

# INDIAN TRAIL MARKER

June/July 2018

News, events & calendar of the Indian Trail Chapter, Texas Master Naturalists...Serving Ellis and Navarro Counties

701 S. I-35E, Suite 3, Waxahachie, TX 75165 | Office: 972-825-5175 | Visit our website at <http://txmn.org/indiantrail>

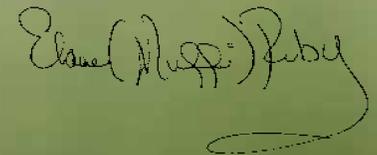
## *From the Desk of the* **PRESIDENT**

*Elaine "Muffi" Ruby*

National Pollinator Week is June 18-24. Pollinator protection and education is at the heart of nearly everything we do: maintaining native habitats at Kachina Prairie and Mockingbird Nature Park, leading wildflower walks, educating both children and adults at our outreach booths, posting

our observations on iNaturalist, and planting trees. Many of us also encourage pollinators in our own gardens with native plantings. What would we do without our pollinators? I don't want to find out!

Have an awesome summer; and I hope to see you at our chapter meetings. Remember our new 2018 training class starts on August 28 ... please plan to attend as we welcome our newest trail blazers!



Monarch on Canadian Thistle © JimWest

**National Pollinator Week**  
**June 18-24**

Meeting 4th Monday (*usually*) of each month at 6 p.m., program at 7 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, Waxahachie

# ★ AWARDS ★

**Congratulations to chapter members who received certification and recognition pins for their achievements in volunteer service. In March and April 2018, achievement recognitions were awarded to the following individuals:**



*New Certification:  
Kayleigh Medeiros,  
Class of 2017*



*2017 Recertification and 250 Hours - Travis Edwards; 2018 Recertification - Sharon Lane, Paul Grindstaff, Deborah Rayfield, Aaron Gritzmaker, Kathleen Mack, Carolyn Gritzmaker, Gwen Eishen; New Certification - Daniel Mueck, Rebecca Mueck, Class of 2017*

*2018 Recertification: Muffi Ruby, Jack Dunaway, Charlie Grindstaff, Don Happ, Sue Frary*



# KACHINA PRAIRIE UPDATE



## PRESCRIBED BURN UPDATE AT KACHINA PRAIRIE

By Chris Cook

It's been a long time coming (two years!), but finally, on March 21, and with just one day's notice, the conditions were right for our prescribed burn at Kachina Prairie in Ennis. Whoopie! Hurray! It was a very successful burn, with several of our chapter members in attendance to assist with the burn.

The "burn boss" Larry LeBeau did a great job of explaining what was going to happen and making sure we had the magic combination -- wind, humidity and temperature. They set the first test fire about 12:30 pm and by 3 pm it was all over.

Within two days of ash layer, green shoots appeared, and as of May 1st those green shoots are now 10-18 inches tall. Among those flowers currently blooming are: prairie parsley, yarrow, coral honeysuckle, spiderwort, evening primrose (i-naturalist calls them pink ladies), Texas



yellow star, prairie verbena, Texas vervain, horse nettle, Texas thistle, powder puff, and Texas dandelion. I also saw, on every one of the 4 thistles I examined, two or more leaf-footed bugs (*Coreidae*



*Heteroptera Pentatomomorpha*), reproducing.

As exciting as it is to see new life emerge from the ashes, the work goes on. On our April 28th workday, six of our wonderful ITMN crew worked in pairs to begin removing woody plants, one to chop, saw, yank and another to apply poison to stumps: Jim Patak, Don Happ, Celia Yowell, Muffi Ruby, Sandy Ashbrook, Jake Calvit, Steve Hill, and moi. They all sweated the hard work, but I was in my element documenting



plants for the i-Naturalist City Nature Challenge. Invasives are still present, of course, but now our access to control them (or attempting to) is quite a bit easier as long as we work at it often and with determination.

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[This is our invitation to please join us on workdays. I'll bring kolaches if that will sweeten the plea!] Poison ivy is lush, but the path is clear. Privet is in bloom and the fragrance is heavenly from a distance. Sumac is doing its thing, of course, and we removed quite a bit in the bison area over the weekend. So far,

I've seen no bastard cabbage at Kachina! However, honeysuckle is ripe for the picking and sucking, and I have a story for that ...

*Photos by Jack Dunaway, Charlie Grindstaff, and Chris Cook*

*Jim Patek, Joan Mahony, and Michèle Ostendorf touching up the signage.*



# Unsung Heroes

Lemon Beebalm (pink) with Clasp-leaf coneflower © Jim West

By Jean Kastanek

As I walked through my backyard one day in mid-March, I came across one of the first signs of spring – a single dandelion flower. I felt a slight flutter of excitement about the oncoming season, but that was quickly replaced with a nagging voice from the dark recesses of my mind, “Pesky weed!” I struggled to ignore this voice, focusing instead on the bright yellow, smiling face of this flower looking up at me.

