

# Texas Master Naturalists ROLLING PLAINS CHAPTER

## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 12, No. 12

<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

December 2020

### President's Report

2020 with all of the Corona virus restrictions has been a very challenging year for the Texas Master Naturalist organization. The state office and several chapters have really “stepped up to the plate” to offer opportunities for acquiring volunteer hours and advanced training in the future. These changes will be presented by your new board members in the new year. We will vote for the new slate of chapter officers at the Tuesday night meeting December 1st. I am confident that our new Board will be able to come up with some creative solutions for our chapter including the training class this spring.

A founding member of our chapter, Laura Gillis, has agreed to serve as President. Debra Halter will be Vice-President, Webmaster, and an assistant for VMS. Lynn Seman has agreed to be Treasurer and VMS Czar in order to let Larry Snyder retire. Larry has served this chapter for 9 years! He has done an awesome job. He was always so patient and presented logical viewpoints in Board discussions. He will truly be missed, including his corny jokes! Sandy Underwood will act as Secretary.

I am so grateful to have served with this board. I couldn't have asked for a better group of human beings to work with: creative, knowledgeable, and kind. Wishing everyone the best new year ever!—Kay

### Forgotten Species: Javelina

Javelina, also called Collared Peccary, is a Texas native and lives in scrubby and arid regions of the state. Similar to hogs in appearance, they are not related. But mistaken identity doesn't change their value in the ecosystem.

Javelina play a great role in nature, because they are an additional prey species for some of the predators out there.

Texas Parks and Wildlife biolo-



gist Froylan Hernandez explains why it's important to keep track of the Javelina population.

Having Javelina out on the landscape is a sign of a healthy ecosystem. When you see declining populations that could also be a sign of declining habitat or degrading habitat and so they play an important role not just as a prey species but also an indicator of a good healthy system.

While Javelina act as an important

### E LOCALS

**DECEMBER 1: Rolling Plains Chapter Meeting** - 7:00pm on Zoom - log in a little early so we can start the program at 7:00pm. A Zoom link will be sent out one hour before the meeting. Hope to see you all there!

**The program:** We will be hearing some summary reports for the year and will be voting for our new slate of officers.

Laura Gillis - President  
Debra Halter - Vice-President  
Sandy Underwood - Secretary  
Lynn Seman - Treasurer

### Chapter Dues

Larry said that if you have your dues for next year, you can mail them to him at: 1020 Pawhuska Ln Burkburnett TX 76354-2815. Dues are \$15 single, \$25 couple.

### Home and Garden Tickets

Like all things, the price of Home & Garden Show tickets have gone up. And, yes, they do plan to have one next year.

The cost to the chapter has increased to \$2.00 per ticket and your

indicator species, Froylan believes Javelina don't always get the respect they deserve.

I like to call them the forgotten species, because they are seen often times as a pest or a nuisance species. You know they deserve the

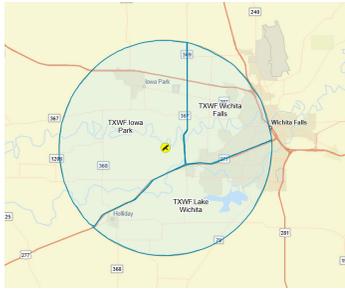
same type of respect as lets say a big whitetail would or a big mule deer.

Javelina have gained a stable population in Texas. Perhaps they'll gain a little more respect as well.

## The Great Texas Bird Count

By Sue King

October 21st, the Wichita Wingmen (Penny Miller, Larry Snyder, Judy Snyder, Warren King and Sue King) participated in the Great Texas Birding Classic (GTBC). We were a "dispersed" (as opposed to an "intact") team, which was a new category for this COVID year. That meant you could only bird together with others in your quarantine "pod" of family/



friends. That gave us three groups birding separately (1. Penny, 2. Larry and Judy, 3. Warren and Sue). We kept in touch by texting locations and bird lists throughout the day. The morning was cool, misty, and calm. The afternoon was less birding friendly as it became warm and windy. At the end of the 24 hours we had logged 74 species, the exact

number that we reported last year for this event.

