



HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

THE TEXAS STAR

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SEPTEMBER PROGRAM:

THE TEXAS LIVING WATERS PROJECT

Jennifer McMahon, Outreach Coordinator of the Texas Living Waters Project, which is a program of the National Wildlife Federation, will share with us some of the concerns on fresh water management in Texas and how we might help. How to manage fresh water resources is one of the most critical issues facing Texas in the new century. Water planners are currently revising the State Water Plan—the master plan that will guide water management decisions and investments for the next 50 years. With the state's population expected to double, water planners are under immense pressure to develop new water supplies for people, industry, and agriculture. But what about water for the environment?

Just like people, fish and wildlife need water to survive. But the State Water Plan doesn't include water for the environment, and there is clear evidence that this is having a devastating effect on our aquifers, rivers and bays. It needn't be this way. We *can* supply water for human needs and still maintain a healthy environment. Come learn about how the National Wildlife Federation and the Texas Living Waters Project are working to ensure that environmental water needs—the fresh water needed to support healthy fish and wildlife populations—are recognized and supplied along with municipal, industrial, and agricultural needs. Learn how you can get involved to help improve the way Texas manages and uses its fresh water so there will be water for fish and wildlife, for future generations, and to preserve the natural heritage that makes Texas so special.

Jennifer McMahon is a Capital Area Master Naturalist and holds a B.S. in Animal Sciences from the University of Illinois. Jennifer has worked as the manager of a fine dining restaurant, a commercial salmon fisherman in southeast Alaska, and a volunteer for several conservation organizations. Jennifer has been with National Wildlife Federation for nearly three years.

Please join us on **Monday, September 22nd at 6:30 p.m.** at Riverside Nature Center at 150 Francisco Lemos St. in Kerrville for a social hour, followed by our program at **7:00 p.m.** We encourage interested members of the public to join us at our meetings.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

WELCOME TO THE CLASS OF 2003

This past Wednesday I had the pleasure of meeting nearly all of the class of 2003. You could feel the excitement in the classroom at UGRA—these folks are *really* glad to be part of the class. There are now 22 class members, 13 women and 9 men, coming to us from five counties. I thought it would be fun to share with you some details from the applications of these new members, so we can all get to know them a little better, a little sooner. So, without further ado, “Ladies first!” (Don't worry, guys, your turn will come next month)

From Gillespie County:

Jannean Alexander used to own the Old Bank Mall and the Birdhaus shop in Fredericksburg, specializing in products for serious birders. She currently volunteers for the Hill Country SPCA about 12 hours a month, and participates in a cowbird trapping program. What better friend could birds have??

Sharon Corley expressed a desire to do what she can to help preserve our natural resources and wildlife by joining our chapter. She has done hospital volunteer work, and enjoys organic gardening.

Gail Eager is both a massage therapist and a yoga instructor (makes you wish those skills could count as advanced training!). Gail likes to spend time exploring and learning about nature and sharing her outdoor skills with others.

Stacy Johnson has been a teacher off and on for 20 years, most recently at Fredericksburg Elementary School where she taught short courses on "Texas Birds and Butterflies" and "Fun Topics in Math."

Katherine Peake is an attorney serving as a part-time Fredericksburg municipal judge. Her volunteer activities include: the Fredericksburg Community Health Center (Board president); the Pioneer Memorial Library Foundation; and the Hill Country Land Trust. She's interested in volunteering for school outreach projects and public speaking.

From Kerr County:

Teresa Lynn homeschooled her daughter for 12 years, and is now employed as a realtor. She has found time to volunteer at her church, the Point Theater, and Playhouse 2000. She's concerned about preserving our natural resources for her daughter's generation and beyond. That's a concern we all have as Master Naturalists.

Marilyn Murrmann is into Dalmatians! She's a member volunteer for three Dalmatian-related organizations, as well as a Dalmatian rescue group. She found out about us through Bill Lindemann's column—thanks Bill!

Nancy Vaughan loves the outdoors, and has tried to build and maintain bird- and wildlife-friendly habitats. She volunteers 8 hours/week for the Sid Peterson Memorial Hospital Auxiliary. She's also Treasurer of the Horizon Owner's Association and serves on their agricultural committee which manages the exotic and whitetail populations.

From Kendall County:

Madonna Ballou is a massage therapist in Boerne. She and her husband are deeply involved in 4-H youth development, including an outdoor living skills program they are starting this fall. She's also a Wilderness First Responder who wants to "educate children to be safe outdoors, to care for, know about, enjoy, and be aware of the world around them."

Milby Moore is a retired mail carrier who has lived in "the country" for more than 20 years. She has volunteered at the Comfort Library, taught riding to girls at Camp Flaming Arrow, and helped the Comfort Volksmarch organization on their walks.

