

The Texas Star

Newsletter of the
Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter

Julie Gibson



Lindheimeria texana
Texas Star

T E X A S



Hill Country Chapter

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August 2009
Volume 7, No. 8

AUGUST MEETING Class of 2009

Meet the Class of 2009.

We will welcome our new class members to the chapter with a reception beginning at 6:30 p.m. Class mentors will make individual introductions during our regular meeting.

The 35 folks of the new class have interesting and impressive



backgrounds. Don't miss this opportunity to visit with them and hear their stories about what inspired them to join us.

Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend the reception and meeting. Monday, August 24 at 7:00 pm at Riverside Nature Center in Kerrville.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE John Huecksteadt

Duke Ellington and the Hill Country

I was never a Duke Ellington fan when I was growing up. Nor was I particularly a jazz fan. One day though, on the Dave Garraway show, the Duke Ellington Jazz Trio played a song I shall never forget, not for the music, but for the title, "*Black, Brown, and Beige*." I thought, "How could anyone get inside my head and discover my favorite combination of colors, exactly?" The title still comes to mind every time I experience a striking combination of these three shades.

Driving through the Highland Lakes area on a recent trip to Georgetown, Texas, I was treated to every permutation and combination of the three colors nature could devise. Long, beige bluestems crowding around dark Blackjack oak trunks and brown slashes of soil and sand shimmering with dry wintergrass and KR bluestem besieged me on all sides as I drove along Highway 29. I was in mocha paradise.

But it struck me that no matter how much I tried to make everything black, brown, and beige, one thing insistently prevented me...the *greens*. Despite my best effort to concentrate on the browns, the amount of green in the landscape shouted not to be left out. No matter that the Hill Country is in the midst of what could be the drought of record, the vast majority of trees, shrubs, succulents, and you name it, blasted me with persistent and not-to-be-ignored greens. What a testimony to nature and, if I may say so, Darwin. What better argument could one make for planting native trees that have become inured to this dearth of moisture?

Now that we've had a little rain, we're all looking for the greens to creep back onto the ground, but I encourage you to appreciate the blacks, browns, and beiges. I have a feeling we're going to need plenty of practice enjoying these shades and their earthy combinations in the future.

THIS MONTH WE HONOR

<u>Milestones</u>	<u>2009 Re-Certification</u>	<u>Special First Year Re-Certification</u>	<u>First Year Certification</u>
<i>Brushed Silver</i> 500 hours	<i>Salamander</i>	<i>Salamander</i>	<i>Dragonfly</i>
Julie Clay	Ronald Hood	Sandy Leyendecker	Ruth McArthur
Diane McMahon	Barbara Lowenthal	Roger McRoberts	
<i>Bronze 250 hours</i>	Jack Millikan		
Gloria Costello	Gene Smith		
Marilyn Knight			
Charles Smith			

© kwd

Those who dwell, as scientists or laymen, among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life.

Rachel Carson

Do you know?

The Texas Master Naturalist program currently has trained 5,306 volunteers in 39 local chapters across the state.



Reserve your camp site today!
Chapter Camp Out

October 9, 10, 11 at Guadalupe River State Park

Check availability and make reservations for GRSP [here](#).

Be sure to ask for a spot in the Cedar Sage Loop camping area.

You can also make [e-mail reservations](#), [fax reservations](#) or call 512- 389-8900.

Email [Gracie Waggener](#) or [Cathy Downs](#) for information.

ADVANCED TRAINING Your chance to learn more



➤ Kerr Wildlife Management Area Seminars

Friday, September 4, **AT 09-084**; Friday, October 2, **AT 09-085**; 1p.m. – 5p.m., Free.
An ecosystems approach to range and wildlife habitat management. Topics include white-tailed deer and grazing management, prescribed burning, brush control and how management techniques effect threatened and endangered species.
To register contact Lisa Wolle at KWMA Headquarters, 830-238-4483.

➤ Fall Grasses Workshop **AT 09-077**

Saturday, September 12, 9-11a.m., CNC, members \$15/non-members \$20.
Presenter: Dr. Floyd Waller
Dr. Waller was trained by *The Grasses of Texas* author Frank W. Gould. Bring grasses and questions. Includes easy walk to learn about 20 fall grasses growing at CNC.
Limited to 20. Pre-registration required. Call 830-249-4616 OR e-mail nature@cibolo.org.

