

Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area Bioblitz VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! April 1st

Come to Lewisville!

LLELA, the Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area is hosting a bioblitz on April 1st from before sunup 'til after sundown. Really there will be activities the evening before too. Breakfast, water/snacks and lunch will be provided for volunteers along with a "Get into LLELA Free Card" on event day.

Our goal is to increase awareness and involvement at LLELA and catalogue as much of the biome as we can. To this end we are asking the expert volunteers to do some field ID educating as part of the process, as such no previous knowledge of a subject is required to volunteer, just curiosity about the natural world and the desire to help and to learn. Each taxon leader will have a group of volunteers, the size of the group will vary depending on the activity, to act as extra hands, eyes, ears and data recorders. So in no small part this is a good sized citizen science project.

We have over 35 Taxon Leaders from 7 different colleges and universities, TPWD, Texas Forest Service, two chapters of Texas Master Naturalists, the Native Prairie Association of Texas, the Native Plant Society of Texas, the DFW Herpetological Society, the Audubon Society, and biologists from a local environmental consulting firm as well as LLELA's staff and knowledgeable volunteers leading survey groups.

A plea is in order here. We still need someone familiar with aquatic vegetation and a non-vascular plants guru. If you or someone you know might be willing to help in these areas we need to hear from you. skiester2@gmail.com . Never pass up the chance to ask!

We will be surveying everything from bats and beetles to frogs, toads and fresh water mussels, to trees, shrubs, grasses, and wild flowers. Oh, and don't forget those woody vines, they're all over! There will be nearly 50 different activities to get involved in. So we have opportunities for 200 plus volunteers. Our hope is to have volunteer observers and recorders on every activity. We will be making full use of the iNaturalist app and database as well as storing the results in traditional database formats, which will be available to any participant for their use.

Activity descriptions, schedules and volunteer signup information will be posted on www.llela.org and www.llelafriends.org starting March 6th. We will likely be adding activities until late March so people should check back to see if anything new pops up.

Oh, and the weather thing. We are thinking only good weather thoughts, but if the local weather people diss us with serious inclement conditions, every volunteer will receive a cancellation email at least 24 hours prior to April 1st. If the worst should happen we will most likely re-schedule for the fall.

Scott Kiester
Elm Fork Chapter

The Elm Fork Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists created the Interpretive Center at the Isle Du Bois Unit of Ray Roberts Lake State Park with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) staff.

The Grand Opening was in the fall of 2007. The mission of the Interpretive Center is to introduce the wide variety of local flora and fauna to visitors, and to encourage them to experience the wonders of nature at this beautiful state park.

Housed in a small building adjacent to the visitor entrance at the Isle Du Bois unit of the Park, the Interpretive Center (IC) consists of a secured, climate controlled space containing displays, multi-media resources, program information, park maps, hands-on experiences for children and adults, some small live animals (reptiles, fish, insects), and a small office for TPWD staff.



Outside the IC there is a small rock waterfall and nature-scaped pond; and a ¼ mile marked walking trail through the adjacent woods. The Master Naturalist Volunteers (MNVs) staffing the IC serve as greeters and hosts for visitors; MNVs are knowledgeable in various subjects covered in the Master Naturalist Certification Program and through their continuing education, personal experiences and other training opportunities. MNVs have the opportunity to interact with the children and adults visiting the IC in a relaxed, fun and safe atmosphere. The IC is open March through June and September through November, on Saturdays from 10am to 4pm, and Sundays from 12pm to 4pm; two volunteer shifts per day on Saturday and one on Sunday are scheduled.

TPWD staff and other supporters of the IC monitor and update the program materials, displays and resources available in the IC; the MNVs are present to assist visitors as they take advantage of the IC. Some MNVs choose to interact actively with visitors, showing them around, answering questions, and helping with the various resources, while some are comfortable simply greeting folks and inviting them to take advantage of the self-guided aspects of the IC.

The IC Project Manager provides and maintains the work schedule at the beginning of each season for the hours of operation. Training and orientation are covered at the IC prior to each MNV beginning to volunteer; a sign-in sheet is utilized, and service hours are recorded by each MNV. All Elm Fork Chapter Certified Master Naturalists are invited and encouraged to volunteer at the Interpretive Center and share their wealth of 'natural' information with visitors.

