



The GLC Tidings

From the President – Betsy Palkowsky

I almost thought we were going to skip spring and head straight to summer when the outside thermometer read 81 degrees in February. Thank goodness the weather went back to normal, whatever that is now. Which brings us to one of the busiest few months of our chapter service



activities; from outdoor school activities to AG Safety days, from maintaining and creating pollinator gardens, to prairie restoration projects, from individual citizen science projects to group outreach opportunities like the Cotton Gin Festival. There is something for everyone to get involved with. Thanks to all of you that manage and work on the many opportunities we have and to those of you that work in your own way. Together we make a difference in our community and give back to the Texas Master Naturalist™, [Texas Parks and Wildlife](#) and [Texas Agrilife](#) organizations.



The [volunteer opportunity dates](#) and [project details](#) can be found on our [website](#). A big thank you goes to Sheri Wilcox for doing such a great job on our evolving website. Look at the new slide show on the home page highlighting some of our past achievements. Managing the website is a big endeavor and she's doing a wonderful job. I look forward to seeing what else she has in store for us.

April is around the corner and we will have a new graduating class. You might have met some of them already, as a few of the trainees have volunteered at a couple of projects. If you haven't met them please join us for graduation, April 30, 2018, 6-9 pm, [Fayette County Agrilife Center, 255 Svoboda Ln, LaGrange, TX 78945-5190](#)



Before we close out the month of March, I would like to invite you to attend **the chapter meeting, March 24th**, 2018 from 9 - 10:30, followed by advanced training from 11 – 1. The topic is "The Structure and Operation of a TMN Chapter". Bring a sack lunch and learn about the details behind our organization.

The meeting is being held in the [VIP building at the Washington County Fairgrounds](#), 1305 East Blue Bell Road, Brenham, Texas 77833. This is the address for the Washington County Extension office which sits on the corner of FM 577 and Independence Road. Turn on Independence Road and enter the first open gate to the left and the VIP Building will be a tan building on your left.

Enjoy the great spring weather, I hope to see you soon at a volunteer opportunity or the chapter meeting next week.

Science Nights Make Everyone Winners

B-I-N-G-O! Over 260 students and parents attended Bellville's Science Night on February 12. Many got a BINGO prize playing the TMN Scavenger/BINGO Game! This is our chapter's 4th year to participate in this event and we expanded again this year with a butterfly exhibit to go along with our many posters and the new Scat & Tracks display. TMN team members included Lori Buffum, Lefty & LuAn Yarnold, Jim Wilson, Linda Esco, BR & Charlene Koehler, Tom Shaughnessy, Donna Mueller, Cindy Rodibaugh.

GLC-TMN chapter had its debut at the Flatonia Science Night on Monday, February 26, 2018. The cafetorium of the FSD campus was exploding with interesting and excited students and project displays.

We presented the TMN Bingo game to students, parents, grandparents, and teachers. One parent said to me, "This is the best exhibit! I learned a lot along with my student!" I was surprised when a grandmother—who had almost



completed the entire grid of bingo squares—asked me for my signature and recognized the dragonfly symbol on my shirt (two squares on the grid). For her prize I gave her two magnifying pieces—one for each eye 😊 We both laughed at our folly. What a fun evening! Young children who were not yet readers had fun learning as our volunteers taught them from the posters. TMN team in Flatonia: Jim Wilson (in photo foreground), Cindy Rodibaugh, Cindy Hobbs, Betsy Palkowsky, Tom Shaughnessy, Donna Mueller.

Thank you to all the TMN volunteers who participated in their efforts to create this

stimulating exercise that teaches and shares our TMN mission with the community. - Cindy Rodibaugh

Our Adopted Highway Gets a Facelift Again



Seven Adopt-A-Highway volunteers met in the parking lot of the St. John Lutheran Church in Ruttersville on February 14, 2018 to clean up our two miles of roadside on Highway 159 between Ruttersville and La Grange. While we were getting organized to work, Earl Mills, Betsy Palkowsky, David Butler, Randy Hegemeyer, Mary Ann Peach and Ron Peach enjoyed a breakfast of orange juice, Holi's sausage rolls and Mary Ann's coffee cake. Mary Ann Butler was busy eating and taking the photograph. We finished cleaning up the roadsides around 10:30 am after collecting 17 bags of trash.

