

April 2021

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# Cross Timbers Master Naturalist Newsletter

## *President's Pen* — Sharon Hamilton

As Texas Master Naturalists, we hold learning in high regard. No matter our backgrounds or education, we commit to forty hours of classroom and about 20 hours of field work just to become official members of Cross Timbers Chapter. To remain active, we attend meetings, classes, workshops, and conferences that total at least eight hours each year. I daresay that many of us record far more than the minimum requirement.

The quote, “I am still learning,” has been attributed to Michelangelo, Emerson, even Norman Rockwell, each of whom were masters of their art forms. One author confirms that Seneca, Roman playwright and philosopher, wrote these words (in Latin!) almost 2,000 years ago. How enduring and wise this statement is, for it to be passed down and valued for so long.

As we admit to still “learning,” we acknowledge that we aim to grow in our understanding of the natural world. Whether we’ve never visited Big Bend National Park before or have spent many days and nights there since our teen years, we patiently listened to guide Tim Martin’s stories, because there was something in his experience that was enlightening to us.

“Still” learning implies that there is much we do not know. We prepare for the hard work of doing something new, reading ideas that may be uncomfortable, stepping into the unknown. We make ourselves vulnerable to failure, which provides a disturbing dose of humility.

Yet by being willing to learn, we embrace hope, optimism, inspiration, and wonder. We feed our souls as well as our minds. As John Dewey said, “Education is not preparation for life; it is life itself.”

May we value what we have learned over this difficult past year—about nature, about ourselves, and about each other. Think about the new computer skills we’ve stumbled through—wasn’t it only a year ago that “zooming” was the sound an airplane makes as it raced across the sky?

Page 2 **Plant of the Month– Texas Bluebonnet: Josephine Keeney**

Texas Bluebonnet, *Lupinus texensis*.

This beautiful annual herb of the Fabaceae family is the most recognized Texasm Native Wildflower.

It's fame is well deserved, for in April and into May it blankets fields and roadways in gorgeous shades of blue.

Mothers with their children as well as glamour girls, engaged couples and brides come to have their picture taken surrounded by a blanket of blooms. These classic Texas photographs bring beautiful memories to last a lifetime. People

who have never seen a Bluebonnet are astounded at it's beauty, and artists compete to capture the beauty of a field full of Bluebonnets surrounded by mighty Oaks.

The Sandyland Bluebonnet, *Lupinus subcarnosus* became the Texas State Flower in 1901, and in 1971 the State Legislature made all other Bluebonnets the State Flower.



Four additional species were included in 1971:

Texas Bluebonnet, *Lupinus texensis*  
Big Bend Bluebonnet, *Lupinus havardii* ( Endemic to Texas)  
Dune Bluebonnet, *Lupinus plattensis*  
Bajada Bluebonnet, *Lupinus concinnus*  
The following are also Texas Bluebonnets:  
Orcutt's Lupine, *Lupinus concinnus* ssp. *orcuttii*  
Sundial Lupine, *Lupinus perennis* ssp. *gracilis*

**Above— Close-up flower 1**

**Below— field**

**See more on page 12**

## Get to Know CTMN Member: Jim Prentice - Carol Marcotte

**What year did you get certified?** I am a brand new, class of 2020, Zoomed up Master Naturalist. I thought that the training was great, however I did miss the in person/in classroom experience. I met many (not all) of my classmates, mostly on the fieldtrips, but had little chance make a real connection. Hopefully, this will turn around as we meet again venturing into the various volunteer opportunities.

**What do you do for fun?** My wife and I enjoy travelling, seeing new places. Sometimes it's local; sometimes we get a stamp on our passport. We traveled to Nashville a while back to see the Amy Grant, Vince Gill Christmas show. It was a wonderful five days.