Bobbie Livingston also hails from Comfort. She has done some teaching, speaking, and growing plants, as well as participating in area bird counts.

From Real County:

Tracy Garofano's field is public relations, marketing, and radio production. In her spare time, she enjoys doing construction work, including a Habitat for Humanity house and a non-profit thrift store. Tracy also volunteers 10 hours/month at The Water Hole (a religious non-profit).

From Bandera County:

Emily Matheson was a high school registrar before moving to Bandera this summer. She's an avid "outdoors" woman who has participated in TPWD's Outdoor Women Workshops. Emily believes the TMN program "will allow me to build on that love of nature and meet new people at my new home." Welcome to the Hill Country, Emily!

Wow! What a diverse and exciting group of women. We are lucky to have their talents and enthusiasm. Let's all make them feel welcome as new members of our chapter. And next month, it's the men's turn!

by Sandy Peña

RECYCLING BY MOTHER NATURE:

A GATHERING OF NON-INSECT ARTHROPODS

Interesting events in nature occur everywhere, even on a walkway. Here we see Pillbugs (in the Order Isopoda) recycling organic matter in the form of a deceased bark scorpion (Striped Centruroides in the Order Scorpionida). Pillbugs are terrestrial crustaceans, and are more closely related to shrimp, lobsters and crayfish. Pillbugs spend the day in dark, moist places, such as under stones, logs, leaf litter etc. At night they come out to feed on decomposing organic material. My "Texas Insects" book describes their food as mulch, grass clippings, tender foliage on young plants, cucumber skin etc. Clearly these Hill Country pillbugs have a far more adventuresome diet.

In some places in the Hill Country, the bark scorpion seems nearly as common as the pillbug, and shares some of its habits. Bark scorpions spend the daylight hours under loose bark of logs, rocks and boards, in debris, or in human habitations. It is common for scorpions to climb, so they are often found in the attics of homes. They become active at night when they hunt for prey, which they catch and hold prey using their pincers. Scorpions are capable of reducing their metabolism to very low levels to survive in adverse environments. The stinger (lower right in photo) of this species can inflict a painful sting. Deaths attributed to this species are not well substantiated.

Reference: *A Field Guide to Common Texas Insects* by B.M. Dress and J.J. Jackman, Gulf Publishing, 1998.

CALENDAR

"APPROVED AT" INDICATES THAT AN EVENT HAS BEEN APPROVED AS ADVANCED TRAINING FOR OUR CHAPTER. We receive little advance notice on some training opportunities. **Please watch your e-mail!**

Monday, September 22 Texas Master Naturalist - Hill Country Chapter meeting at 6:30 PM for our social hour and 7:00 PM for a presentation entitled **"The Texas Living Waters Project"**. (See additional information on page 1). The public is invited to attend.

Saturday, October 4 "Down By the Riverside" 8 AM to 3 PM at Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville. Mostly Native Plant Sale (emphasizing trees and shrubs) **and Nature Festival**, with events for the entire family, including a bat exhibit. Learn the calls of our local frogs from the Texas Amphibian Watch CD in the Nature Lab with Dr. Jim Dobie, our herpetology class instructor.

Tuesday, October 7th "Bigtooth Maples and Why There Aren't More of Them" by Baxter Adams at Native Plant Society of Texas – Kerrville Chapter to be held at Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville at **2 PM**. Until recently, Baxter Adams owned a unique ranch in Medina, a large portion of which became The Nature Conservancy's Love Creek Preserve that our Master Naturalist Chapter enjoyed on our May field trip.

October 11th Regional Conferences for Texas on Water sponsored by the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club in partnership with Environmental Defense, National Wildlife Federation and others in New Braunfels in the Guadalupe Telephone Co-op Bldg.

For more information and registration forms: www.texas.sierraclub.org or contact the Lone Star Chapter office at 512-477-1729 or lonestar.chapter@sierraclub.org

Find out: How are we going to keep water flowing in our rivers and streams?

What do we need to do to maintain the productivity of our coastal bays and estuaries?
Is desalination the answer to our future water needs? Is our groundwater protected?
What changes did the Texas Legislature make in state water law this year?
How will those changes impact us? and more. **APPROVED AT**

October 16-19th Native Plant Society of Texas Fall Symposium (State Meeting) in Fredericksburg

Presentations (Native Grass Restoration, Endangered Means There Is Still Time, Ranching with Natives & much more) and Special Field Trips (some to sites not open to the public). 2 & 4 day registrations available. More info at <http://www.nspot.org>, click on "NPSOT Fall Symposium 2003" **APPROVED AT**

October 24 -- 26th Texas Master Naturalist 4th Annual Statewide Meeting & Advanced Training

in Navasota, TX **Registration deadline is OCTOBER 11, 2003.**

Don't miss this great meeting open to both Chapter members and our new Class of 2003!

