

Master Naturalist™



Los Caminos

The Texas Master Naturalist program activities are coordinated by AgriLife Extension and Texas Parks and Wildlife. Texas Master Naturalist and Extension programs serve all people regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

Celebrating and sharing our experiences along "the roads" we take through nature.

Award Winning Newsletter of the El Camino Real Chapter

Milam County

Texas Master Naturalist

Fall 2011

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Year of the Turtle

by Katherine Bedrich

Turtles can be dated back to the Triassic age, 200 million years ago. There are approximately 300 species of turtles; they live on every continent except Antarctica. Several species, including the American Box Turtle, can live to be over 100 years old.

The top shell on a turtle is called the carapace and the bottom or underneath shell is the plastron. The sections on the shell are **called scutes...they are made of keratin**, much like our fingernails. As the turtle grows, you will see a separation of the scutes and a lighter colored area between them.

This area will be softer than the surrounding scutes. Turtles are attached to their shell; the shell is built into their skeleton. The top shell, the carapace, is made up of approximately 50 bones. Counting the growth rings on the scutes of the top shell does not tell the age of the turtle.

Turtles have good eyesight, seeing in full color; they also have a good sense of smell. Their hearing and sense of touch is excellent. The turtle shell has feeling due to nerve endings. Instead of teeth, turtles have a sharp beak for eating. Depending on species, the beak may be scissor-like, hook-like or serrated. The earliest turtles did have teeth and could not retract their head. They cannot protrude their tongues from their

mouths. Some can live up to a year without food. A group of turtles is called a bale.

Some land turtles can actually out run a human on level ground. Once a male sea turtle hatches and enters the ocean, it will probably not step on land again. Only one out of one thousand sea turtles survive after hatching.

Turtles, like many reptiles, play an important role ecologically. Their eggs and young serve as important food for many species.

Turtles consume small aquatic life, such as snails, insects, crayfish, small amphibians and fish all of which are adapted to having turtles as predators. Many species of turtles are important consumers of carrion and serve as ecosystem **"bottom feeders" or cleaners**. Some species consume algae that could deplete

oxygen from the water if grown without control.

Box turtles (genus Terrapene) can be distinguished from other native Texas turtles by having a single hinge at the front of the lower shell (plastron), allowing them to fold it up and closing the front of the shell **entirely; thus the common name of "box turtle"**. They consume **earthworms, insects**, plants, berries, and mushrooms. Texas has



Our Motto

- Look
- Learn
- Teach
- Conserve

Our Mascot
Green Tree Frog



Did You Know?

Where in the world is the *least* rainfall? (No, it is not Texas!)

See the last page for the answer.

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two native box turtles -Eastern Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina*) and the Ornate Box Turtle (*Terrapene ornata ornata*). You can participate in the Texas Box Turtle Survey at Texas Nature Trackers on the Texas Parks and Wildlife webpage. http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/learning/texas_nature_trackers/box_turtle_survey/

Texas Turtle Watch is a Citizen Scientist project. Observations of sliders, cooters and softshells can be submitted to www.fortworthzoo.org/conserve/.

Turtles are facing many pressures in Texas; one of the most intense pressures comes from the commercial trade. Large

numbers of turtles are caught to be sold as food or pets. Over 250,000 wild-caught turtles were exported from Texas to Asia from 2000-2005. Another impact on turtle populations is roadways and habitat disruption. Information collected will help to establish a baseline about turtle populations on both private and public lands. Repeated data sighting help scientists and the public learn about turtle activities and impacts on turtle populations over time.

Another site to find information on turtles: www.texasurtles.org

- Article and photo by Katherine Bedrich

Sharing Nature Stories

by Our Members

This is something new I'm starting with this Fall Issue.

At all of our chapter and board meetings, as well as many other gatherings, we take a few minutes at the beginning to share any nature sightings or unique stories with our fellow nature lovers. And sometimes, folks send out an email about some experience. Here are a few of these for your reading pleasure. These happen to be all about birds, but the stories usually cover all sorts of nature.

Lucy Coward: The other day I was looking out my front window to see what birds have flown in and to my amazement there were two pair of birds that I had never seen before. So I went and looked them up in my bird book and to my surprise it was a pair of Orchard Orioles and a pair of Yellow Billed Cuckoos. Now how cool is that to find TWO birds you never saw before?