We also like to read: During the power outage we had rolling blackouts. Three days of about 45 minutes of power, 45 minutes without. Our home is older and not well insulated as it should be. Gradually the temp sunk to the low 60s inside. We put on our sweat suites, climbed into sleeping bags on our recliners and read. When we had no power and it was dark, we had miner's lights attached to our forehead and read till the power came back on. Then we would make a cup hot cocoa, tea or soup and jump back into our cocoon.

The ultimate good time is taking the Grandkids and spoiling them. We would take them to the Casa Manana or the Bass for a show and feed them, letting them eat what they wanted. We would pack them into the back seat of the truck and go somewhere (anywhere) for a little adventure.

**Do you work?** I had a job a long time ago. I went there and did what they wanted me to do and it paid the bills. Now I choose where I go. I try to go where I can do some good and maybe have some fun. This doesn't pay much but my bills still get paid. They say that one of the pathways to good health is to exercise each day. One of my jobs now is to find activities that flex, bend and work my body. My side work is keeping my bride happy.

**Do you live somewhere very special?** For twenty years we lived in a 1320 square foot 3 bed 2 bath home on about 1/6 th of an acre in Grand Prairie. We raised three pretty good kids in that home. When they graduated and left for college we decided that we wanted a little more. We now have an (older) home that is about 2000 feet square on ¼ of an acre on the shore of Eagle Mountain Lake. We have hosted some loud, fun 4 th of July parties but generally it is a delightfully quiet place to live.

**Do you have special interest as a Master Naturalist?** I enjoy messing around in the garden. A couple of years ago I was introduced to native plants and I am working hard to know how best to use them. I believe that working with those who have that knowledge is where I should be. The demonstration gardens are a wonderful classroom to get hands on experience.

**Tell us about your family?** My wife and I will celebrate 50 years of marriage this summer. We have three children, one boy and two girls, and three grandchildren, one boy and two girls.

**What advice do you have to the next generation of MN?** Listen to the teachers, site leaders and advisers. Identify the lessons, concepts, and ideas that you most agree with, find out those areas that could use your help, develop a plan on how to accomplish that work, see if there are already volunteer opportunities that you could join. Whatever else enjoy what you are doing!



## Page 4    **Featured Project: Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Trailway – David Owens**

Texas Master Naturalists would not exist without the support of **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.**

**Please consider volunteering, or even taking on the task of CTMN liaison to our home park, Lake Mineral Wells State Park. Contact Sharon Hamilton at [president@ctmn.org](mailto:president@ctmn.org) or [shamilton16@gmail.com](mailto:shamilton16@gmail.com).**

Article by David Owens

**About the park:** Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Trailway is a complex of two components. The State Park is over 3000 acres, including a 400-acre lake, featuring the Cross Timbers ecoregion landscape. The park has 10+ miles of trails for hiking, biking and horseback. Picnic areas and overnight camping sites that provide campers with water and electricity, water only. Screened Shelters and hike-in primitive camping are also available. The lake provides swimming, boating, canoe and kayaking and fishing opportunities. There are nature viewing areas, guided hikes and nature and historic events and programs.



Penitentiary Hollow. Photo provided by David Owens.

The State Trailway is a 20-mile Rails-to-Trails project that stretches from Weatherford, TX to the downtown area of Mineral Wells, TX. It follows the old railroad line to Mineral Wells. It provides trail enjoyment for hiking, biking and horseback. The Trailway has 4 access points: In the city of Mineral Wells, from Lake Mineral Wells State Park, city of Garner trailhead and at Weatherford near Cartwright City Park.

**Activities:** The volunteer opportunities are: Maintaining the pollinator garden, guiding Cross Timber Nature Hikes for park visitors, assisting with interpretive events and programs, assisting in maintenance of the bird viewing area; trail and trailway maintenance.

**Training:** Training for each will be provided by park staff or volunteer leaders in each opportunity.

**Dates and times:** will vary

**Location:** will vary

**How do I participate?** Contact the park volunteer coordinator, David Owens, by phone 940 -328-1171 ext. 227 or by email [david.owens@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:david.owens@tpwd.texas.gov)

For Pollinator Garden, contact project leader Cindy Crump at [cindyleecrump@gmail.com](mailto:cindyleecrump@gmail.com)

Page 5 **Featured Project: Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Trailway – David Owens**



Park overlook and lake. Photo provided by David Owens.