➤ Rainwater Harvest Workshop **AT 09-078**

Saturday, September 12, 9a.m.-noon, Cibolo Nature Center and visit to Kight installation, Members \$20/person or \$30/couple; non-members \$30/person or \$40/couple.
Presenter: John Kight, engineer and rainwater catchment system owner.
Get the latest technological information and practical advice.
Limited to 30. Pre-registration required, call 830-249-4616 or e-mail nature@cibolo.org.

➤ Nature Photography Workshop **AT 09-074**

Saturday, November 14, 9a.m.-6:15p.m., Riverside Nature Center and Block Creek Natural Area, RNC members \$135/non-members \$150.
Presenter: David K. Langford, professional photographer
Learn how to transform what you see in the camera lens into a personal artistic vision.
Space is limited. Registration required. www.riversidenaturecenter.org or 830-257-4837.

Fane Downs and
Alexis McRoberts
have chosen to
donate their tuition refunds to the chapter.



Thank you, Fane and Alexis!

Their contributions will help fund chapter activities. Contact [Martha Miesch](#), treasurer, to donate.

From Michelle Haggerty

Two resources for outdoor skills instruction.

These two to three minute how-to videos offer reality tips to consider when taking children outdoors:

REI: http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=9E1DA7D75E2E50ED

TPWD: Take Me Fishing
http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=1D456CAACE1AC47E&search_query=tpwd

FOUR COUNTY FACTS

BANDERA

Bandera County has two school districts: Bandera ISD and Medina ISD. Students attend one high school, two middle schools, and three elementary schools.

GILLESPIE

The county has three districts and ten campuses: Doss CSD, Fredericksburg ISD, Harper ISD, two high schools, three middle schools, and five elementary schools.

KENDALL

Two districts and thirteen campuses serve Kendall County's children: Boerne ISD, Comfort ISD, four high schools, three middle schools, and six elementary schools.

KERR

Kerr is home to five districts: Center Point ISD, Divide ISD, Hunt ISD, Ingram ISD, and Kerrville ISD. Students are enrolled in five high schools, five middle schools, and eight elementary schools.

A must read

Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District commissioned a four year study of Kerr County area aquifers. This study contains the most comprehensive information available. Read about the project and learn about Kerr County's groundwater resources.



Go to www.hgcd.org and click Hydrogeology of Kerr County 2008.

**Watch for new
Hill Country Chapter merchandise
coming soon!**



**TEXAS COMMISSION
ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

TCEQ has published a revised edition of

A Guide to Freshwater Ecology GI-034

A manual to familiarize individuals with the freshwater environment.

The 136-page document may be downloaded.
tceq.state.tx.us/files/gi-034.pdf 4510661.pdf

A single free print copy may be requested.
tceq.state.tx.us/comm_exec/forms_pubs/order.html.

Office of the Chapter President

Article III of the Chapter Operating Handbook delineates the responsibilities of all officers and directors of the chapter. Take a look at it when you have a minute. For convenience, here is an abbreviated version of the role of president:

- Serve as Chair of the Board of Directors
- Provide an agenda for Board meetings
- Preside over Board and Chapter meetings
- Appoint all Directors
- Be an ex-officio member of all committees
- Sign or co-sign appropriate Board-approved documents and checks
- Present a summary of accomplishments at the first general meeting of the year
- Review Chapter's completed annual report
- Vote when there is a tie
- Communicate with Board and Chapter members as needed
- Correspond with State Office, other chapters, or state agencies as appropriate
- Become Immediate Past President upon completion of term

Having such a list doesn't explain what it means to play a particular role on a day to day basis. For example, this list doesn't indicate how much time is or should be spent on the various responsibilities. It doesn't provide any insight into the influence the position exerts on the general direction and the look and feel of the chapter. It doesn't give you a sense of what strengths might lead to success in the role and therefore for the chapter. The following comments try to address these gaps.

