



THE PADDLEFISH

Briefings from Becky

“Who would have guessed that we would still be in this strange, Covid19 situation.” I know, that’s how I started the June “Briefings from Becky”.

.....and though it’s still very different, the state has provided us a some additional direction for AT, VT, events, meetings, etc. In this newsletter you will find several excerpts from state literature that hopefully will clarify some things. I ask you to read the newsletter carefully. Follow the provided links and/or contact me if you have questions. If you have concerns that we need to share with the state, please let us know that as well. We’ve now had 4 online meetings for Chapter Presidents, online meetings for Training Directors and a state reps online meeting. I must say that most of those have left my head spinning a bit.



I’ll be visiting with Stella and Susan very soon to discuss the Flotilla. Hopefully, we will soon be gathering info from officers and leadership board regarding chapter meeting possibilities.

Tammi and I still need to get back to planning for her great idea I mentioned before. (Hmmm.....) In the meantime, Tami has been doing a great job learning to navigate the new state web site. You all need to visit the new state TMN web site. It seem to be an improvement over the previous system.

Please continue prayers and thoughts for Carol Fox in the loss of her mother and Pam Watts in the loss of her nephew.

~Becky Gullette, CBTMN President

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2020 Meeting Dates

- Aug 10
- Sept 14
- Oct 12
- Nov 9

“Look into nature, and then you will understand it better.” ~Albert Einstein

Cypress Basin Texas Master Naturalists Financial Report for June 30, 2020

Beginning Bank Balance, 05/31/2020	\$ 13,682.92
Add Deposits:	+ 0
Less Expenses:	
Memorial—Pat Lewis \$100.00	
Memorial Plaques \$520.99	- <u>620.99</u>
(Swofford, Hughes, Ingold)	
 Ending Balance, 06/30/2020	 <u>\$13,061.93</u>
.....	
Flotilla Funds \$ 6,779.87	
General Funds 6,282.06	
	<u>\$13,061.93</u>

~ Submitted by Charles Gillis, CBTMN Treasurer



Join the Bird Herd!

Volunteers needed to maintain the bird blinds at the Refuge. Please contact Kim Deloney.



Join Bluebird Buddies

Volunteers to help maintain the bluebird houses and seasonal counts. Please contact Mike Woodruff.

COVID-19 Response

Texas Master Naturalist Program Policy Updates

Texas Master Naturalist Chapters are sponsored both by Texas AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. To that end, we adhere to policies set forth by both agencies. We also must be compliant with all state, county and local public health proclamations. The 2 articles following will summarize interim requirements/suggestions for Advanced Training and Volunteer Service. Since we do not plan new member training until spring, we will not deal with that in this newsletter. You may find additional detail at: <https://txmn.tamu.edu/welcome/covid-19-response/> or if you go to the TMN state website home page you may click on the box that says: COVID-19 Guidelines.

Volunteer Service Requirements

2020 Events & Situations

The state says: There will be **no change in the minimum requirements for volunteer service** for certification/recertification in 2020.

In the Training and Volunteer Ops area, we've offered you some options for "distance" service. Here are some ideas from the state.

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- * Write a newsletter article spotlighting a local SGCN (Species of Greatest Conservation Need) or make a presentation to give in the fall.
- * Verify or assist with curating observations in iNaturalist or eBird. More guidance on Citizen Science volunteer service coming soon. (Note from Becky: Remember, curating is not simply making observations. We are also still waiting for directions as to how simple observations in iNaturalist can be counted.)
- * Contributing to chapter efforts such as blog, newsletter, planning for fall trainings, AT and projects
- * Grant writing
- * Updating chapter websites, brochures, outreach materials. (Note from Becky: We can always use organization and enhancement of our outreach materials. If you have a particular educational outreach activity that you would like to share, contact me to confirm if we already have it in our collection. Though access to the resource room is still problematic, maybe interested members can get together (keeping number at 10 or less) in August. Early morning on the deck at the refuge isn't too bad with fans going.)

Remember, we can work outside as long as we use appropriate caution, appropriate social distancing and general cleansing guidelines are followed and local guidelines are heeded.

Though we should all try valiantly to get our VT and AT completed, please remember that after you initially certify, **you can still be a member even if you don't complete the annual requirements.**

Advanced Training Annual Requirements 2020 Interim Policy

This is a shortened version of the state offices current AT policy.

Online training and webinars will be accepted for **all of the minimum 8 hours of advanced training** required for certification.

Members are encouraged to attend in-person AT in the fall once travel & health restrictions lift. The state is urging us to focus on online training/webinars that are live and allow for real-time interaction, Q&A. etc.

