

# Naturalist News

Texas Master Naturalist, Elm  
Fork Chapter

Volume 20, Issue 11  
November 2019

## **EVIDENCE OF FALL AT NORTHLAKES— FROM JONATHAN REYNOLDS**



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Eastern Carpenter Bee *Xylocopa virginica* at Hagerman  
National Wildlife Refuge—Janice Goetz

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## Special points of interest:

- What's happening on the turtle project
- Helping the wildlife project
- See bios for proposed 2020 officers

On Facebook: [www.facebook.com/  
TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/](https://www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/)

We're on the Web  
[www.txmn.org/elmfork](http://www.txmn.org/elmfork)



## What Happened Last

From Mary Morrow



## 2019 TMN STATE CONFERENCE

ROCKWALL, OCTOBER 2019

~ 55 MEMBERS AND GUESTS ATTENDED

~ SPONSORED THE GENERAL STORE

~ EXEMPLARY PROJECT AWARD

TRAILS OF FURNEAUX CREEK NATURE TRAILS

~ PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD - WILDLIFE

REGINA DALE - 'SHARING A QUIET MOMENT'

~ RECOGNIZED FOR CELEBRATING OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY



## What Happened Last



# What Happened Last



## What Happens Next

*From Rita Lokie –November Meeting Program*

### **CURBING YOUR WASTE**

*A Holiday Presentation About Our Garbage and Recycling*

Recycling has been in the news lately, with local city programs dealing with numerous challenges. And, with the holidays around the corner, consumers need to be especially aware of waste issues and solutions. Education is the key to waste reduction efforts and proper recycling. Fran Witte will present current recycling issues and solutions as well as provide ideas for reducing waste during the holiday season.

## BIO FOR FRAN WITTE

Fran Witte

**City of Irving – 26 years (now retired)**

Environmental Programs Coordinator, City of Irving



I am currently retired, having previously been the Environmental Programs Coordinator for the City of Irving, specializing in environmental education and program development. I was employed by the City of Irving for 26 years and was instrumental in developing and implementing programs to promote environmental sustainability among Irving's residents, businesses and visitors. These included Irving's recycling program; Keep Irving Beautiful; Irving's Master Composter Program; IrvingYES (Youth for Environmental Sustainability); Think Green...Be Green educational campaign; and the Interfaith Stewards Project. I have written, received and implemented many grants and have received numerous awards during my tenure with the city.

In addition to being a Certified Texas Master Naturalist, I'm a Certified Citizen Forester, and Master Composter instructor. I serve on the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) with the City of Denton (council appointed); am a board member of the Denton Community Market; and Secretary with Women in the Environment. In addition to those organizations, I'm a member of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at UNT, Native Plant Society of Texas, North Texas Renewable Energy Group, and the National Association of Interpreters.

I love the outdoors, nature walks, gardening, traveling, arts and music, and looking for good finds at the local antique shops.

I'm married and have lived in Denton for 11 years. I have two grown sons and one rambunctious grandson.



Proposed Leaders for Next Year

From Mary Morrow

**2019 SLATE  
OF OFFICERS**



**PRESIDENT**

**Brenda Wellenreiter**

**VICE-PRESIDENT**

**Jody Springer**

**TREASURER**

**Jerry Betty**

**SECRETARY**

**Kathryn Wells**

**Meet the  
Candidates**



**BRENDA WELLENREITER - PRESIDENT**  
 ~ Texas Master Naturalist Elm Fork Chapter 2014  
 ~ Work background was in oil and gas accounting and financial planning  
 ~ Experience in non-profit accounting with the Denton County Master Gardeners, Denton Freedom House and various horse associations  
 ~ EFCTMN Treasurer in 2017, 2018 and currently in 2019



**JODY SPRINGER - VICE PRESIDENT**  
 ~ Texas Master Naturalist Elm Fork Chapter 2018, Co-Class Representative  
 ~ Retired - healthcare administration in hospital executive management and financial and strategic management consultation  
 ~ Enthusiastic learner and field outing regular; volunteer across a range of TMNEFC projects

