

# THE TEXAS STAR

OCTOBER 2008 VOL. 6 No 10

T E X A S



HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

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

## OCTOBER MEETING

Bill Armstrong, retired long-time Kerr Wildlife Management Area Manager and an expert in prescribed burns, will discuss "Prescribed Burning" at this month's meeting of the Texas Master Naturalist—Hill Country Chapter. Armstrong started with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) in 1968 as a biologist on the Matador Wildlife Management Area near Paducah, Texas, where he worked primarily with quail and turkey management. In 1973 he transferred to the Kerr Wildlife Management Area. There he worked with white-tailed deer, range and livestock grazing systems, prescribed fire, brush control, endangered species, and ecosystem management.

Armstrong retired from the TPWD in 2005, and since then has been on the Board of Directors of the Texas Section of the Wildlife Society and the Board of Directors of the Texas Section of

the Range Society. He is also currently on the TPWD White-tailed deer Advisory Committee. In addition, Armstrong has received several awards, including the W.R. Chapline Land Stewardship Award from the Range Society, Professional Conservationist of the Year Award from the Texas Outdoor Writers Association, Educator of the Year Award from the Texas Section of the Wildlife Society, the Career Achievement Award from Southeastern States Deer Study Group, and the Professional Man of the Year award from the Soil Conservation Service.

The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Monday October 27, at Riverside Nature Center. Guests are always welcome.



*"Fire is the best of servants; but what a master!"*

**-Thomas Carlyle, Past and Present, Book II, chapter 9**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It takes a lot of people to make an organization, even one as small as ours, run successfully. For some, such as those of us on the Board or on the New Class Committee, our efforts are fairly



obvious to all, but I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone on the Board for all of their work this year, and everyone involved with organizing and managing the New Class Training this year as well.

But there are many others who carry out all sorts of activities for our Chapter that go mainly unnoticed by most other MNs. For all of you who have taken upon yourselves the responsibility for the many varied projects in our 4-county area, for serving on any of the ad hoc committees, or for simply seeing something that needs doing and doing it, I thank you very much. Your efforts are what this organization is all about and without you we would have fallen apart long ago.

Just to illustrate the depth of our Chapter's volunteer efforts, let me share with you the list of those members who helped with the Plant Sale and related activities at Riverside on

October 4. It's an impressive list, and I thank everyone for making our only annual fund raiser a success. By your efforts we not only raised some money, but we also provided a community service

(over 650 native plants sold) and introduced ourselves to the community once again.

Thanks to: Arik Beal, Anne Cassidy, Bill & Janet Csanyi, Dennis Day, Ginny deWolf, Steve Dodge, Cathy Downs, Fane Downs, Sherry Egloff, Colleen Everson, Angelo Falzarano, Warren Ferguson, Otis Fox, Barbara Gaddis, Lloyd Hemmert, John Huecksteadt, Ellen Jackson, Marilyn Knight, Barbara Lowenthal, Scott Magee, Rob McCorkle, Diane McMahon, Martha Miesch, Ward Miller, Jack & Karen Millikan, Phyllis Muska, Barbara Noblin, Jean Parreira, Pat Perkison, Edna Platte, Bob Richie, Donna Snow Robinson, Peggy M. Robinson, Sharon Rodriguez, Deborah Sargent, Elizabeth Scalan, Linda Smith, Priscilla Stanley, Bob Tanner, Maggie Tatum, Gracie Waggener, Nina Wagner, Harriet Warren, Mary Frances Watson, Ronnie Wilson, and Walter Workman

Jim Stanley

### **THIS MONTH WE HONOR...**

Mary Morton – Certified Master Naturalist

Charlie Randal – Certified Master Naturalist

Dan Behringer - 2008 Recertification

Colleen Everson - 2008 Recertification

Lloyd Hemert - 2008 Recertification

Marilyn Knight - 2008 Recertification

Annie Rendon - 2008 Recertification

Gene Smith - 2008 Recertification

Sandy Freeman - Special Recertification

Barbara Gaddis - Special Recertification

Lee Kneupper - Special Recertification

Sharon Rodriguez - Special Recertification

Jack Millikan - Bronze Milestone

Annie Rendon - Bronze Milestone



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***“The conservationist’s most important task, if we are to save the earth, is to educate.”***

***Peter Scott***



## ADVANCED TRAINING CREDITS

**AT 08-106** Tom Collins' presentation on Hill Country Butterflies, given at Down by the Riverside on Saturday October 4, 2008, will qualify for HCMN Advanced Training.

## ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES



**Thursday, October 23 *Geology Short Course Part I: Limestone and Geologic History of Our Area* AT 08-095**

**9 am – 12 noon at Cibolo Nature Center**

Dr. Bill Ward, University of New Orleans, Emeritus Professor of Geology presents the vital basics: why we have so much limestone in the Edwards Plateau and how our rocks control topography, soils, vegetation, aquifers and the very culture of our

Texas Hill Country. Cost: CNC Members \$15/person and non-members \$20/person per session. Limited to 24. To register, call 249-4616.



**Friday, October 24 – Sunday, October 26 *Texas Master Naturalist Statewide Meeting, at MO Ranch.*** There are numerous opportunities for Advanced Training at this meeting. Chapter members wishing to report any training session, please use **AT 08-098**.



**Saturday, October 25 *Life in a Drop of River Water* AT 08-103**  
**10 – 11 am at Riverside Nature Center**

Dr. Kent Rylander will present a survey of the common microscopic organisms found in Texas rivers and lakes. He will demonstrate live algae, protozoa, and invertebrates by placing a drop of Guadalupe River water under a microscope that projects onto a screen. Dr. Rylander earned a doctorate in biology from Tulane University and taught at Texas Tech University for many years. He is the president of the Fredericksburg chapter of NPSOT.

