

The Texas Star

AUGUST 2014

Volume 12

Number 8

Newsletter of the
Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter

photo by Vern Crawford



CLASS OF 2014 RECEPTION

The Class of 2014 reception will be Monday, August 18, 6:30 p.m., at the Kerr Arts and Cultural Center in Kerrville. Mentors will introduce each of the trainees. Classes begin on Wednesday, August 20, 8:30 a.m., at the Texas Lions Camp. Our regular monthly chapter meetings will resume in September.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE . . . Vern Crawford

Welcome to the Class of 2014!

Our chapter is so fortunate to have another full training class of talented and enthusiastic men and women eager to begin studies leading to their becoming Certified Master Naturalists.

Many of the folks in this impressive group are newly arrived to the Hill Country. Every one of them comes with diverse and interesting backgrounds and we look forward to adding their many skills and talents to our chapter. What they all share is a common love of nature and an ongoing interest in gaining a deeper appreciation and understanding of the plants, animals, and natural systems that make up the local ecology.

The volunteer mentors are already in the process of meeting with and getting to know each of the new trainees as they offer their support and review the core curriculum and expectations with each of the trainees.

We look forward to meeting and welcoming all of the new class members over refreshments during the Class Reception at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, August 18th at the Kerr Arts and Cultural Center in Kerrville (228 Earl Garrett Street). Michelle Haggerty, Texas Master Naturalist State Program Director, will provide a brief overview of the history, scope, and contributions of our organization. Then the mentors will be recognized, and they will in turn give brief introductions of each of the trainees for whom they are mentors.

Thanks go out to our Class Director, Liz Ross, to her hard-working committee members, and to our Membership Director, Becky Etzler, for communicating with each and every applicant. Special thanks also go out to our members who've volunteered to mentor these trainees.

Please join me in welcoming our new class,

Vern

This Month We Honor

Recertification

Richard Adams Betty Clyburn Carl Luckenbach
Karen Millikan Virginia Sawin Garry Speir Karla Trefny



Special Recertification

Lisa Flanagan Ann Schneider

Milestones

Vern Crawford - Gold Dragonfly, 1000 hours
Julie Clay, Ginny de Wolf - Polished Silver Dragonfly, 2500 hours
Glenn Randow, Gracie Waggener - Gold/Ruby Dragonfly, 4000 hours



Congratulations to members who received awards at the July meeting:

From left to right: Roger McRoberts, Pat Nelson, Rod Boertje, Ernest Smith,
Ann Carabin, Dan Carabin, Ric McCormick

From Becky Etzler, Membership Director

Gentle Guidance and Thoughtful Encouragement

These are the words that come to mind when we think of our HCMN mentors. Ask those who've volunteered to be an HCMN mentor this year if their work is over when the trainees have received their curriculum and been introduced at the reception. I believe you would hear a resounding "No Way; I'm just getting started."

The mentoring program is truly an opportunity to help, encourage, inspire, and bond with another person, without any time restrictions. Often times these relationships grow into life-long friendships, with both mentor and mentee sharing and caring for one another.

Thank you to all who've chosen to lend an encouraging hand to our new trainees:

Leanne Beauxbeannes, Julie Clay, Vern Crawford, Fane Downs, Lisa Flanagan, Lucy Griffith, David Hopf, Pat Hopf, Tom Hynes, Bob McKinley, Ward Miller, Paul Pedersen, Mary Peeples, Nancy Person, Paul Person, Andrew Robinson, Cay Russ, Virginia Sawin, Priscilla Stanley, Nina Stieler, Floyd Trefny, Russell Vowell, Kathy Ward, and Mary Frances Watson.



Recent Hill Country Naturalist Columns by Jim Stanley:

- 7/11/2014 Is It a Weed or a Wildflower?
- 7/18/2014 What Should We Do When There is Not Enough Water?
- 7/25/2014 When is a Bug Not an Insect?
- 8/1/2014 Sitting Around the Nature Trail in Mid-July

These and all other previous Kerrville Daily Times columns can be found at www.hillcountrynaturalist.org

From Michelle Haggerty, Coordinator
Texas Master Naturalist program

The Texas Master Naturalist Video Contest

This is a call for original videos that explore and document the Texas Master Naturalist Program. Texas Master Naturalist Program volunteers of all skill levels are invited to enter our First Annual Video Contest. The top three winners will receive (at a minimum) project grant cash prizes for their chapters, presented at the Texas Master Naturalist State Conference (Oct. 24-26, 2014). Their videos will be shown at the conference, and additional entries will be shared at the conference and online.

