

Lost Pines Master Naturalist's



Volume 12, Issue 4

May 2012

MAY NEWSLETTER

Transitions

By Louise Ridlon

One of the only sure things in life is change, and changes are coming once again to our Lost Pines chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists. President Al Hoerig, who took office in December, announced at the April chapter meeting that he was resigning his leadership office with the LPMN. A number of changing circumstances made it difficult for him to devote the time required to serve as president. According to the chapter bylaws, the executive board has the authority to appoint someone to fill an a chapter officer's vacated position.

In the December election, we had two candidates for president: Al Hoerig and Grace Pratt, who was a member of the 2011 training class and had already certified in 2011. Grace graciously agreed to accept the position of chapter president, effective immediately. She has received coaching from past presidents Hoerig and myself, and the board is confident that she will serve the chapter well. Among other things, Grace is a member of the Bastrop group of the Texas Outdoor Women Network, and teaches Hunter Education, Boater Education, and Angler Education with Texas Parks and Wildlife. Grace said that her "fun" is in volunteering and "teaching others to take care of our natural resources and preserve habitats. I enjoy working with folks to make visions come true." You can contact Grace at graciela@moonandback.org or graciela@austin.utexas.edu.

In the April newsletter, current editor Angie Morrison announced that she and Dale are moving to Cedar Park, and that she would no longer be editing our newsletter after the May issue. Angie offered to take on the newsletter last February when Jeannie Jessup was unable to continue in that position. A request to the 2012 training class was answered when Bonnie Shimek volunteered to become our newsletter editor. Bonnie has experience with Microsoft Word publishing programs, and has even been a trainer for Microsoft software. She welcomes your contributions of articles, pictures, and announcements of Volunteer and Advanced Training opportunities: send them to her at jbshimek@cs.com.

We thank Al and Angie for their service, and hope they remain as active in the chapter as circumstances allow. Be sure to offer your thanks and support to Grace and Bonnie for filling these positions. How great to be part of an organization whose primary goal is volunteer service!



FISHING PROGRAM

Please respond directly to Bill at bgbrooks@mail.utexas.edu if you can help or have questions about the fishing program or the Smithville exhibit. His phone number is 581-0377.

On Tuesday, Feb. 21, KLRU TV World News Tonight had a story about how fishing helps kids. For those of you who have helped with the TPWD GO FISH! program, we already know that. Since 2005, more than 2,000 people have gone through the TPWD's Lost Pines learn to fish program.

The 2012 Learn to Fish Program in Bastrop and Buescher State Parks starts Spring Break, March 10th. It is now less than three weeks away. Due to the repair and restoration efforts in Bastrop State Park, both Spring Break classes will be held at the pond in Buescher State Park, Saturday May 10th and 17th.

Knowing how to fish is not a requirement. There are registration stations and 5 learning stations on knots, habitat, safety, TX fishing laws, and casting. Kids get a Fishing Diploma and gifts, then get to go fish. Equipment and bait are supplied for this free program. (The only cost is park entrance fees.) Volunteers pay nothing, of course. Set up and training is from 8am until 9pm. The public arrives at 9am. We have a raffle at noon and are all done by 12:30pm. This is a very fun, very worth while program. It counts as LPMN volunteer hours. If you can help out either the 10th or the 17th, please email me.

The rest of the 2012 schedule is as follows:

June 9 - Bastrop State Park
June 16 - Buescher State Park

July 14 - Bastrop State Park
July 21 - Buescher State Park

All classes are on Saturdays from 9 until 12:30.

Meredith Longoria, has asked me to be in charge of a casting/ Back Yard Bass booth for kids at the Smithville Wildlife Extravaganza, March 31. If you can do an hour long shift sometime that Saturday, please let me know.

I can't do these programs without you. Thanks for your kind consideration.

- Bill Brooks
bgbrooks@mail.utexas.edu
581-0377



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Red Rock Elementary, in the Bastrop ISD, is trying to win a \$50,000 grant for school beautification (native landscaping, a rainwater harvesting system, enhancements to our outdoor learning center, etc.). The winner is chosen based on # of online votes. People can vote once a day from today until May 7th. I'm hoping you will be willing to vote for us every day and spread the word to any groups or community members you might know. It is really easy and literally only takes a minute or two. You just go to www.rackroomshoes.com. Scroll down and find the section that says school beautification grant. Click on vote. Sort by state. Find Red Rock Elementary in the Texas section, select it, and click vote now. The Red Rock Roadrunners appreciate your support!

