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The Texas Star

Newsletter of the Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter

January
2010



Volume 8
No. 1

JANUARY MEETING...Windpower Transmission and Hill Country Natural Resources

The Texas Public Utility Commission has hired utilities to build a massive network of transmission lines to bring renewable wind energy from West Texas to large metropolitan areas around the state. Several of the proposed routes in the network are planned for the Hill Country. Our program will focus on the potential environmental impacts of this process.



Charlotte Kucera of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Dr. Karen Clary of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will each discuss their agencies' roles in the transmission line selection process, including state and federal environmental laws that apply and the environmental assessment process.

Join us at 7:00p.m., Monday, January 25 at the UGRA Lecture Hall, 125 Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Rare, Endangered,
and Threatened
in Bandera, Kendall,
Kerr, and Gillespie
counties.



Cascade Caverns
Salamander
Eurycea latitans
complex
Kendall County

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE John Huecksteadt

Cheep Thrills

The Chipping Sparrows started arriving at our place several weeks ago. By now they're coming in droves. It's not unusual, when walking through our blonde and auburn-grassed fields, to have dozens fly up and away to nearby cover. The fact that there are so many sparrows here, of so many new and different species, makes me grateful to the Master Naturalist program. If you do what they teach you, you can make a difference. The grasses are simply luxurious. The birds are humbling. As is so each late fall in the Hill Country, the Little bluestem continues its tradition of amazing us with its palette of rich rusts and warm red browns. I swear I could spend hours just drinking in those earthy hues, amazed at the changes every angled hour of sunlight brings. It's cheap thrills in the Hill Country. And none of the fun of Little



bluestem is lost on the sparrows. This morning, as the rains deepen the bluestems' hues almost to maroons, the Chippers, along with the Lark Sparrows and a few Vesper and Field Sparrows, have made our fields an amusement park. The game is Bluestem riding. There seem to be two approaches to "riding the Bluestem." The first game is to fly up high on the stem and ride the panicle to the ground, sometimes fast sometimes slow. The second, which I discovered just this morning, is to fly up and land slightly above the stem's center of stiffness. The bending stems provides a slope, no different than the banister on my parents' hall stairway, which the Chippers slide down to the ground, where they then hold the seed head fast with their feet. It's cheap thrills in the Hill Country, with avian funnel cakes to boot.

THIS MONTH WE HONOR

<u>Milestones</u>	<u>2009 Re-Certification</u>	<u>Special First Year 2009 Re-Certification</u>	<u>First Year Certification</u>
<i>Diamond 5,000 hours</i>	<i>Salamander</i>	<i>Salamander</i>	<i>Dragonfly</i>
Angelo Falzarano	Anne Cassidy	Bill Csanyi	Lou McKaughan
Priscilla Stanley	Gloria Costello	Cynthia Burgin	Cynthia Burgin
<i>Brushed Silver 500 hours</i>	Charlene Randal		
Howard Platte	Nina Wagner		
	Mary Frances Watson		
	Betty Gardner		
<i>Bronze 250 hours</i>	Marilyn Murrmann		
Bill Frodyma	Howard Platte		
Mary Frances Watson	Peggy Robinson		
Julie Gibson	Nancy Vaughan		

What worries you, masters you.

Haddon W. Robinson

Do you know?

Wind generated electricity does not require water and does not emit gases such as CO₂, NO_x, SO_x, and particulates. In Texas, fossil fuel power plants use 440 gallons of water per MWh of generation, about 100 billion gallons. In 2008, the 4,500 MW of wind generation already installed in Texas saved 5 billion gallons of water per year. The anticipated installation of 20,000 MW of wind power by 2015 would save an estimated 20 billion gallons of water per year.

www.windenergy.org

We thank the outgoing officers and directors for their dedicated service to the chapter.

