

August 2018

Vol. 19 Issue 8

# *Naturalist News*

Publication from Texas Master Naturalist,  
Elm Fork Chapter



Photo courtesy Jonathan Reynolds — adult male eastern pondhawk dragonfly, *Erythemis simplicicollis*

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# Naturalist News

Publication from Texas Master Naturalist,  
Elm Fork Chapter

**Look for:**

- What insect is this?
- August speaker bio
- More beautiful pictures in this issue
- Remember to thank a contributor! We need them.



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**Texas Bluebells (*Eustoma russellianum*) at LLELA greenhouse from *Mary Morrow***

# August 2018 Regular Meeting

From Rita Lokie

Our speaker will present at 9:30 am due to a conflict and the Chapter meeting will follow afterwards. The Chapter Meeting for August is at the Denton County Elections Building.

**Dr. Michael C. Slattery** will be our August speaker and will be presenting "A constructive discussion in the Climate Change debate."

Dr. Slattery is the Director for the Institute for Environmental Studies and a Professor in the School Of Geology, Energy, and the Environment at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth.

His expertise includes: Physical hydrology; runoff processes and hydrological pathways; soil erosion, sediment production, and storage; human impact on fluvial systems; atmospheric pollution; environmental impacts of wind energy.

He has B.A. in Physical Geography, Geography and History of Art from University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.  
M.Science in Geography, University of Toronto, Canada  
Doctorate St. John's College and School of Geography, University of Oxford UK



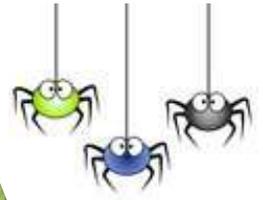
Dr. Slattery

Dr. Slattery has been a contributor to the Elm Fork Chapter by instructing the 2016, 2017 intern classes on Climate and Weather.

## Beginners Guide to Dragonflies



A pocket-size, brilliantly colorful, simple-to-use guide to dragonflies, containing dozens of full-color photographs that enable readers of all ages to identify the most common species; range maps; tips on attracting dragonflies, information on habitat needs, life cycle, food preferences; and much more. Amazon.com



**NOW ACCEPTING NEW TENANTS**  
Sue Yost class of 2017

Brand new Insect House in the exclusive LLELA Nature Preserve.  
Colorful individual suites.  
All units have a secure screened porch.  
Easy access to award winning pollinator gardens.  
Lake Lewisville in proximity.  
Decorated with environmentally friendly decor.  
Open flight paths.  
No pre-qualifying required.  
Fly by or walk by and check them out.  
These units are going fast!  
Get yours today!



**Jonathan Reynolds**

**From the gallery of**

**Red-Eared Slider Turtle**



**FIELD NOTES IN FOCUS**

A place to showcase your photos of flora and fauna.

## THREAD WAISTED WASP

(*Eremnophila aureonotata*)

How often have you seen a little hole in the ground and wondered how it was made, who made it, what may have lived inside, or what still lives inside?

Case in point: Before I set our ice chest down beside lawn chairs, as I do every evening, I noticed a hole in the location where I normally set the chest. I've never noticed that hole before. There were no digging signs with a pile of dirt to one side of hole (like Cicada killers leave), nor was there a consistent piling of fine soil around the hole (like ants leave). Just a hole. I set the cooler in different location vs. over the hole, and walked a few feet to the garden and began watering my vegetable garden.



When I returned for a water break at lawn chair, I noticed something flying around that hole location, but didn't recognize the insect (very thin wasp of some kind)...so back to watering.

As I returned for second time, I noticed a green caterpillar lying next to that mentioned hole. Hmmmm, where did that come from so quickly?

While I was hmmm-ing, the black wasp darted down to the caterpillar, inspected it, caterpillar responded with a flinching jerk, and wasp departed... so back to my watering.



On my third break, the wasp was inspecting the caterpillar again but without a response from caterpillar. Back to watering. On my fourth water break, the caterpillar was gone and the hole in ground was no longer detectable. Hmm...I must have missed the burial. Disappointing.