[Ed. Note: We are working to make a video available for everyone to view; watch the website for "showtimes". In the video, Earl Mills, Randy Hegemeyer, Mary Ann Butler and Betsy Palkowsky are shown transferring some of the 17 bags to the base of our Adopt-A-Highway sign.]

Fun Facts from the 2018 Bluebird Season Kickoff – by Madeline Johnson & Wes Davenport

The Texas Bluebird Society held its annual kickoff conference on February 24 in Bryan, Texas. Wes and I enjoyed learning more about bluebirds. We currently have 12 nest boxes on our place. We thought that we would share some of the things that we learned.



- The Eastern Bluebird is in the same family as the American Robin
- The male bluebird finds the nest box or cavity and then recruits females
- The female bluebird will visit multiple boxes or cavities before deciding
- 2% of bluebird eggs are white instead of blue
- Most fights occur during the egg-laying period – males fight to prevent other males from mating with his female while females fight to keep other females from laying eggs in her nest [Photo credit: AllAboutBirds.org]

Finally, if you are new to bluebirds, consider installing at least one nest box. These are fascinating and beautiful birds to watch. They are in Texas from late winter to late summer. Texas is home to all three bluebird species: Eastern Bluebird (which we see in our area), Western Bluebird (in West Texas), and the Mountain Bluebird (in the Guadalupe Mountains). For more information, check out the Texas Bluebird Society, www.texasbluebirdsociety.org.

Activities Abound at Attwater PC NWR – by Terry Rooney

Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge (APCNMR) is about 10,000 acres of mostly virgin coastal prairie managed for the endangered prairie chicken survival. It is south of I-10 between Sealy or Columbus and Eagle Lake. During 2017, a dedicated group from the GLC Chapter volunteered monthly. We supported the Refuge staff with habitat restoration, seed collection, and maintaining a native grasses demonstration plot. January's project was to deconstruct a prairie chicken acclimation pen.



We will continue the mostly monthly visits to support habitat restoration. In the near term we'll continue with prairie chicken pen maintenance and invasive species eradication. Contact Terry Rooney to discuss Refuge volunteering and watch for the monthly emails with information on the work days.

April 14 and 15 the Refuge holds its annual "Boomin' N Bloomin'" Open House. There will be a series of tours focusing on the prairie chicken, other birds, wildflowers and native dancing. Details are on the refuge website https://www.fws.gov/refuge/attwater_prairie_chicken/. TMN volunteers are needed to be at our chapter display table AND chapter members can earn AT hours by attending selected activities during that weekend. Check our chapter website for details.

ERRATA

My article in the January GLC Tidings about the First Day Hike at Lake Fayette contained an error. I reported a Ringed Kingfisher sighting when in fact it was a Belted Kingfisher. Although similar in appearance, a Ringed would have been a rarity in these parts. - Tom Shaughnessy

[Ed. Note: - Hey Tom, I am so excited to report that we have a Belted Kingfisher by our little pond in Bellville. We often hear him/her before we see the bird, such a raucous call! – Lori Buffum. Photo credit: AllAboutBirds.org]



Gideon Lincecum, the Mythical "Ant Man" – Ginny Welch

About the time Miss Ima Hogg, the great philanthropic lady from Houston, was beginning her restoration of The Stagecoach Inn at Winedale, the Elverson family bought the Witte farm and 1870s farmhouse a mile and a half down the road. They wanted a weekend home where they could escape from the Big City.

Following very modestly in Miss Ima's footsteps, we restored this little German House to approximately how it was when first constructed. That meant scraping off 5 layers of linoleum from the "cut-on-site" oak flooring; ripping down the faded wallpaper on cheesecloth backing and counter-sinking the tacks that were used to secure it to the shiplap boards; painting the house inside and out; and hand-painting the stenciling my mother designed for our home. We furnished our restored home with Texas Primitives that were made by German immigrants who settled in this area in the early to mid 1800s.

Every weekend the four of us would leave Houston on Friday afternoons and work hard all weekend long at the farm - mowing, gardening, fixin' fence, checking on the cows and their bull, exploring all over our land, and reading books about early Texas pioneers. One book in particular was a favorite of ours because it brought one of the early pioneers to life and we felt we knew him.

