



August's Chapter Meeting

We were excited to present the last two certificates to the Training Class of 2019 at our August chapter meeting. The Longleaf Ridge Chapter of Master Naturalists now has 18 new members!!

CHAPTER OFFICERS

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MDJSP Service Projects

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Newsletter

Sharon Lamoreaux
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James Pulliam and his mentor, Terry McFall



Lauren Turner and her mentor, Brenda Marshall

Richard Peters was our speaker for August with a presentation on bats. Richard showed us pictures and identified the different kinds of bats, their habitats and characteristics. He also told us of their benefits to the environment and how to attract bats to control the mosquito problems in our yards. Richard also donated a bat t-shirt for a door prize. Connie Cook was the lucky winner. Thanks Richard!!!

UPCOMING EVENTS

September—

2nd, 7th, 9th, 14th, 16th, 23rd, 28th, and 30th - work days, 8-11am @ arboretum for Festival prep. See website

4th—MDJSP Nature Center—Homeschool Program—Bird Adaptations—work as a volunteer

5th—LRMN Board meeting—Agrilife office—10am

7th—Neches River Rally—8am-1pm for info—<https://www.nps.gov/bith/index.htm>

7th—Interpretative/Nature Center training at MDJSP @ the Nature Center, 9am-2pm register on our website

9th— LRMN Chapter meeting 6pm St Michaels, Carnivorous plants by Mike Howlett, with Gardeners
Plants will be available for purchase

(*moved to Monday instead of Tuesday. The dining hall is not available due to the alligator hunt.)

25th—MDJSP Nature Center—Homeschool Program—Bird Calls—work as a volunteer

October—

3rd— LRMN Board meeting—Agrilife office—10am

5th, 7th, 14th—work days, 8-11am @ arboretum for Festival prep, See website for details

8th— LRMN Chapter meeting 6pm MDJSP Dining hall Program —

8th— Fall Fest Scarecrows due to Arboretum

12th—Guided canoe trip—MDJSP

register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/guided-canoe-trip-tickets-70699368715>

16th-18th—Texas Master Naturalist Annual meeting—Rockwall TX

17th— Friends of the Park meeting—6pm , MDJSP Nature Center

19th— Butterfly Fall Fest— LRMN will a host a booth, Chairman -Don Fralick (fralickdonald@gmail.com)



Head Start—Contact Claire Boutte - fdclaire@gmail.com

Martin Dies Jr. State Park - Contact Ranger Amy at amy.kocurek@tpwd.texas.gov

MDJSP service projects—Contact Lori Horne—lori.horne1965@gmail.com



FREQUENTLY USED WEB SITES

Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists web site..... <https://txmn.org/llr/>

Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalists FaceBook....<https://www.facebook.com/LongleafRidgeMasterNaturalists/>

Martin Dies Jr. State Park events.....https://tpwd.texas.gov/state-parks/martin-dies-jr/park_events

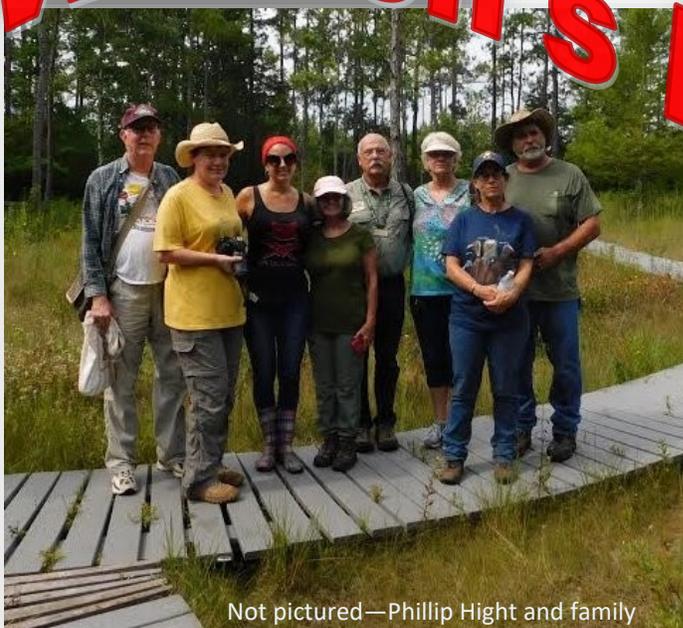
Watson Preserve.....http://watsonpreserve.ning.com/?xg_source=msg_mes_network