Diana Hatch assured me that I had photographed the Thread Waisted Wasp (*Eremnophila aureonotata*).

After googling the identified wasp, I realized that I had witnessed (even though only partially) the activity involved

whereby the wasp stung the caterpillar, dragged it to the previously-dug hole, laid her egg inside the paralyzed caterpillar and then buried it for incubation. Suddenly there was no caterpillar, no wasp, and the hole was completely covered and sealed.

In a blink, I could have missed all of that activity. Incredible.

Dorothy Thetford, class 2001

## The Nine-Banded Armadillo

**T**he Nine-Banded Armadillo, *Dasyus novemcinctus*, is the official small mammal of Texas. "Armadillo" is a Spanish term meaning "little armored one". Armadillos have bony plates on their bodies, tails and the top of their heads. They have large ears, small eyes, and a long snout. Despite belonging to the primitive order of mammals called Endenta, which means "toothless," they have 28 to 32 peg-like teeth. It is not very noticeable but armadillos do have hair. The hair on their upperparts is almost like fuzz while the hair on their underparts is shaggy, coarse and longer. They are about 2.5 feet long from their snout to the end of their tail and weigh about 12 pounds. It is a popular belief but not true that the nine-banded armadillo can curl into a ball.

Armadillos live in a variety of habitats including grasslands and forests. They are found in all parts of Texas except the Western Trans-Pecos. Their range has been expanding since they entered Texas from Mexico over a century ago. They now live all across the southeastern United States from Mexico to Florida. Their range is also expanding northward but will be limited by the cold. They cannot survive long periods of freezing weather. There are approximately 20 species of armadillos but the nine-banded is the only one in the United States. The others live in Central and South America. Their closest relatives are anteaters and sloths.

Armadillos are generalist feeders but eat mainly insects and other small invertebrates. They also eat carrion and sometimes berries and other plant matter. They have poor eyesight but a keen sense of smell which helps them locate food. They shuffle along with their snouts to the ground rooting and digging. They sometimes make sniffing and grunting sounds. They are largely nocturnal but may be seen foraging for food throughout the day.

Armadillos live in burrows that they dig with their strong, sharp claws. Their burrows have multichambered tunnels that usually have several openings. They normally use one main entrance and have the others for emergencies. Abandoned burrows are used by other animals like skunks and opossums.

When an armadillo senses danger it will stand upright, bracing itself with its tail, and sniff the air. Its main defense against predators is its bony plated shell but it will quickly dig a hole or flee with surprising speed into its burrow if attacked. The main reason armadillos become roadkill is that they jump straight up 3 to 4 feet when startled and hit the underside of cars that would otherwise pass over them.



*This photo was taken on the afternoon of June 10. I was surprised to come upon 4 armadillos foraging through the leaf litter near the back of our property.*

Armadillo babies are born in March. There are always four of the same sex. The identical quadruplets develop from the same egg. The babies are born with a soft shell that hardens with age. They are weaned by three months but stay with their mothers until the next breeding season. Except during the breeding season and the time the young spend with their mothers, armadillos are solitary. Armadillos typically live from 7 to 15 years. They can live longer in captivity.

Armadillos are unique animals that have become symbolic of Texas. While it is illegal to sell live armadillos that doesn't stop people from having live armadillo races. Texas souvenirs often feature armadillos. Armadillo-mania has led to the sale of items from stuffed toys, tee shirts, mugs, Christmas ornaments, and jewelry to cookie cutters.

***NN was fortunate enough to have two "armadillo" articles last month. Marilyn Blanton graciously agreed to have her article held over. Two different takes just adds to our knowledge.***

**Eastern Pondhawk**

*Erythemis simplicicollis* - Eastern Pondhawk

**Other Common Names**

Common Pondhawk

Green Jacket

**Numbers**

One of five Nearctic species in the genus.

**Size**

36-48 mm.

**Identification**

Females and young males are green with square blackish spots on the abdomen.

