

NATURALIST NEWS



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www.txmn.org/elmfork

- * See upcoming events
- * Check resources
- * Read articles
- * Watch videos

Every moment of the year has its own beauty . . . Emerson

NATURALIST NEWS –TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST, ELM FORK CHAPTER

OCTOBER 2013

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Watch your step

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.



HELP NEEDED!

Article and photos from Dorothy Thetford

Khaki weed (*Alternanthera pungens Kunth*) is the latest invasive weed that warrants our prompt attention. It is apparently from South America and has been recognized as a major problem in Australia and Hawaii.

Its burs stick into tires, shoe soles, animal paws, and clothing. Flowers are small, pale yellow, fuzzy-looking balls approximately the size of a pencil eraser and are easily camouflaged among the foliage that resembles *Purslane* (*Portulaca*) or Moss-rose ground cover.



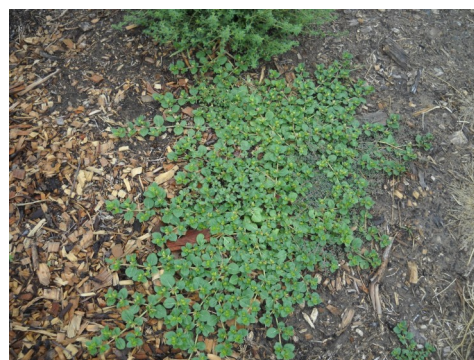
It is a perennial with a taproot up to 6" long. It has low, spreading runners which can form additional roots along bare soil. On heavily mulched surfaces, runners can be 18" long. The first choice of control is to remove entire plant (w/root) and discard permanently. Alternate choices would be spraying herbicide, or pre-emergent herbicides. Control might be achieved within 3-4 years if no new seeds have been introduced. Avoid shaking the plant while digging and placing into container.

As plant is dying and drying, the burs split into many very small v-shaped parts with a sticker on the two top parts of the 'V'.

Walking on the plant results in shoes being totally covered with burs to be transported elsewhere. If you must walk or work in an infested area, have a spare pair of shoes to put on after leaving the area to prevent transporting the seeds to your personal lawn/garden.

Remove plants asap, preferably while they are green and before seeds form, dry and are disbursed. They are easily dug with a garden fork, along with gloves for handling. Discard total plants permanently; do not put in compost or leave on your property.

WITH THIS SIMPLE AWARENESS,
LEARN TO IDENTIFY THE PLANTS
AND REMOVE THEM ASAP.



www.naturalsources.sa.gov.au/files
(Govt. of So. Australia)

[This information was initiated by NPSOT member, Fonda Fox, whose yard was recently infested with Khaki weed.]

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ◆ Report from Nominating Committee
- ◆ Record your hours
- ◆ Honors for Master Naturalist
- ◆ Visit Trophy Club
- ◆ Take a survey on Clear Creek

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From President, Susan Pohlen

Fall is now upon us, and before we know it we will say farewell to 2013 and begin preparations for 2014. Part of that transition will include voting for a new Board of Directors, and first on their list is to prepare the groundwork for a new year.



Photo—Owen Richards

The BOD tries very hard to stay tuned in to the pulse of Elm Fork Chapter. Your input is extremely important. Without member input the BOD has to take an educated guess at what the majority of our members would like to have happen. But the timing of your input is also very important. Please take time between now and the December general business meeting to give this some serious thought. The planning will take place in January, so your input is needed before then. Consider just a couple of questions, such as:

One of the things I really like about Elm Fork Chapter is:

I would like for the chapter BOD to consider making this change:

For example, you might say “One of the things I really like about Elm Fork Chapter is the depth of Advanced Training offered throughout the year.” However, I would like the BOD to consider updating our public address system so that we can hear better at the meetings and training sessions. Feel free to offer more than one compliment or suggestion. All of your input will be reviewed for consideration.

Look for a handout at the October meeting to jog your memory. Make sure your suggestions are feasible and clearly understood.

Susan





Each Volunteer Hour Means Money!!

Did you know each volunteer service hour our chapter reports to our Texas Parks and Wildlife Department sponsor can mean money? They add our hours to those from other Master Naturalist chapters and other volunteer groups, then calculate the value of those hours using a nationally accepted rate for each volunteer hour reported.

“So what?” you ask. The TPWD applies for Federal grants to support the work they do, including sponsoring the **Master Naturalist** program, state parks, etc. The Federal program awards grants to the agency with our service, plus service from all other chapters, and makes an in-kind match. Last year we reported **17,795.5** volunteer service hours. At the current rate of \$22.75 per hour our 2012 service was valued at **\$404,847!**



You can see how important this is for the TPWD. For each hour you report the potential for Federal grant money increases by \$22.75. For the members who meet the minimum of 40 hours of service (plus 8.0 hours of AT) to recertify the value is \$910.

Part way through September our chapter has recorded 11,704 hours of service. At \$22.75 per hour this equates to a value of \$266,266. We know the number should be higher because there are chapter members who are providing service hours, but for some reason, are not reporting them. Maybe it seems like too much trouble, but it means a lot to the program.

For those of you who have reported your hours regularly, “Thank you.” For those behind in reporting your hours, please take the time to do so soon. **It can make a difference!**

If you have any questions or are having trouble with the forms please contact Rob Roy. His email is [robt t_roy@msn.com](mailto:robt_t_roy@msn.com) (there are under scores in the spaces); his cell phone number is 214-668-3233.

From Rob Roy, Immediate Past President

Things to come...