At the recent Edible/Medicinal Plant Walk at Mockingbird Nature Park, my ears perked up when I heard the word “dandelion”. Bob Richie, our expert guide on this walk, described the many ways this “pesky weed” benefits not only nature, but us as well. The dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) provides an early source of pollen and nectar for our pollinators and enriches the soil with calcium. It also serves as a food source for us, one that is loaded with vitamins and antioxidants. I especially like that dandelions can be used to make wine and smoothies, and I might have to bake some of that dandelion bread that I’ve read about.

Henbits (*Lamium amplexicaule*), considered weeds like the dandelions, also serve as an early food source for pollinators, especially long-tongued bees such as honey bees and bumble bees. Henbits are rich in vitamins, iron, and antioxidants. The whole plant is edible raw and cooked and is a good food source for chickens as well.

Chickweed (*Stellaria media*) attracts moths such

as the Chickweed Geometer (*Haematopsis grataria*) and butterflies, among them the Dainty Sulphur butterfly (*Nathalis iole*). It will add potassium and phosphorus to the soil if allowed to grow and die back on its own. As we learned on the plant walk previously mentioned, it makes a delicious salad rich in iron, potassium, and vitamins A, B, C, and D. Modern herbalists prescribe chickweed for iron-deficiency anemia because of its high iron content.

White prairie clover (*Trifolium repens*) is pollinator-friendly and is a host plant for the Southern Dogface butterfly (*Zerene cesonia*). This plant is high in protein and for that reason is a good addition to soups and stews. The flowers can be dried and used to make tea.

Lemon beebalm (*Monarda citriodora*) attracts hummingbirds, long-tongued bees, and Hawk moths. It is used to make jelly and tea, and its anti-fungal and anti-microbial properties make it a good ingredient for a healing salve.

The list goes on. The plants in this article represent that category of flora that are often overlooked or considered undesirable, i.e., those that are weedy, invasive, less colorful, tiny, or thorny (Of course, caution is advised when ingesting plants). Yet, these are the “multitaskers” of the plant world, performing double-duty in their contributions to a healthy ecosystem and our health as well. I’m reminded of an anonymous quote I read recently, “If you judge a book by its cover, you might miss an amazing story.” I’m beginning to see my backyard in a whole different light.



Dandelion © Jean Kastanek



Henbit © Deborah Rayfield

# Simple Delights

Story and Photos by Chris Cook

On Tuesday May 1st, we had a program at the Ennis Garden Club meeting on cooking with flowers, and we fed the group with our creations: marigold herb butter and bread, spicy bastard cabbage hamburger dip, fruit/ flower petal salad, lavender flavored bundt cake, lavender shortbread cookies, candied petals, spinach and rose petal salad, and more.



My part was foraging for the flowers and making the food table centerpiece and a display of what I found (see [foragingtexas.com](http://foragingtexas.com)). Of course, I made this huge vase filled

with edible wildflowers, including long strands of blooming honeysuckle coming out under the mass of blossoms. When it was over I wanted to do something with the vase of flowers; I couldn't take it home because one of our cats eats plants (I know, they are edible ...). So, I took it and the remaining lavender cookies to my daughter's sixth grade classroom. She talked to the kids about picking honeysuckle as a kid



and sucking the nectar, and what fun it had been.

**NOT EVEN ONE** of those 15 kids knew what honeysuckle was or had ever eaten it! And I'm thinking that it's like a rite of passage in childhood and how sad that they had not experienced it already.

So, we showed them how to break off the nub, pull out the pistil, suck the nectar. They were so excited! And I was so pleased for them! My daughter told me that after I left, they sucked the sweet from every blossom and wanted to know where they could find more. (Hey, does that count as outreach?)

Knowing I had promised to write this article on Kachina Prairie and feeling sad for a part of nature that our kids were missing out, I went to the prairie "to see what I could see", a bit nostalgic and a bit sad. I collected honeysuckle vine to make a wreath, held it together with smilax vine (the no-prickle kind), and wove in coral honeysuckle, yarrow, prairie parsley, grass heads, and powder puff vine. Then I walked out to Bubba and had a chat with him about people and nature and which one will persevere.

He looks so good with a wreath of flowers on his horn, don't you think?

# MEMBER P | R | O | F | I | L | E

## Paul Grindstaff

*By Jean Kastanek*

**JK:** Tell us a little bit more about your life outside of Texas Master Naturalist.

**PG:** I deliver Meals on Wheels once a month through our church. I volunteer at the Dallas-Ft. Worth National Cemetery most Friday mornings. I like to weld and work with wood; making both useful and artsy-fartsy projects...and my wife finds plenty of those to keep me busy. I especially love to turn bowls.

**JK:** How did you become interested in Texas Master Naturalist? What projects do you enjoy the most?

**PG:** The first time I heard of Texas Master Naturalists was working with a member of Rio Brazos Chapter at Fossil Rim, but I must admit I had no idea what that was. Then Steve Houser talked about

TXMN during a class he was teaching on trees to the Master Gardeners, but Dallas was too far away. Then Mox Moxley sent an email about starting a chapter in Ellis County and my wife and I jumped in with both feet. I love all of our projects, but Dogwood Canyon and LANDS are the ones I enjoy most; followed very closely by whichever project I am working on at the moment - BRIT, Mockingbird, Kachina Prairie, Bullard Heights, or John Bunker Sands Wetland Center.

