

Coastal Prairie Chapter **Courier**

February 2024 — Volume 12 Issue 2



Fungi are the grand
recyclers of the planet and
the vanguard species in
habitat restoration.

Paul Stamets



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The Texas Master Naturalist Program's mission is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas.

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ON THE COVER

Volunteers and youth explore trees and birds at Cullinan Park (Photo: S. Westveer). When it rains it spores: fungal fruits dazzle at Seabourne Creek (Photos: Sari Garfinkle)



EDITOR TEAM

February's issue was crafted by Co-Editor, **Shannon Westveer**

Have a great story for March's issue? Submit by **February 22nd** to:

Shannon Westveer

Shannon@CoastalPrairie.org

Raji Mahesh

Raji@CoastalPrairie.org

President's Message

by *Susan Walther, TMNCPC President*



Our signature project **Seabourne Creek Nature Park (SCNP)** is off to a great start! Co-directors Jerry Trenta and Randolph Watson are doing a fantastic job of organizing and communicating via weekly SignUpGenius notices. Thank you to Wanda Roof, Terri Hurley, Fran Wilcox, and Shree Nath for volunteering to coordinate tasks in the prairie and garden areas with guidance from Lynn Trenta. And thank you to *everyone* who helps at the park! Last year we had 123 members volunteer 5,444 hours at SCNP. If you haven't been there lately, come to any of the workdays or other activities to enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow Master Naturalists and see for yourself the wonderful improvements we are making at Seabourne.

The Texas Master Naturalist Coastal Prairie Chapter began in 2004 with a small handful of volunteers and is now considered by many to be *the best chapter in the entire state*. We need help to plan a **20th anniversary celebration**. Please let me know soon if you are interested in helping or leading this planning.

Registration for **Spring 2024 training** opened on January 29th and is expected to fill up fast. Please tell your interested friends and family to go to our website's [Join Us page](#) to register; we'll hold another training class in fall. We always need new mentors, so members, please contact Membership Directors Jan and Kevin Kolk for information. Mentors get training and support to help their assigned new member to succeed in initial certification and beyond.

So much more is going on! Our [website](#) is a wonderful information resource, and Slack is an even more vibrant, secure, and up-to-date platform for use by all chapter members. Look for more Slack training classes to be announced soon.

Our chapter's continued success depends on *all of us*; thank you for volunteering.

See you outside!



February Program: Thursday, February 1st, 7 PM Homegrown National Park Presented by Doug Tallamy

By Jan Peterson, TMNCPC Programs Director



Doug Tallamy, photo courtesy of [University of Delaware](#)

Douglas (Doug) Tallamy is the founder of [Homegrown National Park®](#). A professor in the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware, Tallamy advocates for the use of native plants in home gardens and landscapes. He is the author of several award-winning books including *Nature's Best Hope* and *Bringing Nature Home*.

His presentation will explain the concept behind his grassroots movement Homegrown National Park, the largest cooperative conservation "ever conceived or attempted."

Doug has authored eighty research articles and has taught Insect Taxonomy, Behavioral Ecology, Humans and Nature, and other courses for thirty-two years.

Chief among his research goals is to better understand the many ways insects interact with plants and how such interactions determine the diversity of animal communities.

His book *Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens* was published by Timber Press in 2007 and awarded the 2008 Silver Medal by the Garden



Start a new **HABITAT®**

**HOMEGROWN
NATIONAL PARK®**

[TMNCPC members in attendance should record their Advanced Training (AT) hours under "AT: Chapter Meeting-Coastal Prairie" and the VSP hours for the following business meeting under "Chapter Business: Chapter Meeting."]

Website Blog

Be sure to subscribe on our website to get blogs delivered straight to your inbox, so you don't miss the next one.

- [Start a New Habitat](#) | January 2024



Membership Minute

By Jan and Kevin Kolk, TMNCPC Membership Co-Directors



Congratulations! to our numerous certification and milestone achievers. *Way to go!*

2023 Recertification

(114 members recertified)

Linda Rude — 2012

2024 Recertification

(3 members recertified)

Randolph Watson — 2022 Fall

Jan Poscovsky — 2023 Spring

Shannon Westveer — 2019



Initial Certification

Caroline Kane — 2020 Fall



5000 Hour Milestone

Bert Stipelcovich — 2018

500 Hour Milestone

Peter Parsons — 2019

Jean Greenhalgh — 2014

1000 Hour Milestone

Sal Cardenas — 2013

Erik Wolf — 2017

By the Numbers ... Look how our chapter has grown!

CPC Statistics	2020	2021	2022	2023
Active members	158	176	197	228
Volunteers, approved hours	125	165	186	212
Opportunities	72	73	81	80
Volunteer Service (VSP) hours	12,736	15,418	20,642	25,257
Advanced Training (AT) hours	2,865	2,617	2,611	4,082
Initial Training (IT) hours	1,617	1,901	1,863	2,016
Annual Recertification	71	78	96	113
Initial Certifications	25	37	46	37
250 Hour Milestones	6	16	12	18
500 Hour Milestone	7	6	7	14
1000 Hour Milestone	2	1	11	8
2500 Hour Milestone	1	1	2	2
4000 Hour Milestone	1	0	2	0
5000 Hour Milestone	0	1	2	0
Chapter "Milestonesters" (some members achieved more than 1!)	17	25	32	36
Outreach (Individuals "Touched")	2,100	5,045	7,012	24,910
Average Hours per Member	81	88	105	111

Volunteer Service — February Highlights

By Jan Poscovsky, TMNCPC Volunteer Service Projects Director



Before arriving to serve, check our website calendar for last minute changes, cancelations, or other information before departing.

<https://txmn.org/coastal/events/month/2024-02/>

Signature Project Seabourne Creek Nature

Park (SCNP), Rosenberg: 9:00 – 11:00 AM, Wednesdays and 1st and 3rd Saturdays which fall on 2/3, 2/7, 2/14, 2/17, 2/21, and 2/28

Signature Project Monthly Bird Hike at

SCNP, Rosenberg: 8:30 – 10:00 AM, 1st Wednesday which falls on 2/7

Public Outreach Nature Hike Seabourne

Creek Nature Park, Rosenberg: 8:00 — 9:00 AM, Sunday 2/18

Public Outreach Houston Museum of

Natural Science at Sugar Land: 10:30 AM — 3:30 PM 2nd and 4th Saturdays which fall on 2/10 and 2/24

JOIN US!

When you see VSP in front of an activity on the calendar, that stands for Volunteer Service Project and informs our members of service opportunities. It also means that the public is welcome to serve alongside us in our communities. We invite you to get out and meet TMNCPC members in the field!

Hellos and Goodbyes

The beginning of a new year always brings changes. This year we will be saying GOOD WISHES to a few members: **Kevin Biddle** who's now spending a large part of the year in New Mexico; **Mary Warwick** who transferred to the Galveston Bay Area Chapter to volunteer closer to home; **Bob and Carol Schwartz** who met during their training class in 2012, married, and ran the monthly Seabourne Bird Hike for many years. They will be missed!

Please WELCOME to our chapter: **Lora Jorgenson** from the Heartwood Chapter (Class of 2014) who moved to Waller County and has experience in Public Health; **Scot Powell**, a Hill Country Chapter transfer (Class of 2019) who has farmed and ranched for 30+ years, runs a ranch in the El Campo area, is a NPSOT member, and brings experience in software engineering.