Hospitality Happenings

The Hospitality Committee would like to remind all of our upcoming events: May 21st is of next Chapter meeting and will also be graduation for the training class. Please join us at McKinney Roughs dining hall for pizza, salads and cake to celebrate this milestone.

June 23rd will be our annual summer picnic and will be held at Buescher State Park starting at 11:30. This will be a potluck meal with the Chapter providing drinks and papergoods. Bring your favorite dish!

Beginning in July, we will be having lighter refreshments at the meetings. The Hospitality Committee will be bringing drinks and chips or cookies and will accept monetary donations to offset the cost. Of course, if anyone is hankering to make their favorite dish to share, we will be happy to have it too.

The Hospitality Committee is always looking for new members so please contact Caroline Easley at carib708@hotmail.com if interested.



FYI from Robert Vaughn

All work at the Refuge is pre-approved for Master Naturalist volunteer hours. There are enough projects on the drawing board to meet most everyone's annual requirement. If you are interested and willing to contribute, contact Louise Ridlon regarding nature classes (flridlon@hotmail.com), or Robert Vaughn regarding other volunteer opportunities (vaughnrobertj@gmail.com). Even if you're not interested in volunteering, do plan to visit the Refuge for an enjoyable outing—you'll be glad you did—and want to come back for more.

Deena Spellman at Bastrop Gardens told me this wood borer has killed her Western Soap Berries. This could cause a big impact in the Across the Creek Trail area. See this link for more info:

http://www.texasinvasives.org/pest_database/detail.php?symbol=8

2012 Training Class Nears Graduation

The 2012 training class is on the home stretch—the last class session will be a field trip to Aquarena Springs on May 19. Participation and enthusiasm have been high; a good number of our trainees have been involved in volunteer projects already, including the “Bridge Maniacs” and homeschool classes at the CRR and Lockhart State Park. The training committee and sponsors have been extremely helpful and supportive. Feedback from the trainees has been overwhelmingly positive, especially about the curriculum and speakers' presentations.

The class is counting down to May 21, when we'll celebrate their “graduation” at the chapter meeting at McKinney Roughs. At this point, 28 are on track to complete the necessary training hours, or have plans to make up any missed sessions. Rachel Bauer has arranged for a couple of speakers on Texas invasive species, the “Bad Actors”, specifically fire ants and feral hogs. Hospitality Chair Caroline Easley will be organizing a meal including pizza and cake. Please plan to come and lend your encouragement and congratulations. These interns for the Master Naturalist program promise to make a positive impact on the activities and service of our chapter. It's been a real honor and pleasure to work with them!

Louise Ridlon



YAPPOPALOOZA EVENT

Capital Area, Lost Pines, Hays County and Lindheimer Master Naturalist Chapters

There are several opportunities available for Master Naturalists at this event.....If you can help out or need more information please contact Jeannie Muñoz at 512-750-5522 or jmunoz@YappoPalooza.net

local event in your area is Saturday, June 9th, from 1 to 7 pm and :

- Will raise money for Bi-national Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle Project
 - Is sponsored by several non-profits (TPW Foundation, Gladys Porter Zoo, Sea Turtle Inc., TX Game Warden Association, Texas Shrimp Association) and some corporate sponsors (SpawGlass, LandWaterSky, Independence Brewery, Blue Bell, etc).
 - have TX Shrimp Association is donating about 400 pounds of shrimp and will be cooking it (boiled shrimp, fried shrimp and shrimp ceviche).
 - have Four Texas Bands including the legendary Alvin Crow. (Also Jeff Whitehead band, Mashed Potato Johnson and Ghosts of Dixie).
 - have kids activities such as face tattoos, Bean bag toss, possibly some interactive inflatable games and others.
 - Will have a silent auction and six gun raffle.

