covered in pollen, and eating fruit. The information on the right panel gave ideas on how people can help them – bat houses, plant a moon garden, keep cats away, don’t poison them, reduce outdoor lighting.*

*The tri-fold display on the right was titled “Don’t Fear Bats.” The left panel included common bat myths and truths: bats are flying rodents, are pests, have rabies, are blind, are dirty, are blood-sucking vampires, fly in your hair. Nope, nope, nope. Well, there are vampire bats in South America, and they do get rabies, but less than ½ of 1% contract rabies. The center panel showed two locations in Houston where you can see the bats emerge nightly – Waugh Drive Bridge, Watonga Blvd. Bridge. The right panel included bat fun facts. Did you realize bats have belly buttons? They’re mammals! Bat mothers must catch their pups in their wings when they’re born, or they’ll fall to the ground and die. They usually live 20 years.*



*I also displayed, under glass, a dead Mexican free-tail bat. I had a bat house, a child’s book about bats, and various informational printouts about white-nose syndrome, pictures of Texas bats, how to catch and remove a bat from your house, and the perils of inhaling fungal spores from guano.*

*I will bring the display boards to the next chapter meeting for everyone to see and determine how they might be used at other events. They’ll then be stored in our office in the Extension Service building where they will be available for use by anyone. I hope you find them useful.*

## Cub Scouts Tour the Demo Garden *By Terri Hurley, VSP Director*

Photos by Lynn Trenta



*Cub scouts and their parents from Den 4 of Pack 10 in Richmond visited the SCNP's Demo Garden on May 16 in order to complete several requirements for their rank advancement. CPCTMN members Terri Hurley and Lynn Trenta met with them and gave a short presentation to the boys about our area's growing zone (Coastal Prairie!) and the plants that grow there. Then they showed the boys all around the various habitat beds and talked about the plants growing there and what they provide for wildlife. Assistant Den Leader, Doug Lewis, had arranged for all the boys to sign a heart-warming thank you note for Terri and Lynn.*



## Seabourne Creek Nature Park

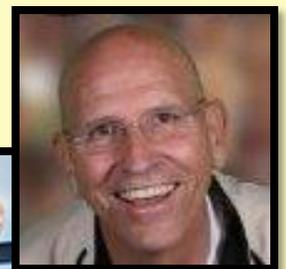
### The Prairie Restoration *By Jerry Trenta, Seabourne Creek Director*

*We have a very challenging plan for our Seabourne prairie restoration efforts this year. Several areas are being worked. Our primary effort currently is a triangular area just east of the tool shed and nursery. This area was herbicided several times this year and over 500 nursery plants have been planted there in April and May, thanks to the LDS, C.J. McDaniel, and others. The intent is to plant close to 2000 plants in this small area, hopefully crowding out the unwanted invasives. The plant mix so far is mostly little bluestem, Liatris and rattlesnake master. Broomsedge bluestem, Texas coneflower, big bluestem and Gulf muhly will be planted soon. Spot herbiciding and irrigation are also being done periodically to aid in giving the new plants a good start.*

*In other parts of our prairie we are ramping up efforts to control the Brazilian vervain, vasey grass and windmill grass. Some areas have been mowed, thanks to Sal Cardenas and then spot herbicided to allow the desired natives to flourish. We have been cutting the tops off the Brazilian vervain and vasey grass (with a hedge-trimmer) in an effort to keep them from reseeding and spreading. In the areas that were worked last year, the spring growth looks encouraging with a reasonably high percentage of the planted forbs and grasses returning.*

*The greenhouse is nearly full thanks to Mark Morgenstern, the nursery tables are full and bump-up efforts, are on a record pace, thanks to Jim Butcher. June will be a very busy month for us. Lynn Trenta has been contacting the LDS volunteers to come out almost every week and they have made a big impact on the planting and bump-up tasks. But there is always a need for more help, especially in invasive plant control.*

*Prairie restoration of an old cotton farm is not easy and requires a lot of patience, as it will take several years for the native plants to really prosper and out-compete the invasives. We see more and more native plants out there every month, so we are getting it done.*



Seabourne Creek Nature Park (Continued)

Chapter Members Stock Seabourne Lake

May 14<sup>th</sup>, Karl Baumgartner and Mark Dylla stocked the Seabourne Creek Nature Park's Lake with:

- 200 6-8" catfish,
- 1000 Medium bluegill,
- 100 4" bass
- 10,000 fatheads.

