



Gideon Lincecum Chapter Texas Master Naturalist™ *NEWS*

April/May, 2013

From the President:

"Everybody has a bird story," Mary Ann Weber, Education Director of the Houston Audubon Society told the GLC-TMN 2013 Ornithology Training Class. Also, "If there were no birds (i.e. *all* the birds suddenly disappeared), the insects would consume all the vegetation on the earth in 3 days." What an awesome thought!!

After watching and listening to Mary Anne's presentation, I was inspired to visit the Houston Audubon Society's Website (<http://www.houstonaudubon.org>). On page 4 of *The Naturalist* (Houston Audubon Newsletter, Vol 32, Number 1, January/February 2013 edition) is an article written by Mary Anne accompanied by picture of her and her Great Horned Owl, Tskili.



Birds are such fascinating creatures. Some are very small, like the tiny Hummingbird that hit my window and was immobilized on the concrete porch floor. He/She was able to fly off after a few minutes of recuperating. The Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Chickadee, and the Pine Siskins that compete at the bird feeder are a little bit bigger than the Hummingbird but still quite small.

The Cardinals that greet me in the morning with their repetitive song, the Eastern Bluebirds that are raising a family in one of my four nesting boxes, the group of Cedar Waxwings that stopped briefly to rest in a tree next to the Ladder-Backed Woodpeckers that oaks, and the common Ground the feeders are what I call



open field east of the house, the pair peck away insistently at the burr Doves that clean up the ground under medium sized.

Larger birds I have seen from my porch include a raucous crowd of Crows that get pretty noisy in the Live Oaks south of the garage; thankfully, they don't stay long. Occasionally, early in the morning, I can hear the Wild Turkeys that meander through the creek bottom about 1/2 mile north of my house. Just this afternoon, about 1:30 pm, a single Wild Turkey hen walked across the yard, headed in the direction of the creek. A Red-Tailed Hawk frequently passes over that same open field to the east of the house, stopping briefly to rest on a fence post and just two days

ago, a Black Vulture landed just beyond the porch and stared in the window at my calico cat, Lucy. Lucy was not moving. She was stretched out with all four feet in the air, snoring---she didn't even notice the bird---or maybe she was playing possum??!!! That was the first (and last, I hope) time I have been so close to such a "sullen-looking creature" (I copied that right out of my bird book because there is no better description I can think of:)



As I listen to the bird sounds wafting through the open window as it begins to rain, I'm very grateful, for the birds, for the rain, and for the fact that I am not a bird) I can't imagine what it must be like to be in a bluebird box with 20-30 mph winds pounding the walls, and thunder vibrating the atmosphere around it! Where do the vultures go during a thunderstorm?

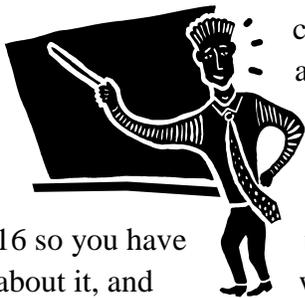
Spring brings migrating birds. My objective is to minimize my invasion into their habitat and maintain the area around my human habitat in such a way that invites them to stop by for a visit.

Cindy Rodibaugh

Calling All Top Tens!

Contributed by Carol Paulson (cspaulson@hughes.net)

I need volunteers for Top Ten Presentations! Here's what's required: a willingness to share your knowledge of a Master Naturalist area of study. Rules: presentation can be any format you choose e.g.:Power Point, Science Project board, or any really creative ideas you come up with; it must be 10 minutes or less -after 15 minutes, we give you the "hook"; you cannot use



16 so you have about it, and

979-251-9384 and let's get started.

copyrighted material without permission; you can use your own pictures and illustrations as well as actual models or samples. In addition, I will be glad to lend you any expertise in creating your presentation that you might need. Your time spent creating your presentation and sharing it counts as Volunteer Hours. The presentation date is not until November the rest of Spring, all of Summer and most of Fall to pick a topic, learn work up the presentation. Contact me at the above e-mail address or at

Congratulations to GLC TMN Charlotte von Rosenberg!



