



**You are encouraged to read the policies below for changes in Master Naturalist requirements.**

### **Current Guidelines for Texas Master Naturalist Chapters**

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department are statewide sponsors of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. As such we must adhere to the policies set forth by both of our sponsoring agencies.

- Texas A&M AgriLife Extension has mandated that ALL AgriLife face to face events, programs and meetings be **cancelled through May 4th** at the earliest.
- This includes Texas Master Naturalist face to face events, programs and meetings.
- Because the period may well be extended, all TMN chapters should continue to make contingency plans for no face to-face events through the summer out of an abundance of caution.
- <https://agrilifeextension.tamu.edu/coronavirus/> - a resource page for updates

### **Certification Requirements – 2020 Events & Situations**

■ The mission of the Texas Master Naturalist Program is to *develop a corps of **well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service** dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas.*

–Key Tenets of our Program – are a ‘Masters’-level Basic Training & Volunteer Service

- The requirement for a full 40 hours of Basic Training and 40 hours of Volunteer Service **will not be changed** for 2020.
- Exceptions will be made for Advanced Training in 2020 as described below, but 8 hours minimum will still be required.

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### **Advanced Training Annual Requirements – 2020 INTERIM POLICY**

■ Online-based training and webinars will accepted for **all of the minimum of 8 hours** of advanced training hours required for certification. Additional AT hours can be earned through distance or in person courses once shutdown lifted.

- We encourage members to consider attending in person advanced trainings in the fall once travel & health restrictions lift.
- We encourage chapters to host multi-chapter or regional advanced training webinars/online programs to limit stress on presenters.
- We encourage the priority of those online training/webinars that are live, allow for speaker/audience interaction and allow for questions/discussion at the end.
- We encourage chapters to host post-training discussion groups if speaker isn't available for questions/discussion.
- We encourage limits to those advanced trainings that are pre-recorded, not live or not interactive in their online format. **No "learning by YouTube"**.

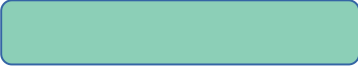
### Volunteer Service Requirements – 2020 Events & Situations

- There will be **no change in the minimum requirements for volunteer service** for certification/recertification in 2020
- But there are some options to switch to distance service:
  - Write a newsletter article spotlighting a local SGCN species or make a presentation to give in the fall.
  - Verify or assist with curating observations in iNaturalist or eBird \* (\*more guidance on CitSci volunteer service coming soon.)
  - Contributing to the chapters blog/newsletter
  - Planning your chapter's 20th anniversary events/celebration/etc.
  - Planning for fall trainings, ATs and projects
  - Grant writing
  - Updating chapter websites
  - Updating chapter brochures and outreach materials
  - Reviewing/making comments to the TMN bylaws, CMOP and COH documents for possible considerations to state program office should consider for 2020 updates.

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- Join a planning committee for the TMN Annual Meeting and events.
- Assist leadership with managing your chapter, going through and organizing chapter files whether they are electronic or paper files.
- Encourage your members to share their service ideas with us to share across the state!
- **IMPORTANT NOTE** – ALL volunteer service MUST meet local and federal guidelines for limited travel and social distancing. Local Guidelines currently vary city to city and county to county.
  - Some considerations – We encourage members to limit engaging in service at parks, nature centers, gardens even if following distancing and cleaning guidelines – consider your travel there

(i.e stopping at a gas station) or the potential safety situations when working by yourself at a remote site. It is strongly recommended that these types of service be limited out of an abundance of caution and are not required to complete under social distancing restrictions.



A. We had a really good presentation by Craig Hensley on the **iNaturalist program** earlier in March. It was well attended and Craig, as always, did a magnificent job!

Michelle Darnelle has created several iNaturalist Projects in our area. Thanks to her, we now have Projects for the Irma Lewis Seguin Outdoor Learning Center, Walnut Springs Park in downtown Seguin, and Crescent Bend Nature Park in Cibolo. One already existed for Park West, so we now have *four* projects in our immediate area! Anyone can join the project by going to the iNaturalist page on your computer, enter the name of the project, and when it pops up, click on Join. Just make sure you are on the correct project and not one that has a similar name. And just like Craig said, any photographs which have been taken by anyone within the boundaries of the project in the past, have already been uploaded to it! Just like magic!

B. The **BioBlitz** is still scheduled for April 24-27, I think. We will be working on setting up some times and dates for us to Blitz our Project areas as the time gets closer. The BioBlitz is an activity that we can do outdoors and still maintain a distance from other people.

C. All of the other Citizen Science activities, such as Geronimo Creek Clean-up and Forest Health at Park West, have been cancelled for the month of April.



## 2020 Birding Classic postponed to Fall!

For more information: <https://tpwd.texas.gov/events/great-texas-birding-classic>



## Pollinator Citizen Science Project



Date: Thursday, April 2, 2020

Time: 10:00 – 11:00 AM

Description: The purpose of this project is to use citizen scientists to determine the attractiveness of different commercially available ornamentals (annuals or perennials) to different groups of pollinators in the Southern USA, namely Texas and Oklahoma.