Deadline: Sept 19, 2014. Judging will occur Sept. 19-26 and the creators of the top three videos will be notified thereafter.

Length: The suggested goal is one minute. The minimum is 30 seconds and maximum is three minutes. The videos will be posted on the Wildlife Diversity Playlist on YouTube.

Acceptable file formats: MOV, MP4, MPEG-4, WMV.

Examples can be seen at (<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL47868EA6F87650FA>).

Topics or Themes:

- What is a Master Naturalist?
- Your certification experience (basic and advanced training);
- Chapter project highlights;
- Frequently asked questions;
- Funniest questions or experiences in the field;
- How-to videos (creating a wildscape, building a fountain, planning a trail).

Videos must:

- feature the Texas Master Naturalist program or an element of the Program (TMN members, members wearing TMN gear, clear mention of your TMN chapter and program);
- reference, or be willing to add reference to, the TMN Program Partners, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TMN people, people wearing their TMN gear, clear mention of TMN chapter and TMN program, sponsors, etc.).

Resources:

- New to making videos? Our resources and guides are available on the TMN website (<http://txmn.org/>).
- Want some video tips? Our tips are updated every few days on our TMN Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistProgram>).

For further information, contact Jennifer Buratti (512-787-0079; jmburatti@gmail.com).

Is It Time for Texas to Welcome ASR?

By Danielle Kalisek

Aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) has been described as an “easy” answer to “more” water by taking excess water, injecting it into aquifers, and then pulling it back out in times of need, such as during drought. While some states to the east and west widely use ASR, that is not the case in Texas.

“In the 2012 Texas state water plan, ASR is only listed as 0.9 percent of new water resources — which is kind of disappointing,” said Dr. Calvin Finch, director of the Water Conservation and Technology Center. The center is administered by the Texas Water Resources Institute and Texas Center for Applied Technology.

“ASR is desirable because the storage is underground, and there’s no evaporation. Environmentally, it doesn’t change the surface of the land. With a surface reservoir, those are big issues: evaporation and environmental challenges,” he said.

Dr. Robert Mace, Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) deputy executive administrator for water science and conservation, said ASR shows up in six of the 16 regional water planning groups’ plans as a future water management strategy, but out of all the projects listed in the state water plan, ASR only accounts for about 81,000 acre-feet per year by 2060.

Although many communities are looking into ASR, currently there are two main, successful ASR locations in Texas: San Antonio and Kerrville.

Even though it is not common in Texas, current research and growing interest has some water experts optimistic about the state’s future of ASR.

Current ASR in Texas

“San Antonio Water System takes the excess permitted water from the Edwards Aquifer—a karst, limestone, aquifer that is very erratic—when water levels are high and pumps it into the sand Carrizo Aquifer south of San Antonio, where it’s more stable,” Finch said. “Right now San Antonio Water System has about 90,000 acre-feet stored; its potential is about 120,000 acre-feet.”

Mace added that San Antonio’s production capacity is 60 million gallons per day.



Photo courtesy of City of Kerrville

The city of Kerrville has stored excess Guadalupe River water in its ASR system since 1990. The city currently has two ASR wells.

Kerrville has a target storage of about 4,600 acre-feet and a production capacity of 2.65 million gallons per day. After a third injection well becomes operational, the city’s production potential will increase to 3.65 million gallons per day, Mace said. Kerrville takes water from the Guadalupe River and puts that into the Lower Trinity Aquifer.

“Kerrville will tend to take excess water out of the river in winter months when demand for water is lower and inject it into the Trinity Aquifer,” he said. “Then it can take that water and pull it out during peak summer demand months.”

In addition to the San Antonio and Kerrville ASR projects, some say El Paso also has an ASR system, although others consider it to fall under the broader term of managed aquifer recharge, which also includes San Antonio and Kerrville’s systems.

This is an excerpt reprinted with permission from the Summer 2014 issue of *txH2o*, a publication of the Texas Water Resources Institute.



