

Texas Master Naturalists ROLLING PLAINS CHAPTER

NEWSLETTER

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<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

October 2018

Presidents Report

by Terry McKee

It is already October and the year will soon be wrapping up. It is time to be thinking about new officers for 2019. This is an excellent opportunity to put your talents to use for the good of the chapter. Officer positions include president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. I encourage anyone to put their name into the pot for one of the offices listed above. This is an excellent opportunity to help the chapter grow and to earn volunteer hours. If you are interested, please contact Kay, Lynn, Larry or myself for details. We will take nominations from the floor in November with officers being elected in December.

Speaking of December- our annual Christmas Party and gift exchange is planned for Tuesday night December 4 starting at 6:30. We will not meet at MSU. The party will be held at the Letter Carrier Hall, 5310 Southwest Parkway. The highlight is our bad Santa gift exchange, which is always lots of fun (unless it's your gift that keeps getting stolen). Gifts should not be expensive, you are welcome to recycle unwanted gifts. We will have more on this at a later date.

Congratulations!

by Larry Snyder

For those of you not on our Facebook page, here's a photo of Megan with here recertification certificate and her Texas Water Specialist certificate. I had the honor of (and permission to) presenting them to her this morning during our Texas Stream Team activity.



Also congratulations to Kay Murphy, Betty Bowles, Paula Savage and Lisa Taylor for reaching their 2018 recertification.

LOCALS

OCTOBER 2: Rolling Plains Chapter monthly meeting is *in Bo-lin Science Hall room 209 at Mid-western State University* Time: 7:00 PM. **The program:** Debra Halter will present a program on i-naturalist

OCTOBER 4: River Bend Nature Center – Monarch Program 4 to 5 - contact Lynn Seman to help out.

OCTOBER 4: Burkburnett Career Fair – 6 to 8:00pm - contact Lynn Seman to help. We will have a booth outside and will be hopefully talking about and tagging Monarchs

OCTOBER 5-6: Buffalo Soldier Program at Copper Breaks State Park contact Park Superintendent Edwin Quintero

OCTOBER 12: Not so Scary Halloween at River Bend Nature Center - contact River Bend to help - 6 to 9 pm

OCTOBER 13: Bird Walk at LASP from 8am – 9am. Meet at the dump station in the camping area.

OCTOBER 14: Big Sit. Meet behind Wild Bird Rescue. Count

Local Events continued on pg. 2

Green Lynx Spider

by Paula Savage

I captured this photo of a Green Lynx Spider that has taken up residence on the head of one of my cockscomb flowers.



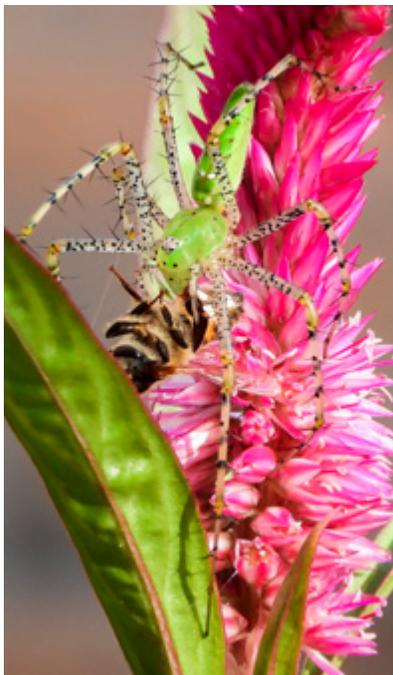
As its name might suggest, the Green Lynx Spider is a bright green spider of the Lynx spider family. Appearing an almost leaf-greenish shade, the species is further complimented by orange on the legs and black dots on a gray coloring as well. The abdomen contains chevron-looking shapes to further distinguish the species. All eight legs are covered in spines, or spikes. Lynx spiders, like the feline namesake, are able to jump a distance

in order to capture insect prey. They do not spin webs for ensnaring it. They do, however, use a silk dragline to catch something at a distance and bring it closer to itself. As with other species of spider, the female is larger than the male.

A fierce predator, the green lynx will eat just about anything. Bees, wasps, beetles, flies, grasshoppers and even other spiders become victim to the green lynx's aggressive hunting.

While the green lynx is dangerous to other spiders and insects, it seldom bites people. When it does (which usually happens only if a person disturbs a female spider guarding her egg sac), the bite is not harmful.

Insects, on the other hand have reason to avoid this nimble hunter. The green lynx spider has excellent eyesight, moves quickly and has the ability to spit venom at it's targeted prey. Because it kills so many bugs that are agricultural pests, the green lynx is considered a beneficial spider. However, there's some debate about that label since it is not particularly discriminating and will kill beneficial bugs as well.



Natural environments for the Green Lynx Spider includes open fields, especially those with tall, grassy surroundings. Females will attach fertilized eggs in a silken sac to these tall, reedy grasses. The egg sac may look more like a tiny, smashed golf ball with spiky parts poking out, not a smooth sphere. The mother will guard her egg sac until the spiderlings hatch and immediately start hunting for their first meals.



Green Lynx Spiders are traditionally found in southern states and are also a common sight throughout Mexico.

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begins at 8 am until 10 am. Bring a lawn chair and binoculars.

