



Gideon Lincecum Chapter Texas Master Naturalist™ *NEWS*

APRIL, 2012

From the President:

Greetings. I'm very pleased to report our chapter seems to be working on all cylinders. The recent rains have resulted in so many wildflowers blooming, some earlier than normal, and lots of grass. I've seen several areas that have been cut and rolled.

Unfortunately, standing water prohibited our Adopt-a-Highway project trash pickup, however, we will reschedule and please keep in mind, we would like to include a "Post-trash pick-up Party:) Please submit any ideas to "Talking Trash" at cindy@devonindustries.com.

Thank you, Charlotte, for sharing your native prairie with the class of 2012 and other chapter members. What a gorgeous day. Can someone please identify these beauties for me?



"The Magnificent Seven" volunteers that cleaned up the Indian Creek Nature Trail in Burton deserve a great deal of praise for their efforts. I arrived an hour late because I took a wrong turn on a back country road attempting to skirt around the Antique

Festival in Round top:(When I finally got there, Carol was monitoring the rubbish burn and the rest had almost completed clearing the fallen branches and pulling the weeds from the trails. I helped distribute some mulch and got the prestigious assignment of monitoring the refuse burn:) What I thought might take 2 or 3 workdays, got done in 3 hours!!!! Thanks.





Kudos to Judith and Bill Deaton and Elisa Henderson and all the volunteers that helped get the Invasive Identification project on track at Festival Hill.

At our next chapter meeting on Saturday, May 19, I'd like to introduce to you the Park Superintendent of Stephen F. Austin State Park, Derin DePalermo. I met with Mr. DePalermo at the park and was treated to a guided tour. We, TMN-GLC, as a volunteer corps, are being offered an exciting opportunity to work with Texas Parks and Wildlife folks to facilitate educational opportunities for campers, school classes, scout troops and be interpretive guides to visitors to this park. To learn more about this adventure, please plan to attend our next chapter meeting Saturday, May 19, 9am, in the Meadows Conference Room at Winedale.

We have so much happening in April and May – this Newsletter is chock full of opportunities for volunteer and advanced training hours. Make sure you take advantage –the time is ripe for you to certify or re-certify.

Cindy

Greenhouse Babies Report

From Charlotte Von Rosenberg

First a bit of history: A few years ago, there was a Golden Opportunity for a Field Day with Dr. Fred Smeins, a TAMU expert on native grasses. Then, a core group of TMNs and landowners began to make commitments to native prairie grasses. This was at the beginning of the “renaissance” of native grasses. Then there was the drought for two years. Now, after spring rains the prairie has risen again! Mark your calendars, native prairie grasses bloom and make

seeds in late summer. For Seed Collection information please see <http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>. In 2009, our Chapter hosted a seminar on Seed Collection by USDA/NRCS personnel. Since then, individual TMNs have collected seeds and donated them to the Greenhouse committee. The the seeds donated by our TMNs and used in the Brenham High School Greenhouse Project are: Gay Feather (Cindy R.), Echinacea (Judy D.), Indiangrass and Little Bluestem (Quebe Prairie), Maximillian Sunflower, Sideoats Gramma (the State Grass of Texas), and American Beautyberry.



On February 23 of this year, a stalwart group met at the greenhouse and planted 18 trays of seeds. A key component in our success is the automatic, timed misting system installed by Jerry Frazier. I do not know the exact germination rate we got – but it was very high. We used Tom Soloman’s method of propagating seeds. Go to the Coastal Prairies website and Tom Soloman’s videos #17 - #19. <http://vimeo.com/17541074> to view his method. These videos are so well done they are worth seeing regardless of your level of interest.

We will demonstrate the Division process at the **Burton Cotton Gin Festival on April 21**. All TMNs, especially new ones, need to go to the Festival, it is wonderful. Please visit our Chapter’s tent and adopt a baby prairie plant on April 21. Our TMN Chapter will also donate some of these trays of seedlings to the Outdoor Learning Center at Brenham Elementary School.

[Brenham ISD Outdoor Classrooms:](#)

Brenham ISD Outdoor Classrooms are still happening! Outdoor classrooms are conducted under the auspices of Nancy Oertli from BISS and Joy Nutt, a Ranger with Texas Parks and Wildlife. BISS 6th graders will go to Birch Creek State Park for their Outdoor Classroom; we always need helpers so more kids have an adult to talk with and ask questions during their activities.

