



Gideon Linsecum Chapter Texas Master Naturalist™

June
2008

NEWS

*Hello Fellow Master Naturalists of:
Austin, Colorado, Fayette, Lee,
and Washington Counties in the
beautiful state of TEXAS!*

*Kathy Milenki
Spring Class '08*

We are trying out a new idea with this newsletter hoping that it will benefit all of our chapter members. We want to provide a fun and interesting way to get to know one another better and to keep our members current with chapter activities.

Our Gideon Linsecum Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist is quite active and there are plenty of activities to participate in. It is easy to become overwhelmed with the amount of information and the numerous volunteer projects that can be underway at any given time. And there are so many beneficial results of the MN efforts that we want to have a forum to highlight some of our results.

Hopefully this newsletter will make it easy to find out at a glance what is going on and where, so that you can schedule your calendar with those activities that suit you best. We will be able to showcase some of the projects and results of our efforts. SO....look around; see what is happening; find some things that appeal to you and HAVE FUN with your fellow MNs in the field!

Please remember that your time and your effort, no matter how small, are greatly needed and appreciated. On

behalf of the inhabitants (both human and otherwise) of our beautiful and unique five-county area, we say "THANK YOU!" to you for your continued commitment and dedication!



We Have Grown!

Twenty-one members of the Spring 2008 class received their dragonfly pins at the Graduation Celebration at the Winedale Historical Center on a beautiful Saturday evening, May 2.

Upcoming Events:

**Monday, June 9, 10:00 am—
Mapping trails at Winedale**
Contact Dave Redden

**Saturday, June 21, 9 am—
Indian Creek Work Day** Meet
at 8 am at the Burton Café for
breakfast if you like.

**Saturday, July 19, 9 am— Next
chapter business meeting at
Winedale** All members are
encouraged to attend.

**GETTING FAMILIAR
WITH THE CHAPTER
WEB SITE**

Kathy Milenki

There is a great web site for the Gideon Lincecum Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists which is contained within the larger Texas Master Naturalist web-site. If you bookmark the Gideon Lincecum home page (and remember where you saved it!) it will be easy to access and then navigate to the various sections that you might need throughout the year.

On the left hand side of the page you will see the main topics of; **About Us, Events, Training, Volunteering, Chapter Members' Area Favorite Links and Members' Scrapbook.**

There is a TON of information contained in these sections. For instance, you can go to the **Chapter Members'** section to find out what happened at the last meeting, or to download forms to keep track of your training or volunteer hours.

In the **Volunteering** section to find updates on what projects are going on and where, or go to the *Events* section to see a listing of what is happening by month.

It is worthwhile to take some time and get familiar with our chapter web site. Here is the link so you can find it easily:

<http://gideonlincecum.org>

**INDIAN CREEK NATURE AREA
PROJECT**

Kathy Milenki

The Master Naturalists are currently working on a project at Indian Creek in the town of Burton, Washington County. The plans are to create a nature hiking trail along the banks of Indian Creek for residents and tourists to enjoy. The MNs are in the early stages of this project which has involved invasive brush clearing and creation of the actual trail. Carol Montgomery provides the following update on the activities so far:

There has been one workday per month since January 2008; however two of those days were rained out. Some of the MNs who live near the project area have put in extra volunteer hours working on this project and another has donated the use of his tractor which has been very helpful. Other volunteers have helped by putting in an hour or two here and there and the whole thing is really starting to come together!

Bluebonnet Electric employees came out and worked alongside the MNs one day, mulching a large pile of wax leaf ligustrum which was used to line the trail. So far, hundreds of invasive plants have been cut out and burned.

The MNs have cleared a trail to the creek and another trail returning from the creek in an area designated for a pavilion. They have managed to start building a bridge and they have erected a MN project sign that reads "Indian Creek Nature Area".

The next workday is scheduled for June 21 so mark your calendars and come help if you can! The group usually meets at the Burton Café at

8 am for breakfast and then works from 9 am until around noon. There is no need to stay the entire morning and any amount of time that you can volunteer is welcome.

If you are passing through Burton and you would like to see the project area, find the parking lot in front of the museum office, pull in and look straight ahead. The sign is near the entrance of the road leading down to the nature area.

