



Features cont'd

CICADA BRIEFING 101



Before school began, I was introduced to the daughter of Denton's North Lakes Recreation Center Manager, Harper. Harper was privileged to come to the Rec Center with her mom that Friday morning because soon she would be enrolling in kindergarten and her weekdays of freedom would be extinguished forever.

Harper was all decked out in a frilly-ruffled-skirted orange Tutu outfit, with matching sandals, and even a bag of matching-colored Cheetos. Adorable beyond belief. I was enamored with her charm as she stood swinging one leg endlessly in order for the frilly skirt to continue flaring while stuffing Cheetos in her mouth non-stop. Yes, the orange color of Cheetos was all over her hand and around her mouth as she answered all of my mundane questions. But when my questions ceased, she looked up at me and said: "Are you a boy or a girl?"as her mom swiveled her manager's chair around in horror. Needless to say, the naive preschooler had all legal rights to ask such a question and, thus, we adults eased through the question with our laughter being restrained.

A morning or two later I had a visitor waiting for me on my foot stool in the



Female Annual Cicada

garden and, as I looked at this newly-hatched, crispy clean cicada, I thought to myself: "Are you a boy or a girl, and what is your mission in life?" Well, since I was just as naive as Harper, I questioned my computer and found a couple of tidbits of simple information worth trying to remember.

The simplified version is that there are Annual cicadas, *Neotibicen* (which emerge every year), and there are Periodical cicadas, *Magicicada* (which live most of their lives {13-17 years} as underground nymphs).

Annual male cicadas emerge from underground and hang out four to five days waiting for wings to harden. Their mission is to fly, sing, lure female cicadas, mate and then die. Mission accomplished.

Annual female cicadas emerge and, as soon as their wings harden, they fly to the luring song of the male cicadas and mate. She then finds a tree branch to slit with her ovipositor so that she can deposit her 50+ eggs, falls off the branch and dies. Her eggs hatch 6-10 weeks later, fall to the ground, bury themselves in the soil and live underground as larvae until time to emerge. Mission accomplished.

The nymphs do not hatch in any synchronized routine, but usually emerge from soil 2 to 5 years later, in late summer when soil reaches preferred temperature (usually July to August).

This simplified, condensed information won't win any points in your science class but proves that simple questions often lead to interesting discoveries.

Dorothy Brown Thetford (BTW, I'm a girl.)

MN Class 2001



Features cont'd

T E X A S



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As many in the Elm Fork Chapter know, Texas Master Naturalist uses the image of the **Cy-rano Darner** as the official logo. It is named after the literary character Cyrano de Berge-rac. The males come out early in the morning and fly slowly along a water's edge holding their wings at an angle. Often they fly through overhanging grasses and branches and perch vertically on tree trunks.

The male Darner has a tapered abdomen, dark blue eyes and a dark brown thorax with green stripes. The female has a cylindrical rather than tapered abdomen. Compared to other darners, both sexes have a more stocky body. The Cyrano Darner is rare and the only member of its genus—*Nasiaeschna pentacantha*.

From w. odum

Reference material was taken from: <http://museum.unl.edu/research/entomology/Odonata/nape.html>



Male
 July 3, 1997
 Patuxent River State Park
 Bob Solem (located in
 Maryland)

<http://www.howardbirds.org/odonates/spec>



Female
 September 19, 2003
 Pigtail, Triadelphia
 Reservoir
 June Tveckrem
 (located in Maryland)

See Texas sightings below.



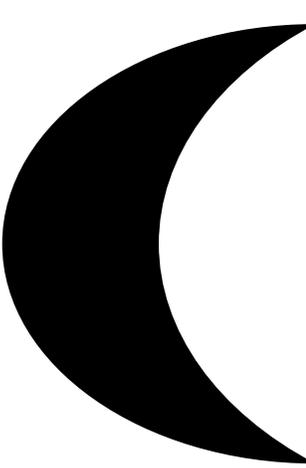
TEXAS: Wise Co; LBJ National Grasslands, stream below Cottonwood Lake - **male** - July 2009 (New County Record)



TEXAS: Denton Co; Flower Mound, Leonard Johns Community Park - ovulating **female** - June 2009 this individual laid eggs all over this dead limb for around 15 minutes before flying off

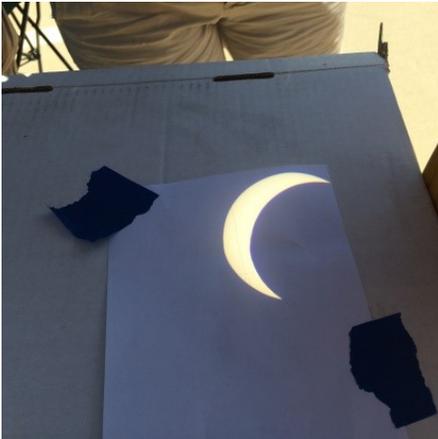
http://thehibbitts.net/troy/photo/odonata/cyrano_darner.htm

 *Features cont'd*



“Moon walk” photo from eclipse—Susan Pohlen

Photos from Toni Benjamin at Bill Coleman’s viewing eclipse program





Features cont'd

Barred Owls

Article and photos—Susan Pohlen



There are at least 19 species of owls in the United States, with each state having at least two species. One of my personal favorites is the Barred Owl, *Strix varia*. Maybe it's the impressive size of the bird, or the beautiful feather pattern for which it's named, or perhaps those dark, "soulful" eyes that tell you in an instant that you're

looking at a Barred Owl. Or maybe it's simply because I've had the pleasure of observing this species close up on several occasions. Whatever the case, the Barred Owl is intriguing to me.

