

The GLC Tidings

JUNE 2025

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Our Mission

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

T E X A S

Master Naturalist
Gideon Lindecum Chapter



<https://txmn.org/glc>
gictmnmkt@gmail.com

Newsletter Entry Deadlines

1st day of even Months

Send articles or photos to
glcnwsltr@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE

Board Meeting – June 27
Chapter Meeting – July 19

From the President



Sheri Wilcox

Our May meeting is always one of my favorites as we welcome our newest Texas Master Naturalist graduates. Each graduate brings a unique set of experiences and knowledge to the class. Traveling their road with them is a great pleasure. Not only does it remind me of my own entry into the TMN organization, but it allows me to revisit some of my favorite topics through their eyes.

Field Days

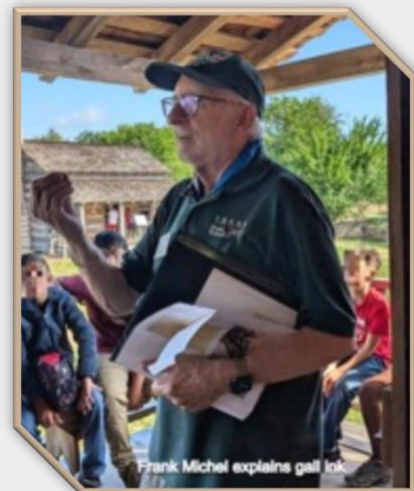
May also means the end of the school year. With it comes a burst of educational events. Our final field day of the school year was the Giddings ISD 4th grade on-campus wildlife day. I helped with Wizzie Brown's insect hunt. My favorite find of the day was the North American Elm Sawfly caterpillar. This two-inch long caterpillar was quite the star of the day. The sawfly gets its name from the female's egg-laying behavior. The female saws open an elm leaf to form a small pocket into which she lays an egg. Once the caterpillars hatch, they feed on the leaves for about a month, then crawl down to the soil where they spin tough, papery cocoons in the leaf litter or just under the soil surface. Some will emerge the following spring, but others may stay underground for several years. Just one more reason to leave the leaves under your trees as shelter for this and other overwintering insects.



Up to 5,000 school children tour San Felipe de Austin Historic Site each year. At our TMN-led nature station, the students learn about the resources early settlers found to help forge a community from the wilderness of the tall grass prairie. We show them how settlers made ink from oak galls, pine resin, and rust.

(Continued)

Trust me, every 4th grader in Texas knows that William Barrett Travis wrote his famous Victory or Death letter from the Alamo. What the kids now know is that this famous letter along with many other fundamental documents in U.S. and Texas history were written with oak gall ink. We also talk about the “black drink,” the Spanish explorers name for yaupon tea, made from the only native source of caffeine in North America, and about frontier dentistry, the pain of which was soothed by a natural pain killer found in the bark of the Texas toothache tree.



Community Outreach

Spring also finds our volunteers out in the community at outreach events. We were thrilled to participate in the Attwater Prairie Chicken Festival as the wildlife refuge celebrated the opening of its new visitor’s center. Other perennial favorites were the Burton Cotton Gin Festival, the Honeybee Jubilee, and the Monument Hill Historic Site Earth Day celebration.

Reflections

As we move into the slower pace of the summer months, I am spending more time at our place near Washington-on-the Brazos. You may remember from an earlier newsletter my battle with the wasps inhabiting my newly installed bluebird boxes. The round one tally was strongly in favor of the wasps leading by nine boxes to one inhabited by bluebirds. We are now into a second round of nesting attempts, and I am glad to say the birds are gaining ground. This month we have three of the ten boxes with active bird nests – one bluebird and two Carolina wrens. I am finding more success with those boxes closest to the inhabited areas and in relatively short grass. I would be interested to hear whether any of you have had a similar experience.

My current habitat restoration effort continues my ongoing battle with Johnsongrass. This pernicious Asian exotic grass washes in with the floodwaters along our creek and seemingly materializes out of thin area in random spots. For those of you not plagued with it, Johnsongrass grows from one inch to seven feet in a nanosecond. To bring it down to a level where I can hit it with a selective herbicide (Outrider in this case), I spent the last couple of days on the tractor shredding it. Hours on a tractor gives you plenty of time for musing. As I circled, I noticed that I kept seeing a red-shouldered hawk sitting in the trees alongside the field. As I watched, I realized that the hawk was tracking along with me waiting for me to stir up a field mouse, now exposed and scurrying away from the tractor. He would swoop down and then race for the woods with his prize in his talons. He, you say? How do you know it was a he? More research required. I learned that the nesting female stays on the nest for several weeks, leaving it the job of the male to catch and bring dinner for his mate and the baby hawks, also called eyas. So, while I am not certain it was a male hawk, or whether there was more than one, I am certain that hawks have adapted to human activity and have learned that a mowing tractor means dinner is served.



