

Coastal Prairie Chapter Courier

June 1, 2021 Volume 9, Issue 6

In This Issue:

Be the Change

More Spring Migration Magic

Companies Make T-shirts Using Recycled Water Bottles

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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Cover Photo
Plant of the month,
aquatic milkweed

Please send chapter events and nature-related articles, photos, and items of interest to the chapter to [Lynn Trenta](#) by the 29th of the month. Suggestions for the newsletter are also welcome. Thanks.

Lynn Trenta,
Courier Editor

President's Message By Bert Stipelcovich



Fellow Chapter Members:

Things are heating up!

June is here and, as the temperature rises, so do opportunities for our chapter. Let's roll!

"In June, as many as a dozen species may burst their buds on a single day. No man can heed all of these anniversaries; no man can ignore all of them." – Aldo Leopold

COVID-19 Status

Fort Bend County's [COVID-19 community risk level](#) remains at yellow "low/moderate risk" since April 13. More detailed information can be found at the [county's pandemic website](#).

Effective May 13, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) updated its [recommendations for fully vaccinated people](#):

- "Fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance"

As expected, our state program updated its [COVID Safety and Response Guidelines](#) shortly thereafter to align with the new CDC recommendations on [May 21](#).

Chapter Presidents & Advisors meeting update

At the May 24 meeting, 10 topics were covered. The state website has [links to the recorded meeting, presentation, and meeting notes](#).

Some noteworthy topics included:

- Reviewed the updated [Return to Service Guidelines](#)
- TMN website support has been deprecated again
- Next [TMN Tuesdays](#) presentation June 8 – "[Dragonflies: Pond Patrol](#)," by [Sam "sambiology" Kieschnick](#), TPWD Urban Biologist and iNaturalist rock star
- Next [Be the Change](#) presentation June 15 (TBD)
- [2021 Annual Meeting](#) (October 21-24) planning underway
 - Meeting format will be with both in-person and virtual attendee options
 - June
 - Close call for proposals June 1
 - Create agenda and finalize speakers
 - July – Release registration costs & final agenda
 - August 1st – Open registration

Moving forward

Seabourne Nature Fest (SNF) 2021 is a go! Planning has already begun. More to come soon!

Planning has been completed for the 2021 Fall Class, and the roster is filling up quickly. Tell your friends that they better sign up soon!

On short notice, our chapter presented at the Richmond Means Tourism event held on May 12.

Continued on the next page---

President's Message *Continued*

Chapter members also participated at the City of Rosenberg [FISH-tastic! Children's Fishing Tournament](#) (May 22). We have also been invited to volunteer at the [July 4th Celebration](#). Expect more information soon from our VSP Director, Johanna DeYoung.

We continue to grow, adapt, and most importantly — have fun!

Continue to stay safe. As always, contact me with any questions, concerns, and suggestions.

All the best,

Bert Stipelcovich bert@coastalprairie.org 713-540-2378



The Membership Minute *By Jan and Kevin Kolk, TMN Membership Directors*

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

Initial Certification

- Sophia Weinmann (Fall, 2020)
- Ute Welk (Spring, 2021)
- Irene Gabler (Fall, 2020)
- Judi Harrington (Fall, 2020)
- Joanie Havlick (Fall, 2020)



2021 Recertification (35 members recertified so far)

- Jim Butcher
- Pam Jones
- Margo Margot
- Blair Margot
- Luke Kolb
- Bert Stipelcovich
- Pauline Zinn
- John Rouane
- Hoiman Low (Spring, 2021)
- Linda Lourim
- Ella Stroupe
- Debbie McMullen



Milestones

250 Hour Milestone

- Margo Margot
- Blair Margot

500 Hour Milestone

- Jan Kolk
- Katie Sallean

2500 Hour Milestone

- Bert Stipelcovich

Certification/Recertification/Milestone pins will continue to be mailed as they are earned until we are able to resume in-person meetings.

2500 Hours of Volunteer Work – More Than Just a Milestone

By Paula Kolmar, TMNCPC Communications Director

Volunteering 2,500 hours is much more than a milestone. Those who achieve that level have influenced and given graciously beyond the call of duty.

Our chapter congratulates the most recent person to cross that threshold; here are the clues to who it is: nature lover, problem solver, challenge tackler, native of New Orleans, purple martin landlord, last name difficult to pronounce, bumped our chapter into the heady air of receiving an award from the Texas Master Naturalist (TMN) leadership for its work hosting the 2020 Annual Meeting. If you guessed Bert Stipelcovich then you're correct.

Bert is in the middle of his second term as president of our chapter after accepting the role for 2020, one of the most challenging years facing the 50 chapters of TMN due to covid-19 and lockdowns. Despite that challenge, and in part because of it, he was just the right president to not only guide the chapter during 2020 but also create opportunities for timely change and healthy growth.