I am sure that the fishing public appreciated this greatly. Fishing is one of the main activities at Seabourne.



Photos by Karl Baumgartner



## Houston is First in Number of Species for the U. S. for the iNaturalist City Nature Challenge *From Lan Shen and the iNaturalist website with comments by Lynn Trenta, Editor*

### City Nature Challenge

PARTICIPATE LEADERBOARD 2019 EDUCATION TOOLKIT ABOUT 

## Final 2019 Results

Cities	Observations	Cities	Species	Cities	People
Cape Town, South Africa	53763	Cape Town, South Africa	4588	San Francisco Bay Area, CA, USA	1947
La Paz, Bolivia	46931	Hong Kong SAR, China	3596	Los Angeles County, CA, USA	1555
San Diego County, CA, USA	38241	Houston, TX, USA	3367	La Paz, Brazil	1500
San Francisco Bay Area, CA, USA	38028	Los Angeles County, CA, USA	3249	Quito, Ecuador	1372
Tena, Ecuador	37965	San Francisco Bay Area, CA, USA	3183	Washington, D.C., USA	1258

Most Observations	Most Species	Most Observed Species
 <b>eric_keith</b> 1,232 	 <b>eric_keith</b> 1,013 	 <b>Pinkladies</b> 186
 anewman 835	 anewman 736	 Green Anole 131
 silvan_shepherd 770	 silvan_shepherd 550	 Common Slider 122
 bobromero 690	 paulines 360	 Indian Blanket 116
 paulines 568	 atjelmeland 328	 Brown Anole 116
 johnschneider 545	 noreenhoard 292	 Salt Marsh Moth 113
<a href="#">View All</a>	<a href="#">View All</a>	<a href="#">View All</a>

*Lan Shen sent this out to the Master Naturalist Community after the results for the iNaturalist's City Nature Challenge were finalized.*

*Houston came in first for the number of species in the U.S. and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the world this year! The top Houston observers are circled above.*

*For our chapter, yours truly, Lynn Trenta, came in 46<sup>th</sup> out of 923 observers for Houston with 116 observations and 90 species. Since people often don't list their names, I can't say for sure about our chapter's other observers. Go to <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2019-houston?tab=observers> to see the entire Houston list of observers.*

The iNaturalist City Nature Challenge (Continued)



For the global total count with more categories go to <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2019/journal>



## VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS

By Terri Hurley, Volunteer Service Project Director

### **GRAND OPENING OF THE WILLOW FORK PARK BUTTERFLY GARDEN---LET'S HELP OUR OWN DIANE RUSSELL!**

*Date: June 22, 2019 at 9:00 am*

*Location: Willow Fork Park in Cinco Ranch at the northwest corner of the Grand Parkway SH99 and Cinco Ranch Blvd.*

*Contact: Diane Russell at [dprussell2000@gmail.com](mailto:dprussell2000@gmail.com)*

*Diane Russell is spearheading this event and she can use our help! After an opening ceremony, Diane will talk about creating a garden both for a place of beauty as well as a restaurant and nursery for butterflies and pollinators. She will then give a tour of the butterfly garden and discuss the key elements that should be considered in planning a backyard butterfly garden. The program will also include a discussion of the different types of plants in the garden and the roles each plant plays. The Chamber of Commerce is being invited. Our Chapter has never tapped in on Cinco Ranch for membership - this will really open it up for us and Diane already has interested people who want to join the Chapter. Diane is asking for about 3 of us to staff an outreach table and recruit. Diane will bring everything needed. All you have to do is to bring yourself!*

*The 1-hour program starts at 9 AM at the pavilion at Willow Fork Park. Willow Fork Park is located at the northwest corner of 99/Grand Parkway and Cinco Ranch Blvd., north of Cinco Ranch High School. This is a free family-friendly activity for all ages. Willow Fork Park has a big comfortable shaded rest area beside the butterfly garden, so no one will have to suffer in the summer sun. [VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under the category "Katy, City of"]*