Paula Engelhardt: On the morning of September 6th, I was working at my computer and I heard a very loud thump. I knew immediately that it was a bird hitting my glass patio door, as this happens occasionally. I went to look and saw a female Baltimore Oriole on the patio, wobbling around, its little head spinning. She looked really dazed so I ran outside to inspect her. She fell over and I picked her up. I sat in a patio chair and held her in my lap, gently stroking her head and telling her that she'd be alright. She didn't even try to get away. After a while, she looked much better and I opened my hand and she flew up onto the chair back. Then she flew across the patio and, eventually, into a tree.



Later that day I was delighted to see her feeding from my hummingbird feeder! I hadn't been sure that she was go-

ing to make it, as I'd never seen a bird look so bad after crashing into my window. Guess I need to put some decals up to help the birds see the glass. Although I felt terrible about the incident for the bird's sake, it was such a blessing to be able to hold and comfort this beautiful wild creature, if even for a few moments.

Ann Collins: I have heard from a few of you about the male Baltimore orioles at your humming bird feeders. Ye! What a sight! These are real Halloween Birds dressed in their costumes for their own ball. This morning we had 3 adult males and at least 2 sub adults. The little ones reminded me of adolescent boys just beginning to get a shadow of a mustache. Smart alects, for sure.

They seem to be everywhere the hummers are. I had about 50 hummers this morning. Carter and I likened them to a cloud of mosquitoes. I filled seven feeders and expect to have to fill them again in the morning. That wonderful cool air from the north really brought them in. I guess the Orioles followed them down or vice versa.

I have two heavily laden pear trees and the Orioles seem to be enjoying them as well as trying to bite the flowers off of the HM feeders. Carter thought they might enjoy some partially peeled pears so we hung a couple of them near the feeders and guess what? Carter was right. I just saw one hanging on to the pear and eating it.

I saw my first Pine Siskin of the year this morning, too. The guide book says these dark, heavily streaked birds have a good bit of yellow in the wings and tail feathers, but it is seldom seen. Since I forget from year to year what they look like I did have to check my Petersons. One of them was in a flat feeder with sunflower seeds in it when a N. cardinal tried to scare it away. No way! He was there to stay and fanned out his wings to reveal much more yellow than I have ever seen. These little babies can get to be somewhat pesky

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(Continued from page 2)

later on when they and , my favorite bird, the American Goldfinches flock to the feeders and empty them in a couple of hours.

I also saw a precious (hate to use that word, but can't think of anything else) Wilson's warbler. If you are not familiar with that bird look it up and keep your eyes peeled. Maybe you will be so lucky!

Don't worry about the Orioles scaring off the Hummers. They (the HMs) are hungry aggressive little dudes and they aren't about to give way to a few big black and orange bullies. If you are doing the Hummingbird Round-up, one of the questions asked is about attacks on the hummers. So, be on the look out for that and be sure to include that information on your summary.

Get out there and get your binoculars ready, the days are cooling off and the birds are getting ready to fly South.

Happy birding!

Paula Engelhardt and Ann Collins: Ann and Paula went to the Eckert James River Bat Cave Preserve, near Mason, TX, this past weekend to watch the bats emerge. **Here's a picture**

of them in front of the cave entrance, and one of the bats in flight.

They also got to see a Swainson's Hawk and two juvenile Great Horned Owls feeding on the bats -- pretty cool!!

[photos by Paula]



This Cameron 6-year-old's hobby just might bug you.

by Jeanne Williams

[Reprinted by courtesy of the Temple Daily Telegram.]

What has more than 900 legs, assorted colors, shapes, wings and antennae, and has three times lured into its midst a steady convoy of enthralled wildlife aficionados, students and curiosity seekers?

Answer: Six-year-old **Charlie Mayer's assemblage of mounted Insecta**, or in people terms, a creepy crawly collection of critters.

At age three, Charlie manifested a fascination for these intriguing air-breathing, invertebrate animal arthropods he picked up along the way at various sites during his life in Rockport and Cameron.

Today, Charlie has amassed an impressive display of nearly 200 of the creatures, ranging from large walking sticks to common queen butterflies clustered in shadow boxes along with flies, cicadas, moths, beetles and grasshoppers.

Charlie, son of Charles and Bobbie Mayer of Cameron and a Ben Milam Elementary School student, is an articulate orator on the topic of his bugs, all skillfully mounted in his display cases.

