

August 2020

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Cross Timbers Master Naturalist Newsletter

President's Pen — Bill Collins

Training time is getting close. The 24th of July is the last date to apply for this year's CTMN training. The review committee will meet on the 27th, and we will try our best to determine which 25 of the candidates will make good master naturalists.

What makes a good master naturalist? According to our criteria it is the applicants who express a commitment to stewardship of our natural resources; a willingness and availability to contribute time to volunteer service; a desire to complete the coursework, homework, and field trips; and those already volunteering. Particular consideration will be given to those who express a willingness to serve in leadership roles for the Master Naturalists program.

Once that decision is made the fun begins. Virtual training classes? Field trips with no more than 10 and 6 ft spacing? If need be, we can make it work.

Passing along information and hearing from an expert talk about their passion is of great value (speaking of which, Cynthia Holt gave a great presentation at the July general meeting on the inland fisheries work of TPWD) and can be done virtually. I think many of us miss the face to face gatherings with the opportunity to shake hands and get caught up on happenings around the chapter. And I miss Josephine's monthly drawings for door prizes that almost always include a native plant or two.

Bottom line, the board and the training team are dedicated to insuring that all students get quality training and the opportunity to learn from our great instructors.

Be sure and check the calendar in this month's newsletter or on the website for more and more volunteer opportunities that are opening up. Get out there and share your love and knowledge of Texas outdoors with friends and neighbors and support your local park/prairie/nature center/preserve. Use iNaturalist when possible to stay in practice. Plans are underway to have a metroplex iNat Challenge in early September. More details later. Take photos and share your photos with the chapter by submitting them to the newsletter editor (newsletter@ctmn.org).

Western Ironweed, *Vernonia baldwinii* and Wooly Ironweed, *Vernonia lindheimeri* (Family Asteraceae)

Western Ironweed is a hardy perennial with lovely leaves and large clusters of gorgeous, bright, deep purple, ray flowers that are a magnet for butterflies. It forms clumps up to five feet tall and has a non branching habit.

The bloom period ranges from July to September and if the plant is cut back after blooming it will bloom again in the Fall. It likes to grow in open woods and low places and is usually not browsed by cattle, because of its bitter taste. Very few of the seeds are fertile, so it is best to sow thickly, but root division in late fall and tip cuttings in Spring are the best propagation methods. This plant is a must have for butterfly gardens.



Wooly Ironweed grows up to three feet, with very narrow grey wooly leaves and has a clumping habit. The ray flowers form large clusters and are very showy, blooming for a long period. This plant is great for butterflies and should be used more in the home garden. It can be propagated by seed, cuttings, and root division.

Both plants are drought resistant and cold hardy.



Pictures by Josephine

Top Right: Western Ironweed

Middle Left: Wooly Ironweed

Bottom Right: Clump

For more pictures see page [11](#)

1) What year did you become a Texas Master Naturalist?

I became a Master Naturalist in 2017.

2) How did you find the program? Did someone encourage you?

I believe I saw a newspaper article in the Star Telegram.

I grew up in an outdoor family—camping and hiking in the mountains, summer camp, boating and hiking during the school season. I earned a MS in Environmental Science in the 70's and was fortunate to be part of the original staff of the FWISD Outdoor Learning Center (OLC). The staff created the hands-on outdoor activities that complimented the concepts in the 5th grade science book that was used at that time.

3) What has been the most surprising change in yourself since becoming a Master Naturalist?

How relaxed I am when I am doing something I love.

4) How do you obtain your VH?

Fort Worth Nature Center, Outreach for MN, BRIT such as Butterflies in the Garden, and Texas Wildlife Association TWA. Unfortunately, the unit that hosted the outdoor field investigations has been dissolved due to covid 19.

5) What would you like to tell the next generation of Master Naturalists?

Have fun, explore, learn, and share what you have learned with others.



Many of you are starting to panic about recertification for Master Naturalists. The number of volunteer and AT hours needed have not been decreased by TMN, they remain 40 volunteer and 8 AT hours.

Some of you have been willing to risk going out to volunteer at your usual spots. You are willing to stay at least six feet away from all others and wear a mask (over both nose and mouth) at all times. We thank you for your volunteer service.