We will have about 15 – 20 vending and marketing booths. **I was hoping TX Master Naturalist Chapters would like to host a TMN booth.** We don't provide the tent/table/chairs but we also don't charge for space. Recommend they bring a 10x10 tent.

We also need volunteers to work the event. Primarily I need folks to work the welcome tables, kids booths, Trash and Recycling and silent auction. There is a beverage booth but those volunteers would need to be (or get) TABC certified which is about \$20 for the online certification (at volunteers expense).



Wildlife Tracking Certification Training in Austin June 9-10

There will be a Tracking Certification in the Austin area on **June 9-10** hosted by Dave Scott of the Earth Native Wilderness School. Please pass this on to anyone you think may be interested in attending. This is one of the first tracking certifications ever offered in Texas that will be open to the public.

Go to www.earthnativeschool.com for more information or to register.

Wave after wave of butterflies from Texas

[Over the last three weeks we have experienced wave after wave of butterflies migrating north from Texas. First it was red admirals, then painted ladies, then American painted ladies, followed by variegated fritillaries, dainty sulphurs, two other sulphur species, grey hairstreaks, buckeyes, and now orange sulphurs (*Colias eurytheme*) - with hundreds of them in the garden at any one time. This short video (to be posted to our Facebook page soon) will give you an idea of the number of sulphurs present today. I can truthfully say that never have I seen so many butterflies in our garden in April. The numbers and diversity actually rival anything we've seen in the fall when butterflies are usually abundant here.

Everything is early and remains so even though the temperatures have been nearly normal for the last three weeks. On Saturday (21 April) while mowing my lawn I spotted and *Asclepias viridis* (green antelope milkweed) in bloom. The usual dates for first bloom of this species in this area are 8-12 May.

This is a spring like no other - at least in the last 20+ years that I have been following monarchs closely. Conditions have been consistently excellent for monarch reproduction of 6 weeks. Everything to this point indicates that monarchs will rebound this year. A big bounce back is possible. I will summarize the situation as I see it as time becomes available in 10 days or so.

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Chip Taylor
chip@ku.edu
Monarch Watch



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT - CHAPTER COORDINATOR TEXAS SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

The Texas Society for Ecological Restoration (TXSER), a chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration International, is seeking a part-time chapter coordinator to manage its business/clerical aspects. Employment will be on a contract-only basis and includes no benefits.

Job duties include, but are not limited to:

- Annual conference coordination.
- Membership management, including member communications, database maintenance, records storage and providing a point of contact for inquiries.
- Production of chapter publications such as conference proceedings and periodic newsletters with the assistance of and input from chapter members.
- Website maintenance.
- Management of financial duties with the assistance of and oversight by the Chapter Treasurer.
- Collaboration with similar organizations on projects and meetings.
- Production of monthly business activity reports for the chapter's Board of Directors.

Fulfillment of these duties is expected to require an average of five hours/week except during the weeks leading up to and immediately following the annual conference. The successful candidate will be able to provide his/her own work space, Internet access, office equipment, and software and must have a working familiarity with programs such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint.

Prior experience with office and/or organizational management is required. A background in the natural sciences and knowledge of / belief in the goals and mission of the Society for Ecological Restoration International are a plus. Monthly compensation is negotiable and is expected to vary with workload.

The TXSER Chapter Coordinator reports to and receives direction from the TXSER Board of Directors. A detailed job description will be sent to applicants selected for interview. Please contact the TXSER Chapter Coordinator Selection Committee at TXSER.applicant@gmail.com or 817.838.2541 with any questions. Applications will be accepted through May 16, 2012. Please submit résumés with cover letters electronically to the TXSER Chapter Coordinator Selection Committee at TXSER.applicant@gmail.com.

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NATURE GETS A BOOST

It was mid-spring at the Colorado River Refuge, and the rain gods had lately smiled on the region. The river was up and the trails were lush. The forest was teeming with life. Insects actively pursued their due as songbirds warbled for the sheer joy of being alive. There was an indifferent but refreshing Spring breeze—the kind that is rare in Texas. As the morning sun streaked through the canopy near the handicap ramp, it was as if nature was dozing comfortably amid the warmth and swelling vegetation. . . no evidence here of the biome’s struggles: a 10-year flood, historic draught, rampant dumping, and a small swarm of misguided mudders—who emerge like mosquitoes after every major rain. Descended from an abandoned wasteland, the original sense was not so much of decay as of quiet discouragement, as if the land had missed its career. It has not. The situation is different now. Despite these challenges, the CRR has flourished. Today, it presents a much different image, thanks to the ongoing assistance from caring people.