I met Gideon Lincecum in a biography which was full of stories about his travels as he settled in one state after another until he came to reside in Texas in Washington County.

Gideon was one of the first pure "naturalists" who studied the flora and the fauna wherever he lived. He lived in a small cabin behind his own home because he found peace to study nature there. He lived among the spiders and the ants and the bees, as well as a host of other creatures.

One story has him teaching bees to swim. He had a bowl of water and he noticed that many who flew in to quench their thirst actually slipped from the side of the bowl into the water and sank and drowned. They didn't know how to get out, so Gideon taught them how to swim! He would put his finger in the bowl and lift them up out of the water, then he would set them on top of the water and hold them on the top of the water until, eventually he taught them how to swim.

The other story that really captured my imagination, and still does today, is when Gideon was watching ants and studying their habits, he discovered that many ants had slaves of another type of ant who they put to work building their habitat. One particular species he studied he called the Harvester Ant, because he observed that they actually cleared an area by their mound and planted a particular type of grass that they harvested. He was the first to claim this activity, and the scientists of the day would not accept his theory that these ants planted their own crop to harvest. But Gideon was a great observer and he submitted his conclusion to some of the most well-known and respected entomologists of the time in a report which later became an accepted fact. He observed how the ants communicated with each other as they traveled along an established route to get to a good food or water source; as they passed each other one would "tell" the other the way.



I was enchanted with that man and all the information he shared by studying and recording all of his observations of nature. Almost 50 years later, I am proud to be a member of the Gideon Lincecum Chapter of The Texas Master Naturalists. Who would have known?!

*[For more about Gideon Lincecum, read our Chapter website page:
<https://txmn.org/qlc/about/qideon-lincecum/>]*

Brenham ISD begins its busy Outdoor Classroom Season – Carol Paulson

We began our season with the first of two Training Sessions on Tuesday, February 27. At this session we were apprised of the learning goals for BISD students and how our Outdoor Classroom sessions at Lake Somerville will reinforce those objectives.

We started by concentrating on 5th Grade. We reviewed what 5th Graders must know about Organisms and Environments and Animal Adaptations and Behaviors. We related vocabulary, reading and deductive reasoning to the exercises we do at the Lake. We then looked at the programs we would present so we would be familiar with them.

We are having an additional training class on March 20, prior to our 6th grade and 3rd grade Outdoor Classrooms in April. This one will be held at Birch Creek, since the 6th grade classes are held there. I have 8 people signed up, but there is room for more. As has been emphasized before, these training sessions are NOT obligatory to signing up to volunteer at any of our BISD Outdoor Classrooms. They have been provided because many of our Outdoor Classroom TMNs have requested a way to know how our lesson plans line up with what is being learned in the classroom.

These training sessions by BISD are counted as Volunteer time when you report your hours, which means that you can include your driving times too.



On March 1, we began presenting an Enrichment Program to Krause 4th Graders. This is an experimental program this year, but we are hoping for success and that the program can be expanded in the future. Some background: based on previous testing, BISD has decided that it needs to focus more on students' reading skills. Every day they spend one class period drilling necessary reading skills for those who need it, which appears to be a majority of the students. For those who are not needing further study, the schools are trying to work out "Enrichment Programs", that is, programs not connected to the daily curriculum that is being taught, but that will enrich the lives and knowledge of students. The 4th grade teacher at Krause remembered our Pocket Prairie on the campus and thought it might meet her students' needs. We have had 3 meetings with these students, 2 led by Natalie James, Outdoor Education Specialist and 1 led by Charlotte von Rosenberg, who spoke about why native grasses are better, seeds and plant structure. We will have programs in the

future that will build on Prairie Grasses and organisms they support and what the prairie needs to flourish and expand. These programs are listed on our website. If you would like to come and observe on a particular date, especially if you are new to volunteering, just let me know what day to expect you so I can send instructions for checking in, etc.

We have also had our first 2 Outdoor Classroom sessions with BISD 5th graders at Lake Somerville. Very windy and cold, but still successful days that I will report on in our next Newsletter. If you would like to volunteer to help with Outdoor Classroom, we really do need more volunteers for April 4 and 5, and for April 12. E-mail or call me and I will give you the information you need. "Newbies" are never asked to lead a group, only to help and therefore see what each group does.



