

The Texas Star

Newsletter of the
Texas Master Naturalist
Hill Country Chapter
May 2022 Volume 20 Number 5



image by Vern Crawford



The April Hill Country Chapter meeting will be a hybrid meeting on Monday, May 23. Doors open at 6 for socializing; the business meeting is at 6:30, and the presentation by Joyce Moore, "Managing Your Piece of Texas - What Can TPW Do For You," will be from 7-8. Joyce Moore is the Technical Guidance Biologist for the western half of the Edwards Plateau Regulatory District. She and her sister own and operate their ranch near Boerne.

We have a new security precaution: we must pre-register via Zoom. Go to <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYvc-CsrjgpEtznjsTPvgKH1bEnNz0WfGF>. You will receive a confirmation containing information about joining the meeting.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...Carla Stang

Greetings all,

On May 10, the Class of 2022 held its commencement at Joshua Springs Park and Preserve in Comfort. Congratulations to the students and many thanks to Carra Milikien (New Class Director), the New Class Committee, and the mentors for your enthusiastic involvement with the class and the students! We had an integrated day of celebration for commencement and the chapter's 20th anniversary. This was the 20th TMN training class in our 20th year of chapter existence. There were over 100 past and present chapter members in attendance to help congratulate our newest TMN members. We also jumped at the chance of having such great attendance to distribute volunteer service awards.

Patsy and Tom Inglet kicked off the morning with some birding, and Gary Fest and Rheda Boardman followed a little later, looking for butterflies and doing plant identification. Both activities had nice sized groups. It was a warm day, but the sun was mostly behind clouds, and we were glad to have the strong breezes blowing. The pavilion was decorated nicely and everyone was able to move about and mingle. I heard some say this was their first time seeing others since COVID began. There was yummy food, beverages, and desserts provided for all; many thanks to the generous anonymous donor!

It was neat to see many people wearing the chapter's 20th Anniversary T-shirt. And all TMN members were given a wooden puck necklace embellished with the year of their class. Thanks to Gracie for making those and for her efforts to get the T-shirts made so we had them to wear for the celebration. There are still T-shirts, as well as other TMN/Chapter swag for sale. Look for Gracie at the merch table at the May chapter meeting at UGRA.

It was a fabulous day!

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It's hot (already!) and it's only May. And there is a lot of volunteering going on. As a reminder, please check our website frequently—especially, the home page—for late breaking announcements and solicitations, including volunteer opportunities. That's [Hill Country Chapter – Keeping the Hill Country Native \(txmn.org\)](http://txmn.org).

The main ways to advertise information are: The Texas Star newsletter, chapter website, chapter Facebook page, and chapter business meetings. Email broadcast to all members is the last option, and one I am trying to use sparingly to avoid email information overload. Help me to help you by sending me an email about what you'd like posted on the website with as much advance notice as possible.

You can send items for the newsletter directly to the editor for publication. You can also post items directly to our Facebook page. These are all great ways to communicate to our members and reach the community!

The Class of 2022



photo by Dot Maginot

NABA Butterfly Counts being done in June

The North American Butterfly Association (NABA) has run the Butterfly Count Program in the US, Canada, and Mexico since 1993. Each of the approximately 450 counts consists of a compilation of all butterflies observed at sites within a 15-mile diameter count circle in a one-day period. The annually published reports provide a tremendous amount of information about the geographical distribution and relative population sizes of the species counted. Comparisons of the results across years can be used to monitor changes in butterfly populations and study the effects of weather and habitat change on North American butterflies.

If you are interested in helping with the butterfly counts, contacts for specific areas in our chapter are listed below:

Boerne: Ken Butler kenbutler67@gvtc.com

Kerrville: Tom Collins towhee@hctc.net

Guadalupe River: Coco Brennan brennan@gvtc.com

Love Creek Preserve: Rebecca Neill Rebecca.neill@tnc.org

San Antonio Northwest: Patty Pasztor agarita@me.com



Every Friday 10am-12pm
@ Riverside Nature Center

Naturalist, author, and columnist, Jim Stanley and Texas Master Naturalist and native plant enthusiast, John Hucksteadt will be available to meet one on one to answer questions, discuss various topics, or listen to ideas about nature.

530.257.4827 • riversidenaturecenter.org • 159 Francisco Llamas St., Kerrville Tx

Riverside Nature Center Presents

Bird Walk & Talk

Saturday, May 21st
9:00am - 10:30am

@ Riverside Nature Center

Join us for a birding adventure!

Join Paul & Dolores Sellin for a wonderful tour of identifying birds in the hill country area.

All Ages & Levels of
Expertise are Welcome!



