

Coastal Prairie Chapter Courier

Volume 14 Issue 2 – February 2026

What birds can have
their bills more peculiarly
formed than the ibis, the
spoonbill, and the
heron?

*Alfred Russel Wallace
(1823-1913)*



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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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COVER PHOTO

A great blue heron in courtship display is captured by local Fulshear photographer Raymond Choo at sunset.

EDITOR TEAM

This issue was crafted by Co-Editor **Jo Ann Cosbey**. Have a great story for the March issue? Submit by **February 25th** to:

#**submissions-courier** on Slack or [Submissions-courier](#) @coastalprairie.org to reach everyone on the Editor Team.

<https://txmn.org/coastal/monthly-coastal-prairie-courier/>

President's Message: Keeping Our Mission at the Heart of Every Service Hour

Jan Poscovsky, TMNCPC President



As volunteers with the Texas Master Naturalist™ Program, we are united by a shared purpose: to provide education, outreach, and service that supports the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas across Texas. Much like growing deeper roots strengthens a plant, keeping our mission at the center of everything we do strengthens our chapter and ensures lasting impact in our communities.

One of the most important ways we honor that mission is by logging our volunteer hours. Every hour you report matters—not just as a personal record, but as a vital measure of our collective contribution. Our state and federal partners look to these hours as a key metric when considering funding and support. When we accurately report time spent in education, outreach, and service, we validate our work and ensure continued investment in the things we care about most.

Logged hours also provide meaningful insight into how we're performing as a chapter. They help us identify where we're excelling, and where we might have opportunities to grow deeper roots—whether that's through additional training, new service projects, or expanded outreach efforts. Simply put: your hours help tell our story.

There's also a tangible perk to keeping your hours up to date and recertifying each year. Annual recertification comes with a special pin that recognizes your commitment and service—and this year's pin features the **Texas Bobcat**, a fitting symbol of adaptability, resilience, and our connection to the wild places we work to protect. It's a small but meaningful reminder that every logged hour contributes to both personal achievement and our shared mission.

In addition to recording our service, we also want to see our impact in action. Please take photos whenever you're out in the field supporting chapter projects, engaging with the public, or working with partner organizations. These images help us celebrate what we do and share it with a

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February Chapter Program: Thursday, February 5 @ 7 PM
 “Creatures of the Aquifers”

Presented by Benjamin Schwartz, PhD
 Jan Peterson, TMNCPC Programs Director



Join us this month for a fascinating presentation on native Texas groundwater creatures you've probably never heard of—organisms that inhabit deep, dark aquifers beneath our feet.



Photo Credit: Benjamin Schwartz

Our presenter, **Benjamin Schwartz**, is a karst hydrogeologist who will share his enthusiasm for how karst aquifers form and function, along with insights into the remarkable biodiversity hidden within Texas' underground waters.

Benjamin (PhD in Geosciences from Virginia Tech) is the Director of the Edwards Aquifer Research and Data Center and a Professor in the Department of Biology at Texas State University. Current projects generally focus on studying the hydrogeology and ecology of subterranean ecosystems, with a focus on the karstic Edwards Aquifer and hyporheic zones (the interface between groundwater and surface water in streams) across Texas.

Our programs are always **FREE** and **open to the public**, held at the Rosenberg Civic Center, 3825 TX-36, Rosenberg, TX 77471. Thanks to the TMNCPC information technology team, programs are also **streamed LIVE remotely via Zoom**. The 1-hour program begins at 7:00 pm. The Texas Master Naturalist Program is sponsored by [Texas Parks and Wildlife Department](#) and [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service](#).

FREE CHAPTER PROGRAM
CREATURES OF THE AQUIFERS
Thursday, February 5, 2026 @ 7:00pm

“Creatures of the Aquifers: The Secret Life of Texas Groundwater” with Benjamin Schwartz, PhD

Director, Edwards Aquifer Research and Data Center
 Professor, Department of Biology at Texas State University

Located at Rosenberg Civic Center, 3825 TX-36, Rosenberg, TX 77471 or on Zoom

TEXAS
Master Naturalist™
 Coastal Prairie Chapter

Rosenberg
TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

[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.”]

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wider audience through our social media channels and newsletters. Visual storytelling connects people to our mission, inspires others to get involved, and highlights the meaningful difference our volunteers make across Texas.

