

# The Texas Star

Newsletter of the  
Texas Master Naturalist  
Hill Country Chapter

June 2023 Volume 20 Number 6



Photo by Vern Crawford



The June Hill Country Chapter meeting will be a hybrid meeting on Monday, June 26. Doors open at 6pm for socializing. The business meeting begins at 6:30 and the presentation on native grasses by Beth McMahon, Gillespie County Horticulture Extension Agent, begins at 7:10.

Prior registration is required for attending the meeting/AT session via Zoom. To register for virtual attendance, click [HERE](#). You will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting, and can log into Zoom at 6PM on June 26.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE....JEFF SCHWARZ

*Our Next Chapter Meeting on June 26th is another hybrid meeting, but **please come join us in person** to celebrate the 10,000 volunteer hour accomplishments of our fellow Members!*

***Tom Collins** will be recognized for reaching 10,000 hours in April, 2023, joining **Gracie Waggener** (2021) and **Stephen Bishop** (2022) as our Chapter's Active 10,000 Club Members!*

*@UGRA Center, 125 Lehmann Drive, Kerrville  
6:00pm Cake and Refreshments Served  
6:30pm Recognition and Business Meeting Starts  
7:10pm Advanced Training Starts*



## This Month We Honor



### Initial Certification

Patricia Higgins, John Hornung

### Recertifications

Mackenzie Brown, David Davies, Ann Dietert, Cathy Downs, Nancye Drukker, Mildred Dworsky, Gary Fest, Cecilia Fuentes, Lucy Griffith, Patti Guin, Sharron Jay, Tyra Kane, Alice King, Laura King, Myrna Langford, Travis Linscomb, Carl Luckenbach, Robin May, Susan McKinley, Linda Miller, Charleen Moore, Sharon Noack, Jeff Schwarz, Debbie Thompson, Van Turner, Clark Williams, Debbie Windham

### Milestones

Lonnie Phillips, Rae Tucker - 250 hours, Bronze Dragonfly  
Maura Windlinger - 500 hours, Brushed Silver Dragonfly  
Sharon Hixson - 4000 hours, U.S. Presidential Service Award

*Congratulations to members who received awards at the May meeting.*



Susan Logrbrinck



Greg Walton



Frank Garcia, Ron Scoggins, Lisa Flanagan, Paula Harley

from Katy Kappel

### Apprenticeship in Nature

When I retired, I decided to involve myself in nature, music and art (no more social work!). The 2016 Master Naturalist class was full, so I began working as a Guide at the Riverside Nature Center. Immediately I was immersed in classes and questions about ecology, botany, ornithology, geology, ...all the ologies. I thought I would "Master" all of this when I took the class in 2017. What I learned is that there is so much more to every "ology" than I ever imagined.

We are not truly "Master Naturalists" when we graduate. The class is an amazing crash course in the science classes we never took. We only begin our apprenticeship when we volunteer. Sometimes it takes a while to get settled on where to spend our time.

Currently I sample the Guadalupe River in the summer and stay involved in the TPWD Water Specialist curriculum. I guide at the Nature Center, teach second grade kids about worms, and orchestrate activities for the Texas Outdoors Woman Network Kerrville. Recently I became part of a team working to achieve "Bird City Kerrville" status.

I have worked at the Nature Center for seven years because of the variety it brings. Sitting at the front desk, answering phones, explaining the exhibits to visitors — all have lead to more learning. Recently a visitor told me he has seen a beaver at the Town Creek inlet to the river! I had been wondering about that.

I have helped create exhibits; now I can tell you all about dung beetles or extinction events. I have helped plan programs, and met wonderful, energetic people!

Every volunteer project increases your knowledge of the natural world. Even weeding the pollinator garden gives you an "up close" relationship with plants and how they prefer to grow. I am sure that each of you have experienced this.

Here is a new volunteer opportunity that will enable you to learn more about birds:

Riverside Nature Center has binoculars to lend to birders. We need a volunteer or two to pick up the binoculars and take them to the monthly Bird Walk led by the Sellins, loan them as needed, and return them to the Center afterwards. Easy to do.