Trailway Spur. Photo provided by David Owens.

Page 6 **Featured Project: Lake Mineral Wells State Park and Trailway – David Owens**



Pollinator Garden. Photo by Cindy Crump.



Photo by Cindy Crump.

## Page 7 Trees of the Cross Timbers Series– Texas Redbud – Carol Marcotte

Follow CTMN member, Leah Breitinstine gave a mini class at the Molly Hollar Wildscape on forest edibles, foraging. On Leah's hors d'oeuvre tray were Redbud Tree buds. That's right, they are edible and tasty.

**Size:** Redbud is a large shrub or small tree, 10 – 20 ft in height.

**Growth Rate:** moderate rate, about 7 to 10 feet in five to six years, living 50 – 70 years or more.

**Bloom Time:** March , April

**Water Use:** Low, Medium

**Light Requirement:** Sun, Part Shade

**Soil Moisture:** Dry

**Soil Description:** Well-drained, calcareous, rocky, sandy, loamy, or clay soils, usually limestone-based.

**Food Use:** The flowers are fried in Mexico. The flowers are acid and are sometimes pickled for salads. The nectar is of some value as a source of honey.

**Medicinal Use:** A fluid extract can be taken from the bark which is an active astringent used in the treatment of dysentery

**Attracts:** Butterflies

**Larval Host:** Henry's Elfin butterfly

**Scientific Name:** *Cercis canadensis* var. *texensis*

\* reference <https://www.wildflower.org/>

\* All photos by Carol Marcotte

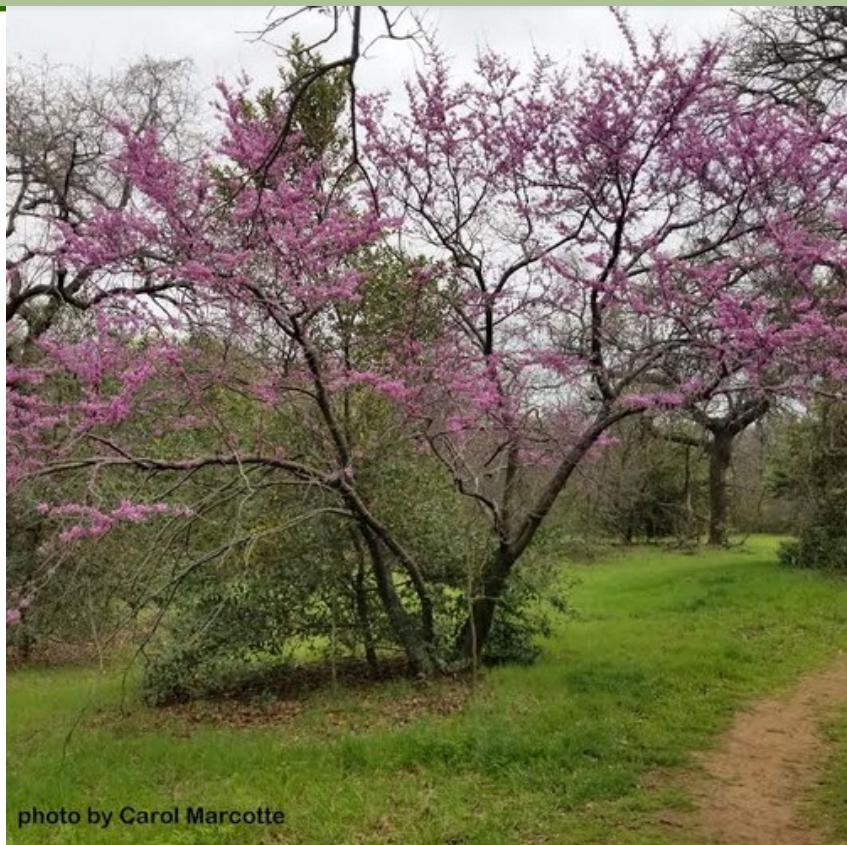


photo by Carol Marcotte

See more on page 12

## Page 8 Lights Out Texas!- Chris Honkomp

Approximately 1/3 of migratory birds (over 1 billion) in the US travel through Texas, and nighttime lighting can cause disorientation and bird-strikes on buildings.

