

January 2005 Program

At our January 24 meeting, Claire Vaughan, Bob Peterson and Sam Mason of the Images for Conservation Fund (ICF) and the Pro Tour of Wildlife Photography will present a slide show of winning wildlife photos from the Valley Land Trust Wildlife Photography contests. ICF and the Pro-Tour were created with the goal of fostering the nature photography tourism industry as a long-term benefit for private landowners, rural economies, nature photographers, and the wildlife of North America.

Sam Mason, executive director of ICF, is an amateur nature photographer and enjoys spending time outdoors. He holds a bachelors degree in English Language and Literature from the University of Virginia. Various work experiences include video and music production, arts promotion, and office management.

Bob Peterson is a Hill country rancher and chairman of the ICF Hill Country Advisory Board. Petersen holds a BS degree in Electrical Engineering from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale and has spent 25 years in the high tech industry. He has held numerous development and executive positions in the aerospace, robotics and computer industries, most recently with Dell Computer Corporation. An avid outdoorsman and conservationist, Petersen has been a supporter and member of numerous environmental causes and organizations over the years, and currently serves on the Texas Advisory board for Environmental Defense.

Claire Vaughan is an ICF board member.

For further information on ICF, visit www.imagesforconservation.org.

This program will be held on Monday, January 24 at Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St, in Kerrville, beginning with a social time at 6:30pm. The meeting and program begin at 7:00pm. The meeting is free, and the public is invited to attend. We hope that you can join us.

President's Message

by Jim Stanley

First, let me take this opportunity to again thank Sandy and the rest of the previous Board for doing such an outstanding job of guiding our Chapter during its initial two years. We are fortunate to have a very active, engaged, and growing membership, which I am sure is due largely to their leadership. Along with the current Board, I will be trying very hard to maintain the vigor and enthusiasm of the Chapter in the coming months.

You should have received a questionnaire I sent to everyone earlier this month. If you did not receive one, please let me know. If you have not responded, please do so ASAP. The Board is reviewing our Chapter's monthly meeting time, place, and content and we want your views and ideas to be included. This is your chance to suggest changes to our monthly meetings more to your liking.

Just so everyone knows who the new Board members are and what their duties are, so you can contact the appropriate person anytime with your questions or comments, here is the list of Board members. If in doubt as to which is the most appropriate person, just contact me.

- Sharon Corley, VP/Programs, 830 669 2146, scorley@hctc.net
- Kathryn Harrison, Secretary, 830 990 2203, kanaha@aol.com
- Ronald Hood, Director of Volunteer Projects, 830 562 3437, ronaldhood@hctc.net
- Wanda Mattarocci, 2004 Class Representative, 830 238 4564, wanda@hctc.net
- Phyllis Muska, Director of Communications, 830 864 5747, pmuska@omniglobal.net
- Sandy Pena, Past President, 830 634 2545, sandy@penasco.net
- Bob Richie, Treasurer, 830 257 8939, brichie@ktc.com
- Jim Stanley, President, 830 257 2094, jstmn@ktc.com
- Priscilla Stanley, Director of Membership, 830 257 2094, jpbstan@ktc.com
- Betty Thomas, Director of Advanced Training, 830 796 4279, bettyneil@78063.com
- Nancy Vaughan, Director of Class Training, 830 257 3723, nvaughan@ktc.com

Also, Roy Walston, Kerr County Extension Agent, and Amy Sugeno of Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Old Tunnel Wildlife Area, have agreed to be our advisors for the coming year.

Riverside Nature Center (RNC) is working on a plan to establish a closer working relationship with several other groups, including our MN chapter. You will be hearing more about this in the future, but I would like to remind everyone that RNC, along with other parks and nature centers, provides us with much needed help by way of meeting facilities, nature trails, arboreta, prairies, and other "native areas" that are invaluable to us. We owe all of these places our support and our time.

Winter Garden Reflections by Julia Campbell

There is a beauty in the winter garden even as leaves fall and colors fade. The structure of the garden becomes more evident. Tree trunks and limbs form garden sculpture. Garden design becomes more obvious. The roughleaf dogwood (*Cornus drummondii*) makes a wonderful backdrop shrub against the rear fence. Even in December, the American beautyberry (*Callicarpa americana*) is lush with purple berries - perhaps because we've had so much rain this year. And if you don't have a possumhaw holly (*Ilex decidua*),

please get one! It will bring joy to your heart with beautiful red berries to brighten the scene all winter long. The mockingbird finds these berries delicious and worth defending vigorously - really fun to observe.

Off to the side of the garden, Indian grass and little bluestem are a lovely rusty-red hue with fluffy seed heads waving in the breeze, and sand lovegrass is a pretty grass blooming a little closer to the ground. In shady areas, cedar sedge is a low-growing, evergreen clump grass.

