

# The Texas Star

Newsletter of the  
Texas Master Naturalist  
Hill Country Chapter  
April 2017 Volume 15 Number 4



T E X A S

Master  
Naturalist™



## April 24 Meeting: Chronic Wasting Disease

Johnny Arredondo, who is the Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. Wildlife Biologist for Kerr, Bandera, and Real Counties, will speak on Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), which is an infectious neurological disease in deer, elk, moose, and other members of the deer family, known as "cervids." He will provide an update on surveillance efforts for the 2016-2017 white tail season.

The monthly meeting of the Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter is free and open to the public. We meet in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority's lecture hall, 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville. Socializing begins at 6:30; the program starts at 7:00

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE . . . Brenda Fest

Hello fellow Master Naturalists!

As the weather warms the beautiful wildflowers welcome butterflies and other pollinators. Bluebonnets are beginning to fade and make way for prairie verbenas, cut leaf daisy, blackfoot daisy, mealy blue sage and others. The juniper hairstreaks and other pollinators are swarming over the antelope horn milkweed flowers. The monarchs are making their way through on their way north. Hopefully there is enough milkweed to support the next generation to make it to their next stop.

Now is a good time to check our Hill Country Master Naturalist online calendar and volunteer projects list for a project that needs your help. There are many volunteer and advanced training opportunities in the months ahead. Wildlife Research Week has a myriad of events at Cibolo Nature Center the week of May 8–13. Wings Over the Hills in Fredericksburg, April 28-29, provides both volunteer and AT opportunities.

On May 3 there will be a special event co-sponsored by the Hill Country Master Naturalist Chapter and the Lost Maples State Natural Area. It will include volunteer opportunities and seven different advanced training opportunities led by our naturalists Jim Stanley, Sky Lewey, Susan Longacre, Sally Garrett, Thomas Redwine, Greg Walton, Lee Haile and others from the staff and Friends of Lost Maples SNA.

We are now accepting applications for our fall training class. The application deadline is June 30. Classes will be held at UGRA this year on Wednesday mornings August 23 – November 21. The class schedule and sign up information is available on our website.

Plans for promoting our chapter's 15<sup>th</sup> HCMN anniversary and 20<sup>th</sup> TMN Anniversary are underway. Please contact me or our Membership Director, Lisa Flanagan, if you would like to participate in the planning.

Join us at our April chapter meeting to hear Johnny Arredondo from TPWD discuss Chronic Wasting Disease, and Overview and Surveillance Efforts.

Brenda Fest

## This Month We Honor



### Initial Certification

Megan Bean, Joyce Studer

### Special Recertification

Richard Coleman, David Davies

### 2017 Recertification

Jill Bowen, Dale Bransford, Craig Childs, Daneshu Clarke, Jim Clarke, Julie Clay  
Tom Collins, Kristie Denbow, Ann Dietert, Gary Fest, Lisa Flanagan, Barbara Jensen,  
Sandy Leyendecker, Scott Magee, Ric McCormick, Diane McMahon, Martha Miesch,  
Claire Michell, Tara Randle, John Sloan, Jim Stanley, Paul Unger,  
Russell Vowell, Deborah Windham

### Milestones

Craig Childs - Bronze Dragonfly, 250 hours  
Rose Ellis, Mike Foulds, John Walker - Gold Dragonsly, 1000 hours  
Stephen Bishop - Diamond Dragonfly, 5000 hours



*Congratulations to members who received awards at the March meeting:*

From left to right: Jane Crone, Chris Anderson, Rheda Boardman, Kristine Bobbitt,  
Marylein Davies, Ruth McArthur, Mike Foulds, Bridget Langdale, Tony Cieszkiewicz,  
Elsa Roberts, Kathy Ward, Gracie Waggener, Reggie Cox, Susan Clark, Joe Braly



At the March monthly chapter meeting Michelle Haggerty presented the Presidential Volunteer Service Award to Diane McMahon, who's completed 4000 hours of volunteer work.

## Recent Hill Country Naturalist Columns by Jim Stanley

- 3/4/2017 Wildlife Habitat in a Small Backyard
- 3/11/2017 Can We Really Live on Less Natural Resources?
- 3/18/2017 It Is Leaf Exchange Time for Our Live Oaks
- 3/25/2017 Invasive Plants: Easy to Identify, but Hard to Define

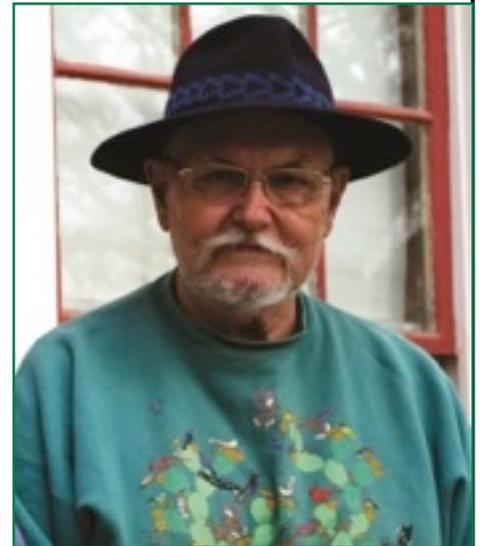
These and all other previous Kerrville Daily Times columns can be found at [www.hillcountrynaturalist.org](http://www.hillcountrynaturalist.org)

From Cathy Downs

### G. Shannon Smith Memorial Fund

The purpose of this fund, set up by two Riverside Nature Center members, is to honor the memory of Shannon Smith. The fund would use donations to advance the development of all areas of the grounds at RNC in a manner that Shannon would have approved of. He was dedicated to the use of native plants (and occasionally, adaptive plants to the Hill Country) that would enhance the beauty and educational value of the grounds.

