

September 2024

Vol 21

Number 9



The Texas Star

Newsletter of the Texas Master Naturalist
Hill Country Chapter

T E X A S



SEPTEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

The September Hill Country Chapter meeting will be held on Monday, September 23. Doors will open at 6:00 pm for light refreshments and a meet and greet with project leaders. The business meeting will begin at 6:30 and the presentation at 7:00.

Our speaker will be David Drake, Projects Director, plus we will hear from leaders of over ten Hill Country Master Naturalist projects. For more information, please see Alice King's article on page 3.

Zoom attendance: Prior registration is required for attending the meeting/Advanced Training session via Zoom. To register for virtual attendance, click [HERE](#). You will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the meeting. You can then log into Zoom starting at 6:00 pm on September 23.

If you are attending in person, the location is at Guadalupe Basin Natural Resource Center (GBNRC). 125 Lehman Dr. Kerrville. There is no need to pre-register.

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President's Message ... Jeff Schwarz

Retirees: The Heart of Our Volunteer Organization

I have September 17th circled on my calendar since it is three months before my 65th birthday, a reminder to file for Medicare. Oh, the joys and benefits of aging in America! By the way, I'm about two or three years younger than our average member.

Our volunteer organization thrives because of the dedication of ALL of its members who play vital roles in our success, and I love you all, but in today's article, I'm focusing on my contemporaries – retirees.

Retirees bring a wealth of experience, wisdom, and compassion, which are indispensable to our mission. Their contributions not only help drive our initiatives but also create a sense of community, bridging generations and backgrounds.

One of the most valuable assets retirees offer is their time. With flexible schedules, many can volunteer consistently, ensuring that our projects receive the steady support they need. Whether it's organizing events, mentoring younger volunteers, or managing behind-the-scenes operations, retirees are often the backbone of our day-to-day efforts.

(Continued on page 2)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Retirees also bring years of professional and life experience to the table. From skills in management and finance to education and healthcare, their diverse expertise helps us operate more efficiently and effectively. Many of our retired members have held leadership roles in their careers, and their guidance has been instrumental in mentoring the next generation of volunteers.

Furthermore, volunteering provides retirees with a sense of purpose and fulfillment. It offers an opportunity to stay engaged, meet new people, and contribute to causes they care about. This mutual benefit strengthens the bonds within our organization and allows us to create an environment where everyone feels valued.

In short, we deeply appreciate the commitment, knowledge, and heart that retirees bring to our organization. They are truly the foundation upon which we build, and we are grateful for their ongoing support and dedication.

This Month We Honor:

Initial Certifications — Class of 2023

Allen Jehle

Special Certifications — Class of 2023

Lucy Cruz-Hudson, Laura Levy, Karla Marchell, Fletcher Thorne-Thomsen

Recertifications

Vicki Andrews, Gordon Downey, Robin Hale, Jane Jamison, Christopher Keating, Selina Keeton, Carol Knutson, Myrna Langford, Bob Lodowski, Robin May, Randi Mellon-Jehle, Anna Orsak, Barbara Pankratz, Eldon Sheffer, Debbie Thompson, Floyd Trefny, John Walker, Phil Youngblood

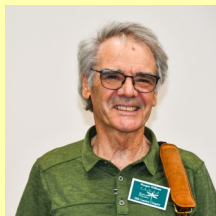
Milestones

1000 Hours: Jane Jamison, Jeff Schwarz

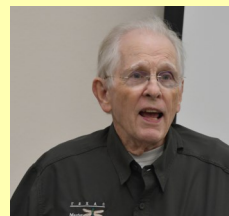
Congratulations to members who received awards at the August chapter meeting:



Susan Liljestrand
Initial Certification



Morgan Williams
Recertification



Mackenzie Brown
2500 Hours

Projects 101

BY ALICE KING

We are giving our project leaders the floor this month. David Drake will set the stage with an explanation of the basics, such as how to get involved in projects, how to get a new project approved, and navigating the project calendar on the website.

David's presentation will be followed by a series of 5-minute presentations (with photos) by projects leads. Each project lead will describe the project and the volunteer work involved as well as impacts and goals. The number and variety of projects we have underway is awesome. You may be surprised at what your fellow volunteers are working on! This presentation will qualify for the usual 1-hour Advanced Training credit.



Volunteer at Lost Maples!

The Friends of Lost Maples

are seeking volunteers to help out in the park this fall. Come share your knowledge at the Visitor Information Table, talking to park visitors about Lost Maples' facilities and trails, plants and animals, geology and human history. We need volunteers mostly on weekends from mid-October thru November.