**KATHRYN WELLS - SECRETARY**  
 ~ Texas Master Naturalist Elm Fork Chapter 2017, Class Co-Representative, 2019 EFCTMN Secretary  
 ~ Denton County Master Gardener Association - Communications Director, Vice President  
 ~ Town of Flower Mound-Environmental Conservation Commission, Commissioner-Place 10  
 Previous Work Experience:  
 ~ Corporate Training, Mass & Media Communications, Public Relations, Writing/Editing



**JERRY BETTY - TREASURER**  
 ~ Texas Master Naturalist Elm Fork Chapter 2018  
 ~ Project Manager for Greenhouse Restoration at Clear Creek  
 ~ Co-Project Leader for DISD School Days at Clear Creek  
 ~ Community Outreach with SWAT  
 ~ 40 Years in Industry on the inside looking out.



Those who contributed to this issue of Naturalist News—Thank you!



Editor, wanda odum, class 2005



Judi Elliott class 2009



Regina Dale class 2019



Mary Morrow class 2014



Janice Goetz class 2016



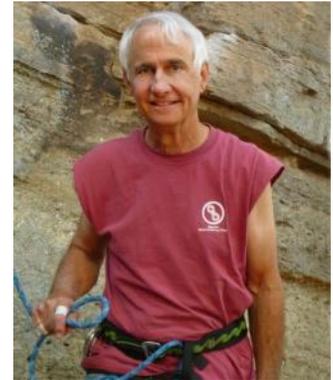
Scott Kiester class 2003



Rita Lokie class 2013



Chuck Swatski class 2018



Jonathan Reynolds class 2014



Nadine Beall— photo unavailable class 2013



Sue Yost class 2017



Photo unavailable— Barbara Kraus class 2017



## Projects In and Around the Community

### **Box Turtle Project Update comes from Scott Kiester**

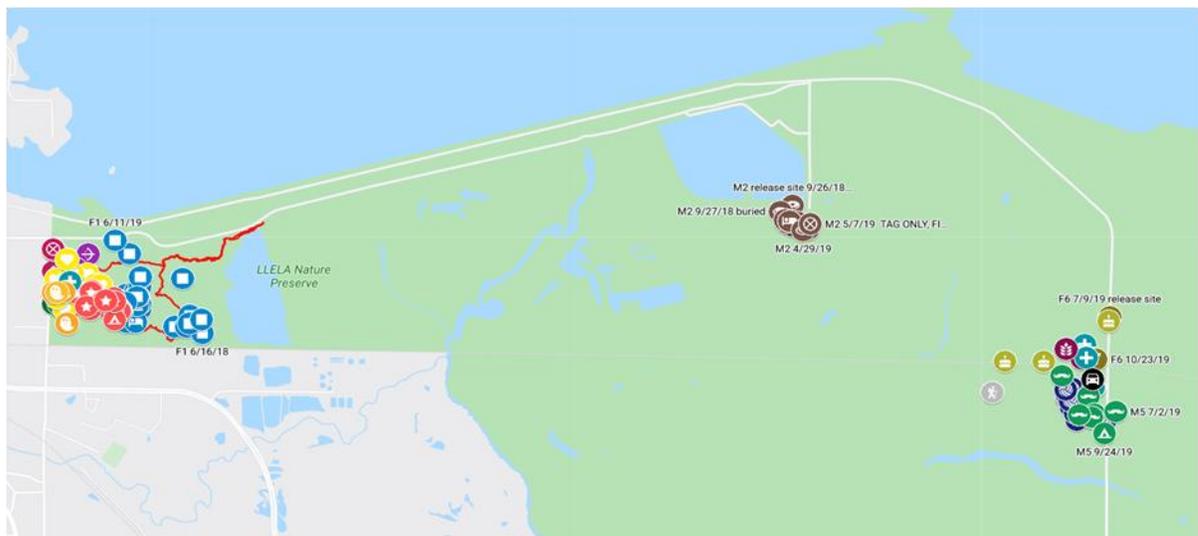
**F**or anyone not familiar with LLELA's box turtle project, we have been tracking several wild turtles on the property, some for over a year, and fostering juveniles. The study began as a response to staff, volunteers and visitors never seeing young box turtles while on the trails or working on the property. It is possible that LLELA has only a remnant population of older three toed box turtles and it is questionable if we have any ornate box turtles at all, since none have been seen in some time.