He says ruefully that there isn't enough space in these glass-fronted containers to hold too many more and he wants a

really big case to develop a spectacular collection. There are more bugs-in-waiting when it comes to mounting them for display.

Insect collection is a diversion that basically grabbed Charlie in its pinchers when he began investigating the contents of the swimming pool filter each day, and the quest expanded to other venues.

"We would do that every morning," Charlie said. "We checked the filters, and we would find crazy bugs and weird bugs. We would find bugs on the river on the bridge, we would be walking and we would find them, and they would be under the lights at night."

His mom said the family bestowed Charlie with an insect net for his birthday **"then he really started collecting insects that fly."**

Before that, Charlie caught insects with his bare hands and sometimes in his cap. His dad, he said proudly, can catch **bees for him in his hands "because they won't sting you unless they are mad."**

"I just started with bugs that were really cool," he said. "I collect everything I can find."

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Charlie even remembers the first bug he ever caught, a tree beetle, and he readily points out this special critter in the display case. He has learned to identify the boys from the girls, and can easily name the bugs in his collection. His favorite is the Dobsonfly "because it has long pinchers."

But pinchers are not a prerequisite for Charlie's admiration.

Each of the insects in his collection is intriguing in appearance, as well as their respective careers in the insect world. To be a truly dedicated insect researcher, Charlie observed **the metamorphosis of a horned tomato worm into a "tobacco sphinx moth" and supervised the changing of larvae into a Monarch butterfly larvae.**

Insect trivia from an experienced bug collector: walking sticks are the hardest to catch, a type of moth has a defense mechanism on its wings, and **"some things can be furry and they could be bad for you, they could sting you."**

Also, along his bug-grabbing route, supportive parents bought him a book on insects that he uses constantly.

Charlie has taken his insect sideshow on the road — twice invited to display exhibits at the El Camino Real Master Naturalist Chapter's Milam County Nature Fest and at the Ben Milam Elementary School "Insect Day," where the collection was dubbed an inspiring showstopper.

As word has circulated around Cameron that the Mayer household harbored **a dedicated bug enthusiast, "we will have people catch a bug they don't know and they will bring it to Charlie and see if he has it in his collection. It's kind of contagious," Mrs. Mayer said.**

While Charlie has some distance to go with his formal education, he already is making plans to become a wildlife biologist.

Meanwhile, as he studies his way through elementary school, he will continue to collect specimens of the hundreds of insects crawling, hopping or flying around Cameron.

"That's what I do, and that's my fa-

vorite thing to do. Sometimes I can't find anything, and go back inside and wait a little while and go back out, and there are more bugs," Charlie said. "You can get more anything; you could get candle flies, beetles, rhino beetles, cicadas, dragonflies, butterflies, moths, walking sticks ..."

After all, the opportunities for bugging are endless for an enterprising 6-year-old.

- by Jeanne Williams, jwilliams@tdtnews.com, Temple Daily Telegram

[Charlie and his bug collection will be the featured program at our Chapter Meeting on October 13, 2011 at the American Legion Building. Come and earn some Advanced Training hours from the "Bug Master"]



A Native Plant and Wildlife Quiz

By eNature.com

I really like the eNature.com web site for all sorts of neat information. Here's a great little 5 question quiz from there called "How Wild is Your Garden" - to test your knowledge on the best plants for Wildlife. - Editor [Answers at the end]

1. Attracting Hummingbirds: Among the most delightful visitors to the backyard garden are the hummingbirds. Choose the wildflower that is best for attracting hummers to a native-plant garden.



A) Foxglove,
Digitalis purpurea
(photo © Walt Anderson)



B) Cardinal Flower,
Lobelia cardinalis
(photo © LBJ Wildflower Center)



C) Woods' Rose,
Rosa woodsii
(photo © Jerry Pavia)

2. Attracting Butterflies: If you plant the right plants, butterflies will come. Which species is the best choice for a native-plant butterfly garden?



A) Queen Anne's Lace,
Daucus carota
(photo © Jerry Pavia)



B) California Dutchman's Pipe,
Aristolochia californica
(photo © Lynn Lozier)



C) Spider Antelope-horns,
Asclepias asperula
(photo © LBJ Wildflower Center)

3. Shrubs: Some shrubs are virtual wildlife magnets, offering nectar, berries, browse, and protective thickets for hiding. Choose the best shrub for a native-plant wildlife garden.



