The Texas Star

Newsletter of the Master Naturalist, Hill Country Chapter

TEXAS Master Naturalist℠ HILL COUNTRY CHAPTER

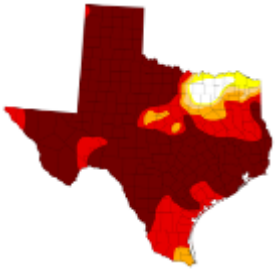
Rare, Endangered, and Threatened in the four counties.

Guadalupe darter
Percina apristis

Kendall County

In search of...
Page 5.

July 2011



Volume 9
No. 7

JULY MEETING ... INVASIVE SPECIES IMPACTS ON TEXAS WATER

Exotic and invasive plants and animals significantly impact the quality and quantity of Texas water. **Dr. Tom Arsuffi**, a leading authority on the science of invasives in aquatic ecosystems, will discuss his research and the immediate and future implications for Texas.

Ecological impacts show dramatic changes in aquatic communities, increased threats to biodiversity, and altered ecological structure and function. Water losses due to invasives cost Texas hundreds of thousands of acre feet of water per year and millions of dollars in economic consequences. Biologists regard plant and animal invasion as a major threat to biological diversity worldwide.

Successfully managing invasive species in our aquatic ecosystems will require innovative, proactive research combined with awareness and education along with focused public policy.

Join us Monday, July 25 at 7:00 p.m. in the UGRA Lecture Hall.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ... Phyllis Muska

How to Spend Your Summer Vacation, part 2

No big surprise – it's still summer, it's still hot and dry, and there's no reason to check the weather forecast until September. So if you're looking for something productive to do without leaving the comfort of air conditioning, try downloading some nature-related apps, or check out some web sites related to nature. Here are some of my favorites:

- http://audubonguides.com is an on-line field guide to birds, butterflies, insects, trees, wildflowers, and other fauna and flora. You can get information on over 5500 North American species, with photographs and audio recordings to help you identify that mystery bird or bug. There is also a Texas version available for use on your mobile device, so that you can access the app even when you're not on-line. Sure beats lugging around a bunch of books on your hike or LMAP visit!
- http://www.tpwmagazine.com/ provides articles and photos from current and back issues of *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine.
- http://wildflower.org is the web site of the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin. You'll find tips on landscaping with natives, help with identification, and information on Wildflower Center events.
- http://texasinvasives.org is the system designed by the Wildflower Center to document invasive species – primarily exotic plants. The

THIS MONTH WE HONOR

Milestones

Gold 1,000 Hours

Sandra Magee

Brushed Silver 500 hours

Karla Trefny

2011 Re-Certification

Horned Lizard

Bill Csanyi

Warren Ferguson

Alexis McRoberts

Garry Speir

Special First Year Re-Certification

Horned Lizard

Robert Howell

First Year Certification

Dragonfly

Donna Howell

People tend to not be concerned about these species until they show up in their own backyard. They need to take this issue seriously today. Prevention is a lot easier and cheaper than any attempts at control.

Jason Goeckler

Do you know?

Most aquatic pests reach North America when oceangoing ships release ballast water from their hulls upon arrival in the Great Lakes or coastal ports. The foreign organisms then move from state to state, clinging to boats and wading boots, traveling in bait bucket water, and spreading via the aquarium and gardening trades.

President's message continued.

database makes it easy to identify invasive plants, and includes information on management. There is also information on exotic animals, insects, and pathogens.

- http://blog.nature.org/ is a nature blog from The Nature Conservancy. There are 25+ regular contributors writing on various topics, from coral reefs to climate change.
- StarWalk is an app for your mobile device, which you point to the skies to identify and learn more about the planets, stars, constellations, and all the satellites moving around up there.
- The Leafsnap app is the first in a series of electronic field guides being developed by Columbia University, the University of Maryland, and the Smithsonian Institution. This intriguing new concept in visual recognition software – based on the techniques used for face recognition – helps identify tree species from photographs that you take with your mobile device. This free mobile app compares your photograph of a leaf with the high-resolution images in its database, and then offers several suggestions as to what the tree might be. You can then look at other photos of the likely species' flowers, fruit, petiole, seeds, and bark to identify your tree. This free app currently includes only the trees of New York City and Washington, DC, but will soon grow to cover the trees of the entire continental United States. Let's hope they come up with a version for grass identification too!
- In the meantime, Texas AgriLife Extension is developing a new website to help with identifying our grasses and other range plants: http://essmextension.tamu.edu/plants/grasses/default.aspx and http://essmextension.tamu.edu/plantsdev/.

