

NATURALIST NEWS



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NATURALIST NEWS –TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST, ELM FORK CHAPTER

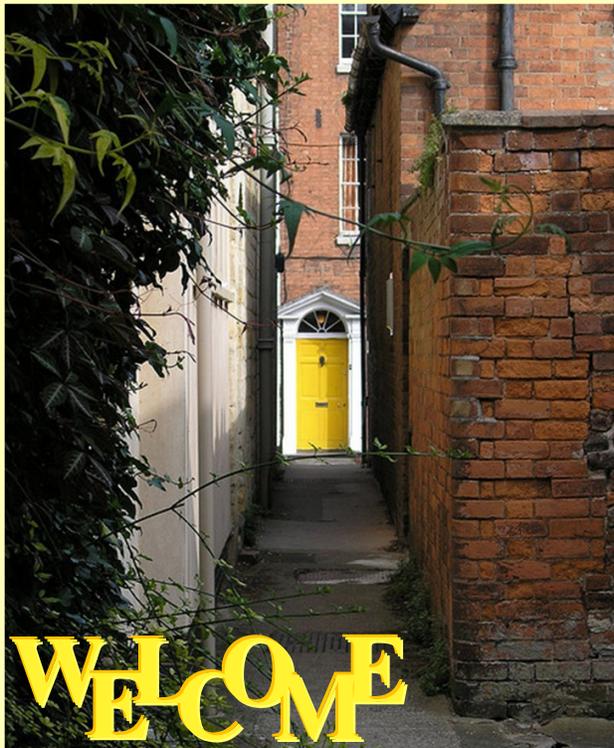
AUGUST 2013

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Our vision. . .in our community, Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program will be recognized as a primary source of information, education and service to support natural resources and natural areas today and in the future.



**OPEN HOUSE AND MEMBERSHIP ROUND UP
AUGUST 15 — COME MEET AND GREET
PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS**



www.environmentalgraffiti.com

Doors will open at 10:00 a.m. for sign-in and will be followed by a short information and question and answer session at 10:30 a.m. Refreshments will be available for guests and members as they get to know each other and view project displays.

BRING A GUEST — THE “WELCOME MAT” IS OUT!

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ Perseid fireballs
- ◆ Info on NOAH Project
- ◆ Awesome nature photos
- ◆ Contribute your unique talents to Chapter as **Project Coordinator**—see p. 8

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Also see p. 10



If you attended the General business meeting in July, you may recall my comments about how the work you do as Master Naturalists is important. Not only is it personally rewarding, but it is important to Elm Fork Chapter, important to the Master Naturalist program, and important to the community. Thank you for your service!

However, I would be remiss if I did not make special mention of the service provided to our chapter by the Board of Directors and chapter committees. Much is done behind the scenes to keep the chapter strong and to enable our general membership to work on their favorite projects. As is often the case few members are interested in assisting with the details of keeping our chapter up and running and on target. Did you know that two chapters have folded this year, and that our own chapter has nearly shut its doors on at least two occasions primarily due to this very reason?

According to our chapter bylaws a member can stay on the Board of Directors for a maximum of four consecutive years, and may hold a single position for two consecutive years. That seems fair enough since we should all do what we can to promote the growth and health of the chapter. As 2013 draws to a close several current Board and committee members will have to rotate or leave the Board completely because they have served for multiple years. It is time for each of you to look into yourself and see what strengths you can bring to Elm Fork Chapter. Please give this serious consideration.

Photo—Owen Richards



Things accomplished...

**PRESIDENT SUSAN POHLEN
PRESENTS RECOGNITION
CERTIFICATES AT JULY
MEETING.**



Larry Brennan



Jeanne Erickson



Deborah Estes



Becky Rogers and Van Elliott



Claire Kamego



Becky Rogers

Photos courtesy
Larry Brennan



Beverly Lyttaker, Carolyn Norgaard, Jeanne Erickson,
Deborah Estes, Janet Gershenfeld, Betty Zajak



Marilyn Turnage

Things to come...

From Peg La Point

Our September Program on the Threats and Pressures to Herpetofauna in Texas

As human populations expand, particularly into the southwestern United States, associated increased resource demands and land use changes will undoubtedly further alter the natural functional processes that shape ecosystems (eg., natural land cover, healthy riparian zones and flow regimes, connectivity and food webs). These changes are exacerbated by the effects of climate change and instability, invasive and introduced species and disease.

The majority of our native reptiles and amphibian populations have already experienced significant pressures and human induced change. Portions of all major Texas ecosystems have been altered by anthropogenic pressures such as the channelization, damming, dredging and draining of our aquatic resources. The installation of roadways and utility easements such as oil and gas pipelines, water and wastewater lines and overhead utility lines fragment the landscape and isolate wildlife.