If you're interested, contact Greg Walton at Gregwalton12345@gmail.com OR contact the park directly at 830-966-3413

The Conservation World Has Lost Another Warrior



BY BECKY ETZLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RIVERSIDE NATURE CENTER

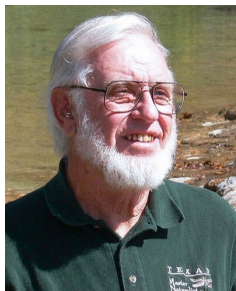
September 10, 2024

Hello Friends,

It is sad news that I bring to you. Our community has lost another environmental conservationist and educator. Jim Stanley left this world this past Friday. Jim had slowly removed himself from public interactions over the past few years; however his dedication as a naturalist remained strong to the end.

As an author and journalist, it should not come as a surprise that he wrote his own obituary, which I share with you here. Respecting Jim's wishes, a memorial service will not be held. Please take a moment to remember Jim and acknowledge his many contributions.

Jim Stanley was a unique man of both irascibility and great generosity. I will miss him dearly.



James "Jim" Preston Stanley

June 4, 1941 – September 6, 2024
Kerrville, Texas

James P. (Jim) Stanley was born on June 4, 1941 in Coleman Texas to William P. and Edith Stanley. Shortly thereafter, the family moved to Seminole, Texas to be close to his maternal grandparents, when his father joined the army early in the war.

However, his father was rejected due to heart issues and the family moved to an oil camp outside of Seminole. When Jim was ten, he began working for a cotton farmer adjacent to the oil camp. He worked on that farm for 6 years while also raising a series of 4-H animals.

Upon graduation from high school, Jim enrolled in Texas Tech and worked summers in the oil field. In 1965 he graduated with Bachelor and Master of Science degrees. He then enrolled at Indiana University, obtaining his PhD. In 1968 he took the position of Post-Doctoral Research/Assistant Professor at Louisiana State University, doing chemical research and teaching undergraduates.

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In 1975, Jim took a position of Research Scientist with Union Carbide Corp. in Tarrytown N.Y. This is where he met his wife-to-be who worked in the same research group. Jim and Priscilla were married in 1978. In 1985 the couple was transferred to research labs in Bound Brook, N.J., They retired early in 2000 and moved to the Hill Country to build a house north of Kerrville.

The couple soon became deeply involved in learning anything and everything they could about native plants and animals, native habitat, and land management. They took every day-long workshop given by the Bamberger Ranch, as well as any presentation by any TPWD, AgriLife Extension, NRCS or Texas Forest Service personnel. They also became volunteers at Riverside Nature Center and became friends with most of the other volunteers.

In 2002 Priscilla and Jim were in the first class of the Hill Country Master Naturalists, and became friends with most of the other students and teachers. Soon both Jim and Priscilla were involved with all of the Master Naturalist activities including teaching many classes for several years. Jim organized a group of knowledgeable Master Naturalists in an organization called the Land Management Assistance Program where landowners could request a visit and advice on how best to manage their land. This program has been utilized by over 500 landowners on over 44,000 acres of the Hill Country.

In 2009 Jim's first book, "Hill Country Landowners Guide", was published by Texas A & M, and in 2012 the Native Plant Society of Texas awarded the book the Carroll Abbott award for writing. Subsequent books have been "A Beginners Handbook for Rural Texas Landowners," and "Hill Country Ecology. Essays on Plants, Animals, Water and Land Management," and finally, a free gift to landowners, "A Guide for Small Hill Country Landowners."

Jim also wrote a weekly column, Hill Country Naturalist for the Kerrville Daily Times, beginning in 2010, which was also published in recent years by five other Hill Country Papers.

People wishing to remember Jim may do so with a donation to:
Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St. Kerrville, TX 78028; (830) 257-4837.

POLLINATOR GARDEN ASSISTANCE & RECOGNITION PROGRAM (PGARP) RECOGNIZES ANOTHER POLLINATOR CHAMPION

BY CATHERINE GAULDIN

Lois Fields of Kerrville was awarded a Pollinator Champion plaque on September 11, 2024 in recognition of the beautiful native plant garden she has installed in both the front and rear of her house. The garden was reviewed by PGARP volunteers Sheryl Pender and Catherine Gauldin who determined that Lois had met all of the requirements. Her plaque will be displayed in a prominent location on her property so that her neighbors will know that her hard work is a testimony to her dedication to providing habitat, food and water to the birds, bees, hummingbirds and other pollinators of her area. Congratulations Lois!