*From Ron Hemberger and Dragonflies through Binoculars (1)* :

"Males have unusual vertical circling contests in which one male which is following another flies under and up in front of the leading male, then the new follower repeats this maneuver, and so forth up to a dozen times."

As of February 2006, the [taxonomic reference](#) followed by BugGuide does not recognize subspecies of *E. simplicicollis*, which they refer to as Eastern Pondhawk. They treat *E. collocata* as a separate species, and refer to it as Western Pondhawk.

The Dragonfly Society of the Americas (whose odonate list is hosted at [Odonata Central](#)) recognizes two subspecies: *E. simplicicollis simplicicollis* - which they refer to as Eastern Pondhawk, and *E. simplicicollis collocata* - which refer to as Western Pondhawk. They give the name Common Pondhawk to the species as a whole.

**Food**

Adults feed on small flying insects.

*From Dragonflies through Binoculars (1)*: "Pondhawks...commonly take prey as large as themselves, held by 3 large spines on each middle and hind thigh." "They hunt from the ground or low perches.... A male territory encompasses about 5 square yards of algae mat or other floating plants."

Feeding on other Dragonflies:

**Range**

Eastern North America, the Great Plains (excluding the Northernmost part), south to Texas, and spotty distribution in Arizona and New Mexico.

**Habitat**

Primarily ponds. Adults often perch on the ground, and are quite unwary.

*From Ron Hemberger and Dragonflies through Binoculars (1)*: "Habitat: Most quiet waters...including slightly brackish waters but not bogs. Usually associated with mats of algae, duckweed, water lilies, or other flat, floating plants."

From: <https://bugguide.net/node/view/577>

**Male**—see Jonathan Reynolds photo on cover page.



**Female**—Marilyn Blanton shared this researched photo

## ***“A Lesson of Friendship, Surprise, Appreciation and Hope”***

The Epiphyllum Hookeri  
*Hookers Orchid Cactus*  
Night Blooming Cereus

**S**ome years ago, a friend gave me a plant with specific instructions to share it with friends. She deemed it “The Friendship Plant”. (The name she gave it seems to frequently be bestowed on a variety of plants by well-meaning people who share a plant that propagates easily and grows prolifically.) I brought it home and sat it outside with little consideration or question.

Recently I did a little digging and learned it’s true scientific name is actually the Epiphyllum Hookeri. It is not a particularly attractive plant as it grows long and lanky stems, but it is quite fascinating and easy to maintain, so I let it stay. I had, for the most part, ignored it for several years, other than the occasional watering (when I remembered) and bringing it inside annually as the first freeze approached. It has sat in the same corner on my porch, winding around in a gangly fashion, doing its own thing, for many years. From time to time I have, as promised, snapped off a piece (either accidentally or intentionally) and stuck it in a pot. Each time the new plantings have easily taken root and I’d give them away to some unsuspecting, “plant-loving” friend, repeating to them what I was told—that it is a “the friendship plant” and that it was to be shared and passed on.

Two summers ago, after a decade of nothingness, I walked out to find that the most interesting large orb had appeared seemingly over night! I was quite surprised, as it had never previously produced any flowering orbs. Very soon thereafter the orb transformed, literally over night, into the most gorgeous 8” wide, white blossom. The early morning hours held a freshly opened bloom, which by afternoon hours, had sadly begun to drastically wilt. (Experts actually say they bloom between 10 pm and 5 am and can do so every six months, but this is my story!) The delicate flower did hold on one more day but did not reopen as some flowers do and I knew it’s time with me was limited. Unfortunately the opening and fading of the single precious flower came so quickly that I had not bothered to grab my camera, assuming I’d have a bit of time to get back to it. Sadly, I now know the flowers are quite delicate and last only a day or two at best. It blossomed only once that year so my delight quickly faded. As a photographer, I know to capture at the moment and not put off the shot but I had not done that, thinking it would be there later.

Last summer, to my delight, this strangely interesting cactus produced TWO lovely blooms. I was thrilled. Knowing I had a short window of time in which to act, I ran in that morning and grabbed my camera, taking as many photos as I could before the annual gift faded into memory again.



