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Our Mission

Volunteers dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources through education, outreach and service in our community.

2021 Officers

President, Betsy Palkowsky
Vice President, Mark Brown
Secretary, Linda Esco
Treasurer, David Hessel

From the President – Betsy Palkowsky

April is a month to experience great change in our ecosystems as the world around us wakes up from the crazy winter of 2021. Additional changes to look forward to:

Not only are the ecosystems changing but our interactions with them and each other are changing too. As more of us receive Covid-19 vaccines and the number of cases continues to drop we have received reduced restrictions on our meetings. The new guidelines allow us to work closer together outside while maintaining 100 sq. ft per person indoors. See additional information in the "Return to Service" section below.

GLC Tidings release months are changing. The newsletter will be published in February, April, June, August, October and December. Look for the next call for articles for the June release in May. This change allows us to stay connected every month of the year instead of multiple times every other month.

Chapter Meeting

Great news we're going to meet in-person at the Cotton Gin Pavilion in Burton! Mark your calendars to attend the meeting on May 15, 2021 starting at 9:30a.m. with our AT presentation followed by business meeting, introduction of the 2021 Training program graduates and celebration of our first get together since last year.

Advanced Training Focus: Solar Energy (more information below)



May Advanced Training Overview: Solar Energy



Bryan Kerr, solar energy consultant will provide us with the basics and benefits of using solar power: Solar ABC's, Solar Design, Solar and Electric Utilities, Incentives, Solar Contractors.

Bryan knows solar and loves sharing his knowledge, especially regarding environmental stewardship and energy independence. He has an Associate of Applied Science in Renewable Energy from Austin Community College and has a certification in PV Technical Sales from the North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP). Bryan started his career with Green Mountain Energy Company in 2012, working with their solar program. He wanted to help even more people get into renewable energy, so in 2014, he became a solar energy consultant working directly with homeowners to install solar panels on their roof. Over the past seven years he has helped more than 400 clients install solar PV projects for their home or business.


TXMN Volunteer Appreciation

This week is National Volunteer Week, a celebration held to highlight the invaluable work done by volunteers all around the globe including all our Texas Master Naturalists. We are kicking off National Volunteer week, which runs through April 24th, by highlighting the impacts that Texas Master Naturalists made across the state throughout 2020. Despite the challenges this past year brought, we still were able to train 770 new volunteers, and you all contributed over 375,284 hours of volunteer service and over 65,000 hours of Advanced Training—an AMAZING feat with everything that 2020 threw (and continues to throw) at us! THANK YOU to all of our Texas Master Naturalist volunteers for all that you do for our program.



The National Volunteer Week theme for 2021, The Value of One, The Power of Many, reflects on the awe-inspiring acts of kindness by millions of individuals AND the magic that happens when we work together towards a common purpose.


T E X A S
Master
Naturalist





NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK


APRIL 18 - 24, 2021

IN 2020, OUR VOLUNTEERS

 Welcomed 770 new trainees.

Contributed over 375,000
hours of volunteer service 

 Learned virtually and
in person from over 65,000
hours of Advanced Training

Made an impact on 12 acres
and reached over 58,600
adults and youth 

TXMN.TAMU.EDU

*“Volunteers are
not paid - not
because they are
worthless, but
because they
priceless”*

Author Sherry Anderson

I appreciate all of y'all every day.

***Your participation in the Texas Master Naturalist Program
and our chapter volunteer opportunities
makes a difference to each other,
our community and the ecosystems
within our chapter area.***

Thank you for the time you spend on the things you love to do.

Betsy Palkowsky

State Chapter President's & Advisor's Meeting, by Betsy Palkowsky

Thirty plus chapters attended the March 29th President's meeting. Over 13 topics were covered. You are welcome to view the material presented: [link to the recorded meeting, presentation, and meeting notes.](#)

Highlighted Topics

- Return to Service Guidelines
- #TMNTuesdays
- "Be the Change" monthly mini-series
- Annual Meeting – format decision to be announced in May

Return to Service Guidelines

3/29/2021

Texas A & M AgriLife Extension issued the following update: "[Texas Master Naturalist Program - Return to Service Guidelines](#)". The following guidelines will direct how the Texas Master Naturalist Program will operate for the foreseeable future. ...It is very important to know and follow all federal, state, county and local COVID guidelines/restrictions before conducting TMN Activities. Beyond these the TMN program will have the following guidelines

- Virtual meeting platform tools should be used whenever possible
- For any indoor TMN activity that does occur in-person, both volunteers and public participants are strongly encouraged to wear masks. The occupancy limit shall not exceed one person per 100 square feet of indoor public space
- For outdoor activities, both volunteers and public participants are strongly encouraged to wear masks and keep a distance of at least 6 feet between individuals
- All multi-county TMN Chapters must consider each of their county's health ordinances when scheduling in person ('face-to-face') events or meetings, the ability/inability for chapter membership to attend, and the equity of scheduling events in certain counties to the exclusion/inclusion of certain segments of the chapter."

