

September 2019

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Frank Keeney– webmaster

Cross Timbers Master Naturalist Newsletter

President's Pen — Bill Collins

Snow-on-the-mountain is in bloom. All is right with the world. Every August, I anticipate the blooming of snow-on-the-mountain (*Euphorbia bicolor*) because I know that means that fall is nearing, and with it cooler weather and some much needed moisture. On the 20th of August we had our first class for the CTMN class of 2019, another reason to know that fall is nearing. The cycles are indeed wonderful. So far this has been a very active new class. They have logged lots of volunteer time and have attended several CTMN monthly meetings. If you see new faces at the next meeting introduce yourself and welcome them aboard.

Speaking of cycles, our treasurer Lani Akers is moving on and leaving an opportunity for someone to fill her space on the CTMN board. If you are interested, contact me or one of the board members for more information.

A special thanks to Melinda Pajak and Frank Keeney for getting all the new class members information for VMS, collecting their money, and making sure all of them got all the information they needed to enroll.

Almost every morning, I walk around our property just to see what is going on. Found a water leak, while not pleasant, a frog also found the water leak, and a rat snake found the frog. Neat stuff to witness. Also noticed what seems to be an increase in the number of Texas Spiny lizards. They are indeed beautiful to witness. Also, lots of moths, butterflies, and the usual birds with an occasional bluebird at the birdbath. Lots of antlions in the carport. Fun to watch their activities. They seem to be keeping the ants under control in that part of the yard. See very few of the adult antlions.

Keep observing and stay cool.

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Page 2 **Plant of the Month– Flame Acanthus : Josephine Keeney**

Flame Acanthus, Hummingbird Bush, *Anisacanthus quadrifidus* var. *wrightii* Acanthaceae (Acanthus Family)

This is the plant for you if you are looking for a beautiful plant that can take the Texas heat and survive with very little water and care. I have never seen it bothered by insects or disease in the fifteen years that I have been growing native plants, that really means a lot, and it is something that can hardly be said about other hardy plants.

This shrub is deciduous, and has light colored brittle wood. It is cold hardy in the DFW area and likes to wait for the weather to warm up before putting on new growth in the spring. The new stems are square and the leaves are small and light green, growing opposite to each other with no serration on the edges. The bloom period is from June to frost in this area of North Central Texas.

Flame Acanthus can be pruned or sheared to suit your desired size or shape; it bounces back quickly and rewards you with many bright tubular orange-red blooms that attract attention from far away. But, if all these virtues weren't enough, the bright tubular flowers attract all the hummers and butterflies in the neighborhood, making it a delight to watch. It also happens to be a host plant for the Crimson Patch, Texan Crescent and Cyna Blue butterflies.

Considering all these good points: Flame Acanthus should have a very special place in the yard and especially in the butterfly garden.



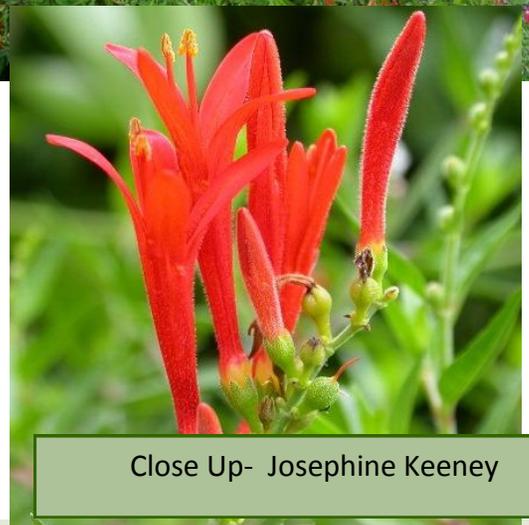
Texas Crescent- Josephine



Shrub- Josephine Keeney



Charly Hummer- Josephine Keeney



Close Up- Josephine Keeney

Texas Propositions to Vote For on November 5, 2019

This year there are a couple of propositions that are related to the environment that you may want to look into. I was introduced to these propositions at the Sierra Club meeting on August 22, 2019 via a flier and an announcement, and then I confirmed the information.