Shannon devoted his life to studying, caring for, and teaching about plants. He studied horticulture at the University of Tennessee, was a research fellow at the University of Florida, and was a senior lecturer at Massey University in New Zealand. He was the first President and Executive Director at the Dallas Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. He also worked in research at Lone Star Growers in San Antonio and was Director of Horticulture at Missouri Botanical Gardens. After retiring to his home in the "back of beyond" in Hunt, Shannon volunteered at RNC, was an officer in the local NPSOT chapter, and worked part-time at San Antonio Botanical Gardens.



One of the few disappointments he experienced about Riverside was the lack of adequate employee/volunteer staff to care for the plants at our site. This fund is an attempt to remedy this occasional shortfall and to provide for better care of the plants and trees of our nature center. The two initial donors spent many hours with Shannon, discussing his vision for the development of RNC. They plan to each donate \$2500 to this important fund, in the fervent hope that other members and friends of Riverside will add to the initial amount in memory of Shannon. The initial donors welcome contributions from everyone who supports the vision of the RNC grounds as an example of how native Texas plants can be used to beautify our own landscapes. This "Designated Fund" will be administered by the Director of RNC in consultation with the initial donors.

2017 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Riverside Nature Center. Please help us to ensure that the grounds will endure for the next twenty-five years and beyond!

Native Plant Society of Texas - Kerrville Chapter  
&  
Riverside Nature Center invite you to...

SPRING 2017  
**Native Plant Sale**



**& Festival**

Saturday  
April 22nd  
9am - 2pm

**Free  
Family  
Fun**

**Native Plant Sale**

- Native Plants selected to thrive in our climate & soil
- Plant experts to answer questions & offer advice
- Save! One day tax-free shopping for plants & gifts



All net proceeds benefit RNC  
& NPSOT education efforts.

**11am: Znobía Wootan**

Native American Seed

**\* Support Pollinators! Become native to your place \***

Learn how bees and other pollinators are essential to the well-being of living things and to our quality of life; we can help through stewardship and learning. Znobía "Z" Wootan leads Customer Care at Native American Seed and has spent the last 10 years helping people restore the earth. She and her sister manage their early 1900's family homestead on the South Llano River with honey bee apiary, organic garden and orchard, free-range chickens and dairy goats using sustainable Holistic management practices. Znobía was elected to the City Council of Junction, Texas, has an Education degree from Texas A&M University and has taught in public and private Montessori schools for many years.

**Informative Displays**

Ask the Plant Expert  
Hill Country Master Naturalists  
Hill Country Master Gardeners  
UGRA - Water Quality & Conservation  
Texas Public Radio \* Glory Garden  
Monarch Watch \* Gardens at the Ridge  
Hill Country Archeological Association  
Texas Hill Country Beekeepers \* Buck Wild  
RNC \* NPSOT-Kerrville Chapter



**Kids' Activities**

Check  
Website  
for Details



**9am-1:30pm**

For More Details: 830-257-4837  
[www.riversidenaturecenter.org](http://www.riversidenaturecenter.org)

150 Francisco Lemos Street • Kerrville, Texas 78028



*photo credit: Linda Ryan*

Please join Hill Country Land Trust for a special field day at Honey Creek, in Llano County, to learn how you can more effectively assess and care for your riparian area through a deeper understanding of your land's particular conditions and qualities.

This HCLT workshop will focus on the role of vegetation to keep creeks and rivers functioning properly and how landowners can manage riparian areas to sustain healthy streams. Participants will learn to identify key riparian plants and how to monitor the functional condition of riparian areas.

The workshop will be led by Steve Nelle, former HCLT Board Member and range management specialist with 35 years of distinguished service with the NRCS. HCLT Board members and staff will also be on hand to share their experiences with conservation in the Hill Country.

**Hill Country Land Trust**  
**cordially invites you to a Field Day on**  
**“Reading your Riparian Zone”**  
**Saturday, April 22, 9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**  
**RSVP Now to Reserve Your Space!**

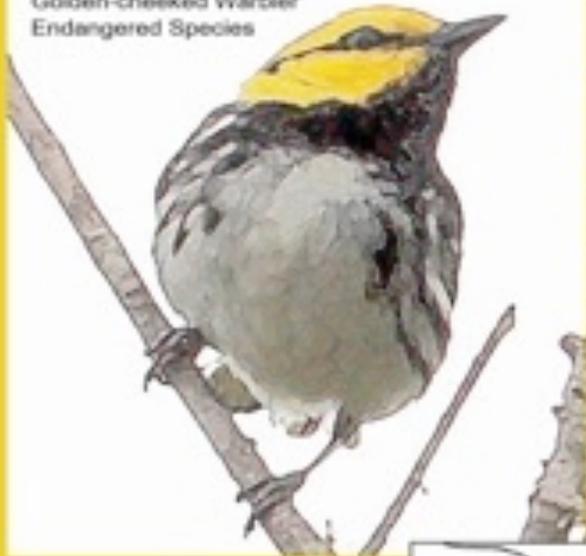
Purchase your ticket early, as space is limited to 30 participants.  
Cost: \$20 (nonrefundable) to be paid on our website by following this link

All participants will receive a copy of the expanded 3rd edition of "Your Remarkable Riparian" Field Guide. (Thanks to our friends at Hill Country Alliance for their co-sponsorship of this event.) A sandwich lunch and drink will be provided; please bring your own water bottle. Maps and information will be shared after payment is received. In the event of bad weather the program will be rescheduled. No dogs or firearms will be permitted at the event location. Contact us at [kate@HillCountryLandTrust.org](mailto:kate@HillCountryLandTrust.org) or 830-997-0027 with any questions.