We will be conducting a **live** training for our pollinator citizen scientists. The training will include information on the importance of pollinators, how to recognize the different pollinator groups, and how to contribute to the project through our citizen science form. Citizen scientists will be required to complete a short quiz after viewing the training; a quiz with unlimited tries, but will help ensure that our citizen scientists are meeting required standards for observations. The completion of this quiz will greatly increase the value of the data you submit.

If you are unable to make the training live, do not fret! The training will be recorded and made available online; the training video, how to access the quiz, and online contribution form will be sent in an email *and* provided on our project website as they are available.

For security reasons, we are asking all personnel to **register before the meeting** using the link <https://sixleggedaggie.com/research/pollinator-project/> or [https://tamu.zoom.us/meeting/register/upEqf-mtqD4uVciCplOokgxM3O8Qi6d\\_pg](https://tamu.zoom.us/meeting/register/upEqf-mtqD4uVciCplOokgxM3O8Qi6d_pg)

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## What's in a (Plant) Name?

Date: Saturday, April 4, 2020

Time: 10:00 AM

Description: All modern biologists still use a form of Latin, if for no other reason than to name living things, from bacteria to plants to humans. However, until just a few years ago, botanists were probably the only people for whom Latin remained a working, technical language. This presentation will cover the story of how we progressed from Classical Latin to modern Botanical Latin, the people (mostly botanists) behind that story, and where Botanical Latin is today. Dr. Best says, "If you're a word nerd like me, I think you'll enjoy it!"



Q&A session to follow the lecture (using chat function in Zoom)

Check the Botanical Research Institute of Texas [BRIT] website at <http://brit.org/online-educational-resources> for details on the Zoom link. Scroll down the Education page past landscaping and composting for Dr, Best's class.

It is suggested that while Zoom is user-friendly, those interested may want to sign on for the Zoom session a few minutes early if they haven't downloaded the app and used it previously.

### Free Online Class

Presenter: Brooke Best, PhD, Dir. of Research Programs, BRIT

### Virtual Birding Seminar

Dates: Friday and Saturday, April 16 & 17, 2020

Time: 2:30 – 4:30 PM

Description: Live webinar with discussion/Q&A . The team at Birding with Extension was very bummed to have to cancel our Birding the Border program this year. But we still wanted to bring our participants a little taste of what we do, so we have taken our seminar content and moved to an **online format!** What that means is that **anyone** can join and learn about new bird research, managing for waterbirds, and the role of private working lands in wildlife conservation!

To see the schedule, speaker bios and register go to:

<https://wildlife.tamu.edu/birding/virtual-birding-seminars/>

Cost: \$10.00 for both days

Contact: Dr. Maureen Frank with any questions: [mgfrank@tamu.edu](mailto:mgfrank@tamu.edu).

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### Training Class News

The committee continues to work toward the August 11 class start date. Prayers going up the COVID-19 will be under control to the extent we can start on the scheduled date.

Committee members continue to work toward that goal. Many thanks to Nancy Masterson and Kathy Pearson for producing the class application. It is attached to this email. **We encourage you to share class information and the application with contacts you feel would be interested.**

Nancy has also developed a new promotional flier. **Please help spread the word** by posting a flier at locations you frequent. The fliers will be available once we are back in full action.

The majority of presenters are scheduled! That's a big relief and Marilyn will be contacting the few she is still waiting on.

Bringing in new members is one of the most satisfying aspects of the Master Naturalist program. The Committee looks forward to an exciting new class this Fall.



Guadalupe Master Naturalists welcome Debbie Balderaz who has transferred from the Alamo Area Chapter. Debbie recently relocated to Seguin from San Antonio. She was certified in 2012 with the Alamo Area Master Naturalist and we look forward to meeting her in person soon.



You can practice social distancing and still get out into nature. Here are some ideas.



Add data to the iNaturalist site by taking pictures in your own yard or some other isolated location.



The fresh air will relieve the stresses of being cooped up, especially for Master Naturalists who like being out in nature. Provide feeders and water and the birds will come.



They're back!! The hummers have arrived so get your cleaned up and filled. I have five feeders and they are being visited regularly.



Travel some of the back roads you have never been on. Pack a picnic basket and enjoy the beautiful Texas wildflowers and scenery.

Some websites that will inspire you:

- <https://texashillcountry.com/perfect-hill-country-wildflower-day-trip/>
- <https://txhillcountrytrail.com/our-stories/texas-hill-country-wildflowers>
- [https://texasbob.com/travel/tbt\\_bbtrail\\_bahia.html](https://texasbob.com/travel/tbt_bbtrail_bahia.html)
- <https://www.onlyinyourstate.com/texas/best-road-trip-tx/>
- <https://traveladdicts.net/texas-road-trip/>
- <https://www.tripstodiscover.com/best-day-trips-from-san-antonio/>



Please send announcements and news items for distribution in the newsletter to Marilyn Anderson, [MarilynA@access4less.net](mailto:MarilynA@access4less.net).

**Deadline for next issue** – Friday, April 24 for the May 2020 edition.



<https://txmn.org/guadalupe/>



The Texas Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife

