

The Texas Star

Newsletter of the
Texas Master Naturalist
Hill Country Chapter

June 2022 Volume 20 Number 6



image from Cullom Simpson



The June Hill Country Chapter meeting will be a hybrid meeting on Monday, June 27. Doors open at 6 for socializing; the business meeting is at 6:30, and the presentation by Cullom Simpson, Prescribed Burning in the Texas Hill Country, will be from 7-8. Cullom Simpson is a wildlife biologist with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for Bell, Coryell, and Williamson counties.

Pre-registration is required to attend the chapter meeting/AT session via Zoom. Go to https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZYvc-CsrjgpEtznjsTPvgKHlEnNz0Wf_GF. You will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. You can log into Zoom at 6pm on June 27.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE...Carla Stang

Greetings all,

Whew, doggies! It's hot out there and no relief in sight. The lack of rain and heat is something we are all in tune with as we approach the astronomical first day of summer, June 21, also known as summer solstice. We would all do well to recall lessons and examples about water conservation and land and wildlife management actions we can all take to help get through these times. Our chapter had a huge number of members achieve their 2022 recertification and milestone awards and I thank you all very much for your dedication! As summer marches on, high costs of fuel and other things, as well as the heat, may cause some to re-think how much and where you volunteer...and that's OK. Do what's best for you and don't put yourself at risk.

I want to announce and welcome David Matthews, Class of 2022, as the New Class Director on the Board of Directors. He enthusiastically accepted the role and will work with Carra Milikien (predecessor) to get the New Class Committee ramped up for the 2023 Class. Also, Ramon Baez, elected by his classmates, has started his term on the Board as the 2022 Class Representative, replacing Trudy Eberhardt. Many thanks to Carra and Trudy for their work on the Board!

At the February 2022 chapter business meeting I brought to your attention that our chapter was in the beginning stages of forming a partnership with Schreiner University (SU) in Kerrville. This partnership is a win-win for both parties as it:

- Allows TMN to spread their mission and values to new audiences and potential students through integration with previously underrepresented demographics (e.g. college students, working adults);
- Invigorates the Hill Country chapter with new energy and ideas;
- Helps SU students develop career skills, relationships, and a deeper connection to nature;
- Instills a conservation and community volunteer ethic in the younger generation.

Early in June, the Board of Directors had a special meeting at Schreiner University (SU) with Karolyn Andrews, Class of 2022, who is the HSI Stem Grant Program Director there. Read about the HSI program at [Schreiner University Announces Receipt of HSI-STEM Grant Totaling \\$5M to Fund Project HOPE.](#)

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At this point in our discussions, we are exploring what this partnership and Basic Training Program will look like. There are three other TMN chapters who have partnerships with learning institutions in their areas, so we have some models to refer to. A few discussion highlights about the course structure included when (e.g. spring or fall), where (e.g. SU or UGRA), time (e.g. daytime or evening), students (e.g. open to community and SU students), course fees (e.g. community and SU students). Rest assured that all state TMN policies concerning training content, number of hours, etc. will be adhered to and the quality of our outstanding Hill Country Basic Training Program will be continued and hopefully enhanced. A Memorandum of Understanding outlining the agreements is part of our planning. I will keep you informed on the progress. Feel free to chat about this with members of the Board as you are out and about volunteering or in classes. There are a lot of reasons this will be a win-win for TMN and Schreiner University!

This Month We Honor

Initial Certification

Mark Hults, Jane Jamison, Patrick Scoggins

Recertifications

Rheda Boardman, David Davies, Anne Dietert, Trucy Eberhardt, Becky Etzler, Lisa Flanagan, Frank Garcia, Diane Gierisch, Juan Leal, Sarabeth Mayfield, Rick McCormick, Sharon Noack, Anne Ryan, Nancy Scoggins, Ron Scoggins, Mary Thomas, Rachel Thompson, John Walker, Morgan Williams, Sherry Wilson

Milestones

John Fiore, Mary Frushour - 250 hours, Bronze Dragonfly
Donna Dutton, Trucy Eberhardt, Carra Milikien - 500 hours, Brushed Silver Dragonfly
Barbara Jansen, Darryl Pitts - 1000 hours, Gold Dragonfly

Congratulations to members who received awards at the May meeting:



Tom Burke



Charleen Moore



Clark Williams

From Kevin Wessels, President of the Kerr County Friends of the Night Sky

The Kerr County Friends of the Night Sky (<https://www.kernnightsky.com/>) is a group of neighbors who seek to ensure the preservation of the dark sky for generations to come. Our goal is to share with others the benefits that can be realized through properly managing outdoor lighting. We are working to provide education and promote the stewardship of our night sky for a variety of reasons, including ecological benefits to ourselves and our natural world.

