



Projects on Target



A group “trucking it” on the Saturday Clear Creek Bird Walk — *photo from Clay Thurman*

The bird walk is a part of Clear Creek project no. **P-040708** managed by Jonathan Smith

Native Plant Art Displays

Denton's three public libraries, the Emily Fowler Central Library, the North Branch Library and the South Branch Library all have displays of the artwork from the Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition 2016. The displays will be in the libraries through the end of March.

Next month on Wednesday, April 26, we will be hosting our Appreciation Reception at the Denton ISD Profession Development Center. The reception will be from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Save the date and plan to stop by any time during the reception to see the artwork, the young artist and their teachers. Thanks to everyone for supporting this project.



This is project no. P-100513, Marilyn Blanton manager—
photos and notice from M. Blanton



\$\$\$\$\$MUGS\$\$\$\$\$



Last year it was Walking Sticks - this year we are making MUGS, lots of Mugs.

We decided to venture out in to the land of clay and make between 75 - 100 Mugs to raise a little dough for EFC.

Janie Farler, class of 2016, has graciously volunteered to throw the mugs on the pottery wheel. Along with Janie, Diana Hatch, Denise Remfert, Mary Morrow, Ray Kreutzfeld, Sarah Goodrich, Mary Cissell, Sharon McAuley, Cynthia Contreras, John Williams and Amy Garrett are lending their drawing skills and etching designs on the Mugs.

This project started in late January. There are approximately 90 mugs in various stages of completion and no two are alike. Next, we may venture out and make a few hanging birdbaths.

For those not familiar with the process, it takes 4-5 stages for the mug to go from a clump of clay to its finished form. Not all clumps make it to the final stage. That's another story for another day...

We are planning on selling the mugs for \$15 - \$20 at the MN booth during the DCMGA Fall Garden Fest. The expense for supplies is generously being donated so the cost is minimal and our profits all the better.

Make your Christmas list out now and plan to purchase a few mugs in October to give to your friends and family members that you really like!

We are our best customers!!!





MEXICAN PLUM TREE

(*Prunus mexicana*)

As one of our resplendent Texas trees, Mexican Plum reminds us that the demise of winter in the north central part of Texas is right around the corner. The 25 foot tree is of no significance in its native habitat since it's natively found in fencerows blended in with all other varieties of shrubs and trees. But once it's time to herald spring, white puffs of fragrant flowers appear along roadsides, in rich soils of river bottoms, lake shores, open forested slopes, and well-drained prairies. As the flowers mature, the tree subtly turns into a tree of pale pink blooms.



Other common names for Mexican Plum might be Big Tree Plum, or Inch Plum.

Since the fruit is rather large compared to the common sand plum, I suppose the 'Inch' Plum helps describe it nicely. Fruit ripens quite late in the summer, i.e., possibly as late as September, and is prized for making tart, colorful jams and jellies.

Once you've seen bark of the Mexican Plum tree, the image never leaves you. The tree appears to have been torched as it shows dark-colored cracks in crevices of the broken bark. It provides an excellent marking for true identity.

By the way, if you can catch the Texas Redbud and the Mexican Plum in bloom at the same time in our city's Cross Timbers Park, you'll encounter a very fragrant hike! Now's the time.

Dorothy Thetford

Master Naturalist Class 2001

Prepare for those Hummers coming to you soon!

Rocky Mountain Penstemon *Penstemon strictus* (Scrophulariaceae)

An upright perennial native to the western and central United States. The closely packed snapdragon-like, purple, tubular flowers are arranged on a sturdy spike. Prefers full sun, but will tolerate partial shade in extremely hot climates. Requires adequate drainage for best results.

- Average planting success with this species:** 60%
- Height:** 2-3 1/2 feet
- Germination:** 15-30 days
- Optimum soil temperature for germination:** 55F-60F
- Sowing depth:** 1/16"
- Blooming period:** May-July
- Average seeds per pound:** 592,000
- Seeds/Pkt:** 375
- Seeding rate:** 4 lbs. per acre
- 1 oz Covers:** 681 sq. ft.
- Suggested use:** Slopes, hill sides, roadsides, mixtures.
- Miscellaneous:** Not hardy everywhere but worth trying. Excellent variety to attract butterflies and hummingbirds to the garden.