*photo credit: Kate Peake*

Golden-cheeked Warbler  
Endangered Species



## Experience the Wild Side of the Texas Hill Country!

Birding for Endangered Species  
Nature Talks, Walks & Demonstrations

Bring the whole family for educational and entertainment activities focusing on the unique wildlife features of the Texas Hill Country

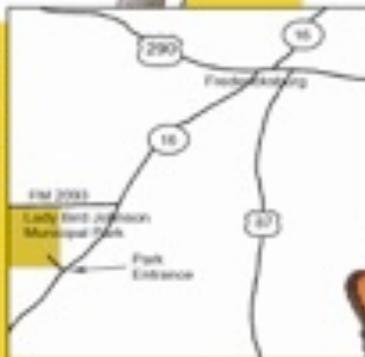
Photo Workshop - Trade Show & More

Black-capped Vireo  
Endangered Species



Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park is located three miles south of Fredericksburg on State Highway 16

Set your GPS for:  
LAT: 30.2392  
LON: -98.9091



Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park  
Fredericksburg, TX

A Project of the Friends Of Fredericksburg Nature Center

[www.wingstx.org](http://www.wingstx.org)

 Like us on Facebook

## 7th Annual

# WINGS OVER THE HILLS

## Nature Festival

### April 28-30, 2017



Special Guest Dorian Anderson  
"Biking for Birds"

## Help Wanted, Help Needed for a Nearly Forgotten Volunteer Activity

We are not in Oklahoma, but in a few days, by the time this is published, the Butterfly Garden's Native Plants will all be at least as high as an elephant's eye. It's amazing what a year of good precipitation followed by a short winter and early spring will do for plants. That is the good news. The not so good news is that a lot of volunteer effort is needed to bring the garden back up to being a welcoming, pleasant, come in, sit down, enjoy the peace, quiet and natural environment.

The Kerrville- Schreiner Park Butterfly Garden is now 17 years old and that is old enough in the plant world to need some cosmetic, if not surgery, then gardening/maintenance/TLC. The Butterfly Garden area is a 104' x 104' irrigated compound enclosed by a deer proof fence, adjacent to the park entrance. KSP is a 517-acre recreation and camping park on the Guadalupe River. The Garden is a highly visible and easily accessible location close to camping, cabins, fishing, boating, and kayaking, so many visitors come year around, many of whom stop in. Right now, in spite of the dedicated efforts of a small cadre of regular volunteers, the garden is looking ragged and unkempt.

We need a serious application of volunteer effort to make it a showplace for Kerrville--and equally importantly, to make the "Native Garden Maintained by Texas Master Naturalist" sign something that presents a positive image of HCMN that reflects our skills, knowledge, and pride.



*How we want it*



*What we have #1*

The Garden is 99% native plants and their gleaner-gathered seeds are used as a seed bank for propagation. It was designated as a Monarch Way Station in 2006 and so is filled with nectar plants, milkweed, and other larval food sources for a wide variety of butterflies and their offspring.

On a typical day one can be surrounded by Monarchs (of course) but also Queens, Pipevine Swallowtails, Checkered White, various Sulfur species, Hairstreak, Reakirt's Blue, various Fritillaries, Bordered Patch, American Lady, Painted Lady, Red Admiral, Common Buckeye, and numerous Skippers as well as other butterflies.

The Monarch Larval Monitoring Program (MLMP) Team conducts a weekly census of the garden's four main milkweed varieties, which are identified by unique colored flags. The milkweed is carefully checked for butterfly eggs, larval forms (instars) and their development stages. Also identified and counted are the varieties of butterflies both in the garden and in the immediate area outside the compound. All of this data is then reported to the MLMP. Once the garden is brought back up to a presentable level we can, again, invite various educational and children's groups in to observe, learn, and enjoy what can again be a signature example of HCMN dedication.



*What we have #2*

*continued on next page*

Now back to the first paragraph – the garden is nearly all native plants, but that does not mean that we want all of them in the amount that we now have them. Bunches of native plants are becoming invasive; e.g., Vetch, Beggar’s Tick, Cleavers (aka sticky weed), Rough Leaf Dogwood, Mexican Plum and several others. We need serious help in managing them. Also, the non-native plants need to be shown the door--especially thistle (all varieties).



*What we have #3*

KSP Butterfly Garden is strictly an HCMN endeavor – it does NOT have the advantage of being part of a larger organization or entity. With frequent reminders and many continuing requests, the city parks people do provide minimum assistance and repairs that are beyond our ability. (Current city plans include refurbishment of the garden shed in the next few months and, next year, a major irrigation improvement.) But this 10,816 square feet compound belongs to HCMN and only HCMN, and how it looks is a direct reflection on the Hill Country Master Naturalists. We work on Thursday mornings from 8 or 9, and depending on the season, until about 11am. If you’d like more information, email me (Larry Eskridge [el\\_e@swbell.net](mailto:el_e@swbell.net)) or call me (214-566-6104); still better, join me/us any Thursday morning,

2385 Bandera Highway (TX173) just south of the intersection with Loop 534 – a left into the park at the Administration Building and the first left through the gate.

