

Coastal Prairie Chapter Courier

May 2022 Volume 10 Issue 5



Inside This Issue
2022 Big Sit Birding Classic Drew CPC Members
Successful Girl Scout Tree Planting Event
Pollinator Pocket Prairie Has Positive Impact
Busy Spring at Seabourne Creek Nature Park



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



President's Message By Terri Hurley TMNCPC President

Happy Spring! We finally got some rain, about 2" at our house. That's the most we have had all year! Also, the month of May is full of action for our chapter...the most we have had in two years! Hope everyone is gearing up to get back in the swing of things in the TMNCPC program. Our partners and other organizations are giddy about restarting their projects and events after being shut down for two years. Be sure to check out this newsletter for the many fun outreach events and service opportunities that are scheduled in the coming weeks.

In other chapter news.....

Membership Meetings to Start Up Again!

We are bringing back a classic event that for years was enjoyed by all members of our chapter. Once a quarter on a Saturday morning, all members, including our trainees,

will be invited to this casual but informational gathering. First, we'll mingle around the donuts and coffee for social time. Then directors of committees and various other projects will showcase their upcoming plans by presenting a short summary to everyone. Who knows, you might like what you hear and want to be involved in that project. We might also bring up other chapter issues and get your input. Members who have an idea for a project can bring it up. This will give us a regular opportunity to keep the lines of communication open. An invitation will be on its way to you soon.

TMNs...Out of This World! *Texas Master Naturalists have conquered the final frontier...space. Kjell Lindgren from the Gulf Coast chapter was launched into orbit a few days ago as commander of SpaceX's Dragon Freedom capsule to the International Space Station. Along with three other astronauts, he will complete a 6-month research project. The exciting news is that he will host a webinar via downlink from the ISS for us master naturalists sometime in the next several weeks. We will have an opportunity to send him questions in advance about his research in the space lab. Keep an eye out for the ISS as it flies across the skies, and also for the registration link to attend this.*



Virtual Volunteer Fair: *Our state coordinators are planning another Virtual Volunteer Fair right around the corner on Thursday, May 5 from 9 am – 12 noon via Webex. Eight different projects from*

chapter partners that need the assistance of TMNs from all over the state will be highlighted. The first three presentations are about projects that are available in our own ecoregion. The others are state-wide, and any chapter member can work on those. Attending this event qualifies for VSP, so join in. This is a come-and-go event, so you don't have to stay the entire time. Registration is now open via this link:

<https://tpwdevents3000.webex.com/tpwdevents3000/j.php?RGID=r1fa5fb14daa7214131db189aff7f5e4f>

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Cover
Coastal Prairie Chapter Volunteer events (from top clockwise): Big Sit, Girl Scout tree planting, Spring Class '22 field trip.

Please send articles and photos by the 25th of the month to Lynn Trenta, Courier Editor. Thanks!

President's Message *(continued)*

Annual Meeting Oct 20-23: The call for presentations is now open until May 31. If you have a great idea for a topic you'd like to see covered in one of the talks, let me know and I will pass it on to our state coordinators. They will then find a speaker to cover that request. How about dragonflies or turtles? Let me know what you want!



Big welcome to TMNCPC future graduates! We would like to welcome our soon-to-be graduates from the Spring 2022 class. What a valuable addition to our chapter—you all will be major contributors to our success. I think the camaraderie we have as a chapter keeps us all motivated because we have so much fun together. We've got some great projects coming up for you to get involved in. Be sure to attend the Quarterly Membership Meetings and let your voice be heard!

Membership Minute

By Jan and Kevin Kolk, Membership Directors



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

Initial Certification

- Barry Barentine Fall, 2021
- Julie Barentine Fall, 2021
- Ella Matsuda Fall, 2020
- Simon Tice Fall, 2021
- Francis Sherrill 2019

2022 Recertification (21 members recertified)

- Ute Welk Spring, 2021
- Ella Stroupe 2018
- Philip Ward Fall, 2021
- Pradeep Sethi 2017
- Katherine Grazer Fall, 2020
- Aida Pita Baston Fall, 2020
- Wen Sherrill 2019
- Bob Naegar 2018
- Sarah Marshall 2018
- Garrett Engelhardt 2017
- Pam Jones Spring, 2020

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Membership Minute *Continued*

250 Hour Milestone

- John Rouane Spring, 2020
- Ute Welk Spring, 2021

500 Hour Milestone

- Pam Jones Spring, 2020
- Robbin Mallet 2019

1000 Hour Milestone

- Jan Kolk Spring, 2020

It's City Nature Challenge Time! So, how do I document my hours?????

For Naturalists and Birders, the City Nature Challenge offers the rare opportunity to earn more than just the .25 hours reporting time in a Citizen Science activity. Because it is a recognized 'project', participants can take credit for all their field hours (April 29 - May 2) as well as the time spent processing and posting photos/recordings (May 3- May 8). Hours can be accumulated into a single entry by identifying the start and stop dates in the iNaturalist Opportunity. In the description, indicate "City Nature Challenge", County of service, and number of total species identified. If you have any questions, Slack @jan or @kevin before submitting.

