

# Texas Master Naturalists ROLLING PLAINS CHAPTER

## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 10, No. 11

<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

November 2018

### Presidents Report

It is time to elect officers for next year.: So far, your current slate of officers have agreed to remain in office, however we will accept nominations from the floor at the November meeting. I encourage you to volunteer for one of the positions available: president, vice-president, secretary or treasurer. Paula Savage has agreed to remain as newsletter editor, and Tami Davis will continue to serve as our webmaster. Thank you both!

For our chapter to continue to grow, it is imperative we have willing volunteers. To those of you that are volunteering with our projects and chapter partners, I thank you; and encourage you to continue into the new year.

Our December meeting will NOT be at MSU. We will meet at the Letter Carrier Hall at 5310 Southwest Parkway for our Christmas party. The meal will be served at 6:30 pm, Tuesday, December 4. Food will be catered by Luigi's and will include lasagna and salad. Members are encouraged to bring a dessert to share at the party. The highlight of the party is always the Bad Santa gift exchange. This is the perfect time to reuse items that you received from previous Christmases that are stored in your closets. Do not spend too much on gifts. Hint: field guides and books are always in demand.

For those of you that can help- on December 1, we will meet at the Letter Carrier Hall at 9 am to clean the building and decorate for the party. The more volunteers, the quicker we can finish.

See you at the November meeting where we will hear from Dr. James Estes concerning sunflowers. —Terry

### White-faced Ibis Visits Wichita Falls

by Paula Savage

On one of my numerous trips to Walgreens, I was treated to the sight of two White-faced Ibis along with numerous ducks in a water filled lot at the corner of Bridgecreek and Southwest Parkway.

The White-faced Ibis is a medium-sized wading bird that is iridescent bronze-brown overall and has a thin band of white feath-



### E LOCALS

**NOVEMBER 6:** Rolling Plains Chapter monthly meeting is *in Bolin Science Hall room 209 at Midwestern State University*  
**Time:** 7:00 PM. **The program:** Dr. Estes will lecture on Sunflowers.

**NOVEMBER 8:** Webinar Co-CoRaHS WxTalk: The National Weather Service - Building a Weather Ready Nation. **Advanced Training Opportunity!!!** See page 4 for more details.

**NOVEMBER 10:** Bird Walk – 9:00 am – Penny Miller at Lake Arrowhead State Park.

**NOVEMBER 10, 17, 24:** Fall Foliage Walk - Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge - 10 am - Bus Tour/Moderate Hike - Reservations Required.

**NOVEMBER 24:** Penitentiary Hollow Wild Walk - Lake Mineral Wells State Park & Trailway - 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Explore beautiful sandstone formations in remote areas only accessible on this guided hike.

**DECEMBER 4:** Rolling Plains Chapter Christmas Party - 6:30 pm -Letter Carrier Hall at 5310 Southwest Parkway - Bad Santa gift exchange.



ers around its bare red face, a long, down curved bill, and red eyes, legs and feet. It feeds on invertebrates, frogs and fish. It alternates several shallow rapid wing beats and short glides, and flies in a straight line formation. Sexes are similar.

The White-faced Ibis breeds from Oregon sporadically east to Minnesota and south to southeastern New Mexico and Texas, and east to coastal Louisiana. Spends winters

from southern California and the Gulf Coast of Texas and Louisiana to El Salvador. Preferred habitats include salt and fresh marshes in the west, and coastal marshes and brushy islands in Louisiana and Texas.

### Several interesting facts about the White-faced Ibis:

- White-faced ibises are declining throughout North America, where continuing threats include draining of wetlands and the widespread use of pesticides.
- It is thought that the largest White-faced ibis nesting colony in the world can be found in the marshes around the Great Salt Lake in Utah.
- A group of ibises has many collective nouns, including a “congregation”, “stand”, and “wedge” of ibises.



## Chapter Members Tag Monarchs at Lake Wichita

by Terry McKee

I certainly hope everyone was able to get out in October and tag Monarchs as they came through.