For more information on how to schedule a site visit by one of our volunteers, please refer to the PGARP page on the Hill Country Chapter website, located at <https://txmn.org/hillcountry/pgarp/>



Pictured:
Sheryl Pender & Lois Fields



Native Texas Plants need Native Texas Pollinators to thrive

The Horned Lizard's Homecoming **Reintroducing the Horned Lizard to the Texas Hill Country**

**Another Great Program Brought to You By:
Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center**



Texas Horned Lizard

**Speaker: Nathan Rains, Regional
Wildlife Diversity Biologist
Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.**

**When: Saturday, September 21, 2024
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Location: Gillespie County AgriLife Extension
Office – 38 Business Court
Fredericksburg, Texas**

**Approved for One (1) Hour of
Texas Master Naturalist Credit**

Did you know that the Texas Horned Lizard, also known to most people as a “horny toad,” is the official state reptile of Texas? It was once found in large numbers throughout the state, but for many Texans this fierce looking yet good-natured reptile is only a fond childhood memory. Currently, the Texas Horned Lizard is listed as a threatened species due to the impact of several factors, but thanks to the efforts of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and other interested organizations, this beloved reptile is being reintroduced in areas across the state where it has disappeared in recent years.

To educate people about the plight of the horny toad and what we as individuals can do to help in this conservation effort, the Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center is sponsoring a program entitled “The Horned Lizard’s Homecoming, Reintroducing the Horned Lizard to the Texas Hill Country.” The program will be held on Saturday, September 21, 2024, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the Gillespie County AgriLife Extension Office, 38 Business Court, Fredericksburg. Guest Speaker will be Nathan Rains, a Regional Wildlife Diversity Biologist for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, who works primarily with threatened and endangered species.

To find out what you can do to ensure the return of this beloved reptile to the Texas Hill Country, RSVP to Gracie at gwaggener@flow-apps.com. This presentation has also been approved for one hour of Texas Master Naturalist advanced training credit.

BIRD CITY KERRVILLE

COMMUNITY-WIDE PLANTING DAY — NOVEMBER 2

BY KATY KAPPEL

KERRVILLE - On September 4, 2024 twelve Texas Master Naturalists joined Pam Leinhard at the Kerr County Courthouse to remove bedraggled non-native plants and prepare the beds for native pollinators. The new area is on the Sidney Baker side. This group maintains the garden on the Earl Garrett side of the courthouse.



BIRD CITY
TEXAS
KERRVILLE
COMMUNITY

As part of the Bird City Kerrville effort, Hill Country Master Naturalists will be joined by Master Gardeners, the Native Plant Society and garden clubs from throughout the County. Communitywide Planting Day will take place on Saturday, November 2, 2024. Groups will also be working at the Youth Events Center and the Veterans Pathway. Other civic or non-profit sites are being sought for this effort.



(Photo by Katy Kappel)

In addition to the Native Plant Sale on October 5, the Riverside Nature Center’s “One on One with a naturalist” will offer advice on fall planting on Friday October 25 and Friday November 1 from 10 am until 12 pm.

For more information please contact birdcitykerrville@gmail.com or refer to the Bird City Texas - Kerrville Community page on the Kerrville Convention and Visitors Bureau website at <https://www.kerrvilletexascvb.com/p/things-to-do/bird-city-texas>

Book Club—Kerrville Chapter

2024

- September 18: Armadillos to Ziziphus by David Hillis
- October: Our Native Bees by Paige Embry
- November/
December: Holiday break

2025

- January: Entangled Life by Merlin Sheldrake
- February: Sacred Nature by Karen Armstrong
- March: The Well-Gardened Mind by Sue Stuart-Smith



FRIENDS OF FREDERICKSBURG NATURE CENTER

SPOTLIGHT ON THE POLLINATOR GARDEN

BY PATTI GUIN

Historically, the groundwork for establishing a nature center in Fredericksburg was laid in 2000 when well-known naturalist Bill Lindemann and friends formed the Friends of the Fredericksburg Nature Center (FFNC) and asked the City about the availability of an unused portion of Lady Bird Johnson Park in which to develop the nature center. The City agreed and early volunteer work consisted of the building of trails, inventorying and creating lists of the flora and fauna at the nature center, initiating a program to educate third graders about the natural world, and creating a handicapped accessibility trail with adjacent parking lot, just to name a few. In 2005, Fredericksburg Nature Center became an approved project of the Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter, and many of the current volunteers are certified Master Naturalists.

