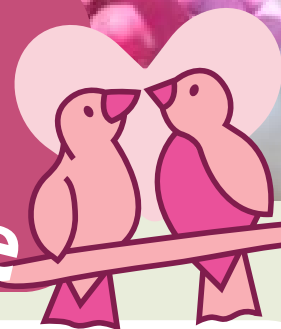


T E X A S

Master  
Naturalist™  
Cross Timbers



In Love  
With Nature



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## In this Issue:



### Annual Awards

The CTMN Annual Awards Ceremony is on Monday, March 17, at the FWBG Rose Room. Claim your recertification pins from last year! Join us in welcoming new and returning volunteers to the Cross Timbers Chapter!

### Short Story

Armadillo Day in Bee Cave is Texas's version of Groundhog Day, where Bee Cave Bob predicts the weather in a tradition founded by Terry Boothe. This fun event celebrates Texas biodiversity and local culture.

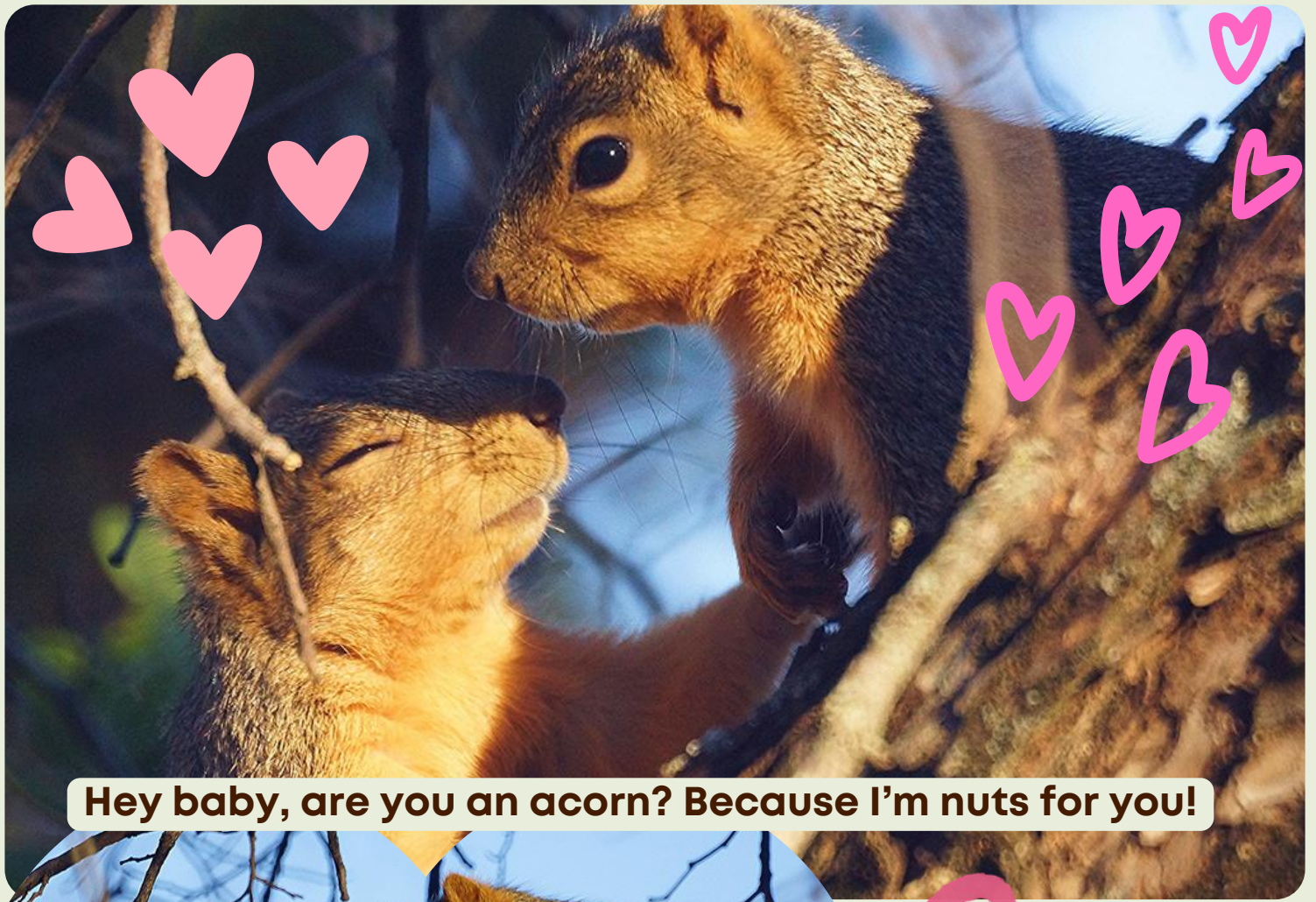


### April Speaker

April's speaker is Jim Jones, Fort Worth Audubon Society Education Chair. Jim's presentation will explore how citizen scientists, including Master Naturalists and Audubon members, contribute to online data platforms that enhance our understanding of wildlife and migration patterns. A passionate traveler and longtime Fort Worth Audubon Society member, Jim brings decades of experience in conservation, birding, and outdoor exploration.