Upcoming dates are:

- April 30
- May 1
- May 2
- May 3

If you feel you can help on any or all of these dates, please contact Margaret Lamar to sign up at gretalamar@gmail.com

[How to Handle Dodder Infections:](#)

Contributors: Cindy Rodibaugh, Carol Paulson, Charlotte Von Rosenberg

On Saturday morning, March 31, as mentioned in Cindy's "President's Letter", our current class of TMNs as well as other interested TMNs toured Quebe Prairie. The prairie was in magnificent full bloom of spring wildflowers including, Downy Paintbrush, Foxglove and many others



But among the beautiful specimens we found an unwelcome intruder: Dodder. Dodder is a parasitic plant that is very harmful to its host plant. Chemical control is not an effective way to eliminate dodder in the home garden as small amounts of dodder can be hand removed or pruned out. But keep in mind that the spread of dodder can take place in the home garden if after handling it, you move on to uninfected areas. The best way to not spread infestation is to remove all clothing that was in contact with the infestation and wash it thoroughly. That said, if there is a large infestation, as there is at Quebe Farm, there are several unhappy ways to go that would involve killing all vegetation in the infested area, and/or burning. However, according to Dr. Fred Smeins, a TAMU expert on native grasses who was consulted by Charlotte, *"The dodder has already flowered and gone to seed and as an annual it will begin to disappear as the temperature goes up. The main reason it is so abundant is the drought knocked the grasses back last year and opened the area for dodder along with other annuals that more normally occur on*

the site. I believe that with the good spring rains and growing conditions that will hopefully continue for a while, the grasses will recover, the dodder will disappear and with a good grass cover will not reappear.” Dr. Smeins allowed us to quote him, but his caveat is that this advice applies to Charlotte’s prairie because of the abundance of grasses. If you have a smaller infestation you still may want to consider hand removal or pruning.



dodder seed by Charlotte von Rosenberg



dodder strangling a bluebonnet by Bill Dudley

If you need more information about dodder, you can link to: www.ipm.ucdavis.edu and look to PestNotes.

[A Master Naturalist Looks at Nature’s Remedies](#)

Kathy Cihlar tells us how she got interested in natural remedies and gives us a recipe. In the future, we hope Kathy will become a good reference for those of us who might like to try using what’s in our back yard for a more healthful life.

How and why would a registered nurse become interested in the use of natural remedies? When asked this question I had to think back about why a person becomes a nurse. We were taught that through care, comfort, and compassion we could assist families, communities, and populations to prevent illness and injury, and alleviate some of their suffering. Somewhere along the way this picture shifted to the band-aid approach or what I call “drive-thru medicine”. The population demands a fast fix and desires a “pill” to feel better. So it seems we are treating the symptoms without ever truly discovering the underlying cause, which could be physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual in origin.

So, I went back to school and became involved in animal health. Much to my dismay the same things were occurring with our pets---they developed human disorders and were given high dose

meds with many side effects. *Was this quality of life?*

This time I looked to history, nature, and medicine and found that all ancient civilizations had in-depth knowledge of herbs, massage, bathing therapies, and other modalities of healing. Their instincts were more attuned to nature. Animals still maintain their natural instinct to search out plants to heal themselves. So began my quest to learn many natural healing methods.

Most true well being begins with diet. Hippocrates said “Let food be your medicine and medicine be your food”. I’m pretty sure he wasn’t talking about a lot of the food we eat today. He also believed that bathing along with drinking a glass of wine was curative---not too bad, huh? Animals that have a diet close to a “wild” diet and less processed are healthier as well.

So what can we do with the plants growing in our own yards? Here are some tips that some of you may already know:

Rosemary- is antiseptic, antiviral, antioxidant, anti-spasmodic, analgesic. It can be used for improving memory, headaches, migraine, muscle aches, joint aches, and poor circulation, improves blood flow, refreshes and energizes mind. For colds, sinus, flu, rheumatic pains, fatigue you can make a tea that can be drunk or even poured into a bath. (I use a quart for baths—ginger is great for colds, but don’t use too much in a bath--tingly). The stems of Rosemary can also be burned to keep insects away.