**JK:** What nature/environmental issues interest you the most?

**PG:** Water, land stewardship, and wildlife.

**JK:** What is the most rewarding thing about volunteering?

**PG:** The elevated high I get when I see the smiles we get from all. If I can put a smile on someone's face that day I am so happy. If I can turn someone to nature, that is all I can ask.

**JK:** What activities do you enjoy when you're not busy with chapter programs?

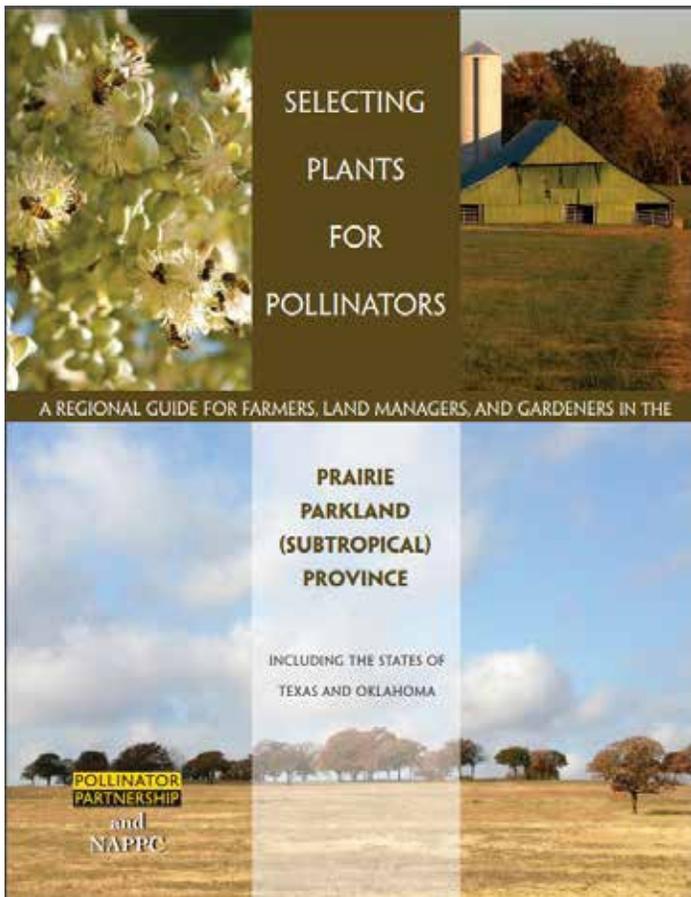
**PG:** Welding, woodturning, playing cards, making things, traveling and spending time with my family.



# PLANNING YOUR POLLINATOR GARDEN

By Anne Marie Gross

Newly transplanted from Florida to Texas, the thought of planning a new garden was overwhelming. Everything was different here – soils, rain, wind, low humidity – as well as the abundance of Texas native plants! I had just completed my Master Naturalist training and was anxious to “do right” for our native critters.

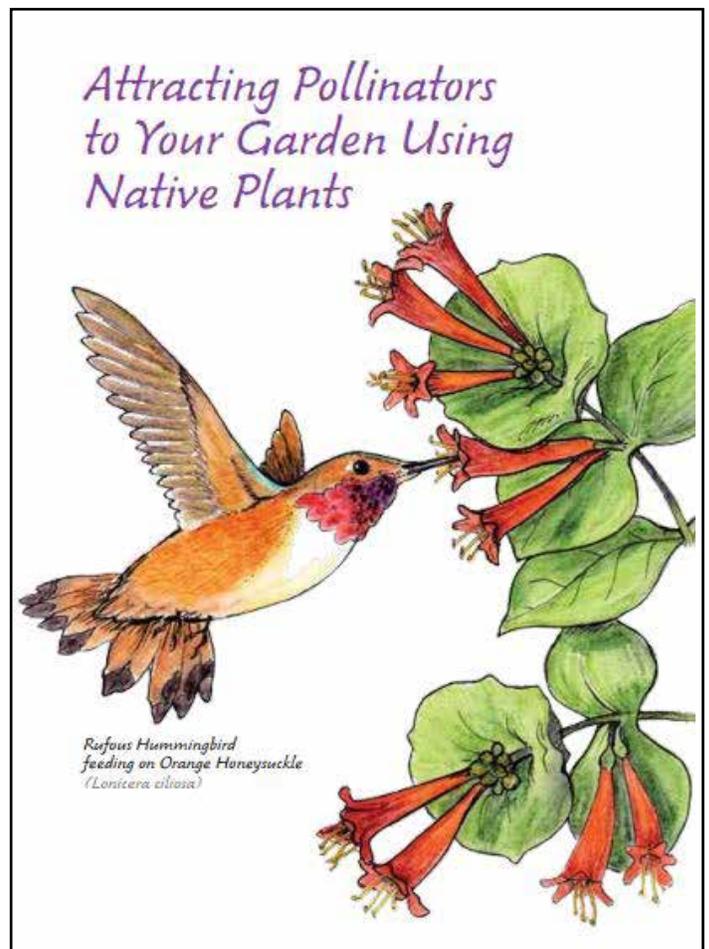


Download this 24-page guide ‘*Selecting Plants for Pollinators*’ for our region from <http://pollinator.org/guides>. Guides are also available for other regions of the United States.