I would like to commend our volunteers, especially Lynn, under whose guidance were able to participate and educate local students throughout the area about the importance of monarch butterflies and maintaining habitats.

**REMINDER: You must return your monarch sheets and leftover tags to Laura Gillis at the November meeting on the 6th.**

## TMN Annual Meeting Report

by Lynn Seman

Several of our members were able to attend this year's TMN Annual Meeting in Georgetown, TX during the



last weekend of October. This

year was a special “anniversary” celebration because the organization is now in its 20th year of operation. We were treated to a special anniversary video that went back over the history of the organization (which will be available to all members very soon).



Two master naturalists that have been with TMN from the beginning reached their 20,000-hour volunteer mark which is an amazing achievement! (Kip Kiphart from

Hill Country and Tom Solomon from Galveston Bay Area)

Our keynote speaker was Ben Masters, a wildlife film

maker, who did an excellent job taking conservation stories that need to be told and creating them into short informational films to share. His films will bring a tear to your eye as well as educate you on some great stories

across Texas. He has a documentary called “Unbranded” that tells of his 3,000 mile journey with wild horses from Mexico to Canada. Overall, the meeting was a celebration of the 20 years of volunteer success across the state of Texas!

## The Big Sit

by Terry McKee

Penny, Debra and Terry met behind Wild Bird Rescue to participate in the Big Sit, October 14. The mist didn't deter our intrepid birders. 21 species were seen on Lake Wichita. The highlights included *Scissor-tailed Flycatcher*, *White Pelican*, *Chimney Swift* and several *Common Yellowthroats*- both male and female. A pair of beavers kept us occupied when there was a lull in the bird watching.



# Texas Pollinator BioBlitz

by Lynn Seman

The 3rd Annual Texas Pollinator BioBlitz has concluded for 2018. What was this BioBlitz? This was an event in which people all over the state of Texas ventured outdoors and took photo observations of every critter that is considered to be essential in the process of pollination of the flowering plants across Texas. These observations were uploaded to the iNaturalist website and added to the Texas Pollinator BioBlitz Project. This snapshot of “what’s out there” can be beneficial to scientists that are keeping track of the population and distribution including the biodiversity of critters in the study. The event lasted from October 5 through October 21 with an update each day showing the leader board with the rank of each Bioblitzer involved and the number of observations he/she has made. Our chapter conducted a BioBlitz at Lake Arrowhead State Park on Oct. 20 to coordinate with the state BioBlitz.

Once again, I learned MUCH during this event. I learned that even during rainy, cooler days, you can find pollinators. Moths can be found on cloudy days: they have so many beautiful details when you get up close for a photo! Some are even camouflaged to look like bird droppings! I found that bees hide out with their faces buried inside a sunflower for protection from the rain. In addition, I learned that during the fall migration days, there needs to be plenty of nectar plants around



to refuel the migrating critters in our area, including the Monarch butterflies. Native plants, such as Texas Lantana or Maximilian sunflowers attract the most pollinators. Some of these excellent refueling stops include River Bend Nature Center, Lake Arrowhead State Park, Lucy Park, LBJ Grasslands, and Lake Wichita. Most of what I found were hanging out in these areas. Also, I learned that if you wander off the beaten path, you may find yourself with an uncomfortable case of Poison Ivy rash, relentless chigger bites, and an assortment of mosquito bites even if you wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts. (the battle scars of an obsessed BioBlitzer!) Pollinators come in all shapes and sizes, from the tiniest fly to the largest bumble bee, but each is still vital to the ecosystem. Most of all, I learned that it’s okay to NOT be the top observer on the rank list, even if your competitive spirit takes over. No matter how hard I tried to get the most observations, there is always someone else out there willing to get more! Consequently, friendly competition can be beneficial when it causes the total observations to soar. This year’s BioBlitz total observations topped 25,000! Overall, the experience was worth the time invested, and I can’t wait till next year’s event.

