

T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™
Cross TimbersSummer
Solstice!

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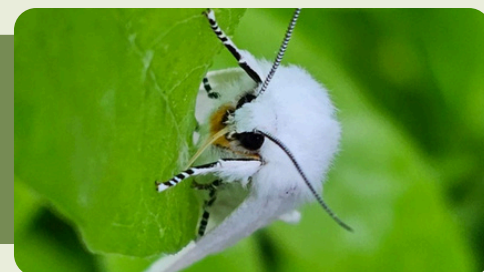


In this Issue:



July Speaker

Celebrate National Moth Month with CTMN's Kimberlie Sasan at our next chapter meeting. Learn how to discover moth diversity right in your backyard. Kimberlie will share tips, stories, and insights from thousands of observations.



Current Events

Bird walks, prairie talks, native plant webinars, and more fill July and August. Join in-person or online—there's something for everyone. Full schedule inside!

Adventurous Anecdotes

Our 2025 Open House welcomed nearly 40 potential new Master Naturalists—our biggest turnout yet! Attendees heard inspiring stories from current members and learned how they can make a difference. The future looks bright for our chapter!



CTMN Announcements



🎉 Welcome to the Cross Timbers Chapter, Lisa Gibson! Lisa joins us from Sabine-Neches Chapter in southeast Texas. (Orange, Hardin and Beaumont counties) She was double certified in 2024. She lives in Arlington. She will be a great asset to our chapter. Please introduce yourself to her when you see her! 🎉

📅 Apply by June 30!

Time is running out to apply for the 2024 Cross Timbers Master Naturalist class!

Let friends and family know — applications are open through June 30.

🔗 Apply here: [🔗 Apply here:](#)

Applicants will be notified of acceptance in July.

👋 Guests Welcome – Monthly Meetings

Our monthly meetings are open to the public!

📍 Fort Worth Botanic Garden – Rose Room

🕒 Social Time: 6:30–7:00 PM

🕒 Program: 7:00–8:00 PM

📅 Every third Monday of the month

🔗 [DETAILS](#)

🌱 What Is the Cross Timbers?

Need a quick intro to our ecoregion? Check out this short, engaging article that covers the Cross Timbers and the nearby Blackland Prairie.

🔗 [READ MORE](#)

🐍 Hammerhead Worms in North Texas

Sightings are increasing! These invasive flatworms are toxic to touch and harm native species.

How to kill safely:

- Place in sealed bag and freeze for 48 hours
- Or soak in salt and vinegar solution

Report sightings to:

🔗 [Texas Invasive Species Institute](#)

🔗 [Full article](#)

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We're excited to share that as of June 5, 2025, Wild Ones DFW is officially a chartered chapter of the national Wild Ones: Native Plants, Natural Landscapes organization. This newly minted chapter brings a fresh emphasis to the Dallas-Fort Worth region on restoring biodiversity through the use of native plants in our landscapes.

(Wild Ones is now available on VMS for CTMN AT/Volunteer hours).

One of the key tools Wild Ones offers to support their mission is its [Certified Native Habitat Program](#); a meaningful way for homeowners, schools, community spaces, and businesses to commit to ecologically beneficial landscaping. Certifying your landscape not only supports local pollinators and wildlife, but also signals your dedication to preserving the natural heritage of North Texas. Whether your yard is small or sprawling, certification is achievable and rewarding.

To learn more, we invite you to join the upcoming virtual presentation on Thursday, August 21, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. CDT, featuring Trent Cruthis, coordinator of the Certified Native Habitat Program. He will walk participants through what the program is, how it works, and how to get started with certifying your own space. This session is free and open to all with registration and is especially valuable for Master Naturalists looking to set an example, deepen their understanding of native landscapes, and inspire others.

As Master Naturalists, many of us are already passionate about using native plants to support ecosystems. Becoming a member of Wild Ones DFW is a great next step to engage with a growing community of people who share those values. Members gain access to educational resources, volunteer opportunities, and an even stronger connection to local conservation efforts.

Wild Ones DFW hosts monthly webinars featuring speakers who bring both local insights and broader perspectives on native plants and conservation. To register for the presentations or to learn more about Wild Ones DFW and the certification process, visit [**Events**](#). Let's support this new chapter and continue cultivating landscapes that serve a higher ecological purpose.



Speakers

July Speaker



**CTMN Chapter Meeting/Presentation –
July 21, 2025 – 7:00 p.m..**

Fort Worth Botanic Garden

Kimberlie Sasan, CTMN 2017

**Backyard Mothing/National Moth
Month**

Kimberlie Sasan is a Cross Timbers Texas Master Naturalist, class of 2017, and a Volunteer Master Entomology Specialist. As an avid moth enthusiast, she has traveled across Texas and beyond to document these nocturnal wonders, contributing over 36,000 observations and 5,700 species on iNaturalist. While she has spent many years mothing around the Dallas-Fort Worth area, she's discovered the greatest diversity right in her own backyard. In 2017, Kimberlie ventured to Costa Rica to document moths, and even after seven years, nearly one-third of her discoveries remain undescribed by science. In 2022, she described a previously unknown oak gall, *Druon laceyi*. Kimberlie also works as an Herbarium and Research Assistant at the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, here at the Fort Worth Botanic Garden.