As a 2016 retiree in the IT field, Bert was able to escort existing and new members into the age of Zoom meetings and enhance inter-membership sharing opportunities using Slack, which he introduced to the chapter when he served as membership director in 2019. He began his TMN journey as an intern in fall of 2018 with his wife, Jean, and both continue to embrace the TMN opportunities that tap into their deep love of nature and educating others



Though conditions in 2020 resulted in canceling our signature Seabourne Creek Nature Fest, Bert served as the event's coordinator in 2019, not a small task according to all who have handled those responsibilities. Joyously, we are able to hold the Fest at Seabourne in 2021 and Bert has volunteered to serve as coordinator again.

There's more to Bert than the Coastal Prairie Chapter though. He has a great affection for purple martins and Italian Greyhound dogs. "If you're ever called upon to do a nest health check and hold a baby purple martin in your hands you will fall in love and be hooked just like I was," says Bert. "I'm happily a martin landlord for life!" As for the big greyhounds, he and Jean find homes for the retired racers. Now owners and residents of 40 acres in Weimar, Texas he and Jean find time to assure the land remains a healthy prairie, just like a coastal prairie naturalist would!



June Chapter Program "Using Your Bird Field Guide" By Kristine Rivers

*Kristine Rivers with Birding for Fun will give us a few important tips to help us navigate our way through bird field guides. Kristine has provided nature-based education for both children and adults for the Cities of Pearland, Meadows Place, Missouri City and League City, as well as UTMB's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) in both Galveston and Angleton. She has also been a presenter and field trip leader for Galveston's FeatherFest since 2016 and is a popular guest speaker for the Galveston County Audubon Group, a division of the Houston Audubon Society, the Ornithology Group (Houston), Texas Master Naturalists and Texas Master Gardeners. **Bring your own favorite guide to this Zoom meeting!** ZOOM REGISTRATION: Check the Calendar a few days before the event for the Zoom registration link. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Chapter members should receive an email with a Zoom link to register for the program.*



Volunteer Service Projects Highlights

By Johanna DeYoung, TMNCPC VSP director

Things are looking up!!! With COVID-19 precautions in place, we are safely returning to VSP!

Having completed the super fun City of Rosenberg's 19th Annual FISH-tastic Event, we're now planning for the City of Rosenberg's Family 4th Celebration and Fall 2021 events, e.g., Fort Bend and Waller County Fairs. Is there any interest out there for the Wharton County Fair?!

Reminder: Per TMNCPC Operations Manual, "...no more than 20 hours of VSP service outside of Fort Bend and Waller Counties may be counted toward member certification or re-certification." With TMNCPC's recent adoption of Wharton County, the preceding guideline pertains to Fort Bend, Walley, and Wharton Counties.

CURRENT STATUS

4/13/2021: FB County moved COVID-19 category from Orange "Moderate/Significant Risk" to Yellow "Low/Moderate Risk". Per K. P. George, Fort Bend County Judge, "Let us continue getting Texas Tough and fight COVID-19 by wearing our masks, getting tested, and getting vaccinated so we can protect ourselves and our loved ones."

Self-Assessment

"Prior to engaging in activities outside the home, everyone needs to conduct a self-assessment. 'Am I healthy enough to leave the home, or do I fall into a high-risk category, based on age or other medical conditions? Is there someone in my home, or someone I interact with on a regular basis, who falls into a high-risk category?' If the answer to either of these questions is yes, then exercise extra caution and discretion before leaving the home. Is it a want or a need?"

Attendance at Events and Entertainment

"Attend events only with proper physical distancing practices in place. Opt for small to medium size events (<50 people) to avoid large group settings."

Outdoor Entertainment

"Continue good personal protective measure such as facial coverings and physical distancing. Consider events that are less crowded and have better controls to keep you safe, such as capped numbers of attendees and good cleaning practices."

New 5/21/2021: Texas A & M AgriLife Extension issued the following update:

"The following considerations should direct how the TMN Program will operate for the foreseeable future.

Considerations for all TMN Activities:

It is very important to know and follow all federal, state, county and local COVID guidelines/restrictions before conducting TMN Activities. Beyond these, please consider the following in planning gatherings:

- 1. Virtual meeting platform tools are useful and should remain an important consideration for planning meetings and events.*
- 2. For any indoor or outdoor activities that do occur in-person, masks and social distancing considerations are encouraged.*

Please note regarding vaccines: *Our program and agencies currently have no legal authority to develop policy based on private health information (HIPAA laws) at this time and we don't anticipate the program drafting its own policy or allowances, etc. addressing whether individuals (members or the public) with vaccines can/cannot participate in any TMN activities and where, when and how.*

Texas Master Naturalist members or members of the public should not be asked about their vaccination status. Chapters may encourage persons in program settings to continuing following CDC guidance."

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Volunteer Service Projects Highlights *(Continued)*

“There shall be NO EFFORT (including casual comments made publicly or privately) to DISCOURAGE the use of face coverings or any COVID related safety precaution. Those who wish to wear masks and practice COVID protocols should be respected and their wishes supported.”

3/2/2021: Texas Governor Greg Abbott issued Executive Order No. GA-34 noting changes in COVID-19 restrictions. These changes, which included lifting the mask mandate and opening businesses to 100%, took effect on 3/10/2021. Governor Abbott encouraged the continuation of wearing masks when maintaining a physical distance cannot be maintained.