830.257.4837 or riversidenaturecenter.org
150 Francisco Lemos St. Kerrville Tx

Plant Walk & Talk



May 27th & 28th
8:30am-9:30am

At Riverside
Nature Center

Kim Orr, Texas Master Naturalist, will guide you on a tour of edible plants in the Hill Country and how to identify them.

830.257.4837 • riversidenaturecenter.org • 150 Francisco Lemos St. Kerrville Tx

WELCOME

Chapter members are welcome and encouraged to attend and contribute to Board of Directors meetings. The board meets at the Riverside Nature Center at 2:30 on the Monday of the chapter's monthly meeting.

Kerrville Schreiner Park Pollinator Garden

This friendly crowd would like to invite the class of 2022 to try their hand at gardening with native plants at the Kerrville Schreiner Park. KR-04-A-NPA is one of the chapter's oldest projects, and is a gem of an opportunity to learn the plants and pollinators of a Hill Country garden.

We meet on Thursday mornings for a couple of hours work most weeks of the year. For more information, contact Paula at pharley57@gmail.com.

From left to right: Vern Crawford, Frank Garcia, Lenore Langsdorf, Tyra Kane, Alice King. Text and photo by Paula Harley.



Hill Country Master Naturalists Lend a Hand to Improve the UGRA EduScape

On April 27, 2022, members of the Hill Country Master Naturalists (HCMN) assisted Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) staff with the installation of new native plants at the UGRA EduScape. The UGRA EduScape is an award-winning demonstration garden that wraps around the Guadalupe Basin Natural Resources Center at 125 Lehmann Drive in Kerrville. Numerous stormwater detention and water conservation practices are demonstrated throughout the landscape, including the use of native plants.



Members of the Hill Country Master Naturalists assisted UGRA staff with planting native milkweed and nectar plants which were purchased through a grant from the Native Plant Society of Texas. Pictured left to right: HCMN members Kathy Loring and Nancy Huffman; UGRA staff Hunter Copeland, Travis Linscomb, and Matthew Wilkinson; HCMN members Frank Garcia, Lee Booker, and Maura Windlinger. Not pictured: Gracie Waggener.



On Tuesday May 24, the Fredericksburg NPSOT Chapter will host an in person presentation by Taylor Collins on "Restoring Functional Ecosystems with Regenerative Agriculture." Taylor Collins is a Land Steward and founder of ROAM Ranch, a 900 acre multispecies regenerative ecosystem in which soil building practices are integrated into every aspect of land management. The meeting is at Gilbriar Gazebo, 208 Danos Drive in Fredericksburg. Social gathering starts at 6:30, the presentation begins at 7:00. Guests and area newcomers are always welcome,

The Boerne and Kerrville NPSOT chapters do not meet during June, July, and August.

T E X A S



Master
Naturalist

Galveston Bay Area Chapter

Presents
Community Advance Training

"A view from the Intersection of DEI and park advocacy"

Alan Spears
Senior Director for Cultural Resources,
National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)



Alan Spears

Virtual Event

Tuesday, May 24, 2022, 6 pm CEST

Register in advance for this webinar by using this link:
<https://bit.ly/3ycVW7r>
 Or scanning this QR Code



OUR CO-SPONSORS

Iman Academy Southeast
MultiCultural Center (MCC)
Bay Area Unitarian Universalist Church
Clear Lake Islamic Center (CLIC)
Changing Hearts and Minds Program (CHAMP)

For more information/details, please contact:
Mohammed Nasrullah
 Director, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
 TMN Galveston Bay Area Chapter (GBAC)
bnasrullah@yahoo.com <https://tmn.org/gbaca/>

***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

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.

To Register: 830-257-4837 or rnc.kerrville@gmail.com
 UGRA classrooms: 125 Lehmann Drive, Kerrville

UGRA Volunteer Summer Study



The Upper Guadalupe River Authority is looking for volunteers to take part in the

2022 Volunteer Summer Study

From June 1st - August 31st, volunteers will collect water samples at various locations along the Upper Guadalupe River and its tributaries and submit them to UGRA for bacteria analysis.

Master Naturalist Volunteer Code: [KR-BB-C-FR](#)

To register, or for more information, visit this link:
www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/volunteer-summer-study



If you have any questions, please contact Matt Wilkison
mwilkison@ugra.org, (855) 496-5556 Ext. 252

UGRA 19th Annual River Clean Up Volunteers Wanted!

**When: Saturday, July 23rd
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

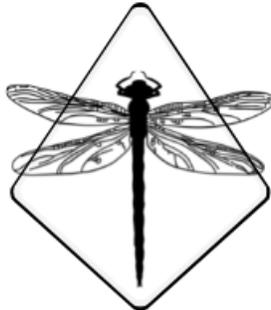


Where: Flat Rock Park

Volunteers should register before July 8th or arrive at Flat Rock Park at 8:00 AM for registration and instructions.

