

T E X A S

Master  
Naturalist™



HIGHLAND LAKES CHAPTER



# Highland Lakes Steward

May 2016

Volume 7, Issue 5

## MISSION

The Texas Master Naturalist program is a natural resource-based volunteer training and development program sponsored statewide by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

The mission of the program is to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the state of Texas

## OFFICERS

**President**  
Melissa Duckworth  
lissaduckworth@gmail.com  
(512) 922-1518

**Cathy Hill**  
cmhill1957@yahoo.com  
(512) 793-5588

**Secretary**  
Marilyn McClain  
mccgrammy@yahoo.com  
(214) 235-5759

**Treasurer**  
Susan Downey  
shdowney@gmail.com  
(830) 693-9291

## MESSAGE FROM MELISSA

by Mellissa Duckworth

### Our Incomparable LMAP Team

Our Highland Lakes Master Naturalists Land Management Assistance Team, aka LMAP, consists of a small group of knowledgeable members who possess a never ending quest for discovery and identification of native trees, grasses and flowers on untamed, undeveloped land in our part of the Texas Hill Country. The team member names are: Marvin Bloomquist, Melanie Huff, Fredi Franki, Linda O'Nan, Jerry Stacy and Jan Warren. Each member has a mindset or "booklet" of interest. Their combined knowledge could very well fill volumes.

I was the recent beneficiary of their services. As we drove across rutted roads, I was informed that my driving speed was excessive. Perhaps I should slow it down from 15 mph to 5 mph. A plant of interest can be seen with peripheral vision at top speed but the brain cannot process. Oh, so better yet, .... " stop, back up"! Well, I am thinking this could take all day. In retrospect, I certainly wish that it had.

I have most of the requisite reference books on trees, grasses, flowers and land management and flip through them on occasion in the hopes of identifying a certain plant. However, this group of Master Naturalists go many steps beyond flipping through a book. They study, learn, seek and retain. And from that, they are able to impart invaluable information to landowners. That, and enthusiasm.

I walk my property daily, for pleasure and for exercise. However, I never knew I

had a cluster of young Eve's Necklace trees growing near the river..... Or False Indigo. So I study and read. False indigo is a drought tolerant plant that possesses a cannabinoid like substance called amorphastibol. Along with lead plant, Native American tribes pounded the roots preparing a " medicine" to rub on their clothing thereby giving them the power to attract buffalo and the ability to kill as many as necessary to provide for the family group. This is history... a cultural tidbit that lives on in a plant. On that one day, this team gave me the inspiration to learn about a plant with a story. By preserving habitat to preserve our native plants, we can look at history. We can tell so many true stories from times long ago. And yet, the truth lives in the plant, long after we are gone.

If a middle - aged brain such as mine can be inspired to learn--imagine, in the right setting, what young minds can retain. The hope would be to set in motion a desire to teach about plant uses , taxonomy, and ultimately land preservation.

You may have a few acres or more than a few. No matter the size, I encourage you to schedule a site visit with LMAP. We are all proud to be Naturalists. The reward comes in becoming a Master as these people have. Hats off.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Message from Melissa—LMAP Team</b><br>Melissa Duckworth | <b>1</b> |
| <b>June Program</b><br>Cathy Hill                          | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Trip Committee News</b><br>Cathy Hill                   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>May Program</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Get Well!</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Texas Pollinator PowWow</b><br>Sammy Childers           | <b>3</b> |
| <b>Children's Day Celebration</b><br>Pat Campbell          | <b>4</b> |
| <b>Gallery</b>   | <b>5</b> |

Please submit pictures, articles, reports, stories, announcements, etc. to

[chili865@gmail.com](mailto:chili865@gmail.com).

Photos should have captions and appropriate credits. The deadline for submissions to each month's newsletter is the 10th of the month and publication will be by the 15th.

## JUNE PROGRAM

By Cathy Hill

The speaker for the June HLMN meeting on June 1 will be Linda McCall, Education and Outreach Programs for the Bureau of Economic Geology, the University of Texas at Austin on the subject of the history and geology of oil production in Texas.



## TRIP COMMITTEE NEWS

By Cathy Hill

The trip committee is planning a day trip to the Mammoth National Monument in Waco, Texas on Friday June 3. Our guided tour will begin at 11:00am.

Further details to follow via emails.

## MAY PROGRAM

Dale Schmidt - TPWD, educated us on the "Llano" eagles and where they have gone.