LIVING WATERS CONFERENCE

August 19, 2014

Texas Tech Junction Center
254 Red Raider Lane
Junction, Texas 76849



The conference will include topics on watersheds and riparian areas as well as Best Management Practices for managing cattle, horses, and feral hogs. There will also be topics over how to manage and control key brush species within watersheds.

3 CEUs for pesticide applicators will be provided through the Texas Department of Agriculture.

Registration is only \$35 which includes lunch and an interactive float trip down the South Llano River for the first 20 registrants who wish to participate!

For more information and to register, visit <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/water> or call 979-845-2604.

Kendall County Parks Volunteer Program

The Host Program offers enthusiastic and interested volunteers the chance to stay in beautiful and diverse park settings while gaining experience in park operations and visitor services.

Host duties generally include providing visitor information, some maintenance projects, and general housekeeping. Most hosts work approximately 25-40 hours. In exchange for those services, the hosts are provided with a camp site during their stay.

For further information, contact Steve Lowe (steve.lowe@co.kendall.tx.us).

Kroc Center Nature Program

The Master Naturalists involved in the Nature Study program at the Kerrville Kroc Center are seeking a few additional volunteers for the coming school year beginning on Sept 18th and continuing until May 2015.

The programs are on the third Thursday of each month, from 4 - 5 p.m. About 25 fourth and fifth graders attend each session.

If you like the idea of encouraging youngsters to observe nature closely and learn about preserving and protecting the flora and fauna of the beautiful Hill Country, please contact Martha Miesch at 830-792-4750 or marthamiesch@msn.com.

From Karen H. Clary
Senior Program Manager, Plant Conservation Program
UT Austin – Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

The 2014 Texas Plant Conservation Conference

The 2014 Texas Plant Conservation Conference will be held at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin, Texas, November 5-8, 2014. We are currently accepting abstracts for 20-minute lecture presentations as well as posters. Abstract deadline is September 15. Please visit our website (https://www.wildflower.org/conservation_tpcc/) for registration and conference details.

The goal of the conference is to foster communication among conservation organizations, agencies, academics, and the public about native plant conservation. The conference, held bi-annually, is a professional level meeting including keynotes, concurrent sessions, workshops, symposia, posters, and field trips designed to serve scientists, land managers, state and federal agencies, local governments, and other professionals with an interest in plant conservation in Texas.

Brief Schedule:

November 5 – Workshops and group working sessions.

Meeting space has been set aside for workshops and group working sessions.

If you would like to reserve a space (first come, first serve) for your group to meet, please contact Dr. Karen Clary (512-232-0160 or kclary@wildflower.org).

November 6 - 7 – Full conference with speakers and poster presentations.

November 8 – Field trips

From Lucy Griffith

The View from Rusty Bend



Image by Lucy Griffith

I sat there and forgot and forgot,
until what remained was the river that went by
and I who watched.
Eventually the watcher joined the river,
and there was only one of us.
I believe it was the river.

- -Norman MacLain, *A River Runs Through It*

At Rusty Bend, we sit in the middle of the Guadalupe on the Fourth of July. The Summer Tanager hangs grandly on the limb of a Bald Cypress and a Belted Kingfisher flies over my shoulder, colorful as a cartoon. The river itself reveals a slow moving parade of cloud and reflected sky.

Birds also think sitting in water in July is a fine idea, as evidenced by the interspecies cooperation at the bird bath. Canyon wren, goldfinch, cardinal, chickadee. Copper, yellow, red, tuxedo. Repeat.

We beat the heat by rising early and sitting on the porch. Coffee in hand, we listen to the river wake up. A swell of sound. First, turkeys flap off their roost and peep and pop toward the water. Then splash, splash as axis deer cross the river. Axis fawns sound like someone stepped on a squeaky toy. The bucks are in rut and sparring most every morning. Their antlers whack against each other like Ninjas fighting with sticks. They shove each other up and down the banks of the river. Oh so macho.

The peeping and popping get closer and two turkey hens with their poults wander into the yard. Time for a flying lesson; the hens urge the young ones off the cliff. Whoosh. Fast track to the river.

A juvenile Red-shouldered Hawk launches from a stately pecan with his strident “kee-reeer” and noisily moves up the river. He is speckled and ratty looking. Other juvenile birds are also looking quite tattered. A titmouse with just one feather in his tuft; young cardinals that look like they got thrown out of a tornado. Feathers of many colors, going every which way.

