

Coastal Prairie Chapter **Courier**

November 2024 — Volume 12 Issue 11



“Nature does not hurry, yet everything is accomplished.”

Laozi Tzu

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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

Spiderweb Taken at Seabourne
 Creek Nature Park
 Photo credit: Constance Rossiter

EDITOR TEAM

The November
 issue was crafted
 by
 Co-Editor, **Raji Mahesh**

Have a great story for the December
 issue? Submit by **November 22nd** to:

Shannon Westveer
Shannon@CoastalPrairie.org
Raji Mahesh
Raji@CoastalPrairie.org

Pam Jackson
Pam@coastalprairie.org



President's Message

by Susan Walther, TMNCPC President



Do you want to hone your observation skills and build a connection with the land? A great way to do this is to find a favorite location and visit it repeatedly, preferably throughout the year and in a variety of weather conditions.

Why? *Because it's never really the same place twice.* A local park, a trail, a pond... depending on the time of day and year you will notice a different set of plants, birds, insects, and animals each time. You will learn where to expect certain types of flora and fauna, and the conditions that make this the case, be it soil type, disturbance, weather, or other factors.

My own favorite reason to make repeat trips is to *build memories*; these go with me on each successive visit. For example, at Brazos Bend State Park my walks take me to the places where I once saw a deer swimming across Elm Lake... heard the male alligators bellowing in the fog on an early summer morning... came upon a mama alligator and her recently-hatched brood of tiny, chirping babies... watched a migrating muster of wood storks fly over while with my birding mentor... observed a great blue heron catch and devour a large siren right in front of me, my son, and his friend on a long-ago camping trip.

My husband and I are very fortunate to have a weekend property, which I love to walk and re-explore. I prefer the cooler months for this activity! I love to wander off-trail through the woods and find the places the deer bed down or find a shed antler. I've come upon a frog bouncing a snake behind it ribbon-like in a desperate attempt to reach the pond's edge (the snake kept its grasp and won), rare-to-us river otters catching fish in our pond, a pair of box turtles um... making the next generation of box turtles deep in the woods, a dung beetle frenetically pushing a deer pellet to its underground pantry. Over time I've come to learn how the different types of plants and trees react to hot summers, drought, and wet periods. Walking the land after a big rain has taught me the contours and soil conditions of the property by observing where the water runs, seeps in, or collects in ephemeral ponds soon to be filled with tadpoles and crawfish.

Continued [next page](#)

November Chapter Program: Thursday, November 7, 7 PM

Exploring the Green Gems of Rosenberg

Presented by Cary Lamensky

By Jan Peterson, TMNCPC Programs Director



Cary Lamensky has been a lifelong resident of Fort Bend County, spending 53 years living and volunteering in Rosenberg, where his roots run deep. Although he now resides in Beasley with Theresa, his wife of 35 years, Rosenberg remains close to his heart.

Growing up in Rosenberg, Cary would often ride his bike to local parks and play Little League, never imagining that one day he would work for the city he loved. His childhood was spent helping his grandparents on their farms, tending to animals, growing cotton, and cultivating large gardens—sparking his lifelong passion for gardening. This early love for horticulture led him to pursue formal education in the field. Cary attended Lamar High School and inspired by an FFA horticulture class, went on to earn an Associate's Degree in Applied Sciences of Horticulture and Floriculture from TSTC in Waco in 1987.

After graduation, Cary briefly worked at Quail Valley Country Club before embarking on a 30-year career with Fort Bend ISD. Following a short-lived retirement, he joined the City of Rosenberg's Parks Department, where he has been a dedicated leader ever since, apart from a



brief period with Fort Bend County's Parks and Recreation. In 2022, he was appointed Director of Rosenberg's Parks and Recreation Department, where his deep connection to the community and love for green spaces shines through. Outside of his professional life, Cary has a deep passion for music. For 30 years, he played in a band he started in high school, performing at various venues. Though he has since retired from performing, he continues to enjoy attending live concerts. Cary and Theresa are proud parents of two adult sons and grandparents to one granddaughter.

