



HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

THE TEXAS STAR

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SEPTEMBER PROGRAM

Our September program will be the *Guadalupe Bass Restoration Project* by **Dr. Gary P. Garrett**.

The Guadalupe bass (*Micropterus treculi*) occurs only in Central Texas, in streams draining the Edwards Plateau. Although relatively small for a black bass, it is a popular sport fish in these streams and was designated the State Fish of Texas in 1989. The Guadalupe bass is truly an indicator of environmental quality. When its environment is healthy, it will flourish. In some locations habitat loss has resulted in a troublesome decline in numbers of Guadalupe bass. However, the greatest threat is hybridization with smallmouth bass. For more than a decade Dr. Garrett has been working to rectify the problems and secure the future for this fish and the natural resources of Central Texas.

Since 1982, Dr. Garrett has worked as a Conservation Biologist in the Research Division of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, which is located at the Heart of the Hills Fisheries Science Center in Ingram. His research interests are centered on the conservation of natural resources in Texas and he has authored more than 60 scientific publications on the subject. He has served as the Chairman of the Desert Fishes Council, President of the Texas Organization for Endangered Species, President of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, Editor of the Proceedings of the Desert Fishes Council, Editor of the Proceedings of the Texas Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, and Associate Editor for the Southwestern Association of Naturalists. Dr. Garrett is a member of the US Fish and Wildlife Service's Rio Grande Fishes Recovery Team, the San Marcos and Comal Springs and Associated Aquatic Ecosystems Recovery Team, and the Rio Grande Silvery Minnow Recovery Team. He is also a Fellow of the Texas Academy of Science, a Research Fellow at the University of Texas, Visiting Professor at Texas A & M University, and Adjunct Professor at Texas State University. He is on the Board of Scientists of the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute.

This meeting will be held on **Monday, September 25** at 7:00pm at Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street in Kerrville. Social time begins at 6:30pm. For more information, contact Bob Richie at 830 257 8939.

We hope that you can join us.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY JIM STANLEY

We finally got some rain, the weather is cooler, and we just saw our first Monarch of the season this afternoon (September 8) – what's not to like about this time of year? One rainfall event, even if it is a few inches, is not enough to "break the drought", but there is hope that more rain will be coming. September is one of our wettest months, after May.

The Plant ID classes will be offered again this fall: October 11 for forbs with the Magees, October 25 for Trees and

November 1 for Grasses, the latter two with me. All three classes will be held at the Lions Camp beginning about 1:00pm (or slightly later if the new class runs late) and will last 2 to 3 hours. Even if you have attended one of these classes before, you can still get AT credit if you believe repeating the class was worthwhile.

Be sure to read the information about the upcoming Plant Sale on October 14. It's our only fundraiser for the year, a good volunteer opportunity (contact Priscilla at 830 257 2094), and your best chance to find the native plants you want.

The State Master Naturalist meeting is being held again at Mo Ranch, this year on October 20–22. You should have received an e-mail notice of how to get a copy of the agenda, AT events, and registration form from the State web site at <http://masternaturalist.tamu.edu/pdf/TMNAAnnMtgReg2006.pdf>. This is a good opportunity to attend a State meeting while it is in our back yard – it may not be in future years. There are lots of Advanced Training sessions and volunteer opportunities to choose from, and the web site has details.

The State TMN office has awarded each chapter a \$75 “scholarship” to aid any member who is in need of financial assistance in order to attend the State meeting. If you need such assistance, please call me at 830 257 2094 or e-mail me at jstmn@kctc.com by September 19.

DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE NATURE FESTIVAL, PLUS HUGE NATIVE TREE & PLANT SALE

This annual event, jointly sponsored by our Texas Master Naturalist Chapter and Riverside Nature Center, will be held on Saturday, October 14 from 8:00am to 3:00pm at Riverside Nature Center in Kerrville. Since this event is the annual fundraiser for our TMN Chapter, all volunteer work can be reported under **Project # HC-01-D**. Our Class of 2006 members will also be able to obtain volunteer hours at this event since it is after October 1. Admission is free, so invite your family, friends and neighbors.