Young box turtles are subject to predation from several carnivores, principally coyotes, bobcats, and raccoons. Once a juvenile reaches three to four years of age they are large enough to close up using the hinge on their plastron, the bottom shell, and become mostly predator proof. The 24 juveniles being fostered are one to three years old and will be released when they are large enough to use their defenses.

The tracking project follows 11 radio tagged individuals to determine their habitat and resource needs. In part to learn about the current population and in part to develop information about the habitat requirements for the juveniles that are to be released on LLELA. Most turtles have a home range, the area where they hang out. It is not a territory in the ecological sense, turtles don't defend their turf, but they do remain in an area that provides enough food, and places to shelter. The home ranges we have documented vary from less than 2 acres to about 7 acres with an average of around 4 acres/turtle.

There are two groups being tracked, six individuals on the west side of LLELA, in and around the Blackjack Trail, and five on the east side of the property in the scrub forests on the edge of the prairies. What we have observed so far is that the Crosstimbers turtles, those on the west side, in general have smaller home ranges than the individuals on the east side. Why this is, needs to be studied. There are a few individuals in populations known as transients, they seem to have a regular pattern of movement but cover a much larger area. We know of one transient, turtle F1, whose nickname is Gypsy. She wanders through an area of about 30 acres.

They will all be dug in and hibernating by about Thanksgiving and likely not move again until mid to late April. Giving both the tracking team and the fostering team a welcome break from the daily feeding and watering of juveniles and weekly tracking the movements of adults.



Map of LLELA showing the locations of radio tagged turtles. Each color represents a different individual and each dot is a tracked location. The movements of turtle F1, Gypsy, are the blue dots along the east portions of the Blackjack trail. She has been tracked the longest and has the most location dots. Turtle M2 lives in the center of the property, brown dots on the map. We lost track of him when his radio tag was bitten off in May. Very likely he survived though, as several individuals have bite marks and scrapes on their shells.



Projects In and Around the Community



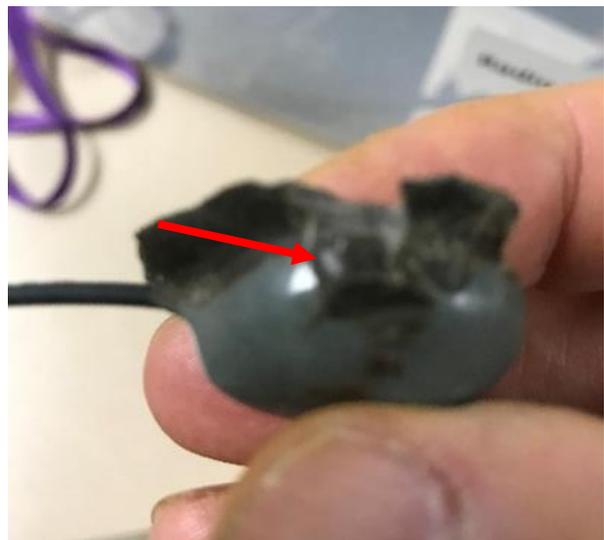
*F1, Gypsy, on May 30th 2019. Notice the bite marks on her*



*F7 on the move October 8th 2019. The radio tags are placed so they don't hinder activity in any way.*



*M7 showing the hinge in the plastron and how box turtles can close up their shell*



*M2's radio tag showing the bite damage*



## Projects In and Around the Community



On November 8, 2019, Flower Mound Wild was invited to attend and accompany the Town of Flower Mound Parks & Recreation Department at the Texas Parks & Recreation Society (N. Texas) conference luncheon at the new Cowboys complex in Frisco, Texas.