Members Recognized in the Community



Susan Walther received a certificate of appreciation from the City of Rosenberg Photo by Joyce Tipton



Greg Hurley and Jerry Trenta made the front page of the FB Herald with this photo of the Girl Scout tree planting that took place April 23 at Seabourne Creek Nature park



Chapter Meeting on May 5, 6pm: “Galveston Canids, a Quest for Truth”

” By Ron Wooten, Outreach Specialist with the Galveston District Corps of Engineers

Ron Wooten always wanted to write an article on the Galveston coyotes. His first direct encounter with the coyotes on the west end of Galveston Island was when he was surrounded by a pack in an open field after chasing them off the body of the family’s dog, Scruffy. Observing the behaviors, it was very apparent that the pack was not a typical coyote pack. He knew something about these animals was unusual, and worth pursuing, but it took 5 years to find someone who would listen to him. Finally, Dr. Dave Mech from Princeton University agreed to get involved, commissioning a study leading to the understanding of the Galveston Island coyotes, and their relationship to the red wolf, an animal declared extinct in the wild nearly 40 years ago.

Ron is an Outreach Specialist with the Galveston District Corps of Engineers, where he started as a Regulatory Specialist. The route to Corp of Engineers included positions as a Fisheries Biologist with the National Marine Fisheries service, an Advanced Placement Environmental Science teacher at Ball High School, the owner of his own landscape and irrigation company, and a photojournalist with Galveston Monthly. He holds a Bachelor of Science in wildlife and fisheries sciences, and a master’s in marine resources management from TAMUG.

Ron and his wife of almost 34 years, Trisha, have lived in Jamaica Beach since 1990. They have two adult daughters, Allison and Emily, both of whom were raised in Galveston.

NOTE: Coastal Prairie Chapter programs are free and open to the public and chapter members via Zoom. Advance registration is required. Check back here a couple days before the event for the registration link.

TMNCPC members are invited to attend in-person at the Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land.

Advance registration via SignUp Genius is required.

To see previous chapter programs go to the Members’ Section on the chapter website.

Volunteer Service Projects Highlights

VSP Opportunities Listed Last Month by Johanna DeYoung, Membership Director



VSP OPPORTUNITIES

New VSP Opportunity! Kudos to Neil Lisco! Neil submitted a proposal which was approved by the VSP Committee on 2/18/2022: “Restor.Eco: Your Home for Nature Restoration: TMN Field Research Hours” with the following description: “Providing, gathering, and/or entering data for public nature areas into Restor's online platform, properties can include city or county parks, state parks, nature preserve, etc. in the state of Texas.” To find out more contact Neil Lisco (phone and email on chapter roster under the “Forms Channel” on Slack.)

Seabourne Volunteer Days

Wednesday mornings 9:00 – 11:00 AM; and 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 9:00 – 11:00 AM.

Jerry Trenta, Director says “Tasks do not need to be completed on regular volunteer days.” Available tasks include:

Bird feeder refilling – Check with Bill Johnson (see phone and email under the “Forms Channel” roster on Slack.)

Bump ups and separations: Bump ups and separations can be done at SCNP, or the materials can be taken home to be done in the comfort of your home. You will need to keep them watered until they are returned to SCNP.

Invasive tree removal: Tasks include brush mower clearing, branch trimming, chipper feeder, chainsaw work, and log haul-off duty.

Native Plant & Butterfly Gardens: Check with Lynn Trenta (see phone and email under the “Forms Channel” roster on Slack.) or Katie Sallan katie@coastalprairie.org.

For additional information, check with Jerry Trenta (phone and email under the “Forms Channel” roster on Slack.)

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Volunteer Service Projects Highlights *(Continued)*

Katy Prairie Conservancy – Stewardship Saturdays

On the 2nd Saturday of the month assist KPC in removing invasive species; clearing fences of vegetation; and planting Texas native plants at the Indiangrass Preserve, 31975 Hebert Road, Waller, TX, 77484, 9:00 – 11:00 AM. All other tools are provided. Register in advance if planning to attend. Contact: 713-523-6135 ext. 4032, info@katyprairie.org, website link <https://www.katyprairie.org/stewardship-saturdays> [VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under: “Katy Prairie Conservancy: TMN Report Hours.”]

Deer Park Prairie Workdays - 4th Saturday of the Month

Scheduled workdays for DPP are the 4th Saturday of each month, from 9 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. These “...workdays offer an opportunity to explore and help maintain this special coastal prairie. The boardwalk project continues as well as brush control and work on the native gardens around the house.” Please RSVP to [Della Barbato@TexasPrairie.org](mailto:Della_Barbato@TexasPrairie.org). Lawther-Deer Park Prairie (DPP), 1222 East Purdue Lane, Deer Park, TX 77536 [VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under: “Community Nature/Public Access Deer Park Prairie: TMN Report Hours”]

Houston Audubon – 2nd Saturday of the Month

Join Houston Audubon on the 2nd Saturday of the month, from 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM, (September through May) at the Raptor and Education Center at Sims Bayou for a morning of gardening and sanctuary maintenance. Activities can include trail maintenance, filling bird feeders and baths, litter pick-up, native gardening, and invasive species removal. Raptor and Education Center at Sims Bayou, 3997 River Drive, Houston, TX, 77017 [VSP hours to be recorded in VMS under: “Houston Audubon Society: TMN Report Hours”]

Brazos Bend State Park - Eco-Explorer, Wildlife and Science in the Park Program

Our partner, Brazos Bend State Park, will be back this summer with its Eco-Explorer, Wildlife and Science in the Park Program! They are asking the Texas Master Naturalist Coastal Prairie Chapter (TMNCPC) to provide a 45-minute “Predator and Prey” presentation on Thursday, 6/9/2022, from 8:45 – 10:00 AM. The TMNCPC's Skulls and Skins WOW will be presented at this event. [VSP hours to be recorded in VMS : “TPWD Volunteering: TMN Report Hrs”]