So, hope you can put some of these creative uses of technology to work – enjoy surfing through your summer, and let's hope for an early fall!

ADVANCED TRAINING

AT 11-074 L.A.N.D.S. TRAINING

August 1, 2, 3; Camp Allen; Navasota; campallen.org.
Texas Wildlife Association annual L.A.N.D.S. teacher/volunteer training.
Contact Koy Coffer, education program specialist, kcoffer@texas-wildlife.org or 830-792-3070.

AT 11-095 ECOSYSTEMS FOR RANGE AND WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT

Fridays, August 5, September 2, and October 7; 1-5P; Kerr Wildlife Management Area (KWMA), free
Kerr WMA offers public seminars at the first of each month beginning in August. Topics discussed include white-tailed deer management, grazing management, prescribed burning and brush control as well as how these management techniques effect threatened and endangered species.
Registration: required call Lisa Wolle at KWMA headquarters, 830-238-4483.

How to find AT codes on the chapter website

1. Paste or type the website address in the navigation bar. Chapter web address is **http://txmn.org/hillcountry/**.
2. On the homepage direct your mouse pointer to **Calendar.** The drop down menu will open. Move your pointer down to the Calendar topic, then click on **Calendar**. The monthly calendar will open in the same page.
3. Scan the monthly calendar for date blocks containing a **time followed by AT 11-### Title**. *Example: 7pm AT 11-094 Use of Organics.* AT 11=2011, next year it will read AT 12 for 2012.
4. Direct your pointer to the AT opportunity that interests you and click. An expanded description box will appear.
5. You may retrieve the AT code and complete title from the expanded description box. Click the blue X in the upper right corner to close the box and return to the monthly calendar.

SUMMARY OF 2010 STATE ANNUAL REPORT

The Texas Master Naturalist Annual report information from all chapters has been compiled. Key results of the statistics representing our program pillars of volunteer service, training, and advanced training data from all 42 chapters include:

TMN volunteers documented and reported 256,157 hours of service valued at $4.995 million.

742 new TMN volunteers were trained by 42 recognized chapters.

TMN volunteers obtained 37,980 hours of advanced training.

Newsletter Notes

Kindly email newsletter submissions to me by 5p.m. on the 8th of each month.

Many thanks to each and every contributor!

Kristie at **denbow@gvtc.com**

Join the Butterfly Count!
July 15 - Kerrville

Want to participate? All you need to do is email Tom Collins at **towhee@hctc.net**.

No butterfly experience is required.

We count butterflies in a predetermined 15 mile diameter circle.

A $3.00 fee covers the **North American Butterfly Association** costs to compile and publish count data.

Wear good shoes, a full-brimmed hat, and bring plenty of water and a lunch.

The recommended field guide is Kenn Kaufman's ***Butterflies of North America***. Close focus binoculars are useful, but not necessary.

Invasive Red-streaked Leafhopper

Dear Master Naturalists:

This invasive leafhopper (family Cicadellidae) is spreading across central Texas. It was found in Houston for the first time last month.

Over 15,000 (!) were found along the right-of-way of Loop 1604 on the west side of San Antonio during a three week survey in 2008.

Known Texas Counties: Bandera, Bexar, Harris, Hays, Kerr, Kleberg, and Travis.

Please let me know (or post photographs to BugGuide) if you find this hopper.

It frequently comes to lights.

bugguide.net/node/view/87190

Thanks,

Mike Quinn, Austin

Texas Entomology, texasento.net

Students were thrilled to learn about butterflies from Linda Ekenstam, Stacy Johnson, and Virginia Sawin during Third Grade Field Day at Lady Bird Johnson Park.

An invasive species is defined as a species that is non-native (or alien) to the ecosystem under consideration and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.

In Search of Butterflies - NABA Love Creek Count

Tuesday, June 28, 15 folks drove, hiked, climbed, and waded creeks enduring air temperatures up to 95 degrees for five hours in search of butterflies.

Without wildflowers to nurture the butterflies and an on-going record drought, it looked like we would fall flat on our field guides and nets. But with expert eyes searching, our 15 counters observed 22 species and 82 individuals. (We had 48 species and 325 individuals in 2010.)Despite the low number of species, the count was far better than expected.