Please click the links below for more information:

Annual Meeting

#TMNTuesday

"Be the Change"

Covid19

Great Volunteer Opportunities—Help Wanted

Having new folks participate at different levels of the chapter ensures the chapter grows in ways that are important to all of the members. If you are interested in any of the positions shown below contact the individuals listed with the positions. The duties for each of these positions can be found in our [Chapter Operating Handbook](#).

Executive Board Members 2022-2024

The Executive Board Members guide the chapter through the years to ensure success of our chapter members, the chapter as a whole and our community in all things we do for Texas Master Naturalists. After two, two-year terms Betsy Palkowsky - President, Mark Brown - Vice President and Linda Esco - Secretary are leaving the executive team. While the Executive Nominating Committee, led by Chris Morrison, has nominees for each role anyone can add someone to the list. All nominees will be interviewed, and the roles explained to ensure we have a great folks on the candidate list for elections in November. If you would like to nominate anyone, email Chris at srachris48@gmail.com by May 15, 2021.

Training Director – 2022- 2024

Helping others become Texas Master Naturalists is an honor many chapter members have taken on over the years by being part of the Training Committee. The success of any committee and our training program depends on having a good leader, Training Director, to guide the committee. Karen and John Gardner have done a fantastic job as training directors the last two years. They are ready to hand over the reins to a new director which could be you!

This is an opportunity to continue the evolution of our program and bring on new Master Naturalists. I won't kid you, it takes a lot of time to develop and execute the training program starting in late September and working through May. It isn't a full-time job but there are lots of moving parts to organize and deliver. You aren't asked to do this alone and many folks volunteer to help with the program throughout the year. If you would like to lead this important group email Betsy Palkowsky, glctmnpres@gmail.com, by May 15, 2021.

Be Our Next “Newsletter Editor”

Jamie Lee Manning has done a tremendous job as the editor of the “GLC Tidings” over the last two years. She is looking forward to working on other media endeavors and would like to begin training someone to take on this role. Being the Newsletter Editor is an opportunity to “work from home” on a vital project that involves the whole chapter. All interested members, please email Lori Buffum, Communications Director, by May 15, 2021.

Basic Description: Seeking Newsletter Editor (NE) to serve on the GLC communications team by shadowing current newsletter editor starting May 2021 then taking full charge starting in 2022. The NE is responsible for producing six issues a year (April, June, August, October, December, and February) and works closely with the Communications Director and Chapter President to ensure that all chapter activities are well represented and to encourage all chapter members to contribute relevant content to each issue.

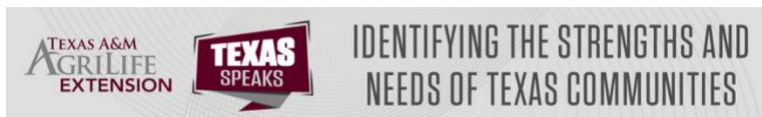
The ideal candidate is both creative and detailed oriented and able to commit to working on the newsletter up to 10+ hours bi-monthly. The NE should be comfortable using computing tools for word processing, publication layout, photo processing, internet searches, web browsing, email communications, etc.

The chapter newsletter has evolved over the years as each new editor has applied his or her talents to the project. We are excited to see how it may evolve with another new editor in place. That could be YOU!