When taking photos—especially at events where minors may be present—please be mindful of privacy and safety. Follow the guidance in the Texas Master Naturalist Best Practices for Photographing Minors at events (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension). <https://txmn.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Best-Practices-for-Photographing-Minors-at-Events-AgriLife.pdf>. This ensures that we protect participants and represent our chapter responsibly.

Thank you for all you do—and for continuing to grow deeper roots in service to Texas's natural resources and the communities we cherish. Let's keep our mission in mind in every hour logged and every story shared.

Membership Minute*Sari Garfinkle, TMNCPC Membership Director***Congratulations!** to our numerous certification and milestone achievers. Way to go!**Initial Certification**

Terry Garrett - 2025 Spring

Valerie Whiting - 2025 Spring

**2025 Recertification**

Kayleigh Minin - 2022 Fall

Lucy Randel - 2021 Spring

Chevvy Tang - 2022 Fall

**2026 Recertification**

Karen Bueker - 2024 Fall

Jo Ann Cosby - 2024 Fall

Pam Jackson - 2024 Spring

Diane Johnston - 2025 Spring

Jan Poscovsky - 2022 Fall

Constance Rossiter - 2024 Spring

Cindi Tanner - 2024 Spring

Randolph Watson - 2022 Fall

Shannon Westveer - 2019

**250 Hour Milestone**

Beth Ruzicka - 2024 Spring

**500 Hour Milestone**

Tom Specht - 2025 Spring

**1,000 Hour Milestone**

Sari Garfinkle - 2023 Fall

Linda Rude - 2012

**4,000 Hour Milestone**

Jan Poscovsky - 2022 Fall

New Chapter's Board Secretary

Please join us in welcoming **Jo Ann Cosby** as the Chapter's new Board Secretary. Jo Ann answered the call to serve last month when the position was vacated. Jo Ann was appointed by the President in accordance with the Chapter Bylaws (Section V.G). The appointment was ratified by the Board via a Slack vote.

Jo Ann has volunteered in a variety of roles within the Chapter and has consistently done a terrific job. The Chapter is grateful for her willingness to step into this position and looks forward to her continued contributions as we grow deeper roots together.



2026 Recertification Pin - Bobcat

Volunteer Service — February Highlights

Becky Jones, TMNCPC Volunteer Director



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

[February 2026 TeamUp Calendar](#)

Signature Project Seabourne Creek Nature Park (SCNP), Rosenberg:

Rosenberg: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Wednesdays and 1st and 3rd Saturdays each month

Signature Project Monthly Bird Hike at SCNP,

Rosenberg: 8:00 AM - 10:30 AM 1st Wednesday of the month

Public Outreach Nature Walk at SCNP, Rosenberg:

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM 3rd Sunday of the month

Public Outreach Insect Hike at SCNP, Rosenberg:

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM 4th Thursday of the month

Public Outreach Houston Museum of Natural Science at Sugar Land:

Sugar Land: 10:30 AM - 3:30 PM 2nd and 4th Saturdays; **Garden Workday** 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM 3rd Thursday of the month (SignUp Genius required)

Board Meeting, via Zoom:

7:00 PM - 9:00 PM 3rd Wednesday of the month (see #announcements channel on Slack for Zoom JOIN link)

Attwater Prairie-Chicken National

Wildlife Refuge, Eagle Lake: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM every Friday

Coastal Prairie Conservancy Indiangrass Preserve, Katy:

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Tuesdays, Fridays, and 2nd Saturdays of each month

Willow Fork Pollinator Garden Workday, Katy:

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM every Saturday

Lawther-Deer Park Prairie Workday, Deer Park:

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM 4th Saturday of the month

John Paul Landing Weekly Bird Hike, Houston:

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM every Thursday

Harris County Precinct 4 Bird Survey Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza Park, Houston:

7:30 AM - 12:00 PM 4th Monday of the month

9 Natives Showcase Garden Workday, Houston:

9:00 AM - 11:30 AM 2nd Monday of the month

Willow Waterhole Bird Survey, Houston:

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM 3rd Saturday of the month

Bolivar Flats Ramble, Port Bolivar:

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM 1st Saturday of the month

Entergy Natives Nursery Workday, High Island:

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM 2nd Friday of the month

Long Acres Youth Wildlife Challenge, Long Point Ranch:

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Wed Feb 25

JB Harrison Bur Bird Survey, Wharton:

7:00 AM - 11:30 AM Sat Feb 28

VSP: Great Backyard Bird Count February 13th - 16th

This is a great opportunity for birders to get VSP hours! You can count birds in your own backyards or elsewhere in Fort Bend, Waller, Wharton counties or anywhere in Texas to create a real-time snapshot of where birds are. Here's a short video describing the event <https://www.birdcount.org/>

How to Participate:

Participating is easy, fun to do alone or with others, and **can be done anywhere** you find birds.