*photos by Gracie Waggener and Larry Eskridge*

### **NPSOT Boerne Chapter Monthly Meeting**

On Tuesday, May 2, Mark Kroeze, Urban Forester, Texas A&M Forest Service, will speak on the basics of pruning and share examples of local pruning ideas.

Socializing at 6:30pm, program at 7pm

Cibolo Nature Center, 140 City Park Road, Boerne



### **NPSOT Fredericksburg Chapter Monthly Meeting**

On Tuesday, April 25, Kimberly Smajstria will speak about and share photos of her visits to three Monarch sanctuaries in the Michoacán mountains and provide insights on providing pollinator habitat that’s designed for them.

Social at 6:30pm, program at 7pm

Fellowship Hall of Memorial Presbyterian Church  
601 North Milam Street, Fredericksburg

### **NPSOT Kerrville Chapter Monthly Meeting**

Our last meeting of the spring, on Tuesday, May 9, will be a field trip to the Collins Ranch in Center Point. We will meet at Riverside Nature Center at 9:15am to get maps to the site and form carpools. For further information, see our website ( [npsot.org/wp/kerrville](http://npsot.org/wp/kerrville) ).

All of these programs are free and open to the public.



**Dual Event: Advanced Training and Volunteer Hours**  
*Half or Full Day, May 3, 2017, Lost Maples State Natural Area, 9:00AM-3:00PM*



**BRING LUNCH, WATER, HAT, SUN SCREEN, INSECT REPELLANT, WALKING SHOES AND A CHAIR. COMMUNITY LUNCH UNDER THE TREES AT 11:30. SOFT DRINKS AND DESSERTS/FRUIT PROVIDED. BRING A SNACK TO SHARE IF DESIRED.**

*Located in two canyons, Lost Maples SNA offers one of the prettiest and best hiking areas in the Hill Country. Hiking trails accommodate the beginning hiker through the experienced trekker. In the fall park visitors can watch the gorgeous Big Tooth maple trees paint the park in hues of red and yellow. In spring, displays of the Golden-Cheeked Warbler, Black-Cap Vireo and native raptors lure birders to the park. Wild flowers, plants—native and non-native—a variety of wildlife and the Sabinal River attract kayakers, fly-fishers and those who just enjoy the great outdoors. LMSNA, a participant in the nationwide Dark Skies program, hosts events each year for visitors to view the star-sprinkled heavens without the interference of city lights.*

*Today's event for Master Naturalists earning AT and Volunteer Hours is sponsored by Hill Country Master Naturalists and Friends of Lost Maple SNA. Spouses/partners welcome.*

9:00-9:30	<b>Meet at the Day Use area along the entry road to the park. Participants will be welcomed by Park Superintendent Shawn Greene and receive their information packets.</b>		
9:30-10:30	2-hr. Q&A Interpretive walk led by naturalist, author and HCMN Jim Stanley.	History and Folklore walk/talk by area natives, historians, FoLM board members and HCMNs Greg Walton and Lee Haile.	2-hr. Riparian and Hydrology Interpretive walk led by Sky Lewey, education director at the Nueces River Authority.
10:30-11:30		Geology of the Texas Hill Country by Susan Longacre, geologist, HCMN.	

**11:30-12:30-All participants gather at the Day Use area for lunch. Drinks and dessert provided.**

12:30-1:30	2-hr. Botany Interpretive walk with Sage Austin, former botanist at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and FoLM board member.	Dark Skies talk by FoLM President and HCMN Thomas Redwine.	<b>Volunteer Activity with the Friends of Lost Maples.</b> Earn volunteer hours by helping FoLM water newly-planted maple trees. If you haven't been on one of the interpretive walks, this will give you a chance to get a good look at the park.
1:30-2:30		The Use of Native Plants as Medicine. Naturalist Sally Garrett will discuss the ways the Hill Country natives and settlers used local plants for healing.	
2:30-3:00	Wrap up. Clean up.	<b>Pre-register by emailing Greg Walton at <a href="mailto:gregwalton12345@gmail.com">gregwalton12345@gmail.com</a>.</b>	

**DAY ENTRANCE FEES WAIVED FOR ATTENDEES.**

From Reggie Cox, 2017 Class Director

## Training Classes Start in August – Join Us!

The Hill Country of Texas is a beautiful and unique part of our state. Have you ever wondered how it came to be and what your part could be in keeping it natural or even helping your part of it to heal? The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department started the Master Naturalist program in order to train volunteers to help out with various projects and education programs. In the process of taking the classes, becoming a Master Naturalist, and volunteering on projects that interest you, you will gain the privilege of teaching others how to become involved with the natural beauty of the Hill Country.

If you would like an opportunity to participate in this learning experience, consider joining the 2017 Master Naturalist class. You will be learning from people who are leaders in the fields of plants, animals, riparian lands, geology, soils, grassland, trees, climate, night skies, and so much more. These people will teach you about the Hill Country – and the love they have for this unique area will be apparent in their words.

The class will meet for twelve Wednesdays, starting on August 23. The class size is limited to 40 people so that you will have the opportunity to know your classmates. When I took the class last year, I was prepared to learn a great deal about the Hill Country and how I could help with teaching and restoration efforts. I learned so much about where I live and how I can share what I learned with others while working in a pollinator garden or at a native plant sale. The added benefit I found during the class was the friends I gained. I was warmly welcomed to so many opportunities to join in projects like pollinator gardens, bird counts, butterfly counts, land stewardship, state park projects, wildlife management, and removing invasive plants from a creek. Do you want to learn to lead a hike at Enchanted Rock, Lost Maples Natural Area, or Honey Creek Natural Area? Or to participate in a night skies program, help maintain natural gardens, volunteer in one of the nature centers in our 10-county chapter, and so much more? When you go on the field trips during the classes, you'll see for yourself all that goes on and how you can help.