Membership Director In-Training

Chris Morrison, current Membership Director, is looking for a someone to begin learning what is involved with being the Membership Director. This volunteer should have good computer skills and possess an attention to detail. Training will begin with production of the chapter roster and maintaining the chapter googlegroups email list then ease into work with the next training program keeping the trainees on track with their VMS entries and answering trainee VMS questions. More duties will be added as you become comfortable with the VMS and all the other activities the Membership Director does. If you are interested in this opportunity, email **Chris Morrison** glctmnubr@gmail.com

Texas Speaks Survey



We need your help! Here is an opportunity for you to voice your ideas about the strengths and needs

of our communities. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey which will greatly benefit Washington County and our programming direction. Here are a few things about the survey:

- Takes about 10 minutes to complete
- Identifying relevant issues is important to our program efforts in the county.
- Anonymous
- Opportunity to elect to receive contact for more information about us.
- Here is the link to use to access the survey: <https://texasspeaks.tamu.edu>

Save The Date: Board and Chapter Meetings 2021

Board Meetings – May 7 – Virtual, No July meeting, September 3, November 5

Chapter Meetings

- May 15 – Cotton Gin Pavilion – AT speaker: Bryan Kerr, Solar Energy Consultant
- July 17 - Virtual Meeting - AT Speaker - Jean Ponzi Green Resources Manager, EarthWays Center of Missouri Botanical Garden | www.mobot.org/sustainability)
- September 18 – location TBD – AT Speaker: Rebekah Dobrasko, Environmental Program Manager, TxDOT-Environmental Affairs
- November 13 – Camp Kubena – Executive Board Member Election - AT Speaker: Taylor Abshier, Ducks Unlimited

Membership Memo, by Chris Morrison

I attended an AT presentation – how do I log it in VMS?

Pre-Covid, TMN limited the amount of AT hours by webinar that could be counted towards certification or annual re-certification to 4 or less, so we were supposed to use “AT:Webinar” for recording them to make it clear how many we were accumulating. Since Covid guidelines have been in place, the state temporarily lifted that limit so that now one may get all of their AT hours via webinar through end of 2021, since most or all of our presentations are now via webinar.

So should everything be put in as “AT:Webinar”? No. It is preferred that during this temporary lifting of limits on webinars that you use the AT opportunity title that you would have used for a live presentation. For many things, you’ll look at who sponsored the presentation.

- If it was TPWD, use “AT:TPWD Wildlife and Land Management Workshops and Programs”
- For Texas A&M AgriLife, use “AT:AgriLife Land Management”
- For Texas Forest Service, use “AT:TFS (Texas A&M Forest Service) Land Management...”
- For Texas Wildlife Association, use “AT:TWA Workshops and Programs”
- For a US government agency (such as NRCS, USDA, USFWS, or USFS), use “AT:US Government Agency Wildlife and Land Management Workshops.....”
- For a program at a local Wildlife Management Association, these groups are sponsored by TPWD, and there is a separate AT for them – “AT:TPWD Wildlife Management Association Programs.” Be careful not to confuse this with the regular TPWD one.

Non-governmental agencies are usually non-profits, and we have a number of them whose programs are generally approved for AT for our chapter members. Use “AT:NGO Workshops and Programs on Wildlife Conservation and Land Stewardship” for programs from Ladybird Johnson Wildflower Center, Audubon Society, Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Habitat Federation, Native Plant Society of Texas, Native Prairie Association of Texas, universities or other educational institutions, prescribed burn associations, etc. There are other AT Opportunity Titles, but hopefully they are self-explanatory. Most things on our chapter website events calendar have the VMS opportunity listed with the event. If it’s not there, consult the list of Opportunities in the VMS for Chapter Members document. The descriptions there should help you to decide. If there was more than one sponsor, pick one.

Lastly, please remember that the description needs to tell the topic, the presenter, and who put the program on. If it was part of the New Landowner series, then say so. If it was the program for a burn association, name the association. Try not to use acronyms because not everyone knows what they mean or perhaps confuses it with another similar entity. Don’t put in how you felt about the presentation or the presenter.

Pins, Pins, Pins! (And Certificates!) –

If you have earned an initial certification, a re-certification, or a milestone pin, you’ll be able to pick those up at the May chapter meeting. At that meeting I will also be presenting 2020 Grit and Determination pins to all of you who logged at least one hour of volunteer service and at least 8 AT hours during 2020. Everyone who has qualified for any of the above will get an email from me before the May meeting. Hope to see you there to get your reward!

Texas Master Naturalist Conservation Awards

Our own Gideon Lincecum chapter member Ken English participated as a judge for this year's Science Fair. Thanks Ken for your service to these young scientists in the making.