A) Catawba Rhododendron,
Rhododendron catawbiense
(photo © Leonard Lee Rue, Jr.)



B) Highbush Blueberry,
Vaccinium corymbosum
(photo © Alan & Linda Detrick)



C) One-seed Hawthorn,
Crataegus monogyna
(photo © David Cavagnaro)

4. Trees: Well-selected trees nourish and protect wildlife. Choose the best tree for a native-plant wildlife garden.



A) Eastern Red Cedar,
Juniperus virginiana
(photo © E.R. Degginger)



B) White Oak,
Quercus alba
(photo © David Cavagnaro)



C) Horse-chestnut,
Aesculus hippocastanum
(photo © Jerry Pavia)

5. Aquatic Plants: Well-chosen aquatic plants can help attract frogs, turtles, dragonflies, birds, and more. Choose the best aquatic plant for your native wildlife garden:



A) Yellow Pond-lily,
Nuphar lutea
(photo © LBJ Wildflower Center)



B) Water Hyacinth,
Eichhornia crassipes
(photo © E.R. Degginger)



C) Soft Rush,
Juncus effuses
(photo © Joy Spurr)

[Answers: B, C, B, A, C. For an excellent explanation as to the rationale for these right answers, as well as other great choices, see <http://www.enature.com/challenge/GardenChallenge1.asp>]

Birding at Cedar Hill Ranch by Ann Collins

On a really hot Saturday in August members of the Birding Committee met at Joyce and Mike Conner's Cedar Hill Ranch in Gause to do a birding survey. Tim Seigman is assisting the Conners in getting their Wildlife Exemption. Their ranch is seven hundred acres, one mile wide and two miles long. Almost all of it is dense woods, lots of yaupon. They plan to thin out some of the yaupon and leave the rest for whatever wildlife happens to take up residence. They have made some really great trails for four wheelers and mules only, no trucks beyond the house.

We met at 6:30am to try to escape some of the horrific heat. The early hour didn't make much difference in this record breaking summer. Members of El Camino Real that came out for the trek were: Katherine Bedrich, Ann Collins, Vivian Dixon, Paula Engelhardt, Donna Lewis, and her friend Mack MacBride. Jim and Mary Waldson are neighbors of the Conners and helped to organize the outing. Betty Vermier, Jim and Kitty Anding, Bruce Neville, and Chuck ? (sorry, don't know his last name) came from the Brazos Valley Chapter and the Rio Brazos Audubon Society. It was a real treat for us to get to bird with some real experts.

Several new birds were added to the ever growing list of species for Milam County. The group was divided into three groups so we all didn't get to see everything. One of the groups saw Tree swallows and a Mississippi kite, that was seen on the school grounds in Cameron a couple of weeks later. Another got to see an Olive sided flycatcher that must have been migrating because they are not supposed to be here. Three Common ground doves were also seen. A couple of our group that shall remain nameless got spooked by a large herd of wild hogs. It sounded, according to their report, like an army marching through the woods. Scary!

The species and counts that were seen were:

Great Blue Heron 1
 Black Vulture 12
 Turkey Vulture 70
 Mississippi Kite 1 [\(photo\)](#)
 Red-shouldered Hawk 2
 Swainson's Hawk 1
 Red-tailed Hawk 1
 Crested Caracara 2
 Common Ground Dove 3
 Mourning Dove 26
 Greater Roadrunner 1
 Eastern Screech Owl 1 [\(photo\)](#)
 Chimney Swift 2
 Ruby-throated Hummingbird 9
 Red-bellied Woodpecker 5



Downy Woodpecker 5
 Pileated Woodpecker 5
 Eastern Wood Pewee 2
 Least Flycatcher 1
 Olive-sided Flycatcher 1 [\(photo\)](#)
 White-eyed Vireo 20 (J-1)
 Blue-headed Vireo 1 ?
 Blue Jay 1
 American Crow 20
 Purple Martin 5
 Tree Swallow 2
 Carolina Chickadee 17
 Tufted Titmouse 8
 Carolina Wren 30
 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher 11
 Northern Mockingbird 2
 Summer Tanager 4 [\(photo\)](#)
 Northern Cardinal 100
 Painted Bunting 21 (J-1)
 Orchard Oriole 1 [\(photo\)](#)
 Feral Hogs 19+
 Nine-banded Armadillo 1
 Raccoon 1
 Lesser Earless Lizard



Pipevine Swallow-tailed Butterfly
 Spice Bush Swallow-tailed Butterfly
 Goatweed Leafwing Butterfly
 Satyr Butterfly sp.
 Common Whitetail Dragonfly
 Eastern Pond Hawk Dragonfly [\(photo\)](#)
 Roseate skimmer Dragonfly
 Lubber Grasshopper
 Bird Grasshopper
 Velvet, Harvester, and Leafcutter Ants



We are planning another outing to the Conner's ranch in November when it cools off a little.