One such intervention occurred on a weekend in late April this year. Visited by a throng of volunteers from the Industrial Asset Management Counsel’s conference at the Lost Pines Resort, the Refuge received some very personal attention. This group, composed of retail property managers and economic development administrators from all over the country, select different venues for their annual conference. As part of their commitment to the environment, they customarily arrive the weekend before their convention to do volunteer work in the community that hosts them. The Bastrop Economic Development Corporation seized the opportunity to connect the visiting volunteers with a long-planned Pines and Prairies Land Trust project to beautify the CRR. A work weekend was just the ticket . . . a fortuitous confluence of paths to give the Refuge a boost!

All was made ready in advance. This event was the culmination of weeks of preparation, spearheaded by LPMN member Robert Vaughn and a small group of Master Naturalists. The objective: to establish a hillside of native trees and plants along the handicapped entrance to the Refuge, previously overgrown with ragweed and laden with debris. About 30 different species of native plants were chosen, ranging from American Beauty Berry to White Boneset with many others in between. Native plants, of course, not only require less water and absolutely no pesticides or chemical fertilizers, but they also are important food sources for butterflies, bees, birds and other wildlife. Educational signage will follow, once these plants are well established. That’s because a major goal will be to suggest to future Refuge visitors that they can successfully use these plants in their own landscapes too. and reinforced to prevent future harm.





Workers from the Pines & Prairies Land Trust, Lost Pines Texas Master Naturalists and others, toiled for weeks to prep the site and host an impressive weekend-full of memories for the group of out-of-town visitors.

Weeds were pulled, grasses mowed, downed trees & limbs were removed, trash was collected and the designated hillside was made ready for planting. Nearby, recent rains had damaged the diversion dam which directed overflow into the wetlands area. This was repaired and reinforced to prevent future harm. An innovative irrigation system designed to draw water from the Colorado and supply new plants on the berm surrounding the diversion dam was also weakened and impaired by recent rains. This too was restored and plans were made for the visitors to extend the system to serve the handicap hillside as well. Surrounding trails, walkways and bridges were mowed, clipped and spruced up for the big event.

The visiting work group alternated between planting & irrigation duties, and enjoying the extensive trail system. From the sanctuary of cool river breezes at the worksite to the dazzling wildflower display along the upland trails, everyone received a mainline fix of nature at her finest. Anyone who's ever contributed to the improvement of this retreat can feel proud of what it has become. People were in awe. Choreographing the flow of human activity was no mean feat. Organized chaos best describes each day's events. A catered lunch was served on Saturday, and grilled hamburgers were served up on Sunday with masterful behind-the-scenes management by Robert Vaughn, Raymond Butler & Dale Morrison. These guys either know how to eat, how to cook, or both. Hard work requires great chow. The irrigation work group was directed by Jim & Joan Estes, Nick Nichols, Mike Barrett and Audrey Ambrose. The task was to engineer and build a complex extension onto the existing irrigation system, so that the target hillside could be watered directly from the Colorado. The challenge was to supply the know-how, and let the visiting workers do the work. Sunday was concluded with a "wet" run that proved the design was sound, complete with a few soaked and surprised workers.

Carrie Knox, hike leader and PPLT Executive Director, enthusiastically took on the task of regulating a horde of frolicking, puppy-like adults, as they excitedly re-discovered their inner toddler while exploring those gorgeous trails. Judging from the smiling faces upon return, everyone had a good time. Overseeing the more serious business of planting a survivable stand of native plants required part botanist, part coach and part den mother—in the form of Miriam Vaughn (Capital Area Chapter Master Naturalist and Robert's wife). Miriam could easily pass for Frederick Lindheimer's Great Grand Daughter! To help her keep the troops purposefully employed, LPMN members Rob Sutherland, his wife Holly, and Rick Gast acted as mentors. But at the end of the weekend—thanks to the extensive preparation and the many helpers who made it happen—our troupe of volunteers left enriched, uplifted, chigger bit and a tad sunburned. As for the handicap ramp at the Refuge; well, where once ragweed and rubbish reigned, a generous gift of native plants now adds to the medley of natural beauty found there.