Seabourne Garden Group

Zoom meetings and field trips include the education committee meetings (signage is under this), and program meetings that offer information for members, as well as trips to gardens and natural settings. If interested, contact Lynn Trenta (phone and email under the “Forms Channel” in Slack), or [Katie Sallean](#). [VSP hours recorded in VMS under “SCNP-7 Habitats Public Access: TMN Hrs”]

Texas Master Naturalist Virtual Volunteer Fair - August 31, 2021 - September 1, 2021:

The recordings from the Virtual Volunteer Fair were recorded and uploaded to the TMN website post-event for those who could not attend the live presentations and wish to attain VSP hours. To access the recordings, go to: <https://txmn.tamu.edu/virtual-volunteer-fair-august-2021/#attendee>. [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 and Slack 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, Charris Powers, Lynn Trenta, and Johanna DeYoung, will review the proposal and determine if it qualifies as a VSP opportunity.

If you are aware of VSP opportunities, have questions about VSP opportunities or are unsure how to record a VSP opportunity, please contact Johanna DeYoung at johanna@coastalprairie.org).

Journal of a Naturalist No. 4 Intersectionality

By Lucy Randel



Over the years, I have developed an affinity for trees. Perhaps it started with the cherry tree I climbed in my NYC backyard as a kid. Or was it the oak-and maple-lined streets? Or the forests encountered on family camping trips? Relocating to Houston, I found trees even on the coastal prairie. My daughter found refuge in the water oak in our yard and I became a steward of a fruit orchard planted at her school. More recently, as part of my HOA, I have participated in specifying tree planting with Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD) to replace 50- to 60-year-old oak, elm, and ash trees sacrificed to add detention capacity to our flood-prone neighborhood along Brays Bayou.

Trees add a lot to inner city environments. In addition to providing habitat, they cool heat islands, absorb pollutants, and mitigate flooding. When I recently came across an article quantifying these benefits, 'Super Trees' may help save Houston ... and beyond, published in Rice News, I quickly shared it with Jen Hadayia, executive director of Air Alliance Houston (AAH). You see, I have been on the AAH board for many years, using my professional training in chemical engineering and environmental science to combat air pollution in the Houston region. Coincidentally, a staff member had recently signed up AAH for the Houston Area Urban Forest Council annual competition planting super trees. The location? A HCFCD detention basin across town near Hunting Bayou. Wow! How's that for intersectionality.

My volunteer work at a school led to a deep dive into tree care. My Master Naturalist training encouraged me to reach out and educate others and influence the ecosystems around me. That outreach led to more connections bringing me back to connecting it to separate long-time volunteer service. And who did I see at the planting competition? The county forester, who would be starting phase 2 of tree planting in my neighborhood the following week.

Now the fun part: = Planting Day!

On a bright sunny morning in March, approximately 18 teams of 10 or 11 volunteers created a little bit of forest at the recently constructed Curtis M. Graves Detention Basin located on a 75-acre site near the northeast corner of Homestead Road and Loop 610. Groups of 100 native oaks, elms, and more were staged around a defined planting area on just a small fraction of the total site. With so much remote work and some new staff and interns starting during the pandemic, Planting Day was a great team building activity for us. A team of landscapers demonstrated proper planting technique by planting 100 trees in less than 15 minutes! Needless to say, our team of amateurs had a different pace. The judges ensuring proper planting were spread a bit thin, so between shovel scoops, I coached team members. A staff member brought her corgi, who even helped dig a few holes and entertained us all in the process. Our group was a bit short, so a senior from Manvel High School joined us. To my amazement, the 1800 trees were indeed planted in the 2-hour window!

The next question is, "Will all those trees survive?" Actually, no. The goal is to quickly establish vegetation on sites completely stripped, regraded and compacted, where the only supplemental irrigation will come from watering trucks. Instead of spacing 12 ft tall trees 50 ft apart as you might on a large boulevard, trees from 3 to 5 gallon pots were randomly placed in each planting block as close as 5 ft from each other, mimicking many seedlings forming on the forest floor.

Competition will determine which trees survive. I look forward to a future canopy of native trees providing much needed greenspace to NE Houston.

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Journal of a Naturalist No. 4 Intersectionality *Continued*

Info about Curtis M. Graves Detention Basin

<https://www.hcfd.org/Activity/Active-Projects/Hunting-Bayou/C-18-Project-Hunting>

Super tree article

<https://news.rice.edu/news/2021/super-trees-may-help-save-houston-and-beyond>



Houston Wilderness and corporate volunteers plant “super trees” at an industrial site along Peavy Drive, near Buffalo Bayou. Members of Rice University’s Department of Statistics helped produce a new study that offers strategies to other cities interested in planting trees to mitigate environmental concerns. Courtesy of Houston Wilderness

