

The Texas Star

Newsletter of the
Texas Master Naturalist
Hill Country Chapter

February 2022 Volume 20 Number 2

image by Carl J. Franklin



The February Hill Country Chapter meeting will be a virtual meeting on Monday, February 28.

Viviana Ricardez, Vice President of the Texas Turtles and organizer of their research sites, will be our speaker. Her title is "Turtles of the Hill Country: Home to Endemics and More."

Go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86855304074?pwd=UHhWOC9qK1Nqbml2aGZWV0M1TXIWZz09>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE....Carla Stang

Greetings everyone: My note to you this month will provide a little information about the recent 2022 Board Retreat session, where we reviewed events of 2021 and identified focus areas we'd like to work on as a chapter in 2022.

The Board met via Zoom during the latest winter storm (Feb 3) to virtually put our heads together to discuss and develop what we wanted to focus on in 2022. Being mindful that our "normal" processes do not stop, we wanted to identify things *within activities that we already do* to maximize and enhance our efforts. As you know, three key words of our TMN Mission statement are: Recruitment, Education, and Service. These words will be the central theme in our focus areas and activities for 2022.

Last month I mentioned that 2022 is our chapter's 20th Anniversary of being a chapter. We will use this significant event as one focus area where we will plan to do several things that link us to recruitment, education, and service. To that end, if you are interested in helping plan and execute activities surrounding our Chapter's 20th Anniversary, please contact me at president@hillcountrytmn.org. We'll have our first planning meeting at Riverside Nature Center on March 4 at 1pm. We'll discuss and work toward efforts for multiple events and activities as part of an ongoing celebration rather than a "one and done" anniversary party. It will be fun! As TMN volunteers, you know that there can always be fun while you are working with each other! And, of course, you'll receive volunteer hours for helping.

As a little teaser, some ideas floating around so far are to create a logo for a T-shirt or other TMN swag; capture "oral histories" from interviews with our members (both new and old); organize a field trip for our members (why do the new students get all the fun?); and include the public at the chapter celebration events. These are just a few ideas at this point...what else would you like to do? We will tap into multi-media resources to publicize and recognize the chapter's work. I'm looking forward to seeing some of you at the meeting on March 4.

Many hands make light work.



This Month We Honor



Recertifications

Bob Binney, Ron Childers, Lucy Space

Milestones

Trudy Florence, Debbie Thompson - 250 hours, Bronze Dragonfly

Recent Hill Country Naturalist Columns by Jim Stanley

- | | |
|----------|---|
| 12/04/21 | Bees and Butterflies and Blooms in Winter? |
| 12/11/21 | The Chemistry of Photosynthesis and the Carbon Cycle |
| 12/18/21 | Have You Ever Seen a Biological Soil Crust? |
| 12/25/21 | Is it a Weed or a Wildflower? |
| 1/1/22 | Dead Plant Material is Valuable: Don't Throw it Away |
| 1/8/22 | Coyotes: Rural and Urban |
| 1/15/22 | Rainwater Harvesting: The Basics of Why and How |
| 1/22/22 | Understanding Aquifers: What They Are and What They Are Not |

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

From Becky Leal, Kerrville NPSOT Communications Director

The Kerrville Chapter of NPSOT presents **Gardening for Birds** by Kathleen Scott on Tuesday March 8 at 2 pm (Zoom only).



Gardening for Birds is a program for anyone who wants to enhance their gardens and attract a variety of birds. You'll learn about birds that frequent the Texas Hill Country, why they're here, what they need and how to provide it: food, shelter, and habitat. You'll also learn how to create bird habitat, illustrated with bird, plant and habitat photos from the author's gardens plus a detailed plant list for the program.