Coastal Prairie Chapter programs are free and open to the public. This program will be held in-person at the Rosenberg Civic Center, 3825 TX-36, Rosenberg, TX 77471.

Please plan to arrive at 6:00 PM for refreshments and social time. The program begins at 7:00 PM. The program will also be streamed LIVE and can be accessed via Zoom. Visit the [chapter program](#) page for the Zoom link.

The [Texas Master Naturalist](#) program is sponsored by [Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#) and [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#).

[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."]

President's Message
Continued from [previous page](#)

I encourage each of you to find one or more places to visit regularly. Get to know these places more deeply by seeing them at different hours, seasons, and conditions; make them yours and build your own set of "this is where I saw or heard this" memories to accompany you each time.

See you outside!

Membership Minute

By Jan and Kevin Kolk, TMNCPC Membership Co-Directors



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



Initial Certification

- Ericka Braun — 2024 Spring
- Karen Bueker — 2024 Fall
- Cindy Chapman — 2024 Fall
- Jo Ann Cosbey — 2024 Fall
- Vanessa Weidman — 2024 Fall

250 Hour Milestone

- Jo Cain — 2023 Fall



2024 Recertification



- Johanna DeYoung — 2019
- Jamie Fairchild — 2012
- Joanie Havlick — 2020 Fall
- Dawn Homan — 2022 Spring
- Gary Moore — 2010
- Lucy Randel — 2021 Spring
- Beth Ruzicka — 2024 Spring
- Scott Tufts — 2021 Fall

Nature Day

Autumn in the Arboretum

FREE EVENT!

Saturday, November 9, 2024 • 10am-2pm

Join us for a delightful day outdoors at the Arboretum!

Face painting • Tree-related crafts
Scavenger hunts • Tree Talk information booth

T E X A S Hosted by: Texas Master Naturalist™ • Coastal Prairie Chapter
www.coastalprairie.org • info@coastalprairie.org • 832-225-6936

2024 Putting Down Roots

Saturday, November 9, 2024 (9AM to 1PM)

Join the Coastal Prairie Conservancy for Putting Down Roots 2024 at the Indiangrass Preserve! Help us reach our goal of planting 1,500 native plants and 500 milkweed seedlings for our Monarch Butterfly Habitat Restoration Project.

New volunteers and participants of all ages are welcome to join this **FREE** event. CPC will provide a hot dog/veggie dog lunch, music, as well as snacks and water. You are welcome to bring your own food if you have dietary restrictions.

Planting will take place from 9 AM and 12 PM.
Enjoy fun activities until 1 PM!

- ▶ Family friendly educational activities include: birding station, pond dip-netting, prairie seed stomp, and native prairie hay spreading
- ▶ Native prairie planting

For more information and for registration visit: coastalprairieconservancy.org

FREE

Indiangrass Preserve
31975 Hebert Road
Waller, TX, 77484

Volunteer Service — November Highlights

By Jan Poscovsky, TMNCPC Volunteer Director



Prior to attending an event, check our website calendar for last minute changes, cancelations, or other information.

<https://txmn.org/coastal/events/month/2024-11/>

Signature Project Seabourne Creek Nature Park

(SCNP), Rosenberg: 8:00 AM – 10:30 AM

Wednesdays and 1st and 3rd Saturdays which fall on 11/2, 11/6, 11/13, 11/16, 11/20 and 11/27

Public Outreach Monthly Bird Hike at SCNP,

Rosenberg: 8:00 AM – 10:30 AM 1st

Wednesday of each month which falls on 11/6

Public Outreach Monthly Nature Walk Seabourne

Creek Nature Park, Rosenberg: 8:00 AM— 9:00 AM, 3rd Sunday which falls on 11/17

Public Outreach Monthly Plant Walk at Seabourne

Creek Nature Park, Rosenberg: 9:00 AM— 11:00 AM, on 11/7

Public Outreach Houston Museum of Natural Science

at Sugar Land: 10:30 AM — 3:30 PM, on 11/16 and 11/23 and Garden Workday, 3rd Thursday from 9:00 AM— 11:00 AM which falls on 11/21