Step 1: Decide where you will watch birds.

Step 2: Watch birds for **15 minutes or more, at least once over the four days**, February 13–16, 2026.

Step 3: Identify all the birds you **see or hear** within your planned time/location and use the best tool for sharing your bird sightings:

If you are a **beginning bird admirer** and new to bird identification, try using the [Merlin Bird ID app](#) to tell us what birds you are seeing or hearing.

If you have **participated** in the count **before** and want to record **numbers of birds**, try the [eBird Mobile app](#) or enter your bird list on the [eBird website](#) (desktop/laptop).

Susan Walther Achieved 5,000 Hour Service Milestone

Bert Stipelcovich - TMNCPC Class 2018



Question: What do you get when you combine dedication, hard work, creativity, caring, enthusiasm, attention to detail, vision, a strong moral compass, compassion, love of nature, grace under pressure, and intelligent leadership?

Answer: Susan Walther.

I've known Susan since I became a Master Naturalist in 2018. She served as Secretary in my second presidential term in 2021. I consider her a trusted confidant and good friend.

When asked by the Courier team to write an article about Susan to celebrate her achieving the 5,000-hour service milestone, I answered immediately: of course. It is my honor to highlight some of her many accomplishments and to share my observations of a truly remarkable person.

Some of Susan's leadership positions include, in chronological order:

- 2021 – Secretary & Weekly Bulletin
- 2022 – Secretary
- 2023 – Vice President
- 2024 – 2025 President
- 2026 – Immediate Past President

Our chapter has had twelve presidents to date. Our esteemed fourth president, James Butcher — also known as the Grand Poobah — had the following observation. "Susan is always professional, enthusiastic, and supportive. She is truly one of the best presidents we have had." And the Poobah presented Susan with the Blue Donut award in

December of last year. That's high praise from a chapter legend.



TMN Annual Meeting 2021 attendees (upper left to lower left) Susie Doe, Margo Johnson, Bill Johnson, Drea Morgenstern, Mark Morgenstern, Jamie Fairchild, Shannon Westveer, Susan Walther, and Bert Stipelcovich, (Mary Warwick Marilyn Culpepper not pictured).

Speaking from experience, the role of chapter president is challenging in many ways. Done correctly, it requires many hours of behind-the-scenes work — planning, coordinating, encouraging, interacting with the state and other chapters, ensuring compliance with regulations, growing the chapter, meeting with partners, leading chapter meetings, and more. Susan excelled in all areas with a quiet resolve and unflinching determination.

An example of her being supportive occurred in January 2019. When I created our Slack workspace, Susan was one of the first chapter members to join

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Susan Walther Achieves the 5,000 Hour Service Milestone (Cont'd)

Bert Stipelcovich - TMNCPC Class 2018



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and encouraged me to continue it. She seemed to immediately understand the platform's value.

On a personal level, Susan and her husband, Rodney, have become good friends outside of the chapter. They have hosted Jean and me at their beautiful property in Columbus and shared the joy they experience caring for the wildlife and native flora. They exemplify what it means to be Master Naturalists.

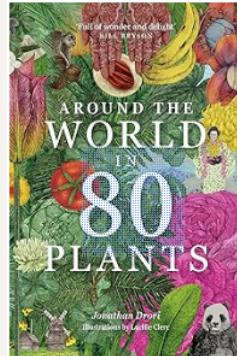
Congratulations, Susan. Well deserved!



Photo by Bert Stipelcovich

Book Review - Around the World in 80 Plants

Jim Butcher - TMNCPC Class 2008



Hello Nature lovers and fellow amateur botanists, I have the pleasure of introducing you to this newly published 210-page book. It is available at the George Memorial Library listed as 581.7 DRO 2021. Dame Judi Dench writes that "It's full of surprises - about plants, and people, too."

After spending over a decade learning about the incredible variety of Coastal Prairie species, I decided to broaden my horizons and take on the world. As expected, this work lays out 80 of the most influential plants divided by geography. Each plant is accompanied by a beautiful color illustration and a bit of history, along with some verbiage describing uses and characteristics. I learned an incredible amount of fascinating information in this book.