Quantitatively, I spend most of my time between two activities as they relate to the position of president. Thank goodness, the vast majority of my volunteer hours is directed outward and not inward. That tells me the chapter is working well, just as a base reading. The first of those activities is preparing for and presiding at board meetings. It is the most time-consuming activity in the role of president. Providing an agenda for board meetings that addresses current and/or pressing issues, represents the membership fairly, and moves meaningfully forward without needless triviality can sometimes be a challenge. The president needs to make sound judgments on issues that can be handled outside board meetings, knowing the mind of the board, or by e-mail vote and consensus-gathering. Related activities take perhaps two to five hours each month, including the meeting itself.

The other activity and responsibility of the president that sometimes requires substantial time is listening to questions and issues presented to him or her, usually by telephone and of some urgency, about the appropriateness of some activity or policy. Sometimes, knowing the mind of the board, the issues can be dispatched quickly, dispassionately and, hopefully, rationally. Other issues and questions may require considerable reflection and entail gathering the thoughts of not only board members, but also the general membership. A few issues rise to formal board discussions and even votes. The main touchstone that I think the president needs to use is that of the welfare of the chapter and the concomitant furthering of its mission. The president, I think, can and should move the chapter forward very carefully with respect for chapter tradition and with an eye toward relevance and orthodoxy. Sound conservative? Probably is...probably should be.

As far as the strengths and traits a successful president should have, I believe a moment's reflection on the foregoing tells the story.

For the sake of those of you who haven't seen or noticed the chapter mission statement, it is, and should remain, the same as the state organization's mission: *To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.*

John Huecksteadt



*The
Fabulous
Reality
Show
by
Ruth McArthur*

Day 1: *I notice copious amounts of bird poop on the driver's side of my car. While in town I run it through the carwash.*

Day 2: Bird poop is back, plus more. Has the carwash gone downhill?

While standing at the kitchen sink in the afternoon, I see a male cardinal swoop down from the oak tree, swan dive onto the roof of my car, roll off and slide down the hood onto the ground. He flutters and then flies around to the mirror

where he spies "another" cardinal. He goes wild flying into the mirror. Again. Again. Head-butting the mirror with a bit too much vigor, he stuns himself and wallows in the dust. He flies to the mirror housing, poops on it, flies around to see if the "other" cardinal is still in the mirror. It is. Head-butting continues.

Day 3: *Have lunch with friends, then a carwash to get cardinal poop off the hood of my car. Return home to find cardinal in tree above my parking spot - he makes his first attack before I have my foot off the brakes. Repeats yesterday's bombing of hood, taunting, and pooping on the "other" cardinal.*

Day 4: Take the dogs walking in the fields across the creek. On our return walk along the creek, cardinal is waiting at the edge of the forest and follows us along the creek through the trees. We cross the creek, he perches in the oak, dive-bombs my hood, rolls down, falls under the car... off to the vegetable garden to plant some more lettuce, can't wait to see what he does.

Day 5: *Cardinal is on the fence singing his tiny heart out. His throat warbles as if it might burst. He swoops from the fence to my car. Please refer to above descriptions of bombing, swooping and pooping. I wonder why he can't go mate like a normal bird. My niece overhears me pondering this and thinks I'm talking about my husband. My best friend suggests that perhaps he can't mate until he destroys the "other" cardinal and perhaps I don't want his genes being passed on to other cardinals anyway.*

Day 6: Got to go out again. Scout the fence and tree for cardinal. He's nowhere to be seen. Turns out he is under the car (think twilight zone theme music). Due to numerous washings, the undercarriage gleams and the "other" cardinal is now clinging to it. Cardinal flies up to the undercarriage, stuns himself, falls into the dust, ad nauseum. How can a bird be that driven and not even crack his beak?

Day 7: *Assassin cardinal is perched on my fence, beady eyes trained on the side mirror of my car. Please refer to description one of attacking the mirror and description two of attacking the undercarriage.*

Day 8: Return home from meeting around 7:30 pm. The little fella is sitting on the fence by my parking spot. He dive-bombs my hood before I even have the key out of the ignition. Gonna have to consider a restraining order.

Day 9: *My husband thinks there is a deeper spiritual lesson in the little guy's behavior. Something about how we as human beings keep running ourselves into walls by not realizing things aren't what we think they are and that it's not what God intended for us. His buddy thinks the bird needs a 12-Step program.*

Day 10: I'm back in the veggie garden planting lettuce, escarole and edamame - cardinal spends his time attacking the undercarriage. Once I'm in the house he circles said house singing his tiny lungs out.