Who Was Gideon Lincecum?

Anne McGaugh, Curator of Education for the [Star of the Republic Museum](#) at Washington-on-the-Brazos, has written a biography of Gideon Lincecum which is now posted on our web site. [Gideon Lincecum](#)

Dr. Jerry Lincecum, great-great-great grandson of our chapter namesake and author of several books about Gideon Lincecum, appeared on June 6 at the Teacher Workshop at Washington-on-the-Brazos, in character as his famous ancestor. He related humorous anecdotes about "Gid's" adventures as an early naturalist and resident of Longpoint in Washington County.

NEW PARTNERSHIP AT WINEDALE

Dave Redden

We have recently been using the facilities at Winedale for chapter meetings and for our Graduation Celebration.

Following the May 17 chapter business meeting at Winedale, several of the members toured the grounds with Mary Evelyn Sorrell, director of the Center for American History at Winedale. She showed us the Gideon Lincecum marker put up by Ms. Ima Hogg, as well as the McGregor house and the Biegel cabin that have been moved to the site. We also made a brief excursion into the natural area looking for remains of the nature trails that were begun years ago by Bob Pickens, a local retired geologist.

Turns out that Bob worked with our founder, Deborah Lansley, to help us set up the original training curriculum for our chapter. He also was a lecturer on soils for the first La Grange class. He is very willing to work with us and appreciates our interest in his earlier work.

The following Monday, Dan Anderson and I returned to Winedale and met again with Mary Evelyn Sorrell to review the maps that Bob Pickens made several years ago. Dave and Dan then explored a portion of the trail near the McGregor house and were able to clear it and flag it.

The next step will be to meet with Bob Pickens at Winedale Monday June 9, to search for other maps he may have left on site and to show him what we have done with the Google Earth maps and our trail clearing efforts to date. Contact Dave if you would like to be involved at this point.

Once we have several trails identified properly, we will organize more members to help clear the trails and make them suitable for public use, as well as begin plant identification and explore ideas for interpretation markers or brochures.

See a [map of proposed trails on our web site.](#)

ANOTHER WAY TO COMMUNICATE

Dave Redden

Now that our chapter has grown to 73 members, it is becoming a challenge to keep everyone connected and to share information. At our last business meeting on May 17, we discussed the need to try new ways to improve our communications.

Right now board members and project leaders send out occasional e-mail messages about upcoming events, but those sometimes get deleted or lost. Sometimes we don't think to check for new information on the web site. Our historian, Linda Behrend, needs a place to keep historical documents, photos and class rosters so that we can all view them.

It could be useful to be able to post questions or have dialogue with each other. We might want to post photos of nature subjects and ask for help with identification, for example.

Yahoo Groups

Yahoo Groups is a free service that provides e-mail, a calendar, photo and file sharing, and list-serve features. Our group is [glmasternaturalists](#).

A list-serve is an automated e-mail distribution system that allows you to send an e-mail to a group of registered members without having to keep track of e-mail addresses of everyone on the mailing list. Each chapter member signs up to be a member of the group

and elects to receive e-mails from the group, either as they are sent, or in a daily digest.

Any reply to an e-mail received from the group is broadcast to everyone, so it is not the place for personal comments unless you want the entire group to see them.

Members can come and go when they want. You can disconnect while you are on vacation if you do not want to overload your ISP inbox, for example. Or if you find it is not working for you, you can just drop out.

Because participation is voluntary, and some may choose not to join, it also means that you cannot count on reaching absolutely everyone in the chapter with your messages.

On the plus side, it allows for a lot of free discussion. So, it becomes a way for everyone to talk to everyone who wants to listen. This is not a replacement for our broadcast e-mails to everyone in the chapter. Those will be the best way to communicate at times.

Right now we are experimenting with Yahoo Groups. That means each of you will need to go to our [Yahoo Group](#) and go through the joining process which will include getting a Yahoo ID and e-mail address. It is fairly easy to do. If you have trouble, let me know and I will help you through it.

Please take some time to join the Group and experiment with the options. Post your comments on the list-serve to share with everyone.