If you are interested in participating, I will send you the current schedule openings, please contact:

Chuck Thetford
cthethford@twu.edu
940 765 1418

Susan Pohlen will give a presentation on the Ecology of North Central Texas/Cross Timbers at her property just south of Isle du Bois State Park. A hike through this somewhat unique section of the Eastern Cross Timbers will follow the presentation. This field trip is designed to refresh your memory about basic, but important ecological concepts with an opportunity to observe some of these concepts with personal observations. However, the hiking trail is narrow with some steep and/or rocky inclines. Members with current injuries, such as bad knees, would find this trail very challenging, so please keep that in mind if you're considering this trip. This field trip is on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 from 9:30 to 11:30 AM and will provide 2 hours of Advanced Training. **Attendance is limited to 20 chapter members, no visitors please due to limitations. If you are interested please send an email to Rita Lokie at rj.stephenson1@verizon.net.** Additional information, including directions, will be sent out to attendees prior to the field trip.

FIELD NOTES IN FOCUS



**Bee at Lake Ray Roberts—comes from the
gallery of Jonathan Reynolds**

*Featuring Master Naturalist photographers—
flora and fauna as you see them*

—Naturalist News Helpers this Month—
Thank you contributors



Jonathan Reynolds class 2014



Judi Elliott class 2009



Don Fikes class 2013



Dorothy Thetford class 2001



Rita Lokie class 2013



Clayton Thurman class 2016



Chuck Thetford class 2011



Becky Bertoni class 2015



Mary Morrow class 2014



Susan Pohlen class 2007



Jan Hodson class 2002



Denise Remfert class 2015

Last Word

Bird Watching Tips

Bird species don't just look unique, they have unique ways of acting, moving, sitting, and flying. When you learn these habits, you can recognize many birds the same way you notice a friend walking through a crowd of strangers.

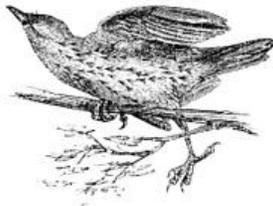


Chances are, you'll never see a Cedar Waxwing poking through the underbrush for seeds – or a Wood Thrush zigzagging over a summer pond catching insects. But similar-sized birds such as towhees and swallows do this all the time. Behavior is one key way these birds differ.



Because so much of a bird's identity is evident in how it acts, behavior can lead you to an ID in the blink of an eye, in bad light, or from a quarter-mile away. Before you even pick up your binoculars, notice how your bird is sitting, how it's feeding or moving, whether it's in a flock, and if it has any nervous habits like flicking its wings or bobbing its tail.

And remember that to get good at recognizing birds by their behavior, you must spend time watching them. It's tempting to put down your binoculars and grab your field guide as soon as you see a field mark. Or, after identifying a common bird, you might feel rushed to move on and find something more unusual. Resist these urges. Relax, and watch the bird for as long as it will let you. This is how you become used to the way a bird acts, how you discover it doing something new – and let's face it, it's probably why you went out bird watching in the first place.



Some things to observe when bird watching: posture, movement, flight pattern, feeding style, and flocking.



www.allaboutbirds.org/bird-id-skills-behavior/



NATURALIST NEWS is looking for contributors!

Articles (plants, animals etc) especially needed for the newsletter.

Send to w. odum, editor

Thank you

Please take a little time each month to thank a contributor. Without them there could be no Naturalist News. As always, my sincere thanks to each of you!



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Our mission. . . "to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our community"

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."



Rufous—w odum

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Monthly Chapter Meetings
 9:30 a.m. preceded by a social time at 9:00 a.m. on the third Thursday of each month. Chapter meetings are open to the public.

No speaker—Annual Awards meeting

Next meeting will be March 16, 2017

701 Kimberly Drive, Denton, TX 76208
Elections /Technical Building
Denton County Admin Complex

Board Meetings

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met March 9, 2017. Next monthly Board meeting is April 13, 2017.

Board meetings are open to members.

This issue has been “for the birds”!