Watching the Deer – Tom Scanio

We had an opportunity on multiple occasions to observe a doe and fawn that visited the front berm area in the mornings. It gave us a chance to see how they act and interact. By the way, I had assumed, for no particular reason, that mom's milk factory was like that of a dog's. I was wrong, it's like that of a cow's with a small udder.

Anyway, most of the time, they are quite loving with them licking and nuzzling each other. One day, it looked like the fawn had stepped into an ant bed. It twitched and jerked around and did some quick run/stop things. Then it started "fighting" with the doe and raised up and put its front legs on her back. Then it took off. It ran 5-6 laps at full speed in around 80-foot diameter circles. Fawns may be small, but I can now attest to you that they can really fly. As it rounded the corner in the front berm area, it really kicked up the dirt. After we saw this activity repeated on another day, it became clear that it just had an excess of energy that absolutely, positively had to come out.

To give you an idea of how fast they grow up, here are two pictures titled Doe & Fawn-Day 1 and Doe & Fawn-Day 18. In just over two weeks, the fawn's head went from a bit below the bird bath to being able to drink out of it. You can also see that between those two times we weeded the berm area.



Austin County Ag Safety Day - Donna Zapalac Mueller

On Thursday, March 8th, Austin county had its Ag Safety Day at the Austin County Fairgrounds and TMN-GLC presented its "Bite Me, Leave Me Bee" program. What a huge success it was and totally enjoyed by all the 3rd Graders. There were lots of smiles and ooohs and ahhs! The attraction for the day was Wanda the Black Widow.

A "Big Thank You" to our awesome GLC volunteers. You made "Bite me or Leave me Bee" a #1 presentation.

Linda Esco - Austin County Liaison to the Agrilife office

Dr. Jim Wilson

Donna Hobbs

Annette Holdeman

Jim Riviera

Donna Zapalac Mueller - Youth Ed Director

WASHINGTON-ON-THE-BRAZOS STATE HISTORIC SITE – Julie & David Itz



On Saturday, December 30, 2017, Ginny Welch, Sheri Wilcox, and David and Julie Itz met at Washington-on-the-Brazos to work in the Pollinator Garden. We cut back the dead growth on the plants, spread mulch, tidied the beds and swept the walkway in anticipation of the predicted freeze coming with the new year. We noticed a few flowers, some new growth and at least one Bluebonnet plant! The weather was cool and a bit damp, but we made good progress in a couple of hours.

David Itz, Sheri Wilcox, Ginny Welch and Julie Itz at WoB Pollinator Garden Workday

Saturday, January 27 was the next scheduled workday in the Pollinator Garden at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site. Dave and Jan Redden, Sheri Wilcox and Julie Itz picked up branches, transplanted a few plants and tidied the garden. It was a gray dreary day, but we were glad to see the rain, since the irrigation system was still not operating.



Dave Redden, Sheri Wilcox, Julie Itz

Jan Redden, Sheri Wilcox, Julie Itz

Check the Chapter website calendar of events for upcoming work days out at the park. We welcome new volunteers to come out and work with us and get to know this fantastic state park.

Chapter Resources Keep You Informed, On Track, and In Touch

Gideon Lincecum Chapter Website <http://txmn.org/glc> - visit often for event listings and more

GLC Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/21969044537/> - find us on Facebook and ask to join

Volunteer Management System: Go to the state website to log your volunteer and advanced training hours:
<http://txmn.org/tmn-vms-users/>.

State Resources Expand Your Horizons

Texas Master Naturalist State Website <https://txmn.org/>

Texas Master Naturalist Listserve <https://txmn.org/staying-connected/sign-up-for-tmn-listserv/> - subscribe to the listserv to get notices about activities across the state

Can we do without them? *Solenopsis* or Fire Ants – Judy Deaton

We have been dealing with red invasive fire ants for so long it is hard to remember when they arrived here in Texas, but they were introduced to the US in the 1920s to 1930s from South America (Brazil) probably in potted plants. There are some native fire ants (*Solenopsis amblychila*, *Solenopsis aurea*, *Solenopsis xyloni* McCook and *Solenopsis geminata*), but the ones we find most disagreeable are the two imported fire ants *Solenopsis invicta*, (red) and *Solenopsis richteri* (black- Imported into US in 1918). The only somewhat aggressive main **native** fire ant *Solenopsis xyloni* is normally absent along the Gulf Coast and has been mostly replaced by the imported ants. All *Solenopsis* species STING.