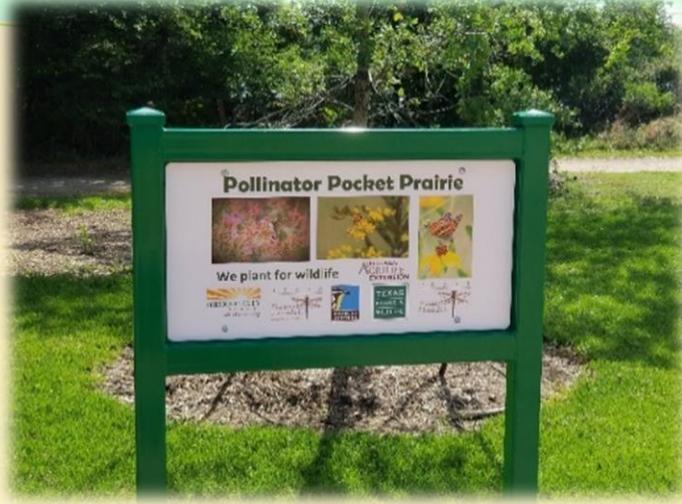
IT IS A FEW PLANTS AND A BIG DEAL!!

Missouri City's first Pollinator Pocket Prairie is Dedicated in Buffalo Run Park

By JudiAnn Carlsson, Project Leader Photos by Jimmy Kumana (JudiAnn's spouse)



The Pollinator Pocket Prairie in Buffalo Run Park was dedicated on Earth Day, Friday, April 22, 2022, at 10:00 am in Missouri City. It was planted on January 12 of this year (see February 2022 Volume 10 Issue 2). Dedication hosts were Paul Wierzbicki, Missouri City Parks and Recreation forester, and JudiAnn Carlsson, TMN Coastal Prairie member, who led the planning and planting and leads the continued maintenance by volunteers. City council members who spoke were Monica Riley, district A, Anthony Maroulis, district C, and Floyd Emery, district D. In attendance were Parks and Recreation Director Jason Mangum, Assistant Director T.W. Diekmann and Parks and Recreation board members, as well as Tara Crain's communications team.



(Above left) Permanent Missouri City sign – note the photos from Shannon Westveer's yard on the sign, our 3 in one logos: Texas Master Naturalist, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Texas A&M Agri Life Extension, plus TMN-Coastal Prairie and Houston Audubon. (Above right) Chapter volunteers Marilynne Malone, Terri Hurley, Mary Spolyar, Susie Doe, Sandra Brown, Charris Powers, Pauline Zinn, and JudiAnn Carlsson

It is a big deal to work a few native plants into any garden. Minutes before the dedication, under the watchful eye of Mary Spolyar from the TMN Gulf Coast Chapter, volunteers added another 15 plants to the 140 plants already growing (See below.) The Parks and Recreation water truck gave the plants a good watering immediately after planting.



IT IS A FEW PLANTS AND A BIG DEAL!! *Continued*

In his talk, Paul Wierzbicki stated that in 2021, JudiAnn Carlsson and Shannon Westveer asked the Missouri City Parks and Recreation for a small area where a pollinator garden could be established. Parks and Recreation seeks groups willing to maintain specific areas within existing parks. In selecting the site for the Pollinator Pocket Prairie factors considered were the limited water supply, the natural existing landscape, and proximity to park visitors. Buffalo Run had these elements as well as an existing raised bed measuring just over 1,000 square feet that had been built in 2012.

Terri Hurley, President of the Texas Master Naturalists Coastal Prairie Chapter, informed attendees about the work of our chapter. Shannon Westveer could not attend so Terri read Shannon's story about growing up in Missouri City in the 1970's where she picked dewberries, played games, and rode bikes, just a couple of miles north of the park. It was there that she learned to be a steward of all natural resources and formed the desire to have a native garden in her own yard where her children could observe nature, play games and pick dewberries.

Attendees received gift bags containing a green all-weather hat, a cup cake, a milk weed plant and native seed balls hand rolled by TMN volunteers Mary Spolyar and Pauline Zinn. Mary Spolyar, who volunteers at the Houston Audubon Society native nursery, was able to select 17 different species of plants chosen for their wildlife value.



Above left, Mary Spolyar and Pauline Zinn make seed balls. Above right, the dedication chapter volunteers

TMN Coastal Prairie Chapter members who dug, planted, and watered included the dedication volunteers JudiAnn Carlsson, Marilynne Malone, Pauline Zinn, Terri Hurley, Sandra Brown, Charris Powers, Susie Doe, and John Rouane, as well as Mary Spolyar, from the TMN-Gulf Coast chapter. Other chapter members involved in the installation of the garden were Hoiman Low, Pradip Sethi, Jim Butcher, and Johanna DeYoung. Spouse volunteer Scott Westveer and Reba Wiles, member of the Native Plant Society of Texas, rounded out the original restoration team.

Buffalo Run is a gem of a park that welcomes people from all walks of life. Planting a few indigenous plants in a yard or a small prairie pocket may be a baby step, but it's a big deal. It is imperative for us all to leave things a little better than we found them. As stewards of our parks, our yards, our environment, natural resources can be protected and conserved so they can be enjoyed by our children and our grandchildren.

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IT IS A FEW PLANTS AND A BIG DEAL!! *Continued*



Chapter Volunteers at work (above) and the original chapter volunteers who installed the garden (below)



Quintana Bird Sanctuary Adds Native Plant Garden

By Bill Johnson, Seabourne Bird Sanctuary Coordinator and Lynn Trenta, Courier Editor



Quintana is a great place to go and see the migrating birds that come through our part of Texas. Our chapter and the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory volunteers man the site every year and offer information to visitors about the birds.