I entitled this article "A Lesson of Friendship, Surprise, Appreciation and Hope" because that describes everything I now see in this gangly plant that always sat in the corner unattended.

- I am gratefully reminded of Friendship each time I look at my crazy plant.
- I was surprised by the beauty of its magnificent, stunningly unique bloom.
- I was reminded that Appreciation is due in full at the moment it is witnessed and should be captured immediately (whether to memory or photo).
- and I am Hopeful each year that I'll receive that same precious gift again.

Such a seemingly simple plant delivering layers of life lesson reminders.

Now, as the days heat up and I look at the intriguing plant sitting in my porch corner, I am hopeful, wondering what this summer will hold. Will this perhaps be the year of my flowering trifecta? One can only hope and anticipate with excitement. What is certain; I will think of my friend who shared it with appreciation each time I see it.

**-LeeAnn Weaver**

\*If you would like one of these plants, please let me know. I am happy to share this "friendship" plant, but when YOU share it, please also tell them it is the "Epiphyllum Hookeri", producer of a rare and special annual bloom! (Or you can just tell them it's the Hookers Orchid, though they might take offense).

**Here is what the experts say:** Night-blooming cereus is the common name referring to a large number of flowering **ceroid cacti** that bloom at night. The flowers are short lived, and some of these species, such as *Selenicereus grandiflorus*, bloom only once a year, for a single night.<sup>[1]</sup> Other names for one or more cacti with this habit are princess of the night, Honolulu queen (for *Hylocereus undatus*), and **queen of the night** (which is also used for an unrelated plant species).

Regardless of genus or species, night-blooming cereus flowers are almost always white or very pale shades of other colors, often large, and frequently fragrant. Most of the flowers open after nightfall, and by dawn, most are in the process of wilting. The plants that bear such flowers can be tall, columnar, and sometimes extremely large and tree-like, but more frequently are thin-stemmed climbers. While some night-blooming cereus are grown indoors in homes or greenhouses in colder climates, most of these plants are too large or ungainly for this treatment, and are only found outdoors in tropical areas.

*It is a type of orchid or jungle cactus and not especially attractive, sporting a leggy cluster of long, flat leaves.*

*The night blooming cereus has a tall almost woody stem, from which the flat leaves emerge. Also, unlike the other orchid cacti, *E. oxypetalum* blooms in late summer.*



Once they start, the buds grow fast, from nearly invisible, to pointed orbs on 12-inch long "S" –shaped stems. After two weeks, large beige buds were hanging from their floral tubes.

As a potted plant, maintain indoor temperatures above 35°. In winter grow in an area that has night temperatures below 60° and above 32° on a consistent basis

Bring soil to a state of dryness between watering--and water less frequently from November to March. Resume watering in March. When watering, thoroughly saturate soil until a little water runs out of the bottom of the pot.

Begin fertilizing in March. They are moderate feeders so 1/4 tsp./gallon once a week is a general recommendation. In winter discontinue feeding. Use a balanced fertilizer i.e. 15-15-15 or a blooming fertilizer like Dyna Gro 7-9-5 or Electra 5-10-3."

Genus: *Epiphyllum*)

Species: *oxypetalum*

Synonyms: *Cereus oxypetalus*, *Phyllocactus oxypetalus*, *Cereus latifrons*, *Epiphyllum latifrons*, *Epiphyllum acuminatum*

Category: Cactus and Succulents

Height: 8-10 ft. (2.4-3 m)

Spacing: 18-24 in. (45-60 cm)

Hardiness: USDA Zone 11: above 4.5 °C (40 °F)

Sun Exposure: Sun to Partial Shade, Light Shade

Bloom Color: White/Near White

Bloom Time: Mid Spring, Late Spring/Early Summer, Mid Summer, Late Summer/Early Fall

Foliage: Evergreen



Results of a little TLC

## MY PERSONAL WILD KINGDOM

I rarely pay much attention to my neighbor's big, old, dark gray cat since he considers my back yard sungarden his personal and private resting ground for security. If he's curled up and sleeping on a big rock in my garden when I arrive to enjoy my javasippin' swing, he politely and slowly tippy-toes out of my garden, and neither of us ever has to say a word.