I wish all of you time this summer for your own musings about the wonders of nature and our place in it.

From the Vice President



Swee Leng Rapatz

The June Board Meeting is scheduled on June 27 at the Colorado County Extension Office at 316 Spring St, Columbus, TX 78934, starting at 9:30 a.m. All members are welcome.

The July 19 Chapter Meeting will be held at the St. Paul Lutheran Lighthouse, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934, at 9:30 a.m. “Meet Your TPWD County Wildlife Biologist” will be the focus of our AT component of the Chapter Meeting.

We have invited Drake Rangel (Fayette), Mark Lange (Austin), Stephanie Damron (Washington), Laura Sherrod (Lee), and Katie Edwards (Colorado) as panelists who will answer our questions to help us steward our land or guide us to resources. TMN-GLC members Lori and David Hessel ([A dream to restore and steward a Texas ranch - AgriLife Today](#)) will be moderating the Q&A session.

Please submit questions to our moderators to help them prepare for our Chapter Meeting by navigating to this link: [Questions for Wildlife Biologists](#).

Date	Topic	Information and Registration
June 9 2-4:30 p.m.	New World Screwworm webinar	https://agrilifetoday.tamu.edu/2025/05/20/texas-am-agrilife-announces-new-world-screwworm-fact-sheet/
June 11 9:30 a.m.	Planting to Support Butterfly Populations Speaker: Monika Maekle, Texas Butterfly Ranch	Brenham Presbyterian Church. 900 South Jackson Street, Brenham, TX https://www.facebook.com/PioneerHSA
June 18 10-11:30 a.m.	Plant Party: Getting to the Root of Soils	https://southtexasrangelands.tamu.edu/plant-party/

Membership Memo



Chris Morrison, Membership Director

Congratulations to these who earned their certification, recertification, or milestone awards at the May chapter meeting:

First Year Certification – Dragonfly Pin

Karen Bookout, Diana Sellers, Louis Sellers, and Abbey Wright

2025 Recertification - Greater Roadrunner Pin

Wanda Anglin, Chuck Babb, Tim Booking, Maria Dahlberg, Nancy Dunnahoe, Tayvis Dunnahoe, Jaci Elliott, Ken English, Bill Fisher, Trey Granger, Kim Kelley, Cindy McMorran, Chris Morrison, Betsy Palkowsky, Jeff Post, Swee Leng Rapatz, Cindy Rodibaugh, Dottie Schoeneberg, Sheril Smith, and Berry Zeluff

250 All-time Volunteer Hours Milestone – Bronze Dragonfly Pin

Patti Brown, Lori Hessel, and Kim Kelley

500 All-time Volunteer Hours Milestone – Silver Dragonfly Pin

Chuck Babb and Frank Michel

1,000 All-time Volunteer Hours – Gold Dragonfly Pin

Charlene Koehler

Did you know?

Prescribed burns conducted with South Central Texas Prescribed Burn Association (SCTPBA) are approved volunteer activities *so long as it is not on your own property*. You may log hours for the time spent getting your instructions and working the fire, plus your travel time to and from the location. The opportunity title is “Prescribed

Burn Activity.” Speakers, demonstrations, and other programs put on by the SCTPBA or their affiliate organizations are approved for AT and are logged as “AT: NGO Workshops and Programs on Wildlife Conservation and Land Stewardship.” No travel time is logged for AT entries.

All Things VMS

Travel time should be included in volunteer time logged, with few exceptions. Please add “plus travel time” to the end of your VMS volunteer entries where appropriate. The main exceptions are for things you’d log as “Out of GLC Area”. We don’t allow you to count travel for those, except that you may count the part of your trip

that was within our 5-county area. So, for example, if I drive to Dripping Springs to help with a TMN project there, I could count the travel from my home in Ellinger to the Fayette County line and back, but not the entire trip.

If you've lost or broken your TMN ID badge, you may order another one for yourself from LG Print, 155 W. Travis Street in La Grange – 979-968-8336. Be sure to make it clear that you want the Master Naturalist pin because they also make the Master Gardener pin. Specify if you want the pin back or the magnetic back. They are less than \$20, last time I checked.