Moving forward to 2012, the Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center accepted an offer from the City of Fredericksburg to take over an abandoned rose garden at the park. However, instead of planting roses, they converted the garden into a picturesque native pollinator garden complete with walking paths, entrance arbors, two garden arbors for seating, and a dry creek with a bridge that leads to the entrance of the garden. The many hours spent creating the garden were a labor of love for FFNC volunteers, whose goal was not only to create a beautiful native landscape for the public to enjoy, but to also showcase the value of pollinators in sustaining a vigorous plant community. Since the creation of the pollinator garden in 2012, thousands of visitors from throughout the country have passed through its gates to walk through the spectacular array of colorful native plants that are visited each year by hundreds of different types of butterflies, bees, and other pollinators. Over the past three years, FFNC has made some significant improvements to the pollinator garden. In 2022, volunteers installed two new entrance gates in both the front and back of the garden, along with a rear entrance arbor. In 2023, new deer-proof fencing was installed around the perimeter of the garden and a new entrance path was built.



2012 Construction of Bridge leading to the Pollinator Garden (Photo by Gracie Waggener)



Tom Hynes poses with the "Little Nature Library" he built for the garden (Photo by Mary Ellen Terrell)

In March of this year, Tom's Little Nature Library was added to the garden. The book-lending library was built by long-time FFNC volunteer and former Board member Tom Hynes, who turned 90 on August 31 of this year. The library contains nature books for both adults and children. The adult section includes field guidebooks on butterflies, bugs and flowers that are intended to be used while visiting the pollinator garden. The children's section contains nature-related stories, including some classics, that can be read in the garden or borrowed and returned.

(Continued on page 10)

The newest addition to the pollinator garden is a beautifully illustrated and educational flip-page VarroBook, which tells the story of how the garden is designed to attract, feed and shelter various pollinators, and how pollinators play a crucial role in plant reproduction. In addition to the colorful photos, descriptions, and information about the various pollinators that visit the garden and how pollination occurs, it also serves to educate the public about what we as individuals can do to help pollinators achieve their plant reproductive roles.



Children enjoying VarroBook
(Photo by Patti Guin)

The pollinator garden is just one of the many areas that make up the Fredericksburg Nature Center. In addition to the nature trails, you will find a bird blind in which over 190 species of native and migrating birds. There is also a butterfly garden, and a cactus/hummingbird garden that is located along one of the nature trails. All these areas were created and are continuously maintained by FFNC volunteers, many of whom are Texas Master Naturalists, who meet at Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park each Tuesday morning at 8:30 a.m. and work for as long as each individual volunteer is able (usually two to three hours). The Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center is a 501c(3) organization and an approved project of the Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter. For more information about the organization, how you can become a member, and the volunteer opportunities that are available, go to <https://fredericksburgnaturecenter.com>.



New entrance gate - Left to right: Frank Garcia, Tom Musselman, and Lonnie Childs
(Photo by Gracie Waggener)



Pollinator Garden
(Photo by Lonnie Childs)



Pollinator Garden Volunteers (left to right): Gracie Waggener, Nancy Person, Deb Youngblood and Sandi Kennedy
(Photo by Lonnie Childs)

TEXAS OUTDOORS-WOMAN NETWORK (TOWN)

Kerrville

BY KATY KAPPEL

TOWN is a program of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department with chapters throughout the state. Nationwide, many parks have a directive to involve underserved populations; minority, low income, and disabled women. Apparently, women are less likely than men to engage in outdoor activities alone.

Our chapter came together in November 2021, when 27 women showed up at the Riverside Nature Center. Today our Facebook group has 400 members. Each month, 50 to 70 individuals show up to hike, kayak, camp, cycle or explore natural areas. We often try a new restaurant together afterwards. Many of our members are widowed or have a husband who is not active outdoors. Most are interested in managing their land or learning more about wildlife. Monthly meeting topics range from first aid, to birding, to trail building. There is no membership fee, no officers, no treasury. Events are scheduled by individuals according to their interests.

TOWN Kerrville is a project of the Hill Country Master Naturalists. Volunteers schedule events and speakers and manage membership paperwork.



Riverside Nature Center
Native Plant Society of Texas - Kerrville Chapter
Texas Master Naturalist - Hill Country Chapter
Invite you to...

FALL NATIVE TREE & PLANT SALE

Tax-
Free
Day

October 5, 2024
9:00 am to Noon

Nature
Book
Sale

Come early for the best selection! Experts will be available to help you select plants that will thrive in your specific landscape conditions.