My husband and I were fortunate enough to start with a nearly-blank slate in our backyard. The backyard of the late-century home we bought quickly flooded every time it rained. While the dirt-moving crew did an impressive job grading and shaping the landscape to drain away from our home, we were left with a bare backyard dotted with patchy bits of “weeds” (which I soon learned to cherish as the pollinator-encouraging wildflowers they are).

Now ... to dream, plan, and plant! The possibilities are endless, but my pot of money (and time) is not. Clearly, my garden vision was not going to happen overnight. If you happen to be faced with the daunting challenge of transforming a non-native mess to something a little more encouraging to our local bugs, birds, and other critters, here are some of tips and resources I’ve gathered along the way:

- Learn the “whys” of native-plantings designed to encourage native pollinators. This knowledge will help you stick with your plan, as well as strengthen your resolve when walking through those garden centers packed to the rafters with beautiful flowering plants. No more randomly picking up plants forced into fast growth in an out-of-state nursery!

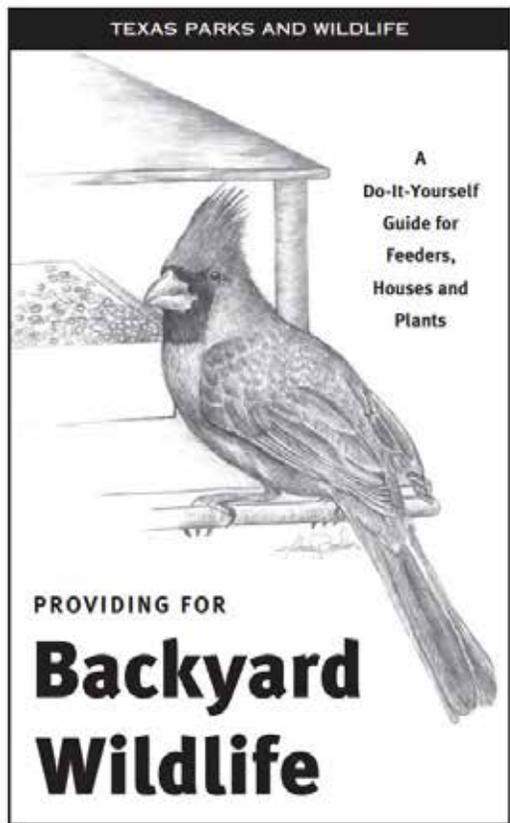


Author and artist Nancy Seiler has this and several other beautifully-illustrated guides available for download <http://www.nancyseiler.com/native-pollinators/brochures>.

- Change your POV. Coming from a FL community where manicured lawns were de rigueur, it was a bit of

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a shock moving into our new TX home, which happened to be the only home on the street with an overgrown, weed-dominated yard. It took a few months, but now I lovingly regard our lawn as a



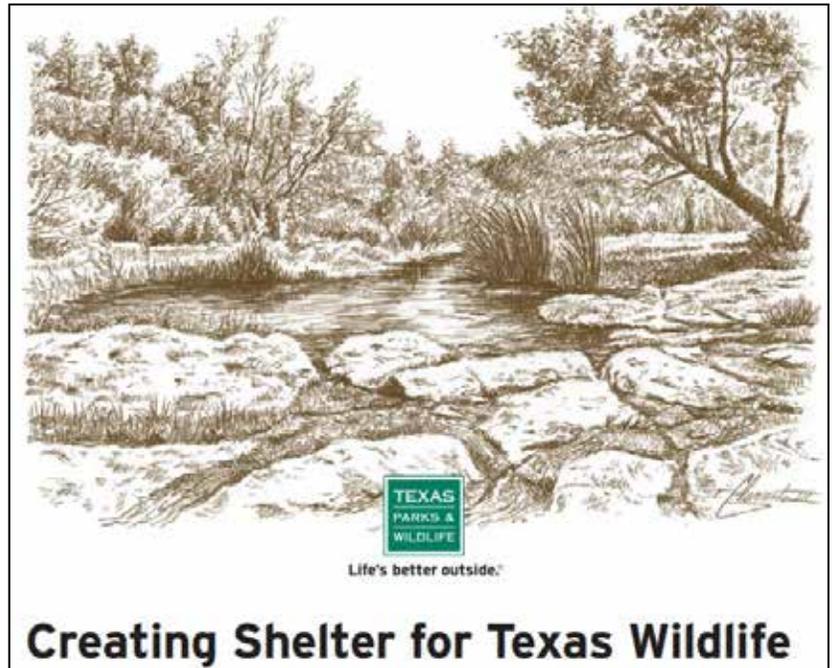
beautiful landscape of tiny wildflowers ... henbit, wood sorrel, field madder, frogfruit, corn gromwell, and a multitude of grasses and sedges I'm forever trying to identify. Learn to love and appreciate those small, yet key, components of the pollinator community, if not in your lawn, then make a place for them within planting beds.