There is a description of each VMS opportunity right after the title of the page where you log your hours. Please read it! Make sure you are putting your hours in under the correct opportunity title.

As always, thank you for logging your hours. Each volunteer hour is worth over \$23 in grants to our sponsoring agencies.

TMN Annual Meeting

2025 ANNUAL MEETING
LODGING

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST
2025 ANNUAL MEETING

TEXAS A&M HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER
177 JOE ROUTT BLVD, COLLEGE STATION, TX 77840

ROOM BLOCK DATES:
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15, TO SUNDAY, OCT. 19

\$159

PLUS 15.75% LOCAL OCCUPANCY TAX

INCLUDES:

- COMPLIMENTARY WIFI IN ALL ROOMS
- COMPLIMENTARY OVERNIGHT PARKING IN ATTACHED GENE STALLINGS BOULEVARD GARAGE
- ACCESS TO HOTEL AMENITIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE ANNUAL MEETING, VISIT:
TXMN.TAMU.EDU/2025-ANNUAL-MEETING

This year's Annual Meeting will be hosted at the Texas A&M Hotel and Conference Center, situated in the heart of Aggieland, on the Texas A&M University campus and across the street from the iconic Kyle Field.

You can now [BOOK YOUR STAY](#) with the Texas Master Naturalist hotel block link!

The contracted room block is for **Wednesday, October 15, to Sunday, October 19**. *Note: There are a limited number of rooms contracted for Wednesday. If you have trouble booking, try moving your dates selected to Thursday through Sunday. If there are issues with the hotel link, please call their front desks to book under our Texas Master Naturalist block.*

Prairie Fire

A Lesson from the Final Prescribed Burn of the Season



By Tayvis Dunnahoe

On April 9, 2025, volunteers from the South Central Texas Prescribed Burn Association (SCTPBA) and Texas Parks and Wildlife carried out its final prescribed burn of the season on Jim Murphy's Bar M Ranch near Round Top. The burn consumed 40 acres of award-winning native prairie across three separate "burn units."

Despite the displacement of a few dozen field mice and at least one copperhead, no other individuals were harmed by the fire. A kettle of Harrier Hawks rode the thermals shortly after the flames had subsided to partake in the spoils.

At the time of the burn, SCTPBA President Mark Brown said, "you'll never hear about this fire on the news."

That statement was almost not true. Shortly after all the volunteers had gone for the day, Murphy took a spin around the property and discovered a plume of white smoke where fire had escaped one of the mowed "breaks" on the last unit burned and had crossed the fence onto a neighbor's property. Outfitted with a water tank and sprayer on his UTV provided by SCTPBA, Murphy was able to get the fire under control except for a large cedar tree located in a mott just across the fence. Round Top Volunteer Fire Dept. was called and extinguished the tree. Murphy said it was fortunate he took the drive, "given another five minutes, the entire pasture might have burned." Fast action limited the "escape" to only about 8,000 sq. ft.



Despite the escaped fire, the burn was a great success. "We burned late in the season and there had already been a good bit of greening up in those prairies," Murphy said. "I didn't realize how much everything would burn."

This burn was carried out with almost two years of planning. Murphy joined SCTPBA 18 months ago, and Mark Brown visited the property half a dozen times over the last year in preparation for the burn. This coordination and planning were instrumental in its success. Murphy also credits the Texas Wildlife Habitat Federation (WHF) for introducing him to prescribed burning through a previous TMN visit and for helping him acquire a Quail Forever grant that allayed some of the cost

of maintaining his property in preparation for burning.

“No two prescribed fires are exactly the same,” Brown said. One important lesson he’s learned is to monitor humidity closely. As days get longer, the air gets drier and “each burn we completed this year has provided unique challenges that needed to be addressed.”

Seven of nine burns carried out by SCTPBA in the 2025 season used mowed firebreaks versus dirt breaks, which are typically plowed or tilled. Mowed breaks should be monitored closely until the humidity increases to a safe level. “On the Murphy burn, humidity was above the 30% range when the fire was completed near midday but dropped to the lower 20s later that afternoon,” Brown said. “It’s hard to put out a grass fire with just a flapper in that lower humidity.”

Both Murphy and Brown agree there is no substitute for experience. Not only do the prescribed burns provide a classroom for hands-on fire management, but working with many of the chapter’s more experienced members who have been conducting this work for decades lends itself to a successful transfer of knowledge on how to burn effectively and safely within a range of environments.