Day 11: *I'm on the patio sipping coffee. Cardinal's thumping against the front bumper is soft and soothing, regular as a heartbeat. How he can do this for hours on end without a headache or bent beak is beyond me. Meanwhile, other male cardinals are encroaching - one looks like he may be claiming the creek, another the horse lot, and yet another the far corner of the front field.*

At press time, cardinal continues to assault author's auto.

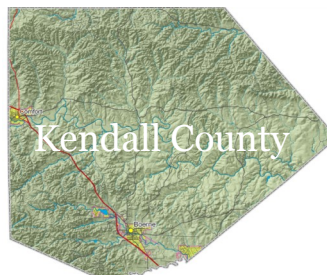
Announcing the Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter Class of 2009



Jerold Hjelmstad

Floyd Trefny

Karla Trefny



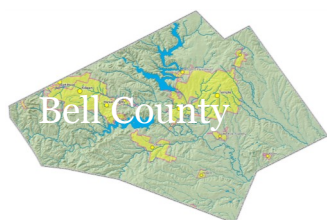
Joseph A. Bergmann

Robert L. Hansen

Reidun Hilleman

Paul Pedersen

Barbara Thomas



Mark C. Tresselt



Cynthia Louise McKaughan

Laura L. Baker

Cynthia Schwab Burgin

Koy Coffey

Valeska Danielak

Mike Kasberg

Marie Miller

Stephanie S. Perry

Jason A. Perry

Jennifer Pittl

Darrin Potter

Garry Speir

Floyd T. Walling

Sharon Walling



Yvonne Carlyle

Ken Dexter

Linda Ekenstam

Nita J. Hazle

Cathryn Heisler-Weikel

James D. Lindley, MD

Janet Lindley

Linda Louise Ross

Thomas E. Schall

Wayne Seifert

Michael Shindle

Robert M. Spencer



New Class Reception

August 24

6:30 pm

Riverside Nature Center



Attention project managers
and volunteers

If your project is in need of funds to enhance your project goals, please submit an application for funding to the Hill Country Chapter's Board of Directors in care of Treasurer, Martha Miesch.

Your application should include a cost estimate, materials or supplies needed, what you hope to accomplish, and why the project should be funded by a chapter contribution. The board may be able to fund your project in total or in part.

A measurement of the worthiness of your request will depend in large part on how it will serve to educate, preserve, conserve, and help others to appreciate our Hill Country eco-system.

The board meets the week before our monthly chapter meeting and would like to evaluate proposals for consideration in August and September.

Your application requests may be sent via e-mail to marthamiesch@msn.com

or surface mail to

Martha Miesch
345 Twin Springs Rd. N.
Kerrville, Tx 78028

Have you put off reporting your Advanced Training (AT) hours because it's too much trouble to keep track of the AT code for the event?

Did you know there is an easy way to look up the codes using the calendar feature on our web site?

Just go to grovesite.com/tmn/hcmn and select the *Calendar* option from the menu at the left.

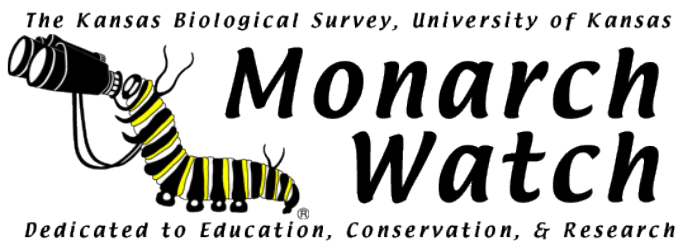
AT Director, Steve Dodge
enters each AT event by date along with
the reporting code.

You don't even need to log in to access this information!



Report Advance Training
and Volunteer hours to
hemmert@windstream.net
or

Lloyd Hemmert
2212 Aurora Drive
Kerrville, Tx 78028



STATUS OF THE MONARCH POPULATION

The number of migrating monarchs this fall should be similar to those observed in each of the last three years. The total area occupied by monarchs at the overwintering sites in Mexico should once again be close to five hectares.