- Read, then read some more -- There is no shortage of resources for learning about pollinator gardens; I've included some of the ones I used here when coming up with my garden plan. Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's plant database ([www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)) is also an excellent resource that has many search variables to help you learn about plants for shade, sun, dry or wet areas.

- Make a master plan and commit to the long-haul; break your plan down into stages to make it more manageable for your wallet as well as your back. An ideal goal would be to entirely replace your non-native lawn and landscaping with a xeriscape that will not only encourage pollinators but reduce water use. However, that's not realistic for every homeowner. If you are restricted by HOA or city codes, then replace

as much of that lawn as you can with wide, curvy beds filled with pollinator-friendly Texas natives. Aside from planning for year-round color and a mix of shapes, heights and textures for an eye-pleasing look, make sure you address key needs for pollinators -- food, water, and shelter.

- Fill your garden with nectar-rich plants as well as host plants for egg-laying.



You can find both of these free brochures offered by Texas Parks and Wildlife at [https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife\\_diversity/wildscapes/publications.phtml/](https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/wildlife_diversity/wildscapes/publications.phtml/)

- Choose plants to provide layers of canopy to shelter pollinators from predators and weather.
- Gather small bundles of hollow reeds for nesting bees.
- Allow some spots of bare, dry earth for ground-nesting insects.
- Puddling zones of shallow dishes or leafy plants to catch and hold morning dew will provide water for our smallest garden visitors.
- Dream (and plan) big -- big plants, that is. Trees and large shrubs also play a key role in supporting native pollinators. Add a variety of trees to your landscape, being careful to leave some sunny garden spaces. Limit trimming and shaping (if any), and only remove snags as needed for safety or code restrictions. Check your short-lived ornamental trees and start researching any replacements.

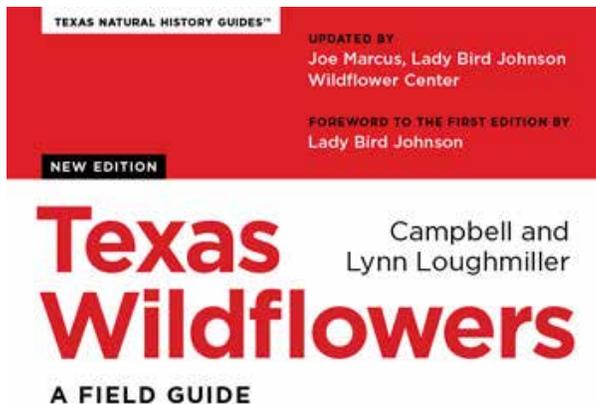
## A Comparison of Two Wildflower Field Guides

Jim Varnum once advised me how to choose a field guide ... sit down with a wildflower that you know, look it up in the field guide, and see how the guide's description matches what you observe. Do you like and understand the description? Does it tell you what you want to know? If your answer is yes, then this is the field guide for you.

This year Texas has been blessed with two new wildflower field guides – *Texas Wildflowers* by Campbell & Lynn Loughmiller and *Wildflowers of Texas* by Michael Eason. So, following Jim's advice to compare these field guides, which wildflower would you sit down with in April in Texas? (Hint: it's name begins with "blue" and ends with "bonnet"!)

### *Texas Wildflowers*

Written by Campbell & Lynn Loughmiller, updated by Joe Marcus; Published by University of Texas Press



*Texas Wildflowers* has 492 pages 5"x 8" with about a page and a half devoted to each flower, including a good-sized picture of the flower. The forward written by Lady Bird Johnson for the first edition in 1984 is included, as are a map of Texas ecoregions, a glossary, an illustrated glossary, an index by family and an index.

#### PROS:

- *Texas Wildflowers* has a great illustrated glossary, possibly the best in any of the field guides I have seen.
- Each floral description includes interesting comments, largely excerpted from the Loughmillers original two editions of *Texas Wildflowers*.