At the conference our program was given an award for the best new youth program in all of the North Texas region. Flower Mound Wild and the Town of Flower Mound beat out many cities to win this award. This award is great recognition for Elm Fork Chapter Master Naturalist. Thanks to all the Master Naturalists who contributed to our youth classes this summer

with Flower Mound Wild at Flower Mound's Heritage Park.

Starting in early 2020 I will start planning for the new Flower Mound Wild Youth Program and there are many opportunities for Master Naturalists to join me in planning and presenting the program for Summer 2020. Please let me if you have interest in working the Flower Mound Wild Program. Contact me at [cswaske@gmail.com](mailto:cswaske@gmail.com) or call or text me at 214/232-0704.

### Chuck Swatske

Project : P180308TR -Wildlife Rehab & Education



## November — A Month to Give Thanks and Thank You

### From Barbara Kraus

**A** big thank you to Judy Guthrie who baked 30 bags of nutrition bars (known as critter crack) for our local wildlife in rehab in October. That many bags is a herculean task and her talent and efforts are so much appreciated. We also want to give a shout-out to Kim Wootten, who bakes nutrition bars every quarter for us; we greatly appreciate how much she has done for the wildlife! Kim and Judy are providing much-needed optimal nutrition for orphaned wildlife to get them a great start in life when they go back into the big wide world. This is a huge contribution to wildlife and we can't thank these two master naturalists enough.

3 cups unsalted nuts (no peanuts)  
 1-3/4 cups 100% Whey Protein Isolate Powder, Vanilla  
 3 large eggs  
 2/3 cup Whole Wheat Flour  
 2 tsp Vanilla (liquid or powder)  
 2 tsp Aluminum-free Baking Powder  
 1 tbsp Organic Almond Butter  
 1/2 15 oz can Organic Pumpkin  
 1/2 cup puréed fruit or vegetable of choice  
 1/4 cup water  
 1 tbsp Organic Virgin Raw Coconut Oil  
 3,000 mg Calcium (powder)  
 1,000 mg Magnesium (powder)  
 5,000 iu Vitamin D



Judy Guthrie class 2005



Kim Wootten class 2017



**Field Notes in Focus**



*From the Gallery of Jonathan Reynolds*



## Meet a Master

### Meet a Master: Marilyn Blanton

by Sue Yost class of 2017

Marilyn Blanton  
class 1999

**Where are you from?** I was born in Denton, Texas and never really left. I've lived in Argyle for more than 30 years now but I'm only a few miles from where I grew up.

**Marital status?** My husband, Jim, and I have been married for 38 years.

**Kids, Grandkids:** We have two sons, Mark and Matt. We have three grandkids, Jack, Logan and Tatum. Mark lives in Page, Arizona and Matt lives with his family in Knoxville, Tennessee.

**Pets:** We have one dog. Benji is a little black Terrier mix that was a rescue dog. We have more cats than we intended to have. Our cats are Sammy, Butterfinger, Almond Joy, Snickers, Spitfire, Scotchie, Dancer, Baby and four more young cats that need a new home. Does anyone want a nice, pretty house cat?

**Work history:** I worked at Denton County National Bank for several years then for First State Bank for about 17 years. I retired in 2000. Jim closed his law office at the same time. We still aren't truly retired. We just changed what we were doing to focus on our rental properties.

**Schooling:** I went to Denton public schools and graduated from Denton High School. I attended the University of North Texas for a short time.

**How long MN?** I've been a Master Naturalist for 20 years. I was in the first Elm Fork Chapter class in 1999.

**Favorite pastime:** I have lots of pastimes. I enjoy being outside and learning about nature. I like nature photography, especially taking photos of flowers, butterflies, dragonflies and other insects. I like doing anything with flowers. In addition to growing flowers, I like to press flowers for craft projects. I like to collect and read natural history books. And, I like to bake.