NEW! Chapter Membership Meeting / Board

Meeting, via Zoom: 7:00 — 8:30 PM 3rd Wednesday which falls on 2/21

Coastal Prairie Conservancy Volunteer Orientation,

Indiangrass Preserve, Katy: 12:00 – 3:00 PM Saturday 2/10

Coastal Prairie Conservancy Indiangrass Preserve,

Katy: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM, Tuesdays, Fridays, and 2nd Saturdays of each month which fall on 2/2, 2/6, 2/9, 2/13, 2/16, 2/20, 2/23, 2/24, and 2/27

Harris County Precinct 4 Bird Survey at Archbishop

Joseph A. Fiorenza Park, Houston: 7:30 AM – 12:00 PM 4th Monday which falls on 2/26

Lawther-Deer Park Prairie, Deer Park:

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM 4th Saturday of each month which falls on 2/24

NEW! Mercer Botanic Garden Bird Survey, Humble:

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM, 4th Thursday of each month which falls on 2/22

NEW! Kleb Woods Nature Center Ecological Surveys,

Tomball: 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM, Tuesday 2/27 ([registration](#) required)

Arthropod Archives: Photograph and ID *Odonata*

By Sari Garfinkle, TMNCPC Class of Fall 2023



In the *Courier's* [January 2024 issue](#) (pages 8-9), our dragonflies had mated. What happens next?

Once her eggs are fertilized, the female will oviposit in wet environments: ponds, lakes, streams, or sometimes mud. Eggs may be dropped into the water, inserted into the stems of aquatic vegetation, or placed where ephemeral ponds will form when it rains. Wherever she chooses, *water is integral* for reproduction.

Eggs hatch into naiads, aquatic nymphs that spend their time voraciously consuming whatever little lifeforms they encounter. In particular, they feed on insect larva (including each other), tadpoles, and tiny fishes. Their lower jaws are like spring-loaded drawers which pop out and back at super speed, capturing their next meal.

Naiads have gills and look nothing like the terrestrial adults they will become. They undergo incomplete metamorphosis, molting at the end of each growth stage. Upon reaching maturity, they climb out of the water, usually onto



Above: Royal River Cruiser (*Macromia taeniolata*)

Below: Calico Pennant (*Celithemis elisa*)



vegetation, and emerge as very compressed adults.

The new adults remain perched as their wings unfold and their abdomens expand. Odonates are most vulnerable to predation during this stage. Their body and wings are soft and pale; flight will be their greatest asset, but at this stage their wings work poorly or not at all. Eventually, their body and wings harden and become suffused with color.

Now that you know a bit about odonates, are you ready to photograph them? Odonates are

unbothered by speech, but they will spook at movement or a shadow.

If you can, take *many* photographs. Concentrate on three views: upper (dorsal), side (lateral), and face.

Continued [next page](#)



Left: Teneral (newly emerged) dragonfly with its exuvia (molted skin). Photo credit: Greg Lasley

Below: Rainpool Spreadwing (*Lestes forficula*) ovipositing

Right: Dragonfly naiad with labium (lower jaw) extended. Photo credit: Jan Hamrsky



Arthropod Archives: Photograph and ID *Odonata* (Cont'd)

By Sari Garfinkle, TMNCPC Class of Fall 2023



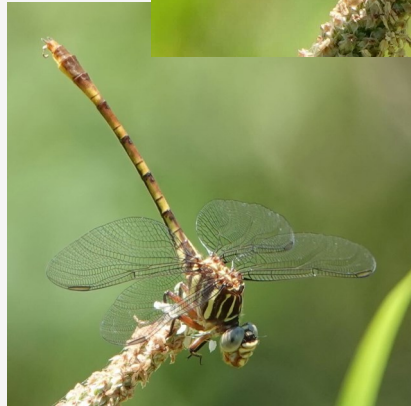
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Import pictures from your camera or phone onto a computer to see smaller, less obvious details on the larger screen. Crop and then post your pictures to iNaturalist, where there are many experts ready to assist. Look at the suggestions offered to see which species most resembles your photo. Lacking a camera, spend some time with a good field guide instead, carry it with you. Compare what you see in the field to the pictures and descriptions.

Pay special attention to attributes like eye color and placement, body conformation and color, and color patterns, especially on the thorax.



Broad-striped Forcetail (*Aphylla angustifolia*) photographed face, lateral, and dorsal views



Many species are sexually dimorphic (males and females are quite different) or change color as they age.