“We write fairly specific burn plans, but there will always be a need for flexibility once the fire is ignited,” Brown said. Murphy added that new members should attend 1-3 burns before conducting their own. It takes quite a bit of work to conduct a successful burn, and the coordination can be overwhelming. Murphy credits the support of SCTPBA with his comfort level as the Burn Boss. “Their coordination of volunteers, their members, and the TPWD fire brigade made it a seamless event.”

Further to planning for an individual burn, SCTPBA addressed these problems in its May 10 annual meeting. The discussion renewed focus of the application of dirt firebreaks and their benefits over mowed breaks. To further eliminate risks of escape, the group also voted to purchase a commercial grade leaf blower for eliminating thatch in and bordering firebreaks on future prescribed burns.

“Landowners assisting one another are essential to both SCTPBA as well as the Texas Master Naturalist program,” Brown says. The collaborative effort of assessing risk, gaining experience, and adopting lessons learned with each new prescribed burn leads to more refined outcomes over time.

Recent graduates of the GLC-TMN training class are probably familiar with Murphy’s Bar M Ranch from their recent site visit. Prior to April, Murphy didn’t believe the property had ever been burned. Now, six weeks out, “the entire prairie is covered with green bunch grasses, primarily Little bluestem.” Murphy says some Johnsongrass is creeping in, but the prairie is looking good—and revitalized. Birds are returning and he mentioned seeing a flycatcher in there the day before our interview.

Brown says, “Fire is one of the most essential tools we have for managing land in our area.” With education being a large component for the mission of TMN, SCTPBA allows members to see and to learn about prescribed burning while earning valuable hours toward TMN certification.

The past burn season was one of the more active in recent years with nine burns covering 186 acres across four counties within the chapter area. To stay up to date on upcoming prescribed burns contact GLC’s prescribed burn project lead, Mark Brown, at southcentraltxpba@gmail.com.

Volunteer Highlights: Winedale

Living Landscapes: Replanting Winedale Pollinator Habitat to Thrive Year-Long

By Nancy Dunnahoe



Before and after: Sam Walton designed an enhanced pollinator landscape at the Winedale Historical Complex. Photos: Carey Soderstrom

One of the chapter's most visible native pollinator habitats at the Winedale Historical Center was recently replanted with the help of a retired landscape professional, Sam Walton (Class of 2025), along with TMN-GLC volunteers. Carey Soderstrom, Winedale Pollinator Garden project lead, organizes monthly workdays to get your hands in the soil and help tend to the garden's health.

Now, with the addition of 42 new native plants curated by Walton, including Mexican Sage Bush (*Salvia leucantha*), Prairie Verbena (*Verbena bipinnatifida*) and Wrights' Skullcap (*Scutellaria wrightii*), the space will have year-long vitality to attract and host critical species of butterflies, moths, and other winged pollinators in the Round Top area and beyond.

"Our chapter's stewardship of native pollinator habitats seeks to inspire, educate and share our love for the natural world with our communities," Carey said. "The gardens are vibrant examples of how we humans can nurture pollinators, help our environment and enjoy the outdoors at the same time." Get to know what inspired Carey and Sam to reimagine the garden and plan a visit soon!

Where: 3738 FM 2714, Round Top, TX 78945

VMS Opportunity: Every second Friday of the month

Read on for a conversation with Carey and Sam to learn more about their interests in the Winedale Pollinator project!

A Conversation with Carey and Sam

Thanks for leading this important habitat project, Carey. When did you start working on the Winedale Pollinator Garden?

Carey: I became a co-leader for the Winedale Pollinator Garden in August of 2023, shortly after graduating from the TMN Training in the GLC Class of 2023. I recently became the sole project leader, but I have been blessed with the help and guidance of Sam Walton and others. I am not alone in this endeavor!

What's unique about this specific site and how has the garden evolved?

Carey: The location of our pollinator habitat in front of the Visitor's Center for the University of Texas at Austin's Dolph Briscoe Center for American History assures that we have lots of visitors. Also, our TMN meetings and training sessions are held in the nearby Meadows Foundation Education Center, making it a great showcase for teaching about and demonstrating pollinator habitats. The garden was created in 2017 as a TMN-GLC Project but was lacking a project leader for the past several years.

As the garden evolves, we're now working on new educational signage, planting new plants, learning what does/does not thrive in the space, looking for outreach opportunities, watching the garden grow and, of course—pulling weeds!

What keeps bringing you back into the garden each month?

Carey: I always look forward to seeing what's growing, blooming and flying or crawling around in the garden with every season. I never know who or how many volunteers will show up to help, but when people come to help, it's wonderful! If no one shows up, it's still wonderful to just be in the garden. The fact that we have irrigation makes the space a true oasis when everything else is dry and dead. And there are almost always weeds to pull (job security)!