**Favorite food:** I like about everything but shrimp. Pizza and chocolate are my favorites.

**Favorite place to visit:** The Big Thicket is one of my favorite places.

**Favorite animal:** My favorite animal, other than dogs and cats for pets, is a butterfly.

**Favorite MN volunteer opportunity:** My favorite MN volunteer opportunity is the Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition. I've been working on this project for 10 years.

**Share a funny story or antidote about being a MN:** Friends and family often ask me what some flower or insect is and bring me caterpillars and insects that they find.

**Tell us something we'd be surprised to know about you:** Jim and I are working on a big project to restore a prairie on Jim's family farm. The farm is in Collin County and has been in his family for more than 150 years.



## Of Interest

**AT approved**

### Ongoing AT Opportunities

- [2019 Monarch Conservation Webinar Series](#)
- [Cornell Lab Bird Academy](#)
- [Raptor Rapture Online Course](#)
- Any of the [Native Landscape Certification Program](#) Classes and most of their programs offered by the Native Plant Society of Texas
- The Citizen Forester Class
- Skywarn class
- [NOLS Wilderness First Aid classes](#)
- SWAt Meetings – Fourth Thursdays 9:30 am
- Friends of Furneaux Creek Nature Trail – Fourth Monday 7 pm
- Bird and nature walks offered by nature centers, such as LLELA and Clear Creek

**AT approved**

### Pre-approved webinars

- o Habitat Restoration Fundamentals: Time-tested approaches and new advancements in creating monarch butterfly habitat (Eric Lee-Mäder, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation) – [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gij\\_gjCsGHQ&feature=youtu.be&list=PLZb5DyVcCk955KQKL4J\\_Ca7aVmzBbM7pr](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gij_gjCsGHQ&feature=youtu.be&list=PLZb5DyVcCk955KQKL4J_Ca7aVmzBbM7pr)
- o On the Wings of Monarchs: A 10,000 foot view of species conservation – <https://fws.rev.vbrick.com/#/videos/fc559008-1640-457e-933c-90d868147dfa>
- o Meadow Establishment in the East (Larry Weaner, Larry Weaner Landscape Associates; Ann Aldrich, Dumbarton Oaks Park Conservancy) <https://monarchjointventure.org/resources/monarch-conservation-webinar-series> – (No direct link, but it is on the page towards the bottom.)
- o Learn to transcribe for BRIT – <https://fccdl.in/4be45lpu7i>

### Scott's (Kiester) Bird Nerd Academy Dec 9 at Lewisville Library—

**AT approved**

<https://lewisville.libcal.com/event/5720377>

Birding is a relaxing hobby where you can enjoy the beauty of nature. Learn from a birding expert how to use the local habitat to identify birds and recognize local bird calls.

Participants will receive a free pass to LLELA to attend the monthly Bird Walk on Saturday, December 14 at 7:30 a.m.

LLELA (Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area)  
201 E. Jones St.  
Lewisville, TX 75057



## Of Interest



# SWAt: Science With Attitude Educational Outreach

## Who We Are

Science With Attitude (SWAt) was established to share, support and enhance the knowledge of horticultural and environmental education with Denton County teachers, parents, and students. **The SWAt team is a group of Texas AgriLife Extension volunteers working collaboratively through these three local organizations: Denton County Master Gardeners, Elm Fork Chapter Texas Master Naturalists and Denton County 4-H.** Volunteer areas include: volunteer recruitment and coordination, Junior Master Gardener® (JMG) community garden, hospitality, tech support, school adviser, inventory team, SWAt educator, photography, administration, JMG/Junior Master Naturalist® (JMN) preschool classes and summer camps and workshop support teams.