The last two strong migrations occurred in 2005 and 2003. It appears that strong monarch migrations occur when the temperatures and rainfall are favorable during the breeding season, including the two periods of migration in the spring and early summer.

Temperatures were higher than normal during the March-April period but perhaps more important were the conditions during the period from late April through mid June.

Temperatures in May and June were below normal and Minnesota (one of the major production areas for monarchs) experienced below normal rainfall and moderate drought conditions.

Overall, the production of monarchs in the south appears to have been moderate, followed by conditions that limited the numbers and reproductive success of monarchs reaching the northern breeding areas.

If you have been tagging over the last three years, you should expect to see and be able to tag a reasonable number of monarchs this fall.

Stay tuned to our blog for updates as the season progresses: <http://monarchwatch.org/blog>.

<http://facebook.com/monarchwatch>

<http://twitter.com/monarchwatch>

From Tom Collins

Monarch Tagging

Last year I tagged 50 monarch butterflies on their way to Mexico. I could have tagged 100 butterflies or more, but when working alone, the tasks to locate, net, secure, tag, log, and release each individual take time.

I could use volunteers to help this year. I can quickly teach volunteers in the field to help me with all activities.

Last year I worked two sites: Brink's Crossing on the Guadalupe River above Center Point and Louise-Hayes City Park in Kerrville. I tagged most of the monarchs on October 14. Volunteers could expect peak migration somewhere in a 10 day period around mid-October.

The exact dates and times will depend upon weather conditions and real time observations from volunteers. The best time to tag occurs fairly late in the day when the monarchs start coming in to roost or very early in the day when they are still sitting on tree limbs. Occasionally monarchs can be caught during mid-day, but at that time their flights tend to be a little higher and more spread out.

Monarch tagging kits are purchased from Monarch Watch. Kits come in 25 tags (\$15) to 200 tags (\$50) or more. I will purchase a kit size based on the number of helpers.

If you wish to conduct you own tagging, visit to the following web site for information: <http://www.monarchwatch.org/index.html>.

Anyone who wants to be involved and can commit to help on short notice, please e-mail me at towhee@hctc.net.

Thanks,
Tom Collins

Tagged monarch
shown with
logged data.





Craig Hensley, Guadalupe River State Park (GRSP) Interpreter and bird bender extraordinaire with his blue bird of happiness - a male blue grosbeak. The blue grosbeak was banded in July during MAPS research. Craig's Bird In Hand programs are planned to begin again in winter at GRSP. The Bird In Hand programs are educational, enjoyable, and recommended for all ages. Watch the calendar for the first program date.



A beautiful blue bird with silvery bill and chestnut wingbars, the blue grosbeak is an uncommon bird of shrubby habitats across the southern United States.

The blue grosbeak was first described in 1758 by Carolus Linnaeus, Swedish botanist, physician, and zoologist.

Formerly placed in its own genus *Guiraca*. Similarities with buntings in genetics, behavior, molts, and plumages led to inclusion in the bunting genus *Passerina*.

It sometimes uses snakeskin as nesting material, which is thought to thwart predators.

A group of grosbeaks is collectively known as a "gross" of grosbeak.

www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/Blue_Grosbeak/id

Make Plans To Attend

Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting and Advanced Training

October 23-25th, 2009

Mo-Ranch Hunt, Texas

Registration information coming soon.

Contribute

Contribute to the silent auction. Items from individuals may be donated or chapters may sponsor a donation or solicit donations from local businesses.

Proceeds from the auction are used to fund project grants, conference scholarships, and secure quality speakers.

The Capital Area Chapter is sponsoring the auction. Please advise Jeri Porter at jeripster@gmail.com or Christine Powell at xtinepowell@verizon.net of contributions prior to Friday, October 23. Items will be accepted at arrival.

Volunteer Opportunities

at the State Meeting

October 23-25

Mo-Ranch

Hunt, Texas

- Unloading and setting up on Friday morning.
- Assisting with registration and check-in.
- Assisting with the Texas AgriLife Bookstore on site - helping sell and bag TMN items and other books.
- Assisting as training class hosts.
- Assisting instructors.
- Packing and loading on Sunday afternoon.
- Obtaining silent auction donations prior to the meeting and bringing donations to the meeting.
- Assisting with the silent auction set up on Friday.
- Helping at the Kerrville office. During the week prior to the meeting help Michelle Haggerty stuff registration welcome packets for attendees, put together nametags, etc. This task usually doesn't take long with three to four volunteers.