Jim Gardner
Martha Miesch
Bob McKinley
Phyllis Muska
Julie Clay
William Lummis

The chapter welcomes the 2010 Officers and Directors

John Huecksteadt - President

Sandy Peña - Vice President

Gracie Waggener - Secretary

Cathy Downs - Treasurer

Steve Dodge - Director of Advanced Training

Tom Schall - Director of Class Training

Susan Longacre - Director of Communications

Koy Coffer - Director of Membership

Priscilla Stanley - Director of Volunteer Service Projects

Laura Baker - 2009 New Class Representative

Jim Stanley - Immediate Past President

ADVANCED TRAININGYour chance to learn more



- **Mussel Aches and Pains - Discovering a Hidden Treasure** AT 10-007
Tuesday, January 12, 11:30a.m., [Riverside Nature Center](#), adults \$6, \$3/members and children under 12
Presenter: Joseph Bergmann, Texas Master Naturalist, author, researcher
RNC's Brown Bag - An educational and entertaining program on landsnails and freshwater mussels. Bring your lunch and enjoy this unique program.
- **Feral Pigs in Texas – Where Have We Been & Where Are We Headed** AT 10-005
Tuesday, January 12, 7p.m., [Gillespie County Historical Society](#) Building, Free
Presenter: Mathew Reidy, Regulatory Wildlife Biologist with TPWD.
Learn about feral pigs and their impact on the environment.
- **Riparian Plants - The Key to Healthy Creeks and Rivers** AT 10-006
Tuesday, February 2, 2p.m., RNC, free (KC-NPSOT)
Presenter: Steve Nelle, Wildlife Biologist with Natural Resources Conservation Service in San Angelo
Kerrville Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas monthly program - presentation will describe the role of vegetation in maintaining or restoring a functional riparian area.
- **Management and Conservation of Native Texas Fish** AT 10-008
Tuesday, February 9, 11:30a.m., RNC, adults \$6, \$3/members and children under 12
Presenter: Dr. Gary Garrett, Director of the Watershed Policy and Management Program of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
RNC's Brown Bag - A fascinating program about native fish recovery and our disappearing Texas resources.
- **"Sustaining the Hill Country — Now and for Future Generations" Forum** AT 10-003
Saturday, February 27, 8 a.m., Fredericksburg Inn
Expert discussions about challenges facing the Hill Country due to explosive population growth.
To register, contact Helen Holdsworth at HHoldsworth@texas-wildlife.org or 800-TEX-WILD.

The newsletter's publication schedule does not allow mention of all advanced training and volunteer opportunities. Watch your email for AT and volunteer announcements and check the calendar and volunteer projects master list on the chapter's website at grovesite.com/tmn/hcmn.



The chapter congratulates

Angelo Falzarano and Priscilla Stanley

for contributing **5,000 volunteer service hours!**

We are grateful for their commitment to the chapter.

Our lives and experiences as Master Naturalists have been enriched by Angelo's and Priscilla's enthusiasm and dedication to service.

FOUR COUNTY FACTS

BANDERA

Temperatures range in January from an average low of 36° to an average high of 69° F, and in July from 69° to 95° F.

GILLESPIE

Temperatures range from an average high of 95° F in July to an average low of 36° in January.

KENDALL

The average minimum temperature is 35° F in January and the average high is 94° in July.

KERR

January's average minimum temperature is 32° F. July's average maximum temperature is 94° F.

The Membership Director role requires an attention to detail and a desire to help our membership in a variety of ways. It is a very busy job, with a lot of challenges but also with a lot of rewards, since one works and serves with a very exceptional group of individuals, in my opinion.

The Membership Director has dual responsibilities for both servicing our current membership (approximately 200+) and for recruiting new members into our annual training program.

Current membership responsibilities include the following:

- maintaining current contact information on our members to help ensure that they not only can stay in touch with each other, but that each member will receive up-to-the-minute information on meetings, projects, and training opportunities via our e-mail announcements;
- record-keeping and tracking of our members' Volunteer hours and Advanced Training hours under the diligent efforts of our Database Manager, Sandy Leyendecker;
- recording, ordering, and presenting member certifications and milestone awards on a monthly basis, which is one of the great pleasures of this position;
- tracking attendance of members and visitors at chapter meetings, while serving as "point person" for questions concerning membership, newsletter receipt, and LMAPs;
- daily responding to general inquiries and issues from our membership; and,
- compiling annual membership data for completion of the State Master Naturalist Annual Report.

Recruiting responsibilities include the following:

- working closely with the New Class Director and the Communications Director in preparation of our annual membership drive communication pieces for brochures and newspaper articles;
- coordinating and overseeing the recruitment application process, the candidate selection process, and the class notification process for the three to four month duration of the membership drive;
- serving as "point person" during the recruiting process, which means many conversations and emails with potential candidates, this is a great opportunity to get to know them; and,
- working with the New Class Committee in establishing a group of mentors (experienced HCMN members) for our new class members, who serve as the "friendly faces" helping to assimilate them into our association.

In closing, I want to say that I feel very honored to have served on the HCMN Board in this capacity and that I really enjoyed the opportunity to work with an outstanding group.

A look back at 2009 from Julie Clay, exiting Director of Membership

Be the first on your block to show your colors!