Sam, as a newly minted Class of 2025 graduate, can you share more about your background working with landscapes?

Sam: Throughout my 20-year landscaping career, I have worked for Texas Hill Country custom home builders to design and build landscapes and have worked alongside landscape architects and landscape designers. As a landscape contractor owner, I gained expertise in water-wise irrigation, artificial turf, native plants and installations, grading, and custom drainage systems.

In December 2023, I sold my company, Structure Landscapes, to another company that's committed to its long-term success. Before I started landscaping, I owned and operated Sam's Texas Grown Plants, a wholesale nursery grower of Texas natives that supplied landscape contractors and developers with shrub and perennial plants.

What inspired you to reimagine this habitat?

Sam: A mix of passion, purpose and place. I've always enjoyed watching butterflies, bees and hummingbirds move through the spaces I helped create. I wanted to take that a step further and give something back to the community and the local ecosystem. The Master Naturalist meeting space is within walking distance of the garden, seen by many trainees and members, so it should engage the local community in learning about these native pollinator plants.

Helping with an existing public pollinator garden comes from a desire to create a space that educates, inspires and supports life. Pollinators are vital to our food systems and native landscapes, yet their habitats are shrinking. I wanted to help build a place where people could see the power of native plants in action—where kids could learn, families could relax and wildlife could thrive. Pollinator gardens are *living* examples of how landscapes can serve both people and the planet.

Do you have a favorite plant and why?

Sam: Yes, *Eupatorium greggii*, also known as Gregg's Mistflower, is my favorite plant currently. It's a butterfly magnet, especially loved by monarchs. This native Texas perennial produces fluffy blue flowers that bloom for months.

When planted en masse, it creates a misty, cloud-like appearance in the garden, hence the

name "Mistflower." It's a low-maintenance pollinator powerhouse that thrives in our ecozone.

Any other insights you'd like to share about the importance of landscapes?

Sam: Landscapes are more than scenery. They are living environments that shape how we feel, interact and thrive in the world around us.



Brazos River Clean-Up

Keeping the Brazos River Watershed Free of 1,600+ pounds of Trash

On May 21, our chapter joined a state-wide cleanup across Texas watersheds as part of Trash Free Gulf's initiative to prevent 800 tons of trash from ever reaching the Gulf of Mexico.



About the project:

Presented by H-E-B's Our Texas, Our Future, the Trash Free Gulf campaign united cleanup partners across the state in May 2025 to raise awareness for healthy streams, rivers, lakes, bays, and oceans.

The results?

A small but mighty team collected 1,621 pounds of trash along the Brazos River! Our collective efforts ended this waste stream's journey to the Gulf at state highway 105 bridge dividing Washington and Grimes counties, between Brenham and Navasota.

Together, we:

- Collected 27 bags of loose trash (cups, food containers, cans, plastic bottles, and other assorted small trash) weighing in at approximately 421 lbs.
- Cleared 4 illegal dumpsites consisting of a large sofa, a large sectional sofa, 3 mattresses and 1 box spring, insulation (construction trash), car parts, and plumbing demo weighing in at an accumulative 800 lbs.
- A random assortment of scrap wood, discarded appliances, and other bulk trash weighing in at about 400 lbs.

Every Texan lives in a watershed that drains to the Gulf. Let's all do our part to keep Texas beautiful and free of land-based waste.

Special thanks to project leads Chuck Babb and Tayvis Dunnahoe, TMN-GLC President Sheri Wilcox,

Wanda Anglin, Nancy Dunnahoe, Randy Hegemeyer, Jacquie Pritchard, John Pritchard, Jeff Post, and Louis Sellers for volunteering to keep Texas's watersheds clean.



Colorado River Watch

A First for Colorado River Watch Program

By Wanda Anglin



Cummins Creek - Downstream

Wanda Anglin & Maria Dahlberg

Cummins Creek - Upstream

Recently Texas Master Naturalists (TMN) Wanda Anglin and Maria Dahlberg, both of Columbus, tested water quality of Cummins Creek, a tributary north of the Colorado River that meanders east of it just before joining the river. It was a pivotal event as it is the first Citizen Scientist volunteer-monitored site that the

LCRA's Colorado River Watch Network (CRWN) program has ever had on private property.