Plants that stay green and therefore provide interest at this time of year are the yaupon holly (*Ilex vomitoria*), a small evergreen tree which has red berries (a favorite of the cedar waxwings), Texas mountain laurel (*Sophora secundiflora*), evergreen sumac (*Rhus virens*), rosemary, and Mexican silktassel. At the front of the garden, smaller plants - columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), various penstemon, skeleton-leaf goldeneye (*Viguiera stenoloba*), and big red sage - are evergreen. The vines, such as coral honeysuckle (*Lonicera sempervirens*) and crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*), also keep their color. Cenizo (*Leucophyllum frutescens*) is a lovely grey/green shrub that combines well with cactus, cholla, agave and yucca, all of which do their bit to provide variety of shape and structure as well as being evergreen

Even now with our winter coats on and fires in the fireplace, bluebonnets (*Lupinus texensis*), pink evening primrose (*Oenothera speciosa*), winecups, Engelmann daisy (*Engelmannia pinnatifida*), huisache daisy and Indian blanket (*Gallardia pulchella*) are wildflowers in leaf, ready to burst into bloom as spring approaches just around the corner.

Joy is a garden!

Julia Campbell completed the first Master Naturalist course given in the Hill Country area in 2002, and has been certified in 2003 and 2004. She is currently program chair and publicity chair for the Kerrville chapter of the Native Plant Society, as well as chair of a land stewardship panel for a local ranch development. She is a member of the Buildings and Landscape committee of the Riverside Nature Center and is an active volunteer there. In addition, she has chaired the Gleaners' group for several years.

Got Cedar Fever?

This homeopathic remedy gradually builds up your immunity to the pollen of Ashe Juniper and should help relieve symptoms:

Gather, clean and freeze some Ashe Juniper berries - two cups will yield enough tea for approximately two months' relief.

Make two weeks' worth of tea at a time: Place 1/2 cup of berries in a saucepan with 1 1/2 cups of water. Bring to a boil, then remove from the stove, cover and let cool. Transfer tea and berries into a jar and place in the refrigerator.

Each morning take 1 teaspoon of the tea, and your reactions to Ashe Juniper should be reduced for this

season. After doing this annually for a few years, you should eventually become immune.

Warning: Consult your physician before trying this homeopathic remedy, as some folks are highly allergic to Ashe Juniper.

Master Naturalist Milestones/Acknowledgments/Kudos

Our chapter held its annual pot luck dinner on Friday, December 3rd in Bandera. This event offered a great opportunity to celebrate all that we as a chapter have accomplished over the past year with our learning about the natural world around us, the service we have provided to our communities, and the graduation of our Class of 2004. We had a great turnout, and it was a wonderful time for socializing with members and their spouses or guests. Food was delicious and plentiful, and Lee Haile and his family regaled us all with their accomplished story telling.

In December, Ed Gage, Ron Hood and Marilyn Murrman achieved first certification. Ann Creel, Kathryn Harrison, Karen Johnson, Michael Johnson, John Rogers, Betty Thomas, George Tinsley, Kim Whitaker and Kay White were recertified. For the year 2004, our Chapter had twelve certifications and 23 recertifications, so 74% of our members were Certified Texas Master Naturalists in 2004. Quite an achievement! And our chapter had eight bronze milestones and one silver milestone for the year.

Kathryn Harrison has been named to a three-year term on the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) citizen advisory panel for the Pedernales River. Panelists help identify problems near and along the rivers and lakes, and serve as a sounding board for possible solutions. The LCRA board selects the panel members based on nominations submitted to LCRA and recommendations by the authority's staff. Dan Behringer is also a member of the Pedernales River Advisory Panel, now serving in the second year of his term.

REFRESHMENTS - Wanda Mattarocci is the new chair of the refreshment committee. Please help her out by signing up to bring refreshments to one of our 2005 meetings!

Calendar

January 19: Texas Master Naturalist - Hill Country Chapter - Board Meeting - 2:00pm at Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St, Kerrville. Chapter members may attend.

January 24: Texas Master Naturalist - Hill Country Chapter monthly meeting - 6:30pm at Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St, Kerrville - Images of Conservation presentation ([see above article](#))

January 25: Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter - 7:00pm, Gillespie County Historical Society building, 312 W San Antonio St, Fredericksburg - presentation on Microbial Life of Soil by Melinda Kneese of Oma's Haus & Garten

January 28: Birding walk, Old Tunnel Wildlife Management Area - 10:00am-noon, Old Tunnel WMA - contact Amy.Sugeno@tpwd.state.tx.us

January: Free entry to Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin - entire month of January!
www.wildflower.org

February 1: Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter - 2:00pm, Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos, Kerrville - presentation on Life Cycle and Habitat of Native Butterflies by Deborah Payne of Fredericksburg's Butterfly Farm

February 8: Hill Country Birding Group - 8:00am, Wheeler Ranch - contact Sally Johnston, hossj@ktc.com

February 8: Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center - 7:00pm, Gillespie County Ag Extension Office, 95 Frederick Rd, Fredericksburg - presentation on Texas horned lizard - contact Jane Crone, 830 669 2639

February 12: Comfort Public Library - 10:00am - A Naturalist's Historical View of the Hill Country - 830 995 2398

February 15 - March 3, Tuesday/Thursday 6-8:30pm - Kerr Arts and Cultural Center class on Painting Wildlife - 228 Earl Garrett, Kerrville - \$145 - call 830 895 2911 for details

February 25 - 27: Docent training for Old Tunnel Wildlife Management Area - to be held at Mason Mountain WMA - contact Amy.Sugeno@tpwd.state.tx.us

February 26: Native Plant Society of Texas/Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Joint Spring Symposium - topics to include grasses, sedges, ferns, cacti, and soils and organic techniques
www.wildflower.org

Please send newsletter contributions and comments to Phyllis Muska at pmuska@omniglobal.net.