The state encourages limits to those advanced trainings that are pre-recorded, not live or not interactive in the online format. No "learning by YouTube". Chapters are urged to host post-training discussion groups if the speaker isn't available for Q&A. Some online sessions created or sponsored by various chapters can be found at <https://txmn.tamu.edu/events/> Remember, simply being listed on the state calendar does NOT constitute approval of that . You still need to contact your chapter leadership for approval. Our chapter usually contacts the President or the VMS director. (beckygullette71@gmail.com or lmricht@hotmail.com)

(Note from Becky: However frustrating this is to most of us, myself included, I acknowledge that interactivity is important to the learning process. When we were being required to have at least 4 hours F2F there wasn't as much concern about the 4 hrs online being non-interactive. I will speak with our officers and leadership board about these criteria. I have a Zoom account and others may have similar access to online conferencing. Maybe if a group of us want to "watch" the same webinar, we can set up a short interactive online conference to discuss it.)

Work Day at the Refuge—past & future

We can continue our group workdays as long as a group does not exceed 10 people and we keep appropriate social distance. We are also expected to take precautions such as not sharing tools without wiping down the handles. Also, please remember that you can get VT for simply walking the trails and picking up easy to move limbs. For safety, you really need to have at least 1 other person with you.

Check out the pictures of our workday on June 13. Cal Witt, Linda Richtsmeier, Caroline Hughes, Jennifer and Jason Bean joined me at 7:30am. We intended to leave by noon but it was closer to 1pm before we actually got away. The trails were in really rough shape and we just kept pushing. Yea! Cal brought “the beast” string trimmer and he was a beast using it. We often don’t do trails in July but I’m sure that after the rain we’ve had they are again in need of attention.

Please let me know if you are available to work the trails at Cad-do Lake National Wildlife Refuge on Saturday, July 25. beckygullette71@gmail.com or 903-692-3813. Because of the heat we need to meet at 7:00am and stop no later than 10am.

If you cannot work that Saturday but plan to go another day, please let me know that as well. I may be able to go with you or find someone else who can.



How to maintain your social distancing on the trail!



Magazine Trail before June 13th Work day.



Magazine Trail after the hard work of CBTMN members. Great job!

Volunteers in Action



CBTM Members, Jennifer and Caroline, surveying the jungle of the Magazine Trail.

Plant ID Winner from last month

Jennifer Bean

Correct Answers were:

1. American Beautyberry
2. Milkweed
3. Meadow Pink
4. Sawtooth Sunflower
5. Red-seeded Dandelion
6. Mimosa Pudica

"Between every two pines there is a doorway to a new world."
~ John Muir

The Texas Master Naturalist 2020 Annual Meeting is going virtual!

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. More details coming soon!



Meetings, Training & Volunteer Opportunities

OFFICERS:

Becky Gullette
President

Susan Sedberry
Vice President

Kim Deloney
Secretary

Charles Gillis
Treasurer

Jill Wright
New Class Director

TBD
2019 Class Rep.

Linda Richtsmeier
Membership Director

Vanessa Adams
Neace
Advisor

Doug Weir
Advisor

Please note: Where field trips or trainings occur on a regular workday, this does not mean there will be no workday at all. Some may choose to do the workday instead of the special activity. We may group up to do trail work, etc. on a different day. **

All events are pending the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions.

JULY

July 13 Potluck meeting 6pm - Cancelled
July 18 WORKDAY

AUGUST

Aug 10 Break from meeting
Aug 15 WORKDAY if needed

SEPTEMBER

Sept 14 Regular meeting
Sept 19 WORKDAY
???? other presenters??? Possible field trip to LOP and presenter Rickey Maxey?

OCTOBER

Oct 12 Regular meeting
Oct 17 FIELD TRIP: Caddo Mounds Historic Site -- Todd McMakin
???? other presenters??? Possible field trip to LOP and presenter Rickey Maxey?

In Need of AT?

Remember that out of the 8 hours of advanced training required each year, only 4 can be online. Hopefully we will be able to continue with our chapter face-to-face AT before too long. Here are a few good online options:

Forestry and Natural Resources Webinars

<http://forestrywebinars.net/>

Conservation of Natural Resources

<http://www.conservationwebinars.net>

Natures Notebook

<https://www.usanpn.org/nn/webinars>

Texas Wildlife Federation

<https://www.texas-wildlife.org/webinars>

Cornell University

<https://academy.allaboutbirds.org>

Please share pictures and updates of any presentations, field trips, etc that is going on! We also can use interesting articles you come across. You can email them to cypress-basintmn@gmail.com

Volunteering Without Violating COVID-19 Restrictions

- * <https://www.inaturalist.org/>
- * <https://www.cocorahs.org/>
- * <https://ebird.org/home> (You may remember that we have an ebird kiosk in the visitor center at CLNWR. If you have the bird app you can enter sightings you may have at the refuge even though you can't get in to use the kiosk)
- * School and community native plant or pollinator gardens: Please honor the state and local laws/rules/guidelines related to the Covid-19 restrictions.
- * State parks are opening but go online to keep up with their status.
- * Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge trails are still open but remember, you should have someone with you on the trails; family member eliminates the worry of the safe distancing. If you partner with a friend, PLEASE, maintain the appropriate distance.
- * Visitor Center, classroom and Admin Building are not open at this time. Contact person is erik_duerkop@fws.gov 903-407-9303

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