Proposition 2 "would allow the Texas Water Development Board to issue obligation bonds for the Economically Distressed Areas Program (EDAP). The bonds would be used to develop water supply and sewer projects in economically depressed areas." More information can be found [here](#) or [here](#) .

Proposition 5 "requires the legislature to use the Supporting Goods Sales Tax for what it was originally intended. This is not a tax, but the revenues from the sales tax has not always gone to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the Texas Historical Commission (THC) as it should have been. This revenue would help TPWD improve and manage state and local parks and historic sites, and to acquire new sites. ... This proposition will close a loophole in the current law that prevents all revenue raised by these sales taxes from being given to TPWD and the THC." More information can be found [here](#) or [here](#).

Proposition 8 "creates the Flood Infrastructure Fund (FIF) as a special fund account outside of general revenue. The money (which is a one-time infusion from the "Rainy Day" fund) would be used for flood control planning, and to establish and maintain flood control structures and drainage infrastructures throughout the state. Both "Structural" and "non-structural" nature-based flood control projects would be eligible for funding." More information on this proposition can be found [here](#) or [here](#).



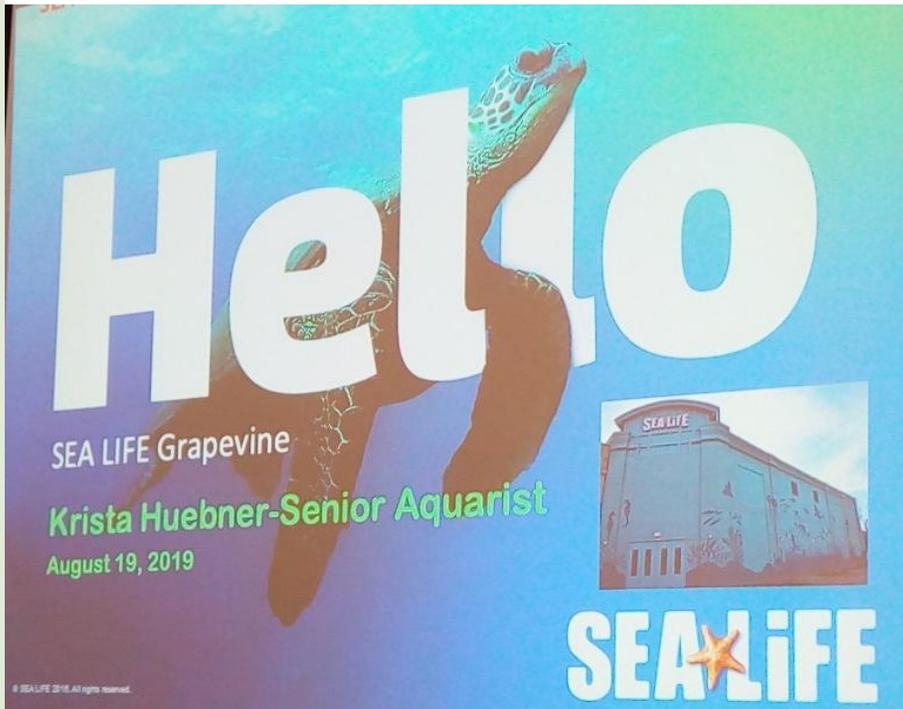
Pepper Spray the Striped Skunk Sierra Club Meeting– Carrie

Percy the Turkey Sierra Club Meeting– Carrie



On August 19 we came together once again for our monthly chapter meeting at the botanical gardens. This month , Krista Huebner, a senior aquarist from SEA LIFE Grapevine, shared her passion for sea turtles with us. Krista informed he group of SEA LIFE’s conservation efforts with the turtles and other species . At their aquarium they have a special interactive area for the people who visit the turtles, an experience that should be fun for the whole family. They also have a turtle rescue hospital, the only inland sea turtle hospital in Texas.. At the hospital they rehabilitate turtles until they are ready to go back into the ocean.

