

May 31 Field Trip Report—from Van Elliott

Tom and Melissa Bookhout hosted chapter members at the Dixon Water Foundation at the Clint & Betty Josey property in Leo, Texas, on Saturday May 31. It was a 3-hour advanced training class on green buildings, range and water management practices. The tour was arranged by Peg La Point.

The vision for the DWF ranches is to provide learning and demonstration sites for education, outreach and research on water issues. They are also implementing a sustainable planned grazing approach, demonstrating how to manage rangeland environmentally and economically.

An orientation was held at the Clint and Betty Josey Pavilion, which is one of the first totally green buildings in Texas. The pavilion was designed as an educational tool for schools and businesses to learn about better ways to manage land and water resources. Rainwater is captured for reuse, the electricity is solar power and the goal is to be totally self sufficient. EFCTMN was the first adult organization to be invited to the facility.

The tour included an informational meeting at the beautiful pavilion made of salvaged 'river pine', a walk around the building, a discussion on its construction and range and water management practices. Dr. Lisa Bellows is a Science Department Chair at North Central Texas College and teaches General Biology, Zoology, Botany, and Environmental Science and lead these discussions. Bellows and the Bookouts worked as a team that day. Bellows, as an NCTC representative, is very active with DWF in the range management and water conservation programs. She lead a discussion on how the Bookouts and NCTC are implementing these programs.

There were 18 chapter members attending and a good time was had by all. Even though a number of us ended up with a good case of chigger bites. I think at least half the attendees became the victims of itch. A reminder: spray before you play!



Larry Brennan took this photo that captures an exercise where we learned how vegetation serves as a filter for water and helps keep soil from eroding.

Vin Merrill is front and center demonstrating the filtration effect. Larry Brennan labeled the photo Master Naturalist Margarita.



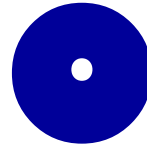
— Bookhouts receiving token of appreciation from President Elliott —

Photos courtesy Larry Brennan & Judi Elliott

John Bunker Sands Wetland Center Field Trip

From Bob Ross

Linda Dunn, Education Manager



On June 4th ten members of Elm Fork Chapter participated in a field trip to the John Bunker Sands Wetland Center in Seagoville. Members attending were Van Elliott, Judi Elliott, Susan Pohlen, Marian Kester, Hilton Dickerson, Vin Merrill, Larry Brennan, Veronica Ruangskul, Charles Martin, and Bob Ross.

The group was initially greeted by John DeFillipo, Director of the Center, and then he turned everyone over to Linda Dunn, Education Manager of the Center, who gave us an overview of the name, layout and purposes of the wetlands.

Van and Susan capturing macro invertebrates



The Center was named after the late John Bunker Sands (1948-2003) who was a member of the Hunt family of Dallas. His mother was Rose Hunt and his grandfather was H. L. Hunt who was reportedly the richest man in the world during the mid-1900's. John was the ranch manager for the Rosewood Ranches which spread over the counties of Kaufman, Henderson, Ellis and Navarro. John was a land steward who directed the creation of over 2,100 wetland acres. He adopted the holistic resource management practices which promoted land stewardship insuring a commitment to manage and improve the natural resources of the land for future generations. The constructed wetlands included seasonal emergent wetlands, scrub shrub and flooded bottomland hardwood forest providing diverse habitat for wildlife. Several of the original wetlands occurred at Rosewood's Seagoville Ranch, the site of the Wetland Center and the East Fork Wetland Project.

Larry bringing up the rear on the boardwalk



Sands' conservation legacy and the vision of the North Texas Municipal Water District have developed into a unique and natural solution for supplying clean water to the growing population of North Texas. The East Fork Wetland Project is a natural process that diverts a percentage of water each day from the East Fork of the Trinity River into a 1,840 acre man made wetland where the water is cleansed by nature. After 7-10 days in the wetland, a pump station then transports the cleansed water underground through a 43 mile pipeline north to Lavon Lake for storage, blending, treatment, disinfection, and delivery for municipal water supply.

After her indoor lecture, Education Director Dunn lead the participants outside to walk the boardwalks, look at the wetlands, and dip nets into the water to capture and bottle macro invertebrates to be examined later in the labs at the Center. EFC members saw a myriad of bird species during the outing with everyone excited to see three Black-necked Stilts with their black and white tuxedo bodies with long, orange legs. Dunn explained the wetlands are home to many species of animals, to include: coyotes, bobcats, raccoons, river otters, nutria, and their most recent sighting of a new resident is a seven foot alligator. It is a male that has left the Trinity River and backed up into the wetlands establishing a new territory.