The Nature Festival will include three educational presentations, including two by our Chapter members.

- 9:30am *Native Plants to Attract Butterflies* by Sandra Magee – TMN
- 11:00 am *Learn Your Hill Country Butterflies* by Thomas Collins – TMN
- 1:00 pm *Getting a Green Car: The New Ford Hybrid SUV* by Brady Huddleston – Ken Stoppel Ford

Our huge native tree and plant sale will offer a wide selection of plants that thrive in the Hill Country's challenging environment. We will offer native trees that grow into very large shade trees as well as trees with more moderate mature sizes. A variety of trees will be offered for both deep and shallow soils, and wet and dry locations. *Late October is the best time of the entire year to plant trees in our area.* Since our soil almost never freezes, the trees will be able to grow roots and be better established in the spring to face the rigors of Texas summers. Trees planted in the fall are more likely to be successful in the landscape. The large selection of perennial flowering plants, shrubs and vines offered will also benefit from fall planting, being ready to produce more blooms next year. Plant docents experienced in growing native plants will be available to assist in plant selection for any growing condition in your landscape.

The *Ask the Plant Experts* folks will be available for questions and plant identification from 8:00am to 3:00pm. (If you want to bring a plant for identification, please cut a piece with enough branches to show clusters of leaves and whether the branches are alternate or opposite, and enclose the entire specimen in plastic bag with a wet paper towel. Wilted or crispy specimens can pose an insurmountable identification challenge.)

We will have our TMN Chapter display near the plant sale with enthusiastic Chapter members telling the public about our program. We have invited the Master Gardeners to bring their display as well. Canoe rides on the Guadalupe River will be available from 9:00am to 2:00pm. Snacks and drinks will be available from 8:00am to 3:00pm.

Children's building activities, sponsored by Lowe's, will include *Build a Butterfly House* at 10:00am and *Build a Sailboat* at 1:00pm.

We will need lots of volunteers for this Nature Festival and Native Plant Sale. The opportunities include the pre-event setup, parking help, greeting table, TMN display table, plant sale cashiers, plant sale docents (must know about native plants), cashiers for drinks and snacks, helping with kids' building activities, helping the speakers set up, canoeing and event cleanup. Priscilla e-mailed the master volunteer sheet to our members so you can select a time slot and activity that you prefer and let her know.

Special Bonus: A *members only* pre-sale will be held for members of the sponsoring organizations (Riverside Nature Center and TMN – Hill Country Chapter, including our newest members, the Class of 2006) on Friday, October 13 from 5:00pm to 6:30pm.

If you have any questions, please contact Priscilla Stanley at jpbstan@kctc.com or 830 257 2094.

A PAGE FROM THE HERBARIUM

BY BETTY K. GARDNER

THIS MONTH'S PLANT:

Scientific Name – *Liatris mucronata*

Common Names: Cusp gayfeather, gay-feather; Blazing star, Narrow-leaf gayfeather

Bloom Period: July – October

Maintenance: Cut back liatris in late fall and harvest the seed

Gayfeather is one of our area's most beautiful fall blooming perennials. Its stiff, upright, unbranched stems, 1–4 feet tall, grow in wide-spreading clumps. The tufted, purple to pale lavender flowers are densely congested in a long spike on the upper part of the stem. The leaves are narrow and crowded, becoming progressively smaller upward.

Gayfeather is commercially available and makes a wonderful addition to a fall garden. It is a butterfly nectar plant requiring full sun, low water, and preferring gravelly, rocky limestone based soils. The deer *will* browse this plant, so plant in a protected area.



Enjoy a fall visit to the Butterfly Theater in Kerrville-Schreiner Park to see a magnificent display of this drought-resistant beauty.

Betty Gardner, a retired investment advisor, moved to Kerrville from Houston in 2004.

She is a Master Naturalist board member, a participant in the Land Management Assistance Program and Virtual Herbarium Project, and volunteers at the Butterfly Theater in Kerrville-Schreiner City Park.