Perhaps the most telling part of the depth of commitment to Master Naturalist goals were the tears in the eyes of a Texas Parks and Wildlife employee sharing that a goal in his life was to be able to offer the chance for his son to see a Texas Horned Lizard, as he had done as a child. Another such moment was when a member of our own chapter asked us to find a project we loved and get busy while we still can. I will never forget these speakers and what they taught us.

Contact our Membership Director, Lisa Flanagan, at [hillcountrymembership@gmail.com](mailto:hillcountrymembership@gmail.com) if you would like further information. To apply online, fill in the application on our website: <https://txmn.org/hillcountry/online-application>. The deadline for submitting applications is June 30. I look forward to greeting the members of the Class of 2017 in August!



Texas Water Symposium planned for April 27 in Fredericksburg:  
Invasive Species Impacts On Water Resources, Economics and Ecosystems

The final *Texas Water Symposium* of the 2016-2017 series has been set for 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 27 at the Texas Tech Hill Country University Center in Fredericksburg. The *Texas Water Symposium* is free and open to the public.

Join our panel in a discussion of potential costs of invasive species to native wildlife and infrastructure, approaching threats, and the most effective ways for Hill Country boaters, ranchers and landowners to protect our waterways.

Invasions of non-native plants, animals, and parasites are regarded by biologists as a major threat to biological diversity worldwide and can have major impacts on water resources and economics. They threaten the survival of native plants and animals, interfere with ecosystems, and hybridize with native species. They have created specific and immediate threats to our rivers' native aquatic flora and fauna, and in many cases, they threaten the productivity of the industrial and water supply infrastructure upon which our economy relies.

Invasive Arundo cane, Zebra Mussels, and Hydrilla are among a host of aquatic plants and animals that are not native to Texas and compete with native animals and plants for food and space. Because introduced species lack natural enemies in our waterways, they can multiply and spread at an alarming rate, interfering with boat traffic, affecting water quality and quantity, and causing a range of other problems.

Tim Birdsong, aquatic biologist and Ecosystem/Habitat Assessment Chief of Inland Fisheries for Texas Parks and Wildlife, will moderate a panel of invasive species specialists in a discussion of invasives in the Hill Country, their potential costs to native wildlife and infrastructure, approaching threats, and the most effective ways for the Hill Country to protect our waterways. The full program can be found at [www.hillcountryalliance.org/texaswatersymposium](http://www.hillcountryalliance.org/texaswatersymposium).

Join Texas Tech University, Texas Public Radio, Schreiner University, and the Hill Country Alliance as we gather diverse perspectives on the challenges of invasive species in Texas – and the future of Texas water resources. Each session is free and open to the public. The hour-long program begins at 7:00 p.m., followed by discussion time with Q&A. The events are recorded and aired on Texas Public Radio one week later.

The Symposium is a partnership project of Schreiner University, Texas Tech University, Texas Public Radio, and the Hill Country Alliance. For more information, visit the Texas Water Symposium, and listen to past shows online. To stay informed about future programs, subscribe at [www.hillcountryalliance.org](http://www.hillcountryalliance.org).

*The Hill Country Alliance is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to raise public awareness and build community support around the need to preserve the natural resources and heritage of the Central Texas Hill Country. Visit us at [www.hillcountryalliance.org](http://www.hillcountryalliance.org).*



Invasive *Arundo donax* can overwhelm Hill Country creeks and rivers, as pictured here in the Pedernales River basin. (Monica McGarrity, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

From Ruth McArthur



*photo by Lucy Spade*

## Birding News

**Heart of the Hills Fisheries**, 5103 Junction Highway, Mountain Home. Third Thursday of the month, 8:15 am; Pam Goolsby, a recent transfer into our chapter, leads. KR-09-B.

**Hill Country State Natural Area (see below) Birds of a Feather.** Monday before the third Tuesday at 8:30am unless otherwise noted. Check the "Events" section of the HCSNA website. Leanne Beauxbeannes and Scott Magee lead. These have been ATs BUT Leanne (ranger and fellow TMN) has arranged for us to log time as volunteer hours under BD-04-A. The admission fee is waived for volunteers.

**Bird Censuses at Kendall County Parks.** It is with great difficulty and heavy heart that I am closing NEW participation in the bird censuses at the three Kendall County Parks. You may have noticed that they are no longer on the HCMN calendar. This is because they have simply become too popular, and it is difficult to impossible to perform the counts per Cornell's Citizen Scientist standards, and too large to be sure that all participants are able to contribute in a meaningful way to earn volunteer hours.

*The censuses still exist and continue;* we simply cannot accommodate all comers as we have in the past. Participants are limited to those participating as of January, 2017. (If you still get the weekly reminder, you are still a participant.) If you live in the Kerrville area, or other areas, please support the new bird count at Heart of the Hills Fisheries, and the newly-identified counts at Riverside Nature Center and Hill Country State Natural Area (see above). They still have plenty of room on these counts and need your help to be successful.

If anyone would like to start a census at another location in Kerrville, or other areas, I am more than happy to give what advice I can and help you work to get one established. Clearly, there is both great need and great desire for more birding. Contact me at [ruth.f.mcarthur@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.f.mcarthur@gmail.com).