Consider habitat, place, behavior, calendar date, and time of day. Does it: Hang or perch? Prefer clear streams to treetops? Wait to ambush its prey or spend its time in the air? Is the season winter or summer? All of these pieces of information can suggest or rule out species or whole groups.

You're now ready to have some fun looking for (and at) Odonates. Check the [#proj-citizen-science](#) channel in Slack to see dates for the upcoming winter and summer Odolymphics when you can put your skills to use.

* * *

Recommended Field Guides and Websites, Resources:

- [OdonataCentral.org](https://www.odonatacentral.org/)
- [iNaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org/) | *Odonata of Texas, by species*
- [BugGuide.net](https://bugguide.net/)
- [Texas Dragons and Damsels \(private group, Facebook\)](#) ... Join it!

Dragonflies of Texas: A Field Guide, John C. Abbott, University of Texas Press, 2015

Damselflies of Texas: A Field Guide, John C. Abbott, University of Texas Press, 2011

Dragonflies and Damselflies of the West, Dennis Paulson, Princeton University Press, 2009

Spring Training — Registration is OPEN

Spring 2024 Training begins **March 2nd**. Join our volunteer corps and don't delay. With only 24 spots each spring (and fall) class, our classes fill up fast.

We serve Fort Bend, Waller, and Wharton Counties. Join us!

<https://txmn.org/coastal/become-a-texas-master-naturalist/>

Seabourne Creek Nature Park — New Energizers

By Randolph Watson, SCNP Co-Director



The weather has been unfriendly to our work efforts at the park to begin the year. Rainstorms followed by bitterly cold temperatures followed by more wet weather. This was Mother Nature's way of telling us to take it easy for a couple of weeks and prepare for another busy year.

One thing that we did accomplish in mid-January was identifying members to lead several of our upcoming projects. Lynn Trenta and I held a meeting of the Native Prairie Garden and Prairie Restoration teams to discuss our priorities in these areas, and several members stepped forward to work with us and help lead projects.

Below, I describe these and other efforts. I also introduce you to the members leading them, so you know who to look for when you come to the park for workdays.

Seeding in the Prairie

February is prime time for seeding and overseeding in the prairie patches. Late last year, the chapter purchased 50 lbs. of native grass and forb seeds, and several members collected more seeds from local area prairies (including SCNP). With growing season right around the corner, now is the time to put these seeds into the ground. (See the article titled "Overseeding: Prairie Restoration 101" on pages 10-11 in the *Courier's* [March 2023 issue](#).)

New Class Representative from Class of Fall 2023, Wanda Roof (photo, above) volunteered to lead our SCNP seeding efforts. She quickly became one of our Wednesday Workday regulars, tackling tasks

wherever she was needed. In this role, she will be responsible for more than just spreading seeds around. She will also coordinate activities for collecting and cleaning seeds as well as tracking where and when different seed types are dispersed and monitoring their success.

Improvements in the Houston Wilderness Area

The Houston Wilderness Area (HWA) is a patch of prairie that was set aside by the Chapter in 2019 to be native habitat for local and migratory pollinators as part of the Texas Monarch Flyway strategy. (See Lynn Trenta's article "What is HWA at Seabourne?"

on page 16 of *Courier's* [December 2023 issue](#) for more information about the HWA.) Last year, we extended the HWA, nearly doubling its size, and we have several projects to incorporate the new space into the existing one.

Shree Nath and Fran Wilcox (photo, below), both of the Class of Fall 2022, spent many hours last year in the HWA planting, seeding, battling dewberry, and removing invasive plants. They were eager to help the Chapter by coordinating different projects in this area. Their first effort

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Seabourne Creek Nature Park — New Energizers (Cont'd)

By Randolph Watson, SCNP Co-Director



Continued from [previous Page](#)

will be the installation of new pathways through the HWA. They will have numerous tasks to level the ground, prepare the ground, and put down mulch for the pathway. Other HWA projects that they will tackle include planting and seeding of pollinator-friendly forbs and installing a covered bench.

