



## Gideon Lincecum Chapter Texas Master Naturalist™

August  
2008

# NEWS

### ***NATIVE PRAIRIE RESTORATION COMMITTEE***

*Kathy Milenki, Cecil Rives*

The Native Prairie Restoration Committee has been working hard toward accomplishing its goals. Three general targeted areas have been established; 1) to locate and identify native prairie remnants in our five-county area 2) to compose a brochure explaining what a native prairie remnant is, how to identify it, and why it is important, and 3) to assist landowners who want to start a native prairie restoration project on their property. The committee hopes its efforts will help landowners who have native prairie remnants to learn more about native prairies, why they are important, and why they should preserve and protect remnants of prairie that are located and identified on their properties.

Plans include seeking out and identifying prairie remnants in our area. After identification, the committee hopes to have signs available to landowners, free of charge, for posting. The idea is to encourage greater recognition of these valuable lands. Charlotte von Rosenberg and Cecil Rives are currently working on putting together the signs that will be used. Meanwhile, Larry Pierce, our Texas AgriLife advisor, is working on a checklist that we can use to help with identification of prairie remnants. In addition, Randy Reddemann is creating a brochure for new and current landowners which will provide education on all facets of native prairie conservation.

Final confirmation of the located prairie remnants will of course be necessary. Two of our faculty member friends from TAMU, Dr. Fred Smeins and Dr. Stephen Hatch, will be helping our group with this task. Thank

you Dr. Smeins and Dr. Hatch!

The NPR Committee is comprised of Cecil Rives, Randy Reddemann, Martha and Ed Koslosky, Frank Monk, Larry Pierce, Dave Redden, David Vogel, Belinda and Jim Weatherly, and Monterey White. You are welcome to join the committee! Contact Cecil Rives.

### ***SUMMER SOCIAL at WINEDALE***

***When:*** Friday, September 12, 6:00 pm

***Where:*** Pavilion by the lake at Winedale Historical Center

***Provided:*** Main course meat/chicken dish  
iced tea and wine

*Spouses and guests are welcome!*

***Please bring:***

- One of your choice—Salad, covered dish or dessert
- Folding chairs

***RSVP*** to Jonell Parker (How many will attend?) [velvethammer@hughes.net](mailto:velvethammer@hughes.net)

***Please furnish*** Jonell with a special interest you have, i.e., prescribed burns; butterfly/dragonfly photography, birding, wildflowers, Texas trees, etc.

***AND . . .***

***Tell Jonell*** something special about yourself that few others know, i.e., you speak Swahili, you worked your way through school teaching sky diving, you won the turkey-calling contest in Marshall, Texas. We plan to use this information at the party, so please don't hold back on sending us something that others will find unique and fun.

***Don't miss this opportunity to get to know your fellow Gideon Lincecum Master Naturalists!***

## ***PRESCRIBED BURNING***

The NPR Committee considers prescribed burning to be an important part of native prairie restoration practices. We have participated in several burns along with the South Central Prescribed Burn Co-op. Here are shots taken on Cecil's property, showing the return of native grasses and forbs after a burn.



*The burn: February, 2008*



*Immediately after the burn*



*Native grasses and forbs return in the spring.*

## ***Swift Night Out***

630 Chimney Swifts were counted entering the chimney of the LaGrange Middle School between 7:43 and 8:45 pm on August 9. Conditions were clear. The info was reported and is now available online at [www.chimneyswifts.org](http://www.chimneyswifts.org). It will be interesting to do the count again in September to see if the numbers change. There were 8 night-hawks circling around.  
Debbie Copeland

## ***ANNOUNCING: 2009 TRAINING CLASS***

The next Training Class will begin on February 2, 2009, and run through early May. Classroom sessions will be at Winedale Historical Center, in the Meadows Conference Room; field trips will take place at various locations. It's coming sooner than you think!

This year's Training Coordinators will be Jacquy and Raye Pearson. They will begin to work with the previous coordinators, Cecil Rives, Jim and Belinda Weatherly, and the other committee members, to develop the curriculum for the next class. Please let Jacquy or Raye know if you have suggestions for the curriculum, for speakers, or you would like to participate on the training committee.

