

Texas Master Naturalists ROLLING PLAINS CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

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<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

October 2017

President Report

Photos by Terry McKee and Debra Halter

If you ever begin to feel that what you are attempting to do to bring people closer to nature has hit a roadblock, all you have to do is participate in the Sikes Lake Cleanup. I am always impressed by the number and quality of the people not just from MSU, but local schools and ordinary citizens. People like Kyle Owens, associate vice-president for Facilities Services and his staff that give up their Saturday off to bag trash and bring food to feed the volunteers. Organizations like American National Bank and Trust that graciously sponsor the event every year with a monetary donation. Students from almost every club at Midwestern State University that got down and dirty (and I mean really covered in muck) in their eagerness to improve their environment. MSU professors that came out to help and not just talk it up. High school students spending their Saturday morning, not sleeping in,



but digging in. And our chapter members who do not hesitate to do whatever needs to be done to help the volunteers while promoting our fine group and its cause.



Almost 100 volunteers picked up 1,000 pounds of litter.

By noon as everyone was enjoying hot dogs, I felt rejuvenated and ready to get back to the business of the Rolling Plains Chapter, with a glad heart, knowing that the future is indeed in good hands.



E LOCALS

OCTOBER 3: Rolling Plains Chapter monthly meeting is *in Bolin Science Hall room 209 at Midwestern State University*
Time: 7:00 PM. **Program:** Our guest speaker will be Edwin Quintero, park superintendent for Copper Breaks State Park.

OCTOBER 7: CoCoRas *advanced training* MSU, Bolin 209 at 10 am to noon.

OCTOBER 8: Big Sit, dawn to 10 am behind Wild Bird Rescue

OCTOBER 10-13: Campfire Fishing Program for after-school kids – contact Lynn Seman for details. Time will be from 4:00pm to 5:00pm each of these days.

OCTOBER 28: Texoma Mini Maker Faire – Ray Clymer Exhibit Hall– We will have a booth that will need volunteers – Sign up for times between 10:00am to 6:00pm.

OCTOBER 29: The Big Day – Bird Event

NOVEMBER 1-3: Region IX volunteers needed to teach about Texas Critters, 9-noon

DECEMBER 5: Christmas Party 6:00pm

CoCoRas Advanced Training October 7, 2017

Thanks to Cari King for bringing this service opportunity information to us. It has been approved by the board.

CoCoRas *advanced training* at the MSU Bolin Science Hall in room 209 at 10 am to noon.

The service is pretty much straight forward. It does require training. However, the online training isn't interactive so you may not count it as advance training ... sorry. If you stumble across a live training you may count that if you attend.

You will also have to purchase an approved rain gauge. It's available for just under \$32 + shipping. There's a link to that page when you sign up. You must have a CoCoRAHS approved gauge to participate. Okay, okay, Community Collaborative Rain Hail Snow Network. Those of you who are familiar with the rain gauge used on the quail study, it's the same kind.

To learn about this opportunity: <https://www.cocorahs.org/>

This is one of those activities that most anyone should be able to do to get some of those often hard to come by service hours.

I have created a Field Research opportunity for this project. If you decide to take the training and participate your hours will be reported under: FR: COCORAHS

Any questions, please feel free to ask Larry Synder

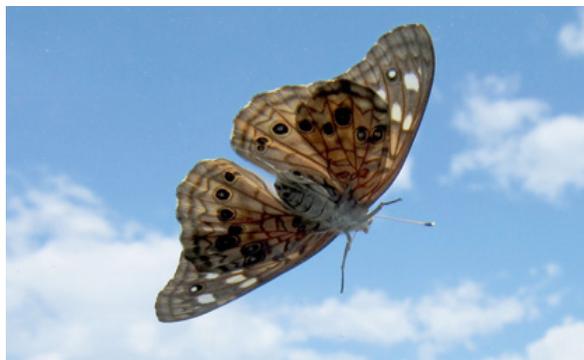
Marilyn Meador Shares Her Wildlife Encounters



This is a picture of a black-bellied whistling duck that was taken at Sikes Lake August 29, 2017, at 7:48 AM. It was on the dam calling loudly. No other ducks of this species were observed. According to the Cornell Ornithology web site, it is not normally seen in this area. I wondered if Hurricane Harvey had caused it to move further north than usual. I reported it on ebird, with pictures and audio recording of its call.



Blue dasher near pond at Smith's Gardentown today.