Contact Michelle Haggerty at mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu or call 830-896-2504.

Report volunteer hours with HC-02-A, Support of TMN activities at state level.

Get 'em while they last.

10th anniversary t-shirt.

Now \$10. [Order here](#)
from the AgriLife Bookstore.

Size codes:

s - MKT-3550A

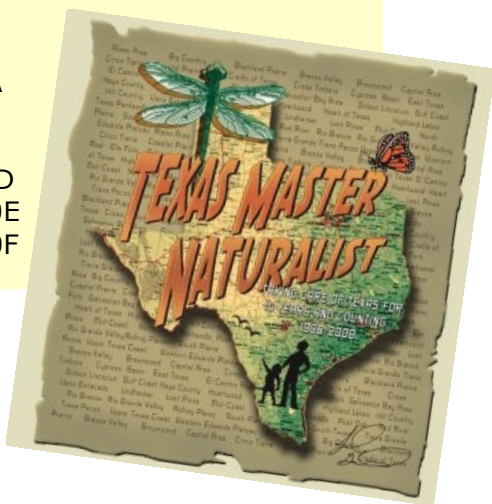
m - Sold Out

l - MKT-3550C

xl - MKT-3550D

2x - MKT-3550E

3x - MKT-3550F



Sign up for TMN ListServ

To join the TMN LISTSERV mailing list, send an email to

listserv@listserv.tamu.edu

with the following command as a single line in the body of the message:

subscribe tmn Firstname Lastname

Firstname Lastname is your actual name.





The Museum of Science, Boston has teamed up with researchers from Tufts University and Fitchburg State College to track the fate of these amazing insects. With volunteer help, Firefly Watch hopes to learn about the geographic distribution of fireflies and their activity during the summer season. Fireflies may be affected by human-made light and lawn pesticides the team hopes to also learn more about those effects.

About Firefly Watch:

<http://www.mos.org/fireflywatch/>

A Citizen Science Project

Firefly Watch combines an annual summer evening ritual with scientific research.

- Join a network of volunteers.
- Observe your own backyard.
- Track your progress online and interact with fellow Citizen Scientists.
- Help scientists map fireflies.
- Even if you don't see fireflies, your data is valuable.
- No specific scientific training required.

Participating in Firefly Watch requires just a fraction of your time. Sign up now for next season.



BLINKING BEETLES

Also known as lightning bugs, fireflies are neither bugs nor flies; they are actually beetles, which have two pairs of wings. The outer pair, called elytra, are hard and held outright during flight like the wings of an airplane. The softer inner pair beat to power and control the beetle's flight.

Riverside Nature Center Fauna Census
7/31/09

Harriet Warren and Cynthia Johnson

80 deg, overcast, no wind.

Birds

Turkey Vulture	1
White-winged Dove	6
Chimney Swift	3
Black-chinned Hummingbird	2
Golden-fronted Woodpecker	1
Great Crested Flycatcher	1
Red-eyed Vireo	2
Carolina Chickadee	4
Black-crested Titmouse	1
Carolina Wren	3
Northern Mockingbird	4
Northern Cardinal	2
Great-tailed Grackle	3

Butterflies	Dragonflies
Pipevine 5	Five-striped Leafwing 2
Orange Sulphur 1	Eastern Pondhawk 5
Lyide Sulphur 1	Swift Setwing 2
Sleepy Orange 1	
Reakard's Blue 3	Misc.
Gulf Frit. 2	Orb weaver spider 1
Queen 2	Green Enoli 2
Clouded Skp. 15	WT Deer 3
Dun Skp. 2	Cricket Frogs 24
Eufala Skp. 3	

Riverside Nature Center has a unique opportunity for individuals who understand and appreciate the Nature Center's leadership role in our four-county area and wish to help the Nature Center continue to succeed.

A generous benefactor has recently agreed to match all individual donations received by December 1, 2009.

In our current economy, it is difficult for non-profit organizations to meet the demands of general operations.
You can help.