That last thing on the agenda was to capture macro invertebrates that were later examined in the labs. Some of the species caught were fresh water shrimp, scuds and mites. A formula was used to determine, utilizing the amount and kind of species caught, the quality of the water in the wetlands for that particular period of time and date. All members agreed it was an educational and informative field trip.

If you want more information about the Wetlands or their hours of operation, go online to www.wetlandcenter.com.

A Talk & Walk About Butterflies

From Bob Ross

Saturday, May 17th, was a special day in Trophy Club Park. The weather was beautiful, the park was green and full of blooms after the recent rains, and Joanne Fellows instructed participants in her presentation of: *A Talk About Butterflies*.

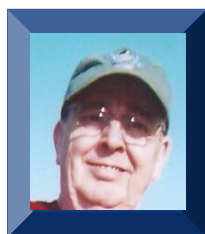


Joanne (photo by Dorothy Thetford)

The first hour was held at the Trophy Club Park Pavilion where participants were captivated by Joanne's expert knowledge about butterflies and her many different visual aids on hand. Participants consisted of master naturalists, scouts, and residents of Trophy Club. Everyone learned Texas has in excess of 450 species of butterflies. They learned most female butterflies lay approximately 200 eggs.

The second hour was spent walking the trails and listening to Joanne identify butterflies. When a butterfly would fly past everyone, Joanne would say such things as, "Oh! There goes a Swallowtail. Look, there are a couple of Frittilarys. Here is an Orange Sulphur. There is a White Sulphur. Look down in that clump of grass and you will see a Skipper."

For two hours, Joanne had all participants in the "palm of her hand." Elm Fork is so lucky to have someone as knowledgeable as Joanne in the chapter.



photos by Bob Ross (class 2013) except where noted

Joanne explaining a pollinator garden



Heading to trails



On the trails

Look Closely To Find These One Inch Jewels:

Rambur's Forktail Damselfly; *Ischnura ramburii*

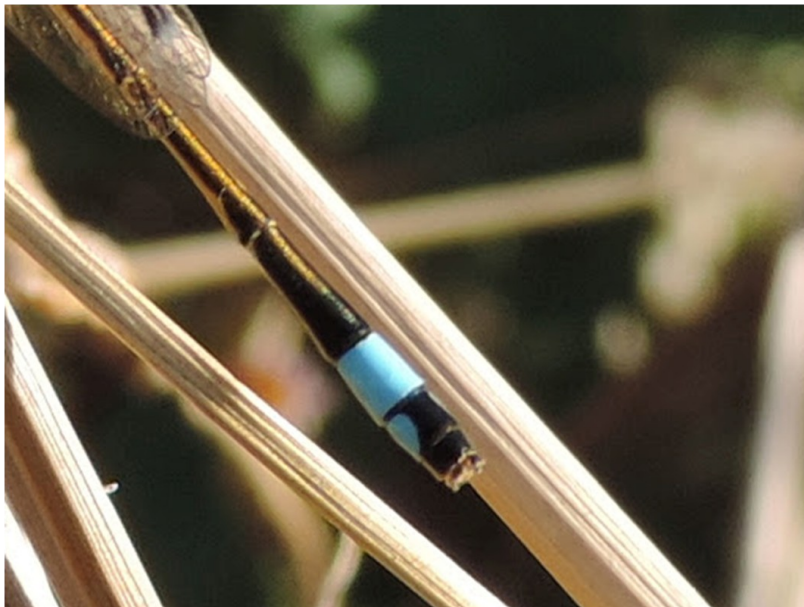
They are the most widespread species of *Ischnura* in the New World. The range is most of the USA, plus Mexico, Antilles, south to Chile and Hawaii.



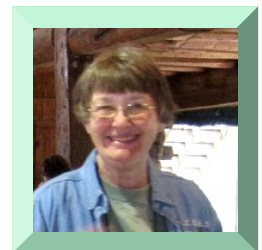
This is a male with a green thorax.

These are tiny damselflies; males 27.5-36.5 mm; females 27-35 mm. They are a polymorphic species. Males have either bright green thorax or a bluish thorax. The abdominal segment 8 is completely blue while only the bottom of 9 is blue. Females have 3 forms; orange, olive, or male-like.

Look for them at the edges of ponds, lakes, marshes, and slow streams with vegetation and sunlight.



This is the detail of tail markings.