We are currently seeking volunteers who are interested in helping to facilitate our Night Sky Friendly Business Recognition program in Kerr County. This will be an opportunity for volunteers to identify businesses that already are practicing night sky friendly lighting while cultivating interest among businesses that are not but may be interested in becoming recognized. Depending on the response from this request, we will hold a training at the Riverside Nature Center to train these volunteers on how to identify these businesses and how to build the program. Volunteers need reliable transportation around town at night to identify businesses that meet our outdoor lighting criteria. We also need volunteers to approach these businesses and others during business hours to discuss their interest in participating in the program. Dark sky work is an approved volunteer opportunity (CC-02-A Dark Skies). Please contact me (kevin.b.wessels@gmail.com) if you are interested in this volunteer opportunity.

From Carla Strang, Kerrville Chapter President

July 12 TMN Tuesday at 12 Noon: This advanced training session will be a joint webinar with the Monthly Chapter President's Meeting that includes all chapter presidents, along with Michelle Haggerty and Mary Pearl Meuth (from the TMN office), and everyone is invited to attend. The focus will be on leadership and management topics. Remember to check the state website, [#TMNTuesdays \(tamu.edu\)](https://www.tamutmn.org/), in July to pre-register. The link is active one or two weeks prior to the session.

From Sandi Kennedy, Vice President, NPSOT Fredericksburg Chapter



On Tuesday, June 28, the Fredericksburg Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas will be hosting an in person presentation at Gilbriar Gazebo at 208 Danos Drive, Fredericksburg. Social gathering starts at 6:30 and the presentation begins at 7:00. Guests and area newcomers are always welcome. Join us to learn more about living with nature in the beautiful Texas Hill Country.

Our presentation will be "Become Creative with 'STEAM'" by Dinah Zike, who becomes our creative mentor with STEAM Garden, Native Plants, and Recycling: Oh, My!, which draws from the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics.

STEAM encourages "thinking out of the box": being creative as well as analytical. How does that apply to gardening with native plants? A nationally renowned creator of educational materials, author, educational consultant, and lecturer, Dinah will focus on her native garden in Comfort and encourage being creative with recycled materials.

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

From Deb Youngblood

Guadalupe River Cleanup

The Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA) has scheduled the 19th annual River Clean Up for Saturday, July 23, 2022.

Hill Country Master Naturalists will be doing cleanup at the Guadalupe Park on Guadalupe Street in Kerrville. We will begin at 8:00am and finish no later than 11:00am. This location has plenty of water, even in July, so bring your kayaks if you like. Click here for a map to the park <https://goo.gl/maps/yyC9dN1CFxQo1Nzf8>.

UGRA will provide all of the supplies we will need for our work; these will be picked up the day before and delivered to the site on the day of the cleanup. All you need to do is show up at Guadalupe Park and pick up trash. You should bring your leather gloves, if you have them; wear a hat, sunscreen, and shoes that are good in wet/boggy environments. You may also bring friends; just get them registered. This work is a lot of fun when you do it with someone else.

Register no later than July 7 at

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScSsRNC3YA00ACMNesKNQ5Ezew1myKyLC7QV78jzn06rV_O_w/viewform

Be sure to register the location you want as "Guadalupe Park on Guadalupe Street, Kerrville."

After the cleanup, you are welcome to go to Flat Rock Park for festivities. There will be refreshments, and UGRA will be providing awards for the most unusual item and the biggest item found.

Call or email if you have questions: [210-268-8187](tel:210-268-8187) or debyoungblood@hillcountrytmn.org

Participation in this event should be entered as service in VMS using the code KR-08-C-FR. Save this code, as we will use it again when we come back together to clean up Guadalupe Park in October. We have cleaned this location in the past and it is certain that this park will need our full attention again.

From Dot Maginot, Kerrville Chapter Membership Director

If you do not want your pins, please let me know so I can put them back into circulation. Unless I hear from you, I will be putting the 2019 Recertifications back into circulation on June 30, 2022.

WHERE TO FIND ME

I will be in Comfort at the Lobby Coffee Shop on June 22.

That's a 2023 New Class Committee meeting from 12-2pm, so look for a group of people.

I will be at the Chapter Meeting at UGRA in Kerrville from 6-7pm on June 27.

I will be at Flat Rock Park in Kerrville from 10am-12pm on July 23 for the UGRA River Clean-up.

I'll have an outreach table set up.

If you have questions, please feel free to text or email me: Membership@hillcountrytmn.org.

