

THE TEXAS STAR

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T E X A S



HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

Chapter Website: <http://www.hillcountrymasternaturalist.org>

JULY PROGRAM

(This program was originally scheduled for March but was postponed due to inclement weather)

Carolyn Vogel, Executive Director of Texas Land Trust Council, will be the featured speaker for the July 23 meeting of Texas Master Naturalist-Hill Country Chapter. The program will be "Land and Water Trusts in Texas and the Texas Land Trust Council".

Although Texas still evokes the image of wide-open spaces, the reality is that 85 per cent of all Texans live in heavily populated urban areas. The state's population is estimated to double by 2050. Such rapid population growth is quickly encroaching on rural areas and fragmenting wildlife habitat.

Texans have repeatedly passed bond elections to acquire land for public protection, but 94 per cent of all land in Texas is privately owned. Land and water trusts can offer creative answers to the land conservation challenges faced by these owners. Texas Land Trust Council, which Ms. Vogel heads, is the service program

for 48 non-profit land and water trusts that collectively have protected over 1 million acres in Texas.

Ms. Vogel is part of a five-generation farming and ranching family in Gillespie County, where she still "fills in" when assistance is needed at Vogel Orchards. She began her career with Texas Parks and Wildlife working summers in state parks and graduated from Texas A&M with a degree in Parks and Recreation in 1976. She has held various positions in a number of communities in Texas including Asst. Superintendent at LBJ, Parks Regional director in LaPorte, and Chief of Operations for the State Parks in Austin. After 31 years with TP&W she retired to work with the Texas Land Trust Council.

In recognition for her work she received the State of Texas Unsung Heroes award from the Texas Public Employees association in 2005.

The meeting will be held at Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos Street in Kerrville, Monday, July 23 beginning at 7 pm.



FYI...

At its June 20 meeting, the HCMN Board of Directors reported the purchase of seven copies of *Water from Stone*, a biography of David Bamberger by Jeffrey Green. These books are being donated to the libraries in our four-county area: Fredericksburg, Kerrville, Harper, Medina, Comfort, Bandera, and Boerne.

HUMMINGBIRD FESTIVAL

The 11th Annual Davis Mountains Hummingbird and Nature Festival will take place in Fort Davis, TX August 8 – 11. Hosted by the Chihuahuan Desert Research Institute, the festival is timed to coincide with the presence of the greatest variety of hummingbird species. Participants will visit private homes, birding sanctuaries, and public natural areas on guided field trips. Registration is \$150/person (\$175 after July 20) and is limited to 100 people. Visit www.cdri.org for details and registration forms.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

When we bought our land in the Hill Country over ten years ago, I never dreamed that one day I would be a hunting advocate. We were feeding deer in the hopes that we'd hold them on our property, hoping to protect them from our neighbors' hunters. And -- true confessions -- we even had Austin's Wildlife Rescue release rehabilitated deer and other critters on our place.

We still love seeing deer around our place, but we know now that more isn't always merrier, and we recognize that the Hill Country has a serious overpopulation problem. To maintain a healthy population without stressing our native forbs and saplings, each deer should ideally have 8 to 10 acres to browse. But in some areas, there are as many as one animal to every 1 or 2 acres. With that many deer, competition for limited resources stresses the animals, particularly in dry years. Hunting offers a means of managing the population effectively for the benefit of plants, other animals, and the deer themselves.

The Texas Wildlife Association (TWA) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) have a special youth hunting program to encourage and educate young Texans in safe and productive hunting. Both rural and urban youth can take advantage of this program, which promotes safety and high ethical standards in hunting, and provides an opportunity for boys and girls to learn about wildlife habitat access, enhancement and management. These outings are held on private ranches and are safe and educational. Each youth hunter is accompanied by a parent or guardian, and additional family members are welcome to join the young hunters.



Volunteer huntmasters from TWA coordinate all the setup, meals and activities, but they are always looking for more landowners willing to host a group. We had a group of three teenage hunters camp out for a weekend last January and they took eight does and spikes, which has brought our white-tail population more in line with where it should be. We felt it was a very rewarding experience, and plan to do it again this winter. I would highly recommend the program, particularly to those of you who may not be hunters yourselves but would like to do your part to help manage our deer population.

The middle of July may seem a little early to be thinking about deer hunting, but participation in this very worthwhile program takes some planning ahead. If you are interested in providing a location for a youth hunt, or if you know a boy or girl who might benefit from participation in this program, now is the time to plan. Call the Texas Wildlife Association at 800 460 5494 or visit <http://www.tyhp.org> for more information.

AND SPEAKING OF HUNTING...