OCTOBER 20: Pollinator Bio-Blitz. Meet at Lake Arrowhead State Park at 8:30 am by the dining hall. We will celebrate Pollinator's Week by hosting a Bio Blitz to document pollinators and the plants they use. *This counts as volunteer hours.*

OCTOBER 26-28: Texas Master Naturalist Program Annual Meeting at the Sheraton Georgetown Hotel and Conference Center, Georgetown, TX. For more information: www.txmu.org/2018-annual-meeting

OCTOBER 27: Critters and Crawlers – Copper Breaks State Park 4 to 8pm - contact Park Superintendent Edwin Quintero

Texas Entomologists Warn Residents About New Tick Species

Confirmed reports of the long-horned tick, *Haemaphysalis longicornis*, in six states have prompted a Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service entomologist to alert Texans to its possible arrival.

Dr. Sonja Swiger, AgriLife Extension veterinary/medical entomologist at Stephenville, said this East Asian tick, originally from China, "is a relative newcomer to the United States and though it has not been confirmed here in Texas, it has been confirmed in Arkansas," as well as New Jersey, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina and New York, she said. This represents a broad range of environments in which the tick can survive.

Unlike many tick species, which complete their life cycle on a single host, the longhorned tick is a three-host tick. Those host species include an array of mammals and birds. To make matters worse, Swiger said the tick is parthenogenetic, meaning females can reproduce without a male, so a single fed female tick can create a whole population by herself.

A Photo Journal of the September 8, 2018 Sikes Lake Cleanup

1.



Betty and Chris check out the sign up sheets at the Sikes Lake Cleanup, Saturday, September 8. More than 100 volunteers came out to join the chapter event, with about 1000 pounds of trash removed from the lake. We really appreciate the help from Midwestern State University staff and the donation from American National Bank and Trust which enables us to buy supplies. Thank you to everyone from the chapter that spent their Saturday morning promoting the chapter and generating goodwill on campus.

2.



Judy lends a hand (and a grabber) as she and a student from MSU clear a patch of debris.

3.



Always the naturalist! Penny finds a floater among the floating trash.

4.



Larry S., Norman and Larry Harvey check out the trash-free bank of the lake.

5.



Kim shows off the latest garb for grabbing garbage.

5.



Lynn uses her kayak to navigate Sikes Lake and corral trash that was too far for students to reach.

7.



As the rain begins to fall, Norman and Larry heat up the hot dogs to feed our hungry volunteers.

6.



Kay enjoys a meal after a hard morning of labor.

8.



Terry helps with serving lunch. Despite the rain, everyone had fun volunteering and enjoyed promoting a cleaner environment..

FUN FACTOIDS



The world's longest flight of a chicken that has been recorded is 13 seconds. The world's longest distance flight of a chicken that has been recorded is 301 1/2 feet.

Poison dart frogs are carnivorous animals that survive on a diet purely made up of meat. Due to the high toxin levels produced by the poison dart frog, it has very few predators in the wild. In fact, it has enough poison to kill over 2,200 people.



Woodpeckers tongue wraps around its head twice. These muscles run over the brain, around the side of the head, under the lower jaw, and into the mouth, where the two meet to form the tongue. It's tongue is sensitive to touch, and aids in detecting insects in dead wood.

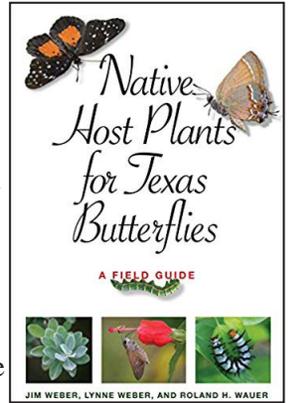
Mud puppy Time in Wichita Falls

This large crawdad (crayfish or mudpuppy, depending on where you grew up) was in our church parking lot. My son took the picture and said the creature was about 5" long. —Marilyn Meador



RESOURCE CORNER

Native Host Plants for Texas Butterflies: A Field Guide
by Myrna & David Langford
Paperback: 260 pages
ISBN- 978-1623496463
Price: \$28.44 on Amazon



While many growers focus on attracting adult butterflies to their gardens, fewer know about the plants that caterpillars need to survive. Native host plants—

wildflowers, trees, shrubs, vines, grasses, and sedges—not only provide a site for the butterfly to lay its eggs, they also provide a ready food source for the emerging caterpillar. Think of these plants as the nurseries of the garden. This user-friendly, heavily illustrated field guide describes 101 native larval host plants in Texas. Each species account includes descriptive information on each plant, a distribution map, and photos of both the caterpillars and adult butterflies who frequent those plants.

An adult butterfly may nectar on a wide variety of flowers, but caterpillars are much more restricted in their food sources. Some feed on only a limited number of plant species, so female butterflies seek out these specific plants to lay their eggs.

Learning more about the plants caterpillars need is crucial for butterfly conservation. Butterflies' dependency on specific caterpillar host plants is one of the key factors restricting their range and distribution. Armed with this knowledge, readers can also hone their ability to find specific species of breeding butterflies in nature. This is a handy guide whether you are in the field searching for butterflies or on the hunt for butterfly-friendly options at your local plant sale.

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