Our chapter now has a 24" w x 18" h metal gate sign available to members. The sign is made from .40 gauge aluminum with a baked enamel finish. It comes pre-drilled with holes in the four corners for easy attachment to yard stakes, a fence or gate. The 24"x18" sign sells for \$45.00.

A smaller sign, 16" w x 12" h, comes with holes punched at top and bottom center to attach to a stake. It is available for \$30.00.

To order, contact Gracie Waggener at gwaggener@flow-apps.com or download and print the order form from our web site: grovesite.com/tmn/hcmn, log in, then go to Member Area, HCMN Merchandise.

Deadline for orders is February 1, 2010.

from IRS.gov

CHARITABLE-RELATED MILEAGE

For 2009, the standard mileage rate for the cost of operating your car for charitable purposes remains 14 cents per mile.

Car expenses and use of the standard mileage rate are explained in chapter 4 of [Publication 463, Travel, Entertainment, Gift, and Car Expenses](#).

2010 Re-Certification Pin Announced!



The 2010 re-certification pin is the Wood Duck.

The pin certifies that a Master Naturalist volunteer has reached their annually required

40 hours of service and 8 hours of advanced training for the current calendar year. Once the calendar year is over the annual re-certification pin for that year retires.



Class of 2009
Commencement Day
18 November 2009



Announcing!

Mollusk Surveys, Studies, and Education

A new volunteer project

Joseph Bergmann, Class of 2009, is a recognized mollusk expert who has consulted for government agencies, universities, and nature organizations. He has developed this project to share his knowledge with us and the public.



Landsnails and freshwater mussels are significant members of one of the largest and most important groups of animals in the world. They are not only key bio-indicative organisms, but arguably the most threatened group of animals in the United States. Although not as popular as a baby rabbits, both groups are truly fascinating to study, and very important to humans and other wildlife.

This project will be rather broad, allowing several ways for us to utilize our talents, including field work, computer applications, teaching, administration, and research. Examples of tasks we might perform under this project include:

1. Conducting a census of all mollusks living in a given area (land and/or freshwater).
2. Building a study collection for viewing at a nature center, and/or erecting a trailside display with examples and/or pictures with scientific/common names.
3. Developing an identification key for the area population of shells.
4. Designing programs of mollusk education for all age groups - kindergarten through college.
5. Planning Power Point presentations for general audiences or advanced training on the topics of mollusks, landsnails and freshwater mussels.



Kendall County Parks has requested a gastropod and bivalve census of three park sites, Cibolo Nature Center has asked for a 3rd grade education course, a census, and display with a reference collection and identification keys, and a presentation to occur in May. Riverside Nature Center wants something similar.

Come on over to the wild side, and we'll learn about these critters, which are not only every bit as interesting as grasses, but faster, too!

If you are interested in participating or have any questions, please contact Joseph.

Project ID: CC-05-F

Project Coordinator: Joseph Bergmann, beehive@beecreek.net



© D.K. Langford

A great way to spend a Saturday! Hill Country Chapter Christmas Party 2009 in Center Point with John Karger and Last Chance Forever, The Bird of Prey Conservancy.



© D.K. Langford

A reminder ...
8 hours of Advanced Training
and 40 hours of Volunteer
Service are required each year
to recertify as a Texas Master
Naturalist. Members have
until the end of the year to
complete these hours.



The family of Garry Speir, Class of 2009, enjoying the bird blinds during a recent visit to Buffalo Lakes WMA.

New Project!



CoCoRaHS

Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow Network

CoCoRaHS is a grassroots volunteer network of backyard weather observers of all ages and backgrounds working together to measure and map precipitation (rain, hail and snow) in their local communities. By using low-cost measurement tools, stressing training and

education, and utilizing an interactive Website, our aim is to provide the highest quality data for natural resource, education and research applications. The only requirements to join are an enthusiasm for watching and reporting weather conditions and a desire to learn more about how weather can effect and impact our lives.

These data can be used by our local National Weather Service office, other agencies, and interested folks like you. The Hill Country is very prone to flash flooding. Immediate reports of heavy rainfall by many area observers enable more accurate predictions of where flash flooding will occur so that timely warnings can be issued.

Information on how to join and how to measure precipitation accurately can be found on the CoCoRaHS website, www.cocorahs.org.

Project ID: CC-13-A

Sponsor: NOAA/National Weather Service

Project Coordinator: Wilma Teague, wteague@stx.rr.com. Wilma has been gathering precipitation data daily for CoCoRaHS since September 1, 2008.



The chapter expresses its appreciation to Bob McKinley for his generous contribution.