Solenopsis invicta (the red imported fire ant) makes nests that are up to about 21 inches across.

They have a 2-segmented red-brown body about 1/8-inch long. The area between the thorax and the abdomen is called a pedicel and the abdominal segment is called the gaster and contains the stinger on the end tip. The antennae have 10 parts and each has a “club” as the last 2 of these. The average nest contains about 80,000 ants.

The winged males and females are called alates and mate in flight then start new colonies. The first tiny offspring go from eggs to larvae to pupae to adult in about 10 days. She feeds this group of workers on her wings and bodily secretions. In a few weeks after hatching these new worker ants mature and the queen can start reproducing regularly. Each stage then takes about 1-2 weeks and foraging workers feed the new hatchlings.

Most fire ants like a protein and fat diet supplemented by fruits and nectar from plants. As a result, they have reduced the numbers of native animals and native insects (including the bobwhite quail) and they cause crop damage and get into electrical equipment.

During flooding, the fire ants escape by massing in rafts and floating to high ground. I wonder if the lower ones survive?



Solenopsis richteri (black imported fire ant) comes from southern Brazil and Argentina and is in the southern and southeastern Atlantic states just now. It can exist in cooler regions although the red fire ant is more ubiquitous. The black fire ant generally spreads with landscaping activities and can hybridize with the red imported fire ant.

Solenopsis xyloni Mc Cook (the southern fire ant, cotton ant or California fire ant) usually does not exist where *Solenopsis invicta* has taken over and has relegated this species to the arid southwest. In appearance very similar to the red imported fire ant, it has a black gaster, is aggressive and stings.

Solenopsis amblychila (a sub species of *xyloni*) and *Solenopsis aurea* are lighter in color with no black gaster and occur in the desert southwest and western states.

Solenopsis geminata (tropical fire ant) have very large heads and are light brown. They occur in a wide band in the temperate and tropical areas of the world and in the southern states including Texas.



You can learn much, much more at <https://fireant.tamu.edu> and [http://www.antwiki.org/wiki/Welcome to AntWiki](http://www.antwiki.org/wiki/Welcome_to_AntWiki) I hope we can generate some interest in our local children in myrmecology!

Solenopsis - continued

I have had some success at keeping fire ants out of electrical equipment with cedar oil and cedar mulch. And remember to consider carrying around a little ammonia on a cotton ball in a tiny jar when you go out volunteering. Strong smell but it prevents welting if dabbed right away on the offending sting.

I recently spoke to some folks at a *Lunch and Learn* and found a great recipe for fire ant control that I have used with success on my vegetables. Expensive, but so are the proprietary chemical ant killers and this works.

Fire Ant "Discourager"

6 ounces of Orange Oil (about \$30 a quart at this writing)

1 squirt of Dish Soap

1 ounce of Molasses

Mix into 1 gallon of Water

Report on Wildlife & Fisheries Academy – Donna Hobbs

The Wildlife and Fisheries Specialist Academy was put on by the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension in Bryan/College Station and was extremely informative. The first day was Aquatic Ecosystem & Vegetation Management presented by Dr. Todd Sink. See <http://aquaplant.tamu.edu> which is the website full of useful information and includes lots of resources on services and events and identifying aquatic plants. You will also enjoy <http://fisheries.tamu.edu> that features information on aquaponics for pond management.

There are very good reasons for managing your aquatic vegetation as follow:

- Reduces water loss
- Helps reduce a breeding habitat for obnoxious insects
- Improves fish and wildlife habitat
- Enhances recreational activities

Here are the four groups of aquatic plants.

Algae: which is easy to identify because there are no seeds, no roots, no stems or true leaves

Floating: all parts float including roots

Submerged: They are rooted in the bottom of the pond

Emerged: Rooted with rigid stem and all parts are above the surface

One very beneficial plant is the American pondweed. Their floating leaves make it easy for fish to swim around and for migrating birds and aquatic mammals to eat the seeds.

The dreaded water hyacinth is a naughty aquatic plant that has tall purple flowers and can increase water loss up to 200-300 percent. They are invasive plants that grow very fast and when not controlled will take over your pond, blocking sunlight from the native plants, thus causing them to die off. Interesting fact, these pesky plants were introduced at the 1884 World's Fair in New Orleans and were given away as gifts.