Two mornings ago my dark gray neighbor was resting in a different spot, so I went on about my business of turning on small water sprinkler, setting up swing cushions, and settling into my comfy zone of the calm early morning.

However, the dark gray neighbor began to move. Granted, his new resting place was on top of my 8 foot privacy fence and his movements were cautious and slow. Lo-n-behold, my furry neighbor had turned into a Raccoon (*Procyon lotor*)! Surprise indeed.

My calm morning suddenly shifted into excitement. With camera aimed at the creature moving very cautiously along the 2 inch width of the 2x4" railing, I stayed in my swing and enjoyed the show. He walked a few feet, lowered his body onto the narrow railing and, with extra efforts to gain his balance, tucked his head down between his front paws and tried to take a nap. After all, they are nocturnal animals and he was needing to get some sleep. That lasted only a minute or two until he actually dozed off and had to catch himself before falling. He moved a little farther along the fence and found an intersection where the angled fence railing gave a little more space for bedding down. (That's when I needed to be taking a video because it was very obvious that he would jolt himself awake every time he dozed off for a nap...sometimes dropping all fours straddling the fence top.) He meticulously tried this position several times until I realized that he was going to fall if he tried that once more.

Sure enough, the eight-foot drop while in a pre-sleeping mind-set put him into an addled mode but, once he regained his composure, he hobbled around and climbed one of my trees without ever noticing that he had an audience of one swinging javasipper!

After about an hour of this wild kingdom excitement, I left him there for my breakfast duties. The next time I checked on him, he was cautiously trying to maneuver the top of the fence that goes along back of my sungarden and on down the alley. Thanks for the memories....

Dorothy Brown Thetford (class 2001)



## How hot is it? Sue YOST class of 2017

I always say, I never saw a bird pant until I moved to TEXAS!  
It's August. It's hot. So what can YOU do to help the birds survive the rest of this hot summer?

Water, water, water! You should have at least one watering station. But this summer...more is better! Birds will come to all levels to drink and bathe. Hang one from a tree. Put a pretty pedestal one in a garden bed. Add one on the ground and you will also help "water" the raccoons, opossums, squirrels, lizards and toads etc. They all need water. Put your bath out in the open, but close enough to cover in case they need to make a quick flyaway from a predator!



Birds need water year around to drink but also to keep their feathers in top condition. Messy, dirty feathers can be hazardous to a bird. Having clean feathers means they can regulate their body temperatures better. Cool off when it's HOT and warm up when it's COLD.

The depth of most baths are about 2-3". Experts suggest no matter what depth of bath you have to add rocks, stones or pebbles to the bottom of the bowl. This will make it look more natural to the birds. But more importantly by adding rocks, etc. this will change the depth of the bath so you have shallower areas for small birds like Chickadees and House Finch but still have deeper areas for larger birds like the Blue Jays and Robins.

The sound of water will help attract birds to the bath. It can be a bubbling waterfall, or a dripper.

You can make your own "dripper" by filling a plastic milk jug with water. Cap it. Then use a pin or small tack to puncture a hole in the bottom side. Then hang it from a tree limb over a birdbath with water in it ...it should then be a slow drip, drop, drip, drop. Drippers are also a great way to keep your bath from going dry whether from dirty bird activity or your own vacation.



Ever notice how birds flock to foliage when you have your sprinklers on? They are taking a "leaf" bath. The best summer bird magnet in my yard is the mister. You can make your own using parts from the irrigation dept. from a hardware store. They can also be purchased at your local bird store or online. I have mine connected to an outside faucet. It sprays a fine mist onto the foliage of a small tree. I usually turn it on [you could use a water timer too] about 5-6 pm. Within 5 minutes the tree is full of birds [and squirrels] They absolutely love it! It is so much fun to watch them, chickadees, woodpeckers, jays, thrashers, wrens, finches, cardinals etc. Some get so absolutely soaked they are almost unrecognizable! Hummers and butterflies also enjoy fluttering thru the mist!