Topic: March 8 NPSOT Kerrville Chapter Meeting – Gardening for Birds
Time: Mar 8, 2022 01:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting: [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88959356924?
pwd=ZEw0azAxUjBoNm5xWWZIRIJIvFhLdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88959356924?pwd=ZEw0azAxUjBoNm5xWWZIRIJIvFhLdz09)

Meeting ID: 889 5935 6924 Passcode: 543360

From Elsa Roberts, Hill Country Chapter Past President



SAVE THE DATE SPRING PLANT SALE APRIL 16

Are you yearning for Spring yet? Come and help us make the Spring Plant Sale a big success this year. We are returning to a public sale format so alert your friends, neighbors and family and let them know they will have the opportunity to purchase beautiful native plants to enjoy in their landscapes.

This sale will be a coordinated effort between Riverside Nature Center, Hill Country Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist and the Native Plant Society of Texas, Kerrville Chapter.

The sale will be held at Riverside Nature Center and we are planning to locate the tables with plants out onto the grounds with a docent at each table, so there will be a need for more volunteers than usual. Volunteers will be needed on the afternoon of **April 15** to set up and again for the sale day on **April 16**. There will be perks for all volunteers to thank you for your service and as usual, your time is eligible for credit in VMS.

Watch for my email coming to your inbox soon. If you are extra eager to volunteer before my detailed email arrives, please call (830-285-1028) or email me at Pastpresident@hillcountrytmn.org.

From Richard Coleman, Pollinator Garden Assistance and Recognition Program (PGARP) Coordinator

February 12, 2022

Dear Master Naturalist Family,

It is with both excitement and sadness that we announce we will be moving to New Mexico late spring or early summer. Teresa's life-long dream has been to live with her horse. Also, my allergies, (cedar fever in particular) have been getting progressively worse the last three years, so the high desert sounds pretty good to us right now.

Donna Dutton has volunteered to assume my duties as PGARP Coordinator. Donna was in the 2014 HCMN class and is a member of the Fredericksburg NPSOT chapter. She lives in the northern part of the HCMN area in San Saba County. She is a long time (30+ years) student and lover of native plants, beginning her studies at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin in the early nineties, when the Wasowskis were lecturing there (*Native Texas Plants*, Sally and Andy Wasowski, 1988). She holds certification in the Native Landscape Certification Program (NLCP) of the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT), having received competency level certification in the four levels of the program. She also participated in the initial development of PGARP.

Joyce Studer, the Fredericksburg Coordinator, will also be relocating this Spring out of the area. Mary Frushour will be the new Fredericksburg Coordinator and is actively seeking additional volunteers to join in the site visits.

Sheryl Pender will become the Kerrville Coordinator later this Spring once she wraps up other obligations; she is also actively seeking additional volunteers to join in the site visits. Rachel Thompson will remain the Boerne Coordinator.

Since Spring of 2018 the PGARP program has fielded 198 requests, some from out of our chapter area, and completed 174 site visits to date. In 2020, Rachel and the Boerne team put together the PGARP presentation for the Project Fair at the annual conference and tied for first place. The cash award was used to purchase additional Rack Cards and Garden Plaques.

This program was the first to combine Master Naturalist and Native Plant Society of Texas members in a single program. Both organizations' Mission Statements promote educating the public about the importance of native plants and their relationship to pollinators and the ecosystem in general. We have talked to Master Naturalist and NPSOT chapters around the state to encourage them to adopt and adapt this program for their area. COVID put a clamp on our ability to do the personal outreach necessary to promote the program to the public. With the pandemic expected to wain in the coming months, the outreach opportunities should also return.

Thank you to everyone who worked to make this program a success. The last six years of involvement with Master Naturalists and NPSOT has been both rewarding and fulfilling for me and Teresa. We will miss the friends we have made through these organizations and look forward to finding similar groups in New Mexico to learn about the native plants and pollinators in a new eco-region.