By visiting the websites I mentioned earlier, you'll be able to correctly identify, then be able to form a protocol to help control these plants to help your pond thrive. My next column will highlight day two; it will be about Texas Native Wildlife and Habitat Management.

Texas Ag Law Blog: Recommended Reference – BR Koehler

A recent issue of the Texas Ag Law Blog by Tiffany Dowell-Lashment included a link to the excellent feature article on the *Basics of Texas Water Law*. Just click on the link. This is some interesting info for landowners. Her weekly Ag Law Blog is also worthwhile and can be subscribed to by adding an email address.

<https://agrillife.org/texasaglaw/files/2018/01/Basics-of-Texas-Water-Law.pdf>

Membership Memo - Chris Morrison, Membership Director

Some tidbits about reporting your hours

- In the VMS, an “**Opportunity**” is the category under which you will record your volunteer hours or your Advanced Training (AT) hours. Choosing the correct one is important for our parent organizations, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas A&M AgriLife, for their reporting for grants and other funding.
- As much as possible, the “Opportunity/Category” is **listed with the event** on our website calendar.
- AT Opportunities begin with “**AT:**” (i.e. AT: TX Waters Certificate Training)
- You **cannot count travel time for AT events**. You SHOULD add travel time (to and from) to your hours for a volunteer opportunity.
- Chapter project volunteer opportunities have the **same name as the project** (i.e. BISS Outdoor Learning Projects)
- If it’s a one-time volunteer event, it will usually go under the **county**, such as “Washington County Natural Resource Projects”
- **Administrative Work** covers anything concerning chapter business – things that help the chapter function. It’s volunteer hours, and you must choose a sub-category from the drop-down menu for the specific thing you did.
- Put additional descriptions of what you did in the box on the page with your hours. Be very brief. Include the major sponsoring group if it is not clearly indicated by the category of the opportunity. (i.e. “AT: NGO Workshops and Programs on Wildlife Conservation & Land Stewardship” is the category, and in the box you would type in info such as “Native Landscaping Program offered by Native Plant Society of Texas”).
- Change the date to the **date the service was done**.
- If the service or workshop was over several days, **report each day’s hours separately**. You cannot LUMP hours into one entry, except for projects where you make an observation daily, such as some citizen science projects.

When in doubt, ask Chris Morrison ☺

See you at the Chapter Meeting!

March 24, 2018 at the Washington County Fairgrounds VIP Building in Brenham beginning at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be followed by an advanced training program on "The Structure & Operations of a TMN Chapter."

An Early Arbor Day at Stephen F. Austin State Park – Tom Shaughnessy

On February 9th, TMN-GLC members teamed up with park staff to plant 30 trees (3 different native tree species) throughout Stephen F. Austin State Park. The trees were provided to the park through the Apache Corp Tree Grant and included native Pecan, American Elm and Cedar Elm.



BR Koehler joked when he asked, "How many Texas Master Naturalists and TPWD staff does it take to plant 1 tree?" The answer is 8!

- 1 hole monitor (TPWD staff)
- 1 person to record the location with GPS
- 1 person to dig the hole
- 1 person to remove the dirt
- 1 person to measure the hole diameter and depth
- 1 person to place the tree in the hole
- 1 person to fill the hole with dirt
- 1 person to water

Bonus "Thank You" also goes to Mary Ann and Ron Peach who assisted in an earlier tree planting community event held by the park. 30 trees were planted at that event.

On January 30th, TMN-GLC members met on site with park staff to survey and plan for the native pollinator interpretive garden outside of headquarters. The plans and plant lists have been submitted and at press time they are waiting on TPWD approval to proceed. Happy Trails!



Youth Education Programs are Going Strong – Donna Zapalac Mueller

The number of different Washington County, Brenham school district, and L.A.N.D.S. events that Carol Paulson coordinates, manages, and participates in is eye-opening. If my math is correct, I estimate Carol's youth education volunteers are involved in 61.7% of all the Chapters youth events, volunteers educating kids from 1st through 8th grades about our ecosystem, flora, fauna, water and nature topics galore relating to the outdoors. I realize TMN partners with staff from TP&WD, BISD, TWA and more for many of these events but Carol Paulson is the fuel that ignites the flames.