You can visit the results at <https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/2018-texas-pollinator-bioblitz?tab=observers>

# BioBlitz at Lake Arrowhead

by Terry McKee



We had a fun-filled, four and a half hour trek in Lake Arrowhead State Park, as Lynn, Debra, “L” and myself participated in the Pollinator Bio-Blitz. We were delighted to have Marcus and Jaylan from MSU join in our search. It was great having an extra pairs of eyes. We had lots of Queen butterflies and even a few monarch flew overhead. It appeared that American Snout butterflies were also migrating through. The wet weather seemed to keep most insects at bay, but when we found stands of flowers, we had plenty to observe. Check out i-naturalist to see what was seen and photographed by our intrepid explorers! Thanks Ranger L, for arranging all the dewy spider webs on every tree to give the park a nice touch for Halloween.





Damselflies capture their prey with the help of their legs, folding them like a basket to form a trap. Once the insect is trapped it is transferred to the damselfly's mouth.

In 2001, a bacterium was killing 99 percent of the male blue moon butterflies. The immune ones bred—and the population evolved and recovered in only one year.



Although the rocks on the rim of the Grand Canyon now lie up to 8,038 ft. above sea level, they contain the fossils of fish, corals, and clams that once lived in the ocean.

## The CoCoRaHs WxTalk Webinar Advanced Training Opportunity!!!

### REGISTRATION INFO

Title: Webinar #63 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: The National Weather Service - Building a Weather Ready Nation

Date: *Thursday, November 8, 2018*

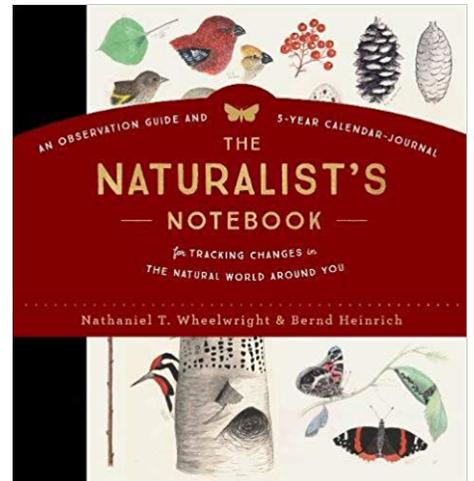
Time: 1:00 PM Eastern, *Noon Central*, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific

"This webinar will highlight how and why the National Weather Service (NWS) is building a Weather-Ready Nation. In terms of the why, Paul Schlatter will explain why we need to be Weather-Ready and how it's becoming more difficult given the increasing vulnerability in many parts of the country. In terms of the how, he will discuss recent changes to some of the products and services provided by the NWS, and how you can make the best use of them. New and interesting weather products will be shown and explained, including where you can find them for your local area and how you can best apply them.

Reserve your seat now by registering here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8430126467366224131>

# RESOURCE

*The Naturalist's Notebook*  
by Nathaniel T. Wheelwright  
and Bernd Heinrich  
Hardback: 208 pages  
ISBN- 978-1612128894  
Price: \$15.68 on Amazon



*"This wonderful book is really about the power of curiosity and passion; two expert naturalists sharing their inspiration and guidance to turn simple observations into a deeper understanding of the world around us."* — David Allen Sibley, author and illustrator, *The Sibley Guide to Birds*

Become a more attentive observer and deepen your appreciation for the natural world. The unique five-year calendar format of *The Naturalist's Notebook* helps you create a long-term record and point of comparison for memorable events, such as the first songbird you hear in spring, your first monarch butterfly sighting of summer, or the appearance of the northern lights.

Biologist Nathaniel T. Wheelwright and best-selling author Bernd Heinrich teach nature lovers of all ages what to look for outdoors no matter where you live, using Heinrich's classic illustrations as inspiration. As you jot down one observation a day, year after year, your collected field notes will serve as a valuable record of your piece of the planet.

This deluxe book, with a three-piece case, gilt edges, a burgundy ribbon bookmark, and a belly band with gold foil stamping, is a perfect gift for all nature lovers.

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