Some of the "gee whiz" facts I read about were the "machinery" plants have developed to sense the direction of gravity. Special cells contain microscopic grains of starch called statoliths, which are constantly jiggled to ensure they always settle at the bottom. These cells effectively tell the plant which direction is properly vertical. The western Australian Christmas tree features roots that grow out horizontally up to 330 feet till they encounter another plant worthy of hijacking. Marine phytoplankton absorbs as much carbon dioxide and gives off as much oxygen as all of the world's trees and land plants combined. Finally, licorice contains glycyrrhizin, a substance that is 50 to 100 times sweeter than sugar.

Come along on this journey and learn much more about the fascinating plants that sustain us.

The Blog is Back

For 2026, content (including the Courier) will be posted every couple weeks.

<https://txmn.coastal->



org/coastal-prairie-blogs/

Getting to Know Our Seabourne Creek Nature Park Prairie Plants - VIII

A Few of the “Earliest to Bloom”

Susie Doe, TMNCPC Class of 2008



It's always difficult to decide which plant species to discuss in these articles -- so many worthy possibilities. This month I have willy-nilly just picked the following 3 species as they are among our earliest bloomers at Seabourne and can be seen from February into early March.

Galium aparine. This member of Rubiaceae (Madder Family) goes by many common names: catchweed



Galium aparine comparison of young plant to older plant, stem bristles | Photos: Susie Doe

the whorls will sport 6 leaves, typical for the species. As it ages it elongates and branches profusely into a billowing 1-foot-tall mass of foliage. In February through March, it produces small, inconspicuous 4-petaled white flowers.



Galium aparine Flower and fruits | Photo: Sam Kieschnick, iNat obs #152561792

bedstraw, goosegrass, cleavers, and – my favorite – sticky Willy. These names rightly evoke the idea of a plant capable of attaching itself to things. Stems and foliage as well as fruits bear barbed bristles that act like Velcro. In December through February, *G. aparine*, an annual, germinates as a small plant with whorls of 4 leaves at each node. As it grows, *Houstonia* sp. Two more members of Rubiaceae, which are all characterized by having 4-petaled flowers, are winter annuals blooming in early spring. *Houstonia pusilla* and *Houstonia rosea* are very small delicate plants; as such they grow where there is little competition. Growing earlier than other species and in disturbed areas gives them a fighting chance.

H. rosea (rose bluet) is quite inconspicuous due to its size (< 3 cm) and sparse growth habit,

wonderful dispersal mechanism for its seeds! Note that there are two additional *Galium* species found at Seabourne: *G. tinctorium* and *G. obtusum*. Both are much smaller, more delicate plants that have smooth stems and glabrous fruits (no hooked hairs).

While the leaves and stems can be cooked as a leafy vegetable, and the fruits can be dried & roasted for use as a coffee substitute. Poultices and washes can be used to treat skin ailments, bites and stings. Roots (like most in the madder family) produce a red dye. Geese apparently consume it, hence the common name, goosegrass. As the common name bedstraw implies, it was used by pioneers as mattress stuffing, much like its cousin, *G. verum*, was used in the Old World. Spittlebugs use it, I presume, because the bristles help keep their spittle in place.



***Houstonia* sp.** Two more members of Rubiaceae, which are all characterized by

having 4-petaled flowers, are winter annuals blooming in early spring. *Houstonia*

pusilla Plant in bloom, blue-violet flower | Photo: Shannon Westveer

pusilla and *Houstonia rosea* are very small delicate plants; as such they grow where there is little competition. Growing earlier than other species and in disturbed areas gives them a fighting chance.

H. rosea (rose bluet) is quite inconspicuous due to its size (< 3 cm) and sparse growth habit, while *H. pusilla* (tiny bluet) makes itself seen by being slightly taller (3-4 inches) and growing in large colonies with a tufted habit, often



Houstonia pusilla Blue-violet flower | Photo: by Susie Doe

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Getting to Know Our Seabourne Creek Nature Park Prairie Plants – VIII

A Few of the “Earliest to Bloom” (Cont’d)

Susie Doe, TMNCPC Class of 2008



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blanketing small areas with a visual blue haze. *H. rosea* flowers are rosy-pink, while those of *H. pusilla* are bluish to blue-violet in color.