Get outside and bird!

From Pam Lienhard

## Learning About Pollinators at the Kroc Nature Study Program

Pollinators were the subject of the March session. The 16 students learned about the importance of pollination and the many important pollinators in Texas. Pam Lienhard was the discussion leader.

The students watched videos of pollination and pollinators in action and then played a game trying to guess which foods would be lost to us if pollinators disappeared from the planet.

To stress the importance of protecting habitat for native bees, students made a bee hotel out of bamboo stalks. Ray Dunton and Chris Lienhard had gathered and cut the bamboo to the appropriate length.



Jill Bowen, Pam Lienhard, Martha Miesch, Clarence Reed, and John Sloan helped students tie the bamboo stalks together into a home for bees. They went home with their bee hotels and instructions on how to protect native bees and why to not be afraid of them, since native bees rarely sting. The students were very attentive and enjoyed the presentation and activity.



## The View From Rusty Bend

*Hill Country Thesaurus*

**Spring green:** *overused, under-descriptive.*

*In the Texas Hill Country, Cedar elm green is the color of Persian limes; Elbow Bush sprouting chartreuse, blinding neon.*

*Hackberry leaves are pure avocado, guacamole on a tree.*

*Spring leaves of Texas Persimmon suggest asparagus tips;*

*Spanish Oak fronds: a strange pink-green and weirdly soft. Escarpment Cherry shoots glow emerald, lined with scarlet.*

*The mighty Cottonwood leaf: olive underneath, upended by the wind.*

*And the sweetest smelling of all, our Agarita: iridescent gold, curing to blue-green prickles.*

*Green, amplified.*



*The Guadalupe greens up*

March at Rusty Bend is all about transformation. The bare spaces and gray branches of winter change overnight. Spring fills in between the lines and within two weeks, all is fresh and new. So much movement: insects, butterflies, birds. Canyon Wrens wind up their nest building. The male grabs tufts of alpaca from the nest materials basket and stands with a mouthful, drifting in the wind, like a tiny member of ZZ Top. He floats it in the air to the nest on the porch rafter. The jumbo version of nest building is down on the river, atop the railroad bridge. The local raven couple is constructing a nest as wide as an armchair. Rejected sticks stack in a pile on the bridge below, dodged by farm trucks on the way to town.

Some afternoons we call “dinosaur days,” when Sandhill Cranes skein overhead, the highest of them turning silver in the setting sun. We hear them before we see them, and stand still, scanning the skies to see their graceful signature against the heavens. Then, on the ground, our other dinosaur: Mr. Armadillo, crisp and clean, corduroyed in his armor, diving in the dirt for bugs with alacrity. His soft ears jiggle side to side as he plunges, with fierce purpose, into the ground. Doodle bugs, your days are numbered.

*continued on next page*

The light is changing too. The angle of the morning light is very October- like, but unlike those days that presage winter, this sun has a slant that softens and highlights each day's new wash of green. Like the return of an old friend, the sun rises over the shoulder of our little house. Our other houseguest is a frequent visitor, the Ladderback Woodpecker, so fresh we've nicknamed him "Barcode." While he hammers above, the White-crowned Sparrows carouse below in the birdbath in their little bicycle helmets.

We've taken to sitting in the garden "of an evening" as my father used to say in his soft Virginia drawl. Swaying on the glider, we imagine how much pleasure he would have in this fine spring. He would love the buzz of the first hummingbirds, pitching their entire bodies into the tangerine trumpets of the crossvine on the garden fence. He'd get a kick out of the free-range cilantro, galloping along the garden paths. How did that happen? And of course, he would like the satisfaction on my face when I pick my first fistful of asparagus, after years of patience with their glacial growth. He would have been elated that night when the Red-shouldered hawk flared and landed on a corner of the garden. "Mighty fine," he would murmur. When we finally identified the persistent whistle at dusk as a Common Pauraque, wandering hundreds of miles from his usual home in the valley, ("Whooo are youuu?") Daddy would have found that rare bird in his Peterson's Guide.

Finally, we have some welcome rain and on a warm evening, we sit absorbing the glory of a hill country sunset. We watch the stars emerge one by one to punctuate the darkening sky. Then, silently, from below the cliff on the river, *more* stars, points of light float and dance until our yard boasts its own constellations: fireflies. Daddy would have liked it, oh yes, he would.



*Elbow Bush and honeybee*

Poem, essay and images by Lucy Griffith  
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*Lucy Griffith, PhD co-manages the Rusty Bend Ranch with her husband, Andy Robinson. She also writes poetry and her muse is a tractor named Ruby. Both Lucy and Andy are certified Master Naturalists from the Class of 2013. Comments welcome at [doctorluz@hctc.net](mailto:doctorluz@hctc.net).*

## Advanced Training

**TUESDAY, APRIL 18 8AM-4PM MANSFIELD PARK RECREATION HALL, 2886 HWY. 16N, BANDERA**  
AT17-103 RIPARIAN AND STREAM ECOSYSTEMS - MEDINA AND SABINAL RIVERS

This training includes both classroom and outdoor walks. It will focus on the nature and function of stream and riparian zones and the benefits and direct impacts from healthy riparian zones. RSVP is required; call Nikki Dictson, 979-575-4424 or go to [n-dictson@tamu.edu](mailto:n-dictson@tamu.edu).