As Wanda and Maria became certified TMNs last May, they found a passion for "all things water" during their training. Last summer, they attended training to become certified Texas

Stream Team water quality testers. Their TMN chapter has had 3 Citizen Scientist volunteer monitors for several years testing the Colorado River in Columbus and La Grange. So, they were eager to test Cummins Creek to provide water quality data for a stream before it joins the Colorado. But there were no public access points on Cummins Creek as all the land within 15 miles north of Columbus are privately owned with no schools, parks, or other areas that offer public access to its banks. So, Wanda and Maria agreed to take over the north bridge monitoring site from a TMN member who had to resign due to a family illness.

But they never forgot about Cummins Creek. One day as they were speaking with a group in Columbus about TMN and the service projects they conduct in Colorado County, Wanda mentioned the difficulties she had encountered finding a way to test Cummins Creek. A private property owner who owns land that Cummins flows through offered to permit access. With this new information, Wanda lobbied the CRWN to begin accepting private property monitoring sites pointing out that with all the private land ownership and rural setting, there were many

important bodies of water that receive runoff from farms, lands, and growing communities that were not being monitored. CRWN is headquartered in Austin where there are public access points on the Colorado and other bodies of water, so the organization is not accustomed to needing private property access, but it was open to the possibilities. Soon the CRWN program developed a process with their legal team to begin accepting private property testing sites. And the Cummins Creek site was approved to be tested. A momentous occasion...and it happened right here just north of Columbus. And now the path to future sites with no public access will be much easier to get approved.

Over the past year, our local chapter of Texas Master Naturalists, the Gideon Lincecum Chapter, has focused on bringing water quality projects to Colorado County. The Water Group recently trained more monitors who will soon be testing more sites in our region and are working on volunteer-presented water cycle and riparian educational programs that will be piloted in our Columbus schools.

Community Partnerships: NPAT

Meet Marvelyn Granger, VP of NPAT-Fayette Prairie Chapter Interview by Nancy Dunnahoe

According to Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute, the 25 Texas counties with the highest total population growth comprise 74% of Texas residents but only 10% of Texas land area. That means only a small percentage of the state's population is responsible for stewarding about 141 million acres of what makes Texas truly unique—our land.

This leaves the habitat of wildlife and health of our natural resources in our hands, says Marvelyn Granger, VP of the Native Prairies Association of Texas (NPAT)-Fayette Prairie Chapter. She also is a certified TMN and Training Committee member whom many of you know as the Training Buddy Coordinator.

A staggering statistic shared by Marvelyn is that only 1% of native prairies remain in North America, so stewardship is crucial to protecting what we have while restoring some of what we have lost.



“Texas is home to some of the most diverse and expansive landscapes in the United States, and among these, the native prairies stand as living testaments to the resilience and beauty of nature,” she says, adding that “once widespread across the state, these grasslands are dwindling in number, yet their restorative power remains as vital as ever.”

Some good news: Wildlife management land in Texas has significantly increased in recent years, from about 94,000 acres in 1997 to approximately 7.1M in 2022.

“We have a responsibility and an opportunity to engage with new landowners, helping them understand the importance of managing their land to support native wildlife habitats,” she underscores.

I sat down to find out more about Marvelyn’s work with NPAT and TMN-GLC as well as her family’s own prairie restoration journey.

How do you bridge NPAT with your TMN volunteer work?

My mission is to further the education and work of restoring native prairie across Texas. The need does not recognize organizational or county borders, so my work doesn't either. When I see a need, an opportunity, or can help somehow, I jump into the tall grass with both feet. I am energized, knowing by the people I meet who are similarly committed to the work, regardless of the sponsoring organization.

How are the two organizations collaborating?

TMN-GLC, NPAT and the NPAT-Fayette Prairie Chapter share the love of the natural world and the mission to protect it but also have complementary features, so collaboration takes full advantage of all our shared resources. We also both have very close relationships with Texas Parks and Wildlife, strengthening the impact we can have together.

We often collaborate due to the extraordinary conservationists who enthusiastically share their energy and talent within both TMN and NPAT. There is a significant overlap of talented, ecologically-minded members among many organizations, allowing us to serve our broad community of land stewards effectively. When we identify potential new projects, we call upon each other to combine our networks, ideas, commitment and volunteers for greater impact.

Any advice to share with those of us just getting started with native habitat restoration?

Many of us are urban-to-rural transplants, so shifting our relationship with nature takes time. Restoring a prairie is nothing like landscaping. There is often no rhyme or reason; plants don't stay where you put them, and it's tough to tell the good stuff from the "weeds" because you didn't plant either, and the most important factor is the soil beneath your feet, not the plants you see.