Congratulations to Charlotte von Rosenberg for becoming runner up Wildlife Conservationist for Area 3 (there are 5 areas in Texas

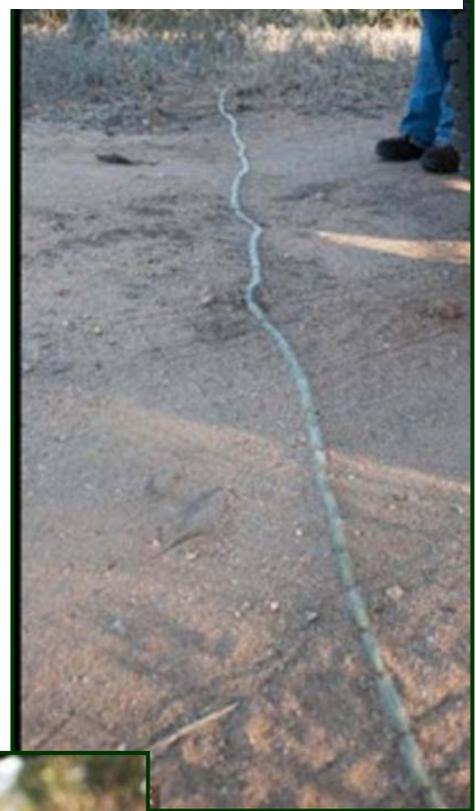


Pictured are Charlotte von Rosenberg (runner up Wildlife Conservationist for Area 3) Nancy Oertli, Brenham Science Teacher (winner the Teacher Conservationist for Area 3).

Caterpillar Crossing

Contributed by LeMae Higgs

This story was sent to LeMae by a friend in South Africa



This story is about a group of tiny caterpillars that formed an incredible 17 ft long convoy to cross a road in the Kruger National Park.

Some 136 caterpillars made the single line and wriggled top-to-toe across the road, linked by a thin silk thread which set their path. And their safety-in-numbers approach had the desired effect as the slow-moving convoy was easily seen by motorists, who were held up for 20 minutes as it

made its way across. The spectacle was captured on camera by British tourist Jamie Rooney, who was visiting the famous Kruger National Park in South Africa. Jamie, from High Wycombe, Bucks, was in a Jeep full of tourists when their driver slammed the brakes just inches from the crawling caterpillars. He said, 'It was an incredible sight. We were out driving in Kruger National Park for a safari, when all of a sudden the driver shouted out and slammed on his brakes. He managed to stop just in time in front of this amazing trail of caterpillars, which was stretching across the road. Conservation is a massive deal in South Africa and the idea is that if there is any living creature in the road you have to wait patiently until it is safely across. We got out to get a closer look and counted 136 caterpillars in convoy, all moving together across the track. They were following a very, very thin silk thread on the ground and it took them about 20 minutes to get across the road safely. Our guide had never seen it before, but he'd heard about it and explained they were migrating into the bush where they would disperse. It's like the mass migration of bigger animals like wildebeest, but on a different scale and pace. When they arrive in the bush, they turn into chrysalis and then butterflies. It's a rare sight. It was an absolute joy to watch and a great experience to be able to get down close and see it first hand.'

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

Contributed by Kathy Cihlar

Natures Band-Aid

It's name is *Achillea millefolium* or Yarrow .It is at home as a weed in fields or rocks as well as, in fine manicured yards. Yarrow is named for the warrior Achilles, who it is said was dipped by his mother in Yarrow (she forgot to anoint the heel) to protect him from battle wounds. He also carried it to treat his army and their battle wounds. Yarrow has also been found among other medicinal herbs in a Neanderthal burial site in Iraq, dating from around 60,000 B.C. Because it is suitable for injuries that are quick and cut to the bone, it was used extensively during the Civil War and WWI to stop bleeding and heal the many violent wounds.

This lacey, fern-like plant with tiny white flowers in clusters is useful for so many things it is hard to know where to start. Besides being very versatile, Yarrow is very common, which makes it useful for first aid.



Benefits:

- Non-toxic
- Antimicrobial/antibacterial
- Anti-inflammatory
- Hemostatic-staunches bleeding
- Reduces fever
- Clear sinuses-use in blends
- Strengthens blood vessels-tonic for those that bruise
- Helps with flu
- Reduces Menstrual discomforts
- Use on insect bites, wounds, hemorrhoids, varicose veins, abdominal cramps
- Can use in cleaning products
- Clears blood stagnation and metabolic wastes
- Digestive stimulant-aids liver/gallbladder
- Used in sprays, teas, tinctures, oils, salves, powders
- For wound and skin care, one can chew a leaf and spit on cuts/bites for instant relief. For nastier wounds, make a strong tea and soak a cloth/bandage in the hot tea and apply. This will clean, disinfect, and increase circulation to the area, as well as speed healing.

Yarrow is also a good companion plant, as it discourages harmful insects—aphids for one. I let it grow where it wants and it's helping some previously struggling plants. It is also often used as a compost activator--- you only need a small amount.

If you raise chickens, hang a few sprigs in the coop to keep their delicate respiratory systems clear. Also a shot of the tea in one of their water sources can be used to ward off/treat infection. They don't like the flavor so sweeten it.