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.

June 2025



TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

Title: Shell by Shell: Community-Based Oyster Gardening for Ecosystem Recovery

Speaker: Amy Nowlin, Texas A&M AgriLife Matagorda County Extension Agent – Coastal & Marine Resources

Description: Learn how the Mid-Coast Texas Master Naturalist Chapter is restoring coastal health through its Oyster Gardening Pilot Project. This hands-on effort grows oysters for conservation—not consumption—boosting water quality, marine habitat, and community science in Matagorda, Calhoun, and Aransas Counties.

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

[Register Here](#)

[Webex Guide](#)

[FAQ](#)

Member Highlight

Meet CTMN David Haury!

What year did you become a master naturalist?

I am part of the Cross Timber Master Naturalists Class of 2024!

What sparked your passion for nature and conservation?

My love of nature started as a child. Ever since I was very young I have always had a strong interest in insects, and that fascination has never diminished. My favorite part of our local zoo growing up was seeing the reptiles and amphibians in the Herpetarium; in my backyard this translated to American toads and occasionally, horned lizards! While I have owned gerbils and rats as pets, I have also always enjoyed watching the native mammals we encounter in suburban settings.



Two of my biggest influences in the natural world growing up were my dad and grandma. My dad is big into birding: he knows all the common birds of this region, and can describe them in detail. He was also very supportive of my path through Boy Scouts (all the way to Eagle Scout), going on monthly campouts and to summer camp with me and my scout troop. I learned a tremendous amount through the many nature-related merit badges I completed, as well as a wealth of direct observations I made from spending all that time outside. My grandma is THE reason I became a gardener.

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While she has always specialized in growing begonias, which are non-native, I still learned a comprehensive skill set of how to grow & care for plants from her. The begonia club meetings that she brought my sister and I to every month never shied away from using latin binomials, which is something I've especially embraced in recent years, since common names can be a source of confusion for folks trying to identify animals and plants online.

Which local natural spot has left a lasting impression on you and why?

It's tough to choose between the parks that I have volunteered at, but I think I'll choose Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve. I've probably gone on the most nature walks there, and it reminds me the most of what the natural areas near my hometown look/feel like.

What unique hobbies or creative pursuits do you enjoy when you're not volunteering with CTMN?

I enjoy expressing myself through music, namely playing my trumpet and singing at church. At my previous church I also arranged music for the small wind ensemble I helped form, there, though I have had less time for that since becoming a Master Naturalist, haha.



Featured Project

Elmer W. Oliver Nature Park



When: Year-round opportunities available

Where: Oliver Nature Park, Mansfield, TX

What: Inspire nature appreciation through education, conservation, and community engagement

Oliver Nature Park offers a wide range of volunteer opportunities for nature lovers of all ages and experience levels. Whether you're helping with summer camps, archery lessons, kayak programs, or caring for bird feeders and native gardens, there's a meaningful way for everyone to get involved. Volunteers can assist with educational programs, special events like the Monarch Festival and Stargazing Nights, or lend a hand behind the scenes in the office or with animal care.

This is a great opportunity to give back to the community, support environmental education, and enjoy the outdoors. All volunteers must complete an application and background check before participating.

[🔗 Learn more and apply: Description](#)

[✉️ Questions? Email: olivernaturepark@mansfieldtexas.gov](mailto:olivernaturepark@mansfieldtexas.gov)



Record-Breaking Turnout at Cross Timbers Master Naturalist Open House

by Teddi Zonker

The Cross Timbers Master Naturalist chapter recently held its most successful Open House to date, welcoming nearly 40 prospective applicants, the largest turnout ever from individuals not yet certified in the program. With only 28 spots available in the upcoming training class, the interest level presents both a challenge and an exciting opportunity for the chapter.

Four current Master Naturalists gave heartfelt presentations, sharing how the program has transformed their relationship with nature and inspired meaningful contributions to local conservation efforts. Guests had the opportunity to meet current members, ask questions, and explore how becoming a Master Naturalist can empower them to protect and serve the natural world around them.

This surge in interest reflects a growing awareness of environmental challenges. From the noticeable decline in butterflies and fireflies to the increasing loss of open spaces due to development, many attendees expressed a strong desire to be part of the solution.

The evening was a hopeful reminder that people care deeply about the health of our ecosystems and that together, through education, volunteering, and community action, we can make a difference.

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Plant of the Month



Mustang Grape (*Vitis mustangensis*)

by Madison Gover



Mustang grape is our plant of the month for June, as this is around the time they begin to produce fruit from their vines. Many plants in the genus *Vitis* are culturally significant to indigenous Americans, early Texas settlers, and animals alike. This is one plant that everyone has at some point in time, decided was useful. Their fruit will start green and turn purple around July, which is a good time to pick them.