Others of you are either at high risk or you live with those who are high risk from the COVID-19 virus and are not willing to take the risk to get your volunteer hours. I don't blame you, like you, I am searching for ways to get my hours during this time. I started my search at the TMN site itself to see what they suggest we do to get hours. Texas Master Naturalists suggest, as per their site (1), that we get our hours at a distance

The first recommendation, that is Theresa Thomas and Carol Marcotte approved, is write an article up for the newsletter. As per both Theresa and Carol, if you spend fifteen minutes researching/writing the article, you report 0.25 under CTMN newsletter: TMN Admin Report Hours, if you spend more time, you report more time. TMN suggests picking a SGCN species (species of greatest conservation need (2)) and writing about it. I would suggest picking a species from our area of Cross Timbers, there are many of all types to choose from. Texas parks and wild-life has several Excel documents on all the major taxa to chose from, the documents can be found at https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/nongame/tcap/sgcn.phtml . The Texas Master Naturalists site also recommends, if you are inclined and find yourself passionate about the species you choose, giving a presentation about the species in the fall.

Or, if you like to volunteer for place or group special to your heart, write up an article on what you do when you go, what times and dates you normally meet, and what the future might bring for that place/group.

If you choose to write something for the newsletter, please send it to newsletter@ctmn.com on or before the 20th of each month. If you send it late, that is fine, but it may be in the next month's newsletter, instead of the current month's newsletter. If you include a picture, it needs to be a picture that you have taken or that you have permission to use, that way CTMN does not get in copy write trouble.

Verify or assist with curating observations on I Naturalist or eBird (1), was the next suggestion given by TMN for distance volunteering. If your special skills lay with animal and/or plant identification, this is an awesome choice for you. If you spend your time doing this, report it under Citizen science/ data collection.

If you are a planner, the next option is for you. The Texas Master Naturalists site says you can get hours for planning fall trainings, ATs, and projects. Make sure you present your idea to the board before you get to the planning, so that the training, AT, or project gets approved.

Maybe you prefer writing grants to get your favorite volunteer spot money so that they can keep going in these difficult times. All the work and effort spent writing for grant money counts, as long as you document it (even if you don't win the grant money). Report time spent this way under the organization you write the grant for.

There are many more exciting ways to volunteer and stay safe inside without leaving your house. I know it is not the ideal, most of us joined CTMN because we enjoy the outdoors, but for our health and others we do what we must. On the Texas Master Naturalists site, there are other opportunities listed both by them, and suggested by other chapters. If you have a great way to volunteer, suggest it to the board, and if it is approved, you (or the board) can send it to <https://txmn.tamu.edu/volunteer-service-at-a-distance/> for other chapters to view and implement if it works for their chapters as well.

Work Cited

- 1.) June-21-2020, <https://txmn.tamu.edu/volunteer-service-at-a-distance/>
- 2.) June-21-2020, https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/nongame/tcap/sgcn.shtml

Volunteer at BRIT: Veronica Marquez

As you can imagine, our volunteer opportunities are limited due to safety guidelines. So far, only outdoor gardening is available for volunteering. For master naturalists, I assume they would be interested in native areas only. We have the Rock Springs Garden and Cactus Garden that would serve as options for them. We request that interested parties apply to be a volunteer at brit.org/become-volunteer. An orientation must be completed, along with our onboarding paperwork.

Another opportunity that will soon be available is helping in the BRIT Herbarium. This will not open until COVID cases drop for 14 consecutive days, so we ask that any questions regarding the herbarium be directed to this email address.

Thank you again... We hope to have Master Naturalists onboard!

CTMN August Chapter Meeting

Dr. Bruce Benz of Texas Wesleyan University will present to our chapter about the Ecology of White Rosinweed. Join us on August 17, 2020 via Zoom starting at 6:45 pm for CTMN business matters and 7pm for the lecture. Instructions on registering for the zoom meeting will come out via email closer to the date of the meeting.

A few things that have helped me have been tending to my native pollinator garden, which is very therapeutic. I get interesting insects. I also take photos in my garden. (Zach in his garden to the right)



I have taken a few trips, mainly day trips, since the outbreak. Recently I went to Caddo Lake State Park and Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge. (Zach's picture of the Spanish Moss in trees at Caddo Lake State Park to the left).