Water is only one way to help the birds in this heat. Food availability is another important part of summer survival. Birds expend so much energy foraging for food that knowing they have dependable feeding stations can help lessen the stress and save them energy. Whether nectar [liquid or nectar producing plants], seeds or live mealworms, maintain a good feeding station to supplement their natural diets. In a drought, their natural food may not be flourishing so there will be more birds [and animals] competing for less natural food resources.

Do your part.....set up your habitat with plenty of fresh water and fresh food . Then pour yourself some cold ice tea and watch your success! They will thank you with a song!!

## A Sticky Wicket in the Big Thicket

*By Bob James*

If you drive south from North Texas on Highway 287 going to Beaumont, you will pass through one of the most incredible regions on earth. It is a biome called the Big Thicket. It really is one of the incredible places on earth or at least it was. Before the Anglos arrived to homestead Texas, The Thicket was the biological cross-roads of America. Within its boundaries both temperate and subtropical plants and animals lived in habitats that encompassed jungle, swamp, woodland, plain and desert.

On your trip south when you pass Crockett, Texas, you cross the Old Spanish road El Camino de Real. The Camino was a highway that began in Mexico, crossed Texas, through Crockett, to Nacogdoches, to San Augustine, crossing the Sabine River and on to Natchitoches, Louisiana. The Spanish Road was the northern limit of the Thicket. The southern limit was the grassland of the Coastal prairie of the southern coast. The eastern boundary was the Sabine River and the western boundary was the Trinity River or, as some biologists have theorized, the San Jacinto River. The original area of the Thicket was in excess of four million five hundred thousand acres.

The Thicket was formed over eons of time. Due to tectonic plate dynamics the area was submerged and raised up innumerable times during the Pleistocene period 2,588,000 to 11,700 years ago. As the northern glaciers melted the vast rivers, the Trinity, the Sabine and the Neches washed silt, clay and sand down from the north. The area has a deep underlying clay covered with Weches Greensand. The resulting soil is capable of absorbing and holding vast amounts of water and the Thicket is located in an area that receives over 60 inches of rainfall yearly. As a result the Thicket has developed eight distinct plant communities: uplands, savannahs, beech-magnolia forests, baygalls, palmetto-bald cypress forests, bogs, stream bank gardens and floodplain forests. Because of the heavy growth of the plant communities there are habitats for hundreds of different animal species. There are still occasional reports of panthers being seen – and heard – in the Thicket. A black bear wandered into Livingston, Texas in the 1950s. It was thought to be the last bear in the Thicket and the local citizens promptly shot it and ate it. It supposedly weighed over 400 pounds and tasted rather “gamey”.

In the years between the two world wars there was a significant effort to preserve a large portion of this unique biological paradise. There were a number of Congressmen from Texas that supported the movement of the Big Thicket Association, the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society to create a Big Thicket National Park. The Second World War interrupted this effort and by the time the war was over any legislation to protect the Thicket was forgotten.

During the 1920s the Lumbermen moved into the area and ‘compromised’ with the Government. Their primary idea was ‘reforestation’ which is a prostitution of the language, masking the ecological disaster that resulted. The lumbermen and the oilmen listened to the claims and promised to “re-grow” the Thicket and be “stewards” of the land. Now there is hardly anything left, no game, no birds, no wildflowers, no ferns, and hardly any trace of this great wilderness. A Big Thicket National Preserve was established in 1974 and the Federal Government created a series of nine habitats protecting 15 remnant areas of 108,208 acres, called ‘A String of Pearls’. This represents only 2.4% of its original area. The rest of this beautiful and unique country has been left to the lumbermen and the developers. Almost all of the huge pristine Loblolly Pines, Longleaf Pines, Beech and Magnolia trees have been “reforested” with fast growing yellow pine planted in straight rows. All of the understory has been rooted out and burned. In some places it looks like the surface of the moon.

