

Texas Master Naturalists ROLLING PLAINS CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 10, No. 4

<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

April 2018

Presidents Report

Terry McKee and photo by Debra Halter

I would like to take this time to welcome our new 2018 trainees to the master naturalist program and to the Rolling Plains Chapter. We are glad you decided to take the training and hope you continue to stay with the program in the future.

We are pleased to welcome Margit Bale, Laura Clepper, James Elms, Martha Elms, Larry Harvey, Stephen Honkomp, Christina Peterson, Pete Peterson, Mason Rhoades, Carol Stayer, Russel Taylor and Lee Williamson. As you can tell from this photo taken during the March 24 training class excursion to Lake Arrowhead State Park, everyone had a great time electro-fishing. Nothing fishy about this group- I think they will fit right in!



Just a reminder that due to the training class, we will not hold our regularly scheduled chapter meeting in April.

Our next meeting will be May 1 in Bolin 209 at Midwestern State University.

LOCALS

APRIL 3: We will not hold our regular chapter meeting April 3, due to the training class. However we invite everyone to come out to **Bolin Science Hall room 213 at 7 pm** to show support for the new trainees.

APRIL 12: *How to Raise a Wild Child* 7:30 pm in the Akin Auditorium at MSU. *Tickets are required—940-397-4253.*

APRIL 13 AND 15: *Horned Lizard Surveys Begins.* See page 3 for more information.

APRIL 14: *Bird Walk with Penny Miller.* Penny leads a the monthly bird walk at Lake Arrowhead. Meet at the dump station at 8 a.m. for an hour walk.

APRIL 19: *Earth Day at MSU* Our chapter will be hosting a booth at the annual Earth Day Fair in the Atrium of the Clark Student Center on the MSU Campus from 11:00am to 2:00pm.

APRIL 23-26: *Campfire After School Fishing* The event will take place at South Weeks Park from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm each day (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday).

For more events see pages 2-4

Monthly Bird Walk at Lake Arrowhead State Park with Penny Miller

Mark your calendar for the second Saturday of each month for the monthly bird walk at Lake Arrowhead State Park led by Penny Miller.

Meet at the dump station at 8 a.m. for an hour walk to commune with nature and learn how to identify bird species in our local area. You never know what you will find. The highlight of the trip this time was a beaver.

Penny led the monthly bird walk at Lake Arrowhead on March 10 to a record crowd.

Species seen were:

- Canada Goose
- Northern Shoveler
- Gadwall
- American White Pelican
- Great Blue Heron
- Turkey Vulture
- American Coot
- Killdeer
- Eurasian Collared Dove
- Mourning Dove
- Greater Roadrunner
- Red-bellied Woodpecker
- Eastern Phoebe
- Bewick's Wren
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- Eastern Bluebird
- American Robin
- Northern Mockingbird
- Orange-crowned Warbler
- Field Sparrow
- White-crowned Sparrow
- Harris' Sparrow
- Song Sparrow
- Lincoln's Sparrow
- Northern cardinal
- Western Meadowlark
- Red-winged Blackbird
- Brown-headed Cowbird
- Great-tailed Grackle

Next walk is April 14!



Events at Lake Arrowhead State Park with Park Ranger Laura Clepper

Park Ranger, Laura Clepper, "L", has been very busy hosting many events at Lake Arrowhead recently. In March, she had fishing events, night hikes, jr. ranger hikes, Frisbee golf events, with a total of 91 adults and 61 kids attending! She is also one of our "trainees" in this year's spring class of Texas Master Naturalist.

In April, she has more events planned at LASP. You can "**Hike with a Ranger**" on April 13, at 6:00pm, go on an "**Earth Day Hike**" on April 22, at 1:00pm, two "**Night Hikes**" on April 27 and 28, starting at 8:00pm, and also go "**Fly a Kite**" on April 29 at 1:00pm.

If you want to assist with the events, you can contact her at laura.clepper@tpwd.texas.gov or just come and enjoy some time outside at our local state park.

Natural Areas Association Pollinator Management Webinars

The Natural Areas Association is hosting seven exciting presenters on *four webinar dates in March and April*, covering a wide range of topics having to do with best practices for managing natural areas, while ensuring pollinator health and resilience. The Pollinator Management Series will share some of the background and conclusions that will shortly be published in an NAA Synthesis Paper on Pollinator Health and Resilience in Natural Areas Management - stay tuned for more on this important forthcoming resource! For abstracts, bios, registration (free), and additional details, visit <https://www.naturalareas.org/webinars.php>.