### **MORNING NATURE HIKE at SCNP for SHADY OAKS PRIMARY SCHOOL in RICHMOND---HELP THEIR NATURE CAMP!**

*Date: Any day(s) between June 3 – 7, 2019, and any time from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm*

*Location: Seabourne Creek Nature Park*

*Contact: Rachel DePavia at [rdepavia@shadyoakprimary.com](mailto:rdepavia@shadyoakprimary.com) or cell 925-324-9590*

*Shady Oak Primary School in Richmond offers a morning "Nature Camp" for their kids in June. They usually go to Brazos Bend for a nature hike and to tap into the Nature Center's programs. But the BBSP is closed until June 18 at the earliest, and their camp is scheduled for the week of June 3 – 7. So, they are in a bind and have asked for our help.*

*They are asking for any volunteer(s) who might like to help them with a Nature Hike or Birding Walk at Seaborne Creek. There are 6 kids only, grades 1-5, and they meet Mon – Fri . You can offer the hike anytime from 8:30 – 12:30 any day(s) that week. Rachel checks her email daily, or you can call her cell at (925) 324-9590. [VSP hours for volunteering to be entered in VMS under "SCNP-Public Outreach Interpretive Info"]*

**VOLUNTEER SERVICE PROJECTS HIGHLIGHTS** (continued)**ONGOING PROJECT of the MONTH: HOUSTON AUDUBON SOCIETY BIRD SURVEYS!**

Even though the bird hikes at SCNP are finished until the fall, you can still hone your birding skills by participating in one or two of the myriad monthly bird hikes organized by the Houston Audubon Society (HAS). You do not have to be a member to join in or to have expert birding skills. Even if you are new to birdwatching or are a beginner and know only the common birds, you can still be very helpful in a survey because you will be able to tell if a bird is new to you or is unusual and that alone will be helpful to the leaders. For a listing of all their bird surveys go to: <https://houstonaudubon.org/birding/bird-surveys/surveys.html>.

The closest HAS bird survey to us is their Archbishop Fiorenza Park Phase 2 Bird Survey. It is held the fourth Wednesday of each month. The next monthly survey is on Wednesday, June 26, starting at 7:30 am. This park has miles of paved trails, wooded thickets, open grassy areas, large detention ponds with bird islands and much more. You can see a multitude of species and get in a good healthy walk and enjoy the company of other outdoorsy folks. The Phase 2 Park is north of the Westpark Tollway and just north of the original Archbishop Park on Eldridge. A link to the map is here: <https://goo.gl/maps/qYR56M2ohGLor6SB8>. The leader is Mary Anne Weber. She can be reached at [maweber@houstonaudubon.org](mailto:maweber@houstonaudubon.org) if you would like to participate and to confirm the time. Meet in front of the bathrooms near the parking lot off Eldridge. [VSP hours for volunteering to be entered in VMS under "Houston Audubon Society"]



*Diane Russell talks about Monarch Butterflies at Earth Day Event 2015*

## Plant of the Month

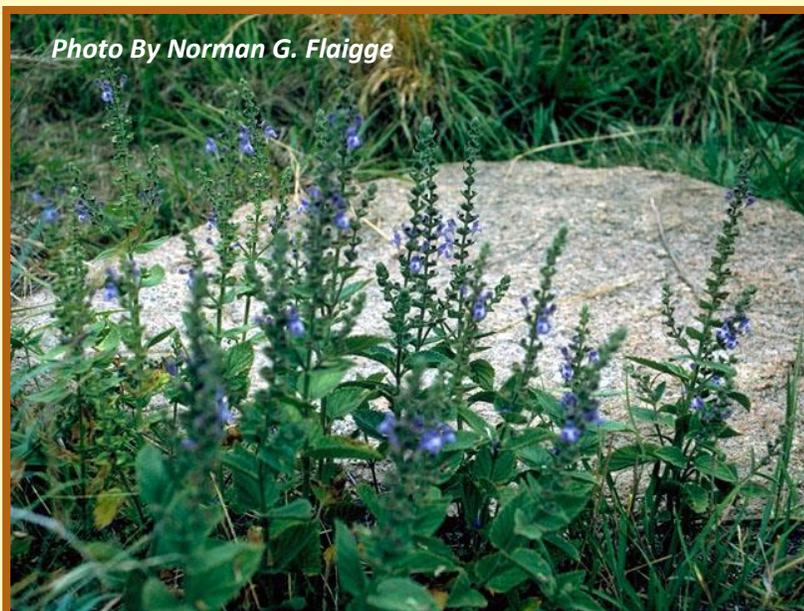
**Heartleaf Skullcap (*Scutellaria ovata*)** *By Mark Morgenstern*