#### CONS:

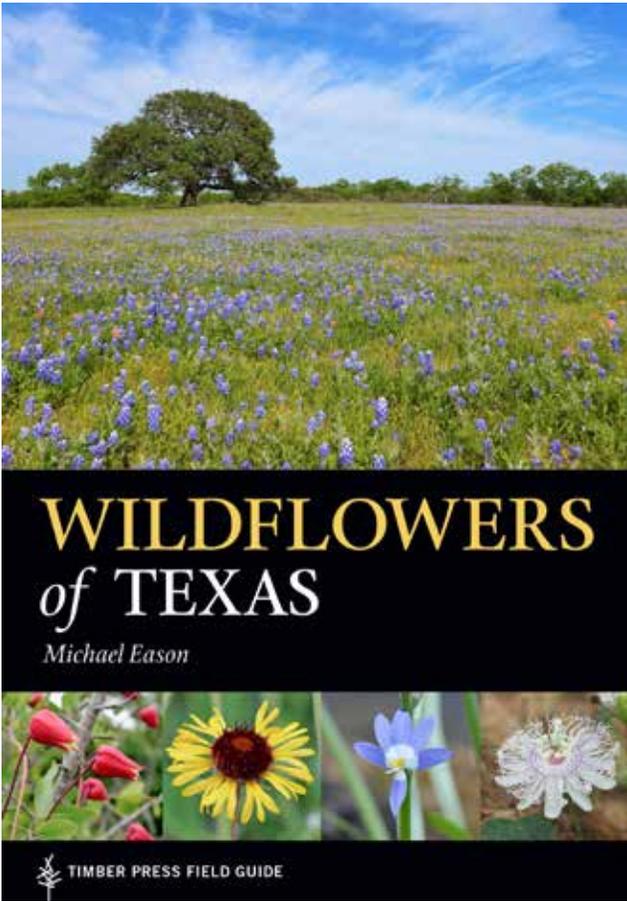
- This edition is organized first by flower color, then by flowering time, and finally by genus and species, supposedly to make it more useful for novice wildflower enthusiasts. However, if a novice sees a yellow flower blooming in June, how would they know if that flower began blooming in June or several months earlier in April? They would need to look through the entire color section, no matter when the bloom time.
- Only 350 species are included.
- No listing in the index for Bluebonnet ... luckily, I knew the full name to be Texas bluebonnet, and its scientific name is *Lupinus texensis* so I was able to locate it on page 411. The picture is lovely but does not show the leaves, the whole plant or seed pods; only the flower.
- The height of the plants is given, but the size of the blossom is not often given.
- For most flowers only one common name is given, some have two common names listed and few have three. This makes it difficult to search the index for a flower if you only know local common names.

### *Wildflowers of Texas*

Written by Michael Eason

Published by Timber Press, Inc. 2018

*Wildflowers of Texas* is slightly larger with 508 pages 6"x 8.5" with one third of a page devoted to each flower, including a 1.5"x 2.25" picture of the flower. The illustrated glossary is printed on the inside of the front and back covers. Eason includes sections on How to Use This Book; Climate, Geography and Ecoregions (including a map); Viewing Wildflowers; Plant Families; a glossary and an index. *Continued next page*



- Gives tips on identifying and photographing wildflowers for identification purposes.
- Many more common names listed, with a maximum of three per plant.
- Has more technical details, such as length and width of leaves and flowers.

### CONS:

- No listing in the index for Bluebonnet ...however, if I had known its other common names – Buffalo clover or Wolf flower, I could have found it. The picture is lovely but does not show the leaves, the whole plant or seed pods; only the flower.
- Bloom time is only listed by season, not actual months.
- No comments or interesting facts about the flowers. You can't fit much in a third of a page.
- The illustrated glossary is very basic.
- Pictures are small and for the most part focus just on the flower.

I am left still searching for the perfect field guide. My preferred guides of choice are still *Wildflowers of Texas* by Geyeta Ajilvsgi for descriptions of the wildflowers and *Wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country* by Marshall Enquist for the photographs. But I welcome these new books to my library and will consult them for the updated current botanical names of the wildflowers.

### PROS:

- 1170 species are organized by color, then family and genus. Easy to compare flowers of the same genus when grouped this way.

## DID YOU KNOW?

... that bats are important pollinators, too?

According to the National Wildlife Federation, over 500 species of flowers worldwide rely on bats for pollination. In Texas, the Mexican long-tongued bat (*Choeronycteris mexicana*) pollinates agave plants, used to produce tequila.

The Mexican long-nosed bat (*Leptonycteris nivalis*) is a major pollinator of many night-blooming cactus flowers.

More information on bats and pollination can be found on the National Wildlife Federation Blog, *Not Just the Birds and Bees – 6 Fast Facts About Pollinating Bats* by Micaela Jemison, June 18, 2014.



*Mexican long-tongued bat*  
Photo by Scott Buckel,  
iNaturalist.org

# Notable NATURE

## Hummingbirds

By Carolyn Gritzmaker

Two species of hummers spend the spring and summer months with us. In a sense, east meets west here, as the ruby-throat (*Archilochus colubris*) is an eastern bird and the black-chinned (*Archilochus alexandri*) is western. The adult male of both species looks somewhat similar at first. But when the light hits them just right their throat features, which look black in poor light, seem to glow with color.

The adult male ruby throated hummingbird is about 3 ¾ inches long and has a radiant ruby throat. His crown and back are metallic green, and he has a distinctive dark forked tail. The female also has a green crown and back, but she lacks the red throat and her tail is rounded with white tips on the feathers.

The adult male black-chinned hummingbird is about 3 ½ inches long. He has a dark head and black chin and a gleaming purple band above a white collar and chest. He, too, has a metallic green back, but his tail is only slightly forked. The female black-chinned is so similar to the female ruby-throat that it is almost impossible to tell them apart in the field.

Besides dining on flower nectar and the “fast food” feeders we put up for them, hummingbirds also eat a considerable number of small insects. These are chiefly those insects that come to the flowers the hummingbirds visit, but also some caught in flight.