Bob's donation directly benefits our chapter and helps us to achieve our mission.

If you would like to contribute to the chapter, please contact Cathy Downs, Treasurer
mzdowns@hctc.net

Volunteers Needed!

NEW PROJECT: TOWN CREEK NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION



This is an opportunity to gain experience in riparian restoration. The City of Kerrville is completing the installation of new water and sewer lines along Town Creek. Our chapter has been asked to participate in the selection and planting of native plants and grasses along the creek.

Help is needed in growing some of the plants, especially grasses. Although we will take the lead, we hope to partner with other groups, such as the Native Plant Society – Kerrville Chapter and the Tivy High School Horticulture Class.

We also need photographers to document the project's progress.

Contact Project Coordinator Jim Gardner at jimg@mccollom.com for more information. Project ID: KR-01-F

New Volunteer Project



Last Chance Forever is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the rehabilitation of sick, injured and orphaned birds of prey, scientific investigation, and the education of the public.

You can help!

Last Chance Forever is opening a new facility in Comfort.

Visit lastchanceforever.org to learn about the group's work and contact Cynthia to learn how you can become involved.

Project ID: KL-09-A

Project Coordinator: Cynthia Burgin,
cburgin@omniglobal.net





Don't forget.
Report your hours at the end of
each month. It's easy and quick.

Submit your Activity Report with your Advance Training and Volunteer hours to our database manager, Sandy Leyendecker, sandy325@windstream.net.

Activity reports (hours) received after the fifth of each month will be posted in the next month's cumulative membership reports for determining member awards.

The Activity Reporting Form may be downloaded, saved on your computer, filled in electronically, and e-mailed as an attachment to Sandy, our Database Manager. You will find the form on our website under "Members Only."

Advanced Training Codes are available on the website Calendar. Questions on AT Codes may be directed to Steve Dodge, Director of Advanced Training, at sadodge@ctesc.net.

The list of Approved Volunteer Projects and Codes is also found on our website under "Members Only." Questions on Volunteer Projects may be directed to Priscilla Stanley, at jpbstan@ktc.com.

The Hill Country Chapter website:
<http://grovesite.com/tmn/hcmn>



The Texas Bluebird Society is having a Bluebird Season Kickoff on January 30, 2010 at the Brazos Center in Bryan, Texas.

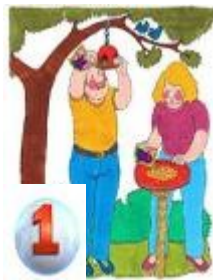
Eight speakers will talk about various topics such as, enticing bluebirds to one's land, helping bluebirds stay, photographing bluebirds, and more.

Visit www.texasbluebirdsociety.org or call Jim Anding, 979-776-8381 or 979-324-

Project FeederWatch

Embrace the winter. Count feeder birds for science!

www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/index.html



Put up a
feeder.



Count the
birds
that visit.



Join Project
FeederWatch.



To: All Master Naturalist Chapters

Regarding: Canyon Lake Gorge

The Gorge Preservation Society (GPS) would like to thank all Master Naturalists for volunteering your time in the Gorge for 2009!

The GPS Board of Directors is currently working on a new volunteer gorge maintenance program to start in spring of 2010.

All future tours and/or presentations regarding the Canyon Lake Gorge must be requested through the GPS office.

Group tours for Master Naturalists only, are discounted at \$5 each; others pay \$10 each.

Jaynellen Ladd, Natural Resource Specialist

Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority, Gorge Preservation Society

830-964-5424, www.canyongorge.org



LMAP Leaders Needed

Our LMAP volunteers visited a record 53 properties comprising a record 6,424 acres in 2009. Since the program began in late fall of 2004, we have visited 213 properties on a total of 17,424 acres. Each year we get more requests for LMAP visits than the previous year. Most of us who do these visits will tell you that we believe this is the most important activity our chapter does, with the exception of training a new class every year. I can tell you from my standpoint it is certainly the most rewarding.

We are fast approaching a point where the number of requests is greater than our LMAP Leaders can accommodate. We need more LMAP Leaders.

What does an LMAP Leader do?

The Leader contacts the landowner, discusses the property and the reasons for the request, gets directions, and schedules the visit. The Leader then forms the LMAP visit team with one to three other LMAP volunteers.

During the visit, the Leader asks the landowner to describe the property and the reason for the LMAP request and then leads the team and landowner on a tour of the property. Most plants seen will be identified and land management issues (grazing, deer, cedar, erosion, oak wilt, riparian areas, etc.) will be discussed. The Leader supplies the landowner with several pieces of literature, and later writes a report of the visit listing all plants seen and discussing whatever land management issues apply. Including travel time, this process will take a minimum of about four hours and an average of over five hours per visit.