If you would like to visit SEA LIFE aquarium, prices range from free for under 3, to \$14.99 for children 3-12 (online price), or \$17.99 for adults 13 and over.(online price). At the aquarium there are 250 species of sharks, rays, fish, turtles, and more, so everyone should be able to find a favorite here.



Meeting Date: September 16th

Presentation Topic: Monarch Migration

Presenter: Gail Manning, Entomologist at Fort Worth Botanic Garden

Most Texas Master Naturalists are aware of the multi-generational, migratory cycle of the monarch butterfly and of the important role that Texas plays in preserving this declining species. But the deep dive into monarch biology that Gail Manning provides is likely to expand your knowledge of this iconic insect.

Other topics Gail will discuss include:

- *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* (OE), a protozoan parasite that infects monarchs, and the association between OE and tropical milkweed
- The Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site within the oyamel fir forests in the mountains of central Mexico, where monarch butterflies overwinter
- Monarch butterfly migration patterns throughout the U.S.
- Citizen science and other volunteer opportunities related to monarch butterfly preservation.



Monarch Larva-Kerry Newberry

Gail Manning with Monarch Butterfly



1. Tell us about your background.

I am a chemistry teacher currently at Bill R. Johnson CTE Center in Crowley. I have taught all levels of chemistry (AP, Pre-AP, and Regular), as well as forensic science classes. I have a BS degree from Baylor University in forensic science, and a MS degree from the University of North Texas in chemistry education. I am looking at going back to school to get my PhD in forestry science or environmental science.

I currently live in Burleson, but I have lived in Waco, Denton, Carrollton, and The Colony, so I am a North Texas gal.

I like to hike and camp, as nature is my happy place; being out in the middle of the woods away from everyone soothes my soul. I love to travel to exotic places and learn the culture of whatever place I visit. I am an avid reader, I love to paint/ draw, I enjoy writing, and I play Magic the Gathering and Dungeons and Dragons (my two nerdy obsessions).

2. When did you finish TMN classes?

I finished most of my TMN classes in 2018, I still have to go on my prairie field trip this October to be officially finished and graduated.

3. What is your passion, as a Master Naturalist? Do you have more than one passion?

I love to learn! I am a firm believer that when we stop learning as a species, we are done as a species. So I am constantly taking classes on gardens, bee keeping, mammals, reptiles, and trees as that is where I want to take my Master Naturalist career to. I also enjoy watching documentaries on epidemiology (spread of diseases) and zoonotic diseases (a disease that jump into the human population from animals). I do like birds and insects, but for some reason my eyes have a hard time finding them in nature, so I will have to stick to book learning for these two topics.

4. How & where do you get your 40 volunteer hours each year?

I am still looking for my volunteer project. I know I want to work with mammals or reptiles as those are where my interests lies. I am taking classes with the Urban Forestry Council and the Native Landscape Certification Program to become certified in both as I do like to plan out gardens, I'm still working on not killing the gardens once I get them in. Most of my volunteer hours at the moment come from creating and editing the newsletter and working with the CTMN board. I will be working with Melinda, Hestor, and Beverly to create a Jr. Master Naturalist Program for the children in our area.

5. Is there a website you like to visit?

Google, I spend most of my time on Google with work (docs, sites, drive, pictures) and I like the wide range on news articles I can get to from Google.

6. What do you like most about being the Newsletter Editor?

I love that being the newsletter editor gets me interacting with other members I may have never met before.



Our Members Volunteering and Volunteer Opportunities



Jane Oosterhuis and Josephine Keeney with Zexmenia, Horsemint, Flame Acanthus and Sunflowers. At OSGray Natural Area one of the gardens to take care of.

Sept 28th, 5-9:30pm

Kimberlie's Birthday



BioBlitz



Overton Ridge Park
821 Weybridge Ln, Keller

kimberlietx@gmail.com



Volunteer Highlight: Monarch Tagging at FWBG– Kerry Newberry

Monarchs are beginning to arrive in our area! Report your first sighting of a monarch to Journey North at journeynorth.org.