Lights Out Texas, a program sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Colorado State University, started in the Fall of 2020. The program seeks the support of state and local governments, businesses and private citizens to decrease interference with bird migrations by turning off all unnecessary artificial lighting between 11 pm and 6 am during Spring and Fall migrations.

The Spring 2021 target period is March 1 through June 15. The City of Fort Worth has joined with other major Texas cities to encourage participation in the effort due to the presence of tall buildings in the migratory pathways. According to the Fort Worth Star- Telegram, eleven downtown buildings began turning off lights on March 8 and will continue through May 31. Individual homeowners can also support the effort.

For more information on Light Out Texas, refer to <https://birdcast.info/science-to-action/lights-out/lights-out-texas/>. Information specific to Fort Worth can be found at <https://www.fortworthtx.gov/news/2021/03/Lights-out-FW>

Limiting light pollution is not new to those in our community, but this program has been a recent successful effort due to cooperation among major cities.

Good resources for specific lighting practices and fixtures that you can use at your own home are: <https://www.audubon.org/conservation/project/lights-out>, [www.darksky.org](https://www.darksky.org), and <https://mcdonaldobservatory.org/darks skies>. These sites guide you through steps you can take at your own home to avoid interfering with migration, as well as other light pollution impacts to our natural environment.

Here are ways to contribute to the Lights Out solution:

- Extinguish pot and flood-lights
- Close drapes, blinds, and shades at night.
- Down-shield exterior lighting to eliminate horizontal glare and all light directed upward
- Install automatic motion sensors and controls wherever possible
- When converting to new lighting assess quality and quantity of light needed, avoiding over-lighting with newer, brighter technology. Use warmer colors—specifically yellow—lights whenever possible.
- Turn off exterior decorative lighting

Photo from: [https://asd.gsfc.nasa.gov/archive/nightglow/states\\_night.html](https://asd.gsfc.nasa.gov/archive/nightglow/states_night.html)



Page 9 **Cross Timbers Master Naturalist Photo Contest 2021– Carol Marcotte**

Entries must be submitted by **Friday, May 14, 2021**

**Entries must be labeled with owners name, category and title of the work.**

All entries must be original work and submitted by a CTMN volunteer.

**Entries are limited to one per category per individual.**

- Photos must be Texas specific (i.e. taken in Texas)
- Photos can be color or black and white.
- Photos must be unframed and have no unnatural/extreme digital enhancements
- Submit your photo entry(s) to Cross Timbers Masters  
<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=oa.1118670525272734&type=3> or email to [carol@carolmarcotte.com](mailto:carol@carolmarcotte.com) or [mblampe@gmail.com](mailto:mblampe@gmail.com)
- *Photos will be marked with attribution. Photographer will be credited for or identified with the photo.*

\*Contest Committee reserves the right to place an entry into another category if deemed appropriate.

**Photo Categories:**

- (1) Plant life (with no wildlife)
- (2) Wildlife
- (3) Birds
- (4) Scenic
- (5) Historical photo of members at work/play ( i.e. inaugural class, members then & now, early projects in our history)

Judging will be done by a panel of three (3) impartial judges. **Winners will be announced at the June 21, 2021 meeting.** If there are less than 3 entries in a given photo category , a placement ribbon may not be awarded.