The other 4 counties make up the remaining percentage for youth educational activities/events as we do AG Safety Days, Science Nights, etc.

Lori Buffum's TMN Bingo game/junior naturalist scavenger hunt design has become a "Science Night" favorite in Bellville (and now Flatonia) and we are looking to extend a helping hand to other school districts who are just starting to offer Science Nights or STEM nights. Thanks to a series of trifold posters created by Lefty and LuAn Yarnold, we can help all the participants find the answers on the posters. Everyone can win a prize and learn about Texas "nature" in the process.

Cheryl Karr designed a hands-on Scat & Tracks display as a Top Ten project years ago. Now, the Chapter has its very own traveling display and kids (and adults) love it. This collection contains replicas of realistic fecal samples of animal scat and track imprints for species identification.

Donna Zapalac Mueller's "Bite me or Leave me Bee" is a presentation designed to provide awareness and information regarding select species of flora & fauna that are lurking in the outdoors or concealing themselves in your home and how to minimize contact. The presentation can be adapted to educate all age groups.

Just check the Chapter website calendar for all the youth education events coming up this Spring. The list is quite impressive so we hope you will choose the events that appeal to you and get involved.

The Best Little Nature Park in Burton – Indian Creek – Judy Deaton

The winter season is coming to an end and the winterizing of the pollinator Gardens has been protective. Most of the plantings have done well. We hope to use some of the new plants from the Greenhouse at Blinn to add different colors to the terraces and more "bijou" plants as the beds are narrow and the frostweed and partridge pea swamped them last year. We have planted three of the Apache button bushes by the creek, two Mexican persimmons in the Nature Area and 5 Mayhaws along the trails in the sunnier areas. The count was ten. Waiting hopefully to see if they burst out in buds. Sadly, no bats have chosen our bat box offering this winter, but we live in hope. They are so good at insect control. We always welcome suggestions for making this little piece of the natural world in Burton more attractive to wildlife and to inspire the public.

Late Breaking News: We had our Indian Creek workday March 16. It started out cloudy, but cleared up and we cut down brush, weeded and mulched trails. Many, many thanks to Jacquy Pearson who mowed the park just in time so we weren't fighting long grass. Early in the morning, Bluebonnet Electric delivered a load of ground Christmas trees for the trails...a challenge with shovels, but very easily moved by hand. New member Jan Hughes and veteran Mary Ann Butler took charge of weeding the pollinator beds and they look fabulous. The garden will only need a few more plants and a cursory weeding before the Cotton Gin Festival. After we all spent some time pulling weeds in the nature area, chain sawing down a fallen tree and ligustrum that blocked the pathways and lining the trails with the logs, Jim Wilson, Tom Scanio and David Butler kept Susan Scanio (left) supplied with wheelbarrows full of mulch. At the end, Jan (right) watered the garden and we were finished. We need another workday to finish spreading mulch just before the Festival. That will be on April 20th. All invited!



TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM
2018 ANNUAL MEETING * SHERATON GEORGETOWN
OCTOBER 26TH THROUGH 28TH 2018

CALL FOR PROPOSALS!



SUBMIT PROPOSALS AT:
WWW.TXMN.ORG/2018-ANNUAL-MEETING



ANNUAL MEETING

500+ Texas Master Naturalist volunteers
Three days of concurrent sessions
In-Depth & Hands-on Trainings
Daily Local Field Sessions
Networking Socials each evening

SESSION TOPICS

Sessions range from 1 to 4 hour blocks
Promotes development of naturalist skills
Trains volunteers for projects/partnerships
Natural resource management issues
Chapter management & leadership

PROPOSALS DEADLINE: APRIL 30TH, 2018
QUESTIONS * EMAIL MARY PEARL MEUTH * MPMEUTH@TAMU.EDU

WANTED: Assistant Editor for this Chapter Newsletter! If you enjoy working with words and/or pictures and want to put in some volunteer hours helping prepare The GLC Tidings, please contact Lori. Any and all help would be appreciated and you can determine what you want to do.

The GLC Tidings newsletter is published 6 times a year. Submit articles and photos to Editor Lori Buffum.
The deadline for the next issue is May 1, 2018.