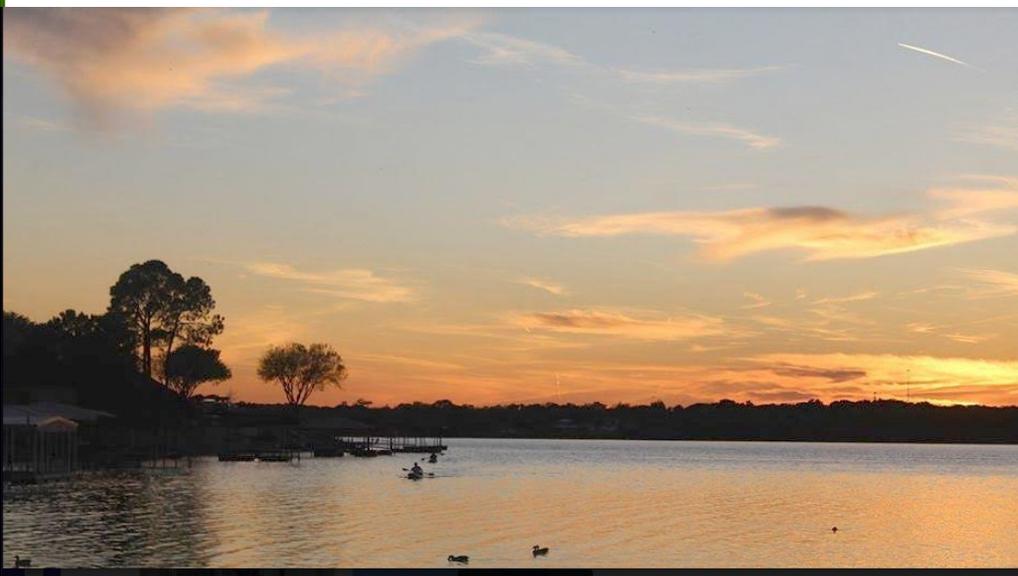


I participated in the City Nature Challenge. (pictured to the right).

Is anyone else hooked on watching nature shows? I have been binge watching nature and outdoor programs from PBS Nature, Nova, National Geographic, animal planet and BBC America.

I've been reading my friend's texts on entomology. So, I am keeping busy in between being a bookworm and a lazy person watching TV but all the stuff I watch gives me some good ideas and tidbits to share later.

Also, I have been working out a bit to keep fit; eating healthy, building endurance and stamina for hikes. I have been walking around the neighborhood. (Zach's picture of a sunset at Lake Arlington to the left).





I'm also maintaining my bird feeders. I have been a steward to wildlife and myself even in times like this. (Zach's picture of a woodpecker at the bird feeder above).

Sharing a lot of nature photos on my Facebook and Instagram accounts. On my Facebook, I have been holding live video feed sessions at my new mothing light. I check in and give my own version of an old fire side chat at the mothing light. It is a way to share my love of nature but to also spread positive messages and tell stories. It is a really nice thing to do since many of us are stuck inside or limiting our lives to certain activities. I host them from my backyard. It's nice to have people comment to keep it as interactive as possible.

Finally, please wear your mask when you go out. I miss all of you guys. I hope you are all doing well and staying safe. (Zach in his mask to the right).



At the very beginning, there was some surprise that way off in China, They locked down the massive city of Wuhan and built a hospital in a week. It sounded very medieval plague-like-ish and yet very modern technologically. I thought of Venice, where the term quarantine originated, with boats waiting in the harbor for 40 days before anyone was allowed ashore. And soon on the news were images from cruise ships, around the world, with people who waited and waited to disembark. Hospitals in northern Italy that did not have room for all the people who were sick.

As for me, in far off Texas, I started watching the news again as more and more of the activities I am involved, ceased to be things that could be done.

My son Thomas flew home from India and quarantined himself in a hotel for two weeks because he had to travel through the New Jersey airport at the height of week before air travel ceased in America. When he was safe he visited both sets of grandparents before coming back home.

My other son Terrence was already home. He is managing a cardiologist office and applying to medical school.