New Signage for the Native Plants Garden

Chapter members have put much effort into the Native Plants Garden through the years. The garden is a big draw for park visitors where they can learn about many species of native Texas plants and see them firsthand. The existing signage in the garden is a little worn and needs to be updated.

Immediate Past President Terri Hurley (photo, right) offered to coordinate the activities for creating new signage for the garden. Terri performed a similar function last year, overseeing a small team that created the Arboretum's new tree species signs and associated web pages.



Reorganization of the Nursery and Plant Bump-Up Area

Jo Cain (photo, right) volunteered to lead a project to organize things in the Nursery and bump-up areas. Jo, Class of Fall 2023 is still working with Lynn to define the project's scope, but some of the expected tasks include arranging the seedlings and young plants, labeling them, removing weeds from the pots, and general care for the plants in the Nursery. Jo's project team will also work with the infrastructure team, which plans to repair

damaged nursery tables and install new netting and sprinklers over several of the Nursery tables.



Tree Care in the Arboretum

The Chapter led several large projects in 2022 and 2023 to plant two hundred or so new trees in the Arboretum area north of Seabourne Lake. Some of these new trees have done well, but many others have struggled or died for various reasons. Kevin Peters (photo,

above) volunteered last fall to coordinate efforts to care for these trees and try to help them stabilize and thrive.

Kevin, Class of Spring 2023, is passionate about trees. In recent years, he spent much time volunteering to care for the trees in his community. He learned quite a bit from the different arborists with whom he consulted and worked. After studying the trees in the Arboretum, Kevin suggested tasks that might benefit the trees: adjusting tension on the staking wires; correcting the amount of soil around the tree bases; mulching; other detailing work on individual trees.



Reach out to any of these folks and see what assistance they may need.

The chapter is ever appreciative of everyone who fulfills our mission at Seabourne to restore the natural habitats and create a welcoming space for area residents, so all visitors can experience and learn about the important and disappearing coastal prairie ecosystem.

Promise of Spring

By Jean Stipelcovich, Class of 2018



Do you have a favorite

season? For the majority of my life, summer was my favorite season because the days were longer and that meant more time outside. But for the last several years, it's the overlapping end of winter and beginning of spring that is the most exciting and joyous for me.

Toward the end of winter, I look out over the astonishingly



beautiful monochromatic prairie colors of beige and browns and savor the quiet calmness of the season. At the same moment of appreciation for what is, I get a bubbling feeling of excited anticipation; the prairie browns are deceptive.

Just beneath the dormant grassland, hidden from view when looking at it from up high, thousands of tiny green grasses and wildflower rosettes are just on top of the soil, spreading their leaves. As the days grow longer and warmer, these new plants will

surge upwards and rise above. The landscape will turn green — seemingly overnight. And then blooming spring flowers will cast rainbows upon the land. The waves of color will change from day to day.

But until then, I like to walk through this end of winter

landscape and search for the new life below the golden browns. It was wet and dreary as I took a walkabout in the prairie in the latter part of January. As I rubber-booted around, I inspected and studied the ground. I saw many baby plants that



caused me to gush and babble out loud to Bert. "Oh look, there's some bluebonnets! And coreopsis! Here's some

wine cup! Here is a large patch of firewheel!"

I see the promise of spring gathering and preparing itself for its big unstoppable reveal that will blow our TMN hats off.

Whether you love winter or you're just trying to survive until your favorite season comes around again, I am pretty sure that you appreciate and celebrate the change of seasons as much as I do. As naturalists, we appreciate all the seasons.

No matter the season, *get outside!*

January 29th, Fort Bend County Judge K.P. George gets some friendly Master Naturalist outreach by President Susan Walther on the importance of snakes — the great majority of which are harmless to people and pets.