Texas Master Naturalist Conservation Award – Junior Division

Save the Turtles: A Study in Microplastics by Marby Miller, Isbill Junior High, McGregor Texas



From the TMN Judges: *This young lady had a lot of enthusiasm about conducting her research and hopefully will benefit by knowing that we support her efforts in making people aware of microplastics on the beaches.*

Texas Master Naturalist Conservation Award – Senior Division

An Analysis of Dreissena polymorpha downstream of Canyon Lake by Riley Ames, John Jay High School, San Antonio, TX



From the TMN Judges: *This young researcher got out in the field to conduct her work just like a master naturalist would. She hopefully will benefit from possibly making some connection with others who can give her direction in where next to go with her project.*

New Nature Spots at Lake Fayette, by Jaci Elliott



Always on the lookout for natural places where I can paddle my kayak or peddle my mountain bike, I discovered a relatively local spot (actually, two places) with which some of our members may be familiar: Lake Fayette Park Prairie Park and its partner park, Lake Fayette Oak Thicket Park.

If you have not recently visited either of these parks, between LaGrange and Round Top off Highway 159, you might want to check it out. I remembered briefly driving up and looking at the Prairie Park two years ago and was amazed by the size of Lake Fayette and the size of its whitecaps on what was a fairly windy day. Noticing that there seemed to be a good deal of trash near the fishing pier and a small armada of motorized boats on the lake, I dismissed it from my potential sites to visit again; however, after finding an article about the parks' new management in the Schulenburg Sticker last summer, I figured I'd give it another try.

My first visit back (there is a day-use fee of \$5 that is good for both parks) was a reconnaissance mission, following our TMNGLC's Adopt-A-Highway cleanup, March 3, 2021. I talked with some of the staff members at the Prairie Park, hiked the 3-mile Multi-Use hike/bike path connecting the two parks, picked up surprisingly few pieces of trash while on the trail, and scoped out the lakeshore for future paddling. During my hike I saw several types of waterfowl on the water and lots of sandhill cranes and white pelicans on the wing. The path was well-maintained, offering several peeks at the lake and a few small, paved bridges for easy run-off crossings. Two of the maintenance crew met me on the trail and told me about their massive clean-up efforts in the past and their discovery that day of a box turtle shell; then they thanked me for picking up trash, but I had only collected a few items, so my compliments were to the park staff for their friendliness and hard work.

Twenty days later, on my second trip back to the parks, I brought along my kayak and bike; in and on which I then explored the northern coastlines on the lake and rode the trail to Oak Thicket Park and back.

Besides a short bird and nature trail, if you are into camping, Oak Thicket Park offers a fishing pier and boat ramp, a tiny beach and picnic area, 20 campsites, six screened shelters and five lakeside cabins. While on the water that day, I observed 60 white pelicans, numerous cormorants, blue-wing teal, coots, common gallinules, pied-bill grebes, belted king fishers and four ospreys (one of them catching a fish on the fly, then feeding in a treetop). I also floated past four yellow-bellied water snakes, lazily coiled up among the reeds at the water's edge.

The possibly only major drawbacks to Lake Fayette are the lake's southwestern features, the LCRA hydroelectric plant and the Fayette Coal Power Plant. I'd suggest visiting when you have a sunny day with a slight wind out of the north, as I was fortunate to have. Trying not to notice the huge smokestacks and their subsequent pollution was of course easiest when facing north and focusing on the immediate scenery. Perhaps an environmental study of the impacts of the power plants on the flora and fauna at Lake Fayette would make for worthwhile and informative future TMNGLC project. Am giving it some thought. Let me know if you'd be interested.

In the meantime, if you can, please consider checking out these two parks on the lake. Our presence as Master Naturalists and plain old lovers of nature is an important one, especially in supporting these areas of wildlife and outdoor recreation.

New Project at Winedale, by Jan Hughes



We are excited about Winedale and a new project starting up with the help of TPWD - Tim Siegmund and NPAT - Fayette County Chapter. Our plan is to restore approx. 15+ acres full of invasive bahia grass into a native grass prairie. Mark Brown is helping us put together a plan for the eradication of the bahia, and we ask that any members who would like to contribute native seeds, please keep us in mind and start harvesting anything you can give. Any other "sweat equity" would be appreciated as well when we get to that point where we need some manpower. We are starting this year to spray the invasive grass and by next year we might be able to plant seeds in the fall of 2022. It's a long process, but we are getting ready! We will keep you informed. We are also vigorously working in the pollinator garden trying to trim it up from the freeze. Our next workday is **Friday April 23rd at 9AM**. We will be laying some mulch, so please come help if you have the time.

Goat's Rue, by Donna Mueller



One of my favorite spring flowers is the *Tephrosia virginiana*. Common name is Goat's Rue.