If you wish to donate and help the Nature Center receive matching funds, please send your contribution to:

Riverside Nature Center
150 Francisco Lemos St
Kerrville, Tx 78028

10th Annual Renewable Energy Roundup and Green Living Fair

September 25- 27

Market Square in downtown Fredericksburg

The three-day event will showcase eco-friendly products and renewable energy solutions that help preserve the environment and reduce carbon output.

www.TheRoundup.org



www.texasento.net/Cicada.htm

From Tom Collins

"A blood-sucking bug - yes, really. Found this guy in my garage. Based on its pointed beak I searched BugGuide and found this information."

Classification

Kingdom Animalia (Animals)
Phylum Arthropoda (Arthropods)
Class Insecta (Insects)
Order Hemiptera (True Bugs, Cicadas, Hoppers, Aphids and Allies)

Suborder Heteroptera (True Bugs)

Family Reduviidae (Assassin Bugs)

Genus *Triatoma* (Bloodsucking Conenoses)

Other Common Names

Kissing Bugs, Big Bed Bugs

Numbers

Nearctica.com lists 11 species.

Size

Body length 16-21 mm

Identification

Medium-sized, boldly patterned in dark brown to black with reddish markings. Beak tapered, not curved, as in *Reduvius*, and bare (1) (2) (3). See Lent (1979) for key to species.

Range

Southern North America into neotropics. *T. sanguisuga* and *T. heidemanni* are eastern.

Habitat

Mammal nests, houses

Season

All year, but may be more frequently noticed in spring and fall when dispersing and coming to lights.

Food

Mammalian blood; also other insects?

Life Cycle

After a meal, female scatters many oval whitish eggs. Nymphs take up to 2-3 years to become an adult, passing through eight instars.

Remarks

Bite causes severe allergic reaction in many humans. Bite and defecation into bite can transmit Chagas disease, caused by *Trypanosoma cruzi*, a protozoan. The most notorious vector is *T. infestans*, found in South America. The North American species are not normally thought to transmit the disease, though they can carry the parasite. The North American species do not normally defecate at the site of the bite, which is what actually transmits the parasite. The CDC says, "Rare vectorborne cases of Chagas disease have been noted in the southern United States."

Bill Lindemann of Fredericksburg, "These bugs are called kissing bugs because they often bite people on the lips while sleeping. They are likely drawn to the moisture on the lips. They cause some disease risk and should be killed when found. They can be drawn to your house through pets - mostly dogs. We have found them in our house several times and once in our bedroom. Most of them were found in the garage. We don't have pets, but the bugs showed up just the same."

Sue Wiedenfeld of Comfort, "Saw an article that stated Chagas disease from Kissing Bugs seemed to be migrating north. Cases have been found north of the Rio Grande in the past two years. We have them in the house from time to time, as many as 10 per year. Squashed one last week in the bedroom, bad news."

Mitch Heindel of Utopia, "I accidentally stepped on a Reduviid, *Triatoma* sps. on my back porch. What a proboscis! I hear they key in on CO2 and that is why they bite lips and have the kissing bug name. I guess in some parts of the south camping in a tent is risky because of them."



Eastern Blood-sucking Conenose *Triatoma sanguisuga* 001

T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™



Hill Country Chapter



Lindheimeria texana: Texas Star

Board of Directors 2009

John Huecksteadt - President

Jim Gardner - Vice President

Gracie Waggener - Secretary

Martha Miesch - Treasurer

Steve Dodge - Director of Advanced Training

Bob McKinley - Director of Class Training

Phyllis Muska - Director of Communications

Julie Clay - Director of Membership

Priscilla Stanley - Director of Volunteer Service Projects

William Lummis - 2008 New Class Representative

Jim Stanley - Immediate Past President

Hill Country Texas Master Naturalist

P.O. Box 293972

Kerrville, TX 78029-3972

VISIT OUR WEBSITE!
grovesite.com/tmn/hcmn

We meet the fourth Monday of each month (excluding December) at 7:00pm
Riverside Nature Center
150 Francisco Lemos Street in Kerrville.
Our meetings are open to all.

Texas Master Naturalist mission:

To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.

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The Texas Star newsletter is a monthly publication of the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program.

News, comments, information, and ideas are always welcome.

Please contact *Kristie Denbow*, editor, denbow@gvtc.com.