From Carla Stang, Kerrville Chapter President

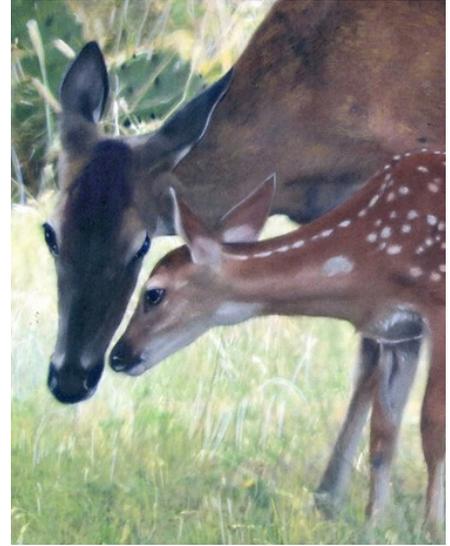
Help tell the Hill Country Chapter's story at the 2022 TMN State Conference, which will be in Houston. October 20 – 23, 2022. Registration opens in August. Carpool to defray gas costs. . .

Tell others about our wonderful chapter. Submissions in three categories will be accepted for recognition and awards during the 2022 TMN State Conference. The categories are:

- 1) Photo, Art Media
- 2) Video Contest
- 3) Project.

I KNOW for a fact that we have many very talented artists, photographers, crafters, and project leaders. The TMN State site will have links describing the criteria for submission of information. Check it out and don't be shy! I am happy to help with submissions – contact me at president@hillcountrytmn.org.

As a reminder: last year, Catherine Gauldin's colored pencil drawing, "Mama Tell Me," took First Place and Best in Show!



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.



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.

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 Naturalists Volunteer Code: [KR-08-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 Wilkinson
mwilkinson@ugra.org; (830) 896-5456 Ext. 235



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.

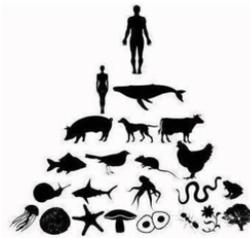
830.257.4837 • riversidenaturecenter.org • 150 Francisco Lemos St. Kerrville Tx

Riverside Nature Center Presents:
Conversation with a Conservationist

How YOU Can Be A Better Steward of Our Native Hill Country

Are you cultivating your ecological conscience?

EGO



ECO



June 21st @ 5:30pm
@Riverside Nature Center

Join us for a wine & cheese reception with Jim Stanley, author, columnist and naturalist.

Suggested Donation \$20
RSVP: riversidenaturecenter.org

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

The View from Rusty Bend



May's Lunar Eclipse

Late Date with the Occult

I stayed up late
with a sanguine moon
rusty really, an off-red,
off-planet—
earth's sooty shadow
sighed across the surface
A lost shadow?
Could I sew it back?
a silhouette that eased
into a scarlet glow,
then scrubbed my mind of reason,
hanging like a pendant
in the blue-ink sky,
all my pores now open
to its pull

I am thinking about sound this May at Rusty Bend. On my morning runs, I hear bands of birdsong, noting Field Sparrow and his territory, then twenty strides later White-eyed Vireo, then Bewicks Wren, then Painted Bunting. I imagine thick stripes, a rainbow made of birdsong.

The *pit-ti-tuk* chorus from the cypresses tells us of a gang of Summer Tanagers, whipping about and nailing wasps, banging off their stingers on a branch. Whack, whack, whack.

We notice as it gets drier and drier, how the sounds begin to concentrate near the river. We sit on the porch in the evening and hear sounds of conflict as the creatures overcrowd for water. Time for a game of "what the heck is that?"

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This May has been a month of “whys.” Why did the Red-tailed Hawks abandon their nest? Was it the noisy well digging at the neighbors? Was it a raid by a Great-horned Owl? After watching them daily, it feels like such a loss. I think of Rilke and his admonition “to have patience with everything unresolved in your heart.”

Still we wonder. Why do we have so many buntings this year? Where are the bluebirds? Why are the red wasps suddenly more aggressive? How can the vultures fly when missing so many primaries from their molt? Why is the air so dirty? Why do some birds return to their nests and others destroy them? Why do Canyon Wrens use SO MUCH COTTON?

We do know that when Cornell says to watch for warblers, to drop everything and do just that. We saw 27 species in an hour one afternoon. Some real treats like an Ovenbird, a Yellow Warbler, a MacGillivray’s Warbler, Orchard Orioles, literally falling from the sky.

The grass has greened up a bit, but it is an illusion. No deep moisture and I worry for the trees and the critters that need them. There are a few gifts in the dryness. Cycles interrupted as in the absence of chiggers, hardly any dreaded star thistle. But we need rain badly. When will the drought break? I hear Rilke in my head again and try to “live the questions themselves” so that I might someday— live my “way into the answer.”



Canyon Wren and SO MUCH COTTON! Image by Andrew Robinson

Poem, first image 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
- Frank Garcia -- Vice President
- Alice King -- Secretary
- Ron Scoggins -- Treasurer
- Diane Gierisch -- Advanced Training Director
- David Matthews -- New Class Director
- Ramon Baez-- 2022 Class Representative
- vacant -- Communications Director
- vacant -- IT Director
- Dot Maginot -- Membership Director
- Tom Burke -- Volunteer Service Projects Director
- 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:
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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
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membership@hillcountrytmn.org