When:

Saturday, October 5th. There are 2.5-hour shifts, one morning and one afternoon. Gail Manning will provide details for start times when you sign up to volunteer.

Where:

In “The Grove” at Fort Worth Botanic Garden (FWBG), 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd, Fort Worth, TX 76107. FWBG map is available at <http://www.fwb.org/botanic-garden-map>, but Gail Manning will clarify where to meet when you sign up to volunteer.

What:

- Tagging and releasing monarch butterflies
- Testing butterflies for *Ophryocystis elektroscirrha* (OE) as part of Project Monarch Health; see <http://www.monarchparasites.org/> for details. Gail Manning, Fort Worth Botanic Garden Entomologist, will provide volunteers with training and oversight for these activities.

To sign up and learn more, contact ...Gail Manning at gail.manning@fortworthtexas.gov



Tagged Monarch Butterfly, photo by Gail Manning

Our Garden Tour and Presentation were a great success! - Josephine Keeney
53 brave people showed up in spite of the heat and a few people had to stand, the room couldn't hold that many chairs. It is very rewarding to see people wanting to learn about Texas Native plants for Pollinators, so it looks like our work is well received and we haven't labored in vain.

Garden Gate- Josephine



Hester the Greeter - Josephine Keeney



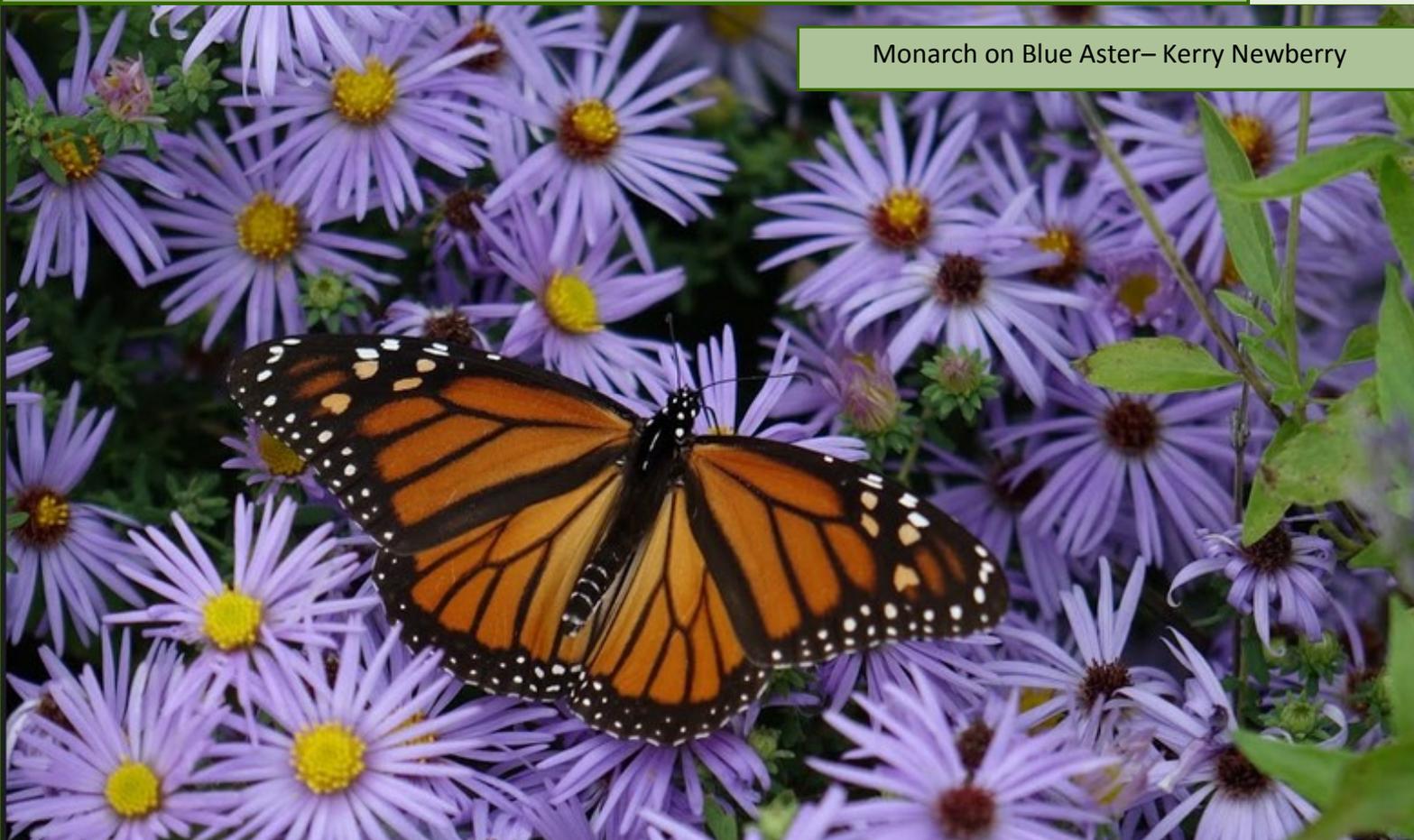
Our Members Volunteering and Volunteer Opportunities