Big Thicket National Preserve.....<https://www.nps.gov/bith/index.htm>

Send your favorites to me at sherlmx@gmail.com



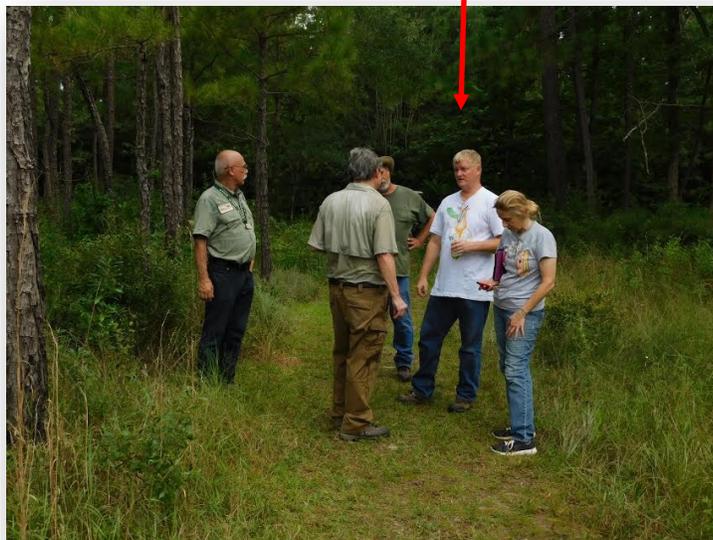
Watson's Preserve



Not pictured—Phillip Hight and family



On August 3rd, 11 LRMNers traveled to see the Chapman's Fringed Orchid, known only to northern Florida, Georgia, and eastern Texas, it's beauty is well worth the trip. Also making the trip was Mike Howlett, who will be our presenter for September on Carnivorous plants.



OUTREACH

August 2019

Lori Horne and Joanie Kochanek conducted outreach for us at Agrilife's Deer Expo educational program held August 30 in Kirbyville. About eighty attendees got to find out who we are and what we're all about. Volunteers also helped with organizing and conducting the event for our advisor, Brock Fry. Sue Singletary awarded door prizes as they were called out. Jerry and Laura Clark helped secure exhibitors and door prizes, and then assisted with their set up and take down.



State Representative James White made a surprise visit and told everyone about a Texas constitutional amendment they could vote for this November that will ensure that taxes collected on hunting and fishing licenses and outdoor sports and recreational items would be dedicated to Parks and Wildlife as they were intended, rather than going into the State's general revenue fund.

Randall Kroll, a Texas Parks and Wildlife biologist, spoke over the rain pounding on the metal roof to share information about the best ways to attract whitetail deer using different feeding and attractant schemes. Mossy Oak's Division Manager, Stephen Schlein, gave everyone tips on increasing the value of their land for wildlife habitat, explaining how that also increases the value of the real estate. Justin Eddins and Morgan Inman, Texas Parks and Wildlife Game Wardens, who are also featured on Lone Star Law, updated everyone on new regulations and reviewed some old ones that are most frequently violated.



Article and photos submitted by Laura Clark

TRASH-OFF CHALLENGE Still continues until November 5, 2019 in Jasper and Newton counties.

RULES - Take pictures of the littered area before you pick up trash and after. The photo needs to include trash bags and participants to qualify. Use the buddy system, work in pairs or teams. The goal is to see who or which team picks up the most trash!!!

Send in photos to lori.horne1965@gmail.com

Winners will be announced winners and prizes awarded at our November Longleaf Ridge Master Naturalist

LRMN LOGO CONTEST Design and submit an idea for a LRMN logo. Use LRMN in your design. Use black and white, plus a maximum of 3 other colors to keep the design simple enough for a patch. Submit your entries to Sharon Lamoreaux at sherlmx@gmail.com. The submissions will be voted on at a future chapter meeting.

This article was posted on Facebook by George Blasing of the Piney Woods Lakes Chapter
It was so interesting, I wanted to share it with you.

This is a Texas Blind Snake. They are not really blind, BTW. They are very small and are completely harmless to humans. In fact, they are actually very beneficial to us, even though you may have never seen one.

Looking and acting like a snake, they are often killed because people assume they are baby snakes that will grow up to be something sinister, like a cobra or python or other such deadly human killing machines known to slither throughout Texas and the Southwest. (for those who don't understand sarcasm, that was sarcasm.)



These tiny snakes burrow into ant and termite nests and eat the larva. So they are killing the very pests that so many of us try to get rid of thru the use of insecticides and poisons. So we stomp out nature's pest control and then poison our lawns because there is no pest control.

Now for a really interesting example of the complexity of nature.



Screech Owls are experts at keeping the rodent population under control. They catch and kill those "pesky" mice who make their way into our homes, causing us to, once again, poison our own environment to get rid of them.

Screech owls have been observed catching Texas Blind Snakes and carefully carrying them to their nest. They are not used as a food source, but instead as welcomed guests. The snake buries itself within the nesting material of the owl, and then goes to work eating the parasites that attack the baby owls within the nest. In other words, the owls bring in nature's pest control to rid themselves of parasites that are dangerous their babies.

Researchers have discovered that owl chicks whose nests have these snakes in them have a much greater survival rate than those that do not, because the snakes kill the parasites that feed on the chicks. A higher survival rate means more owls. More owls mean more mouse control. More mouse control means less need for poison. Less poison means better quality of life.

Yes, the reality is that some animals are detrimental to our way of life. And yes, sometimes we have to take measures to rid ourselves of these pests. But my point is that when we indiscriminately kill animals, we have no real understanding of the impact we are having on our environment. I hope that the next time someone comes across one of these tiny snakes, we stop for a moment and realize that even the smallest animals can have a big impact in our lives.