Several TMNCPC volunteers took shift turns at the all-day Open House for organizations sharing the AgriLife Complex off Band Road. (Photo credit: S. Westveer)

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



Wild About Nature: A Youth in Philanthropy Adventure

By Terri Hurley, TMNCPC Immediate Past President



The third annual Fort

Bend YIP ([Youth in Philanthropy](#))

Volunteer Day at Cullinan Park on January 13th was capably organized and led by our chapter, and it was a fantastic and fun day of community outreach. YIP, sponsored by the **George Ranch Foundation**, aims to provide community service and leadership opportunities for high school students. Fifteen chapter members hosted sixteen juniors and seniors, creating an all-day event centered around learning, lunch, and lending a hand. Everything successfully came together around the citizen science theme.

Our mission was clear: instill environmental stewardship in the younger generation and help make nature an absolute blast. We wanted these students not just to learn but to have so much fun that they would be eager to explore the outdoors again, perhaps become birders



Lynne Woods followed with her Native Texas Tree WOW, and then Mary Parkhouse and I led the students on a "tree experience," featuring a native tree hike and even some tree hugging! Contributions to the iNaturalist app poured in as the students documented some of the park's trees.



or native plant enthusiasts.

The day kicked off with a warm welcome from Beth Wolf, executive director of the **Cullinan Park Conservancy**, and me. Shannon Westveer then gave a helpful demonstration to the students on using iNaturalist which they had already downloaded to their phones.

As the provided lunch was served, Monica Taylor with **Wildlife Center of Texas** (and also TMNCPC Class of Fall 2023) showcased three ambassador animals which captivated the students. Monica and two assistants showed off a Harris' hawk, an American kestrel and a cozy, cuddly opossum. We all agreed that the Word of the Day was from Monica: plumicorn. Go ahead. *Look it up!*

Following lunch, Lucy Moyer delved into the avian world with our Bird WOW, and then she gave instructions on binocular use. The day wrapped up with ecotherapy hikes led by Tierra Ortiz-Rodriguez and bird hikes led by Shannon.

By day's end, these YIP students had gained a deeper appreciation for nature's beauty and diversity. It was a successful day of discovery, learning, and fostering a love for the environment in the next generation.

I would like to sincerely thank all our wonderful TMNCPC volunteers and partners who helped make this day a fun and successful event for us and the students.

Book Drive

If you have any nature books, especially ones for children, could you please donate to the Rippert Education Station at the Seabourne Butterfly Garden?

Bring them to either the March or April in-person chapter meetings or Slack or email Katie Sallean. *Thank you!*



Hodge Podge Decoupage

By Shannon Westveer, *Courier* Co-Editor



Over the winter break, **Pelin Ünal** (Class of Fall 2022) and Shannon Westveer lead a homeschool group and their parents on a nature hike at Seabourne. After catching and releasing some insects to observe up close, Pelin ends with a population game of “Oh Deer” with the students at the Native Plants Garden.

Every year, Texas A&M University Entomology Department opens up their insect collection for viewing by the public. TPWD’s Sam Kieschnick couldn’t attend, so he sent **Shannon Westveer**, **Susie Doe**, **Kerry Padilla**, and TMN Gulf Coast members Mary Spolyar and Katy Emde on a quest: *Ochteridae* — velvety shore bug.

Found them. What will the next hunt be?



Many Master Naturalists engage in Christmas Bird Counts each year in Texas.

During Waller County’s “Cypress Creek Bird Count” on January 1st, **Erik Wolf** served his 1,000th hour milestone with Deb McMullen and Scott and Shannon Westveer on Coastal Prairie Conservancy’s Indiangrass Preserve and other properties.

Harris Sparrow, seen on the fourth hike at the end of the day was the bird of the day. Birding with friends is where it’s at!



(Photo credit:
Erik Wolf)

YouTube Outreach Video

NEW! Houston Community College reporter Randall Williams catches TMNCPC volunteers serving at Houston Museum of Natural Science. This short production features member Katie Sallean (Class of 2012) and Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land’s Kavita Self.

[Great American Pastimes](#) | TMNs at HMNS

Be sure to follow us at [YOUTUBE](#)
[@TMNCoastal Prairie](#)



2024 Board Retreat Highlights

By Susan Walther, TMNCPC President



On January 13th, fifteen of the Coastal Prairie Chapter's board members met to plan how to best lead the chapter in 2024. Rodney and I were happy to share our property. The Executive Committee and other board members provided delicious food.