On July 16, this item appeared in an Austin American-Statesman report on the crowds lining the route of Lady Bird Johnson's last ride to the ranch:

People in Johnson City talked about Lady Bird Johnson's grace, her dedication to beautifying the United States and many of the other familiar memories of the former first lady. Some people also said she had a sharp and subtle sense of humor.

One story shared at Whittington's Jerky and General Store:



Mrs. Johnson grew a bed of pansies just outside her bedroom window. One morning, the flowers were eaten and the dirt dug up. Peeved, she found the gardener. She asked him what had happened. He said a deer was responsible.

"Have you got a gun?" she asked.

"Yes," he replied. "OK," she said, according to the story, "I'll drive; you shoot."

AWARDS, CERTIFICATIONS, AND MILESTONES...



5000 Hours (Diamond) – Kip Kiphart

1000 Hours (Gold) – Barbara Lowenthal

TMN Certification – Priscilla Bailey, Anne Cassidy, Jack Millikan, Charles Smith

2006 Recertification – Guy Harrison (apologies for missing this last month. Congratulations, Guy!)

2007 Recertification – Sharon Corley; Robert Keiser, Gene Smith

CONGRATULATIONS, JIM AND PRISCILLA!

Golden Eagle Landscaping has given our chapter \$400 in honor of Jim and Priscilla Stanley and their "tremendous help in the Progressive Farmer project in Fredericksburg."

This spring, Golden Eagle Landscaping asked for help from our chapter in identifying native plants on a special project they were working on in Fredericksburg. The project sponsor is *Progressive Farmer*, a national magazine doing a series on the "idea house" they built in the Texas Hill Country. As part of this project, they are restoring the native vegetation as landscaping in front of the home.

Golden Eagle was hired to plant about half an acre in native plants and help with a restoration trail. Native American Seed donated a special seed mix for the project. Jim and Priscilla Stanley from our chapter walked the front restoration area and generated a plant inventory, similar to what we would do on a Land Management Assistance Program visit. Dan Miller, a writer for *Progressive Farmer* and the manager of the project, indicated that he wanted to make a restoration trail through the front yard, provide informative signs, and monitor the trail throughout the project in a series of articles on how folks could have an attractive, low-care,

economical, natural landscape. The Stanleys returned in mid-June to identify interesting plants along the loop trail. They set around 40 flags with plant names, and provided a list of common and botanical names.

Dan offered to put a sidebar in the magazine about the TMN program, so Jim and Priscilla provided him with resources and details. Thanks, Jim and Priscilla, for all your efforts on this endeavor, and for the recognition you've brought our chapter!

The home is open for visitors through October, and they expect between 10,000 and 20,000 people to tour the home and grounds. For details on the Idea House, its location and visiting hours, see http://www.progressivefarmer.com/farmer/house/2007_house/takethetour.html



MEETINGS AND EVENTS

July 21 – 6:30 – 8:30 a.m. Boerne Birders will meet in the parking area near the Boerne Lake dam. Beginners and experienced birders are welcome at their monthly outings. Bring binoculars and a favorite bird book. For more information, call 830-230-5551, or 210-710-3981.



July 24 – 7:00 p.m. July meeting of Hill Country Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist (see page 1)

July 31 -- NPSOT of Fredericksburg meets at 7:00 p.m. at the Gillespie County Courthouse.

THANKS TO OUR TMN VOLUNTEERS AT EARTH DAY 2007

Our chapter's nature partner, Riverside Nature Center, held their annual Earth Day Celebration and Native Plant Sale with the help of many volunteers from our chapter. This nature festival focused on multiple aspects of water conservation with presentations and exhibits throughout the day. It also helped attendees learn about water-thrifty native plants and provided personal assistance to aid folks in selecting native plants that will thrive in their landscape.

Riverside Nature Center and the Earth Day 2007 Committee want to thank the following 35 TMNs for their contributions to the success of this nature event: Priscilla Bailey, Leanne Beauxbeanes, Marguerite Belec, Doug Bresler, Sharon Corley, Ginny de Wolf, Angelo Falzarano, Otis Fox, Dusty Gilliam, Guy Harrison, Lloyd Hemmert, John Huecksteadt, Gwynn Jackson, Cynthia Johnson, Barbara Lowenthal, Scott & Sandra Magee, Jack & Karen Millikan, Phyllis Muska, Barbara Noblin, Bill & Pat Perkison, Edna Platt, Courtney Qualtrough, Peggy Robinson, Chuck Smith, Jim & Priscilla Stanley, Maggie Tatum, Nancy Vaughan, Nina Wagner, Kay White and Walter & Jerri Workman.