Direct questions to Carol Marcotte, cell: (817) 793-3917 or email: [carol@carolmarcotte.com](mailto:carol@carolmarcotte.com)

**Not a member of CTMN Facebook page? CTMN is a Private: Members Only Facebook page. You must be invited. On the home page "Join Group" button. Mary Beth Lampe will accept your invitation request.**



**Opossum on Fence—  
Carol Marcott**

### **10 Things to Celebrate Earth Day**

- Support our native bees.
- Recycle and repurpose!
- Plant wildflowers!
- Reduce plastic dependency.
- Go native!
- Bring nature into the garden
- Start an organic vegetable garden.
- Conserve water!
- Plant more trees!
- 10 . Get kids involved!**

Learn more at: <https://www.almanac.com/content/earth-day-date-activities>

### **Events at the BRIT April 2021– Brooke Best**

Multi-day Event: WeDigBio with the BRIT Herbarium

Thu 08-APR through Sun 11-APR

Thu 08-APR, 9am-10am: Intro and Transcription Blitz

Thu 08-APR, 10am-11am: Virtual Herbarium and Digitization Studio Tour

Fri 09-APR, noon-1pm: Virtual Lecture, “Evolutionary origins and species diversity in the wild blueberries”

Sat 10-APR, 9am-10am: Transcription Blitz #2

Sat 10-APR, 10am-11am: Virtual Molecular and Structural Laboratory Tour

Sun 11-APR, 9am-10am: Transcription Blitz #3

Sun 11-APR, 10am-11am: Virtual Collecting Demonstration and Tour

Please see the attached flyer or the following webpage for more info: <http://brit.org/wedigbio>

AND

BRIT Lunchtime Lecture Series (virtual)

“Evolutionary origins and species diversity in the wild blueberries (tribe Vaccinieae)”

by Dr. Peter Fritsch (BRIT), **\*\*Friday\*\***, Apr 9th, noon to 1pm

More info at <https://bit.ly/2NQNPIr>

## Page 11 City Nature Challenge 2021

When?

April 30-May 9

What?

First Part,

From April 30th– May 3

Take pictures of wild plants and animals

Second Part

From May 4th-9th

Identify what was found in the pictures

## RWFM Stewardship Webinar Series-Jacklyn Jones

Our RWFM Stewardship Webinar Series will feature Dr. Cat Barr Ph.D., [Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory](#) diagnostic toxicologist, Bryan-College Station, speaking on **Toxic Plants in Grasslands and the Impact on Livestock** on Thursday April 1<sup>st</sup> at Noon CST.

Please register at: <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/3343>.

<https://agrilitetoday.tamu.edu/2021/03/17/toxic-plants-in-grasslands-livestock-impact-topic-of-april-1-webinar/>

## Join us for our Stewardship Series!

**On April 1, Dr. Catherine Barr will be presenting "Toxic Plants in Grasslands & the Impact on Livestock" at noon CST.**

*The RWFM Stewardship Webinar Series will consist of monthly webinars during the first Thursday of every month at Noon CST. Topics will consist of rangeland science, wildlife management, and aquaculture. Each webinar will qualify for 1 General CEU from the Texas Department of Agriculture for Pesticide License applicators.*

### Webinar Topics

- Toxic Plants
- Prescribed Fire
- Top 10 Brush and Weeds
- Managing Wildlife Damage
- Multi-species Grazing
- Natural Resource Tourism
- Aquatic Management

### Event Details

**Cost:** \$35/webinar

**Duration:** 1 hour

To register, go to

<https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/RWFMEvtWet>



### Contact

Dr. Morgan Treadwell:  
[morgan.treadwell@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:morgan.treadwell@ag.tamu.edu)

Brittany Chesser  
[brittany.chesser@tamu.edu](mailto:brittany.chesser@tamu.edu)



Upper Left– Close Up 2 Josephine  
Upper Right– Field with primroses and blue bonnets Josephine