We have also been asked by Tim to do a survey for Peggy and Collier Perry sometime this fall. Hopefully, many of you will be willing to go out in better conditions. We really did have a great time. Birders are the Greatest!

- by Ann Collins

[All photos from internet public domain, with imbedded credits as available]

On Becoming a Naturalist by Michelle Fletcher

Thoughts on Becoming a Naturalist
(Maybe not a Master)

In 2006 my husband and I bought the farm. Literally! Suddenly, I wanted to know everything. What kind of bird was that singing? What kind of tree was that? And the bugs!!!! All kinds of bugs!! Were they harmful, helpful? My questions needed answers, so when the opportunity arose for me to take the Master Naturalist course; I signed up.

Now, to tell you the truth, a lot of those questions remain unanswered, but a lot of my attitudes have changed. At one time, when trees would die on our place, I was anxious to get it cut down, chopped it into firewood and have all those branches piled and burned. Now, I leave it for all those little creatures to live in. And those piles of branches that I used to burn, I now leave as habitat for all kinds of critters.

To my husband's chagrin, I'm also spending a goodly portion of my food budget on birdseed. Putting out scoop after



scoop and seeing to it that the birdbaths are maintained. While planting the garden, I also have to consider planting dill and penstemon for all those beautiful butterflies and hummers. What I have learned is to look at a lot of things differently.

One afternoon, my thoughts turned to dying and just what would happen to me after death. Is there an afterlife or would I just be so much worm food? It suddenly hit me! Worm Food!! Could any thing be better? I would be just so much worm food! How wonderful, just a continuation of that marvelous cycle of life. Me: compost, a future flower, or tree or grass, feeding a continuing line of bees, and birds and other critters.

Things just don't
get much better than that.

- by Michelle Fletcher

[photos from internet public domain]



Paraphrase of Genesis Chapter I by Michelle Fletcher

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

And God made the light and separated the day from night,

And God saw that it was good.

And God made the dry land and the waters,

And God saw that it was good.

And God made the grass and the trees and every herb yielding fruit.

And God made the fowl that fly in the air and the creatures that swim in the water; the great whales and the beasts of the earth.

And God made all the creatures great and small.

And God saw that it was good.

And God created man in his own image, and he gave man dominion over the earth, and everything that creepeth upon the earth, and everything that swims in the sea and the fowl that flies through the air.



And man said, "This is good".

And man builded great cities, and he spun cotton, wool and flax into cloth and he builded great highways for all manner of things that speed upon the earth.

And man said, "This is very good".

And man created TV and microwave and "the chip" and automatic door openers and electric can openers and telephones.

And man said, "This is great".

And in the END, man created styrofoam, disposable diapers, toxic waste, fluorocarbons and plastics.

And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the earth.

- by Michelle Fletcher

[photos from internet public domain]



Tuff Year! - by Donna Lewis



If you are like me, you are looking at your "wild-scape" and thinking - where are all the butterflies, and birds that were here last year - and how do I rescue them from death?

As you know, high temperature and lack of water have severely affected every-

thing this year and may happen again in years to come. Our pond, like many others, is "dry as a bone" even after having it dug deeper and wider last year. We pray our Well holds out.

More animals and snakes have appeared in my yard than ever before. Some of these creatures, such as the Rattlesnakes, have never been seen on any of my property. This year is a first and my Lab was the "lucky" one to find it.

Even a thirsty "Cotton Mouth" found its way to my back porch.

Around here, Copperheads are "Old Hat!"

All of nature is suffering from heat and thirst.

What can I do? I ask myself, being a naturalist true to nature.

The few plants that have survived in my garden are the "Lantana, Flame Acanthus, Turks Cap, Salvia, Cow-Pen Daisy, Passion Vine, Coral Vine, Cypress Vine, Trumpet Vine, Dutchman's Pipe Vine, and the Milk-Weed."

There is no magic "recipe" to make the drought go away.