Chapter Meeting and Board Meeting, via Zoom:

7:00 PM — 8:00 PM 3rd Wednesday which falls on 11/20

Coastal Prairie Conservancy Indiangrass Preserve,

Katy: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Tuesdays, Fridays, and 2nd Saturdays of each month which fall on 11/1, 11/5, 11/8, 11/9, 11/12, 11/15, 11/19, 11/22, 11/26 and 11/29

Harris County Precinct 4 Bird Survey @ Archbishop

Joseph A. Fiorenza Park, Houston: 7:30 AM – 12:00 PM 4th Monday which falls on 11/25

John Paul Landing Weekly Bird Hike: 7:30 AM –

11:00 AM on 11/7, 11/14, and 11/21

Willow Park Pollinator Garden Workday:

8:30 AM – 12:00 PM every Saturday which fall on 11/2, 11/9, 11/16, 11/23, and 11/30

Kolter Elementary Pollinator Garden

Workday: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, 2nd Saturday of each month which falls on 11/9

Bolivar Flats Beach Ramble: 10:00 AM –

12:00 PM, 1st Saturday of each month which falls on 11/2

HHSWC– Native Garden Winter Workday

Edison Middle School: Saturday, 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM on 11/2

Annual Planning Meeting for HMNS– SL

Outreach: 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM on 11/14

Private Open House and Tour of Long Acres

Ranch: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM on 11/14

Frontier Days at George Ranch: 9:00 AM –

5:00 PM on 11/16

Keep Fulshear Beautiful Trash Pickup &

Garden Replanting: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM, on 11/16

Lawther-Deer Park Prairie: 8:00 AM –

12:00 PM on 11/23

AgTivity Barn

By Debby Wendt, TMNCPC Class of 2014



The Texas Master Naturalist Coastal Prairie Chapter participated for the 19th year at the AgTivity Barn of the Fort Bend County Fair.

This year we exhibited the Bat WOW to over 1,140 4th graders and over 150 teachers and parents. They were excited to learn about bats, such as the fact that Texas is home to the world's largest bat colony at Bracken Cave near San Antonio. About 20 million bats live there from May through September. Most of the Mexican free-tailed bats migrate to Mexico around October to find the insects they devour in huge numbers. One bat can eat as much as 5,000 insects in a night.



Debby Wendt engaging with the public at the AgTivity Barn. Also seen TMNCPC members Jim Butcher and William Hannah. Photo credits: Debby Wendt



The members gave 15-minute presentations to six groups of 4th graders from 10-12 and another six groups from 12-2 Monday through Thursday. Debby Wendt was the lead for the AgTivity Barn this year.

Thank you to this year's volunteers Cindy Chapman, Jan and Stan Poscovsky, Nicole Bride, Ana Jaramillo, and Kerry Padilla.

Cindy Chapman and Nicole Bride helped multiple days. On Friday the Exceptional Rodeo children and Primrose School kindergartners visited the AgTivity barn. Bill Hannah, Ruth Smith, and Debby Wendt shared the Skins and

Skulls WOW with about 100 adults and 83 youth.

Wednesday night was Wildlife night at the AgTivity Barn from 6-8. Jim Butcher, Bill Hannah, and Debby Wendt showed the Skins and Skulls WOW to over 100 adults and over 50 children and parents.

It was a very successful outreach for our chapter. We look forward to serving again next year.



Thank you, Chris

A huge thank you to Chris Anastas —TMN Galveston Bay Area Chapter member and our August program presenter — for sharing her love of native plants with her sister chapter. Nearly a dozen mature tubers of rescued *Asclepias viridis* (green milkweed) came to Seabourne in Shannon Westveer's 4SOIL minivan. They are now snug in their new homes among several demo gardens. Now that's TMN cross-pollinating at its finest!