**Hey baby, are you an acorn? Because I'm nuts for you!**



**Are you bird seed? Because I could eat you right up!**

**Photos by Eleanor Pate**



# CTMN Announcements



Our 2025 Recertification Pin: The Greater Roadrunner!



## CTMN Annual Awards Ceremony

**Monday, March 17th**  
**FWBG, Rose Room**

If you have questions regarding your chapter standing, awards, dues etc..., contact Carol Marcotte, Membership

Director cell: (817) 793-3917 or

[carol@carolmarcotte.com](mailto:carol@carolmarcotte.com)

Earth Day volunteering opportunity! The Fort Worth Botanic Garden is looking for volunteers to help host the iNaturalist City Nature Challenge, Friday April 25th from 9:30am to 3:00pm (partial shifts welcome). Help document the natural areas of the campus and teach people about the amazing tool iNaturalist can be! For more information or to volunteer, please contact with Erin Flinchbaugh at [eflinchbaugh@fwbg.org](mailto:eflinchbaugh@fwbg.org) or Kimberlie Sasan at [kimberlietx@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlietx@gmail.com).

**Cross Timbers Chapter wants to WELCOME the following new and returning volunteers!!!**

**Lauryn Bourget** - from Prairie Oaks Chapter

**Christie Strange** - class of 2013

**Rudy Escobar** - from South Texas Border Chapter

**Paul Scudder** - class of 2007

**Savannah Thomas** - from Elm Fork Chapter

**Katie Silva** - from Lindheimer Chapter

When you see any of our new volunteers, introduce yourself & welcome them to the Cross Timbers Chapter.



# Speakers

## April's Speaker

**Presentation: Monday, April 21, 2025 |  
7pm**

**Fort Worth Botanic Garden**

**Jim Jones, Fort Worth Audubon  
Society Education Chair**

## **Bird Migration: Using Technology to Track Their Journey Through North Texas**



[Zoom Link](#)


Over the past 24 years, various tools have been developed to provide scientists with valuable data on local habitats and wildlife migration patterns. Much of this information comes from citizen scientists, including Master Naturalists and National Audubon Society members. In this presentation, Jim will discuss how you can contribute to online data platforms and use this information to deepen your understanding of the wildlife around us.

Jim moved to Texas in 1998 after an extensive career working on engineering projects across 15 states and the Middle East. An avid traveler, he has camped and hiked in 47 U.S. states, eight Canadian provinces, and 14 other countries, including Nepal and Kenya. His love for the outdoors and wildlife began in his hometown, a small Appalachian community in north-central Pennsylvania, where he spent his teenage summers as a counselor at scout camps.

Though not initially an avid birder, Jim's interest in birding took off after moving to Texas. In 1999, while researching Mississippi Kites nesting above his home in Bedford, he discovered the Fort Worth Audubon Society (FWAS) and quickly became involved in field trips, bird counts, and conservation projects. By 2001, he had joined the FWAS board of directors.

# TMN Tuesdays

On the second Tuesday of each month at 12:00pm Central Standard Time, the TMN State Office offers an hour-long virtual advanced training event – with fantastic new and returning guest speakers.



Online Webinar  
Speaker Series  
**#TMNTuesdays**


# 2025

<b>January</b> <b>14</b>	<b>February</b> <b>11</b>	<b>March</b> <b>18*</b> <small>*Not a second Tuesday</small>	<b>April</b> <b>8</b>
<b>May</b> <b>13</b>	<b>June</b> <b>10</b>	<b>July</b> <b>8</b>	<b>August</b> <b>12</b>
<b>September</b> <b>9</b>	<b>October</b> <b>TBA</b>	<b>November</b> <b>18*</b> <small>*Not a second Tuesday</small>	<b>December</b> <b>9</b>

**Save the dates for our 2025  
#TMNTuesday lineup!**

All webinars will be the second Tuesday of each month at 12pm CT with a few exceptions. Keep an eye on socials and emails for details!