Houstonia rosea Rosy flower; small plant | Photos by Kerry Padilla

Note that the genus *Houstonia* was once considered to be part of the genus *Hedynotis*, so you may find it under that name in older texts. These species are important early

nectar sources for small bees and flies.

***Lamium amplexicaule*.** This non-native species, like many other non-natives, gets a leg up on our later blooming natives by growing and blooming in disturbed habitats left open for the taking. It grows to be about 1-1.5 feet tall – its leaves are cordate and crenate; the lower leaves are petiolate, while the upper leaves are sessile and clasping as its species epithet implies. As is typical for members of the Lamiaceae

(the Mint Family), it has square stems and bilaterally symmetric flowers. The pale pink to dark purplish flowers are bilabiate meaning that the upper two petals are fused together into a bonnet-like shape and three petals are fused together into a 3-



L. amplexicaule blooming plant | Photo: Susie Doe Flower Structure | Photo by @mcwildlife Leaves | Photo: Susie Doe

part lower ‘lip’. In this species the middle of the 3 lower petals is larger and has two lobes as well. In the northern climes of its native Old World range, when it is cold and few insects abound it is capable of self-fertilizing; this ability probably has helped it become established all around the world as well as the fact that it is visited by honeybees, which aid in fertilization as well. Seeds are often eaten by birds, and the leaves can be used in salads and as an herb in cooking.

What Your Favorite Migratory Warbler Says About You



Northern Waterthrush

No matter how nice your outfit is, your boots are always covered in mud.



Yellow Warbler

You're a source of joy and light. Everyone is terrified to cross you.



Wilson's Warbler

You like anyone who is wearing a tiny hat.



Painted Redstart

Your personal style is beguiling to your lovers and terrifying to your prey.



Cerulean Warbler

You got good looks at a Cerulean Warbler one time and you won't ever let anyone forget it.



Orange-crowned Warbler

You're too cool for the rest of us and you know it.



Black-throated Blue Warbler

You're the helpful friend who always has a clean tissue in your pocket.



Black-and-white Warbler

You enjoy parties but you often get shy and duck behind furniture.



Blackburnian Warbler

You like scented candles because they're a socially acceptable way to set small fires.



Mourning Warbler

You were emotionally overwhelmed by the return of MCR.



Blue-winged Warbler

All you want to do is talk, loudly and often, about bees.



Whatever Warbler You're Looking At

You are correct.

The Search for the Streak-backed Oriole

Erik Wolf - TMNCPC Class of 2017



There are few things that cause a bigger ripple in the birding world than a rare bird sighting. It doesn't take long for the word to spread through E-bird alerts, WhatsApp groups, Discord, text and emails. Photos start to flood social media. Whether it's the red-footed booby in Corpus Christi, the pyrrhuloxia in Archbishop Fiorenza Park, or the streak-backed oriole at Woodland Park, word spreads and people show up.

Some are listers looking to add a new bird to their list. Others may be nature lovers who may just want to see a new bird, no list needed. Some are hoping to score the photo of a lifetime. For me, it's a mix of all that, but there is more.

I grew up sifting through my granddad's loose change, looking for odd coins. If I found one, I didn't recognize, it would be my focus for the next week. I would ask my neighbors, my parents' friends, my teacher, or the cashier at the grocery store if they knew anything about the mystery in my hand. My quest for answers usually led me to the Dewey decimal system at the Deer Park Public Library. It was a similar process with stamps, hundreds of stamps. Beautiful pieces of miniature artwork all around us, in plain sight, going unnoticed by a majority of the people. The thrill of the hunt, the research, the anticipation!

The internet has robbed us of some of those adventures. If I want a coin from a far-off land, I can just order it online. No hunt, no research, and if I click the tracking link, there is no anticipation. I

didn't have to go anywhere or talk to anyone. The adventure never even started.

For me, birding fills some of that loss. However, I don't use apps or emails to notify me of a rare bird. I have something better. I get a personal invitation. Deb told me she was going to see a rare oriole on Saturday, and wanted to know if I was interested.

There was a heated online debate on which oriole it was, and at the current consensus was a streak-backed oriole. I had never heard of a streak-backed oriole because, well, it's not supposed to be here. It resides in northwest Mexico and South America.