*This month's featured plant is Heartleaf skullcap. The scientific name is Scutellaria ovata. It is a member of the mint family Lamiaceae. They are sometimes identified by a square stem. This perennial plant has blue flowers and grows 1-3 ft. It will colonize an area with spreading roots and will grow in all soil types. The flowers will attract butterflies and hummingbirds!*

*I became familiar with this this plant while visiting Susan Conaty. We cut a bag of seeds and grew some for the first time last year. It has a lot of positive attributes, the first being it grows in shade or part shade. Also, it is a good nectar source and is evergreen in the winter. It can be aggressive, so if you have an underutilized shady spot this is the plant for you!*



*Photo by Norman G. Flaigge*



*Photo By Norman G. Flaigge*

## The Bird Spotter: A Closer Look at Our Common Native Birds

### The Northern Mockingbird *By Jade Hems*

- *The Northern Mockingbird compensates for its subtle coloring with a bold and conspicuous personality and incredible song repertoire.*
- *Look for Mockingbirds perched high in a tree or shrub, on signs, fences and pergolas at Seabourne Creek Nature Park.*
- *The amazing song repertoire of the Northern Mockingbird might easily be mistaken for several different species singing at once!*
- *True to their name, Mockingbirds are accomplished mimics and often incorporate sounds of other bird species, wildlife, even human generated noise, as they continuously add new sounds to their repertoire. An individual may learn as many as 200 songs during their lifetime!*
- *Both males and females sing. Males almost continuously, day and night, while establishing a territory and attracting a mate, jumping and flashing their wings as they do so.*
- *Single males may sing all night long, research has shown they sing more on nights when the moon is full and in well-lit neighborhoods.*
- *A pair constructs the nest together and may raise 2 or 3 broods in a single season. Some pairs stay together and continue to defend their territory year-round, but rarely reuse past nests.*
- *Mockingbirds fiercely defend their territories and nests. They run along the ground and hop at each other face to face until either retreats, or a physical battle follows!*
- *Mobbing of species far larger than themselves is common. Predators such as hawks, jays and crows are aggressively pursued. Other animals, dogs, cats and humans who venture close to a Mockingbird nest provoke harsh scolding and sometimes mobbing!*
- *Mainly insects are eaten during the summer, captured by running or hopping along the ground, with tail up, as they snatch up their prey.*
- *Mockingbirds frequently flash their white wing patches as they dart along, one explanation is that this is a hunting strategy that may scare up insects!*
- *In fall, Mockingbirds switch to a diet of fruit. If you have a Yaupon in your yard, they may defend it against all who venture near!*
- *During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Mockingbirds became rare in the wild as they were captured in large numbers for the caged bird trade, where there was much demand for their beautiful voice. They have since recovered and are common and thriving in our parks and suburbs.*



Northern Mockingbird by Stan Lupo (Flickr)  
Male and female alike



Northern Mockingbird wing flashing behavior by Billtackular (Flickr)



Northern Mockingbird juvenile by Melvin Yap (Flickr)

## Balloons More Deadly For Seabirds Than Any Other Kind of Plastic

*E360 Digest March 8, 2019 (Yale Environment 360) by Emma Johnson*



**Autopsy of a white-headed petrel, with balloon debris.**  
**LAUREN ROMAN**

<https://e360.yale.edu/digest/balloons-more-deadly-for-seabirds-than-any-other-kind-of-plastic>

*Balloons and balloon fragments are the deadliest kinds of marine pollution for seabirds, killing almost one in five birds that ingest the soft plastic, according to a [new study](#) published in the journal *Scientific Reports*.*

*The research, conducted by scientists at the University of Tasmania, examined the cause of death of 1,733 seabirds, 32 percent of which had ingested marine debris. Hard plastics — items like LEGO bricks or straws — accounted for 92 percent of all items ingested. Soft plastics — including packaging, rubber, foam, rope, and balloon fragments — accounted for just over 5 percent of items ingested but were responsible for 42 percent of seabird deaths. Balloon fragments, specifically, composed just 2 percent of ingested plastic, yet the scientists found that if a bird ingests a balloon or balloon fragment, it is 32 times more likely to die than if it ingests a hard-plastic fragment.*