*Joanne Fellows
Class 2008*



Sharon Barr, class
2008

Mute swans



raising babies can be tiring



nap time for little ones

I learned about this Mute Swan pair that nested in Carrollton from DFW Urban Wildlife website. They nested and had 3 hatchlings. They can be found at the pond of the Josey Ranch Lake Library at the corner of Keller Springs Rd & N. Josey Lane. Baby Mute Swans are called cygnets. Their brood is now down to one cygnet. ~Sharon Barr~



in watchful guard mode



intruder gets the "evil eye"

FIELD NOTE—EXTRA

The Mute Swan does not belong here. They spread from pairs imported from Europe in the late 19th Century. Or maybe not. Lewis (of Lewis and Clark), writing in the expedition's Weather Journal on July 4, 1804, reports he went ashore alone and saw "a great number of young geese and swan." They were at the Kansas/Missouri border near a place the expedition named Independence Creek in honor of the date, and the young nation they had set out to explore. If Lewis saw swans, given the heat and the time of year they could only have been Mute Swans. Earlier that same day others remarked only of geese. Perhaps Lewis was tired. Or maybe he was right. Swans are hard to miss. I remember the first time Mute Swans flew directly over me, seven of them in a perfect V, wings in unison, wingtips whistling. I was standing on the shore of Tisbury Great Pond and after the swans passed I did not move or make a sound for a long time. ~Mark Seth Lender~

<https://www.poetrysociety.org/psa/poetry/birdsandbards/swan/>

**Mexican Hat
(Ratibiada columnaris)**

I'm an attractive, common perennial, belonging to the Asteracea family

I'm colorful, tough and drought tolerant, everything a native should be

grow in full sun in a variety of well drained soils over a wide range

My showy Mexican sombrero-like flowers inspired my common name



Both ray and disk flowers make up my interesting flower head
My striking colors are orangey-yellow, chocolate brown and dark brick red

My drooping petals, really ray flowers may be a single color, splotched or dark with yellow trim, each has its own allure

My center cone is first gray-green but turns brown as it lengthens and my small disk flowers on it open and mature

I start blooming in May and continue off and on through the summer and into the fall

My many branched stems are each topped with a single bloom standing one to three feet tall

Course hairs make me feel rough but I look soft and lacy bending in the breeze
So light and airy are my slender stems and the fine cut segments of my leaves

My cut flowers make a long lasting bouquet and a bright yellow and olive green dye can be made from me
I spread easily from my many small seeds and often form large, pretty colonies seen growing wild and free

Wild and free

Wild and free

Marilyn Blanton —
class of 1999





“It’s a bird, it’s a plane, it’s a, a, a . . .” hummer?



Well, no. Actually, this little creature that seems to the naked eye to be a hummingbird is just a funny little insect that feeds on flowers—the Hummingbird hawk-moth. “The great imposter” is a good hummingbird mimic.

Moths in the *Hemaris* genus of the family Sphingidae are known as "hummingbird moths" in the US, and "bee moths" in Europe, which sometimes causes confusion between this species and the North American genus.

Habitat is open and second growth gardens and suburbs. They range from Alaska and the Northwest Territories south through British Columbia to Oregon; east through the Great Plains and the Great Lakes area to Main and Newfoundland; south to Florida and Texas.

In this image a snowberry clear wing is sipping nectar from swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*).

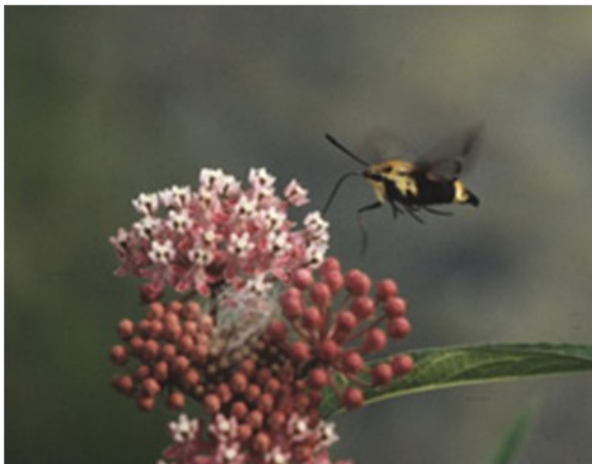


Photo by William Glass.

The red coloration on this hummingbird moth readily identifies it as a hummingbird clear wing. Here it is nectaring on a beebalm (*Monarda fistulosa*).



Photo by Bob Judson.

Sources for this article:

www.viralnova.com/unique-animals

www.arkinspace.com/2013/02/the-amazing-hummingbird-hawk-moth.html

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<http://birding.about.com/od/birdingbasics/a/Hummingbird-Moths.htm>

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