While not like landscaping, prairie restoration is much more like parenting. Like a child, it is wondrous and constantly surprising. Each native plant has a special talent, adding value that the world should not be without. There is no one-size-fits-all guarantee of success.

Lessons:

Don't be in a rush. Take time to consider your property's history, test its soil health and understand its topography. Observe and journal the seasonal changes on a property for a year before making any big restoration decisions.

Ask many questions of many people and never quit learning. You will never know it all, and you will relearn often. Be inquisitive and love the process.

Be a steward, not a manager. It may seem like semantics, but it's essential. The land isn't ours, just ours to care for.

Still don't be in a rush. Restoration practices take time, often years, to see outcomes and the outcomes may not be what you expected. It's difficult to not always be doing something, but sometimes observation is the best practice you can do.

Do you have a favorite prairie plant you are focusing on?

Targeting specific pollinators or the most colorful flowers or impressive grasses can be tempting, but it is essential to keep diversity front and center as the goal. Many pollinators rely on a single plant. If a keystone species is removed from an ecosystem, it can cause a cascade effect, leading to the decline or even collapse of the entire ecosystem.

I highlight the importance of plant diversity to warn against being overly enamored with any one plant for whatever reason and risking imbalance. But if I secretly chose a favorite, I just love Indiangrass. But don't tell the others I said that.

Anything else you'd like share about collaborating with the TMN program and about prairie restoration?

We have been astounded at the generosity in the community. There is extraordinary collective knowledge and experience; many people are eager to assist and share their resources. There are endless continuing education avenues including TMN, TPWD, and NPAT, to name just a few. Everyone is eager to teach and learn.

As part of our continuing education, we have found that the training for Certified TMN is thoughtfully crafted and genuinely excellent in providing a basis of knowledge. Certification and training have opened many doors to other organizations of like-minded people and field experts.

You will never run out of things to learn, and no two restorations or restoration years will be the same. There is no end — you will never complete a restoration — it is a marathon that requires incredible patience. But all the while, you can be confident that your efforts are essential and that you are only responsible for being part of the solution.

To follow along with the Nellie Gail Ranch's prairie and riparian restorations, visit: www.NellieGailRanchTexas.com

NPAT Workshop (Left) and TMN Training Class (Right)



Wild Things

Africa Trip to Kirstenhof Gardens

Ann Ray shares the work of naturalists in South Africa:

How amazing to hear that 69% of the plants native to the southern tip of Africa are only found there!



And there is an ongoing discussion among naturalists about which should be considered invasive nonnatives, and which plants have survived there so long they should be left even though they are introduced plants.

Invasive Coreopsis Leaf Beetle (*Phaedon desotonis*)

Thanks to Julie Itz for sending the link to the screwworm information!



The larvae of this invasive insect, present in Texas, feeds on host plants *Coreopsis* spp and *Bidens aristosa* (*Asteraceae*) in May. Adults emerge in mid-June, feed and then begin mating and egg laying near the host plant. Eggs stay dormant until the next spring when the larvae emerge, and the cycle continues. The larval stage is the most destructive – plants may be eaten to the ground! For more information, including suggestions for managing this pest, see the [Texas Invasive Species Institute flyer](#).

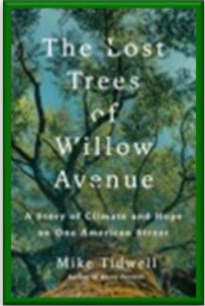
Photo from <https://inaturalist-open-data.s3.amazonaws.com/photos/266743491/medium.jpeg>

Book Review

Here are a couple of suggestions for your summer reading pleasure!

The Lost Trees of Willow Avenue

By Lori Buffum



Taking a unique approach to the very difficult task of addressing the trauma of climate change (current and future), Mike Tidwell writes a character-driven journal of his years living in a tree-lined neighborhood on the edge of Washington DC: *The Lost Trees of Willow Avenue*.

The word “tree” in a title attracts me like a magnet, and I was also drawn to this book because I have personally grieved for lost trees and wanted to see how the author treated that aspect of his relationship with the modern arboreal world. Little did I know how his perspective would expand and contract in ways that encompassed our whole planet while at the same time focused on myriad characters in his story.