Tom Collins

texas powdered-skipper
Bob Rasa

One new species was added to the count - Texas powdered-skipper – a possible new county record too.

desert checkered -skipper
Tom Collins

Teams 2 and 3

Thanks to all who helped. Special thanks to Rebecca for gaining access to the ranches and making cup cakes and cookies.

california sister
Bob Rasa

Photos: Bob Rasa - pbase.com/bobsnature/nabalovecreek2011&page=all
Tom Collins - picasaweb.google.com/pipilofuscus/LoveCreekPreserve?authuser=0&feat=directlink (First 11 photos are from the 2011 count)

Tom Collins and Rebecca Flack, Co-compilers

Cynthia Johnson, Tom Collins, Cathy Downs, and Rebecca Flack with Gracie Waggener behind the camera.

tropical checkered-skipper
Tom Collins

rawson's metalmark
Tom Collins

zoned-tailed hawk
Bob Rasa

comanche skimmer
Bob Rasa

Milestones and recertifications were many in May. Floyd Trefny contributed 500 hours, Bob McKinley, Karla Trefny, Jim Stanley achieved 5,000 hours and the diamond dragonfly; Glenn Randow, Susan Longacre earned 1,000 hours, Sandy Leyendecker, Myrna Langford, Bernadette DeShields, Martha Miesch, Linda Smith, and State Coordinator Michelle Hagerty. (Three days later Michelle added baby Grant to her family.)

Chapter Picnic at Cave Creek School

smartphone apps for naturalists

What's Invasive!

TX Snakes

Virtual Water

* * * * * * * * * * *

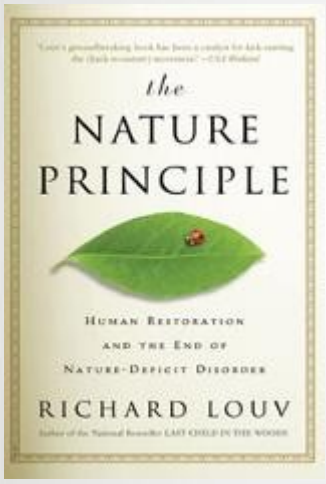
What's your favorite app?
Share it with us at denbow@gvtc.com.

HEY, WHAT IS THAT ?

Be first to discover what creature is in the image below and you will find yourself with the psychedelic dragonfly next month.
Try again next month.

Henry's elfin
Callophrys henrici

NATURE OF READING
BOOKS FOR NATURALISTS



The Nature Principle

Richard Louv

2011

The more you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.
Dr. Suess

Subscribe to the TMN Listserv

Send an email to listserv@tamu.edu.
No subject necessary. LISTSERV automatically uses the address from your email. A confirmation request will be received.

TMN listserv is one of the first-line portals of communication for the Texas Master Naturalist program. Over 800 members are enrolled.

From Tom Collins

Every now and then you get a lucky shot. I was working on the ranch and just happened to have my camera with me. I saw this crested caracara flying low and back and forth over the lower part of our place. I kept trying to get a shot, but the bird stayed just below tree line peeking out occasionally, but not long enough to get a shot. Suddenly it emerged in an opening and I took three rapid shots. This shot was just as the bird banked and disappeared. The hill in the background is called Saddle Mountain. The house on the right side of the hill is a little over 1.5 miles from our place, and on the exact same elevation.

Sponsorships Needed for TMN Annual Meeting

For the first time the state office is seeking sponsorships and support for the annual meeting. Your support would help us schedule top-rated speakers and trainers, and allow us to keep registration costs to a minimum.

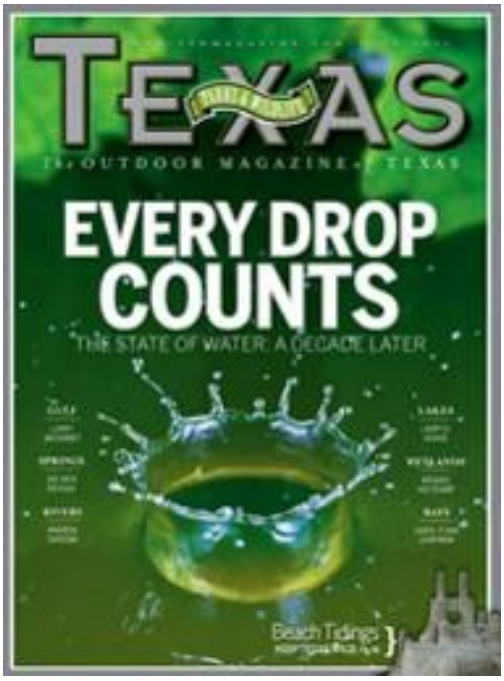
Chapter and/or individual contribution levels: Gold - $500, Silver - $250, Bronze - $150 , Individual Supporter - $75

Sponsorships will receive special recognition through conference communications, fliers, announcements, and programs. Gold Level contributors will receive discounted registration.