What does the Leader get out of all of this? I can tell you what I get. I get the satisfaction of knowing that this particular property will likely be better managed and the habitat better protected/improved than would have been the case had we not visited. In virtually all cases you will get to meet very interested and interesting people who will be grateful for your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your time, and you will see that they value their property more because of your visit. You also get to see many interesting properties. It is hard to think of a volunteer activity that more directly meets our mission: "provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas."

What does it take to be an LMAP Leader? It takes the desire to learn as much as possible about land management and the flora and fauna of the Hill Country. More specifically, it requires the ability to identify most of the 100 most common plants, to be able to recognize the difference between healthy, at risk, and unhealthy landscapes, to determine the causes of any land management problems, and to be able to suggest possible, practical solutions tailored to the individual landowner. (Just to be clear, we have LMAP Leaders whose job is as I described it above, and also LMAP Volunteers, who go along on LMAP visits but are not necessarily expected to identify plants or discuss land management issues.)

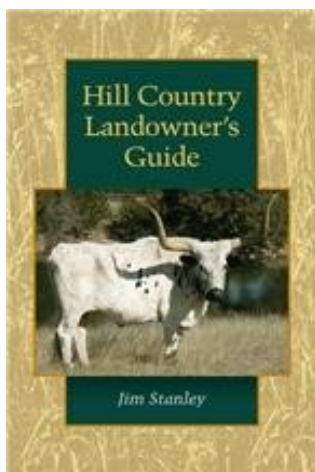
If this sounds like something you would like to learn how to do, I would like to talk to you. I and the other LMAP Leaders will be happy to work with anyone with a serious desire to learn these skills and a willingness to spend time doing it. Please give me a call and let's talk about it.

Jim Stanley
830-257-2094
jstmn@kctc.com



Reidun Hilleman and Ruth McArthur observe spiny aster.

Hill Country Landowner's Guide by Jim Stanley



Jim's book is a great reference for all – especially those who own acreage and those who visit other landowners' properties as part of our Land Management Assistance Program.

Jim takes us through a variety of challenges — from brush control, grazing, and overpopulation of deer to erosion, fire, and management of exotic animals and plants. The topics covered reflect Jim's personal experiences as a Hill Country landowner along with information gleaned from other experts in the area.

Jim's book is available on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and [TAMU Press](https://www.tamupress.com) (enter code 25A to receive a 25% discount.).

Jim will be happy to sign books at any of our meetings or get-togethers.

From Tom Collins



I netted and photographed this bug at Mo Ranch on October 24 while doing a fauna census .

I researched it on BugGuide and narrowed my choices down to two species. Apparently I was close as I got a reply after posting the photos that it was a *Tibicen tremulus*. It is a beautiful bug and its sound is much like a very angry rattlesnake to the point when I netted it, the sound it produced hurt my ear drums and made my eyes water from its intensity.

bugguide.net/node/view/346679#555035

This new species was recently split from *T. dorsatus*.



I submitted these images to BugGuide on a very unusual caterpillar I found below the dam in Louise Hays City Park. I believe it to be a Torsa sphinx, *Xylophanes tersa*.

bugguide.net/node/view/344285

Below is an image of the Torsa Sphinx in the adult moth form that was on my truck in the garage here in Center Point last year.



Have you visited our website?

Our chapter web site at grovesite.com/tmn/hcmn is accessible to the general public.

Why should members login?

When you login with your e-mail address, you are recognized as a 'member' and gain access to additional options and information. After you login, scroll down to see the menu options at the left side of the screen.

Member Area options include:

- A list of chapter members
- Board meeting notes
- Treasurer reports
- Advanced training codes
- Volunteer project guidelines and codes

We've created a new page with information on merchandise with the HCMN 'brand.' You can find our new chapter gate sign on this page!

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions concerning our web site, contact our webmaster, Phyllis Muska, pmuska@windstream.net, or Communications Director Susan Longacre, SusanLongacre@chevron.com.



© D.K. Langford

A well spent afternoon in the company of fellow Master Naturalists!

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*, 1949



© D.K. Langford

From Tom Collins

Riverside Nature Center Weekly Fauna Census, 12/18/09 – End of Year

A beautiful day with a cool start and some great birds.

The highlight was seeing a 1st winter Chestnut-sided Warbler. This will be a first ever record for the Edward Plateau if Mark Lockwood accepts the details. This is a new species for RNC as well.