VSP Opportunities

Seabourne Volunteer Days

TMN COVID-19 Precautions: “For any indoor or outdoor activities that do occur in-person, masks and social distancing considerations are encouraged.

Fort Bend County COVID-19 Yellow Precautions: “Continue good personal protective measure such as facial coverings and physical distancing. Opt for small to medium size events (<50 people) to avoid large group settings.”

For bump ups, prairie planting, nursery maintenance, and/or trail maintenance, please contact Jerry Trenta, Seabourne director ([713-898-4769](tel:713-898-4769)) jerrytrenta@txtrentas.com)

For demo garden work, please contact Lynn Trenta, ([832-646-4769](tel:832-646-4769)/ltrenta50@gmail.com)

For bird sanctuary work, please contact Bill Johnson, ([281-734-3349](tel:281-734-3349)/rxrelo@aol.com)

For butterfly garden work, please contact Katie Sallean, ([713-502-5701](tel:713-502-5701)/katie@coastalprairie.com)

[VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under the category “SCNP-7 Habitats Public Access: TMN Report Hours”]

Seabourn Garden Group

Activities for this group include: 1) gardening in the Seabourne gardens (see above) and 2) participating on the education committee which includes signage ([Jan Kolk](#)), outreach ([Judi Harrington](#)) and programs/field trips ([Lynn Trenta](#) and [Katie Sallean](#)), [Pam Jones](#) can also be contacted about group activities [VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under the category “SCNP-7 Habitats Public Access: TMN Report Hours”]

***Family 4th Celebration:** This is a City of Rosenberg event scheduled for Sunday, 7/4/2021, 6:00 – 10:00 PM, at Seabourne Creek Nature Park. SignUpGenius for Wagon Master positions coming soon!*

[VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under the category “Rosenberg, City of: TMN Report Hours”]

Texas Master Naturalist’s 2021 Virtual Volunteer Fair

This fair provided overview and ideas for VSP projects. If you did not attend the two-day sessions conducted on 2/3/2021, and 2/4/2021, you can still view these sessions. The recording of the Virtual Volunteer Event is posted to the TMN website: <https://txmn.tamu.edu/virtual-volunteer-fair-february-2021/>.

The VSP hours can be accrued by viewing these sessions, and by following up with the volunteer opportunities.

[VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under the category: “TMN Virtual Volunteer Service Fair: TMN Report Hours”]

Please continue to check the website calendar, Slack, and the TMNCPC Members Only Facebook page for VSP updates. If there is no existing VSP description fitting a potential VSP opportunity, please request and complete an VSP Proposal Form. In turn, the VSP Committee, Terri Hurley, Lynn Trenta, and Johanna DeYoung, will review the proposal and determine if it qualifies as an VSP opportunity.

If you are aware of VSP opportunities, have questions about VSP opportunities, or unsure how to record an VSP opportunity, please contact Johanna DeYoung ([832-689-4877](tel:832-689-4877)/johanna@coastalprairie.com).



From Awareness to Allyship *By Sharon Watson*

Texas Master Naturalists (TMN) know any ecosystem is diminished when it loses diversity. That's one reason why the TMN program wants to ensure it reflects gender, ethnic and economic diversity. But just as it's easy to do the wrong thing in our eagerness to restore an unfamiliar ecosystem, people can fumble when it comes to being allies to communities they don't know well.

As founder and board president of [Black Outside, Inc.](#), Alex Bailey fields many requests from people and organizations eager to work with his group. He very gently pushes back by asking what they know about who Black Outside serves. "Don't just jump into allyship," he says. "You have work to do first."

Bailey offered his take on this work and how to be an effective ally to Black-Indigenous-People of Color (BIPOC) communities in the outdoors at the May 19 "Be the Change" virtual statewide TMN program. Using [Dr. Barbara J. Love's](#) "liberatory consciousness" framework, Bailey suggested would-be allies work through the following steps before engaging a community that is less familiar to them.

Awareness. *Understand how the outdoor experiences of BIPOC communities and individuals differ from your own. Bailey's female colleagues challenged him to learn more about how women of color experience the outdoors. He expanded his social network to follow more female BIPOC explorers and nature journalists. [Afro Outdoor](#), [Melanin Base Camp](#) and [Black Girls Trekkin'](#) are places to start.*

Analysis. *Reflect on personal assumptions and blind spots, as Bailey did about women outdoors. He also suggested thinking about how and whether outdoor community resources and programs serve people of a variety of classes, ethnicities and genders. Clues include community park names and locations, which parks are cared for and which not so much and why.*

Action. *Decide what personal steps to take to learn more about and address barriers to inclusion and equity in a program or facility.*

At this point, a person is in a better position to be a good ally. When ready for that stage, Bailey recommends considering three questions:

To what extent are you/your organization learning about BIPOC communities? To build bridges and trust, allies must be willing to understand a group's traumas—as well as its strengths and resiliency.

How are you making space for BIPOC leadership and resources? Bailey said it's important for BIPOC campers, hikers and naturalists to see and hear from someone that looks like them. That may call for training BIPOC leaders or giving them resources so they can run a program themselves.