Historically, Texas herpetofauna have been targeted by both private and commercial trappers for sale to the pet trade, Asian markets and rattlesnake roundups. This activity still thrives today in parts of the Southwest and are threats to the future viability of our native reptile and amphibian species and has resulted in reduced diversity, density and local extirpation from portions of their historic range.



Ryan Blankenship, A.W.B.

A native Texan, Ryan Blankenship earned his B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University, College Station, and his Master's of Science degree in Conservation Biology from the University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia. Ryan is a Certified Associate Wildlife Biologist with an interest in restoration ecology and wildlife management. He has specific experience with resource management on public and private lands both locally and abroad, working with regulatory agencies such as Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the New Zealand Department of Conservation.

Ryan has nearly 10-years of experience handling native Texas wildlife as well as 3 years of experience with federally listed threatened and endangered species, invasive species management, predator/prey interaction, and ecological restoration of degraded sites. Ryan currently resides in Dallas, Texas while serving as a wildlife biologist for Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., a national engineering consulting firm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, REMINDERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES



<http://www.amsmeteors.org/> Photo by Howard Edin

Ever seen Perseid Fireballs? Say what?

Mark your calendars for August 12th at 10:30 p.m. into August 13th until 4:30 a.m. and be prepared to be stunned!

Science@NASA has the story and YouTube video

Excerpt from the presentation: “In astronomy, there’s nothing quite like a bright meteor streaking across the glittering canopy of a moonless night sky. The unexpected flash of heavenly light adds a dash of magic to an ordinary walk under the stars.

“New research by NASA has just identified the most magical nights of all. ‘We have found that one meteor shower produces more fireballs than any other,’ explains Bill Cooke of NASA’s Meteoroid Environmental Office. It’s the **Perseid** meteor shower, which peaks on August 12 and 13. Using a network of meteor cameras distributed across the southern United States, Cooke’s team has been tracking fireball activity since 2008, and they have built up a database of hundreds of events to analyze. The data point to the **Perseids** as the ‘fireball champion’ of annual meteor showers. A fireball is a very bright meteor, at least as bright as the planets Jupiter or Venus. They can be seen on any given night as random meteoroids strike Earth’s upper atmosphere, are heated by friction and disintegrate.

“One fireball every few hours is not unusual. Fireballs become more numerous, however, when Earth is passing through the debris stream of a comet. That’s what will happen this August. The **Perseid** meteor shower comes from Comet Swift-Tuttle. Every year in early-to-mid August, Earth passes through a cloud of dust sputtered off the comet as it approaches the sun. **Perseid** meteoroids hitting our atmosphere at 132,000 mph produce an annual light show that is treasured by backyard sky watchers.”

Intrigued yet?

FULL STORY: http://science1.nasa.gov/science-news/science-at-nasa/2013/26jul_perseids/

VIDEO: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zO83KP54YXs>


 Notices cont'd

There is a New Project in Town

Project NOAH (Networked Organisms And Habitats)

Project Number: P-130711

Backed by National Geographic, **Project Noah** is mobilizing a new generation of nature explorers and helping people from around the world appreciate their local wildlife. Our community is harnessing the power and popularity of new mobile technologies to collect important ecological data and help preserve global biodiversity.



Project Noah is an award-winning software platform designed to help people reconnect with the natural world. Launched out of NYU's Interactive Telecommunications Program in early 2010, the project began as an experiment to mobilize citizen scientists and build a digital butterfly net for the 21st century.

Elm Fork members will use their expertise to contribute Texas specific information to the general database and mission specific collections of **Project Noah**.

How to start participating:

Set up and manage your free **Project Noah** account. <http://www.projectnoah.org>

Questions? Read **Project Noah** FAQ page, <http://www.projectnoah.org/faq>

Send the account identification (Username) to [Project Manager Ron Fellows](#), so he can "follow" you to track your participation in **Project Noah**. This will aide him in reporting the participation of our chapter members to the board.

How to collect data:

Take a photo using the free **Project Noah** app on a smart phone or iPad, or use your camera. If you use a camera, import your photos to your computer and use your **Project Noah** web page.

Add as much of the other information you know into the labeled fields. The better your data, the more useful the database..



Service hours will be awarded for the following:

Time to collect (hike, photograph, and identify) Texas specific data.

Travel to collection locations only within Elm Fork Chapter counties, Denton, Cooke and Wise.

Time to enter Texas specific data into the **Project Noah** database.

Participation in special focus events by entering Texas specific data into missions collecting global environmental samples. Here are some of the current missions – see project description for a sample of existing **Project Noah** missions.