The Texas Hill Country Virtual Herbarium is a project dedicated to creating a photographic database to be used for identification of plants native to the Texas Hill Country area.

*For more information, contact **Barbara Lowenthal**.*

TOUR OF NATIVE-SCAPED YARDS IN BOERNE

Inspiration for your yard and garden will be in full bloom during the Third Annual Tour of Yards on Saturday, September 30, from 9am–1pm. Sponsored by the Cibolo Nature Center (CNC) and Native Plant Society of Texas–Boerne Chapter, the tour offers alternatives to traditional “water-hungry” landscaping with a variety of informal and more formal yards using diverse plant material with something for every visitor to enjoy.

The free, self-guided tour will feature ten spectacular yards, each one selected for its unique mixture of design, plant combinations and expressed individuality. Visit the home of a professional landscaper. Explore the yard planted with natives to keep wildlife out of the garden, and one designed to attract and feed wildlife. Walk among a collection of native and near-native wildflowers, shrubs and trees planted in “planned chaos.” Muse along the stream and under the waterfall found on an old farm. Linger at the garden at the CNC’s Lende Learning Center, which features a collection of trees and shrubs that grow in the Upper Cibolo drainage basin.

Jan Wrede, education director for the Cibolo Nature Center, describes the tour as a showcase for landscape enhancement through hardscape and waterscape design. Master Naturalists and horticultural experts from the CNC, Texas Department of Transportation, Native Plant Society of Texas, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and Texas Cooperative Extension Service will be on hand at various yards to educate visitors and answer questions.

Maps for the Tour, which winds its way through Boerne, Fair Oaks Ranch and other nearby neighborhoods, will be available at the CNC on the morning of September 30. The CNC is located at 140 City Park Road in Boerne (one mile east of Boerne on Highway 46). For more information, please visit www.cibolo.org.

ON-LINE BIRD IDENTIFICATION COURSE OFFERED

Beginning in November, the Galveston Ornithological Society (GOS) will offer an online bird identification course to anyone interested. Created by GOS Executive Director **Jim Stevenson**, the course will consist of 100 lessons over 20 weeks, and each section will be in your in-box each weekday morning. Each lesson contains several paragraphs on bird ID, along with several of Jim’s pictures that will help show field marks. If interested, send tuition of \$100 (check payable to GOS) to GOS, Rt. 1 Box 185C, Galveston TX 77554. Be sure to include the e-mail address you wish the lessons to be sent to.

MASTER NATURALIST MILESTONES / ACKNOWLEDGMENTS / KUDOS

Barbara Noblin of our Class of 2005 has achieved Certification as a Texas Master Naturalist by completing 40 hours of volunteer service and eight hours of advanced training within a 15-month period. She will receive her certificate and her dragonfly pin at our September meeting. Barbara has worked on several projects including the Old Tunnel Wildlife Management Area (popularly known as the Bat Tunnel).

Cathy Downs of our Class of 2005 will receive her Bronze Milestone award recognizing 250 cumulative hours of volunteer service since she became a TMN last year. Cathy chairs our Curriculum Committee and our Class of 2006 members all know her as the manager of their training.

Our yearly re-certification requirements are based on a calendar year (after the 15 months allowed to members of the new class for their initial certification)

Milestone awards are based on the service a volunteer has contributed over their Master Naturalist career. Based on these data, our Hill Country Chapter members have contributed 19,305 hours to their communities since October 2002. Using the standard value of a volunteer hour of \$18.04, our members have provided \$348,256 worth of service to their communities. That is a whole lot of teaching about nature and the environment with both children and adults, supporting nature centers and native plant display areas, monitoring water quality and interpreting bats to the public that might not have been done without our Chapter members' contributions. Congratulations to all our 121 Hill Country Chapter members for so many jobs well done!

CALENDAR

Lots going on this time of year!

September 16: Wildscapes Gardening Workshop – 9:00am–3:00pm. Hosted by Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter. Presentations by **Kelly Bender**, **John Dromgoole**, **Elizabeth Drozda-Freeman**, and other gardening and wildscaping experts. Cost \$25 for NPSOT members, non-members \$30 (box lunch & drinks included). Gillespie County Historical Society Building, 312 W San Antonio Street, Fredericksburg.