Tephrosia virginiana (L.) Pers.

Goat's Rue, Virginia Tephrosia, Devil's Shoestring

Fabaceae (Pea Family)

USDA Symbol: TEVI

USDA Native Status: L48 (N), CAN (N)

The flowers of goat's-rue resemble bi-colored sweet peas. Lower petals are pink; upper petals are pale yellow. Pinnately compound leaves have 8-15 pairs of leaflets. Stems and leaves are covered with soft, white hairs giving the 1-2 ft. perennial a silvery appearance. Mature plants form attractive mounds. Bicolored, pea-like flowers, with pink wings and a yellow standard, crowded into clusters atop a hairy stem.

A distinctively silvery plant, Goat's Rue has long stringy roots, to which the common name Devil's Shoestrings refers. It was at one time fed to goats to increase their milk production, but since it contains rotenone (now used as an insecticide and fish poison), this practice has been discontinued. In the South, several white-flowering species occur (*T. spicata*, *T. chrysophylla*, etc.) with fewer flowers per cluster on the tips of long stalks. These flowers eventually turn pink, and the foliage is often distinctive because of brownish or golden hairs. **Plant Information taken from Lady Bird Johnson Wildlife Center*

Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Habit: Herb

Flower:

Size Class: 1-3 ft.

Bloom Information

Bloom Color: Pink, Yellow

Bloom Time: Apr, May, Jun, Jul

Light Requirement: Sun, Part

Shade, Shade

Soil Moisture: Dry

Soil Description: Sandy soils.

Benefit

Use Wildlife: Attracts ground birds.

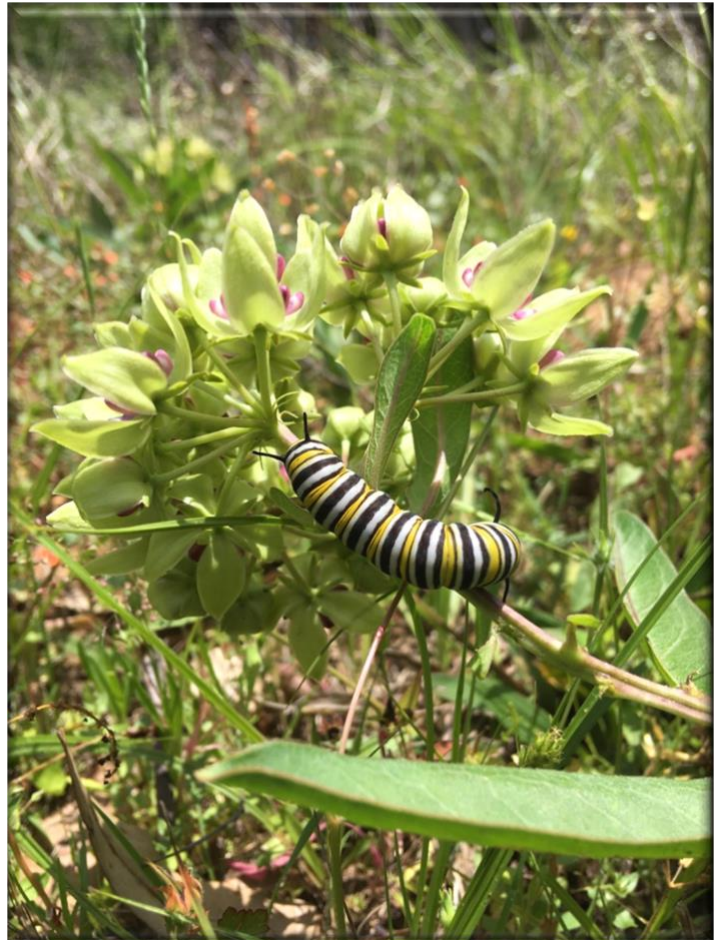
National Audubon Society

[ISawABird](#) Tune in the last Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm (ET)!

“Audubon has launched *I Saw A Bird* to bring a bit of the bird world indoors for everyone, no matter where they are. This monthly Facebook Live show highlights funny, engaging, educational, and sometimes weird bird-related topics and discussion, all while fostering a sense of community for everyone who has found joy in birds while stuck at home.”

Field Observation, by Jon Watkins

Watch the flowering Green Antelope Horn milkweed all around us right now because the Monarch caterpillars are having a Spring feeding frenzy!



Resources

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 listserve to get notices about activities across the state

**The GLC Tidings is published 6 times a year
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