These webinars will count as Advance Training as they are interactive. Remember that only four hours of webinars may be used towards your certification requirements.

BioBlitz at Copper Breaks State Park

Park Superintendent, Edwin Quintero, of Copper Breaks State Park would like to invite any interested master naturalists to help with a BioBlitz at the state park on the weekend of April 20-22.

He will be setting up the event on iNaturalist so that we can document as many species as possible at the park on that weekend.

There will be no “set” time period to observe. Participants may just visit the park during this time period and make observations to add to this project on iNaturalist. Some of our members plan to make a trip out to the park on Saturday, April 21. (I know this is the same time as the field trip to Hackberry Flats and a few other events as well, but you may come after the field trip if you like or come on one of the other days.)



I am also inviting the ESO (Environmental Student Organization) from Midwestern State and will contact their president.

Please feel free to forward this message to any interested parties. We would like

to try our best to get a large amount of data to add to Copper Breaks State Park’s observations.

Below is the contact information for Edwin Quintero.

Edwin Quintero
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Park Superintendent
Copper Breaks State Park
International Dark Sky Place
777 State Hwy Park Rd 62
Quanah, TX 79252
(940) 839-4331 Office
(940) 261-1623 Mobile

Thank you very much! Hope to see you at the BioBlitz! If you need more information on a BioBlitz or iNaturalist, just ask!

Lynn Seman
940-867-3006

Earth Day is Coming!

Our chapter will be hosting a booth at the annual Earth Day Fair in the Atrium of the Clark Student Center on the MSU Campus on April 19, from 11:00am to 2:00pm. *If you would like to help at the booth, please contact Lynn Seman (rlynnseman@gmail.com) with the time that you would be available to attend.* This is the second year of this event which is hosted by the ESO (Environmental Student Organization) at MSU. We will have different displays set up to share with the students. We will also be giving away a game camera (donated by Academy Sports). *Come and help celebrate Earth Day with MSU!*



Horned Lizard Surveys Starts Soon!

Have you seen any Texas Horned Lizards lately? Join us for this year’s surveys! *We are starting on April 13 (for public sites) and on April 15 (for private sites).* The survey consists of walking a transect and looking for horned lizards. We collect weather data, look for ants, and then count horned lizards that we see. The information is reported to Texas Parks and Wildlife each month.

On Friday, *April 13*, we will meet at 8:00am at *Lake Wichita chat trail* for the first site survey. After about 1 hour, we will move on to *Lake Arrowhead State Park (approximately 10:00 am)* to survey there. Next, we are adding a site to our public list, *the Wichita Rail Trail off of Southwest Parkway*. We should make it to this site in the afternoon. If you can’t make all of the surveys, that is fine. You can attend which ever ones you can make.

On *April 15*, we will meet at Sutherland’s parking lot at *1:00pm*. From there, we will head to the private land sites. We have *one site off of highway 79* and *two sites near Dean, TX*. On this day, we should be finished with the surveys by 7:00 pm. Again, if you can’t make it to all the sites, come to what you can!

If you are interested in helping with horned lizard surveys, please contact Lynn Seman at rlynnseman@gmail.com to get more information.

Dinosaur Paleontologist Dr. Scott Sampson to Speak at MSU April 12, 2018 at 7:30 PM



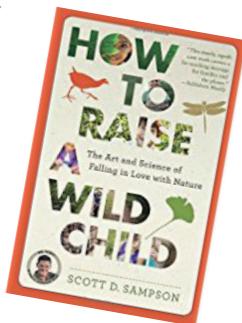
In conjunction with River Bend Nature Center, the Whiteside Museum of Natural History, and the West College of Education, the College of Science and Mathematics will present *dinosaur paleontologist Dr. Scott Sampson at 7:30 p.m.*

in Akin Auditorium. He will speak about “How to Raise a Wild Child,” also the title of one of his books, on teaching children to connect with nature in an age of electronics.

Admission is free and open to the public, but tickets are required. Call the College of Science and Mathematics at 940-397-4253 for more information.

Sampson is best known as “Dr. Scott,” host and science adviser of the Emmy-nominated PBS KIDS television series *Dinosaur Train*, produced by the Jim Henson Company. He has published numerous scientific and popular articles, and he regularly speaks to audiences of all ages on a range of topics. Sampson is author of *Dinosaur Odyssey: Fossil Threads in the Web of Life* and *How to Raise a Wild Child: The Art and Science of Falling in Love with Nature*.

Sampson also will sign books at River Bend Nature Center from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and speak to the MSU Texas community at 3:30 p.m. in Bolin Science Hall about “Dinosaurs of the Lost Continent.”