Are you taking space to advocate for BIPOC communities? This includes ensuring BIPOC community members feel safe and included at activities, events and programs. For instance, do the names of events, trails and places signal that everyone is invited?

Finally, Bailey noted an event or program designed to welcome and include the most marginalized and vulnerable individuals likely will deliver a better experience for everyone participating.

For more from Alex Bailey and supporting BIPOC and other diverse communities, view his entire [TMN "Be the Change" presentation](#) and check out his [2019 TEDxSan Antonio](#) talk.

Companies Make T-shirts Using Recycled Water Bottles By Paula Dittrick

As more people venture to Texas beaches during the summer months, it is likely that more plastic water bottles or other plastic trash will be left behind. The good news is some t-shirt companies are using fabric made from recycled water bottles.

Advances in plastics recycling technology enable the conversion of water bottles into yarn to be spun for clothing, helping divert plastic trash from oceans, beaches, and landfills. Polyester fabric made from recycled polyethylene terephthalate (rPET) has a lower carbon footprint than virgin polyester, and the material from rPET is as soft as virgin polyester, manufacturers report. The PET Resin Association (PETRA) reports more than 1.5 billion pounds of used PET bottles and containers are recovered in the U.S. each year for recycling. For years, many bottled-water companies have voluntarily included a percentage of rPET in their containers.

This story will mention just a couple examples of companies making t-shirts using rPET material although no doubt additional companies also are doing this.

ReThink Fabrics of Las Vegas uses 15 water bottles to make one T-shirt and three water bottles to make a mask. The ReThink logo has an upside-down question mark instead of the lower-case "i." Recycled plastic water bottles are collected, cleaned, smashed, melted, polymerized and spun into yarn that becomes ReThink fabric and ultimately products.

The ReThink website said, "Every day approximately 8 million pieces of plastic pollution find their way into our oceans. Today, single-use plastics account for 40 percent of the plastic produced every year. Many of these products, such as [plastic bags](#) and food wrappers...may persist in the environment for hundreds of years. There may now be around 5.25 trillion macro and microplastic pieces floating in the open ocean. Plastics consistently make up 60 to 90% of all marine debris studied."

A group of apparel industry executives started ReThink in 2008, and they later launched ReThink Worldwide, a nonprofit focused on conservation efforts involving single-use plastics.

Another company, Recover of Charlotte, North Carolina, produces T-shirts using a recycled PET and recycled cotton blend. They utilize recycled plastic bottles and cotton from industrial waste to create clothes. Recover's processes generate 35% less greenhouse gas emissions, expend 66% less energy, and use 55% less water to create each shirt than the traditional manufacturing process.

Plastic is shredded into flakes, which are melted into pellets. The pellets are made into yard, which is knitted into fabric, Recover said. The fabric is dyed using what Recover calls "an eco-friendly process."

Recover emphasizes using very few dyes to reduce chemical use. The company said it also uses as little water and energy as possible. Its website says Recover donates at least 1% of total sales to environmental nonprofits.

"At Recover, we believe first and foremost in supporting those doing significant work in our backyard," the company said, listing the French Broad Riverkeepers as among the organizations to which it donates. "We also donate to World Vision, which is working to bring clean water access to those who need it worldwide."





COMMUNITY OUTREACH IS NOW BACK ONLINE! *By Terri Hurley*

Our first outreach event in a long time took place on May 12 at the “Richmond Means Tourism-Celebrating the Power of Tourism” day. This event was hosted by the City of Richmond, the Development Corporation of Richmond and the Fort Bend Museum, one of our partner organizations, and was held in the courtyards of the historic Moore Home in downtown Richmond.

A group of our members, including Bert Stipelcovich who spearheaded our participation in this project, Linda Lourim, Jamie Fairchild and Terri Hurley staffed a booth that promoted our chapter and highlighted the tourism value of Seabourne Nature Park and the Seabourne Nature Fest. Our draw to bring in over 60 participants to our booth was the ever-popular Bat WOW, created and expertly presented by Linda Lourim. This was also the first time we were able to use our new retractable banner and it performed beautifully, especially after we added sandbags to counteract the wind.

Celebrities in attendance were the mayor of Richmond, Rebecca Kennelly Haas, and Fort Bend County Judge J. P. George. Other organizations that were there included: Fort Bend Museum, George Ranch Historical Park, Brazos Bend State Park, Houston Museum of Natural Science - Sugar Land, Fort Bend Children’s Discovery Center and the Rosenberg Railroad Museum. Several restaurants and other local attractions from Richmond and the greater Fort Bend County were there also.

All in all, it was a successful day and if this event proves to be an annual thing, we should plan on attending!



Spring Bird Migrations *By Hoiman Low and Ute Welk*

Photos by Hoiman Low

There are four major bird migration routes in North America (Atlantic Flyway, Mississippi Flyway, Central Flyway and Pacific Flyway), and we in the Houston area are incredibly lucky to be located right along the Central Flyway with many birding hotspots and spectacular birding opportunities during both the spring and fall migrations.