This year our chapter's volunteers also have incorporated a native plant garden (see Bill holding the project sign below)

So, if you want to see migratory birds and the new native plant garden at Quintana, head on down there for a great getaway and birding adventure. The migratory time for the neotropical birds extends through the middle of May along the Gulf coast.



Chapter member Bill Johnson at the Quintana native plant garden

Spring Class of 2022 Field Trip Photos

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK



Photo by Lauren DeShazo



Photo by Susan Walther



Spiderwort Photo by Frank Hunter

LONG POINT (JB Harrison Foundation)

Susan Walther hosts class field trip at Long Point (below) and Frank Hunter receives the blue doughnut (right)
Photos by Joyce Tipton



Cattle Egret and Alligator Photos by Joyce Tipton



Lauren DeShazo takes a selfie with class





The Big Sit April 2022

By Margo Johnson



Yet another good Big Sit year! We thank **Jerry Trenta** and the **Rosenberg Development Council** for sponsoring again, paying the Texas Parks and Wildlife entry fee to the 26th Annual Great Texas Birding Classic and buying our memento tee shirts. Next year we will get MORE!

The sun was not quite up on Earth Day, Friday April 22 for our third Seabourne Prairie Perchers Big Sit. **Kerry Padilla** and **Pam Jones** had already unpacked and were ready to head to the 50 foot count circle when we arrived. They were almost there with their stuff by the time the gate was opened. **Bill Johnson** had set up the circle a day ahead in the Prairie Garden parking. This year Bill re-used the re-bar stake and a wooden rake handle wrapped with pennant flags--not elegant but fit for purpose. Driven into the hard ground it served as the circle center. Then a 25 foot rope measured the circle radius...we STRETCHED it hard before putting down bright orange traffic cones to mark the perimeter.

Our intrepid bird hike organizer and leader, **Bob Schwartz**, arrived shortly toting his scope, which he handles masterfully bringing up birds quickly for the rest of us to have clear looks. Bob was followed closely by **the Kolk**s and **Deb McMullen**. Along with Deb's other excellent bird ID-ing skills, she, and now Kerry, are our chief-listeners-for-heard-only birds or to direct us toward the sound. That's how a handsome common yellowthroat was first found. So even though we were very much missing Mark Scheurman who was guiding for Galveston's Feather Fest (SO MUCH going on here in April), we had a full complement of the chapter's best birders including skilled newbies!



From our circle we had a good view of the marsh lit by the rising sun behind us---with a lot of "heard" birds early, including a troop of whistling ducks, just as pictured on this year's collectors-item tee shirt. From early on we were also entertained, distracted and FOOLED (briefly) by FOUR green herons who were flying and skulking around all day. We tried to make them into bitterns and rails, but a closer look always revealed those bright yellow legs and gorgeous green and burgundy feathered backs.

Those whistling ducks and green herons tested the rest of us, but **Jan Kolk** or **Kerry Padilla** would calmly walk out and ID the pesky skulkers so **Jean Greenhalgh** or **Kevin Kolk** could get a scope on them from back in the circle and **Ute Welk** would get a photo. And so it went. Fairly early on we had a pileated woodpecker calling and then flying north over the big island---everyone had good looks so no doubt about this "red dot" bird for our park in eBird.

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The Big Sit *Continued*

When the early birds slowed down, **Jerry Trenta** arrived to set up our shade shelter. We were quite grateful after the sun got high and it stood us in good stead until the wind picked up. Then a quick leg grab by **Jan Peterson** and others kept it from heading into the marsh with the alligator. The team stowed the shelter for another day, but it was appreciated while we had it.

Bird hikers (and gardeners) who were out were **Garrett Englehardt, Debby Wendt, Marilynne Malone, Sandra Brown, Lynn Trenta and Jan Peterson**. Bird sanctuary workers there were **Tina Kung and the Coopers, John and Ursula, and the Margot's, Blair and Margo**. New class members **Dorothy Tran and Kerry Padilla** and relatively new **Pam Jones, Renee Brown** and early COVID class members **Lucy Moyer, Joyce Tipton**. Our truly fearless leader **Terri Hurley and Greg Hurley** came to spell us in the afternoon after a successful dedication of the new prairie garden in Missouri City's Buffalo Run Park (see nearby article).

Over the day, we had nearly all the raptors we could hope for including handsome Swainson's hawks, first over the marsh and much later the prairie. Unlike the local red-shouldered hawk, they weren't missing any wing feathers so we didn't KNOW if it was the same one again. Just before she left her long shift, Kerry also got us a Mississippi kite high over the prairie, confirmed by Deb and others. Mid-morning, a trio of cara cara flew in low over the big island and really showed off in the morning sun all their spring markings and bright white tail with a terminal band. Our single warbler, the common yellowthroat, similarly sat out in the sun displaying his bright yellow patch and black mask....kind of as if to say, "What do you MEAN, I'm a skulky bird who is more heard than seen?"

Throughout the long, hot but breezy afternoon Renee Brown stayed, crocheted---surprised she didn't attract hummers with her vivid yarn---and regaled us with stories of Team Rubicon and many other adventures. Really whiled away those non-birdy mid-day hours and on to the end of the 13+hour day.