Below is a partial list of topics that will be covered in Advanced Training classes and Fieldtrips, and Roundtable discussions. **APPROVED AT**

Monitoring Amphibians as Environmental Change Indicators	Dragonflies and Damselflies
Foreign, Exotic and Invasive Plants of Texas	How to teach Ecology and Ecosystem Concepts
Delivering Hummingbird Gardening and ID Workshops	Mussel Mania!
Designing Interpretive Programs	Cowbird Trapping Certification
Wetlands: More than just mosquito habitat! (at the Katy Prairie Conservancy)	
Introduction to Bats and Bats of Texas	Monarch Larva Monitoring Project
Close-up (Macro) Photography	Plants of the Post Oak Savannah
Keynote Speaker: Gary Clark: "Connecting People with Nature"	

The following events are all sponsored by Cibolo Nature Center in Boerne. There is a modest fee (\$10 for Cibolo members, \$12 for non-members, discounts for couples). **For more information, visit their website at <http://www.cibolo.org> at the "Learn" option.** Register by phone at 830-249-4616 or by e-mail at nature@cibolo.org

Fall Wildflowers and Prairie Restoration led by Janis Merritt, San Antonio Natural Resource Department

Saturday, September 27: 9 AM to noon

Come and learn about how to start and maintain a wildflower meadow or a native grass and wildflower prairie on your property. Janis Merritt is the Native Plant Specialist for San Antonio's Natural Resource Department and a resident of Kendall Country. She will present a slide show on local prairie restoration and we will take a leisurely walk to see some fine native plants that blossom in the fall. Bring your own wildflowers for identification. **APPROVED AT**

Butterflies of the Texas Hill Country led by Mike Quinn, TPWD

Saturday, October 4 9 AM to noon

The Texas Hill Country has a wealth of butterflies that you can attract to your property. See an extraordinary slide show of these delightful creatures. Learn about the native plants that are essential for their survival. We will take a walk, collect and release some

species that are active in our area at this time of year. **APPROVED AT**

Plant Communities of the Texas Hill Country led by Bill Carr, Texas Nature Conservancy botanist
Saturday, October 18: 9 AM to noon

The Texas Hill Country is made up of many different plant communities. Bill Carr is a professional botanist, who has completed botanical surveys on thousands of acres in our area. He will present a slide show of our major natural communities and the components that make them unique. We will also walk the Nature Center property to see a sampling of native plants we have right here in Boerne. **APPROVED AT**

Hill Country Geology Part I and Part II led by Dr. Bill Ward (our MN Class Geology instructor)

Saturday, November 1 Part I at 9 AM to noon and Part II at 1 PM to 3 PM

Cost: members \$20/person & 30/couple, non-members \$25/person & \$40/couple

Part I. What is limestone and why do we have so much of it?

Using a series of slides, rock samples, and vivid diagrams, Dr. Ward presents the 100-million year-old origin of our pervasive limestone formations and the subsequent events that have shaped the Hill Country landscape. Class includes handouts and a short field trip on CNC property. **APPROVED AT**

Part II: Living with all that Limestone!

Dr. Ward will discuss how Hill Country culture is influenced by the limestone bedrock that controls soil, vegetation, topography, and especially our underground aquifers. Limit: 20 **APPROVED AT**

Trees and Understory = Food and Cover for Wildlife! by Mark Peterson, TFS and Rufus Stephens, TPWD (Rufus is a sponsor of our Master Naturalist Chapter)

Saturday, November 8 9 AM to noon

All over the Texas Hill Country, land is being cleared for development and an excessively high white-tailed deer population is preventing regeneration of our hardwood trees. Come learn the dynamics of forest ecology and how hunting and other land management practices can benefit native plants and the wildlife that depend on them for food and cover. **APPROVED AT**

Stewardship for Endangered Birds by Leslie Lineham and Eric Lautzenheiser

Saturday, November 15 9 AM to noon

This is a field trip to see both golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo habitat at Friedrich Park in Leon Springs. We will walk uphill through warbler habitat to an area that has been success-fully restored for the vireos. Ms. Lineham has had many years of experience on the warbler monitoring project at Camp Bullis and Mr. Lautzenheiser is land manager at Friedrich Park, a critical area for both birds. **APPROVED AT**

REFRESHMENT VOLUNTEERS

Thanks go **Edna Platte** and **Betty Thomas** for the delightful refreshments at our August meeting.

Refreshments for our September meeting will be provided by **Kim Whitaker** and **Sandy Peña**.