Migratory birds were plentiful during our April 2021 Bit Sit event in Seabourne Creek Nature Park. What could be more exciting than to see a big flock of Franklin's Gulls fly overhead on their thousands of miles long journey from the Chilean and Peruvian coast to their breeding grounds in Canada while a colorful Orchard Oriole, migrating from Central or South America, was exploring the Demo Garden.



Franklin Gull



Orchard Oriole

During our May bird hike at Seabourne Creek, we observed a Blackburnian Warbler, migrating from Central or South America, refueling before flying off to the Northeastern US or Canada. Similarly, a Blue Grosbeak, migrating from Central America, put up a show for us on a treetop.



Blackburnian Warbler



Blue Grosbeak



Purple Martin

Purple Martins, back for the summer from South America, love the gourd houses at Seabourne Creek Nature Park to raise their chicks.

Spring Bird Migrations *(Continued)*

Some of our Coastal Prairie Chapter members went on a field trip to Long Point Ranch on May 3 in support of the Houston/Galveston 2021 City Nature Challenge. Cattle Egrets, Great Egrets, Little Blue Herons and Anhingas were the most common residents at the Bald Cypress pond rookery - all dressed up in their spectacular breeding plumage. Look at the colorful lores of the Great Egret and the Anhinga.



Great Egret (l) and Anhinga (r)

In Brazos Bend State Park, Cattle Egrets and Purple Gallinules - both short-distance migrants - can easily be watched from close-up.



Cattle Egret (l) and Purple Gallinule (r)

Spring Bird Migrations *(Continued)*

At the Smith Oaks Bird Sanctuary, the explosion of colors (and noise !) at the rookery is unbelievable during the spring breeding season. Roseate Spoonbills, Great Egrets, Tricolored Herons, Neotropic Cormorants all choose to nest there because of the abundance of food and the absence of predators due to the rookery being on an island guarded by the resident alligators against unwelcome invaders.



Great Egret with babies (l) Roseate Spoonbill with babies (r)



Tri-colored Heron (l) Neotropic Cormorant with babies (r)



Plovers, Skimmers, and Terns..... Oh My!

Text and Bird Photos by Shannon Westveer

I'll start with my favorite 'birb,' snowy plover. He's the shorebird I actively search for year after year, and when I don't find him, I'm quite saddened. This is at Bolivar flats; typical one-footed posture. FYI - The red knot is another imperiled migrater ... last I've seen him was in 2014.



Snowy Plover



At San Luis pass skimmers are often found skimming the tidal pools (I hope someone else has a photo of them doing this!)



Skimmers

Here is a least tern pair at Bolivar Flats, and the male just gifted that tasty fish to show his mate how dedicated he is, and another one, looking a bit more desperate.



Least Terns

Plant of the Month

Photos by Jerry Trenta, TMNCPC past president and Seabourne director



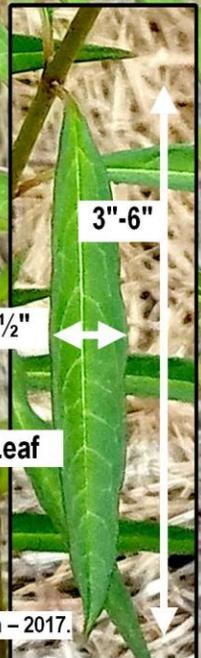
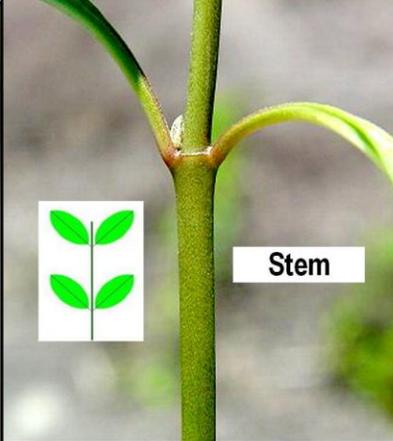
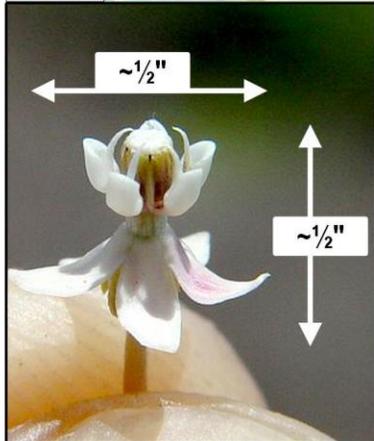
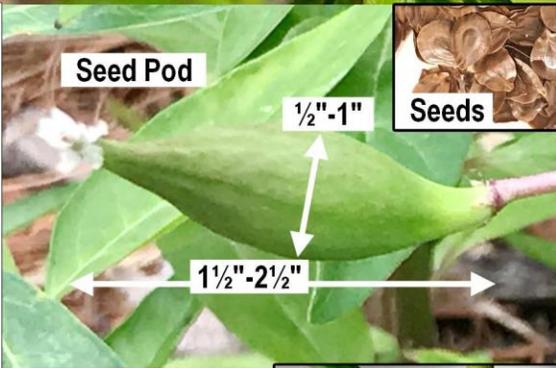
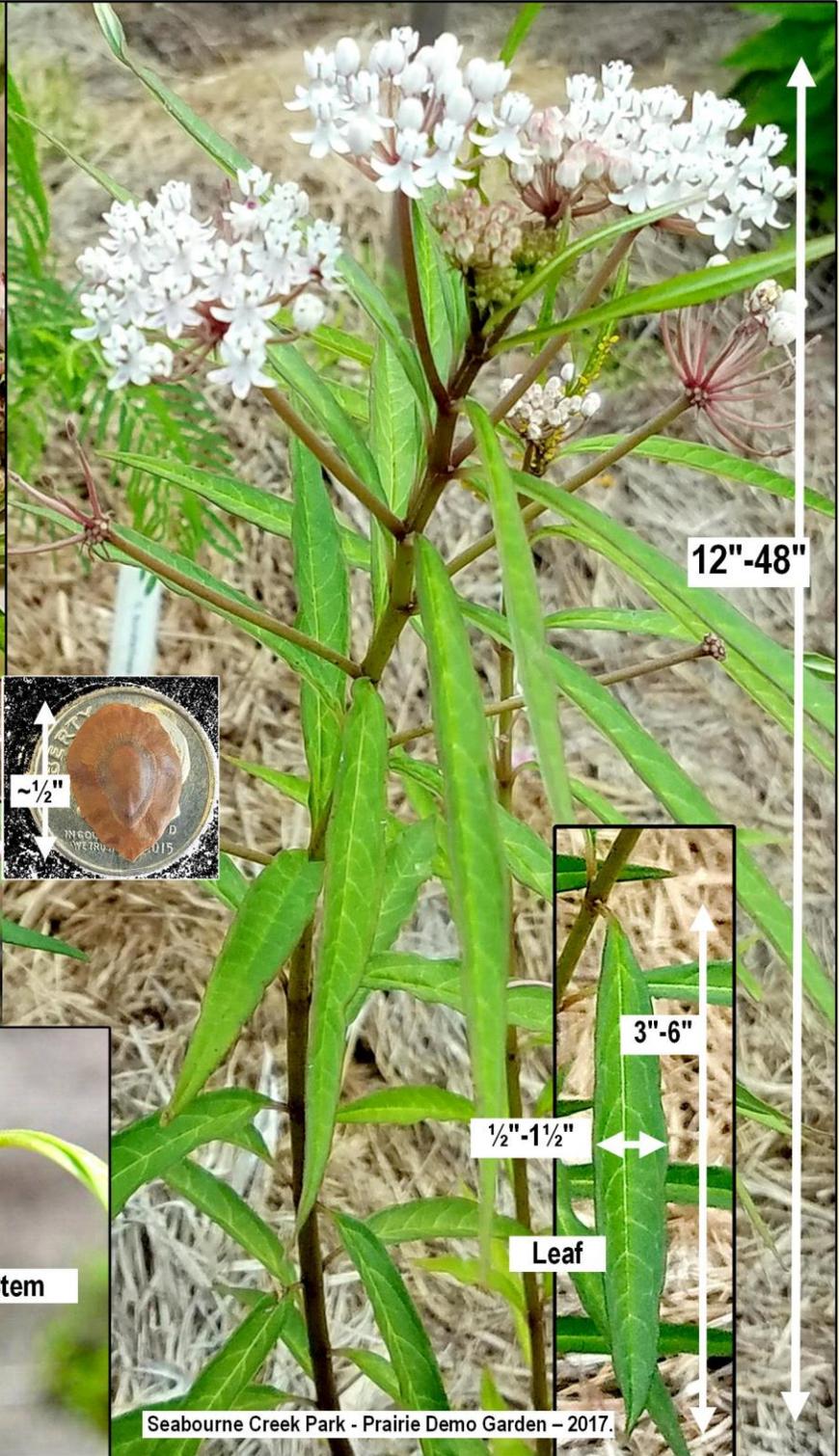
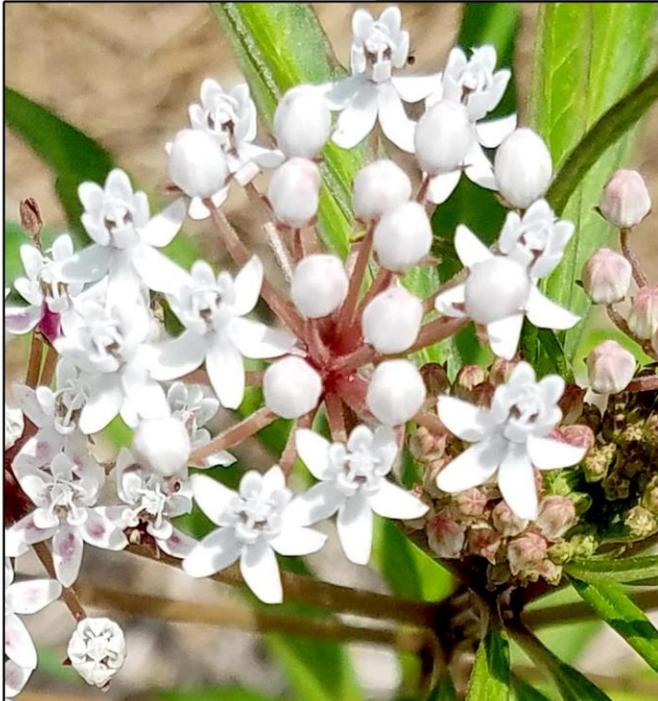
Aquatic Milkweed *Asclepias perennis*

Swamp Milkweed

Perennial

Flowers: **May – Sep**

Seed Collection: **Jun – Nov**



Seabourne Creek Park - Prairie Demo Garden – 2017.

Seabourne May Update

By Isabella Wu



Hello Coastal Prairie chapter! This month's May update is here. Let's get to it!

This month, TMN members who were active during 2020 were awarded the Service Against All Odds pin for their contributions during a difficult season. Pins and name tags for new members were available for pick up at Seabourne Creek Nature Park on the 15th. Many members also chose to volunteer that day at the Butterfly and Demo Gardens or worked on bumping up plants. Congratulations to our 2020 active members for persevering "through grit and distance!"



Photos by Paula Dittrick

The 19th annual FISH-tastic Kids' Fishing Tournament also took place on the 22nd of this month. Children from 4 to 11 years of age participated in the free challenge of who could catch the biggest and most fish, although door prizes were also awarded. The winner for the 4-6 years old age group was Luke Johnson. Brennan Laczkowski caught the most fish for 7 to 10 year olds, with Matthew Cantu taking the prize for biggest fish caught in that same group. For ages 11 and up, Ashley Shaw caught the most and the largest fish. Congrats, kiddos and a big thanks to chapter volunteers Jim Butcher, Marilyne Malone and Jim Butcher for helping with the event!



Marilyne Malone and Jim Butcher showed our skins and skulls at the tournament.



The big bass



Seabourne May Update *(Continued)*

The Seabourne Garden Group had the wonderful opportunity of hearing Lauren Simpson speak on May 20. She gave a talk about the importance of planting native plants to about twenty group members. She also talked about her garden named St. Julian's Crossing Wildlife Habitat which is a Monarch Waystation. Following up, the garden group will pay a visit to her garden and do a seed swap in September. Find her on Facebook at St. Julian's Crossing-wildlife habitat or Instagram @st_julians_crossing!



Photo by Lauren Simpson



Photo by University of Houston Law Center

Linda Lourim is pioneering the first ever Edible Plants Garden plot in the Prairie Demo and habitat area, so get ready for some delicious edible plants! The garden plot is still in construction and will be coming soon. When selecting plants, Linda chose those that could not be confused with similar plants which are toxic and those which are easily sampled by the public in that their edible portions included leaves, flowers or seeds. Twelve plants made the first cut, including Texas frogfruit, Turk's cap and pink evening primrose as well as two varieties of sunflower. The majority of these plants also have medicinal properties. For example, lemon bee balm is useful as an insect repellent and Maximilian sunflower's efflorescences can relieve arthritic pain when placed in bathwater. Crushed mountain mint flowers relieve pain from toothache instantly while Turk's cap leaves are used to relieve itches.



(l to r) Turk's Cap, Lemon Beebalm, Pink evening primrose, and Winecup

iNaturalist City Nature Challenge Results for 2021



From Jaime Gonzalez's Facebook:

A Special Thanks for This Year's City Nature Challenge!

It look everyone one of our wonderful 1,211 Observers and dedicated 945 Identifiers (**different on the photo) to get our Houston-Galveston City Nature Challenge Team to the #1 national rank (species observed) and #1 Texas rank for Species Observed and Number of Observers. We thank you all!

Yet, we did want to send, also, a very special thanks to a few folks who really went above and beyond. Look at the leader board below and you'll see that [Eric Keith](#) (Raven Environmental Services, Inc.), [Kelsey Low](#) (Houston Arboretum & Nature Center), [Scott Buckel](#) (Galveston Bay Area Chapter - Texas Master Naturalist and TNC volunteer), [Aaron Tjelmeland](#) (The Nature Conservancy in Texas), [Jamee Moulton](#) (Houston Botanic Garden), [Susie Doe](#) (Texas Master Naturalist Coastal Prairie Chapter), [Misti Little](#) (Desco Environmental), and [Jim Sinclair](#) really helped this team a lot. We thank them for their super efforts on this year's team!

**Editor's note--For another set of statistics go to <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/city-nature-challenge-2021-houston-galveston> Sorry for the different numbers. There must have been later tabulations as witnessed at this link.



In Our Own Backyards and Other Places

Red-bellied Woodpeckers *Photos and Text by Diane Eismont*

Have you ever seen a bird happier to find a special nut in a feeder than this one?

This is a beautiful male, red-bellied woodpecker. The back of his neck and his crown are bright red. His back and tail are sharply and regularly barred black and white. The crown on a female is white. They are common residents in the woodlands of East Texas.

They feed on grasshoppers, roaches, weevils, caterpillars and other bugs on the trunks and limbs of trees, as well as a variety of seeds, including sunflowers, acorns and other nut meat. They also feed on wild fruit, such as mulberries, wild cherries, wild grapes, hackberries, pokeberry, woodbine, poison ivy and persimmons.