My day job made it possible to work from home, so I gained a dog and a cat as coworkers. I only left the house to go to the grocery shop for my parents and ourselves. My desk at home is near the windows to the front yard. I observed the native plants growing in the springtime and the bees pollinating the dewberries. I watched the squirrels and birds on the bird feeder. I discovered that some butterflies are quite fond of rotting fruit in a compost heap. I started tomatoes and okra and dragon tongue beans from seeds, although perhaps a bit late for them to do well. I trimmed to the ground the exceedingly tall and bloomed out Augusta Duelberg Salvia and the Engelmann Daisy and have seen a surge of new growth on them.

Now that things are open again, we spent the past week camping at Lake Ouachita in Arkansas with friends and family. I am listening to birdsong as I write this. It was good to slow down and appreciate the nature around me.





Above
Carol Marcotte
Animal Life
Something on My Mind



Left
Banjo Moore
Plant Life
Mexican Hat Flower



Above
Bird Category
Rob Ramos
Male Bluebird on Nesting
Box



Left
Scenic Category
Donna Honkomp
Lake Mineral Wells



Pictures by Josephine

Above Right: New Plant

Left: Leaves

Bottom Right: Flower Cluster





Photo, Art & Media Contest Announcement



'A Virtual Contest for a Virtual Meeting' Hosted by the Cradle of Texas Chapter



In order to keep the *Photo, Art, & Media Contest* as an event for a Virtual Meeting, certain changes were required to be made to various areas of the Contest criteria. A partial list of the changes can be found below. A complete list of the 2020 *Photo, Art, & Media Contest* Rules will be available August 1, 2020.

- Entries - TMNs may submit entries for the 2020 *Photo, Art, & Media Contest* by uploading them to the TXMN.org website, and completing an entry form(s) on the website. Any TMNs may submit entries for the Contest, but only those who are registered for the Annual Meeting may vote on the entries starting on October 14, 2020, the first day of the state meeting, through the Annual Meeting App, and ending at 6:00 PM October 16.
- Entries must be received between September 1, 2020 12:01 AM through September 30, 2020 12:00 PM. More details on the website will be available by August 1, 2020.
- Categories not available in 2020 due to judging difficulties brought about by the *virtual* nature of the meeting are: **ART**– Carvings and Sculptures, and Sewing and Stitchery. **MEDIA** – Scrapbooks. We sincerely apologize for this inconvenience. One new category was added, “Digitally Enhanced Nature Photos”.
- Photos - Entered as digital files only (File size <= 8 MB) with a 10:8 aspect ratio.
- Drawings and Paintings – A Jpeg/Png file of a drawing/painting will be submitted in place of the original work of art. The file aspect ratio that best compliments it should be used. If framed, and if the frame is an original, it may be included in the Jpeg/Png.
- Brochures and Newsletters are submitted by chapters, not individuals, and are submitted as PDFs. The PDF will then be linked on the State Website and voted on through the Annual Meeting App. Pages should be viewable enough to read as part of the judging.

#	Photo Categories	Submit As	Comments
1	Plant Life (w/o Wildlife)	JPEG/PNG File <= 8 MB	Keeping with tradition, all photo entries will have an Aspect Ratio of 10:8 or 8:10 (i.e. 10" x 8" or 8" x 10" if printed)
2	Wildlife	"	
3	Birds	"	
4	Scenic	"	
5	Photos of Chapter at Work/Play	"	
6	Digitally Enhanced Nature Photos (New)	"	
#	Art Categories	Submit As	Comments
1	Drawings and Paintings	JPEG File <= 8 MB	Aspect Ratio is the Same as the Entry AR
#	Media Categories	Submit As	Comments
1	Chapter Newsletters	PDF	All Pages Will be Viewed
2	Chapter Brochures	PDF	All Pages Will be Viewed

If you have questions, please direct them to billahlstrom@gmail.com or 979-299-8645 (cell).

When: October 14th-17th, 2020

Where: From the comfort of your home office, back patio or reclining chair.

As a result of the uncertainty surrounding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas Master Naturalist Program has decided to suspend this year's in-person event in Houston, Texas, in favor of a fully virtual experience.

The decision reflects TMN's responsibility to protect the health and wellbeing of its members, conference attendees and the general population while still serving its mission to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas.