I was parked along a country road, waiting to see if I could get a good bird picture, when this Hackberry Emperor butterfly landed on my windshield and posed while I took several pictures from inside the car - looking at it from underneath!



Want to spend a day watching the birds while helping the birds?

Form a team for the Big Day for Wild Bird Rescue of Wichita Falls. On Oct. 29, teams will compete to see who can spot the largest number of bird species and raise the most money in a single 24-hour period.

"We hope to have more teams and raise more money than ever before," says Katherine Smith, President of the board for Wild Bird Rescue.

Each team is asked to secure pledges and sponsors to benefit the rescue center. Prizes will be awarded for the team which sees the greatest number of species and for the team that raises the most money. The day-long event will be capped with a dinner for all participants.

Everything you need to know can be found at www.wildbird-rescueinc.org. Wild Bird Rescue cares for injured and orphaned birds year-round, as well as providing educational programs about birds.

"Big Day is always a fun event, with lots of friendly competition. We hope a number of the Master Naturalists will join us this year," says Smith.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to Kim Mason and Maryruth Prose on recertifying for 2017.

To date we've recertified 15 master naturalists and certified 4 new master naturalists this year.

It's not hard to see how the ladybird spider got its name. These bright males and their large black female counterparts live across central and southern Europe. Unlike other spiders, the female tolerates the male spending time in her presence.



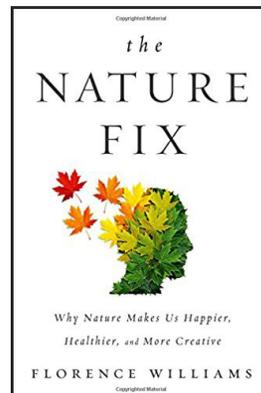
Don't be fooled by the name—kingfishers don't just eat fish, and not all of them live by the water. Rodents, insects, crustaceans, fish, frogs and snakes all make up its diet.

The pacific tree frog choruses nightly for up to five months, advertising itself to mates by the edge of fresh water. The more frequently a frog chirps the more likely it is to attract a female, and the amphibians even extend vocal pouches from the lower jaw to amplify the sound. This results in a single frog sounding like a miniature croaking choir.



RESOURCE
CORNER

The Nature Fix
by Florence Williams
Hardback: 304 pages
ISBN-13: 978-0393242713
Price: \$18.32 on Amazon



For centuries, poets and philosophers extolled the benefits of a walk in the woods: Beethoven drew inspiration from rocks and

trees; Wordsworth composed while tromping over the heath; and Nikola Tesla conceived the electric motor while visiting a park. Intrigued by our storied renewal in the natural world, Florence Williams set out to uncover the science behind nature's positive effects on the brain.

In this informative and entertaining account, Williams investigates cutting-edge research as she travels to fragrant cypress forests in Korea to meet the rangers who administer "forest healing programs," to the green hills of Scotland and its "ecotherapeutic" approach to caring for the mentally ill, to a river trip in Idaho with Iraqi vets suffering from PTSD, to the West Virginia mountains where she discovers how being outside helps children with ADHD. The Nature Fix demonstrates that our connection to nature is much more important to our cognition than we think and that even small amounts of exposure to the living world can improve our creativity and enhance our mood. In prose that is incisive, witty, and urgent, Williams shows how time in nature is not a luxury but is in fact essential to our humanity. As our modern lives shift dramatically indoors, these ideas and the answers they yield are more urgent than ever.

October TPW Television on PBS

October 1-7, 2017

Park Hiker, Paddling Port O'Connor & Finding Flounder

Follow a walker of Texas ranges as he visits the state parks one step at a time. Slide through silent saltwater marshes as you paddle the coastal trail at Port O'Connor. One of the top three sport fish in Texas, more and more fishermen now set their sights on the southern flounder.

October 8-14, 2017

Eroding Island, Fire Crew & Jamaica Beach

See what's being done to save one of the most important rookery islands on the Texas coast from eroding away. Meet the crew on a prescribed fire and learn about all the different skills necessary for a successful burn. Enjoy the end of the day at Jamaica Beach near Galveston.

October 15-21, 2017

Traveling Photographer, Coastal Crabbing & Harbor Sounds

Meet the traveling photographer who lives in a tiny trailer, but whose home is the great outdoors. Discover the joys of crabbing with some kids, and adults, at Sea Rim State Park. Fulton Harbor has some unique sights and sounds at sunrise.

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