Tony Gallucci gave me an important update on what I have been calling Eastern Fox Squirrel. The correct name is Edward Plateau Fox Squirrel - more information on the name change to come.

Cynthia Johnson, Linda Pillow, Harriet Warren, Tom Collins

1st winter Chestnut-sided warbler - Notes

We watched this bird in bright sunlight around 10:15 am for about two minutes and then lost it. It was working above our heads all the time from almost overhead to about a 30 degree angle and remained 30-50+ feet away from the four of us. The bird was a perky little guy with a tail that it cocked up while flitting around in the tree canopy. The small, thin bill eliminated any vireo. The cap, nape, and back were bright chartreuse. The face was gray with a slight eye ring. The throat, breast, flanks and under tail coverts were a clean whitish color. The tail spots were white. It had two prominent wing bars that looked white on gray wings.

Bill shape eliminated vireos.

Bright yellow-green cap and back eliminated kinglets, Verdin and most of the warblers. Tennessee, Orange-crowned, Pine, and Nashville would all be ruled out for breast color or streaks in breast.

The only warbler species with this bright of a cap and back, plus clear under parts and gray face with eye ring and two well defined wing bars is a 1st winter Chestnut-sided Warbler. No photos taken as it stayed too far away.

Lockwood shows no record of any winter Chestnut-sided Warbler, but I have to say that that's as close as I can come on this bird. I don't think I could have seen it any better and as an after thought, I consulted Kaufmann and not only did he mention the cocked tail, but called them 'perky', my exact words in the introduction.



Monarch Larval Monitoring Project



The Monarch Larval Monitoring Project is now a Cross-County (CC) project.

Members may participate in any of our four service counties. Currently we have active Monarch Larval Monitoring Projects at Cibolo Nature Center (CNC) and the Kerrville-Schreiner Park Butterfly Garden (KSP). Training is required. Contact a Project Coordinator for information.

This new project, created by request of the Project Coordinators, includes the projects at CNC and KSP, as well as members monitoring Monarch larva in other locations, such as parks, natural areas, on their land, or in their gardens.



New Project Name: Monarch Larval Monitoring

Project ID: CC-14-A (Monarch Larval Monitoring *sponsored by the University of Minnesota*)

Project Coordinators: Kip Kiphart, skipkip@gvtc.com and Ginny de Wolf, dewolf@kvc.com.

Bird banding at Honey Creek State Natural Area resumed last November.

The first day of banding was remarkable! 43 new birds were banded and four birds were re-netted that had been banded the previous winter (3) and summer (1).

The summer bird was a field sparrow that bred at Honey Creek and was captured during MAPS efforts. The other re-captures included a male orange-crowned warbler banded March 16, 2009; a male spotted towhee captured on March 1, 2009 (from the same net no less); and a vesper sparrow originally captured February 15, 2009.

Black-crested Titmouse -- 2
House Wren -- 1
Ruby-crowned Kinglet -- 1
Western Scrub Jay -- 1
Spotted Towhee -- 3
Northern Cardinal -- 1
Savannah Sparrow -- 4
Vesper Sparrow -- 2
Lark Sparrow -- 3
Lincoln's Sparrow -- 3
Field Sparrow -- 8
Chipping Sparrow -- 7
White-crowned Sparrow -- 4
Grasshopper Sparrow -- 2
Orange-crowned warbler -- 1
Two LeConte's sparrows were also seen.

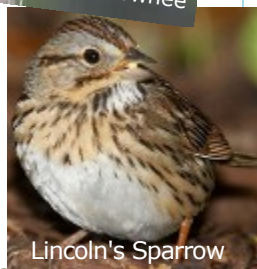
Members of several Master Naturalist Chapters participate in banding and getting to know them is part of the fun. It is amazing what can be learned from examining a tiny bird-in-hand. This activity is also the best way to appreciate all the 'little brown jobs' out there. Banding will continue on weekends in January. If you have experience in bird banding and would like to help, contact Craig Hensley, rcraig.hensley@gmail.com.



Orange-crowned warbler



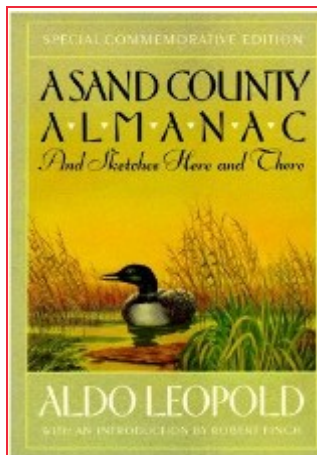
Spotted towhee



Lincoln's Sparrow



Ruby-crowned Kinglet



The Class of 2009 received copies of *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold during commencement ceremonies. The members of classes of 2006 through 2009 have each received copies of this influential natural history work. This tradition has been made possible by Sand County Foundation (SCF) of Madison, Wisconsin, which donated the books.