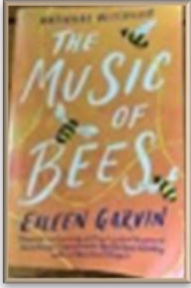
We meet

- the author’s son playing in the backyard under the protection of an ancient oak
 - a Chinese-born scientist with the brilliant idea of burying dead trees to sequester their carbon
 - Lyme disease-carrying ticks and the havoc their expanding range plays on human health
 - a young woman who consciously chooses not to bring children into a warming world
- a midwife growing vegetables and using geothermal energy to heat and cool her home
 - several individual giant trees in the neighborhood losing their battles with storms, broken seasonal patterns, bug invasions, and even gas-polluted root bases
 - neighbors banding together to meet the threats to their lives, their trees, their futures
 - wildfires in Canada causing record heat and pollution all down the NE coast
 - flood waters that threaten a local preschool
 - . . . and so many more characters that touch the reader’s heart

Tidwell (founder and director of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network) tells a very intimate story (THIS IS NOT FICTION) of the trauma of experiencing global warning in real time, in real life. Yes, the reader can feel the trauma, but I found I could also feel hope as I witnessed the resilience of the characters as each found his or her “community” where they could make a difference in how to face the current and future challenges of life on a warming planet. I’m glad to have met all the “characters” Tidwell introduced me to and I learned much more about the science of climate activism. His final message is to urge each of us as individuals to find a community of like-minded people to help harness the power to make a difference for future generations.

The Music of Bees | Author Eileen Garvin | 2021, Dutton

By Carol Gaskamp



Set in Oregon's Hood River apple orchard region, the heart of the novel is about three strangers, each struggling with their own sorrows and limitations, coming together to form a family. The central

unifying force among the three is beekeeping. Each chapter begins with a quotation from L. L. Langstroth, inventor of the modern beehive. Facts about bees and beekeeping are interspersed in the story of how the relationships

among the three protagonists develop, and the healing that comes with time and through relationships.

The Music of Bees is the selection for the 17th annual Washington County READ. A dramatic reading from the novel and reception with author Eileen Garvin will be October 7, 2025, at Unity Theatre in Brenham (For more information visit

<http://www.lifetimelearningbrenham.org/the-read.html>)

Calendar Highlights



As announced at the chapter meeting, a new TMN calendar app is being developed for TMN websites, so there are no events or activities listed for June.

Calendar link: <https://txmn.org/glc/events/>

GLC Tidings Newsletter Index

<https://txmn.org/glc/whats-new/newsletters/>

Find information about articles for newsletter issues from 2018 through the most recent. For each article, the index cites the subject, title, and author, and links directly to the issue published on the chapter website.

State Information

Online Webinar
Speaker Series
#TMNTuesdays
June 2025

*"Shell by Shell:
Community-Based
Oyster Gardening for
Ecosystem Recovery"*

with

Amy Nowlin
Texas A&M AgriLife Matagorda County Extension Agent

June 10, 12 p.m. CT

[Register Here](#)



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ANYONE can purchase this plate and \$22 of each \$30 annual plate fee comes directly back to the Texas Master Naturalist Program for continuing our mission.

The plate is available for purchase on the website:

Personalized plate (\$70): <https://www.myplates.com/design/personalized/passenger/texas-master-naturalist/>

Non-Personalized plate (\$30): <https://www.myplates.com/design/background/passenger/texas-master-naturalist/>

Chapter Resources

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Indian Creek Nature Area – Ann Ray

LaGrange AgriLife Building Native Plant Landscape –
Cindy Rodibaugh

Monument Hill State Historic Site – Karen Woods

Prescribed Burning – Mark Brown and B.R. Koehler

River Cleanups – Chuck Babb & Tayvis Dunnahoe

San Felipe de Austin State Historic Site – Frank Michel

Schubert House Pollinator Project – Karen Woods

Stephen F. Austin State Park – B.R. and Charlene
Koehler

Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historic Site – Julie Itz
and David Itz

Watershed and Waterway Protection Water

Monitoring – Wanda Anglin

Winedale Trails and Pollinator Garden – Carey
Soderstrom

Sponsor Contact

Each county has its own TPWD Biologist and Texas AgriLife Extension agent. We work closely with these sponsors.

Use the following links to access the main county contacts working with our chapter.

[Austin County](#)

[Colorado County](#)

[Fayette County](#)

[Washington County](#)

[Lee County](#)



- Our Chapter Website <http://txmn.org/glc>
- GLC Facebook Group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/21969044537/>
- Volunteer Management System; log your hours <https://txmn.tamu.edu/chapter-resources/tmn-vms-users>
- Texas Master Naturalist Program Website <https://txmn.tamu.edu/>
- Texas Master Naturalist Listserv; get notices about activities across the state <mailto:TMN@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU> [LISTSERV - Subscription Management - LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU](#)

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