Thank you,
Richard and Teresa Coleman

From Laurie Brown, Director of Programs, Cibolo Center

Oak Wilt Workshop Feb 24 6pm to 7:30pm in-person. Join Erin Davis, Staff Forester from the Texas A&M Forest Service, for an up-close look at the deadly fungus disease killing our lovely Hill Country oak trees. Learn to identify oak wilt and look at options for managing and preventing oak wilt. Ryan Bass from the City of Boerne will also participate in this workshop. He is the Environmental Planner and Urban Forester for the City of Boerne. He will overview the recently updated tree ordinance and discuss the current known distribution of oak wilt within the city limits. Ryan will detail the city's new oak wilt management program, which provides financial incentives to qualifying property owners to treat or remove oak wilt-infected trees.

To register and learn more, visit: <https://cibolo.org/calendar/oak-wilt-workshop>.

Virtual Watching Wood-Warblers March 23 6pm to 7pm. Each spring, the sky is filled with small, colorful, insect-eating birds winging their way to northern breeding grounds. Wood-Warblers are diverse, beautiful, and a challenge to see, let alone identify. Join TPWD's Texas Nature Trackers Biologist Craig Hensley for a presentation exploring the world of these birds. You'll learn how to identify and discover these birds during the spring. This event is a virtual presentation, and links will be emailed on the day of the event.

To register and learn more, visit: <https://cibolo.org/calendar/virtual-watching-wood-warblers>.

From Michelle Haggerty, Texas Master Naturalist Program State Coordinator

VIRTUAL 2022 Wildlife Tax Valuation Workshop

When: Saturday, March 26 8am-12pm - VIRTUAL Sign-in begins at 7:45am

Register TODAY using our [on-line form](#) and select the Saturday, March 26, 2022, Wildlife Tax Valuation Virtual Workshop, Online from the workshop list.

Have Questions? Contact Jessica Alderson at Jessica.Alderson@tpwd.texas.gov or 210-309-2416.

The virtual workshop link and instructions on how to participate in the workshop will be sent to registered participants the week of the workshop.

Who should attend? Texas landowners interested in wildlife tax valuation for their property.

Topics to be covered:

- Overview of Wildlife Tax Valuation
- Habitat Evaluation
- Target Species Selection
- Requirements and Wildlife Management Plan Development
- Seven Wildlife Management Practices
- Filling out the Wildlife Management Plan and Annual Review
- Help with Individual Plan Preparation

* You may attend any workshop regardless of the county you live in or where your property is located.

* Landowners must have a current 1-D-1 appraisal (also known as an ag exemption) to be eligible for the Wildlife Tax Valuation.

* Everyone is welcome to attend, even if they do not have property or a 1-D-1 appraisal.

* An email will be sent the week of the workshop with the link and instructions on how to log in.

**Upper Guadalupe River Authority & Riverside
Nature Center present**

EduScape Talk & Tour

The UGRA EduScape is an award winning demonstration garden that contains numerous examples of water conservation & storm water detention practices that you can incorporate into your own landscaping.

The EduScape Talk & Tour will feature presentations by leading experts, followed by a tour of the EduScape.

Talks & Tours are *FREE* to All

March 9th • 10:30am • Native Grasses

Christian Hopkins, Ranger Specialist will be teaching the many ways our native grasses are beneficial to us & the environment.

April 6th • 10:30am

Land Restoration in Cedar Regrowth

Pete Van Dyck, Owner at Van Dyck Earthworks & Design LLC & Drought Proof Texas Land Designer discusses regenerative property design.

May 4th • 1pm

Urban Riparian & Watershed Protection Planning

Lucas Gregory, PhD, Texas Water Resources Institute, Texas A&M AgriLife Research explains how a healthy riparian area functions in an urban setting.

June 8th • 10:30am

Native Plants & Waterwise Gardening

Veronica Hawk, Native Plant Society of Texas & PGARP discusses the importance of using native plants in our landscapes.