Young ravens gather and fly low over the pasture to stir up a grasshopper breakfast. Cooperative hunting. I “be-caw” to them when they cruise by the house. Sometimes, I am rewarded with a tasty glottal.

Our porch needs a sign: Canyon Wren Playhouse. They land on the railings, the woodpile, the fan blades, the wall lamps, waving the copper flags of their tiny tails. They throw their heads back and belt out their songs, then perform some deep knee bends and a hop, hop. Bugs? Spiders? Must sing now. Tiny windup toys. They groom the porch each dawn.

Being so dry, we buried a trough to provide more dependable water. Each morning now the dust of the road has so many tracks it looks like a critter highway to the “pond”. Ringtails, raccoons, foxes, skunks. I suspect there is some interspecies cooperation there as well. If you build it, they will come.

At dusk, four Great Egrets circle up from the river. They form a pale calligraphy against the darkening sky. A glance at ghosts.

With hardly any rain, it’s getting pretty crispy. The cedar elms look ready to give up and drop their leaves early. As for me, if it’s hot, find me in the river.

Lucy Griffith, Ph.D., co-manages the Rusty Bend Ranch with her husband, Andy Robinson. When she is not on her tractor, she practices Clinical Psychology. When the tractor is broken, Andy is fixing it. Both Lucy and Andy are members of the Master Naturalist Class of 2013. Comments are welcome at oodie1950@gmail.com.

Advanced Training

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15 11AM-9PM DRIPPING SPRINGS RANCH PARK EVENTS CENTER AT 14-114 BETTER LIGHTS FOR BETTER NIGHTS CONFERENCE

The City of Dripping Springs, in partnership with the International Dark Sky Association Texas (IDA Texas), is hosting this conference which will address many issues surrounding light pollution. It will provide you with tools to enable you to share this information and possible solutions in your community. Vendors and exhibitors will provide displays and demonstrations; organized sessions led by industry professionals and educators will take place throughout the day. Cost: \$60. To register, go to <http://www.cityofdrippingsprings.com/default.aspx?name=dscblbn.page>.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23 AND THURSDAY, AUGUST 28 9-10:30AM HILL COUNTRY SNA, BANDERA AT 14-136 NATURE WALK: PRAIRIE GRASSES OF THE HILL COUNTRY

Walk with the interpretive park ranger in the beautiful Hill Country State Natural Area. Learn to identify our diverse native grasses and some that were introduced by ranchers in the drought of the 1950's. Easy one mile walk. Meet at Headquarters; regular entry fees apply prior to start time. Bring water, camera, books, and note pads. For more information, contact the ranger, Leanne Beauxbeannes (leanne.beauxbeannes@tpwd.texas.gov).

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26 7-9PM NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS--FREDRICKSBURG CHAPTER AT 14-137 THE LOVE CREEK NATURE PRESERVE

Rebecca Flack and Bob McKinley will describe the preserve and its history, and discuss the special flora in the preserve, including a number of rare, unusual, and endemic plants. The chapter meeting is at 601 North Milam Street in Fredricksburg.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27 1-2PM WEBINAR

AT 14-134 SOLAR-POWERED WATER SYSTEMS FOR GRAZING OPERATIONS

Participants will learn important considerations for planning a solar-powered system, in contrast to an electrically-powered system. The presenters are Robert DeClue, District Planner, Jeff Porter, P.E., Environmental Engineer and Team Leader, and Kevin Ogles, Lands Specialist. Please join the webinar at <http://conservationwebinars.net> 15 minutes before the start of the program.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 4 9AM-2:30PM CIBOLO NATURE CENTER AUDITORIUM, BOERNE

AT 14-135 OUTDOOR CLASSROOM TRAINING, CIBOLO NATURE CENTER AND FARM

The Nature Center will host a volunteer training for the Outdoor Classroom Program, which educates 4,000 children ages 5-18 from regional schools about the natural world and the importance of protecting it. Snacks and a free lunch will be provided to attendees. To learn more about this program, see this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q13BAErG05Y> . Contact Stephanie@Cibolo.org to register.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 5 8AM-3PM KERR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA, HUNT

AT 14-120 FACING THE QUAIL DECLINE

Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension have teamed up to deliver quail ecology research highlights and statewide initiatives concerning the Northern Bobwhite and Montezuma quail. Join us for programs covering what we have learned and to learn how to participate in the Texas Quail Index. Outdoor tour of sites will demonstrate activities and topics covered indoors. Registration begins at 7:30am. For more information, registration, and lunch details, contact Ryan Reitz, 830-238-4483 .