From Peg La Point

Randy Johnson to Present Program

OCTOBER 17: NATIVE MILKWEED - A KEYSTONE SPECIES

Our native milkweed is a 'Keystone' species in whatever ecosystem it occupies. A very large diversity of native fauna use and depend on the plants within the genus *Asclepias*. This vital component of our native ecosystems is being lost at an alarming rate and the impact has potentially devastating consequences. This presentation will explain the importance of this plant and ways that we as individuals can help to nullify the effects of habitat loss.

Randy Johnson earned a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University. He is the former Director of Horticulture at Texas Discovery Gardens in Dallas, and is currently employed by the Dallas Zoo as their Horticulture Manager. Randy's personal business, Randy Johnson Organics, serves both private and commercial entities and he also has a native plant and seed operation: Black Land Natives and Black Land Seed. He collects seeds of native species from local prairie remnants and propagates these genetically superior plants. Randy enjoys teaching and speaks on a wide variety of subjects including but not limited to Organic horticulture, Native plants, Composting/Compost Teas, Soil Biology, Escapology and Pollinator Gardens.



ANNOUNCEMENTS, REMINDERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES



Send contact information changes to: **1) Susan Pohlen pohlensusan@gmail.com; 2) Rob Roy robt_t_roy@msn.com; and 3) Donna Wolfe donna.wolfe@dentoncounty.com**

Want to stay in the loop?

Email message to chapter: **Donna Wolfe donna.wolfe@dentoncounty.com**

Items to website: **Martha Peet Marthawpeet@gmail.com**

Items for newsletter: **Wanda Odum wodum10043@reagan.com**

ANNOUNCEMENTS, REMINDERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES-cont'd

Join Cornell Lab of Ornithology Project Feeder Watch!

This year **Cornell Lab of Ornithology Project Feeder Watch** begins on **November 9th**. Participation in this project is approved for service hours by our Chapter.

All you need to do to participate is:

SIGN UP ONLINE at www.feederwatch.org

-OR-

CALL 1- (800) 843-BIRD (2473) to join by phone. They do accept credit cards.

-OR-

PRINT and MAIL the form on the website to pay by check.



There is a participation fee of \$15 when you join Project Feeder Watch.

New participants receive a Common Feeder Birds poster, the Feeder Watch Handbook and Instructions, Winter Bird Highlights (the Feeder Watch annual summary) and a subscription to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's newsletter, "BirdScope".

When you register, you can choose to enter your hours and observations by paper or online.

You will need to keep track of your time and submit it for your service hours.

This is a great project for anyone interested in birds. Lots of links and helpful information online.

If you have temporary health or mobility issues, this is a great project to participate in to get your service hours and retain active member status. Project Feeder Watch continues through spring.

QUESTIONS? Visit <http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/> or contact me for additional information.

WHEN YOU SIGN UP, PLEASE LET ME KNOW YOU HAVE JOINED SO I CAN ADD YOU TO MY PROJECT MEMBERS LIST FOR THE CHAPTER.

REMEMBER, PROJECT FEEDER WATCH BEGINS NOVEMBER 9TH.

Put up your feeders

Count the birds that visit

Send the data to the Cornell scientists

Earn service hours!

You can contact me by email at kmangum13@verizon.net Look forward to hearing from you soon!

Karen Mangum

Project Feeder Watch, EFCMN Project Feeder Watch manager

ANNOUNCEMENTS, REMINDERS, AND OPPORTUNITIES—cont'd

NOTICE OF NEW PROJECT

Trophy Club Nature Preserve

Trophy Club Nature Preserve is approximately 450 Acres of diverse woodlands, grasslands, waterways, and lakeshore located in the Cross Timbers Eco Region. Although this property is leased by the Town of Trophy Club from the Corp of Engineers and is designated flood plain, much of the time flooding is not a factor. Marshall Creek, Indian Creek and other smaller tributaries drain into Grapevine Lake through this area.; and is enjoyed by foot traffic and horseback riders, birders, all nature lovers. The preserve becomes more popular every day.



The woodlands primarily includes mature post oak, pecan, hackberry, honey locust, Osage orange, cedar elm, American elm, and Hercules club.

*** Projects in the woodlands: controlling of the greenbrier, privet and nandina; ID markers.

The grasslands portion of the area is rich in native grasses and wildflowers. We have fields of native little bluestem, switchgrass, sideoats grama, and sea oats. Wildflowers include liatris, passionflower vine, bee balm, horsemint, purple thistle, false foxglove, basket flower, to name just a few. Also, in the grassland areas are prickly pear cactus and yucca.

*** Projects in the grasslands: control of invasive trees, such as cedar and locust; ID system.

Our primary waterway is Marshall Creek.

***Projects: water monitoring, erosion control, study of aquatic life.

***Trail maintenance is an ongoing project. Horse use and erosion problems keep this project active and always needs knowledgeable trail builders and volunteers. Rerouting of some trails is needed.



Project Manager: Kathy Trotter—Project No. 130912

Nominating Committee's Slate of Officers for 2014

In accordance with Article V, item D.2.a., of the Bylaws of the Elm Fork Chapter, the nominating committee submits the following slate of candidates for the officer positions on the 2014 Board of Directors.

President – Van Elliott
Vice President – Jan Deatherage
Secretary – Judi Elliott
Treasurer – Jeri Marold

Each of the above members agreed to serve in the designated position if elected by the membership during the November 21, 2013 general meeting. Nominations for all positions will be accepted from the floor prior to the election at the November meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay Crowe
 Shirley Holland
 Carl Patrick
 Rob Roy – Chairperson, Nominating Committee