T E X A S



Master Naturalist

[View Past #TMNTuesday  
Presentations Here for  
Advanced Training Hrs.](#)

[Register Here](#)

[Webex Guide](#)

[FAQ](#)



# Member Highlight

## Meet our TPWD Chapter Sponser, Rachel Richter!

**Tell us about your college, where did you attend and what degree(s) do you have?**

Texas A&M University- B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science

Texas State University- M.S. in Wildlife Ecology

**How long have you been the TPWD advisor to CTMN?**

9 years! I had to double check that number a few times because it definitely doesn't feel like it has been that long.

**How long have you taught classes for the CTMN training program?**

9 years! I had to double check that number a few times because it definitely doesn't feel like it has been that long.

**Are you an advisor to any other organizations? If so, names?**

I am also on the advisory board for UNT's Advanced Environmental Research Institute.

**How long have you been an Urban Wildlife Biologist and what did you do before then?**

I've been an Urban Wildlife Biologist since January of 2016. Before that, I worked as a permit specialist for Texas Parks and Wildlife's Big Game Program in Austin.



There are 10 Urban Wildlife Biologists in Texas serving these areas:

Austin- **1**

Dallas/Fort Worth- **2**

Houston- **2**

El Paso- **1**

Lower Rio Grande Valley- **1/3** of a position

San Antonio- **2**

Actually, **9** or maybe **8.33**. Unless you count our program supervisor as number **10**

### **What is(are) the source(s) of funding for the Urban Wildlife Biologist Program?**

The majority of our program's funding comes in the form of a federal grant from the Pittman-Robertson Act. Passed in 1937, this law established an excise tax on firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment. The proceeds are collected by the federal government and then reallocated to fund state wildlife agencies.

### **What are your duties as an Urban Wildlife Biologist? What percent of your job is behind a desk and what percent is out in the field? What do you do when you are in the field? What duties take up most of your time?**

As an urban wildlife biologist, my primary responsibilities are to work with land managers to improve habitat for wildlife and to provide educational outreach. There's a lot of other things that pop up that don't fit neatly into any one category. One thing that I love about my job is that every day is different. I also really enjoy being able to find solutions to human-wildlife conflict issues and providing management guidance that can be implemented by communities on a large scale.

I spend more time than I would like sitting at my computer. Field work usually consists of technical guidance site visits, surveys, and bioblitzes. I also run a project for the Urban Wildlife Information Network, which involves setting up cameras to monitor wildlife diversity along the urban to rural gradient in Tarrant and Parker Counties. The Urban Wildlife Information Network is an international research project with around 50 cities participating across the world. The goal is to collect to understand broader patterns of urban wildlife and to better inform management decisions.



**What parts of nature interest you the most and you most enjoy learning about?**

This question is always tricky for me to answer because I really like a little bit of everything! But if I have to choose, I guess I'm most interested in mammals and herps.

**Tell us about your life outside of work.**

When I'm not working, I enjoy spending time with my husband and three young kids.



**Thank you Rachel for being our sponsor!**



## What I Love About Nature

by Teddi Zonker

As a Master Naturalist (2023), I've found that my love for nature stems from its beauty, peace, and endless inspiration. One of my greatest joys is gardening, particularly creating spaces that support pollinators, birds, and other wildlife. I've transformed my yard by removing grass and planting native species, turning it into a sanctuary for butterflies and other wildlife. For me, watching the butterfly process unfold is a symbol of hope and resilience.

I cherish the simple yet profound moments, like watching sunsets and exploring the outdoors. Photography allows me to capture the essence of nature, whether it's a delicate flower or a breathtaking landscape.

Nature is not just a backdrop for my life; it's a vital part of who I am. It teaches me lessons of growth, resilience, and interconnectedness, which I carry into my everyday life and work as a Master Naturalist.



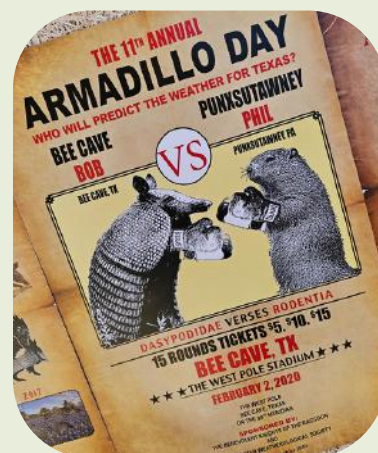
# Armadillo Day: Celebrating Texas Wildlife in Bee Cave, Texas

by Teddi Zonker, VP

Each year on February 2, Texans gather in Bee Cave to celebrate Armadillo Day, the state's answer to Groundhog Day. This unique tradition, now in its 15th year, features Bee Cave Bob, a nine-banded armadillo, as the official weather prognosticator. The event, initiated by fifth-generation Texan Terry Boothe and the Benevolent Knights of the Raccoon, serves as a lighthearted alternative to Pennsylvania's Punxsutawney Phil, reinforcing the idea that Texans don't need an out-of-state groundhog to predict their weather.