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

From Kip Kiphart

Both photographs were taken the first week of May during Cibolo Nature Center Wildlife Field Research... nature IS dynamic!



July 2011: Every Drop Counts

The July 2011 issue of *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine celebrates 10 years of examining the state's most precious resource: water.

Ever since the premiere in 2002, *Texas Parks & Wildlife* has devoted the entire July issue to this topic. During the early years of the series, each issue focused on one body of water: bays, rivers, springs, lakes, wetlands and the Gulf of Mexico.

For this special 10th anniversary issue, we have assembled some of Texas' best writers and water experts to discuss the progress made during the past decade. We also take a look at the future of water, including available clean drinking water, declining marsh-land and the after-effects of oil spills in the Gulf.

tpwmagazine.epubxp.com/issue/33411

Upper Guadalupe River Authority

8th Annual River Clean Up

SATURDAY
JULY 23

The Clean Up will be staged at Louise Hays Park in Kerrville. Groups and individuals are invited to participate in the River Clean Up. Volunteers may arrive at Louise Hays Park at 8:00a.m.for registration, instructions, and assignments or pre-registered volunteers may go directly to their assigned Clean Up location.

The first 100 pre-registered volunteers will receive an official 8th Annual River Clean Up t-shirt. All participants will be entered in a raffle for prizes. Volunteers should return to Louise Hays Park with their trash by 11:00am for free food and distribution of awards for the most unusual item and the biggest item.

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and American Rivers will aid in the Clean Up.

Please contact Tara Bushnoe at tbushnoe@ugra.org or Travis Linscomb at tlinscomb@ugra.org or call UGRA 830-896-5445.

Visit http://ugra.org/annualrivercleanup.html for more information and to download the pre-registration form.

RECIPE FOR THE ROAD + GOOD FOOD ON THE GO

Chocolate Chip Peanut Butter Bars

1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup real peanut butter (no hydrogenated oil)
3/4 natural sugar
1 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 large eggs
1 cup buttermilk
2 2/3 cups oats
1 1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease or grease and line with parchment paper a 81/2x13 inch baking pan. Mix flour, baking soda, and salt together. Set aside. Cream peanut butter and sugars. Add vanilla and eggs and beat until light and fluffy. Add flour mixture and then buttermilk, beating after each addition. Add oats and combine. Add chocolate chips. Spread batter in pan. Bake for 35 minutes or until done. Cool about 10 minutes in pan. Cut cake into bars while still warm. If parchment was used, grab edges of paper, lift cake from pan, and place on a cutting board. Use a ruler and a sharp, serrated knife to cut uniformly sized bars.

T E X A S

Master Naturalist ™

Hill Country Chapter

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE!
TXMN.ORG/HILLCOUNTRY

We meet the fourth Monday of each month (excluding June and December) at 7:00p.m. in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Join us at 6:30p.m. for a fun social half-hour.

We welcome anyone interested in our meeting topic or the Texas Master Naturalist program.

Board of Directors 2011

Phyllis Muska - President

Bob McKinley - Vice President

Anne Cassidy - Secretary

Cathy Downs - Treasurer

Steve Clyburn - Director of Advanced Training

Lisa Williams - Director of Class Training

Susan Longacre - Director of Communications

Koy Coffer - Director of Membership

Reidun Hilleman - Director of Volunteer Service Projects

Vern Crawford - 2010 New Class Representative

John Hueckstead - Immediate Past President

Questions about our chapter?

Contact Koy Coffer

Director of Membership

kcoffer@texas-wildlife.org

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.

Texas Star
Lindheimera texana

The Texas Star is a monthly publication of the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program. News, stories, comments, and ideas are welcome. Please contact Kristie Denbow, denbow@gvtc.com.

Hill Country Chapter does not recommend or endorse items of interest published in *The Texas Star.* Items of interest are for information only. Opinions expressed are those of the authors.

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TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE

AgriLIFE EXTENSION Texas A&M System