Photo by Cathy Hill

### GET WELL!

Prayers and/or Get Well Wishes :

- Kathy Griffis-Bailey
- Cris Faught
- Billy Hutson
- Mike Kersey
- Dan Nutter
- Janis Koby and her husband
- Margie Dearmont's husband, Dean
- Judy Parker's husband, Bob
- Bob Glover
- Wade Hibler's wife, Ellen Ely

## Stewardship

An ethic that embodies cooperative planning and management of environmental resources with organizations, communities and others to actively engage in the prevention of loss of habitat and facilitate its recovery in the interest of long-term sustainability

## TEXAS POLLINATOR POWWOW

by Sammye Childers

Mike and I had the good fortune to attend the Texas Pollinator PowWow April 22-24 in Lubbock. This is the third PowWow that we have attended and it is always a very enlightening and never disappointing experience. Speakers reveal cutting edge science and inform about new, exciting research and discoveries. The keynote speaker this year was Dr. Bob Pyle, Author and Founder of the Xerces Society. The title of his lecture was Pollinators, Plants and People on the Edge of What's Left. A few main points from his lecture are:

As in most things, managing ecosystems is not a one size fits all situation. Things are never black and white. But, the one common thread is diversity, diversity, diversity. When native species are scarce consider proven nonnatives. Purism might be a luxury of the past.

It is becoming more apparent that burning is often too aggressive. Often fires are too fast to allow fauna to escape, too hot therefore sterilizing the soil and they often carry things too far. Fire is a useful tool but more careful consideration is required.

Hedgerows and native corridors are becoming increasingly important. Many lessons could be learned from the British Isles and other Old World countries.

Due to changing climate patterns, the decline of pollinators may well be caused by the shifting of the timing of pollination in expected host plants.

It would be impossible to share the whole PowWow experience but I would like to include the following points as food for thought:

To attract beneficial insects to your garden, they must have a supply of aphids available to them.

Evidence and research indicates that it takes 3 years for native plants to establish. Therefore, a native garden would require supplemental watering for at least 3 years, especially in drought conditions.

Bees are attracted to yellow. If you want hummingbird feeders to be "bee free" make sure there is no yellow on the feeder.

There have now been 1100 species of native bees documented and described in Texas. And more and more are being discovered on a regular basis. And, most native bees are specialists.

Bat habitats with White Nose Syndrome have a 90 to 95 percent mortality rate, some 100%. However, the bats in Europe that survived have developed immunities but colonies are about 5% of normal numbers.

The Ogallala Aquifer, that took 20 million years to form, is down 200 to 300 feet across its vast expanse. Its recharge ability is 15mm per year. If irrigation stopped today, it would take 60,000 years to recharge. It is estimated that Texas Plains farms have perhaps 15 years of water supply remaining. It is predicted that Texas farms will become dry land farms by 2035.

97% of the native grasslands in Texas have already been lost. 85% of those that remain are on private lands. 2% are being maintained for conservation.

Native bees disperse even further than previously estimated. They will be instrumental in connecting fragmented lands.

It has forever been conventional wisdom that cotton is self pollinating. While that is true, recently accepted research has proven that cotton assisted by external pollination increases production by approximately 25%. This will be very useful information in convincing farmers to incorporate native corridors within their fields.

Soil pathogens do not like oxygen.

We are at the nexus of the sixth extinction. That is not a hopeless statement (in my view). There is still time. What happens on/in our own spaces will make the difference.

I hope that all of you will be able to attend the next Pollinator PowWow. That is not a "cutesy" name, by the way. In native terms, it means a gathering of sages and leaders to share knowledge and plan strategies. I hope you will consider attending the next Texas Pollinator PowWow.

## CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION

by Pat Campbell

Several of us volunteered at the Children's Day Celebration in Marble Falls on Saturday, April 16, 2016.

We did backyard bass, the worm project, and tattoos. Poor Dan Nutter probably had prune fingers from all the tattoos he applied over the course of the day. Backyard bass was a smashing hit, and kids were lined up all day. During the course of 10:00am -1:30pm we had almost 600 people at our booth! Parents as well as kids enjoyed learning about worms and holding them. We tried out the digital microscope for a short time, but with no electricity, it was short-lived.

Phil found out computer batteries don't last very long. It was super busy and super fun!



# GALLERY



From Sunset Stable on Lake Buchanan  
Photos by Lori Greco



Gold Fronted Woodpecker Photo by Sue Kersey



Osprey Photo by Sue Kersey



Turtle Laying Eggs in our front yard  
Photo by Sue Kersey

# GALLERY



Clockwise from above: Cardinal with babies in nest, baby Cardinal, very wet Coopers Hawk, Screech Owl  
Photos by Sue Kersey



Killdeer sitting on eggs at Blackrock Park on Lake Buchanan

Photos by Alice Rheaume