Our last-arriving team member (straight from work) was Nathan Cross. Nathan topped off our 55-count day with a handsome male blue grosbeak. By this time Deb McMullen had returned as well. After getting it in the scope for us to see, she went out for the record picture. She would have had the female too but for a prairie jogger (still, we are GLAD people are enjoying the prairie and park). Her last picture as the sun was setting is of the unmanned scope that stood us in such good stead. We missed Hoiman Low's beautiful, seemingly effortless pictures but a number of team members have posted lovely pictures in Slack and Facebook. ENJOY! THANK YOU, ALL Prairie Perchers.



Garrett Engelhardt, Deb McMullen, Ting Kung, Lynn Trenta, Dorothy Tran, Kevin Kolk, Renee Brown, Kerry Padilla, Margo Johnson, Jan Peterson, Debby Wendt, Joyce Tipton, and Lucy Moyer Photo by Ute Welk



Seabourne News

The Big Sit Continued



Debby Wendt, Margo Johnson & Lynn Trenta
Photo by Renee Brown



Bill, Margo, Ute, Renee, and Dorothy enjoy "sitting" Photo by Jan Kolk



Garrett Engelhardt, Bill Johnson, Greg Hurley, Terri Hurley, Renee Brown, and Margo Johnson



Blue Grosbeak



Indigo Bunting



Common Yellowthroat



Yellow-crowned night heron

Photos by Deb McMullen



Ursula Cooper, Sandra Brown, Margo Margot, Marilyne Malone, Blair Margot, Kerry Padilla, Jean Greenhalgh, Bob Schwartz and others at Dawn.



Green Heron Photo by Ute Welk



Dusk



April turned out to be a very busy month for chapter activities at Seabourne.

The chapter's touring cart was sold and picked up by the new owner. We are now looking for a four-passenger utility vehicle to replace it.

Work has continued removing invasive trees and shrubs from the south shore of the wetlands thanks in large part to Garrett Engelhardt, Sal Cardenas, Pradeep Sethi, Scott Tufts, and others. This has made the view from the Wetland Loop Pathway more of the Wetlands and its birds and less of wall of invasive eastern baccharis and pepper vine.

April 19 and 20--Twelve trees growing along the eastern end of the prairie restoration area were moved to the eastern end of the outer loop. Six of these trees had been planted by the TMN-CPC members nine years ago and six others were 'volunteers.' The city has plans to use the eastern part of the Seabourne prairie as a future retention area for flood control purposes, so we rescued these valuable trees and put them in a section of the outer loop that is a little shy of trees. These transplanted trees need to be watered every three days for the first two weeks then weekly along with the other newly planted trees.



Good-bye to the touring cart (l) and large tree transfers (r)

April 22--The Big Sit was held near the Native Plant Garden with members and guests participating. (see previous article.) The same day Sal Cardenas, Scott Tufts and Jerry Trenta spent the morning augering holes in very dry clay soil for the next day's Girl Scout tree planting event.

April 23--The Lone Star Treasures Community Girl Scouts had a tree planting. Greg Hurley planted a red mulberry on the knoll to the north of the Butterfly Garden. Using Greg's example, the Lone Star Treasures Community Girl Scouts then planted 27 more trees on the north side of the knoll. They planted nine each of live oak, cherry laurel and red mulberry and created what they called the LSTC Girl Scout Grove. The girls also attached ownership tags to the trees with their names and their group's name. (See article on page 19)

The seven new LOOK! signs for the park are at last installed, one at each of the seven ecological areas: Arboretum, Woodlands, Wetlands, Butterfly Garden, Seabourne Lake, Native Plant Garden and Seabourne Prairie. A mix-up by the sign vendor has left us with a second set of these signs which we intend to put to good use by installing them in different locations in their areas.



Jerry Trenta and Sal Cardenas install signs



Nancy, Linda, Donatta, Lynn, and Marilyne with new sign

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Seabourne News *Continued*

For May we will continue with the wetlands south shore cleanup and our next infrastructure project at Seabourne is installing two simple 24 foot long by six foot high roosting racks (shown below) on the large island in the wetlands. This will be done over several volunteer workdays this month. It involves setting up a canoe ferry between the island and the wetlands boardwalk nearest the island. Then material, tools and volunteers will be ferried across to the island.