**TUESDAY, APRIL 18 9-11AM HATHAWAY'S ORCHARD, HWY. 173, 4/12 MILES FROM KERRVILLE-SCHREINER PARK**  
AT17-116 PECAN GRAFTING AND PRODUCTION WORKSHOP

Grafting, insect management, and fertilization will be discussed. Cost, payable on site, is \$10. For more information and to pre-register, call Kerr County Extension office, 830-257-6568.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19 10AM-12PM- NINE MILES WEST OF MASON**

AT17-128 A PLANT WALK THROUGH GRANITE/SANDSTONE/LIMESTONE SOILS

Participants will walk through Cambrian age sandstone (500 million years old) in a narrow transition zone between the granites and igneous rock of the Llano Uplift and the limestone of the western Edwards Plateau. Attendance is limited; to pre-register and get directions call Chris Anderson, 830-998-8559 or go to [sligo.canine@gmail.com](mailto:sligo.canine@gmail.com).

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19 6:30-7:30PM WEBINAR**

AT17-126 THE ECOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF NATURAL FLOW REGIMES

Go to to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4883365827052368898> to register.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 20 8-9:30AM ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA, FREDERICKSBURG**

AT17-069 LOW ALTITUDE VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TRAINING

The goal of this training is to assist and educate visitors at the park entrance and at the foot of the trail. Volunteers are requested to familiarize themselves with the park online before the training. The training will provide additional information about the park's environmentally sensitive areas, such as vernal pools, and policies to protect those areas. Training sessions will continue on Thursday mornings during April and May. For further information, call Chris Anderson, 830-998-8559 or go to [sligo.canine@gmail.com](mailto:sligo.canine@gmail.com).

**THURSDAY - FRIDAY, APRIL 20-21 8:30AM-5:30PM Y.O. RANCH HOTEL, KERRVILLE**

AT17-061 FOURTH HILL COUNTRY LAND STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCE

This conference provides a comprehensive update on many aspects of ranch management in the Hill Country. Cost is \$75; includes all meals, break refreshments, and tour transportation costs. To register, call 979-845-2604 or go to <https://agrifiregister.tamu.edu/BennettTrust>.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 22 8:30-10:30AM LOS RINCONES PRESERVE**

AT17-123 GOLDEN-CHEEKED WARBLER HIKE

This Texas Land Conservancy preserve features Juniper-oak woodlands and grassland savannas; it is a beautiful snapshot of the Texas Hill Country in Kerrville. The moderate to strenuous hike will provide interpretation from Master Naturalists and professional birders. Cost is \$15; to RSVP and get directions, call 512-301-6363 or go to [info@texaslandconservancy.org](mailto:info@texaslandconservancy.org).

**SATURDAY, APRIL 22 8:30AM -4:30PM CENTRAL TEXAS ELECTRIC CO-OP, FREDERICKSBURG**

AT17-063 LEVEL 1, INTRODUCTION TO NATIVE LANDSCAPES

The Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP) is a series of day-long classes that teaches best practices for native plant landscaping, including wildlife habitat gardening. We show you native plants in their natural habitat, common invasive plants in natural areas, 45 native Texas plants recommended for your landscape, and five invasive plants to avoid. Cost, before April 21: \$37. For more information and to register, go to <https://s08.123signup.com/event/registration/nyvbq>.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 22 11AM-12PM RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER, KERRVILLE (RNC)**

AT17-115 SUPPORT POLLINATORS! BECOME NATIVE TO YOUR PLACE

Znobia Wootan will explain how bees and other pollinators are essential to the well-being of living things and to the quality of life.

**MONDAY, APRIL 24 7PM UPPER GUADALUPE RIVER AUTHORITY LECTURE HALL, KERRVILLE**

AT17-110 CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Johnny Arredondo, Wildlife Biologist from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, will be the speaker at the monthly chapter meeting.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 25 9AM-12PM ALBERT AND BESSIE KRONKOSKY STATE NATURAL AREA, PIPE CREEK (ABKSNA)**

AT17-094 PRAIRIE VEGETATION SURVEY

This training is for new volunteers as well as a refresher for those who participated in 2016. The first hour will introduce materials and methods for the prairie vegetation survey and practice in identifying grasses and forbs; remaining time will be collecting in the field. For more information, go to [aadams@wildblue.net](mailto:aadams@wildblue.net).

**TUESDAY APRIL 25 10AM-12PM HILL COUNTRY STATE NATURAL AREA, BANDERA**

AT17-104 WALK WITH NATURE/TALK WITH A RANGER

Wildflower Month! Come often and watch as each species adds its color to the landscape. Join Ranger Leanne Beauxbeannes for a guided nature walk exploring the diversity of the Hill Country. Wear sensible shoes, layered clothing, and a hat or cap. Bring field books, cameras, water, and a friend. Arrive early enough to register before 10am starting time. Day-use entry fees apply. Bring a picnic and stay all day on your own! RSVP always appreciated; call 830-796-4413

**TUESDAY, APRIL 25 6:30-8PM MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL, FREDERICKSBURG**

AT17-105 MONARCH OVER WINTERING SANCTUARIES OF MEXICO

Kimberly Smajstrla will tell of her visits during the past two years to three of the four main Monarch sanctuaries in the mountains of Michoacán, Mexico.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 25 7-9PM BEC COMMUNITY ROOM, 3172 TX 16, BANDERA**

AT17-124 PREDATOR MANAGEMENT

Ranchers and Landowners Association of Texas, together with Texas A&M Extension Service, will host this community meeting.. The speaker will be Robert Ashley, representing the Wolf Club in the Medina area.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 27 8-9:30AM ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA, FREDERICKSBURG**

AT17-069 LOW ALTITUDE VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TRAINING

See Thursday, April 20 listing (above) for details.