Have fun out there!



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.



# UGRA Volunteer Summer Study



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

## 2023 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  
*E. coli* bacteria analysis.

Master Naturalists Volunteer Code: KR-08-C-FR

To register, or for more information, scan the QR code or visit this link:  
[www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/volunteer-summer-study](http://www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/volunteer-summer-study)



If you have any questions, please  
contact:

Matt Wilkinson  
[mwilkinson@ugra.org](mailto:mwilkinson@ugra.org)  
(830) 896-5456 Ext. 235





The Fredericksburg chapter will meet on Tuesday, June 27 in St. Joseph's Halle, 212 W. San Antonio Street. Social time begins at 6:30 and the meeting starts at 7. Dawn Davis will speak on how dark skies, eclipses, and plants are connected.

The Boerne and Kerrville chapters do not have monthly meetings in June.

### **Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center Workshops 2023**

**(All Workshop Times are from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon)**

August 19 AT23-056	<b>Solar Eclipses and Other Dark Skies</b> Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park, Tatsch House	Jeff Stone, Retired NASA Engineer rsvp: <a href="mailto:gwaggener@flow-apps.com">gwaggener@flow-apps.com</a>
September 13 AT23-083	<b>Monarchs and Milkweed Propagation II</b> Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park, Tatsch House	Cathy Downs, Hill Country Master Naturalist rsvp: <a href="mailto:gwaggener@flow-apps.com">gwaggener@flow-apps.com</a>
October 28 AT23-064	<b>Learning Through Nature Journaling</b> Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park, Tatsch House	Nancy Huffman, Hill Country Master Naturalist rsvp: <a href="mailto:gwaggener@flow-apps.com">gwaggener@flow-apps.com</a>

For further details, go to <https://fredericksburgnaturecenter.com/>

From Nyta Brown

Volunteers are needed for Friday and Saturday nights at Old Tunnel State Park. We would like to train a few more volunteers to assist on those evenings. If you are interested in bats and also enjoy talking to people about conservation, contact the Park Superintendent, Nyta Brown at [nyta.brown@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:nyta.brown@tpwd.texas.gov) about this opportunity.





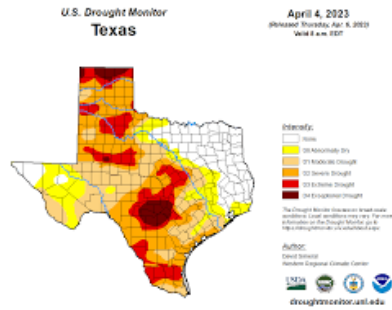
**Every 1st & 4th Friday | 10am – 12pm**

A Certified Texas Master Naturalist will be available to meet 1-on-1 to answer questions, discuss various topics, or listen to ideas about how to advance the stewardship and conservation of our environment.



**RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER**  
ASSOCIATION

[riversidenaturecenter.org](http://riversidenaturecenter.org) | (830) 257-4837



**TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION**

**PRE-  
REGISTERED  
COST \$10**

## **DROUGHT MANAGEMENT**

Reconditioning Rangeland, Wildfire  
Mitigation, Long Term Weather Outlook  
and Drought Insurance

**\$15 AT THE  
DOOR**

**JUNE 21, 2023**

**REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 1:00  
PROGRAM FROM 1:30PM - 4:30PM  
BANDERA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
1103 CEDAR ST, BANDERA, TX 78003**

**Program brought to you by the  
Medina and Bandera County  
AgriLife Extension Services**

**REGISTER IN ADVANCE:  
Bandera County Extension Office  
2886 Hwy 16 North  
PO Box 756  
Bandera, Tx 78003  
(830) 796-7755  
Please RSVP by June 19th**