Desperate for solutions, I have applied all my skills and resources that I have learned as a naturalist, and put them all into a lot of hard-work, and deep thought to try ways to best serve, at least part of the wildlife, on my property.

Here are a few things I have found successful in assisting



the plants, butterflies, and birds this year. Shade in the garden is a major factor. Every plant, with the benefit of shade for at least half the day, has done well for me. Planting near trees has been a

plus.

The vines and trellises have offered shade for other plants around them as well. The thicker vines provide protection from the heat of the sun, and from predators of the caterpillars. **I have found...when caterpillars are exposed to excessive heat, what a horrible thought...they seem to turn into, "French fries."**

Extra watering is essential for all the living creatures visiting my garden. Saucers from broken pots are recycled, and great to hold shallow-water. **I have "ten" saucers** placed on the ground and sitting on cinder-blocks.



The broken pots are turned-over and protecting the toads from the heat. Several bird baths are sitting under shady areas to keep the water cool for birds to drink and bath. With this heat, evaporation is a great concern. Keeping water in the shallow dishes and bird baths is a challenge and must be monitored and filled regularly.

Planting "native" nectar plants has been a great source of "drink" for the Butterflies and Hummingbirds in my garden. I find that the "nectar" I prepare for the Hummingbird feeders has to be changed at least ever two or three days, and more frequent where exposed to the sun.

So far, all these things seem to be working. Rescuing each and every plant and animal is impossible for me to do and very frustrating knowing I can't help them all. **However, if I manage to save even one precious "living thing," I have done my part to preserve the future.**

Even the un-wanted snakes and skunks need a drink and shelter.

- By Donna Lewis



[Photos from the internet public domain]



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Certifications, Etc. By Cindy Bolch

Achieving Certification: Kathy Lester, Sandy Braswell, Vickie Braswell, Michelle Fletcher, Barbara Cromwell, Rich Cromwell, and Tracy Scarpinato



Our 2011 re-certification pin is the Horned Lizard, our State Reptile.

Achieving 2011 Annual Re-Certifications to date include: Cindy Bolch, Katherine Bedrich, Lucy Coward, Sue Taylor, Don Travis, Paula Engelhardt, Dorothy Mayer, Janice Johnson, Sandra Dworzaczyk, Debbi Harris, Cindy Travis, Paul Unger and Donna Lewis

Lifetime to date Milestone Achievement Levels Awarded include:

250 Hours—Paul Unger, Ann Collins, Katherine Bedrich, Cindy Bolch, Paula Engelhardt, Don Travis, Debbi Harris, Joy Graham, Lucile Estell, Shawn Walton, Anne Barr, Ed Bureson, Connie Roddy, Dorothy Mayer, Lucy Coward, **Donna Lewis, Sue Taylor, Phyllis Shuffield, Sandra O'Donnell, Jim O'Donnell, Vivian Dixon, Sandra Dworzaczyk and Cindy McDaniels**

500 Hours—Paul Unger, Ann Collins, Katherine Bedrich, Cindy Bolch, Paula Engelhardt, Don Travis, Anne Barr, Donna Lewis, Phyllis Shuffield, Lucy Coward, Debbi Harris, Dorothy Mayer, Sue Taylor and Connie Roddy

1000 Hours—Paul Unger, Ann Collins, Katherine Bedrich, Cindy Bolch, Don Travis and Paula Engelhardt

2500 Hours—Paul Unger

[Congratulations to All!](#)

Did You Know?

Where in the world is the *least* rainfall?



It is in Arica, Chile. They average only 0.03 inches of precipitation annually. At that rate it would take a century to fill a coffee cup! Anyone want to move out of all our heavy rain in Texas to a dryer climate? It is a northern port city about 11 miles south of the border with Peru, with a population of 185,000. Occupied by different native groups for over 10,000 years, it was founded by the Spanish in 1570 and soon became a major port for shipping silver from Brazil and other mines back to Spain. And because of that, it was also a major attraction for every known pirate to sail the seas. Modern governments created a tax free zone and other favorable incentives and attracted Citroen, Peugeot, Volvo, Ford and General

Motors, who made the Chevrolet LUV picked until 2008. It is tourist attraction with casinos, beaches, a mild and dry climate year round without temperature extremes, moderated by somewhat higher humidity and cloud cover than a typical desert climate. Low temperatures average **between high 50's and high 60's, and high temperatures average between mid 60's to high 70's.**