Shannon Westveer Recognized for 4,000 Hours of Service

By Bert Stipelcovich, TMNCPC IT Director



Dynamo [dī'nə-mō'] noun

An extremely energetic and forceful person. (From [The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, 5th Edition.](#))

Shannon Westveer is a multifaceted force of nature.

Mom, wife, teacher, doer, evangelist, cheerleader, promoter, encyclopedia, friend, citizen scientist, networker... and the list goes on. She exhibits boundless energy and zeal.

I first met Shannon just prior to the start of training for the new class of 2019. Back then our chapter offered only one class each year, which was held in the fall. Jean and I had volunteered to mentor her, and we invited her to our home in Sugar Land. We knew immediately that she was special and would make a great addition to our chapter. But we could not have realized how significant her impact would be.

Here is a list of Shannon's past and current roles in our chapter:

2019 – New class member; certified and re-certified

2020 – New Class Director (spring)

2021 – Vice President; New Class Director

2022 – Vice President; New Class Director (spring)

2023 – Courier Co-editor; YouTube creator/curator

2024 – New Class Director (fall); *Courier* Co-editor



Above: The prairie fairy and husband Scott Westveer attending to the needs of the pocket prairie at Buffalo Run Park.

Below: Soil evangelist presenting at the annual TMN conference. Photo credit: Ute Welk



Shannon brings passion and a fresh perspective to everything she does. A great example is when she took on the role of New Class Director. As the incoming chapter president for 2020, my primary objective was to dramatically increase our chapter membership as quickly as possible. At that time, we numbered about 100 members. Achieving the goal required that we begin offering two classes each year.



Shannon with the Houston Galveston "Moth Posse"
Photo credit: Shannon Westveer

At the new class graduation party on November 7, 2019, I asked Shannon if she would be our New Class Director. She would have little time to plan and organize an unprecedented spring class from scratch.

Undaunted by the challenge, she immediately said yes. More than one chapter member cautioned me privately that it was an impossible task. My reply was always, "Have you met Shannon?" The rest is history. And now we number over 230 active members — greatly expanding our positive impact.

In her spare time, she somehow manages to create pocket prairies, present to other organizations, mentor chapter members, and advise other chapters. And at the just completed 2024 TMN Annual Meeting in San Marcos, Shannon was recognized for completing over 4,000 hours of service. I could not be prouder of her.

Brazos Bend 28th Annual Butterfly Count

By Shannon Westveer, *TMNCPC Courier* Co-Editor



One of the best ways to determine the overall health of a habitat or ecosystem is to regularly survey the wildlife that use it. Every year, Brazos Bend State Park hosts a 15-mile count circle for the North American Butterfly Association (NABA). Sunday, October 6, 2024, was the 28th Annual BBSP Butterfly Count.

Eleven volunteers participated, splitting into seven count assignments. Past compiler and long-time BBSP-VOL, Chuck Duplant, shadowed Shannon Westveer, TMNCPC member, leading the count for the first time. Other TMNCPC members Jan Poscovsky (also a BBSP-VOL), Hoiman Low, Ute Welk, Jo Ann Cosbey, and Carmen Perez helped lead six trail assignments over 18 collective hours and 14.25 group-miles hiked.



Group selfie before hitting the trails
Photo credit: Shannon Westveer

(For a more detailed count summary, visit #partner-bbsp channel on Slack.)

In all, 41 species and nearly 1,900 individuals were counted – a great day. Several *Julia heliconian* butterflies arrived at the area behind the amphitheater being warmed by the rising sun. It had been ten

years since that the last one was counted; this group collectively saw eight for the day. It was absolutely the star of the show!

Next year's count is set for Sunday, October 5, 2025, being compiled again by Shannon Westveer. We hope you can join us as we chase and gawk at butterflies next year. It's not just science; it's fun!