**2 CEU'S  
OFFERED**

**TEXAS A&M  
AGRI LIFE  
EXTENSION**

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

# UGRA 20TH ANNUAL **River Cleanup** **VOLUNTEERS WANTED!**

**When: Saturday, July 22nd  
8:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Where: Flat Rock Park**



**Volunteers are encouraged to register before July 7th or they can arrive at Flat Rock Park at 8:00 AM for registration and instructions**

**Refreshments, Prizes, and Activities!  
T-shirts For First 300 Volunteers!**

**For more info and to register, visit:  
[www.ugra.org](http://www.ugra.org) (scan QR code above)  
Or call (830) 896-5445**



*Let's Keep OUR River Clean!*



## The View from Rusty Bend



*Painted Bunting at his bath*

Haikus from Rusty Bend

### **Dinosaur**

watch armadillo  
dig bugs in a hailstorm  
unfazed      he wears a roof

### **Black-capped Vireo**

masked for summer's ball  
elegant in your olive suit  
bathing   with a swoop

### **Monarch**

wings of bittersweet  
a thousand miles  
with no map

*continued on next page*

We strayed from Rusty Bend this May to visit treasured friends in the pothole prairies of Minnesota. A long road trip with cowboy cookies, many maps and the wild freedom of time. Staying mostly to the blue highways, we were never bored, but curious about the new biomes we were cruising through.

Surprisingly heartening were the prescribed burns of prairies in Oklahoma and their bright emerald response. Every farm had a storm cellar. Then into Kansas and Nebraska, we noticed that the soil-saving message of low-till or no-till practices has been heard loud and clear, as we passed section after section of farms giving up the deep plow. The grim stories of the Dust Bowl must have made a mark.

Further north, the monoculture was back in charge, with every inch of arable land plowed right to the edge of the road. Corn is still king here. Sigh. We noticed that the birds had disappeared. Can't blame them, no edges, few trees, no cover, no water. It was also sobering to cross big rivers like the Arkansas and the Cimarron, both dry, dry, dry.

In the sandhills of South Dakota, wetlands as far as the eye could see were full of migrating fowl. The cranes know home when they see it. Each little lake had a goose or swan nesting.

Once we arrived to our friends in Minnesota, at midnight, I could hear the migration above me. Their yard was a riot of orioles and woodpeckers. Each morning twenty species filled the air with songs. The lake beside their house was full of pelicans and swans, egrets and herons. So many big birds. Big water, big birds. The night before we left, a dinosaur of a snapping turtle came out of their wetlands like a scene from Jurassic Park. She covered half the road, lumbered across it, seeking a safe place to lay her eggs.

Back home, Lady Cardinal is sitting a nest on a much smaller scale next to my window. I watch her turn her eggs methodically. The Canyon Wren babies fledged while we were gone, and papa did demo on the nest, scattering twigs and piles of cotton in the yard.

The baby titmice with their gray topknots are learning to bathe. They are scared of the water. Every window sports a Painted Bunting or a tanager. A large snakeskin reminds us to watch for reptiles. Each morning, the dawn songs are muted compared to Minnesota. They are not as loud and crazy, but they are ours.



*Lady Cardinal guarding her clutch*

Poem, images and essay by Lucy Griffith Copyright 2023

*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](http://www.flowersongpress.com).*

*Comments welcome at [lucy@lucygriffithwriter.com](mailto:lucy@lucygriffithwriter.com).*

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.



**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.**

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 7:10-8:10PM.

**Board of Directors 2023**

President.....Jeff Schwarz  
Vice President.....Kim Ort  
Secretary.....Patti Guin  
Treasurer .....Ron Scoggins  
Advanced Training Director ....Deb Youngblood  
Class Training Director .....David Matthews  
Communications Director.....Mark Hults  
Membership Director.....Dot Maginot  
Volunteer Service Director.....David Drake  
Past Class Representative .....Jane Jamison  
Past President .....Carla Stang  
Chapter State Representative...Vern Crawford

Chapter Advisor: Michelle Hagerty



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.

**Questions about our chapter?**

Email Membership Director Dot Maginot  
[membership@hillcountrytmn.org](mailto:membership@hillcountrytmn.org)

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.