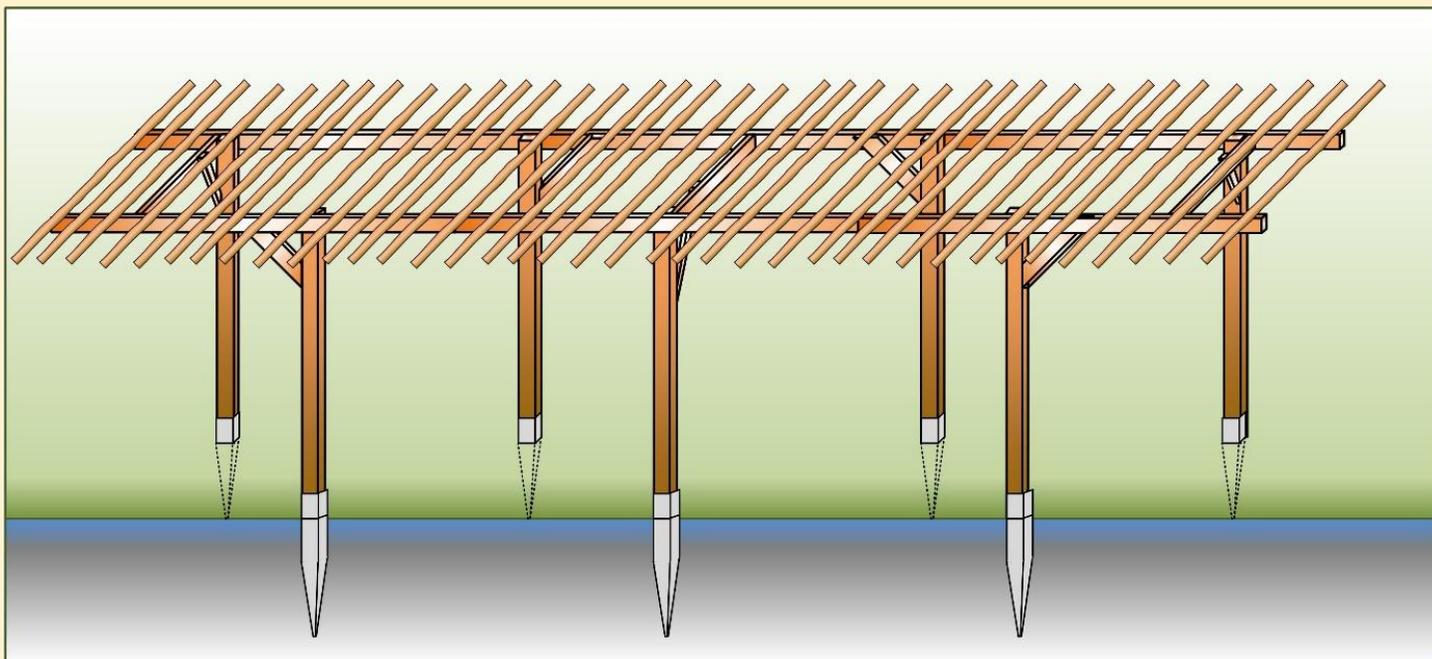
Some of the tasks involved are:

- Move canoe to boardwalk and set up rope ferry across to island.
- Transport and ferry all project material, tools and volunteers to the island.
- Clear area (weedwack, etc.) for the racks
- Drive in one set (7) of post anchors.
- Install posts and rack structure.
- Install cedar stays across the top.
- Install baffles on posts.
- Repeat for the second rack.
- Remove canoe-rope ferry.

The amount of time to do this will depend on the number of volunteers and can extend over several regular volunteer days as needed. Saturday, May 7 is the targeted first day, Wednesday, May 11 is the second. Volunteers will need boots as some of the work is along the water's edge. We realize other regular tasks need to be done at the park on these days, such as new tree watering (high priority) and garden maintenance, so extra hands are needed here or other arrangements need to be made to see that these tasks are done.



Two platforms to be built



Seabourne Garden Group Tours Houston Botanical Garden

By Charris Powers



The former Glenbrook Park Golf Course along Sims Bayou off Interstate 45, between William P. Hobby Airport and the University of Houston, is now Houston's first botanic garden consisting of 132 acres.

TMNCPC's Seabourne Garden group was able to tour this informative, culturally diverse garden with assistance from TMNCPC's Della Barbato. Della called in extra hands and the group was able to get an interpretive talk from Beth Clark, retired landscape architect, formerly of Clark Condon Associates Inc, who was instrumental in the creation of the garden.

The garden is inviting and welcoming with its show of the Global Collection Garden which is parted into three zones displaying arid, subtropical and tropical plant species. The Culinary Garden was showcasing its smells of onions and root vegetables, its various shades of green and different heights of kale, cabbage, broccoli and chard. The colors and sights of this garden allowed us to appreciate edible plants. The group walked along the concrete sidewalks of the bygone golf course and visited the Stormwater Wetlands and prairie ecosystem areas which we know are projects that take time and test naturalists' patience. Beth stated that these are projects and phases that will be continually improved. The Event Lawn and Glade is an area for events like birthdays and weddings making for great photography opportunities. There are several large areas with tables and chairs for picnicking, concerts and special events.

Visit the Houston Botanic Garden's website at hbg.org for upcoming events and programming.

Angela LeDoux photo



<<<Beth Clark tells us how the garden came to be

Photos Charris Powers

Girl Scout Tree Planting *Text and Most Photos By Debbie Wendt*



*Left: Debbie Wendt, Jerry Trenta, Blair Margot, Jim Butcher, Margo Margot, Greg Hurley, and Sandra Brown
Middle: TMN Seabourne Scout Coordinator Greg Hurley talks to girl scouts Right: Sandra Brown helps scouts.*



Greg Hurley organized the Girl Scout tree planting on Saturday, April 23. Troop 152119 Lone Star Treasures Community in Richmond planted 27 trees at Seabourne Creek Nature Park. Trees planted were oak, mulberry and cherry laurel. They were under the tutelage of the Coastal Prairie Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists Sandra Brown, Jim Butcher, Greg Hurley, Blair Margot, Margo Margot, Jerry Trenta, and Debby Wendt. Greg Hurley talked to the scouts about the importance of trees and their part in nature and Debby Wendt talked about reducing plastics and keeping the earth healthy by picking up trash and not releasing balloons. The girls were very enthusiastic and worked hard to plant the trees correctly. The holes were augered by Sale Cardenas, Jerry Trenta, and Scott Tufts the day before. The scouts watered the hole, scored the planting area, planted the tree, added the soil that had been dug out to form a moat to keep the added water from escaping the area. Then they stepped on the soil to eliminate air pockets. Each of the trees had three t-posts installed around it to protect the trees from mowers. One of the girls wanted to use the t-post driver to put in the t-posts around the tree she planted. She enthusiastically pounded the driver and successfully installed the t-post. After the trees were planted, the girls attached a metal tag that identified their group, LST Lone Star Treasures, as the planters of the trees. One of the girls told us "I want to come back in a couple of years to see how our trees have grown."