Bastrop State Park

Finding hope in the ashes of the Lost Pines

Shock and sadness ... those were my predominant feelings as I made my first visit to **Bastrop State Park** since September's devastating Bastrop County Complex wildfire ripped through the 6,500-acre loblolly pine forest preserve.

Virtually everywhere I looked on a cloud-scattered December afternoon, I saw the path of the firestorm that had engulfed the park: scabs of charred bark clung to tree trunks; bare earth, in some spots covered by a thin layer of dead pine needles; vast swaths of empty floor of the forest known as the Lost Pines, where underbrush once stood thick. Everywhere my eyes landed, I found evidence of loss and destruction.

But there were also hopeful signs. The park's signature cabins built decades earlier by the Civilian Conservation Corps were untouched. Its **18-hole golf course**, unique among Texas state parks, was relatively unblemished. Thanks to the efforts of firefighters, the swimming pool area and historic **CCC-constructed Refectory** had been spared from the flames.

The foundation for the park's return to its pine-scented glory was intact. But much recovery lies ahead.

A torrential downpour in late January revealed another problem facing the park: erosion. Plants that had held the soil in place were now ash. The 5 inches of rain that fell during the one-night deluge washed out a portion of Park Road 1A, part of a winding network of roads that connects Bastrop State Park to its sister, Buescher State Park.





Beset by these problems, and a subsequent loss of visitors and revenue, park staff members are fighting back. Restoration of campgrounds, roads and trails is ongoing. Almost all campgrounds are again open. Many trails are accessible, and dead trees that pose a danger to visitors are being marked and cut.

And nature is showing her resilience—saplings have sprouted through the soil enriched with ash from their burned ancestors. Birdsong echoes through the bare trunks, and even the calls of the endangered Houston Toad, which some biologists feared had been wiped out by drought and conflagration, have been heard.

I, like many who have visited the park through the years, wondered what I could do to help. A volunteer workday provided the answer for me.

Led by Volunteer Coordinator/Park Interpreter Katie Raney, the volunteer days have set hundreds of hands to work on projects where people power can make a difference.

That's how on a sunny February morning, I found myself with about 50 other hard hat-clad volunteers traipsing toward Pond No. 8, a Houston Toad hangout near the route of the Lost Pines Trail. Our mission: spread mulch made from fallen trees around the perimeter of the pond to give the toads a place to hide and help promote regrowth of underbrush that will provide the amphibians with habitat.

We formed a bucket brigade stretching from the large mulch pile atop a rise down several hundred feet to the pond's edge. The shivering of a cool winter morning was quickly forgotten as a steady stream of filled, five-gallon buckets were passed hand-to-hand downslope with mulch to be spread on the ground and stacks of empties handed back up to be refilled. Jackets were doffed as we made quick progress, with friends and strangers, young and old and in singles, couples and groups tackling the work at hand with smiles, jokes and laughter.

A little more than two hours later, the last bucket was passed down and dumped, and the toad oasis of Pond No. 8 was ringed with a layer of protective mulch.

I returned to my truck with weary arms and a tight back but was left with the satisfying feeling that perhaps I'd made a difference. Maybe because of the efforts of myself and the other volunteers, a toad on the brink of extinction would have a fighting chance to survive and a park I love to visit will someday fully recover.