*“A hard piece of plastic has to be the absolute wrong shape and size to block a region in the birds’ gut, whereas soft rubber items can contort to get stuck,” Lauren Roman, a marine scientist at the University of Tasmania and lead author of the new study, [told ABC News](#) in Australia.*

*[Some scientists](#) have predicted that by 2025, the cumulative amount of plastic in the ocean could reach 250 million tons. Some 180 marine animals — including [mammals, birds, reptiles, crustaceans, and fish](#) — have been found to ingest plastic. Even some of the smallest creatures in [the deepest parts of the ocean](#) have plastic in their stomachs.*

*Seabirds, which represent a shrinking portion of bird species around the globe, have been shown to consume large amounts of plastic waste, mistaking it for prey such as squid and small fish. Roman and her colleagues say their research could be used to shape future waste management strategies, as well as seabird conservation programs.*

*Published at the [Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies](#)*

**Some Eco-Friendly alternatives** *April 19, 2019 at 11:53 pm (partial)*

Sara Burrows **Return for Now** ([Balloon alternatives from Return for Now](#))

Fortunately, there are eco-friendlier alternatives (to regular balloons) to brighten up your next party:

**Ribbon dancers and kites:** Ribbon dancers and kites are just as beautiful and more engaging than balloons, as they require guests to twirl, run and move around. Plus, they can take them home and keep them “forever” rather than litter them into the environment after 24 hours of decoration.

**Garden spinners and pinwheels:** If you’re trying to draw attention to your party, event or place of business, colorful garden spinners or flashy pinwheels do the job just as well as balloons without killing birds.

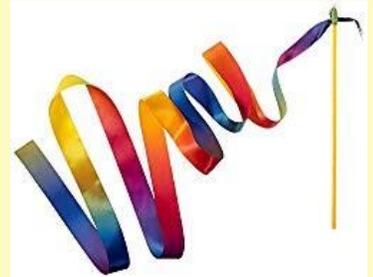
**Tissue Paper Pompoms** – For some color burst at parties or celebrations, these colorful tissue paper poof balls make beautiful hanging decorations. You can easily [make your own](#) and throw them in your compost when you’re done.

**Floating flowers** – For some, the upward drifting of balloons gives them a sense of letting go, at a funeral or memorial service. Floating flowers down a calm stream can give you the same feeling. Be sure to use native flowers.

**Biodegradable balloons** – If you must have balloons at your party, at least ensure they say “biodegradable” on the package. While latex is made of sap from rubber trees, which is technically biodegradable, many of them have chemical additives specifically designed to prevent them from degrading. Even balloons advertised as “biodegradable” take between [6 months to a year](#) to biodegrade, and even longer in salt water, which acts as a preservative.

Helium-filled balloons can travel hundreds of miles into the ocean and choke or starve birds long before they break down, so ensure they are not released into the atmosphere.

Never buy Mylar balloons, which are made of a metallic plastic that never breaks down.



## In Our Own Backyards and Other Places

### Mining Bees *By Diane Eismont*

*Have you ever seen ground nesting or mining bees?*

*This Spring is the first time I saw them. They dig burrows that look like small ant mounds in areas where the ground is bare. I saw them along a dirt path. Watch for bees, about the size of honey- bees, flying low and entering burrows.*

*The best time to look for them is in the morning in Springtime. Many females often nest in the same area, but they are solitary bees with the queens living individually. They lay eggs and store food for their larvae in the underground burrows. The larvae emerge as adults the following year, but only live 4-6 weeks.*

*They can sting but are generally docile and are said to be excellent pollinators.*



## Out and About

### *Chapter Members Rescue Prairie Plants* (via Facebook) *By Mark Morgenstern*

We went on a plant rescue today (Monday, May 24<sup>th</sup>) at Gerhart Prairie.

I really dig these 2 beauties!! We collected *Liatris pycnostachya* and *acidota*, purple sneezeweed, prairie verbena, twistleaf goldenrod, *Asclepias linearis* and Indian plantain.