RNC members - \$2.50, non-members - \$5.00.



**Thursday, October 30 *Geology Short Course Part II: Hydro-geology of the Trinity Aquifer* AT 08-097**

**9 am – noon at CNC auditorium and visit to Herff Falls Ranch**

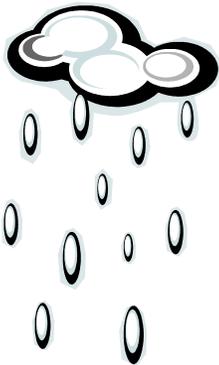
To sustain the quality and quantity of our water, we need to understand the special character of limestone aquifers. Building on the information in Part I, Dr. Ward will present the basic hydrogeology of Trinity Aquifer, the system that provides our ground water and interacts with surface water of Texas Hill Country springs and streams. This will be followed by a field trip to discuss the hydrogeologic system within the local

limestone at nearby Herff Falls Ranch. Cost: CNC Members \$15/person and non-members \$20/person per session. Limited to 24. To register, call 249-4616



**Thursday, November 6 *Geology Short Course Part III: Field Trip to Canyon Lake Gorge* AT 08-098  
9 am – 2 pm Carpool from CNC pavilion**

The great flood of July 2002 created Canyon Lake Gorge. With guidance from Dr. Bill Ward, this unique Glen Rose limestone outcrop provides insight into the mysterious character of our Aquifer and reveals a fascinating history of the early Cretaceous seas. Cost: CNC Members \$15/person and non-members \$20/person per session. Limited to 24. To register, call 830-249-4616 (preference given to those who attended classes on geology and hydrogeology).



**Saturday, November 8: *Harvesting Rain in a Drought*, AT 08-104**

**10 -11:30 am at Riverside Nature Center** (This is a repeat of the program given at Down By The Riverside.)

Phylis Muska and Dan Behringer installed a rainwater harvesting system when they were building their home near Harper in the middle of a drought. That was 1996, and their system has never dropped below a three-month supply. They have no well on their property, so their sole source of water is rainwater. Come hear their story and learn the basics of setting up your own rainwater collection system - no engineering background required! Open to the public. RNC Members - \$2.50, non-members - \$5.00.



THANKS to everyone who purchased a chapter shirt. The proceeds will go toward our chapter programs and projects. Gracie Waggener will have them at the chapter meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup>, and she is going to be placing another order soon after the meeting, so it's not too late!

## CHAPTER ELECTIONS COMING UP

At our next meeting, on November 24, we will be electing Board officers for 2009. The nominating committee (Phyllis Muska, Anne Cassidy, and Gracie Waggener) has proposed the following candidates:

President – John Huecksteadt  
VP – Jim Gardner  
Secretary – Gracie Waggener

Treasurer – Martha Miesch  
Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor.

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## ..AND MORE CHOICES... MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT!

As always in an election year, there are a lot of opinions and distorted truths being presented as facts. If you are confused by, or wary of, what you are reading and hearing, here are some **non-partisan** sources to look into:

**The Annenberg Political Fact Checker** – nonpartisan, nonprofit, “consumer advocate” for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics.  
<http://www.factcheck.org/>

**The Center for Media and Democracy** – nonprofit, nonpartisan, public interest organization investigates and exposes public relations spin and propaganda; promotes media literacy and citizen journalism. <http://www.prwatch.org/>

**SourceWatch** documents the PR and propaganda activities used to manage and manipulate public perception, opinion and policy. <http://www.sourcewatch.org>

**Black Box Voting** –nonprofit, nonpartisan organization seeking to ensure fair and accurate elections through citizen oversight. <http://www.blackboxvoting.org/>

**NewsTrust.net** - Online social network that aims to help people identify quality journalism.  
<http://newstrust.net/>

**Pew Research Center** – an independent public opinion survey research project that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. <http://people-press.org/>

**Project VoteSmart** “Picture this: thousands of citizens (conservative and liberal alike) working together, spending endless hours researching the backgrounds and records of thousands of political candidates and elected officials... Every election these volunteers test each candidate's willingness to provide citizens with their positions on the issues they will most likely face if elected through the Political Courage Test.” <http://www.votesmart.org/>

**Vote411.org**, sponsored by the League of Women Voters Education Fund provides nonpartisan information on every aspect of voting, from eligibility to polling places, and much more.

*And don't forget...*

**Snopes.com** – whenever you receive an email asking you to sign a petition, or to forward the message to “everyone in your address book,” or that presents claims about an issue that brings up doubts in your mind – before you hit the “send” key, start here. It may be an urban legend, an outright lie, or a partial truth. This site may be the best antidote to “inbox clutter” and the plague of “rampant misinformation.” <http://www.snopes.com/>



# FAQ

## about *Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter*

**Who Are We?** The Texas Master Naturalist – Hill Country Chapter is a group of trained volunteers who live in Bandera, Gillespie, Kendall and Kerr counties, who are dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities. Each volunteer has received more than 40 hours of training, and then completes another 40 hours of volunteer service and 8 hours of additional advanced training in order to become certified. To maintain certification, volunteers commit to an additional 40 hours of service and 8 hours of advanced training each year.

*There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot. ...Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild, and free. For us of the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and the chance to find a pasque-flower is a right as inalienable as free speech."*

*- Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac*

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