If you decide to eat the skins, they are very stringent. The grape itself is not very easy to eat as they are full of seeds, tannins, and sharp with acidity. However, they have been made and processed into various food. Most notably, you can make wine, jelly, green grape pie, and candy from them.

Other than humans, mustang grape feeds birds, insects, and any mammal that can reach them. You may notice the young plant has deeply lobed leaves that fill in as the plant grows. As a vine, you may also be able to train it to grow decoratively!

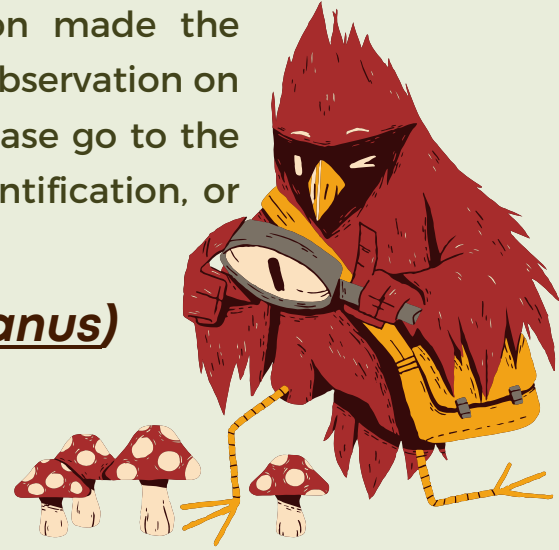


iNaturalist Observation of the Month

Each month we will choose an iNaturalist observation made the previous month in Tarrant or Johnson County*. Make an observation on iNaturalist to be in the running for this achievement! Please go to the observation itself to congratulate the user, add your identification, or favorite (star) the observation.

Greater Roadrunner (*Geococcyx californianus*)

creepycrittersftw



Time: 4:01 PM

Date: June 15, 2025

Location: Azle, Texas



*Observation copyright settings must not be set to full rights reserved so that the photo can be used for the newsletter.



Current Events



Upcoming Events – July & August 2025



Fort Worth Audubon Society (FWAS) Bird Walks

- July 9 • 6:30–10:00 AM
 - Birding at Village Creek Drying Beds, North Arlington
- July 12 • 7:30–9:30 AM
 - Birding at Foster Park, Fort Worth



Texas Native Cats – July Virtual Presentation

- Sunday, July 13 at 5:15 PM (CT)
 - Virtual – RSVP required



Native Prairies Association of Texas – Fort Worth Chapter

- July 14 • 6:30–8:30 PM (Zoom)
 - Comparing Prairies in Nebraska & Texas
 - Speaker: Chris Helzer



Wild Ones DFW – Virtual Presentation

- July 24 • 7:00–8:00 PM (CT)
 - "Tough Texas Native Plants for Drought and Flood"
 - Speaker: Carol Clark
- [Register here](#)



Monarch Watch Symposium

- August 5–7 • Lawrence, Kansas
 - monarchwatch.org/events/symposium2025





FWAS Bird Walks (continued)

- August 1 • 7:30–9:30 AM
 - Friday Feathers at Kelley Park, Arlington
- August 9 • 7:30–9:30 AM
 - Birding at Foster Park, Fort Worth
- August 13 • 9:30–10:00 AM
 - Birding at Village Creek Drying Beds, North Arlington

continued ->

Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge Early Birds

- July 21 • 7:30–9:30 AM
-  [Register here](#)
- July 27 • 7:30–9:30 AM
-  [Register here](#)
- July 28 • 7:30–9:30 AM

Milkweed Seed Collection Needed!

Help support Monarch Watch's restoration work by collecting native milkweed seeds in Texas!

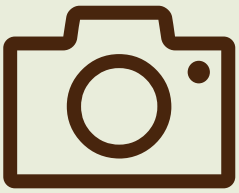
Needed Seeds by Region:

- Region 315: *Asclepias oenotheroides*, *A. asperula* (high priority)
- Region 255: *A. viridis*, *A. asperula*
- Region 231: *A. viridis*, *A. tuberosa*, *A. perennis*

 Learn how to harvest, clean, and donate seeds here

 View region map

Contact: Carol Clark, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist



Art & Photography Gallery



Firefly Certify
Your Yard



Monarch on green milkweed

All Photos by Teddi Zonker



Virginian Tiger Moth



Buttonbush



Board Members

CTMN Board Members

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

CTMN Directors

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

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

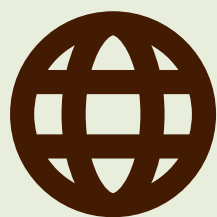


Inclusivity:

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,
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- **Jacklyn Jones Doyle**, Texas AgriLife, County Extension Agent – Agriculture and Natural Resources,
jacklyn.jones@ag.tamu.edu
- **Michael Perez**, Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge
michael.perez@fortworthtexas.gov