Shown in the photo are Tracy Kolb and Andrea Morgenstern.

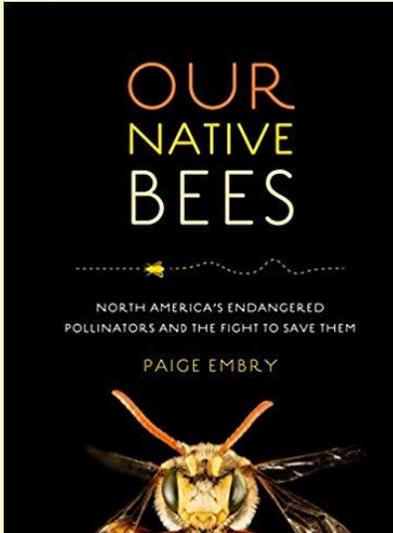


### *HMNS Native Plant Garden Gets Help* (Sent in by Ella Stroupe)



*Lois Ponder helped at the Houston Museum of Natural Science in their native plant garden a while back. Way to go, Lois!*

## Book Corner

**Our Native Bees**

Paige Embry

*One day, gardener, geologist and now author Paige Embry learned of a surprising fact: honeybees can't pollinate tomatoes. Embry read that honeybees — which are imported from Europe — cannot perform buzz pollination. This is a process where a bee holds onto a flower and vibrates certain muscles that shake pollen out of the plant. This discovery launched Embry's multiyear obsession about the more than 4,000 species of other pollinators, specifically bees that are native to North America. The result informed "Our Native Bees," a nature book published in February 2018.*

*In recent years, the press has focused on the grim challenges facing honeybees. Embry argues that the story of native bees, which are essential to the ecosystem and food supplies, is far more captivating. In fact, Embry references the common statistic that one bite out of everything eaten in the United States is thanks to pollinators, stating that many essential nutrients come from fruits and vegetables pollinated by native bees.*

*To emphasize the importance of these species, Embry's chapters highlight various native bees, after she dedicates the entire first chapter to honeybees.*

*Embry also discusses "bee lawns," which are essentially lawns with flowers that benefit both people and bees. She recalls the 1990s, when several companies produced grass mixes with flowers, called ecolawn or fleur-de-lawn. Their goal was not to help pollinators but to make lawns less needy and require less water, fertilizer, pesticides and mowing, Embry writes. She also references a University of Minnesota study, conducted by Mary Meyer, Marla Spivak and Ian Lane, on creating a bee lawn with clovers. Unfortunately, the study's authors found that people are wary of "bee lawns" because they are worried about the look of their lawn and what their neighbors think. (Read more about pollinator-friendly yards).*

*This book is written for audiences of any experience level. Embry's writing is informal, yet she is passionate in her quest. She doesn't assume that the reader has prior knowledge about the subject and puts everything in layman's terms. Despite this, a native bee expert would still find this an interesting read.*

*"Our Native Bees" reads like a piece written by an investigative journalist. Embry's scientific questions combined with her storytelling ability make for a very compelling book. The layout of the text displays multiple sidebars and stunning images, some of which Embry took herself. The end product is a beautiful and fascinating publication.*

*Reviewed by Hannah Gillespie*

The Lighter Side



Thanks to Julie Gentry (Facebook)



Thanks to John Donaho(Facebook)





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We're on the Web!

See us at:

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### COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER OF THE TEXAS MASTER NATURALISTS

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

### Bug Repellent Recommendations

(Sent in by Wayne Poorman)

The CDC recommends using a repellent that contains DEET (10 to 50 percent concentration at most), picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus on exposed skin. It also recommends the repellent permethrin, which can be sprayed on clothes, shoes, bed nets, or other equipment (it can't be used on skin). The CDC notes that picaridin and oil of lemon eucalyptus may not be as effective as DEET, which is sold under brand names including Off! and Cutter. For more info go to:

<https://www.berkeleywellness.com/self-care/preventive-care/slideshow/summer-bugs-can-bite-you>

### Check out our Chapter Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/cpctmn/>

To post photos and information, email  
[Ramona Ridge](#) or [Erik Wolf](#)

Check out our Facebook Page at

[TXMN Coastal Prairie Chapter Facebook](#)

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



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.

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