AWU-CER Lunchtime Lectures Twice Each Month!

at Austin Water Headquarters Downtown And NOW also at City Hall

Each lecture begins AT NOON

*First Tuesday of the Month - Location - Waller Center [625 East 10th Street –
between I-35 and Red River]
Waller Center Room 104*

*Same Lecture Repeated Each Month on a Tuesday at City Hall
Boards and Commissions Room 1101*

Free and Open to the Public – bring a lunch and learn

2012 A Year of Natural History: Origins, Practices, and Examples

Natural history is the study of plants and animals leaning more towards observational rather than experimental methods. This definition satisfies depending on how much one likes to lean toward observation and if one is a scientist. The originators of natural history were not scientists. In Western history, the origin of the term traces from Aristotle to Pliny the Elder to Linnaeus, a 2000 year journey to someone who might be considered a “scientist”. However, the most famous natural history in English was written by Gilbert White, a contemporary of Linnaeus, who was a country clergyman. White’s *Natural History of Selborne* inspired a tradition of natural history by nonscientists like Thoreau and others who carefully observed and recorded the nonhumans around them in the place where they lived.

In the 20th century, natural history followed one pathway into scientific research where today it fights to survive in shadow of “experimental” biological science and another pathway into what is now called “nature or environmental writing” where it is best represented by Aldo Leopold, Roy Bedichek, and others in the 20th century and



different spatial scales. First, we will look at the natural history of the Americas as it was described by early explorers like Von Humboldt and others in the 18th and early 19th century and by the biological surveys of the late 19th century which documented the transformation of the natural history of the Americas by the development of modern society. Contemporary work in geography, archeology, anthropology, and environmental history has forced biologists and ecologists to reconsider assumptions about the natural history of the Americas and other regions where concepts like “native species” and “wilderness” have been shown to be based more on culture than science. Hence, the lectures this year will all have bearing on the ongoing reassessment of ecology and biology. We will then shift more locally in scale and focus on the natural history of Texas documented by the work of scientists like Bailey and Oberholser in the great biological surveys of Texas and more literary types of natural histories in writings ranging from Lincecum to Bedichek. Finally, we will look at the natural history of Austin from the 19th century to the present where observers ranging from university researchers and “citizen scientists” to writers like Bedichek have documented the changing plants and animals of the Austin area.

May 1 at Waller Center - The Natural History of the Americas: Discovery and Transformation

May 15 at City Hall - The Natural History of the Americas: Discovery and Transformation

June 5 at Waller Center - The Natural History of Texas: Biological Survey and Ecological Change

June 19 at City Hall - The Natural History of Texas: Biological Survey and Ecological Change

July 3 at Waller Center - The Natural History of Austin: Biological Context and Urbanization

July 17 at City Hall - The Natural History of Austin: Biological Context and Urbanization

Unnatural History – Urban Natural History [August – December]

We will finish the year exploring an often neglected type of natural history - urban natural history. First, we will look at examples of how natural history is practiced in cities from London to Berlin to New York and then literary examples natural histories of cities. Then we will look closely at the natural [and unnatural] history of three different places in Austin which are iconic types of urban habitats: a creek, a vacant lot, and a sewage farm. We will end the year looking forward at the possibilities for natural history and nonhumans in a human dominated world.

August 7 at Waller Center - Urban Natural History: Life in the City



August 28 at City Hall - Urban Natural History: Life in the City

September 4 at Waller Center - The Natural History of an Urban Creek: Waller Creek

September 18 at City Hall - The Natural History of an Urban Creek: Waller Creek

October 2 at Waller Center - The Natural History of an Urban Vacant Lot: Tannehill Urban Wild Woodland

October 23 at City Hall - The Natural History of an Urban Vacant Lot: Tannehill Urban Wild Woodland

November 6 at Waller Center - The Natural History of an Urban Wasteland: Hornsby Bend

November 20 at City Hall - The Natural History of an Urban Wasteland: Hornsby Bend

December 4 at Waller Center - Natural and Unnatural History: the Path Forward

December 18 at City Hall - Natural and Unnatural History: the Path Forward

Kevin M. Anderson Ph.D.