—Sit a Spell and Enjoy the View—



Coopers Hawk photo captured by Dorothy Thetford from her Sun Garden

Great Blue Heron up close at Lake Texoma
by Ken Agee shared by Jan Hodson





VMS team



From Judi Elliott

BACK ROW: Kevin Frerich, Mike Hatch - VMS Leader, Van Elliott, Judi Elliott, Ray Kreutzfeld

FRONT ROW: Denise Thompson, Brenda Wellenreiter, Clyde Camp, Blackland Prairie, State VMS Representative, Mary Morrow, Rob Roy

Your **VMS team** stays in constant email contact and also has scheduled team meetings. On March 2, 2017 the meeting was held at the Denton County Administrative Complex, Facilities Management. Clyde Camp, Blackland Prairie member and State VMS Representative, and his wife Kathi, also a Blackland Prairie member, attended and gave a very informative, helpful presentation. The State requires on-going education for the VMS representatives which they often get through on-line training. Clyde offered an informal training session with discussion on many topics. In addition to refresher training, Clyde told the group about changes the State has made and others they anticipate making. The VMS team operates within strict guidelines and understanding the State requirements better enables the team to interact with the Chapter members. Thank you, Clyde, for your time and knowledge.

Friends of Coppel Nature Park Guest Lecture Series

Spring 2017 Biodiversity Education Center
367 Freeport Parkway, Coppel
Admission is FREE

Shared by Becky Bertoni

Sat., March 18, 10 am to 12, "Rose Rosette Disease in our Roses" Claude Graves, Master Rosarian and Curator of the Rose Mary Haggard Rose Garden at the Dallas Arboretum will speak. Claude is the current president of the Collin County Rose Society and has grown roses for 50 years in the DFW area. He has experienced the devastation of RRD in his own rose garden and is especially led to inform DFW of Rose Rosette Disease, it's current research, and what to do if a person has RRD in their roses This spreading disease is taking out knockout roses all over North Texas. Emphasis will be focused on how to eradicate this disease and what plants are desirable in our landscapes.

Sat., April 1, 10am to 12, "The Case for Residential Solar" Solar energy in this country is becoming very affordable and several companies make "going solar" financially attractive. This seminar is about actual residential costs, results, and experiences as garnered from area residents who use solar to offset rising electrical demand. Coppel resident Lou Duggan will share his hands-on and objective experiences with solar from actual costs to savings. If considering solar, you will want to hear what he has to say.

Sat., April 22, 10 am to 12, "Raptors of North Texas" Erich Neupert, Executive Director of the Blackland Prairie Raptor Center, will return to the Biodiversity Education Center to discuss and demonstrate these great birds. He will have live birds to illustrate the characteristics and exceptional hunting abilities of these birds. Don't miss this one-of-a-kind presentation.

Sat., May 20, 8 am to 12, "Birding in North Texas" North Lake College's Chuck Siegel will conduct an early morning bird tour of Coppel Nature Park from 8 to 9:45 and will present "Birding in North Texas" from 10 to 12. This will be a special opportunity for attendees to enjoy the more than 220 species of birds that migrate through CNP each year.

Advanced Training

Mike Danner

Advanced Training Committee

Mike Danner, Committee Chair
Rita Lokie, Martha Peet, Rob Roy

elmforkat@gmail.com

'The local Chapter's Advanced Training Coordinator, Committee, or equivalent, should pre-approve all advanced training opportunities before the volunteer attends.'

'Pre-approval from the Chapter must be obtained for any Advanced Training session including those that are outside the Chapter boundaries.'

Definitions of Advanced Training - VMS

AT: Chapter Meeting – applies to EFC Chapter Meetings only.

AT: Project Specific – applies to training related to an approved project.

AT: Chapter Approved – applies to all other training.

Criteria for considering approval for AT:

❖ REQUIRED

- ❖ 1. Promote continued learning and development of naturalist skills?
- ❖ 2. Provide Master Naturalists with knowledge and skills to work in volunteer efforts?
3. Direct trained volunteers toward specific programs in need of their services?
4. Provide practical information and training for application in volunteer efforts?

5. Take advantage of local partnerships?

- ❖ 6. Provide Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few specific topics?
- ❖ 7. Build on the core curriculum initially provided by the local Chapter?
- ❖ 8. Provide natural resource management issues and information applicable to Texas and the Chapter's local community or ecoregion?
- ❖ 9. Is the program/training provided by a person who is a recognized authority or skilled in the subject matter?

Advanced Training

The Chapter Management and Operations Protocols have been revised and updated by the State for all Chapters of Master Naturalists.

One area of particular interest to all members is Article V, Advanced Training. It is beneficial to review the entire section since it covers the purpose of the 8 hour requirement, various types of Advanced Training and the criteria for Advanced Training approval. The document can be found on the Elm Fork Master Naturalist website.

In an effort to adhere to the guidelines Don Fikes appointed Mike Danner to head up an Advanced Training Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to review items based on the criteria to determine if they indeed qualify for Advanced Training.

If you have identified training that you are interested in but are not sure it qualifies please send an email to ElmForkAT@gmail.com. Please list the details of the training and who is conducting the training if possible.

The diagram, developed by Mary Morrow, shows the process flow.