I suppose it's no surprise that I've seen Barred Owls locally on several occasions. Their preferred habitat is large blocks of mature trees, especially those near bodies of water. My own neighborhood lies adjacent to Lake Ray Roberts State Park and the associated greenbelt running through Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center, both providing the perfect habitat for Barred Owls. That would explain why I saw one a few years ago while on a kayak trip down the Elm Fork River, a perfect mix of



water and mature trees. However, Great-horned Owls often inhabit the same area.

The Great-horned Owl, as it turns out, is the largest natural threat to the Barred Owl. This dominant predator will eat eggs, young birds, and occasionally adult Barred Owls. Consequently, Barred Owls that encounter Great-horned Owls generally move to the edge of their territory or beyond as a matter of survival. I have noted personally that when the Great-horned Owls seem more prevalent closer to my own



home that I'm much less likely to observe Barred Owls. Perhaps the reason I'm seeing a Barred Owl more regularly right now is three fold: both species have already raised their broods, some birds may be venturing out to find new territory, and, sadly, more trees have been removed in the last year from acreage known to support a breeding pair of Barred Owls.

Barred Owls are not migratory, and in fact, they would prefer to stay in their territory, which they defend year round, for their entire life. They're very beneficial to humans, consuming many small animals such as mice, voles, squirrels (apparently not at my place), birds, reptiles, and amphibians. They've also been known to catch fish, which is why in one of these photos you see the owl staring intently into my goldfish pond.



Another interesting note about the Barred Owl is that, relative to other local owl species, this owl is seen fairly often during the day. In fact, I've had the good fortune of seeing Barred Owls on several occasions, and except for the evening we received a call to help an owlet in the road, my sightings were always during the morning. For owl lovers and photographers that's great news. Since the species likes staying close to home and is often seen during the morning, you can follow up on local sightings and have a good chance of seeing the owl yourself.

Sources include The Cornell Lab of Ornithology website, and *Intriguing Owls* by Stan Tekiela



All eyes on "this and that"

Correction from August Naturalist News. It was incorrectly noted under the photo of Bob James that he transferred from Cross Timbers Chapter. As stated in the article, he transferred from Heartwood Chapter. Sorry, Bob!

Below is a link you may find interesting from one of our newest trainees, Shannon Bushong. Thank you, Shannon.
<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/08/frogs-riding-buffaloes-turkey-mutualism/>

**Walt Davis will be at Hagerman NWR for another workshop on Sat, Oct. 28:
Nature Journaling Workshop**

Drawing talent or skill are not required for this workshop, and students who missed previous workshops will still benefit from this new and revised version. We will focus on sharpening observational skills and recording impressions and information in a personally useful format. We will explore the supplies needed, some key observational techniques, several methods for capturing simple images and will practice making records of actual encounters with nature. In response to requests from students in the previous workshop, more emphasis will be placed on insects, birds and plants this time around, and we will delve more deeply into the use of watercolor to enhance drawings.

If you attended previous workshops you already have the supplies needed; if not the list is posted along with registration info in the sidebar at friendsofhagerman.com/Activities. The workshop will be limited to 25, first come first served on registration. If you experience difficulty registering, just shoot us an email for advice! Let's try to get everyone registered by Oct. 23.

Thanks, Sue Malnory—Friends of Hagerman



From Becky Bertoni

Keep Lewisville Beautiful has remaining these classes from 2017 Garden Secrets Classes series that may interest Master Naturalists:

September 21, Seed Saving 6-8 p.m.

November 2, Care & Maintenance of Trees in North Texas 6-7:30 p.m.

November 16, Rain Gardens 6-8 p.m.

All classes held in classroom 1 at the MCL Grand (100 N. Charles St 75057

RSVP REQUIRED: 872 538-5949 or info@keeplewisvillebeautiful.org

Becky Bertoni shares this information from Living Magazine, Sept 2017, Tex-Active by Annette Brooks:



Fossil Hunting



Several parks in Texas offer fossil hunting, including Dinosaur Valley Park and Ladonia Fossil Park. If you're up in the Dallas area, check out Post Oat Creek in Sherman, Texas, where you can find fossilized shells and shark's teeth. Many who have been there agree that a good way to enter the creek is to park off Travis Street, just north of the bridge.