I have to say again what a wonderful group of people we have on the 2024 board! Every person is dedicated to working together to lead and serve the chapter. We ended the day knowing each other better and with some key takeaways.

Remember the Mission. As our chapter becomes ever larger, it is important to remember the Texas Master Naturalist Mission.

A reminder that all our Volunteer Service (VSP) activities should serve the mission, just as our New Class Training and Advanced



2024 Board of Directors, TMNCPC

Training (AT) should prepare us to serve. The [Chapter Management and Operations Protocols](#) (CMOP) has explanations and examples of VSP and AT opportunities, and those listed on our website calendar are pre-approved for credit hours. To inquire about receiving credit hours for another opportunity, please contact our VSP Director Jan Poscovsky or AT Director Lisa Sanders.

Explore, Engage, Grow – 20 Years Strong! This will be our theme throughout the year. We encourage every chapter member to **explore** new activities in new locations, to **engage** and make stronger personal connections both within and outside our chapter, and to **grow** as a person by opening yourself up to new learning opportunities and challenges.

The board will **explore** new ways to better serve our members and our communities. We will also explore ways to **engage** our

chapter members on a personal level. We will continue to **grow** our chapter with two training classes a year and — with help from mentors — help them to become active Texas Master Naturalists. Increasing the number of engaged Coastal Prairie Chapter members

enables us to make a greater positive impact on the natural areas in our communities.

As we celebrate **twenty years** since our chapter began in 2004, we will look back on our history and accomplishments over two decades. We will also look forward to continued growth and service to the Texas Master Naturalist Mission in the future!

Our chapter serves THREE counties. While our chapter is doing incredible work in **Fort Bend** County, we see the need to improve our membership and overall presence in **Waller** and **Wharton** counties. We recognize that this can't be done overnight. I thank Joyce Tipton for her willingness to form a team to explore ways to better serve our other counties; please contact her if you would like to help in this important endeavor.

Along with our board, I look forward to serving and volunteering with you in this 20th anniversary year of the Coastal Prairie Chapter!

The Mission

The Texas Master Naturalist Program's mission is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas.

Girl Scouts Ring in the New Year at Seabourne

By Jan Kolk, TMNCPC Membership Co-Director



How did you spend the first Saturday of 2024? Girl Scout Troop 129236 from Richmond spent the first Saturday of the New Year exploring Seabourne Creek Nature Park and learning about native plants. Nine girls with their leaders and a tag-along brother began in the Seabourne Butterfly Garden with a lesson on native plants and the effects of development on plants and pollinators.

Each chose two native plants to research and created a field guide. Next, it was off through the garden to find the native plants as they watched fritillary butterflies enjoying the nectar of what was still flowering.

A nature walk through the prairie introduced them to mima or 'pimple' mounds eliciting giggles at the term. The troop finished at the Native Plant Garden, to add more detail to their field guides. They learned how pollinators transfer pollen using cheese puffs and pipe cleaners as an activity. The day ended with a prairie stomp of native seed and packets of native seed heading home with each girl.

Nature and scouts outdoors is a great start to any new year!



Clockwise from top: Creating field guides; Which butterfly was that? Group shot; A nice lake break; Seedheads for the stomp
Photos credit: Tara Gordon



Got Scouts?

Contact our Volunteer Service Director to schedule an outing or merit badge exercise with your troop today. Master Naturalists are trained to keep youth engaged outdoors.