September 20: Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter board meeting – 2:00pm at Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street, Kerrville. Chapter members may attend.

September 22–24: Renewable Energy Roundup and Green Living Fair – Marktplatz, Fredericksburg. Exhibits and presentations on solar, wind, water use and reuse, energy conservation, rainwater harvesting, green and sustainable building, organic growing, alternative transportation, straw bale construction. Gate entry fee \$8 for Friday or Sunday, \$10 for Saturday or \$16 for a 3-day pass (children under 12 free). Also: special screening of *Nobelity* at the Stagecoach Theater in Fredericksburg on Friday, Sept 22, at 8:00pm. Take a look at the world's most pressing problems through the eyes of nine Nobel Laureates. Filmed across the US, and in France, England, India, and Africa, *Nobelity* combines the insights of nine distinguished Nobelists with a first-person view of world problems and the children who are most challenged by them. Tickets \$10. For more information visit www.nobelity.org or www.theroundup.org.

September 23: Hill Country Archeological Association – 12:30pm, Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville. **Dr. Thomas Hester** will speak on *Maya Stone Tools: Production, Function and Exchange in Northern Belize*.

September 25: Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter monthly meeting – 7:00pm, Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos, Kerrville. **See above for details.**

September 26: Native Plant Society of Texas, Fredericksburg Chapter – 7:00pm, Gillespie County Historical Society Building, 312 W San Antonio Street, Fredericksburg. *Rainwater Harvesting for the Garden* by **Dick Peterson**, Environmental Program Coordinator for Austin Energy, Green Building Program and expert on landscaping, rainwater harvesting, and outdoor water conservation.

September 29–October 1: Water Congress – Trinity University, San Antonio. *Winning the Texas Water Wars* conference hosted by Sierra Club Water Privatization Task Force, Texas Fair Trade Coalition, Texas Water Alliance, and Trinity University. For more information or to register, contact Sheril Smith at 512 468 2131 or e-mail sherilsmith@ev1.net.

September 30: Riverside Nature Center Adult Learning for Living series – 10:00–11:00am,

Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street, Kerrville. **Sandra Magee**, President of the Native Plant Society of Texas, Bandera County Chapter, and member of our Master Naturalist chapter, will speak on 'Fall Wildflowers in the Hill Country.' Fee for non-members is \$3; members \$1.50. Call 830 257 4837 for additional information.

September 30: Annual Yard Tour – 9:00am–1:00pm, beginning at Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne. Sponsored by the Cibolo Nature Center and Native Plant Society of Texas–Boerne Chapter. **See above for details.**

October 3: Native Plant Society of Texas, Boerne Chapter – 7:00pm, Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne. **Dr. John Abbott**, Professor of Entomology at the University of Texas, will present a slide show talk with photographs of many beautiful species of dragonflies and damselflies of the Texas Hill Country.

October 3: Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter – Field trip to Medina for members only. Join NPSOT to participate in this field trip! Contact **Edna Platte** for more information, 830 257 2185.

October 6: Range & Habitat Seminar – 1:30–5pm, Kerr Wildlife Management Area. An ecosystems approach as it pertains to range and wildlife habitat management. Topics discussed will include white-tailed deer management, grazing management, prescribed burning and brush control. Reservations required – 830 238 4483.

October 7–8: Texas Parks and Wildlife EXPO – Texas Parks and Wildlife Department headquarters, Austin. Volunteer opportunities available for Texas Master Naturalist members who want to assist. The Hays County Master Naturalist chapter will give leadership to our Texas Master Naturalist exhibit and conduct several teaching activities during the two day event. Other volunteers are needed to assist various Parks and Wildlife Department officials with additional exhibits. For information about specific opportunities available, contact Sonny Arnold in the TMN state office at 979 458 1099. Select the *Experience Texas* link on the home page and then the link to EXPO.