Campfire After School Fishing Event April 23—April 26

Most of the Texas Master Naturalist members at some time in their life, have gone fishing. Fishing not only draws people outdoors, but it also is a fun recreational activity! We include fishing events in many of our volunteer opportunities. On April 23 through April 26, we are sponsoring a fishing event for the Campfire After School program. The event will take place at South Weeks Park from 4:00pm to 5:00pm each day (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday). We will need volunteers to help kids bait the hooks, cast, and take fish off after they catch them! *If you can help any of the days, please contact Lynn Seman at rlynnseman@gmail.com.* You will have a great time!

Take the
**City
Nature
Challenge
2018**
April 27 – 30



Lynn Seman

Here is an event that we can join in to help our nature lovers in the DFW area!

The following was posted by Sam Kieschnick, Urban Wildlife Biologist (known as sambiology on iNaturalist):

**Mark your calendars for April 27 - 30!
We need your observations!**

Calling all naturalists in and around Dallas/Fort Worth! We need YOU! *This year's City Nature Challenge is on April 27 - 30*, so you can go anywhere within the range (as seen below on map) and make observations that will count this year. This is a competition among 65 cities in 15 different countries around the world. Can Texas compete? We think so! But we need your help. Any and all observations count, but the most valuable observations are made on public property (parks, right-of-ways, preserves, etc...) and are of wild (non-cultivated/not captive) organisms. Other observations count, of course, but the wild organisms found on public property can influence management and policy. Wherever you are, observe some things on April 27 - 30!

Observations have to be uploaded before May 4 to count as well.

There is a global website here: <http://citynaturechallenge.org/> Hopefully we'll have a TX website as well -- stay tuned!

NOTE – I plan on going to LBJ Grasslands (which is Located in the map zone) during this event to make observations on iNaturalist to help the DFW group. Anyone wanting to join me in this, contact me at rlynnseman@gmail.com.—Lynn Seman.



Results of the 2018 Texas Science and Engineering Fair

Summary by Lynn Seman

The Texas Science and Engineering Fair was held on March 24 at the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center in San Antonio. Eight Texas Master Naturalist gathered this year to judge projects for the Texas Master Naturalist Conservation Special Awards. The TMN volunteers interviewed almost 200 students with their projects that involved Texas natural resources, such as water, energy, plants, and animals. Out of these projects, the judges narrowed the group down to 6 senior high and 6 junior high projects that fit the criteria set for our award – definitely not an easy task! There were many amazing projects to choose from and the students did an awesome job explaining their research and results! Tina Davis (Heartwood Chapter), Gary Buckwalter (Gideon Lincecum Chapter), Coco Brennan (Lindheimer Chapter), and Carol Heinrichs (Brazos Chapter) worked together to judge the senior high category. They chose projects that dealt with one of our precious resources, water. Some of the winning projects researched ways to collect water, clean water, desalinate water, and conserve water in our state. One senior project involved a study of the Monarch butterflies and their host plants, milkweed, and another project was a study of how introduced aquatic plants can affect the environment. The top senior division winner was Alondra Gonzalez, a senior at Veterans Memorial High School, in Brownsville, TX. Her project was called “Bio Water: The Process of Using Cactus Mucilage to Purify Water from Toxins, Sediments, and Foreign Objects”. This amazing young lady received a \$500 scholarship and a plaque



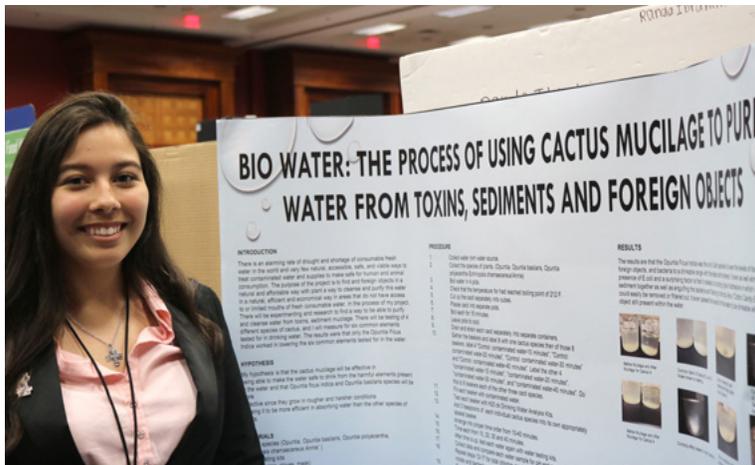
judged the projects in the junior division. These projects included projects researching the fungus affecting bats in Texas, ingenious designs in solar energy tracking and reducing carbon emissions, prevention of coral bleaching, and monitoring water for safety. The top project