The celebration takes place at Boothe's ranch in Bee Cave, a location recognized by the Texas Legislature in 2007 as the "West Pole" of the Earth. Since its inception in 2010, the event has grown in popularity, drawing attendees eager to witness Bob's annual forecast and enjoy the festivities that honor Texas wildlife.

Ralph Fisher, a former rodeo clown and experienced animal trainer, has played a crucial role in Armadillo Day's success. Fisher, who has worked with a variety of animals for films and events—including bison, Longhorns, coyotes, and buzzards—has been Bee Cave Bob's caretaker for over a decade. His expertise in animal rehabilitation ensures that Bob is well cared for at his home in La Grange, Texas. Fisher is also known for organizing armadillo races and handling armadillos for films.



This year, my friend, Heather Thomas, and I had the opportunity to attend Armadillo Day and witness the festivities firsthand. It was a fantastic experience to see Texans come together to celebrate local wildlife and embrace the humor and tradition of this event. The enthusiasm of the attendees, along with the dedication of those who have kept this tradition alive, made it a truly memorable occasion.







# Native of the Month



## Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)

by Madison Gover



The Eastern Redbud is native of the month this month because it always reminds me of Valentine's Day. It has heart-shaped leaves and varying shades of beautiful purple or pink blooms. This is around the time of year the first bloomers of Spring begin to appear, and this includes the Eastern Redbud.

The Eastern Redbud is a great native alternative to other ornamental trees such as crepe myrtle. The redbuds don't get too terribly tall and are a great spectacle for your front yard. It provides woody cover for wildlife and can be made into a shrub or small tree. If you live in a neighborhood that has lost a few oak trees here and there, the eastern redbud does wonderful in the understory of much larger trees. Be aware that this tree's vibrant blooms have inspired different cultivars. Make sure you buy from a reputable nursery!



# Current Events

## MARCH

### **FWAS Birding**

Spring Bird Count

Saturday, 3/3

maroonmichael19600@gmail.com,  
817-781-7018

## APRIL

### **Migration throughout the Lower Rio Grand Valley**

Tuesday, 4/15-Saturday 4/19

tom.haase@sbcglobal.net, 817-229-4987

### **Free Day at the FWBG**

April 15th

## MAY

### **NPSOT Fall Plant Sale**

May 3, 2025

10 AM - 12:30 PM

**Current Events needs  
help gathering event  
schedules! Email to  
help!**



# Board Members

## CTMN Board Members

- Mary Beth Lampe - President
- Teddi Zonker - Vice President
  - Bill Collins - Secretary
- Dee Ann McGinnis- Treasurer

For submissions, nominations or announcements, please put the subject line as the newsletter category you are entering for and email to [newsletter@ctmn.org](mailto:newsletter@ctmn.org)

## CTMN Directors

- Carol Marcotte - Membership
- Sharon Hamilton - Past President
- Melinda Wolfinbarger - Training
- Theresa Thomas - VMS Admin & Vol and AT Hours
  - Sandy Thornburgh - Hospitality
  - Theresa Thomas - Records
  - Madison Cover - Newsletter
- Frank Keeney - Announcement eblasts
  - Mary Beth Lampe - Webmaster
- Julio Corralejo - Class of 2024 Rep.

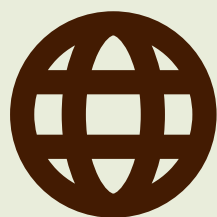


## Inclusivity:

Together we can make the newsletter inclusive to the visually impaired. Consider providing a text description of your photos for screen-reader software.



**Cross Timbers  
Master Naturalists  
Facebook Group**



**Cross Timbers  
Master Naturalists  
Website**

## CTMN Sponsors

- **Rachel Richter**, TPWD, Urban Biologist,  
[Rachel.Richter@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Rachel.Richter@tpwd.texas.gov)
- **Jacklyn Jones Doyle**, Texas AgriLife, County Extension Agent – Agriculture and Natural Resources,  
[jacklyn.jones@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:jacklyn.jones@ag.tamu.edu)
- **Michael Perez**, Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge  
[michael.perez@fortworthtexas.gov](mailto:michael.perez@fortworthtexas.gov)