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY, APRIL 28-30 6:30AM-7PM LADY BIRD JOHNSON MEMORIAL PARK, FREDERICKSBURG**

AT17-076 SEVENTH ANNUAL WINGS OVER THE HILLS NATURE FESTIVAL

Go to [www.wingsoverthehills.org/registration2017](http://www.wingsoverthehills.org/registration2017) for information and to pre-register for specific events. Registration for events at the festival also is possible if space is available.

**TUESDAY, MAY 2 7-8PM CIBOLO NATURE CENTER, BOERNE**

AT17-125 TREE PRUNING

Mark Kroeze, Urban Forester, Texas A&M Forest Service, will speak on the basics of correct tree pruning.

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 3 9AM-3PM LOST MAPLES STATE NATURAL AREA, VANDERPOOL**

AT17-121 ADVANCED TRAINING AT LMSNA

See page 8 of this newsletter for the complete schedule.

**THURSDAY MAY 4 8-9:30AM ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA, FREDERICKSBURG**

AT17-069 LOW ALTITUDE VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TRAINING

See Thursday, April 20 listing (above) for details.

**FRIDAY, MAY 5 1-4PM MASON MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA, MASON**  
AT17-120 MASON MOUNTAIN OVERVIEW AND QUAIL STUDY ORIENTATION  
Mark Mitchel and Jim Gallagher will speak on the history and purpose of the MMWMA. The same presentation will also be done on May 6, 9am-12pm; June 2, 1-4pm; and June 3, 9am-12pm. For further information, contact Tony Plutino, 512-496-2020 or go to [tonyplutino@gmail.com](mailto:tonyplutino@gmail.com) .

**SATURDAY, MAY 6 8:30AM-12:30PM LLANO RIVER FIELD STATION, 254 RED RAIDER LANE, JUNCTION**  
AT17-117 WATER QUALITY TRAINING: FOCUS ON UPPER LLANO RIVER WATERSHED  
The workshop will include a discussion of watershed systems, types and sources of water pollution, and ways to improve and protect water quality. There also will be a group discussion on community-driven watershed protection and management.

**SATURDAY, MAY 6 9AM-12PM MASON MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA, MASON**  
AT17-120 MASON MOUNTAIN OVERVIEW AND QUAIL STUDY ORIENTATION  
See Friday, May 5 listing (above) for details.

**THURSDAY, MAY 11 8-9:30AM ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA, FREDERICKSBURG**  
AT17-069 LOW ALTITUDE VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TRAINING  
See Thursday, April 20 listing (above) for details.

**FRIDAY, MAY 12 8:30AM-7:30PM YO RANCH CONFERENCE CENTER, KERRVILLE**  
AT17-118 ENHANCING RANGELANDS AND REDUCING LIVESTOCK COSTS  
Texas A&M AgriLife will host this seminar on utilization of cedar as nutritional supplementation for livestock. This will be an informative program on an innovative approach to utilizing an abundant natural resource. Registration is required by May 1; go to <http://sanangelo.tamu.edu/sss-conf> . Cost is \$15/person.

**THURSDAY, MAY 18 8-9:30AM ENCHANTED ROCK STATE NATURAL AREA, FREDERICKSBURG**  
AT17-069 LOW ALTITUDE VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TRAINING  
See Thursday, April 20 listing (above) for details.

**FRIDAY, MAY 19 8:30AM-3:30PM KERR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA, HUNT**  
AT17-119 SPRING RANGE AND WILDLIFE FIELD DAY  
Cost is \$20/person; includes lunch and educational materials. Register, with name and phone number, by May 12; call 830-896-4911 ext 3 or go to [deanna@kerrcountyswcd.com](mailto:deanna@kerrcountyswcd.com) .

**SATURDAY, MAY 20 8AM-4PM TYE PRESTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY, 16311 S. ACCESS RD., CANYON LAKE**  
AT17-065 LEVEL 1, INTRODUCTION TO NATIVE LANDSCAPES  
The Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP) is a series of day-long classes that teaches best practices for native plant landscaping. See Saturday, April 22 listing (above) for details.

**MONDAY, MAY 22 7PM UPPER GUADALUPE RIVER AUTHORITY LECTURE HALL, KERRVILLE**  
AT17-TBA INTRODUCTION TO THE ODONATES  
Craig Hensley will be the speaker at the chapter monthly meeting.

**TUESDAY, MAY 23 8AM-3PM ALBERT AND BESSIE KRONKOSKY STATE NATURAL AREA, PIPE CREEK (ABKSNA)**  
AT17-122 The ABKSNA is not yet open to the public and is in the planning and development phase, including a comprehensive feral hog management program. Participants will learn about the "tools" for hog control, how to develop a strategy for a large property focused on recovery and protection of sensitive ecosystems, and volunteer opportunities at ABKSNA. Participation is limited to 30 persons; cost is \$10/person. For further information and to register by May 17, go to <https://friendsofabksna.wordpress.com> .

**The newsletter's publication schedule does not allow listing all AT events in each issue.  
Check the chapter calendar on our website for additional AT information.**



We meet on the fourth Monday of most months at 7:00 PM in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Join us at 6:30 for our social half-hour.

Everyone is welcome.

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 is a monthly publication of the Hill Country Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. News, essays, comments, and ideas are welcome.

Please email contributions to:

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*Questions about our chapter?*

Email Lisa Flanagan,  
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