Many of these members are also members of Riverside Nature Center and the Native Plant Society of Texas – Kerrville Chapter, the co-sponsors of this event, but we are proud to claim them as TMNs as well. All together, these wonderful volunteers provided over 160 hours of volunteer service. Many thanks to each of you!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Kerrville Schreiner Park (KR-01-A): the 4th Tuesday of every month, 8:30 AM-Noon

Come out once a month to help make a difference. The eco system of the entire Park is being challenged. We will be cutting down small cedar, caging small hardwood saplings, rebuilding hiking and biking trails, and improving the grounds around the Park Headquarters.



The Park has 8 loppers for our use. If you have your own favorite pair please bring them along with your gloves, water, hat, etc. Contact Jim Gardner to let him know if you will be able to volunteer, or if you have questions: jimg@mccollom.com; 830-896-1122 or 830-285-2129.

ADVANCED TRAINING

The HCMN Board of Directors has revised the chapter guideline regarding the pre-approval of advanced training. A member can now receive AT credit for attending a class as long as the class is approved prior to reporting the AT hours to the Database Manager.

The program "Springs of Texas" by Chad Norris at the HCMN May meeting has been approved for one hour of AT.



The June 2nd field trip to Spring Creek Springs has been approved for two hours of AT.

If you attended the Butterfly ID class by Tom Collins on Friday, July 13 at Cibolo Nature Center, prior to the NABA Butterfly count, it qualifies for one hour of AT.



VOLUNTEER PROJECT OF THE MONTH

RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER: MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Riverside Nature Center (RNC) is a non-profit organization in Kerrville. Its mission: *“To foster greater public awareness and appreciation of the Hill Country’s natural resources through education, information and example,”* aligns well with our TMN mission. Riverside has one of the largest collections of native plants, shrubs and trees in display gardens in the Hill Country. The grounds are bordered by both the Guadalupe River and Town Creek, which provide riparian habitat and trails rich in wildlife.

Gardening and Grounds Care (KR-02-D): The largest TMN project at Riverside involves caring for the gardens and grounds. This is an excellent opportunity to



work beside volunteers who are eager to share their knowledge of native plants with you. Many volunteers at RNC learned about Hill Country plants in this manner. Currently, volunteer groups work on

Tuesday and Thursday mornings, but once you are trained, you can come on your own if you wish. There are several different areas including care of the perennials, shrubs and trees in the gardens, such as the butterfly garden, the cactus and succulent gardens, the sensory garden and various native berms, as well as maintenance in the wild areas, including trails to and in the riparian area. Native seed collection for planting at RNC or selling to the public is also included in this project. Volunteers can come as often as they choose, and stay for however long they wish; it is not a weekly commitment (unless you want it to be).

always welcome. Educational displays for the Visitor Center and the several kiosks on the grounds are prepared by volunteers

Plant Coach for Habitat for Humanity Landscaping (KR-02-F): RNC runs a program for the Cailloux Foundation to provide attractive, mostly-native landscaping for some Habitat for Humanity homeowners in Kerrville. This project



involves working one-on-one with Habitat homeowners to show them the various plants growing at RNC and to describe how they grow so the homeowner can

select the landscape plants that they prefer. The Plant Coach writes a report to the landscaper, who designs and installs the landscape for the homeowner. This program is significantly enhancing the appearance of the homes and building a neighborhood spirit among the homeowners. Plant Coaches need to be familiar with Hill Country native plants and how to grow them.

If you have any interest in any of these worthy projects, please call Priscilla Stanley, the Project Coordinator, at 257-2094 for more information.



Adult or Youth Education, Visitor Assistance, or Developing Nature Displays (KR-02-A): RNC has lunchtime and other educational presentations for the public where

your talents could be put to good use. There are also various youth activities from day camps to school and scout outings where assistance is



FROM THE HERBARIUM



Giliastrum rigidulum (Benth.) Rydb.

Blue Gilia, Bluebowls

Polemoniaceae (Phlox Family)

A low, often tufted plant with violet-blue flowers borne singly or few in a loose cluster near dense, rigid, divided leaves. Plants will often wait until late afternoon to bloom.

The violet-blue flower with the bright yellow center is unique. The "eye" serves to guide insects to the nectar. Some plants may be sticky to the touch. Excellent in a wildflower garden and can be raised from seed or young transplants. The genus was named for Felipe Gil, an 18th century Spanish botanist.

Plant Characteristics

Duration: Perennial

Height : 3" to 12"

Bloom Information

Bloom Color: Blue

Bloom Time: Mar-July

Growing Conditions

Light Requirement: Sun

Conditions Comments: Small mounding plant with flowers resembling Persian Violet, but deeper blue. Likes caliche soil.

Betty K. Gardner

Please send newsletter contributions and comments to Donna Robinson at dsrassoc@ktc.com



Lindheimera texana: Texas Star

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