- Native Trees
- Shrubs
- Perennials
- Grasses



WATCH: RiversideNatureCenter.org



For More Details



MARK YOUR CALENDARS



SEPTEMBER

September 21

The Horned Lizard's Homecoming
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Fredericksburg



OCTOBER

October 5

Fall Native Tree and Plant Sale
Riverside Nature Center, Kerrville

October 23-27

TMN (State) Annual Meeting, San Marcos



NOVEMBER

November 2

Bird City—Community Planting Day
Youth Events Center & Veteran's Pathway—Kerrville

November 16

2024 Class Launch and Volunteer Appreciation Day
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Fredericksburg



DECEMBER

December

No chapter meeting or newsletter in December.

The View from Rusty Bend



Saharan sand colors the close of day

Where I'm from

I am from the smell of masa on a cast iron pan,
a smear of refried beans,
dreaming in Spanish.
I am from a plain house
with shiny magnolia trees to climb.
I am double-bred for storytelling,
my mother's wry humor,
my father's feel for detail.
I am from a steward that taught
*We don't own the land,
we owe the land.
Slow the flow of rainfall.
Cut the cedar, chop the thistles.
Bring back the old grasses.*

I hail from scratch baking,
knives for whittling
and all day outside.
I am from hospitality, greeting
with the smell of your favorite foods,
flowers by your bed,
building a drink just for you.
I am from a horse's muzzle at my neck,
the lullaby of lope across the pasture.
I am from the dew on velveted bucks
in August, the cough-bark of fox,
the rattle call of roadrunner.
I have bluebonnets in my veins,
limestone in my bones,
and bird by ear a little better each year.
(Listen— the tanagers still sing on the river.)
When I'm gone, bury me
with seeds in my hands
and a storm on the way.

Now it is August at Rusty Bend. It's challenging to find beauty and meaning in this hard time of year. August feels like an armload of heat and dry grass, tawdry as a cheap novel, like torn pages on a dusty floor. Even the name reeks of irony. August has beigned the landscape and robbed the air of sweetness. I find myself pouty and cranky. No wind. No rain, I complain.

Yet I watch the turkey hen stand motionless in the shade. She holds her wings away from her body for hours, trying to evade her own heat. Snakes and lizards are hard pressed to find a safe temperature to hunt, so we watch our steps at night. We do enjoy "Morning Swim" at the bird bath, when the chickadees and goldfinches arrive to splash like kids at the beach.

Still, on my walks, which are early and earlier, I am reminded and consoled by nature's circular structure, her ebb and flow. The moon holds the metaphor. She makes me remember how winter's fallen leaves feed the rush of spring. How all this dead grass hides and protects insects and their eggs. How this dormancy of late summer is protective. This rest time will give way and allow the push of fall color and cool air.

This flip side to the unwanted or unloved humbles me. I remind myself that the lowly mosquito is fine dining for my beloved dragonfly. The rat snake sniffing out the voles that multiply no matter the weather is welcome. Bless his muscled body. When I cock my head and my attitude, and look at it just right, I see the beauty in unloved things.

Easiest perhaps, to love the vulture, circling, circling, drawn to something at the end of its life. A welcome clean-up crew, turning death into hollow bones and feathers.



August is the time of big bugs

Poem, images and essay by Lucy Griffith Copyright 2024

Lucy Griffith, PhD co-manages Rusty Bend 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 new collection celebrating the brush country is forthcoming from FlowerSong Press and can be pre-ordered from this link:

[The Place the Spiders Waved by Lucy Griffith \(Coming in the Fall of 2024\)](#)
— FlowerSong Press & Juventud Press

Comments welcome at lucygriffithwriter@gmail.com

About us

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 Guadalupe Basin Natural Resources Center (GBNRC) Building at 125 Lehmann Drive in Kerrville.

Doors open at 6:00 pm for socializing. Business Meeting begins at 6:30 pm. Advanced Training session begins at 7:00 pm.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS—2024

- President.....Jeff Schwarz
- Vice President.....Alice King
- Secretary.....Lisa Flanagan
- Treasurer.....Dot Maginot
- Advanced Training DirectorPatricia Poore
- Class Training DirectorCarra Milikien
- Communications DirectorMark Hults
- Membership Director.....Phil Roberson
- Volunteer Service Director.....David Drake
- Past Class Representative.....Lou Hugman
- Past President.....Carla Stang
- Chapter State RepresentativeVern Crawford
- Chapter Advisor.....Michelle Haggerty

Learn more on our website:
txmn.org/hillcountry

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:
newsletter@hillcountrytmn.org.

QUESTIONS ABOUT MEMBERSHIP?

ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS
 Email Membership Director, Phil Roberson
membership@hillcountrytmn.org

See our Facebook Page!
 Search Texas Master Naturalist, Hill Country or click [HERE](#)



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.