October 9: Monarchs, Milkweed and More – 9:00am–noon, Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne. Training for Monarch Larval Monitoring Project (MLMP) in conjunction with Wildlife Field Research. Training covers monarch life cycle, milkweed ecology, and monarch migration and how to do MLMP. Call 830 249 4616 or send an e-mail to volunteer@cibolo.org for more information or to register.

October 10: Hill Country Birding Group – Meet at Mitchell Lake Entrance at 8:00am – Take IH 10 to San Antonio, then take Loop 410 West to the Moursund exit, then 0.7 miles south. Bring lunch and drinks.

October 10: Hill Country Archeological Association – 10:00am–3:00pm, Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville. *Rendezvous on the River* Archeology Celebration.

October 11: Forb Identification – 1:00pm–4:00pm, Lions Camp meeting room, Kerrville. Presentation by **Sandra** and **Scott Magee** on identification of Hill Country wildflowers. *Starting time may be slightly later if the classes run late.* **Advanced training credit available. See President's Message above.**

October 12: Basic Birding – noon–1:00pm, Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville. Presentation by **Jay Keen** on *How to Identify Birds*. Bring lunch – drinks and dessert are provided. Free for members, \$3 for nonmembers.

October 13–14: Hill Country Master Naturalist Plant Sale – Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville.

- Member Preview Sale – Friday, October 13, 5:00pm–6:30pm
- Public Sale – Saturday, October 14, 8:00am–3:00pm

See above for details.

October 13–15: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center Fall Plant Sale and Gardening Festival

- Member Preview Sale - Friday, October 13, 1:00pm to 7:00pm.

- Public Sale - Saturday and Sunday, October 14 and 15, 9:00am to 5:00pm

See www.wildflower.org for details.

October 14: MLMP@CNC Back Porch Review – 9:30am–11:30am, Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne.

Close-up and practical review of the egg to butterfly life cycle, how the project is done at CNC, and monitoring the monarch density at the CNC milkweed patch. Call 830 249 4616 or send an e-mail to volunteer@cibolo.org for more information or to register.

October 16–17: Plant ID and Ranch Management – 5:30pm–7:30pm, Fredericksburg High School, Room 235. Class sponsored by Fredericksburg ISD Continuing Education and taught by **Willard Dearing**. \$30.

October 19–22: Native Plant Society of Texas Annual Symposium – Workshops and field trips related to this year's theme of *Convergence and Diversity: Native Plants of South Central Texas*. San Antonio Marriott Northwest, 3233 NW Loop 410, San Antonio. See www.npsot.org, e-mail symposium@npsot.org, or call 830 997 9272 for more information.

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October 20–22: Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting – Mo Ranch, Hunt.

Early/Discounted Registration ends September 24. All Registration ends October 4.

Advanced Training topics for the weekend include:

- Texas Wildfire History and Preparedness
- Volunteer Work Just Got Easier!
- Leopold Education Project
- Rainwater Harvesting
- Entomology and Its Field Laboratory
- Invaders of Texas
- Science & Civics
- Texas' Wildlife Habitat Evaluation Program
- Planning and Running Effective Meetings
- Basic PowerPoint Skills for the Master Naturalist Communicator
- Tracking Mammals

Registration Packets will be available at the TMN State website: <http://masternaturalist.tamu.edu>. Volunteers to set up the Chapter display for the Friday evening social and pack it up at the end of the Sunday morning activities. If interested, contact Phyllis Muska at 830 864 5747 or pmuska@omniglobal.net. To volunteer to help with other activities at the meeting, contact Michelle Haggerty at 830 896 2500 or mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu.

October 24: Monarch Larval Monitoring Project – 9:00am–11:30am, Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne. 'How We Do It' program in preparation for Monarch Larval Monitoring Project (MLMP). Call 830 249 4616 for more information or to register.

October 25: Tree Identification – 1:00pm–4:00pm, Lions Camp meeting room, Kerrville. Presentation by **Jim Stanley**. *Starting time may be slightly later if the classes run late. AT credit available. See President's Message above*

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