in this category was a young lady named Emma Maltos from Rudder Middle School in San Antonio who conducted a 3-year study entitled “Human Impact on the Water Sources at Guadalupe River State Park”. This quote from her abstract demonstrates her passion for conservation of Texas natural resources – “It is important that we understand the stress that we are putting on the environment daily in order to uphold our few natural areas that we have left.” Her study compared the water quality and biodiversity of Guadalupe River State Park to Honey Creek Natural Area with a collection of data from both areas over three years.



After visiting with the students about their projects, the judges left a sticker with our master naturalist logo with each student and a thank you for sharing their projects. We hope that these students will continue to pursue research to help our natural resources. The judge volunteers had a great experience and hope that our organization will continue supporting and encouraging research opportunities of our Texas youth in future years!

from our organization. She demonstrated passion for conservation as well as putting in hours of time with research and investigation.



Top: Lynn Seman (Rolling Plains Chapter), Leslie Cusick-Fernandes (Rolling Plains Chapter), Josie Gonzales (Alamo Chapter), and Dawn Hatch (Alamo Chapter) judged the projects in the junior division.

Center: Junior Winner – Emma Maltos. **Bottom:** Senior Winner – Alondra Gonzalez

Lynn Seman (Rolling Plains Chapter), Leslie Cusick-Fernandes (Rolling Plains Chapter), Josie Gonzales (Alamo Chapter), and Dawn Hatch (Alamo Chapter)

The names, schools, and abstracts of the winning projects for our special awards are available for anyone interested. Contact Lynn Seman at rlynnseman@gmail.com for a copy.

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FACTS
OLD
FUN

If the Scops owl is faced with a large predator, it can stretch tall, tuck in its feathers and squint its large eyes. It remains motionless and hopes to be mistaken for a knot in a tree branch. Scops Owl feeds mainly on insects, spiders, caterpillars, earthworms, as well as small vertebrates such as small mammals, small birds, reptiles and frogs. Small prey are taken with the bill, while larger prey are seized with the talons.



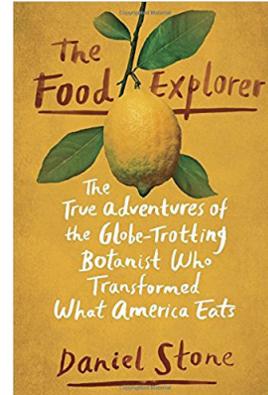
While the underside of the Sun's Glass Frog is see through, the skin on the dorsal side is a pale, translucent green. They are mostly active at night, when they're virtually invisible. Main enemies of glass frogs are snakes, mammals and birds.

The animal with the most bones is the snake. It has 600 to 1,800 bones and 200 to 400 vertebrae with two ribs attached to each except in the tail. They have ten bones in their skull and jaw alone. The human body is made up of 206 bones including 33 vertebrae and 24 ribs.



RESOURCE
CORNER

The Food Explorer: The True Adventures of the Globe-Trotting Botanist. . .
by Daniel Stone
Hardback: 416 pages
ISBN- 978-1101990582
Price: \$20.71 on Amazon



The true adventures of David Fairchild, a late-nineteenth-century food explorer who traveled the globe and introduced diverse crops

like avocados, mangoes, seedless grapes--and thousands more--to the American plate.

In the nineteenth century, American meals were about subsistence, not enjoyment. But as a new century approached, appetites broadened, and David Fairchild, a young botanist with an insatiable lust to explore and experience the world, set out in search of foods that would enrich the American farmer and enchant the American eater.

Kale from Croatia, mangoes from India, and hops from Bavaria. Peaches from China, avocados from Chile, and pomegranates from Malta. Fairchild's finds weren't just limited to food: From Egypt he sent back a variety of cotton that revolutionized an industry, and via Japan he introduced the cherry blossom tree, forever brightening America's capital. Along the way, he was arrested, caught diseases, and bargained with island tribes. But his culinary ambition came during a formative era, and through him, America transformed into the most diverse food system ever created.

Asian Carp
One of the Top Ten Invasive Species
in Texas

Asian carp, like bighead and silver carp, have the potential to cause enormous damage to native species because they feed mainly on plankton, a vital source of nutrition for larval fish and native mussels. Asian carp are a potential competitor with some native fish, like gizzard and threadfin shad, that depend on plankton for food



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