A couple of recipes:

1) Classic fever treatment: Yarrow, peppermint, elderflower tea-----this makes you sweat out toxins

2) Varicose veins: flowers and leaves dried, place in witch hazel 1:4 (1 part herb to 4 part W.H.) for 1-3weeks, strain and spray on veins

3) Bug Spray: Yarrow leaves, stems, flowers and peppermint---slightly wilted or dried (hang upside down out of sun) and put 2/3 jar full then fill with Everclear. Wait 2-4 weeks and strain. One can add any essential oil, ex. Lavender 10 drops/oz. and use as a spray on self. I sometimes add a little olive oil to make it stick on skin a little, or mix in a little yarrow infused witch hazel with the alcohol blend---it's not so drying.

Yarrow tea, made with the flowers is bitter but used externally or drunk as a tea it's good for what ails ya.

Greenhouse Update

Contributed by Charlotte von Rosenberg

Greetings! Our seed planting took place on February 28. Since then, the native grasses yellow Indiangrass, Little Bluestem, Sideoats Gramma are the most prolific. Next is Inland Sea Oats (our first year to plant this). Virginia Rye is doing well. There are only 4 little switchgrass plants and no Big Bluestem. It is possible our seeds were not viable. At seed-collection time this summer we will zero-in on these two species.



The forbs frost weed and ironweed are doing very well. These perennial forbs bloom in late summer and are great plants for all pollinators. They should be encouraged in pocket prairies.

Rubekia is doing great, and the rattlesnake master is coming along with 8 seedlings. Gay feather is doing better than last year, also a few partridge peas. Not doing as well (yet) are beautyberry, foxglove and milkweed.

The Seed Collection workshop will be held November 2 at Quebe Farm. Details later.

Indian Creek Workday

Contributed by Carol Montgomery

Last Saturday morning (April 6), a group of Texas Master Naturalists met at the Burton Café for breakfast at 8AM. We had a chance to get better acquainted as some of us were from the current class and had not met the older members. At 9AM we went to the worksite, and spent two hours clearing the trails of weeds, cutting fallen branches off the trail, and spraying for poison ivy, picking up trash, raking the mulch smoothly on the trail, and cleaning the picnic table, benches, and swing. Low lying limbs were trimmed, and any dead limbs over the trails were cut. Dottie Schoeneberg had mowed the area. Our purpose in cleaning now was to be ready for visitors when the Burton Cotton Gin Festival is held April 20. We had such a good crew, and we really enjoyed working together. The area looks beautiful.

The crew consisted of the following folks: Bill Deaton, Keith Hale, Carol Montgomery, Cindy Rodibaugh, Royceanna Kendall, Caroline Young, Ann Biss, Margaret and Tom Adkins, Deborah and Russell Healy, Carol Paulson, Karen Woods, and LeeAnn Bennett.



[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. (The camaraderie is a big bonus too!) These are in date order:

Monday, April 15, 2013 – Bump-Up Day at the Greenhouse

E-Mail Lefty & LuAn Yarnold if you can be there. Lhyarnold@aol.com

Saturday, April 20, 2013 - Prairie Field Day at Quebe Farm

The 2013 Master Naturalist class will attend and all GLC TMN's are invited.

Saturday, April 20, 2013 – Burton Cotton Gin Festival

We will have a booth at the Festival. If you want to volunteer, contact Cindy Rodibaugh. Come and enjoy yourself – it's great fun!

Thursday, April 25 – Colorado County Ag Day

If interested, contact Lefty & LuAn Yarnold. Lhyarnold@aol.com

Monday, April 29, 2013 – TMN Class of 2013 Graduation

6pm -9PM; Winedale Center; For information contact Chris at srachris48@aol.com

All GLC TMNs are invited to attend.

Saturday, May 8, 2013 – Ags Day at Brenham High School

If interested in attending – Contact Larry Pierce. lw-pierce@tamu.edu

Saturday, May 18, 2013 – GLC TMN Business Meeting

9 a.m. -11 a.m. Winedale Center. All Chapter Master Naturalists are encouraged to attend.

Saturday, May 18, 2013 – Mark Klym, Information Specialist for Wildlife Diversity and Coordinator of the Texas Wildscapes & Texas Hummingbird Program for TPWD:

12 PM-2PM Winedale Center – Mark will give us the benefit of his expertise on creating user friendly vistas for wildlife and humans.

Saturday, June 29 – Summer Chapter Meeting and Program

Stephen F. Austin State Park – Details to follow.

Guess which business meeting this guy tried to drown out?



Some of our Recent Activities

Edited by Carol Paulson