Photo Jerry Trenta

In Our Own Backyard and Other Places

Black-bellied Duck Nest Box

Text and Photos by Diane Eismont

We had originally decided to put up this special nest box over 8 feet above the ground, for the black-bellied whistling ducks, sometimes called "tree ducks", that nested on our property in the past - frequenting our pond and wetlands.

WHAT a surprise to open the nest box this spring and actually find lots of the duck's characteristic white eggshells inside!

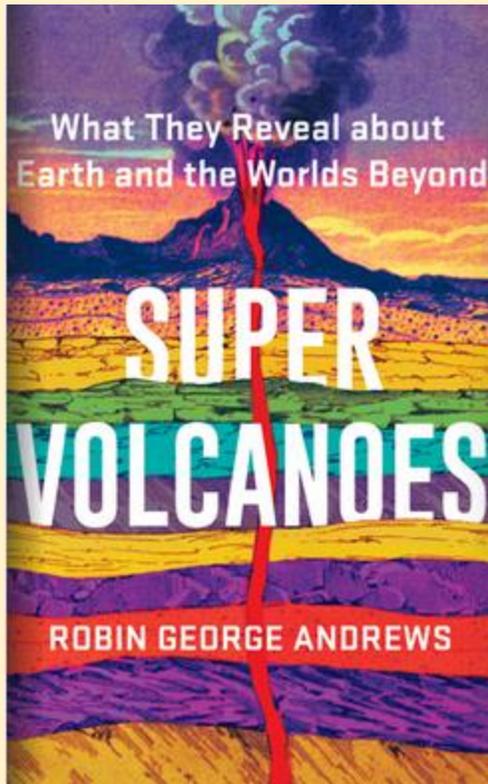


Spotless Lady Beetle *Photo by Jaime Fairchild*



A Spotless Lady Beetle was found at the Houston Museum of Natural Science last month in the butterfly garden, early in the spring. I was remiss in not attributing this photo to Jaime. The garden is a beautiful and fun place to visit!

The Book Corner *By Jim Butcher, A.K.A. The Grand Poohbah*



Hello nature lovers, This book awakened the inner geologist in me.

It is fairly easy to read and covers all the usual suspects in the realm of volcanoes. You can expect Krakatoa, Mt. St Helens, Vesuvius, Kilauea and of course the whopper under Yellowstone. Don't start packing the car just yet.

A wild card in the mix is Ol Doinyo Lengi, one of the most peculiar volcanoes on earth. It is in Tanzania in the great rift and is the only volcano on the planet erupting carbonatite lava today.

Speaking of lava. Did you know it is 10 times hotter than boiling water? Ouch!

Mr. Andrews does not stop on earth. He goes on to cover current knowledge on the Moon, Mars, Jupiter and even Jupiter's 4? 5? moons.

The pictures are rubbish. I have to call them as I see them. I do recommend the book though.



Ol Doinyo Lengai in Tanzania

The Lighter Side



Sent in by Jim Butcher

I've found that if you tuck one part of your pant legs into your sock, people expect less of you.

A new airplane has been developed that cannot crash. Made from rubber polymers, it will just bounce. The craft was invented by Boeing, Boeing, Boeing.

Good Living (Facebook)



Sent in by Debby Wendt

Why are they even allowed to drive?



English Humour and Images (Facebook)

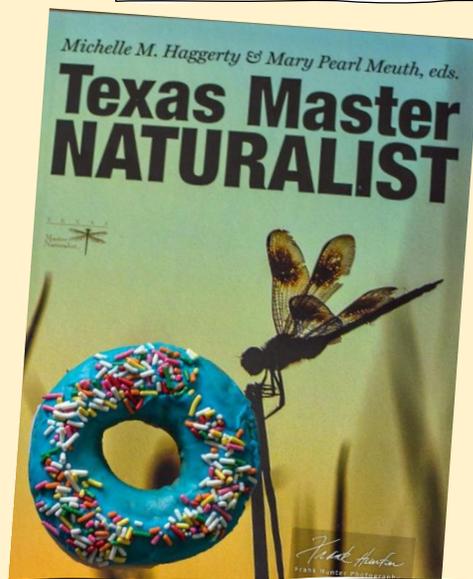


Photo by Frank Hunter, Spring 2022 class

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We are on the Web!

See us at:

www.coastalprairie.org

Bird Migration

Sent via Slack by Kerry Padilla

BirdCast

I was looking at BirdCast for our area this morning and thought I'd share the link. It's a collaborative research program that tracks migration - led by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and supported by many other groups. Cornell is also behind eBird (counting/reporting) and the Merlin app (bird ID help). The forecast map images are always amazing (you may have seen these posted by Houston Audubon) and the live counts of birds passing through/by are so cool! Migration is magical! <https://dashboard.birdcast.info/region/US-TX-157>

Our Chapter Facebook Page is at

[TMN Coastal Prairie Chapter Facebook](#)

To post photos and information, email

Paula Kolmar or [Robbin Mallett](#)

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.

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

***Check out & subscribe to our Chapter's new YouTube Channel:
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