



Gideon Lincecum Chapter Texas Master Naturalist™

February
2010

NEWS



2010 TRAINING CLASS

On Saturday, February 6, the 8th class of Gideon Lincecum Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist met for orientation at the Meadows classroom in Winedale. Class size has increased over the years, from just 10 members in 2005, to our largest yet, 26 new members in the 2010 class.

TOP TENNER SOCIAL And Potluck Supper

All MNs and spouses are invited

*Saturday, February 20, 5 pm
Winedale Dining Hall*

Bring a casserole, salad or dessert to share
BYO beer and wine.

See page 2 for Top Tenner Tips



*Can you name this spider?
Learn its name and the
names of 9 others—and
have some food and fun
while you're at it!*

NEXT MEMBERS' BUSINESS MEETING

*Saturday, March 20
9 am at Winedale*



NEXT PROGRAM

*Saturday, March 20
1 pm – 3 pm
FREE and open to the public*

Carolynn Fannon
Wildflowers

Flo Hannah
Native Grasses



INDIAN CREEK NATURAL AREA PROGRESS

Carol Montgomery

The trails are laid out now and the area is ready for visitors to enjoy but there are many more things we want to do.

Daniel Lewis is helping to identify the trees and we'll have labels for those. We will build a pavilion, bluebird and owl boxes, a swing and we will install some new benches. Some native species of plants will be introduced to the area.

The trails will need to be maintained, trash removed and invasive plants kept under control, so there will always be plenty of work for volunteers to do. The bluebird boxes will need to be monitored.

Burton Cotton Gin Festival

On April 17 we will have a booth at the Festival where we can invite visitors to enjoy the trails that lead to Indian Creek. At the entrance to the trails, we will set up a tent with activities and information for the visitors. Volunteer to help with this event by contacting [Carol](#).



Carol Montgomery and Daniel Lewis found an example of Chinese photinia growing along the bank of the creek. (Doesn't sound like a native, does it? ed.)

HOUSTON TOAD PROJECT

Jan Redden

Volunteers who will participate in the search for the endangered Houston toad met on February 1 to receive our final training before the survey begins.

Paul Crump, from the Houston Zoo, made sure we could identify the call of the target toad, as well as the calls of other species of toads and frogs we may encounter.

Each toad team will make at least 12 surveys along predetermined routes during the toads' mating season. We will stop to listen at around 10 stops near ponds and creeks and record what we hear and see. The surveys will be done on warm, damp evenings in Austin and Colorado Counties.

Martha Koslosky and Paul Crump (right) check out the instrument for measuring wind speed.



Donna McKinney and Debbie Copeland (left) check their routes and equipment

TOP TENNER TIPS

- Choose ten items in any category that you think all Master Naturalists should know. Choose birds, snakes, butterflies, grasses, fungi, frogs, invasive plants, etc.
- Find examples, or photos of examples of each item. Make your own photos, if you want. (Keep in mind that in order for your Top Tenner to be "published" to our web site, the photos must be copyright-free, or you must have permission to use them.
- At the Social, please limit your presentation to 10 minutes.
- If you have questions, contact [Mary Evelyn Sorrell](#) or [Carol Montgomery](#).

WINEDALE RESTORATION PLANS RELEASED

Dave Redden

On January 15, representatives from the University of Texas and the Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center presented their Master Plan for Winedale, the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History. We have worked cooperatively with UT and LBJWC on this report for over a year. We had a good turnout from members of the chapter to hear what their plans are.

The plans include major changes to the campus area, where the lake, visitor center, Meadows Conference center are, and also restoration of the historical area on the other side of the road. The goal of the restoration effort is to return it more nearly to what it was at the time of European settlers' arrival in the 1800s. Here is an excerpt from the report.

The planned restoration will transform the landscape from non-native pasture grasses to native tallgrass prairie, from encroaching woodland to post oak savanna, and from dense woodland with an impenetrable understory to open park-like environment underneath the canopy of a gallery woodland.

We hope to play a role in making the plan a reality over the next few years. We will keep you informed as soon as we know plans for a specific project where we can contribute.



Volunteer Opp

McGREGOR HERB GARDEN

At Winedale

Work Day February 18, 1:30 pm

Belinda Weatherly

The McGregor Herb Garden work is gearing up again. There will be a work afternoon for clean-up, trimming, clipping and cutting the roses. Please bring your gloves, clippers and weeding tools. There will be refreshments!!

For those of you who haven't worked in the garden before it is located at Winedale, directly across the road from the office. The chain will be down. Just follow the dirt road a few hundred yards to the site.



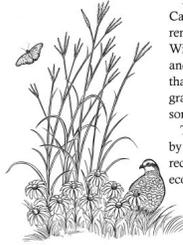
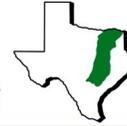
EXXONMOBIL GRANTS

In recognition for the volunteer work of Monterey White and Dave Redden, Exxon-Mobil recently gave our chapter a grant of \$2,500. Along with a previous grant received late in 2009, that is a total of \$4,000 in funding for projects that support our mission.

Dave and Monterey's husband, Richard White, are former ExxonMobil employees. Their work and the work of their spouses results in these gifts.

If your company has a similar program of offering grants for employees' volunteer service, consider directing some of that money to our chapter. In the past grant money has been used to support projects at the Brenham Elementary School, the 4-H WHEP teams in Fayette and Washington Counties, the nature related programs at Christ Lutheran Church Preschool, and others.

TEXAS NATIVE PRAIRIES



The Tallgrass Prairie once covered an area from San Antonio north to Canada and included some 142,000,000 acres. Today, less than 1% remains as a result of changes in land use over the past 200 years. Wildlife depends on this prairie habitat for food and shelter. Some flora and fauna are found nowhere else. A prairie remnant may contain more than 300 species of grasses and wildflowers including the "big four" grasses, Big Bluestem, Little Bluestem, Indiangrass and Switchgrass, some of which can grow to 8 or 9 feet.

This property has been designated as a remnant of the Tallgrass Prairie by the Gideon Lincecum chapter of Texas Master Naturalist™ in recognition of the landowner's commitment to the stewardship of our ecological heritage.



NATIVE PRAIRIE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Charlotte von Rosenberg reports that 5 properties in our region have been designated as native prairie remnants. That is, they have never been cultivated for agricultural purposes and they consist of representative species of native plants. Her own Quebe Farm contains a prairie remnant.

Each of the owners will receive a sign (above) and a certificate recognizing their stewardship of a native prairie remnant.



Charlotte has been nominated for a Texas Parks and Wildlife Land Steward Award for 2010, along with other private landowners who have demonstrated excellence in habitat management and wildlife conservation on their lands.



Mike Quinn, of the Austin Butterfly Forum, reports that the Monarchs are having a tough time in Michoacan, Mexico this winter as a result of the recent rains lasting for 36-48 hours. The winters are normally dry there.