Several unusual plants found in the Big Thicket are carnivorous. They are the bladderwort, the butterwort, the sundew and the pitcher plant. These plants obtain their nitrogen by consuming insects. Flying insects are attracted to their beautiful colors and their pollen. As the insects encounter the pollen they become trapped in the plant’s sticky sap and are slowly propelled into the plant and consumed. I have always wanted a sundew plant to place on my screened-in back porch when I lived in the Woodlands. In 2003, Ralph Smith, a friend and fellow student in the Gulf Coast Master Naturalist program, wanted to do a program on these plants for a local school. He drove to the



Sundew —courtesy Blair Pittman

Preserve Headquarters north of Kountze and applied for permission to collect two sundew and a pitcher plant. I had told him it was illegal to collect anything in the preserve so he obtained a letter from our sponsor. When he arrived at Headquarters and showed the Chief Ranger the letter, he granted him permission to collect two sundew plants and a pitcher plant. They also showed him on the map where these specimens might be obtained. Before he left, the Ranger told him he should not, under any circumstance, cross the small slough just to the right of the collecting area. When asked why, the Ranger told him, “That is Eason land and those are the Dog People and if you trespass on their property they will shoot you. They are violent people and have been at war with us for a number of years.”

Well, Ralph went to the area, parked and walked about a quarter of a mile to a boggy place that was indicated on the map, walking warily to the left of the slough. After spotting a number of sundews he squatted down with his basket and spade. Just as he started to dig a voice behind him said, “Hey fellow, wha’ the hell you doing anyway?” Ralph almost jumped out of his skin! “Bob”, he told me later, “This guy had on dirty overalls, a beat up old straw hat, a khaki shirt and a pump shotgun in his right hand. Stuttering, I told him I was just digging up a couple of sundews. Then he said, “Don’t you know that’s ‘gainst the laws?” I told him, “Yes’ser, I know that but...” And before I could retrieve the permission paper he said, “In that case, by God, I’ll hep yea” and he leaned his shotgun against a cypress tree and got down on his hands and knees and helped me dig out the

plants. After placing the sundews and pitcher plant in my basket he told me to be sure and put the basket in the trunk of my car so them ‘Feds’ wouldn’t see it as I drove out. Then he told me his name was James Eason and his uncle was I. C. Eason but he had passed on to the Lord. Bob, I was scared to death and I’m not going back to that place ever!” Ralph did give me one of the sundews.

I kept the sundew on my back porch until my wife and I moved to Arizona. Before I left I gave the plant to a good friend and told him how to take care of it. Several years later I called him and in the course of our conversation he told me he had to get rid of the sundew; it had gotten huge and one night while they were asleep it ate his wife’s cat. I think he was pulling my leg. I do know you can buy sundews on the Internet. If you decide to buy one, keep it on the back porch in sphagnum moss and water it carefully every day. And, don’t leave the cat out on the porch at night.

*Sundews*

An ingenuity too astonishing  
to be quite fortuitous is  
this bog full of sundews,  
sphagnum –

Amy Clampitt

“Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.”  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Enjoy the show!

*Don Fikes– Queen Butterflies*



**Red-bellied Woodpecker**  
(*Melanerpes carolinus*) and **Brown**  
**Thrasher** (*Toxostoma rufum*) just  
dropping in for lunch at Dorothy  
Thetford's open air café!



Kathy Webb has been making small beds for orphaned wildlife for project P180308. Now she is making hammocks which are wildly popular with both the orphans and the rehabbers. These hammocks (see photo at right) are a hammock on top and have full fringe on the bottom. Some of the babies like to be on top and some like to hide in the fringe on the bottom. Kathy could use some help putting these together. If we could get it in the weekly e-mail, that would be wonderful and Kathy should be the point of contact. (Some of us don't know how to sew.) Please let me know if questions. *From Barbara Kraus*