Above: *Julia heliconian*, dorsal view
(Credit: Hoiman Low) Below: Great purple hairstreak (Credit: Ute Welk)



2024 Annual Meeting Awards Wrap Up

Follow the link below to view all TMNCPC members' contest submissions and service award recipients.

[2024 Annual Meeting Awards Wrap Up - Texas Master Naturalist Program](#)



Chapter Happenings

By Raji Mahesh, *TMNCPC Courier* Co-Editor



Above left: Cindy Chapman earned the Blue Donut for her help with the demo plot. Above right: Starla Lawhon earned one for spotting a ribbon snake!
Photo credits: Jim Butcher



Inktober is a month long art challenge. Amy Phan celebrates art and wildlife with this digital rendering of the purple martin.

The SCNP Archway Grasses Project had a "**Really Big Show**" with a major planting day on Oct 2nd. The Archway is abuzz with activity. As Lisa Sanders aptly puts it, "Yay!" Right — TMN members seen in the picture: Aki, Shannon Westveer, Kevin Peters, and Raul Orlando Garcia. Photo credits: Lisa Sanders









Above — pocket prairie at Seabourne Creek Nature Park. Photo credit: Constance Rossiter

Chapter Happenings (cont'd)

By Raji Mahesh, *TMNCPC Courier* Co-Editor



Most Observations		
	pufferchung	1,515
	jellyfishmambo	1,502
	madisonba13	1,292
	bosqueaaron	1,262
	grroschat	1,064
	sambiology	1,004

The Texas Pollinator Bioblitz ended October 27th. The final results are not in yet as more IDs will be rolling off people’s cameras. TMNCPC member Ute Welk — @grroschat on iNaturalist — is in 5th position at this time.



TMNCPC members James Yi, Constance Rossiter, Beth Ruzicka, Susan Brodmerkel, Jo Ann Cosbey, attend the Land & Legacies conference at George Ranch and visit the Nash Prairie .



The Native Plant Garden flourishing under the loving care of TMNs. Photo credit: Lynn Trenta



The insect walks led by Kerry Padilla are becoming increasingly popular and are drawing kids to the Seabourne Creek Nature Park. Photos credit: Cindy Peden Chapman



Chapter Happenings (cont'd)

By Raji Mahesh, TMNCPC Courier Co-Editor

Photography: Detail & Macro



1st Place
JOYCE TIPTON
Coastal Prairie
"Texture Pattern
Color"

Photography: Wildlife *Birds*



1st Place
JOYCE TIPTON
Coastal Prairie
"Native Plants
Feed Birds"

Photography: Wildlife *Reptiles and Amphibians*



2nd Place
ERIK WOLF
Coastal Prairie
"Ssssnake!"

Photography: Digitally Enhanced



2nd Place
JOYCE TIPTON
Coastal Prairie
"Azure Mantis"

Photography: Wildlife *Other*



2nd Place
JOYCE TIPTON
Coastal Prairie
"Pardon Me,
It's Just Bark"

Congratulations to our chapter members who did well in the photo contest at the annual TMN meeting.



Clockwise from top: Susan Walther and Shannon Westveer receiving awards recognizing their 4,000 hours of service; Randolph Watson, Bill Johnson for their 2,500 hours of service, and Bert Stipelcovich for his 5,000-hour-service. Congratulations!
Photos credit: Hoiman Low

Elected Officers

President [Susan Walther](#)
 Vice President [Joyce Tipton](#)
 Secretary [Kerry Padilla](#)
 Treasurer [Carrie Dolezal](#)

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 Volunteers [Jan Poscovsky](#)
 Adv. Training Lisa Sanders
 New Class Spring Lisa Sanders
 New Class Rep. Becky Jones
 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 TBD



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



TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST™ COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER

1402 Band Road
 Fort Bend AgriLife Extension Office
 Rosenberg, TX 77471-8678

Phone: (832) 225-6936

Visit Us On-line: www.CoastalPrairie.org

Email: Info@CoastalPrairie.org