Their nest is usually made in a hole in a dead tree or limb, either one which they excavated or one found empty. They more commonly make their nest in a hole which they excavate themselves.



Online Observations



SANDRA SWANSON

Photo by Sandra Swanson

This article in the National Wildlife Federation's magazine gives wonderful information about planting natives. Keystone plants are a great way to ensure insects are getting the support they need from our plant choices. Although this article speaks to people in the Great Lakes area the concept applies in general. The article follows.

Not all native plants are created equal. Certainly, all can benefit native wildlife by providing nectar, pollen or other foods. But after reviewing decades of research, entomologists have determined that a small percentage of native plants provide the majority of food for [bees](#) and for moth and butterfly larvae. Their research review revealed that just 5 percent of native plant species yield about 75 percent of the food that fuels these food webs. These extra-helpful plants, which function as a type of "keystone species," include oaks, willows, sunflowers and coneflowers.

To help gardeners maximize their benefit to wildlife, the National Wildlife Federation's [Garden for Wildlife™](#) (GFW) program will be compiling lists of such keystone plant species native to specific regions of the country. These lists will include plants for butterflies (such as swallowtails, pictured), moths and pollen-specialist bees, such as the agile long-horned bee, which make up about 30 percent of the more than 4,000 bee species native to North America.

To read more go to <https://www.nwf.org/Home/Magazines/National-Wildlife/2021/April-May/Conservation/Working-for-Wildlife>



Photo by Cathy Bonsell

CATHY BONSELL

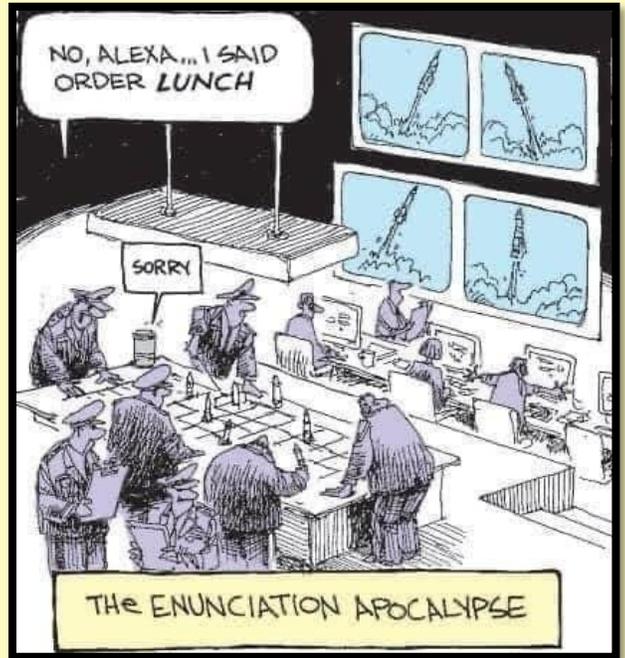
The Lighter Side



Twisted Tails (Facebook)



Fulshear Police - Facebook



The Heinlein Society-Facebook

RSVP

YOUR RESPONSE IS REQUESTED
BY SEPTEMBER 22ND

M _____

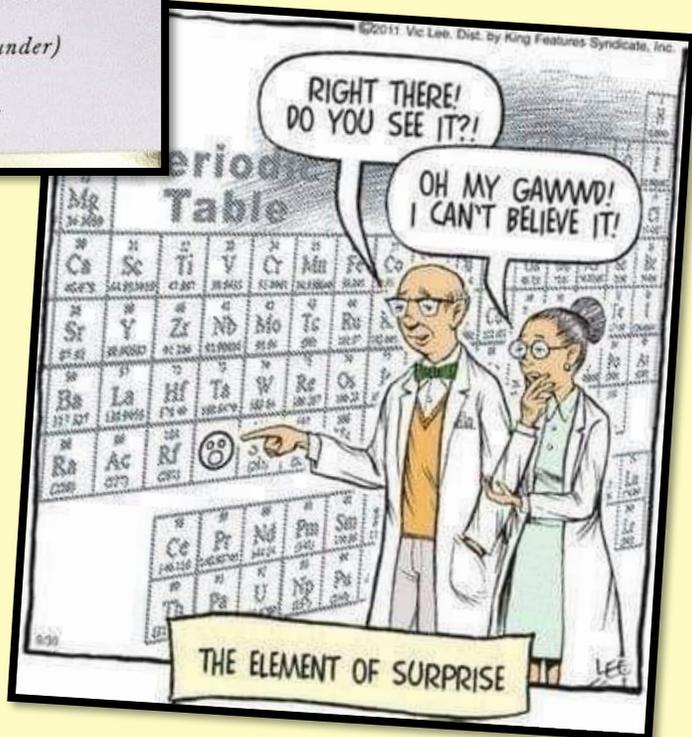
_____ will attend _____ will not attend

PLEASE INITIAL YOUR CHOICE OF ENTRÉE

_____ beef _____ pork _____ child (12 and under)

Please let us know of any dietary restrictions.

Lynn Miclea - Facebook



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