The Dallas Fly Fishers will have their annual benefit auction Monday evening August 13 starting at 5:30 PM. The auction location is the Wyndham hotel at 7800 Alpha Rd. in Dallas. Come at 5:30 for a buffet meal, the auction starts around 6:30 PM with many wonderful fishing trips and vacation opportunities along with all the flyfishing gear that you may need. The Dallas Fly Fishers has been a supporter of LLELA for many years, so if you can possibly come and are interested in flyfishing this is a event you do not want to miss! Call Richard at 469-877-0695 if you are coming.  
Richard Johnson

Approved AT coming up in August:

**August 14** – [Pollinator Garden Walk](#)

**August 15** – [Meet the Raptors!](#)

**August 28** – [Webinar – Our Changing Climate and the Impact on Texas' Fish, Wildlife, and Habitats](#)

2018 MN Annual Conference

Registration is now OPEN for the Texas Master Naturalist 2018 Annual Meeting! Plan to join us this October to celebrate 20 years of the Texas Master Naturalist Program!

<https://txmn.org/2018-annual-meeting/>

This link on bird strikes comes from Karen Magnum: <http://content.yardmap.org/learn/improve-windows-protect-birds/>

From **Karen Mangum**: In a new study, milkweed plants exposed to higher levels of CO2 served as a less effective defense for monarch butterflies. *Weather.com*

Nights Warming Dangerously Faster Than Days

According to NOAA data, summer nights in the U.S. are rising at double the rate of days. *Weather.com*

Our Contributors so this Month



Mary Morrow class 2014



Rita Lokie class 2013

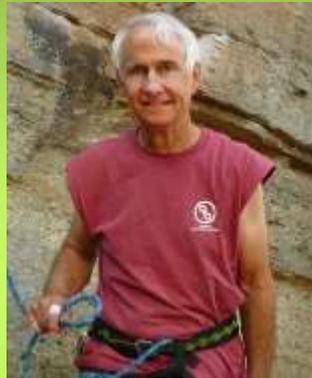


Judi Elliott class 2009



w odum editor class 2005

Marilyn Blanton class 1999



Jonathan Reynolds class 2014



Dob Fikes class 2013



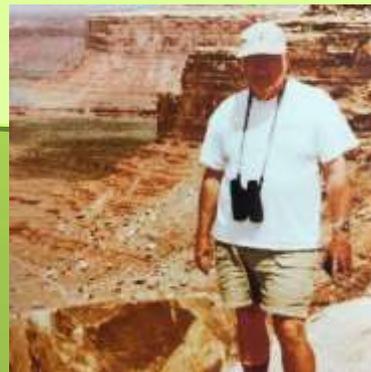
Sue Yost class 2017



Dorothy Thetford class 2001



LeeAnn Weaver (& Presley) class 2004



Bob James transferred/refresher with 2017



Questions  
are  
guaranteed in  
life;  
Answers  
aren't.

## Why do oak trees get hit by lightning?

Because trees are normally the tallest point around, are natural lightning rods. Oaks and poplars tend to be taller and have a higher moisture content, which increases their chances of being struck by lightning. If a tree is struck after being soaked by rain it has a better chance of survival.



*Thank  
you*

TO ALL CONTRIBUTORS. Each of  
you is appreciated.

*Send your idea for "Mostly the Last Word" to wanda odum, Naturalist News editor*



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.”*

*Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension  
Joseph A. Carroll Building  
401 W. Hickory Street  
Denton, TX 76201—9026*

940-349-2883

**We're on the web!**

**[www.txmn.org/elmfork](http://www.txmn.org/elmfork)**

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- TPWD—Ricardo Torres



Carolina chickadee  
*poecile carolinensis* –w  
odum (ballpoint pen)

**Regular Monthly Chapter Meetings**

The August meeting speaker will present at 9:30 a.m. and business meeting will follow. This is to accommodate the schedule of the speaker. Chapter meetings are open to the public.

Next meeting is August 16, 2018

Dr. Michael C. Slattery will be presenting “A constructive discussion in the Climate Change debate”.

Meeting this month is at Elections Bldg.,  
701 Kimberly Dr., Denton, TX 76208

**Board Meetings**

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met June 14, 2018. Next monthly Board meeting is August 9, 2018.

Monthly Board meetings are open to members.