## Educational Outreach for Denton County Educators

Denton County educators can request a talk or demo from the **SWAt Educational Outreach Program**. SWAt's volunteer team provides assistance with school gardens/outdoor learning centers, wildlife gardening, vegetable gardening, and irrigation.

Demos are available on: trees, honey bees, worm composting, discovering wildlife, birds, wildflowers, insects, Enviroscape, rainfall simulator, the stream trailer, Freddie the Fish, and the Junior Master Naturalist and Junior Master Gardener programs.

For the most up-to-date information go to <https://dcmga.com/all-about-dcmga/science-with-attitude-educational-outreach-page/>



## Heads Up

### How Long Does It Take? Sue Yost class of 2017

With the great training from Fran Witte about recycling, it got me thinking? How long *does* it take for everyday items to decompose? Whether in the landfill, in the water or anywhere on planet Earth....here are a few answers.

|                                      |              |                      |             |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------|-------------|
| Apple core                           | 2 months     | Waxed carton         | 3 months    |
| Cardboard box                        | 2 months     | Newspaper            | 6 weeks     |
| Paper                                | 2-4 weeks    | Cotton shirt         | 2-5 months  |
| Cigarette butts                      | 1-5 years    | Plywood              | 1-3 years   |
| Wool socks                           | 1-5 years    | Plastic grocery bags | 10-20 years |
| Foam buoy                            | 50 years     | Styrofoam cup        | 50 years    |
| Tin can                              | 50 years     | Aluminum can         | 200 years   |
| Disposable diaper                    | 450 years    | Plastic bottle       | 450 years   |
| Photo-degradable<br>beverage holders | 6 months     |                      |             |
| Plastic beverage<br>holders          | 400 years    |                      |             |
| Monofilament<br>fishing line         | 600 years    |                      |             |
| Glass bottle                         | undetermined |                      |             |

I hope you stop and think before you buy and before you toss that item in the trash.  
Remember the 4 R's...

**Reduce**  
**Reuse,**  
**Re-purpose**  
and  
**Recycle.**



## Heads Up

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/>



### Thank you, Texas!

Texans voted to approve Proposition 5 in the Nov. 5, 2019, election. Now 100 percent of the sporting goods sales tax will go to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Historical Commission. This funding will help secure the future of local parks, state parks and historic sites for generations to come.

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the people of Texas for voting to approve Prop 5.

See [what's in store](#) for Texas State Parks.



4200 Smith School Road, Austin, TX 78744  
(512) 389-4800 | (800) 792-1112 | TTY: (512) 389-8915  
Operation Game Thief: (800) 792-GAME



TPW Foundation  
Official Non-Profit Partner



From the Album



Texas Cicada from  
Regina Dale

At the Greenbelt from  
Jonathan Reynolds



## Almost the Last Word

*Wanda, !!! What would we do without you? All your wonderful inputs to get the rest of us back into gear...to get up and going with our loves and curiosity to make our Denton area a wonderful, energetic and exploding force of learning, sharing, caring about our wonderful world of nature RIGHT HERE !! Thank you and thank you!!*

*HOORAY!! to all those, like you, who have shared their observations, curiosity, questions, learnings and energy that add exciting discoveries of unknown LEARNINGS of our normal everyday nature.*

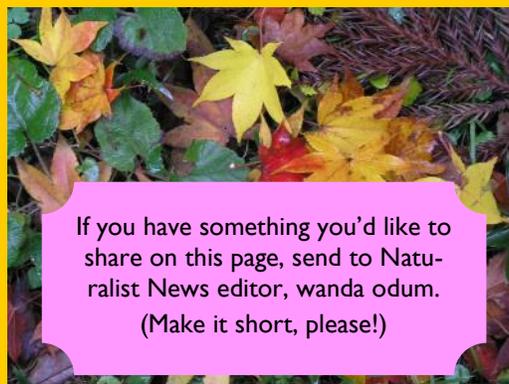
*To the more Natural lovers and protectors of our Denton, Texas area, we honor and celebrate you! We are so fortunate for the BASE of our natural beginnings with our earliest nature LEADERS and their EXPERTISE and ENERGY that hungrily eggs us on to do MORE and MORE for our Denton Master Naturalist Members!!*