Checking out the Plants- Josephine Keeney



The happy butterflies, Josephine Keeney and Corinna Benson.



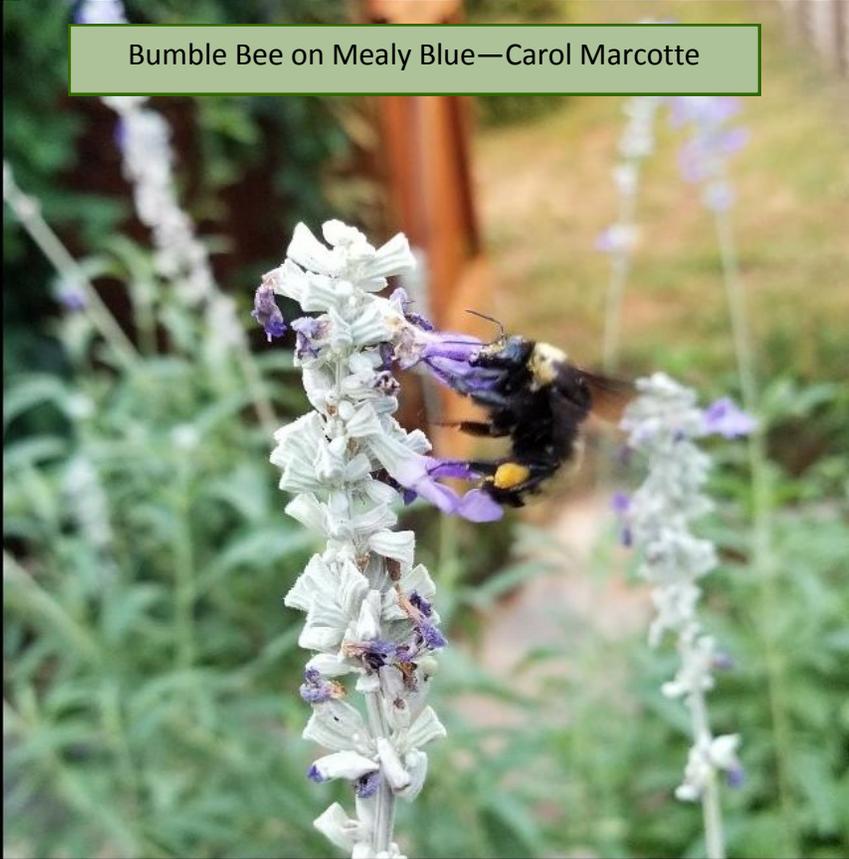
Monarch on Blue Aster— Kerry Newberry



Snow on the Prairie—Carol Marcotte

Pictures From Our Members

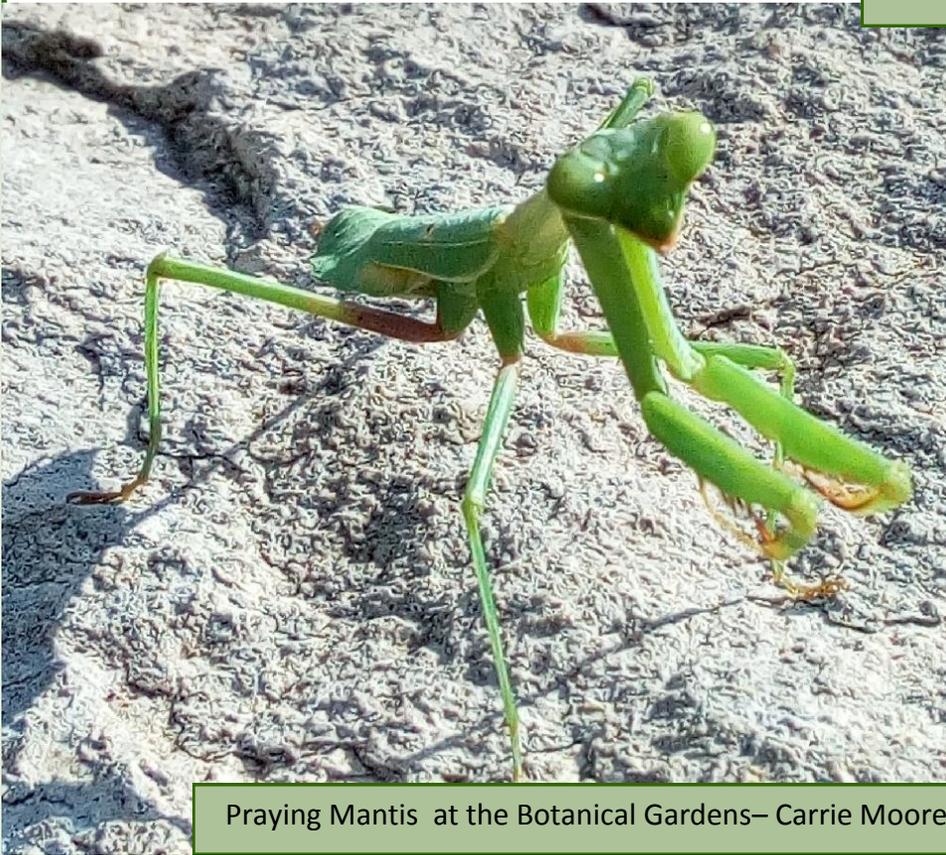
Bumble Bee on Mealy Blue—Carol Marcotte



Monarch on Blue Mist— Kerry Newberry



Praying Mantis at the Botanical Gardens— Carrie Moore



September 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 H	4 A	5 B	6	7 B, H
8	9 J	10 H	11 A, K	12 B, G	13	14 B
15	16 D	17 H	18 A, E, C	19 B	20	21 B
22	23	24 H	25 A	26 B	27	28 B, I
29	30					

A– FWNC– Restorative Greenhouse from 9:30– 11:30 AM– this event is a reoccurring event every Wednesday

B– FWNC– National Guard– Outdoor Conservation from 9 AM to 12 PM– this event is a reoccurring event every Thursday and Saturday

C--Sierra Club Monthly Meeting, Fort Worth Botanical Garden, 6:30 pm. Please bring a pot luck dish. This counts for an advance hour of training. This is a reoccurring even every 3rd Wednesday of every month.

D– CTMN Monthly Chapter Meeting

E– Citizen Urban Forestry Class

F– Molly Hollar Volunteer and Mini Class, from 10:30-11 am .

G– BRIT Water Saving Seminar from 6-8 pm

H– CTMN 2019 Class

I– BioBlitz at Overton Ridge Park 5-9:30 pm

J– CTMN Board Meeting

K– Cross Timber Urban Forestry Council's Annual meeting