



THE PADDLEFISH

Briefings from Becky

HAPPY FALL, Y'ALL!

The our beautiful East Texas fall color is finally starting to show! On Friday, I was on the road to Longview by 8am and noticed the beginning of leaf glow in the relatively low angle morning light. On my way home at mid-afternoon it looked like the amount of color had doubled! I didn't check this out scientifically but those trees were intensifying in color during the day, both from their own chemical changes and from the change in light. Get out and enjoy this beautiful color! Go outside at different times of the day! Make a point to observe different trees and shrubs not just at a distance but up close. There is some amazing beauty out there and more coming on!

Come to our meeting Monday night and enjoy a presentation on Paddlefish and on Aquatic Vegetation by Tim Bister and Margaret Stadig with TPWD Fisheries Division. They always do excellent presentations.

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After the program, we'll have a short business meeting. We'll take a quick look at some "new" volunteer opportunities, discuss some VMS issues and get updated on our ongoing projects.

Looking forward to seeing you. Remember, we are in a very large space, socially distanced and encourage to wear masks. As always we understand if you are not comfortable going to indoor gatherings during COVID19. We will record the program



~Becky Gullette, CBTMN President

"A fallen leaf is nothing more than a summer's wave goodbye." ~Unknown

Cypress Basin Texas Master Naturalists Financial Report for October 31, 2020

Beginning Bank Balance, 10/01/2020	\$ 12,354.69
Add Deposits:	+ 0
Less Expenses:	- 0
Ending Balance, 10/31/2020	<u>\$12,354.69</u>
Flotilla Funds	\$ 6,004.42
General Funds	<u>6,350.27</u>
	<u>\$12,354.69</u>

NOTES:

There was no financial activity for October.

I received an update from Amazon Smile - as of Aug 2020, our Chapter's cumulative receipts are \$215.97.

~ 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.



Pat Sawyer has done an amazing job of developing a new website for the Friends of CLNWR! Take some time to visit it at: <https://www.caddofriends.com>. It is easy to navigate and has an interactive map. The pictures help you orient to the various trailheads and reflect the interesting history and the beauty of the refuge. Great job, Pat!

Cypress Basin Texas Master Naturalists Minutes from October 12, 2020

Becky called the meeting to order at 6:30.

Becky reminded everyone of the Annual Meeting which will be held virtually this year. Tami, Jill, and Becky are planning to attend. It is not too late to register. The virtual 5 K will be October 3rd through October 17th. The cost to participate is 35\$.

Tim Bister will come to the November meeting and talk about the state of vegetation on Caddo and the Paddlefish Project on Caddo. His program should last about an hour and would count as AT credit. There is the possibility of recording this presentation so that all members could watch the presentation at their convenience.

Becky discussed a possible field to Caddo Mounds in the spring. Due to Covid restrictions, the groups would be limited to ten or fewer.

The refuge will be closed November 12th – 15th and November 19th – 22nd for rifle hunting.

Becky said there will be no pot luck at the November meeting and pins will not be passed out until January. This will give people more time to meet the requirements for the pin. Becky noted that at the last board meeting, it was decided to retain the current officers for now. Caroline and Susan are the new training class directors. Stella is in charge of food for the new class meetings. A new class will be attempted next fall.

Tami proposed a seasonal online photo contest (more information to come).

The key is a problem for the bird feeders at the refuge. The ladder and bird feed is locked in the classroom. Kim may possibly get access to the key. Susan is going to check into classroom access. Mike and Thelma are going to get with Vanessa concerning the blue bird boxes. They need to be counted and located. Some need repairing or replacing. We have nine new ones to go out. Some are overgrown with vegetation so trimming around them is something that needs to be done.

Trail work is planned for the October 17th workday. We will meet at 9:00. At 11:00, those interested will participate in an INaturalist activity. Becky also discussed the adopt-a-loop project. Wildlife can be tracked on loops through INaturalist. Becky discussed hosting on the refuge deck and passing out maps to refuge visitors.

We will continue to facilitate diversity and inclusion by encouraging others who are interested in our projects to become members. We will plan to do Marshall Night Out in the future and pass out information.

Hattie reports that weevils are still being released.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15.

Notes from TX Master Naturalist Annual Meeting

Coming Soon!

After much waiting it was revealed at the Annual meeting that the Texas Master Naturalist License Plate will soon be available. It is expected to become available Winter 20/21 TxDOT Specialty License Plate Website for a purchase of \$30 (\$22 of that goes to the TMN Program. Watch for the announcement through TMN Listserv and website.



2021 Annual Meeting

Save the date—October 21-24, 2021 Dallas/Fort Worth Airport Marriott

Pins Reveal



Become a Texas Watershed Steward

This is a free educational workshop, hosted by Piney Wood Lakes Chapter Texas Master Naturalists, designed to help watershed residents improve and protect their water resources by getting involved in local watershed protection and management activities. In-Person & Virtual Attendance Options are available on November 17, 1 to 5 pm, in Livingston, TX, at the First Baptist Church, 106 Colt Rd, Livingston, TX 77351. Training may count (up to 4 hours) after review and pre-approval as advanced training by your local chapter.