*"HOORAY ! MORE AND MORE !!*

*Thanks to all who join, contribute, know and share.  
Nature nurtures us humans in so many wonderful ways.  
Thanks Denton Master Naturalists!!!*

*" a little member": Nadine R. Beall*

Editor's Note: None of our members are "little members". We are all in this together equally because it takes all of us to be the dynamic organization we have become. Each of us has our special niche to fill. I share this communication with all of you as a reminder that someone may be watching and following your lead (even as we speak!)



If you have something you'd like to share on this page, send to Naturalist News editor, wanda odum.  
(Make it short, please!)



**Texas Master Naturalist,  
Elm Fork Chapter**



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)

Wood duck —pen &  
pencil w odum

**OFFICERS OF THE BOARD:**

PRESIDENT—Adelaide Bodnar  
VICE-PRESIDENT/PROJECTS—Robert McLaughlin  
SECRETARY—Kathryn Wells  
TREASURER—Brenda Wellenreiter  
MEMBER-at-LARGE—Harriet Powell  
CLASS REPRESENTATIVES—Tim Trosper, Jody Springer

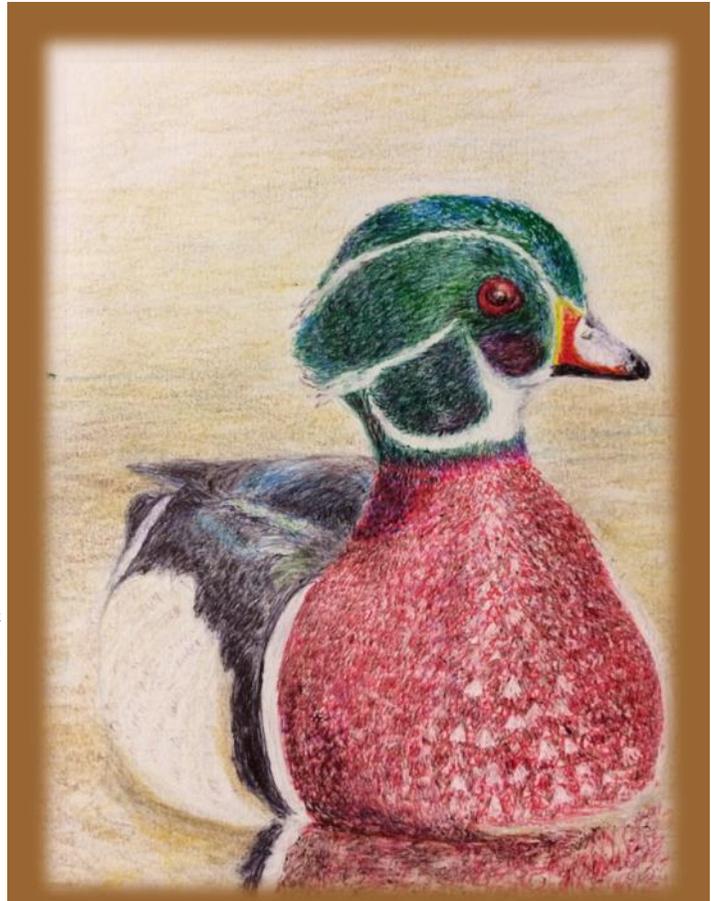
**ADVISORS:**

Janet Laminack, Extension Agent  
TPWD—Ricardo Torres

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

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."



**Regular 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. Next meeting will feature Fran Witte speaking on "Curbing your Waste"  
Elections Bldg, 701 Kimberly Drive, Denton, TX 76208

**Board Meetings**

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met November 14, 2019. Next monthly Board meeting is  
December 5, 2019

Monthly Board meetings are open to members.