The flight of hummingbirds is very impressive and more like that of an insect than a bird. Their wings move so rapidly as to seem like a soft blur on either side of the bird’s body. They can hover so steadily as to appear fixed in space, as though sitting on an invisible perch. The can turn at any angle quickly and, just as suddenly, dart off and away at top speed. Hummingbirds can fly forward, backward, sideways and hover. The only flight maneuver they cannot perform is to soar on motionless wings. Watch for these little jewels of the bird world as they dart around Ellis and Navarro counties from late March to October.

### Species Profile

**Common Names:** *Ruby-throated and Black-chinned Hummingbird*

**Scientific Name:** *Archilochus colubris, Archilochus alexandri*

**Family:** *Trochilidae*

### Key Identification

#### Characteristics:

- *Males/Females: metallic green back and crown feathers*
- *Males: iridescent ruby-red throat; black chin with throat strip of iridescent purple*
- *Length: 2.8 – 3.5 inches*



© Jim West

© Jack Dunaway



# Butterfly Photography Tips

Story and Photos by Sue Frary

Taking really beautiful, tack-sharp photographs of butterflies is a difficult task... much like photographing flying birds, only on a much smaller and twitchier scale. Butterflies fly erratically, typically don't sit still very long, and often look a little tattered from their travels. But they are gorgeous creatures, and against a nice flower with a clean background, you'll have a photo suitable for screen savers, phone screens, and your wall!

My tips are **1.** practice, **2.** practice, **3.** practice. Grab a chair, sit by a butterfly garden somewhere, settle with your beverage of choice and wait. If you sit by the right plants..



**The Postman**, *Heliconius melpomene*, native to Mexico and Central America. First described by Carl Linnaeus in 1758.

lantana, milkweed for instance ... they will come.

As you practice, try to line up your camera back so that the butterfly's wings are flat as you look at it. That usually means taking the shot from above, which means you need to get out of your chair, but hey you've finished the adult beverage, right? To get all of the butterfly in focus, you'll probably need a medium aperture and a fast shutter speed. The street photographer's maxim of "F8 and be there.." is handy

**Tawny Owl**, *Caligo memnon*, a large butterfly often mistaken for a resting Blue Morpho. The master of camouflage, resident of rainforests from Mexico to the Amazon.



advice., and a shutter speed of 1/500 sec or higher will stop the wing motion if your subject critter suddenly moves to a killer pose. Always set your ISO to as low a value as you can get away with, given the light conditions. Shooting the butterfly with your widest aperture will give you a nice background blur (a nice "bokeh" in tech speak), but if the wings aren't dead flat relative to the camera back, you might get some of the wings out of focus. It's all a bunch of tradeoffs, that's what makes photography addictive.. getting the tradeoffs perfect is a real rush.

My favorite practice place is the Fair Park Discovery Gardens Butterfly House. You are assured of comfortable conditions (bring a little stool to sit on), many many mind-blowing tropical butterflies, and several tiers in the plantings arrangements to explore. There's the money shot of the Blue Morpho to be had if you are lucky. The only drawback is way too many people on the weekends, and lots of kids under-foot all the time. Happily there are lots of places where you can park yourself in comfort and shoot all day.

## My equipment is pretty simple:

- 1.** A place to sit. All killer photographs come with a seat nearby! A little hunting stool is better than a big soccer-mom chair in public places.
- 2.** A tripod or a monopod. Bummer to have to hold your camera around your neck all the time. At fast shutter speeds you can hand-hold your camera, but the tack-sharp portrait really needs a solid base and a shutter release, or the ability in your camera to shoot in bursts. One of the shots in the burst will usually be sharp.
- 3.** A ball-type head for your tripod/monopod. You need to be able to pan and tilt to catch that lovely critter when it moves... I use a monopod in the

**White-barred Longwing**, *Heliconius cydno galanthus*, native to forests from Mexico to Costa Rica. Unlike other butterflies, *Heliconius* females feed on pollen as well as nectar.



Butterfly House. Some venues do not allow tripods, so ask.

- 4.** A medium telephoto lens - something between 50mm and 200mm focal length. I have a 40-150mm zoom which nicely handles close-ups as well as longer shots. If you want to do close-ups, I would recommend a macro lens in the 100mm range. Cameras nowadays have macro settings to focus closer, but a dedicated macro lens will give you much better results.
- 5.** A small fill-flash if the venue's management allows it. This is to lighten up your subject if it's in shadow or backlit. See the internet for good fill-flash tutorials.. Fill flash is a good skill to learn for any outdoor portrait photography, people, flowers, and critters...
- 6.** A good butterfly ID book...we don't see tropical butterflies around here in the wild, so their ID's take a little research. And even common butterflies here can be mistaken for others. Queens for instance look a lot like Monarchs from a distance.



# MR. WEST'S NEIGHBORHOOD

*By Jim West*

Going green. Green Heron, that is. I was fortunate enough that the heron in the lower photo was so transfixed on catching lunch that he (or she) wasn't bothered by my close proximity. Earlier in the day, I had watched one catch a huge bullfrog tadpole in the same spot. My fishing holes should be so bountiful.