Preregistration is Required for this FREE workshop that will provide an overview of water quality and watershed management in Texas, including a discussion on the Lake Livingston watershed and best management practices to help improve and protect it. Free continuing education credits/CEUs may be offered for a wide variety of professional disciplines. To register, visit <https://tws.tamu.edu/workshops/registration> or call 979.862.4457., the event flyer is available on <https://www.facebook.com/PWLCTMN>.

It's a Hog? It's a Boar? It's... Super Pig?

(iWire October 2020) Feral hogs (*Sus scrofa*) have a secure seat on the list of [most problematic invasive species](#) in Texas. The Texas population alone surpasses 1.5 million, with approximately 9 million spanning 35 states. Mature feral hogs can grow up to 36 inches high at the shoulder and weigh over 400 pounds. Their nocturnal rooting behavior disrupts vegetation and soil, leaving trademark ruts behind. The increased number of lumbering bodies and voracious appetites are endangering ground nesting birds and animals. They are major nest predators of threatened and endangered sea turtles. They also can carry several diseases and parasites that can be transmitted to livestock and wildlife. In 2019, the annual loss to agriculture in Texas due to feral pig damages was estimated at \$118.8 million.

Hogs (Suidae) were first introduced to Texas over 300 years ago by explorers as a food source. Since then, these hogs have been domesticated and bred to be fertile all year round. When a domestic hog escapes or is released, it will quickly become feral. Each generation of offspring will lose the domestic traits and grow sharp tusks, which are usually cut off piglets by farmers. In the 1930s, the European wild boar was introduced by ranchers and sportsmen for hunting. European boar and feral hogs are mating, resulting in a European-feral crossbreed, also called “super pigs”, that retain the best traits from each. They remain fertile all year round, capable of producing multiple litters a year, each with an average litter of 10 piglets. They have tough hairy hide, are highly intelligent, and can adapt quickly. Because of crossbreeding, there are very few true European boars remaining in Texas.

Feral hog hunting is legal all year round without a permit. Transportation and release of live feral hogs can exacerbate the situation and is unlawful, unless in compliance with Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) regulations. [TPWD Hunting Regulations](#). Authorities utilize multiple methods to reduce the population of feral hogs, including traps and aerial gunning. There is a lot of controversy about how various methods may alter feral hog behavior and spread them to areas not yet infiltrated. Texas estimates indicate that with current control methods, annual population reduction reaches 29%. A continuous 66-70% population reduction is necessary to prevent a population boom. There may be 30-50 wild feral in your yard preventing your kids from playing outside for 3-5 minutes, but vigorous efforts are being made.

*Hunting for native Javelinas (Peccary), which are smaller than feral hogs with a square build, distinct lighter collar of fur and no tail, and not problematic, is restricted to hunting season and requires a license.

For more information: [Ecology and Management of Wild Pigs](#).



Feral hog (*Sus scrofa*). Credit: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Bugwood.org



Feral pig damage. Credit: USDA Wildlife Services.



Javelins (Peccary). Credit: USDA Wildlife Services.

“Autumn shows us how beautiful it is to let things go.” ~ **Unknown**

Meetings, Training & Volunteer Opportunities

OFFICERS:

Becky Gullette
President

Susan Sedberry
Vice President

Kim Deloney
Secretary

Charles Gillis
Treasurer

Caroline Hughes
Susan Sedberry
Training Co-Directors

TBD
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.**

NOVEMBER

Nov 09 Potluck meeting 6pm AT: Tim Bister & Margaret Stadig

Nov 14 WORKDAY

DECEMBER

Dec 14 Break from meeting

Dec 19 WORKDAY if needed

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 cypressbasintmn@gmail.com

Volunteer Gardening Opportunities

CLSP Superintendent, Brandon Lopes-Baca, is interested in volunteers to tend to the garden at park headquarters.

CLNWR Manager, Erik Duerkop, is interested in volunteers to tend to the garden at the comfort station near Refuge headquarters. There may be some members of the Friends of CLNWR that would like to work with you.

Trail Development at CLNWR

In addition to our regular trail work at CLNWR, we have some special trail opportunities:

- * Erik Duerkop says that Hope Cemetery maintenance is under the Refuge supervision not private as we thought. It needs repair of the iron fence, repositioning of some headstones (Erik is looking into that) and of course weeding and trimming.
- * Erik is interested in supporting our efforts at clearing old sidewalks and developing a trail that could eventually connect the Visitor Center Parking lot with the Parade Ground. Pete, Jill and Becky began a clearing process at the last workday. Vanessa has been enthusiastic about this project for some time. Hattie has expressed an interest as well. It has the potential for turning into a beautiful and interesting path that more easily used by folks with mobility issues. There are some interesting native plants along the way, the birding has been good at the Parade Ground and the new path could provide another location for bluebird boxes. With the visitor center trail, this path could enhance the use of the refuge for those who wanted to stay closer to the headquarters area.

If you are interested in either of these opportunities please contact Becky.

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