Rosemary Ginger Tea - *this is good for all of the above disorders*

- 2 slices ginger-1/2 inch long or less
- 1 3 inch spring rosemary or 1tsp dried
- 1 tbsp orange zest or slice of orange
- 1 clove
- Honey

Add 1 cup boiling water over and cover—steep 5-10 min. Strain and enjoy.

Don’t give rosemary to dogs, as it is a strong nervine. It can cause seizures if they are sensitive. If giving herbs to dogs, making a tea is best. For the “serenity challenged” dog, try mixing oatmeal with his food. If you make chamomile tea for yourself, it can have a sedative effect on your anxious dog as well. A treat soaked in the tea will help when he is anxious. Cats will absorb their herbs by brushing up against the plant. Teas also work with them. Just go easy.

.....Kathy

Can You Name These Wildflowers?

Since I did not receive many entries, I assume all of you are much smarter than you let on.

Here are some submissions from the brave souls who are willing to see how smart you are.



Submitted by Jennifer Pihoda



(I have done my best to enhance all pics – you might have to go by the leaf form)



Submitted by Cecil Rives



Submitted by Carol Paulson



Submitted by Cecil Rives

Don't forget the picture in our President's Letter – that counts too!

Send your guesses to Carol at cspaulson@hughes.net and we'll publish the answers next Newsletter (June).

Winner gets a pat on the back!! And our admiration!





CALENDAR FOR THE NEXT MONTH OR 2?

Make sure you mark all of these on your calendar. Each opportunity here will increase your knowledge as a Master Naturalist and help to make others aware that our planet needs our help. (The camaraderie is a big bonus too!)

These are in date order:

Saturday, April 14, 1:00PM – 3:00PM Firewise Training Event

This program will focus on making your house “Firewise” Andy Ander from the Lake Jackson FD and Dave Redden of the South Central Texas Prescribed Burn Association will present. Advanced Training Hours Please let Toni Platt or Janet Jarrell know if you will be attending. Toni.platt@yahoo.com or janetlockout@msn.com.

Saturday, April 21, 8:00AM – 4PM Burton Cotton Gin Festival

To volunteer time to help at the booth, contact Cindy R. at cindyr@devonindustries.com

April 30, May 1, May 2, May 3 – 8:30AM – 2:30PM BISD Outdoor Learning Center at Birch Creek. Contact Margaret Lamar at gretalamar@gmail.com to volunteer

Monday, May 6, 6PM, Winedale Center, TMC-GLC Class of 2012 Graduation

May 19, 9AM – 11AM Chapter Meeting at Winedale Meadows Conference Room

Meet Derin DePalermo, Park Superintendent of Stephen F. Austin State Park and learn of future volunteer opportunities.

May 19, 12PM – 2PM, TMN-GLC Program on Weather and Water

TMN-GLC will host a program on Weather and Water. Speaker Paul Fahrenthold is a professional engineer and chemist living in La Grange, Texas. He holds two degrees in chemical engineering and a PhD in chemistry. His professional career extends over 40 years in the environmental engineering field. He joined the USEPA shortly after it was formed in 1972. In his five year tenure with the EPA in Dallas he served as an engineer in the air and water divisions. He later accepted a transfer to EPA in Washington as a National Expert in the Organic Chemicals Industry. Paul will share his expertise on "Global Warming".

Speaker Kristine Uhlman joins Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension as a Program Specialist supporting the Texas Well Owner Network, a science-based, community-responsive education focusing on protecting ground water quality and aquifer integrity. Ms. Uhlman comes to this position following 35 years in hydrogeology, including her most recent position with the University of Arizona, Water Resources Research Center where she developed a state-wide educational outreach program on water resources and watershed planning. Her aquifer characterization experience includes subsurface exploration in many

geologic settings, including the arid regions of the Middle East and the Southwestern United States, glacial outwash aquifers, fractured bedrock, karst, and coastal areas susceptible to salt-water intrusion. Project experience includes geologic data acquisition and analysis; aquifer characterization; environmental site remediation and compliance; aquifer vulnerability assessment; groundwater modeling; and, expert witness testimony.