**Refreshments, Prizes and Activities!!
T-shirts For First 300 Volunteers!!
Contact UGRA For More Info www.ugra.org**

Let's Keep *OUR* River Clean!



TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST 2022 ANNUAL MEETING HOUSTON, TX OCTOBER 20-23

Put it on your calendar now as we prepare for our **23rd Texas Master Naturalist Program Annual Meeting**, an event to gather, learn and celebrate another year of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. We're preparing this year's meeting as an in-person event at the Omni Houston this fall **Thursday, October 20th to Sunday October 23rd**.

This year's Annual Meeting will be hosted in the heart of one of the most ecologically diverse urban centers in the nation. Houston is nestled in the Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes ecoregion of Texas, inviting a wide variety of wildlife and vegetation. With a temperate climate and abundant rainfall, more well-known species include the Houston toad and the whooping crane. The conference, held at the Omni Houston, sits on the shores of Buffalo Bayou, creating 160 acres of greenspace in the heart of downtown Houston, and re-introducing the natural world to those who call the city their home.

For more information and the Call for Proposals, (deadline: Tuesday, May 31) go to

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/WhctKKXPlqGLZRWtzLGfVfSGhqQXtDkgwtRWGtgPdnCRpqSQjZCvRHJflqNKfHrGWQnSLL>

The View from Rusty Bend



Blue Grosbeak looking up for worms

Dowsing with My Father's Ghost

Can't hurt. I hear your soft drawl over my shoulder. I glance but you're not there. Well drillers come tomorrow with their pipes and chains. I grab some loppers, wander your old orchard and cut a springy Y from a stalwart peach.

Could I witch for water? Some call it doodlebugging. You'd be game. I still feel you near when rain heals a drought, when fences need tending, when your *cenizo* blooms like a belly laugh.

So I pace circles near the house site, heels of my palms to heaven, no wonder they call it divination. Cradling one fork for yearning, one for memory. It spins and dives. I stroll over the spot again,

laughing. Like a magic trick, that cut branch plunges to earth. Same as gravity, they say. *It works but we don't know how.* I stab the spot, plant the Y as a marker. The next day

wellmen tap water at a hundred feet, fifty gallons a minute, sweet as a mountain spring. My witching welcome. I feel you near, nodding your head. Come over here Papa, I'll hold the hose as it runs clear, then we'll drink from the pond of your hands.

I always miss my father but each April around his birthday, I surely get it bad. There is so much I wish I could share with him. When he bought Rusty Bend in the 60's it was a wall-to-wall overgrazed desert of caliche and horehound.

Something about the place slid the bolt to open his inner naturalist. He transformed into a man energized with a mission. Armed with Aldo Leopold's *Sand County Almanac*, a Peterson guide to birds, and Enquist's *Guide to the Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country*, he made a plan.

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He banished the goats, got a few cows, fenced off the river from grazing. He found some grant money to dig a tank near a spring in a double drainage. He cut all but the largest cedar trees and laid them on contour lines for erosion control.

He fashioned a shallow tiller from a railroad rail and spikes, chained it to the back of his truck and dragged the barren field to break up the hardpan. He planted a Wildflower Path at the edge of that field. Three droughts later, salvia, cenizo, and cholla still thrive.

He bought prairie grass seeds by the bushel and spun them off his chest with a hand cranked spreader, usually during a rainstorm. My poor mother watched in dismay. He found a hubcap, drilled three holes in it, threaded baling wire to hang it from a hackberry tree. That makeshift birdfeeder became a source of enchantment for the whole family.

Today, I imagine him thrilling to the color wheel of Blue Grosbeaks, Indigo Buntings, and Painted Buntings crowding the millet feeder on our porch. We could observe the osprey fly by in today's drizzle, then watch her shake off the rain, mid-flight. The hip-high Little Bluestem from last year's rains would wave us a rusty hello. No caliche desert now, no horehound, Papa, and never forget, it's all your fault.



Girl's day at the spa

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 ordered from [Wingbeat Atlas — FlowerSong Press & Juventud Press](#)

Comments welcome at lucy@lucygriffithwriter.com.



Chapter meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month (except in December). Members and the public are welcome to attend in person or virtually. There is no cost to attend. In-person: We meet in the auditorium at the Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) Building at 125 Lehmann Drive in Kerrville. Doors open at 6PM for socializing. Business Meeting begins at 6:30PM. Advanced Training session is 7-8PM. Virtual: Links are available at txmn.org/hillcountry.

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

- Carla Stang -- President
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Elsa Roberts -- Immediate Past President
Vern Crawford -- State Representative

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 Dot Maginot Membership Director membership@hillcountrytxmn.org