WOLF SPIDER MOMS CARRY THEIR HUNDREDS OF CHILDREN WITH THEM WHEREVER THEY GO.



zoodrawscomic.com

The Lighter Side

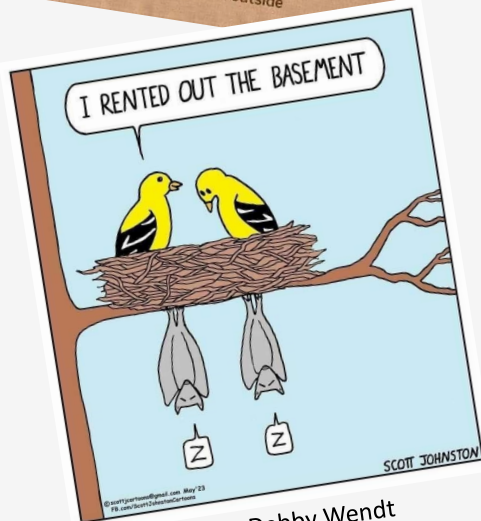
By TMNCPC Various Members



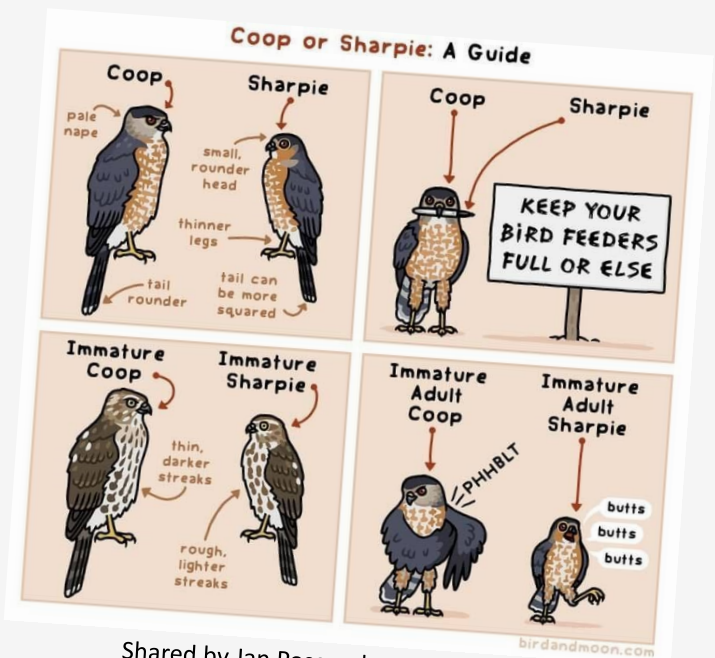
Shared by Lynn Trenta

Share Your Nature Fun

Post a comic to the Members Only Facebook, on **#random** on Slack or let the Co-Editors know in another way. We are a fun bunch who love to laugh while we learn.



Shared by Debby Wendt



Shared by Jan Poscovsky

Elected Officers

President	Susan Walther
Vice President	Joyce Tipton
Secretary	Kerry Padilla
Treasurer	Carrie Dolezal

Board of Directors

Past-President	Terri Hurley
Membership	Jan and Kevin Kolk
Programs	Jan Peterson
Communications	Tom Zaal
Volunteers	Jan Poscovsky
Adv. Training	Lisa Sanders
New Class Spring	Lauren DeShazo
New Class Rep.	Wanda Roof
Info. Tech.	Bert Stipelcovich
State Rep	Hoiman Low
Seabourne Creek	Jerry Trenta and Randolph Watson

TPWD / AgriLife Chapter Advisors

Prgm. Coordinator	Brandy Rader
Fort Bend Ag Agent	John Few

Not Getting Invites?



MEMBERS ONLY: Open SignUps are always listed on the last page of the Weekly Bulletin. Check here for more tips:

<https://txmn.org/coastal/sign-up-genius/>

Chapter Photos Repository



MEMBERS

ONLY:

SmugMug is
the new

home for chapter
photos, kept and
shared by membership.

Slack Tip — Looking for Something?

MEMBERS ONLY. Put keywords into the search box and filters to find photos, documents, sort by date, by channel, posted by individuals, and other parameters.



Facebook—Like us!



Follow [TMN Coastal Prairie Chapter Facebook](#) for timely and seasonally relevant content. Learn about Coastal Prairie and engage with your volunteer organization.

MEMBERS ONLY To join the [private Facebook Group](#), send a request and wait for TMNCPC Admin to respond.

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION



TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST™ COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER

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