SCF Vice President, Kevin McAleese, and SCF board member, David K. Langford of Comfort, coordinated the book donation effort.

Our chapter, again, thanks Sand County Foundation for its generous support.

About SCF

Aldo Leopold's godson, Reed Coleman, formed Sand County Foundation in 1965 to protect the Leopold farm from encroaching lot development along the Wisconsin River.

Today, the role of SFC has expanded from caretaker of the 120 acre Leopold Memorial Reserve to advising the managers of hundreds of thousands of acres of land in several countries. The Foundation works with private landholders to improve the quality of their lands through science, ethics, and incentives.

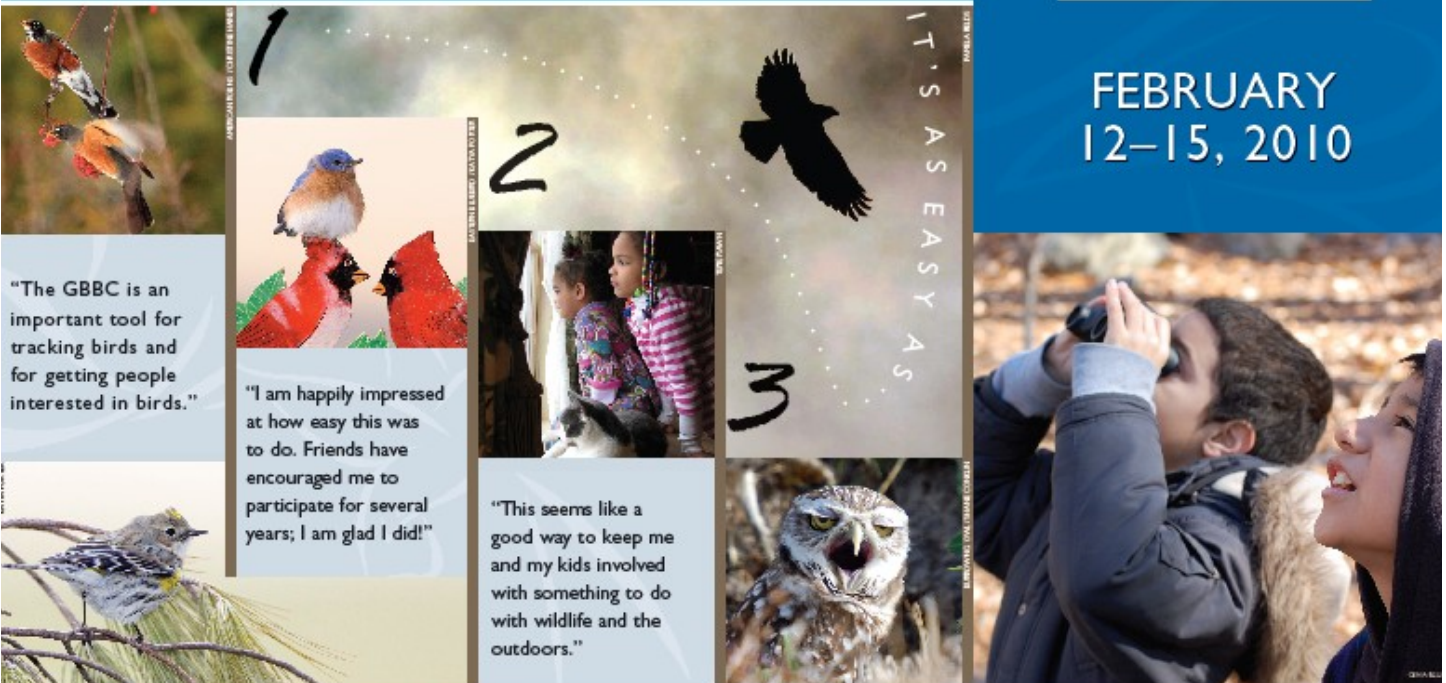
SCF partners with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to sponsor the Leopold Conservation Award as part of the Lone Star Land Stewards Awards Program. The Leopold Conservation Award is a competitive award that recognizes landowner achievement in voluntary conservation. In 2009, Sand County Foundation will present Leopold Conservation Awards in Nebraska, Wyoming, Colorado, Texas, Utah and California.

www.sandcounty.net

COUNT FOR FUN! COUNT FOR THE FUTURE!