While we may not be seeing you in Houston this fall in person, we are committed to creating a valuable and engaging educational and networking experience that mirrors our in-person Annual Meeting. In fact, we're quite excited about all of the new possibilities that a virtual conference opens up for our event!

Please save the dates for us now! We've shifted the dates to **Wednesday through Saturday** to accommodate the virtual setting. We'll be online with you **October 14th through 17th** with four days of sessions, interactive programs, and some surprises we'll be sharing later this summer.

<https://txmn.tamu.edu/2020-annual-meeting/>

Volunteer Address Sites from the Calendar on page 15



- A- FWNC Restoration Greenhouse - Resource Center, Broadview Dr
- B- FWNC Natural Guard - Resource Center, Broadview Dr
- F- Molly Hollar Wildscape, 2866 Spanish Trail, Arlington
- H- Lk Mineral Wells State Park - 100 Park Rd 71 off Hwy 180
- I- Tarrant County SW Sub Courthouse, 6551 Granbury Rd, FW
- J- SW Regional Hulen Library, 4001 Library Ln
- M- Chisholm Trail Community Park, 4936 McPherson Blvd, FW

Dragonfly at the FW Botanical Gardens

Carrie Moore

What does the shirt look like and what colors are available?



Colors are turquoise, silver, and leaf green. Imprint is black ink.
Shirts are 100% ring spun, soft cotton.

What size should I buy?

Shirts are sized in “retail fit,” slimmer than the usual boxy T shirt fit. Additionally, the soft cotton clings to every “curve” or imperfection in the torso.

For a less form-hugging fit, the vendor recommends ordering one size larger than usual.

Sizes available: Turquoise and Silver—XS through 2X.

Leaf green—XS through 4X.

How much does each shirt cost? \$14.00

How do I pay?

PayPal or credit card or debit card. No matter which method you use, click on the Add to Cart button. PayPal will give you the option of using a credit or debit card in the shopping cart.

What if I want to buy more than one shirt of the same color?

In the PayPal shopping cart, look for the button that says “Continue Shopping.”

Order now through Tuesday, August 11th!

How will I get my shirt?

For those currently volunteering at various sites (FWNC, River Legacy, SW Regional Courthouse, etc.), we’ll deliver shirts during a volunteer work day.

You may be able to Porch Pick Up at a board member’s home, and we plan to deliver to you!

When will the shirts be ready? Two weeks after the vendor gets our order.

We hope to have them to you by the end of August.

More questions? Email Sharon Hamilton at outreach@ctmn.org.

Ready? Go to www.ctmn.org/shirts.html now!

August 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						I F, M
2	3 E	4	5 F, K	6 A, B	7	8 I
9	10	11 L	12 F	13 A, B, J	14	15 H, I
16	17 D	18	19 C, F	20 A, B	21	22
23	24	25	26 I, F	27 A, B, J	28	29
30	31					

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

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 via Zoom. Via facebook or Meetup. This counts for an advance hour of training. This is every 3rd Wednesday

D– CTMN Monthly Chapter Meeting via Zoom, you will receive an email from the board with a link.

E– CTMN Board Meeting, contact a board member if you would like the Zoom link.

F– Molly Hollar Wildscape Volunteer Opportunity from 9 am –12 pm. The mini class has been canceled until further notice.

G– BRIT Water Saving Seminar from 6-8 pm

H– Lake Mineral Wells Pollinator Garden Volunteer Opportunity from 9-11 am, this is every 3rd Saturday of the month at the park administration building. Contact Cynthia Crump

I– Tarrant County SW Sub Courthouse Garden Volunteer Opportunity from 8am –12 pm. Volunteers can take home plants. Contact Gailon Hardin

J–Southwest Regional Hulen Library Native Plant Demonstration Garden on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month. Saturday can be scheduled with leads. From 8:30 to 12:30 am (Summer 7:30 to 11:30 am). Contact Theresa Thomas

K– Sign up for the 2020 Annual Texas Master Naturalist Virtual Meeting

L– Last Day to order a CTMN Volunteer T-shirt

M– Trash Pick up at Chisholm Trail Park, 7-9 am . Meet by the dumpster in the front parking lot.