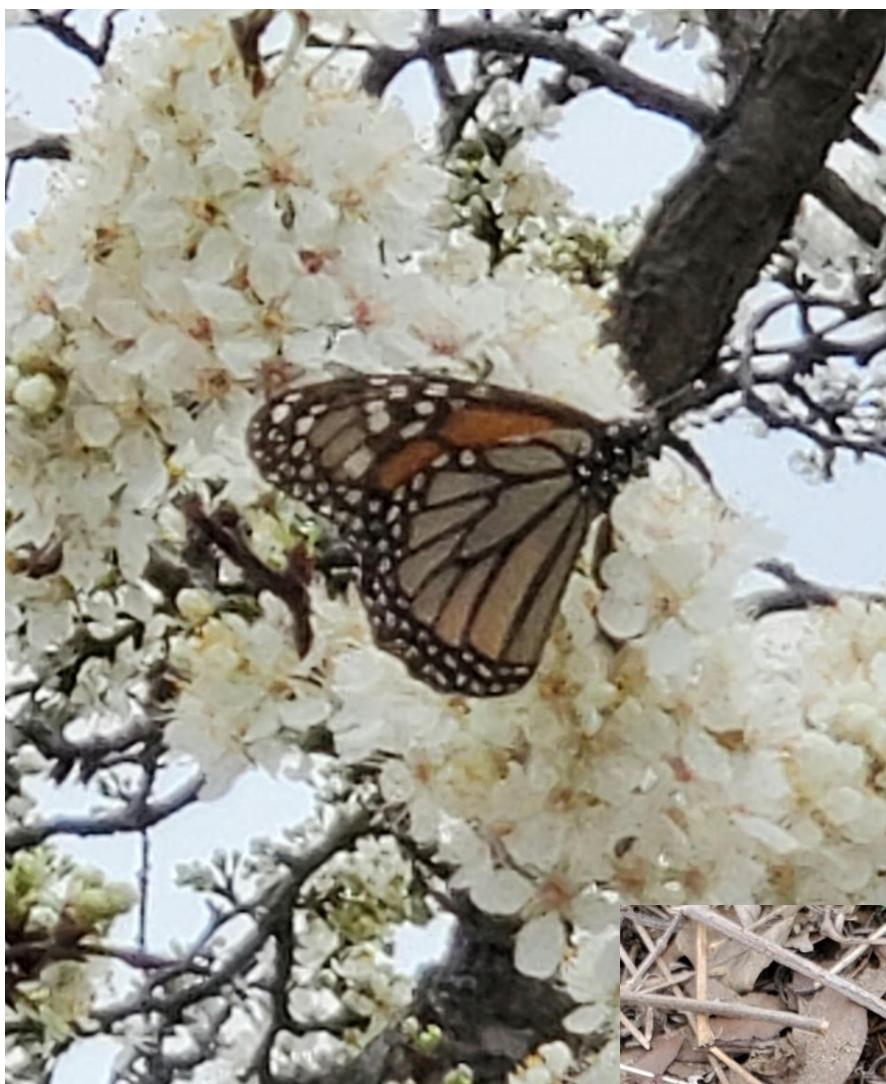
Bottom Left-New Leaves on Redbud– Carol  
Bottom Right– Blue Bonnet– Carol



photo by Carol Marcotte



Bluebonnet in Randol Mill Park March, 2021



# April 2021

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

A– FWNC– Restorative Greenhouse from 9:30– 11:30 AM

B– FWNC– Natural Guard– Outdoor Conservation from 9 AM to 12 PM

C--Sierra Club Monthly Meeting via Zoom. Via Facebook or Meetup.

D– CTMN Monthly Chapter Meeting via zoom

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 Events, see page for more details.

H– City Nature Challenge April 30– May 3, info [HERE](#)

I– Tarrant County SW Sub Courthouse Garden Volunteer Opportunity from 8am –12 pm. 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– Texas Master Naturalist Virtual Trainings #TMNTuesdays!

M– OS Gray 9-12 am/pm.

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- Lake 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