13TH ANNUAL
GREAT BACKYARD
BIRD COUNT

FEBRUARY
12-15, 2010



"The GBBC is an important tool for tracking birds and for getting people interested in birds."

"I am happily impressed at how easy this was to do. Friends have encouraged me to participate for several years; I am glad I did!"

"This seems like a good way to keep me and my kids involved with something to do with wildlife and the outdoors."

IT'S AS EASY AS 1 2 3

- Discover and help the birds in your community
- It's fun, family-friendly, and educational • Free and open to all ages and skill levels

www.birdcount.org

Great Backyard Bird Count with Boerne Birders and CNC

February 20 8 a.m.

Join a friendly group of birders who lead our participation in this annual national event. We will bird the 100-acre Nature Center property that includes marsh, prairie, woodland, and Cibolo Creek. Bring your binoculars and favorite bird book. For more information, call Jerry at 210-710-3981 or Delmar at 830-230-5551.

www.birdsource.org/gbbc

GBBC is a joint project of



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Audubon

CNC Outdoor Classroom Guide Training and Organizational Meeting

February 10, 9a.m. to Noon

We need you! Please attend the spring Outdoor Classroom organizational meeting and see if you would like to become a Trail Guide with this award-winning program.

Help us lead children in fun-filled educational activities that teach about natural systems and the importance of conserving our natural resources.

No formal teaching experience necessary. If you love nature and enjoy happy children, this is the volunteer opportunity for you.

Breakfast provided. Contact Mary Gomillion: 830-249-4616 or education@cibolo.org.

Stay Connected with Master Naturalist News, Subscribe to TMN Listserv!

1. To join the TMN LISTSERV mailing list, send an email to listserv@tamu.edu.
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Sustaining the Hill Country — Now and for Future Generations Forum February 26 and 27 Fredericksburg

Central Texas is all about the Hill Country — rolling vistas, dramatic bluffs, seeps and springs, and diverse wildlife. But the character of the Hill Country is changing due to explosive growth.

On February 26 and 27, the Bexar Audubon Society, Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas, the Hill Country Alliance, the Texas Wildlife Association, and the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service will focus on this challenge at the 7th Farm and Range Forum, **"Sustaining the Hill Country — Now and for Future Generations."**

The Farm and Range Forum begins Friday evening with a tour and reception at Becker Vineyards in Fredericksburg and continues on Saturday at the Fredericksburg Inn and Suites.

Topics include the natural history of the Hill Country and an assessment of its current status, water resources, wildlife and habitat, brush management, nature tourism, managing the homestead, food production, and public policy incentives to promote good stewardship. Keynote speakers and panelists with diverse backgrounds offer a depth of experience. There will be opportunities for sharing of experiences and discussion.

Who should attend? Everyone interested in the future of the Hill Country.

The forum will help land owners, Hill Country residents, and urban and rural conservationists better understand the history and dynamics of the region, as well as the choices and events that are irrevocably shaping its future.

Human residents have flocked to this landscape at an amazing rate over the past several decades. More than 57,000 people are coming to live in the Hill Country every year. The 17 county region's current population of 3.1 million is projected to climb to at least 4.3 million by 2030.

To sustain what people love about the Hill Country requires a strategy including dedicated land stewardship, protection of natural resources, and incentives to help land owners conserve open spaces and make a living on the land. This is a challenge to urban dwellers, as well as rural communities, because their objectives and interests in conservation and sustainability are intertwined.

For registration information, contact Helen Holdsworth at HHoldsworth@texas-wildlife.org or 800-TEX-WILD (210-826-2904). Program details and registration materials may be found on the following websites: www.texas-wildlife.org, www.greenspacesalliance.org, and www.hillcountryalliance.org. AT code 10-003

T E X A S

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Hill Country Chapter

FIND MORE INFORMATION
ON OUR WEBSITE!
grovesite.com/tmn/hcmn

Board of Directors 2010

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Priscilla Stanley - Director of Volunteer Service Projects

Laura Baker - 2009 New Class Representative

Jim Stanley - Immediate Past President

We meet the fourth Monday of each month (excluding December) at 7:00pm at [Riverside Nature Center](#), 150 Francisco Lemos Street in Kerrville. We welcome and encourage visitors. Please join us.

Questions about our chapter?

Contact Koy Coffe
Membership Director
kcoffe@twa-mail.org
830-792-3070

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.



Lindheimera texana: Texas Star

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, denbow@gvtc.com.

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