They can catch and eat some pretty large prey as their neck is longer than their body. They're also very quick on the draw. I hate to set my camera on *machine gun* as, with my luck, the money shot would be between the frames. I got set up when the twitching of it's tail indicated that it was about to strike at something. Then, boom, done and the shot below is the first frame I got. Bon appétit.



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# CALENDAR

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## JUNE

- 9 Mockingbird Nature Park Workday, Midlothian (9am-12pm)
- 15 Kachina Prairie Workday, Ennis (9am-12pm)
- 16 Wildflower Walk, Mockingbird Nature Park, Midlothian (9am)
- 17 Fathers Day
- 17 Kids Activity, Waxahachie Farmers Market (9am-12pm)
- 18-24 National Pollinator Week
- 23 Kachina Prairie Workday, Ennis (9am-12pm)
- 25 Indian Trail Chapter Monthly Meeting, Waxahachie (6pm); Program – Mammal Skins & Skulls, Gwen Eishen (7pm)

## JULY

- 4 Independence Day
- 6 Mockingbird Nature Park Workday, Midlothian (9am-12pm)
- 7 BRIT Workday, Fort Worth (9am-12pm)
- 14 Mockingbird Nature Park Workday, Midlothian (9am-12pm)
- 16 Indian Trail Chapter Board Meeting, Waxahachie (6pm)
- 20 Kachina Prairie Workday, Ennis (9am-12pm)
- 21 Wildflower Walk, Mockingbird Nature Park, Midlothian (9am-12pm)
- 21-29 National Moth Week
- 23 Indian Trail Chapter Monthly Meeting,
- 28 Kachina Prairie Workday, Ennis (9am-12pm)



**MASTER NATURALIST PROGRAM 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.

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## INDIAN TRAIL CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice President: Gwen Eishen ..... [gwenieclaire@yahoo.com](mailto:gwenieclaire@yahoo.com)  
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Past President: Don Happ ..... [donnahapp.happ@gmail.com](mailto:donnahapp.happ@gmail.com)

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## COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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## SUPPORT

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## PROJECT CHAIRS

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Stream Team: Maureen Nitkowski ..... [maunitka@att.net](mailto:maunitka@att.net)

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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY LIAISONS

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Botanical Research Institute of Texas (BRIT): Debbie Pierce..... [debbiekpierce@att.net](mailto:debbiekpierce@att.net)  
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John Bunker Sands Wetland Center: Don Happ ..... [donnahapp.happ@gmail.com](mailto:donnahapp.happ@gmail.com)  
Perot Museum: Tim Brys ..... [nightcrawler1405@hotmail.com](mailto:nightcrawler1405@hotmail.com)  
Trinity River Audubon Center: Gwen Eishen ..... [Gwenieclaire@yahoo.com](mailto:Gwenieclaire@yahoo.com)

*The mission of this newsletter is to inform, educate and entertain  
Texas Master Naturalists and their circle of friends.*

# BECOME A TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST

Registration is now open for the annual **Master Naturalist Training Class** of the Indian Trail Chapter, serving Ellis County and Navarro County. Training includes weekly classes in Waxahachie on Tuesday nights, **Aug. 21 - Nov. 13, 2018**, and three Saturday field trips.

To register, email [training@itmnc.com](mailto:training@itmnc.com), or visit our website to apply online at [txmn.org/indiantrail/about](http://txmn.org/indiantrail/about). Applications are also available at the AgriLife Extension office at 701 South I-35, Suite #3, Waxahachie, TX 75165.

For additional information, please call Lynn at 214-802-6993.



Jack Duraway 2013  
Texas Master Naturalist



**Monday – June 25, 2018**  
**MAMMAL SKINS AND SKULLS**

**Location: First United Methodist Church**

**505 W. Marvin Ave., Waxahachie, TX**

**Family Life Center - Gathering Room**

**Indian Trail Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist**

- **6:00 PM - Business Meeting**
- **7:00 PM - Program by Gwen Eishen - Educator for the Texas Wildlife Association and Certified Texas Master Naturalist**

Gwen Eishen's presentation will explore identification and specialized adaptations of native Texas mammals with animal skulls and skins, all while learning about the animal's habitat, food sources, and adaptations for survival.

Gwen is a Texas native, growing up in Duncanville with Ten Mile Creek in her back yard. She found her love of wildlife while being part of the last generation who got to grow up playing outside in the woods and creeks. She has a bachelor's degree from Texas A & M University – Commerce in Wildlife Conservation. Since 2012, she has worked as an outdoor educator for many local natural resources organizations. She completed two animal behavior research internships in 2013: African Elephants with the Dallas Zoo and Asiatic Black Bears with the Bear Trust International. She is currently an Educator for the Texas Wildlife Association, teaching students and training teachers in Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant Counties.

Indian Trail Chapter is part of the statewide Texas Master Naturalist Volunteer Program of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

*The 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 for the State of Texas.*

This program is part of a series of "no cost" "open to the public" Master Naturalist programs offered the fourth Monday (generally) of each month, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. Please bring a friend! For more information, please call the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension at 972-825-5175 or email: [information@itmnc.com](mailto:information@itmnc.com)