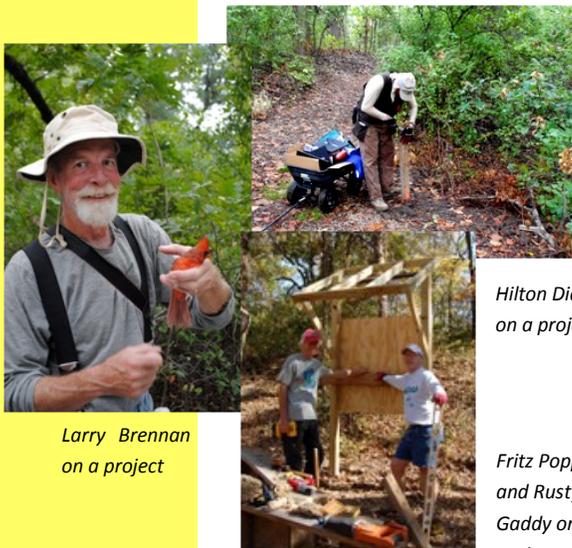
Notices cont'd

PROJECT COORDINATOR NEEDED

What is a project coordinator? The Project Coordinator (PC) holds a voting position on the chapter Board of Directors (BOD), and is an extremely important link between chapter project managers and the Board.

What are the responsibilities of the PC? The PC works as a liaison between project managers and the BOD. The PC communicates new information to project managers, collects data from project managers for inclusion on state reports, coordinates requests for new projects, makes recommendations to the Board for projects to compete at the annual conference, coordinates project displays at our annual Roundup meeting, and briefs new members about our projects and data collection as part of their initial training.

What happens when we don't have a PC? Additional work and responsibilities fall upon the shoulders of the other Board members. When the workload increases and too few members are juggling the work some things fall through the cracks. It is in the best interest of Elm Fork Chapter to have someone helping to oversee the management of our chapter projects. Our projects are a key component of defining us. When attention to our projects suffers the entire chapter suffers.



Larry Brennan
on a project

Hilton Dickerson
on a project

Fritz Poppe
and Rusty
Gaddy on a
project

What do you gain by being the Project Coordinator? This important position in the chapter provides you with insight across the chapter. You have a much better understanding of, and appreciation for, what our chapter is doing within the community. That makes it possible for you to have more influence on the types of projects that are accepted to help keep the chapter on track in meeting goals and mission. As the PC you can earn service by visiting any or all approved projects. This gives you the opportunity to engage with virtually all of our members and have a greater appreciation for their contributions.

What skill sets do you need to be the Project Coordinator? You have to have a computer and *basic* knowledge of major programs like word processing, spreadsheets, and power point. The most important skill, however, is your ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

Elm Fork Chapter should have a Project Coordinator – please consider volunteering for this key role.

Without a project leader?



Call me if you have any questions or wish to volunteer:

Susan Pohlen
President, 2013
940 686-5739

pohlensusan@gmail.com



NPSOT meeting in Dallas — *from Jeanne Erickson*



On August 19, 2013, at 7 pm: North Texas Master Naturalists Jim Shouse and Dana Wilson will take a big-picture look at plant species that are invasive to the Dallas-Fort Worth region. They will discuss where invasive plant species originate from, why they are here, why they are a problem and what you – as gardeners and as naturalists – can do to combat this problem.

Dana Wilson has been a North Texas Master Naturalist since 2001 and has been interested in plants ever since. From its opening in 2008 to the summer of 2012, she worked as volunteer coordinator for the Trinity River Audubon Center in Dallas and later also for Dog Wood Canyon Audubon Center in Cedar Hill, directing and supporting volunteers in their efforts towards habitat restoration and environmental education of thousands of area school children and adult visitors. Dana is currently working with Texas Conservation Alliance as volunteer coordinator to recruit and train volunteers for TCA's new water recycling initiative.



Jim Shouse is originally from Oklahoma, has lived in Dallas for almost 35 years and resides in the Lakewood area of east Dallas. He was a mechanical design engineer with Texas Instruments and later Raytheon before taking early retirement at the end of 2007. Jim loves to volunteer for outdoor activities and is typically out four to five days every week. He has been active in the Invaders of Texas citizen science program since 2008. Jim volunteers weekly at the Trinity River Audubon Center and the Dogwood Canyon Audubon Center, primarily working on landscape restoration and trail maintenance projects. He also builds houses with the Dallas Area Habitat for Humanity and works in the gardens at the Dallas Arboretum. He is active in the North Texas (Dallas) chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program and in the Texas Archeology Society. Jim plays a baritone in the New Horizons Band – Dallas.

Dallas Chapter of the **Native Plant Society of Texas** monthly meeting, **7 pm on Monday, August 19**, at the upstairs 'Guadalupe Peak' meeting room of the Dallas REI store at 4515 LBJ Fwy, Farmers Branch (635 and Welch Rd).

Websites of Interest

Need an outlet for your creative side?

WANTED: interesting photos of native plants and related stories within the North Central Texas area
Submit articles of 350-700 words. Longer articles are also accepted. Please take the time to submit your items and share with others who enjoy our native plants. Go to:

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/tx/newsroom/factsheets/?cid=nrcs144p2_003087

From Peg La Point: <http://focusingonwildlife.com/news/losing-our-monarchs-iconic-monarch-butterfly-down-to-lowest-numbers-in-20-years/>