We were successful in photographing the red-vented bulbul, but were only able to get looks at the oriole. Photo by Debbie McMullen

We left the house at 7:30 am and headed towards Woodland Park. I had researched a breakfast spot two miles from the park that boasts a 4.8 star rating. We had a quick breakfast at a bougie little spot called the Botanic Coffee Garden, as Deb and I debated whether we

had been to the park before. As soon as we turned in, we realized we had. It's a small park with basketball courts and a trail that runs along White Oak Bayou. We came out once to help with a red-vented bulbul survey. As we were gathering our gear, a Subaru pulled up and a lady got out with a camera. You don't have to spend much time outdoors to know Subaru + Camera = Birder. The lady said we looked familiar and asked if we met at Lake Somerville looking for the yellow-green vireo. We had back in 2023. Deb asked her if she birds Sabine Woods. She did. Amy's claim to fame is that she has the earliest sighting of a mourning warbler at Sabine Woods with photos! Her sighting really got the Golden Triangle Audubon

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The Search for the Streak-backed Oriole (Con't)

Erik Wolf - TMNCPC Class of 2017

Continued from [previous page](#)

riled up. The three of us headed to the trail, where we came across a group of 6 or 7 people with binoculars who told us they had just seen the hybrid oriole further down the trail, along with 4 bulbuls. Amy needed bulbuls for her life list. I noticed the other birders said hybrid oriole and not streak-backed oriole. We got on the bulbuls rather quickly and were on high alert for the oriole. We passed another set of birders who said the hybrid oriole was still further down the trail. I hadn't seen Amy in a while, and when I turned around Deb was gone too. There it was again, hybrid oriole. I continued down the trail and found Amy and Deb standing on some wooden steps looking up. There it was, the oriole. He was hanging out with a summer tanager and another bird we couldn't ID. As we all called out field marks we were seeing, Deb asked if it could be a western tanager. That's it! Another rare bird!

From the time that Deb saw the alert and discussions online to the time we laid eyes on the bird, a decision had been made. It wasn't a streaked-back oriole after all. It was a Bullock's X Baltimore oriole (hybrid). We spent some more time birding, and then headed back to the car. We ran into Kevin and Jan Kolk in the parking lot. They had been in the area and just stopped by to do some birding, unaware of the oriole. We turned around and took them to the spot. It didn't take long to get them on the oriole and both tanagers. Jan said it may be her first time starting an E-bird list with 2 rare birds. Man, this bird guiding stuff is easy!

We went to the park to see a rare oriole, and we saw one, but like I said, it's more than that. I spent the morning on an adventure with my girlfriend. We ran into friends. We got to visit and look at birds. We helped another birder get a life bird. We found and identified our own rare bird, we met and spoke with a dozen people. I photographed some new plants to research later, and we tried a new restaurant in the area. You never know what the day is going to bring. Rare bird or no rare bird, there are worse ways to spend a Saturday morning.



Photo by Kerry Padilla

Happy CBC New Year

Starting the year engaging with nature and natural resources is what TMNs do! TMNCPC members Erik Wolf, Deb McMullen, and Kerry Padilla joined Shannon Westveer at Katy Prairie's Indiangrass Preserve for the Cypress Creek Christmas Bird Count before daybreak January 1. They observed 57 species including 3 different owls, thousands of snow geese and sandhill cranes, and Kerry unexpectedly observed a young Swainson's hawk posing on a post late in the day — a 1st time species for the count. A joyful way to ring in the New Year is with friends and birds.



Photo by Shannon Westveer



Photo by Shannon Westveer

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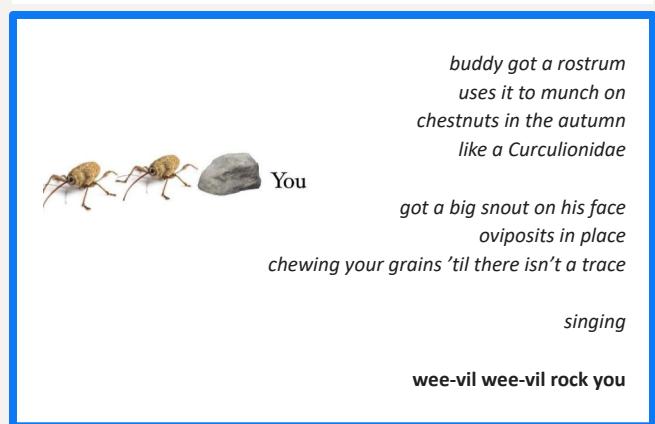
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The Lighter Side

A FUNNY By Lisa Sanders and Nelson Gonzalez

**TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST™
COASTAL PRAIRIE CHAPTER**

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