Thanks to Jacquy and Raye! Please offer them your support.

## ***UPCOMING EVENTS***

**Friday, October 24-Sunday October 26—  
Annual State Master Naturalist Meeting  
at Mo-Ranch, Hunt, TX** Check [web site](#) for registration information soon.

**Saturday, August 16, 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.  
—Bluebird Symposium** 8203 Millennium Forest Drive (just west of Woodlands High School) [More information](#)

**Friday, August 22, 6:30 pm—Washington  
County Wildlife Society semi annual  
meeting;** Washington County Fair Grounds Event Center; Fried fish and chicken tenders dinner; \$5 per person; speaker: Robert Lehmann

**Saturday, August 23, 9am-4 pm —Texas  
Forest Service Woodlands Conservation  
Initiative Program:“Your Land, Your  
Way,”** at the new AgriLife building, 255 Svoboda Ln., La Grange. Contact: Daniel Lewis

**Saturday, September 20, 9:00 am—  
Chapter Business Meeting** Winedale

**Saturday, September 27, 9:00 am—Indian  
Creek Work Day** Meet for breakfast at Burton Café; bring gloves, tools. Contact: Carol Montgomery

## TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

### *Brenham ISD Outdoor Classroom*

7<sup>th</sup> grade at Nails Creek SP, every Thursday in October. Contact Joy Nutt to volunteer to assist teachers and leaders.

### *Gideon Lincecum Chapter Makes Grants*

- **\$500** to help 4H members attend the National competition for Wildlife Habitat Evaluation (WHEP) in Stillwater, OK.
- **\$1,000** to students in Agricultural Mechanics to build a burn trailer that will be used by the South Central Texas Prescribed Burn Coop to conduct prescribed burns.

### *Volunteer Hours*

Since bluebells are so plentiful this year, they are appropriate for the design of the recertification pin. Members who have previously attained their initial certification are eligible to receive this pin by completing 40 hours of volunteer work and 8 hours of AT during 2008.

You can pick up a quick 3 hours by attending a business meeting and count your travel time as well. Start updating your records now so you will be ready to send in your hours at year's end or whenever you reach certification requirement. Keep those hours coming! Martha Koslosky

### *Milestones*

- **Certification:** Jonell Parker, Debra Nordt Donna McKinney
- **1,000 hours:** Dave Redden has achieved 1,000 hours of service and received his gold dragonfly pin. Congratulations!

### *Yahoo Group*

Sign up for our chapter's Yahoo Group so you can post your photos, start discussions, ask for plant and animal ID help. Visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/qlmasternaturalists/> to join.

## *Annual State Meeting Opportunities*

**Annual Slide Show**—Every year the slide show highlights activities of all chapters throughout the previous year. Please send me your photos that show us working together, playing together, our volunteer projects, etc., and I will include some of them in the Gideon Lincecum section of the show. Please send them as attachments to an e-mail message before October 1. Thanks! Jan Redden [jredden@mssblue.net](mailto:jredden@mssblue.net)

**Photography and Art Contest**—We're on a prize-winning roll with our chapter members' entries. Bring or send your entries with a friend to this year's exhibition. Photos categories include: 1. Wildlife, 2. Plants, 3. Scenery, 4. Chapter Projects and/or MNs at work or play. Photographs – black and white or color - should be unmatted, unframed and be of a standard size up to 8 x 10 and have no digital enhancements. Entries are limited to one per category per individual. Art entries may include original drawings, paintings, carvings and sculpture. Judging is by popular vote of attendees during the meeting.

**Silent Auction**—You may donate items or services to be auctioned at the Annual State Meeting. The silent auction proceeds will “enable us to offer more and larger scholarships to the annual meeting; to be able to bring in nationally-renowned guest speakers and trainers; and to support the project fair awards and other non-profit organizations who occasionally donate their services for the annual meeting with great expense to themselves.” Contact Michelle Haggerty, Coordinator, Texas Master Naturalist, if you would like to contribute.

[mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu](mailto:mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu)

**Scholarship**—One \$150 scholarship per chapter is offered by Texas Master Naturalist to help a member attend the state meeting. Our chapter will offer assistance as well. Contact Dave Redden, [dred-den@mssblue.net](mailto:dred-den@mssblue.net)

## WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE NATURE TRAIL?

At our July business meeting, Gene Luhn mentioned his recent visit to the nature trails that surround Lake Fayette. That gave us the idea of putting together a list of favorite trails in our five-county area. Eventually we will share this list with our members and the public on our web site. We should never run out of ideas for places to go to see, photograph and enjoy nature!

You can help with this project by sending us the names of your favorite nature trails and some information about them. Tell us about the length of the trails, the type of terrain, the plants and wildlife we might see there - and any other interesting facts. Send your ideas to Jan Redden [jredden@mssblue.net](mailto:jredden@mssblue.net). We will include your nominations in future newsletters.

## FAVORITE TRAILS

### Oak Thicket Park at Lake Fayette

The spotlight this issue is on the trails at Oak Thicket Park, on Lake Fayette, which surrounds the Fayette Power Project near Fayetteville. There are two trails at LCRA's Oak Thicket Park. One is the **Rice-Osborne Bird and Nature Trail** and the other is a **Multi Use Trail** that connects Oak Thicket Park with Park Prairie Park. See map of the park: [http://www.lcra.org/parks/developed\\_parks/park\\_prairie.html](http://www.lcra.org/parks/developed_parks/park_prairie.html)

**Gene Luhn** gives us this information about the Multi Use Trail:

- **Trail length: 3 miles**
- **Habitat: Mixed wooded, prairie**
- **Fee: No charge to use the trails only**

"The Multi Use (long) trail can be described as a prairie/woodland trail. It follows the shoreline of the lake at varying distances, although lake view is limited. The long trail can be accessed near the boat ramp at either Oak Thicket or Park Prairie."

"There is a covered shelter with benches (approximately 24 seats), at the beginning of the birding trail, as well as benches along the way. The long trail has picnic facilities on the west end. Information brochures are available at the lake entrances. The town of Fayetteville is about five minutes from the lake. Lodging and three restaurants are available."

"Over the last several years, I have been walking the rural roads around Fayette County, as well as private property, state parks and nature trails within a fifty mile radius of LaGrange. It is my opinion that this facility offers much to the Master Naturalist: location, accessibility, availability, and variety."

"I hope to spend as much time as possible documenting flora and fauna here over the next year(s). A field trip to this facility is a must. Soon!"

**Kathy Milenki** visited the Rice-Osborne Bird and Nature Trail on August 4, in the late evening. She saw armadillos, cottontails, doves, cardinals, wrens, bullfrogs, dragonflies and a swallowtail butterfly.

- **Trail length: Approximately 1 mile long**
- **Trail terrain: Caliche crushed gravel, dirt, leaf litter**
- **Amenities: None – primitive**
- **Fee: No charge to use the trails only**

The trail itself is easy hiking, but varied terrain with some tree roots and other obstacles make the ground uneven. Most of the trail was easy to spot and lined with white rocks. There were several wooden boardwalks over low spots. Stairs led to the pond lookout.

"At the beginning of the trailhead there was no map posted. I was surprised at the number of downed trees and debris lying across the trail. Bluebird nest boxes along the trail were poorly attached or had dropped to the ground. About a half mile into the trail I came to an unmarked fork. The path to the right led to a dry pond with a trail winding around the edge of the pond. A downed tree blocked the trail making it necessary to find a way over or turn back."

"This trail would make an excellent Master Naturalist project to get it cleaned up and user friendly again. All in all, I would go back to see what type of birds and other wildlife I could see during the daylight, but it would be nice to see this trail cleaned up once again."



Oak Thicket Park: [http://www.lcra.org/parks/developed\\_parks/park\\_prairie.html](http://www.lcra.org/parks/developed_parks/park_prairie.html)

Park Prairie Park: [http://www.lcra.org/parks/developed\\_parks/oak\\_thicket.html](http://www.lcra.org/parks/developed_parks/oak_thicket.html)

Fayette Power Project: <http://www.lcra.org/energy/power/facilities/fayette.html>