Austin Water - Center for Environmental Research [CER]

2210 South FM 973, Austin, Texas 78725

at the Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant

Phone: Office 512.972.1960 Cell 512.689.6412

Work Schedule: M, T, W, Th, Sat

CER Mission: Urban Ecology and Sustainability - Community, Education, Research

CER website - <http://www.austintexas.gov/cer>

Dillo Dirt and Hornsby Bend website - <http://www.austintexas.gov/dillodirt>

Hornsby Bend Bird Observatory Program website - <http://www.hornsbybend.org>

Texas Riparian Association website - <http://www.texasriparian.org>

University of Texas – Texas Natural Science Center website - <http://www.utexas.edu/tmm/>



ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

for Lost Pines Texas Master Naturalists

The Texas Wildlife Association provides monthly webinars to cover topics of specific interests to individuals in our chapter. As far as I know, no one in our chapter has successfully completed any of these webinars to give us any hints how to get the connection done. I will post the next 3 months of subjects each month. If you have any interest in working together and have a video streaming internet access, give me a call and we can work together to see how and if this webinar works.

General instructions are to log on to the live webinars. <https://texas-wildlife.webex.com>. For more information, attendees can contact: Courtney Brittain, Texas Wildlife Association, Education Program Coordinator, at (210) 826-2904 ext. 122 (office), (210) 393-3467 (mobile), www.texas-wildlife.org, or cbrittain@texas-wildlife.org

The next 3 monthly topics that would be considered advanced training are
March 15 - Pond Management, Michael Masser;
April 19 - Riparian Management 201, Sky Lewey; and
May 17 - Integrating Cattle and Wildlife on Small Acreage, Larry Pierce

AWU-CER Lunchtime Lectures occur at noon at Austin Water Headquarters Downtown (Waller Center, Room 104 or 105 [625 East 10th Street – between I-35 and Red River). Lectures will be given the first Wednesday of each month. These lectures are free and open to the Public – bring a lunch and learn! The first series addresses **The History of Natural History [March – April]**. The remaining lectures are **March 7:** The History of Natural History: 20th Century Science and Literature [Room 105] and **April 4:** The History of Natural History: Contemporary Natural History. The second series addresses **Natural History and Ecological Change – Americas, Texas, and Austin [May – July]** and begins on **May 2:** The Natural History of the Americas: Discovery and Transformation.

Walt Elson contacted the Gault School of Archeology about a tour of the Gault Site. May 26th fits their schedule and we are penciled in for that date. The site is located near Florence, Texas which is about 82 miles north of San Marcos off of I-35 (6-10 miles west of Jarrell).

They are very familiar with TMN program and will tailor the tour for our interest. The program is generally 2 hours long and covers about 1 1/4 miles. Topics covered include:

- Hypotheses regarding the peopling of the Americas
- The geology and history of this area of Central Texas
- Cultural history of Central Texas
- Primitive technologies
- Important finds from the Gault site
- Observing current excavations

Our tour must have at least 10 people and the cost is \$10 each. A sign-up list will be provided at the March and April chapter meetings.

Let me know of any upcoming offerings that you think might work as advanced training.

Ronnie Lanier
Vice-President
(512)581-8117
nxplgr@wildblue.net



Lost Pines Master Naturalist Monthly Meeting Schedule

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

FOR NEXT ISSUE MARCH 31ST. We welcome relevant contributions, photos, announcements, or other material relating to the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program, particularly those pertaining to our local area. Please send information to Angie Morrison 512-629-3344(angie.morrison@studiosdallas.com.)

PLEASE send text either in an email or in doc format. I cannot open any other form! Pictures should be sent as attachments of jpegs as big as you can send them. Please do not embed images in the email. Doing so greatly helps in the newsletter creation! Thank you!

STATE PROGRAM CONTACTS

Website: <http://txmn.org/>
State Coordinator: Michelle Haggerty, mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu; (979) 458-2034.
The Texas Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.
SPONSOR CONTACTS
Caldwell Co. Extension Office: Position vacant; Caldwell-tx@tamu.edu; (512) 398-3122.
Bastrop Co. Extension Office: Rachel Bauer, CEAAG/ NR; Bastrop-tx@tamu.edu; (512) 581-7186.
Bastrop/Caldwell Co. TPWD Wildlife Biologist: Meredith Longoria, 804 Pecan, Bastrop, Meredith.Longoria@tpwd.state.tx.us; (512) 332-7280.

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| Newsletter | BonnieShiemek | 512-581-2625 |
| Web Page | Andy Butler | 512-321-1308 |
| Basic Training | Louise Ridlon | 512-985-5064 |
| Advanced Training | Ronnie Lanier | 281-382-5593 |
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