Register:

830.257.4837 or rnc.kerrville@gmail.com

UGRA classrooms: 125 Lehmann Dr. Kerrville, TX 78028



MARCH 30, 2022 | 10 - 11:30 AM CST

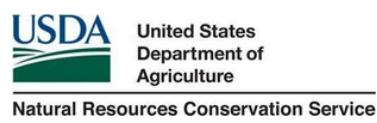
FREE webinar with great door prizes!

WHAT'S THAT? PLANT ID FOR EVERYONE!

- Major Clumping: How to look smart with common characteristics
- Perennial vs. Annual Forbs: How to know the difference
- The Family Breakdown: Taking an unknown plant down to family
- Genus *Paspalum* in Texas
- Using Seek and iNaturalist for Plant ID

Register at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/>

For more information, go to Megan.Clayton@ag.tamu.edu,
Tim.Siegmund@tpwd.texas.gov, Charles.Kneuper@usda.gov



The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

From Lucy Griffith

The View from Rusty Bend



Red-Tailed Hawk nest above the Guadalupe River

Long Exposure Triolet

wintering invites prolonged attention
to search for the end of each stretched shadow

sit and stare—take your medicine
wintering invites prolonged attention

dormancy's pulse softens the tension
quietude required—ease will follow

wintering invites prolonged attention
to search for the end of each stretched shadow

We are dormant here at Rusty Bend. Dry, so dry, and crunchy underfoot. Dormancy plus drought yields a spare space, devoid of color and quieting the action. As we hit the pause button this time of year, what do we do?

Watching the Red-tailed Hawks build their nest provides some respite. Back and forth from ground, to cypress, to pecan, bending and breaking off branches that float behind them in their flight. The nest is wide and woven so tight, it's now stable in the highest wind. As if we have the world's quietest airport, we see them glide in again and again. I can hear the air traffic controller "Romeo Tango Heavy clear for landing."

We try to keep track of changes in our little biome. No bluebirds, no phoebe, few migrants. Is it the drought? Did the big freeze last February do more damage than we thought? The deer population has plummeted, and that is good news for hardwood saplings that now have a fighting chance to reach maturity.

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The usual suspects seem to show more interspecies cooperation. White-crowned Sparrows share the birdbath with Spotted Towhee and Lesser Goldfinch. Mockingbird shares the seeds on the possum haw with titmouse and chickadee. Caracara and raven sit side by side in a furrow, catching some rays after hunting for 'hoppers. There is a lesson here.

We are heartened by the notion that small properties, properly tended weave a patchwork of safe harbors for wildlife. Even an urban yard can be a sanctuary. Use this quiet time to make a plan. Provide dependable water, supplemental food, create brushy shelter, keep cats indoors, plant native species, leave your leaves for shelter and bugs. I dream of interlocking habitats that give the creatures a chance to adapt and co-exist with us. After all, they were here first.

In the meantime, this morning a four-legged tuxedo loped across winter's drab palette of beige and grey, with much purpose. Looking for a girl skunk, I suppose. I know he prompted a song of yearning in me for spring.



Winter Sunset at Rusty Bend

Poem, images and essay by Lucy Griffith Copyright 2022

Lucy Griffith, PhD co-manages the Rusty Bend Ranch with her husband, Andy Robinson. She also writes poetry; her muse, a tractor named Mabel. The story of the Burro Lady of West Texas, told in poems, We Make a Tiny Herd, has been awarded the 2020 Willa Literary Award for Poetry as well as the Wrangler Award by the Cowboy Hall of Fame. A joint project of bird poems and images, with wildlife photographer Kenneth Butler, Wingbeat Atlas, can be preordered from www.flowersongpress.com.

Comments welcome at lucy@lucygriffithwriter.com.



We meet on the fourth Monday of most months (but not during pandemic) at 6:45 PM in the Upper Guadalupe River Authority Lecture Hall at 125 North Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Join us at 6:15 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 2022

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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 them to:

Lenore Langsdorf, Editor

LenoreLangsdorf@gmail.com

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Questions about our chapter?

Email Dot Maginot

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membership@hillcountrytmn.org