FRIDAY, SEPT. 12 8AM-3PM MASON MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

AT 14-121 FACING THE QUAIL DECLINE

Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension have teamed up to deliver quail ecology research highlights and statewide initiatives concerning the Northern Bobwhite and Montezuma quail. Join us for programs covering what we have learned and to learn how to participate in the Texas Quail Index. Outdoor tour of sites will demonstrate activities and topics covered indoors. Registration begins at 7:30am. Contact the WMA office (325-347-5037) for more information, registration, and lunch details.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 20 9AM-3PM FREDRICKSBURG

AT 14-130 FREDRICKSBURG SHINES SECOND ANNUAL HOME TOUR

Fredericksburg SHINES will host this tour of nine eco-homes to spotlight sustainable practices including solar applications for electricity generation, water heating, and solar tubes as interior light sources, as well as examples of xeriscaping, rainwater collection systems, and compressed earth block, rammed earth, strawbale, and “cool roof” type construction. Zero waste applications, an electric vehicle charging station, and a Chevy Volt (or two) and Tesla will be on display. Tickets are \$25 and include a map and description of what is available for viewing at each home. They will be available in Fredericksburg beginning August 20th at Judy’s Liquor, Memorial Presbyterian Church, and Peach Basket. Tickets also may be purchased online at <http://www.fbgshines.org/sustainability-home-tour/>.

FRIDAY, OCT. 3 1-5PM KERR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA, HUNT

AT 14-122 ECOSYSTEMS APPROACH TO WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

This is the third and final seminar discussing white-tailed deer management, grazing management, prescribed burning, brush control, and endangered species. The focus is on finding a cure rather than treating a symptom. The seminar will also include over 30 years of nutrition and genetics research conducted in the Donnie E. Harmel White-tailed Deer Research Facility. Outdoor tour of sites at the Management Areas will follow demonstrating topics covered indoors. Free. For more information and registration, contact Ryan Reitz, 830-238-4483.

Friday, Oct. 10 8:30am-3:30pm MASON MOUNTAIN WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

AT 14-123 ECOSYSTEMS APPROACH TO WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

This is the third and final seminar discussing white-tailed deer management, grazing management, prescribed burning, brush control, and endangered species. The focus is on finding a cure rather than treating a symptom. The seminar will also include over 30 years of nutrition and genetics research conducted in the Donnie E. Harmel White-tailed Deer Research Facility. Outdoor tour of sites at the Management Area will follow demonstrating topics covered indoors. Free. For more

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 24-26 MO-RANCH CONFERENCE CENTER, HUNT

AT 14-047 TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST ANNUAL MEETING AND ADVANCED TRAINING

This year, all accommodations will be included in your registration fee; there will be no need to make accommodation arrangements apart from registering for the meeting, unless you want to stay off site.

The newsletter’s publication schedule doesnot allow listing all AT events in each issue.
Check the chapter calendar on our website for additional AT.



We meet on the fourth Monday of most months - but not this month - at 7:00 PM in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville. The September meeting will be on the 22nd; 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.

Board of Directors 2014

- Vern Crawford -- President
- Kathy Ward -- Vice President
- Sarah Hilburn -- Secretary
- Diane McMahan -- Treasurer
- Rod Boertje -- Advanced Training Director
- Bob Wiedenfeld -- Communications Director
- Becky Etzler -- Membership Director
- Stephen Bishop -- Volunteer Service Projects Director
- Liz Ross -- 2014 Class Director
- Lisa Flanagan -- 2013 Class Representative
- Priscilla Stanley -- Immediate Past President



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 them to:

Lenore Langsdorf, Editor
LenoreLangsdorf@gmail.com

The Hill Country Chapter does not recommend or endorse organizations or commercial sources mentioned in our newsletter. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and editor.

Questions about our chapter?
Email Becky Etzler,
Membership Director
hillcountrymasternaturalist@gmail.com