### The species logged are:

1. Red-winged Blackbird
2. Eastern Bluebird
3. Northern Cardinal
4. American Coot
5. Double-crested Cormorant
6. American Crow
7. Eurasian Collared Dove
8. Mourning Dove
9. White-winged Dove
10. Cattle Egret
11. Great Egret
12. House Finch
13. Northern Flicker
14. Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
15. Gadwall
16. Canada Goose
17. Common Grackle
18. Great-tailed Grackle
19. Eared Grebe
20. Pied-billed Grebe
21. Ring-billed Gull
22. Northern Harrier
23. Cooper's Hawk
24. Ferruginous Hawk
25. Red-tailed Hawk
26. Swainson's Hawk
27. Great Blue Heron
28. Black-chinned Hummingbird
29. Blue Jay
30. Dark-eyed Junco
31. American Kestrel
32. Killdeer
33. Belted Kingfisher
34. Ruby-crowned Kinglet
35. Mallard
36. Eastern Meadowlark
37. Merlin
38. Northern Mockingbird
39. Red-breasted Nuthatch
40. Osprey
41. Barred Owl
42. Great Horned Owl
43. American White Pelican
44. Eastern Phoebe
45. Pigeon
46. Northern Pintail
47. American Pipit
48. American Robin
49. Semipalmated Sandpiper
50. Western Sandpiper
51. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
52. Loggerhead Shrike
53. Chipping Sparrow
54. House Sparrow
55. Lincoln's Sparrow
56. White-crowned Sparrow
57. White-throated Sparrow
58. European Starling
59. Bank Swallow
60. Blue-winged Teal
61. Brown Thrasher
62. Tufted Titmouse
63. Spotted Towhee
64. Turkey Vulture
65. Black and White Warbler
66. Orange-crowned Warbler
67. Downy Woodpecker
68. Ladder-backed Woodpecker
69. Red-bellied Woodpecker
70. Bewick's Wren
71. Carolina Wren
72. Sedge Wren
73. Greater Yellowlegs
74. Common Yellowthroat

cost per ticket is \$8.00. The chapter keeps the \$6.00 for our programs and other costs. Tickets will be \$10 at the door is my understanding.

This is the only fundraiser that we ask our members to participate in.

This year I WILL NOT be purchasing tickets and then trying to push them off on to the membership. That's too much work for me or for whomever takes on the Treasurer position for 2021.

Instead, orders will be taken until January 15th. Tickets will then be purchased and delivered to the purchaser.

So, send me your order ... starting now.—Larry Snyder

### TMN Tuesdays

TMN will be presenting a special program in 2021 on Tuesdays called "TMN Tuesdays" at lunch-time. On this special day, they will show the videos from the annual meeting for *AT credit*. On January 12, they will start with Doug Talamy's presentation and then have a variety of other ones.

### Adopt-a-Loop Project

Penny is heading up the Adopt-a-Loop project for our chapter. She said that there are Texas Wildlife Trails across Texas that Texas Parks and Wildlife have, but help is needed checking on these trails and also with adding observations at these locations. There are 3 loops in our area with 8 sites. She said don't do anything yet until she gets the checklist set up and she will let us know when to start on this project. There is a possibility to add other loops to the project such as Nature Bluff, Lake Wichita, and others. She will check on these. Larry mentioned that he found an area in Montague County that has 568 acres called the Nocona site (part of Hagerman?) Penny said she will look into that one also.

### Bird Walks at LASP

Penny's bird walks at Lake Arrowhead State Park have started up again on the second Tuesday of each month. Next one is December 8 at 8:00am.



Earth's oxygen is produced by the ocean. Ever stopped to think where oxygen comes from? Your first thought may be a rainforest, but marine organisms take the

bait. Plankton, seaweed and other photosynthesizers produce over half of the world's oxygen.

In just one teaspoon of soil, there are more microorganisms than people on the planet, said the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "Millions of species and billions of organisms—bacteria, algae, microscopic insects, earthworms, beetles, ants, mites, fungi and more—represent the greatest concentration of biomass anywhere on the planet."

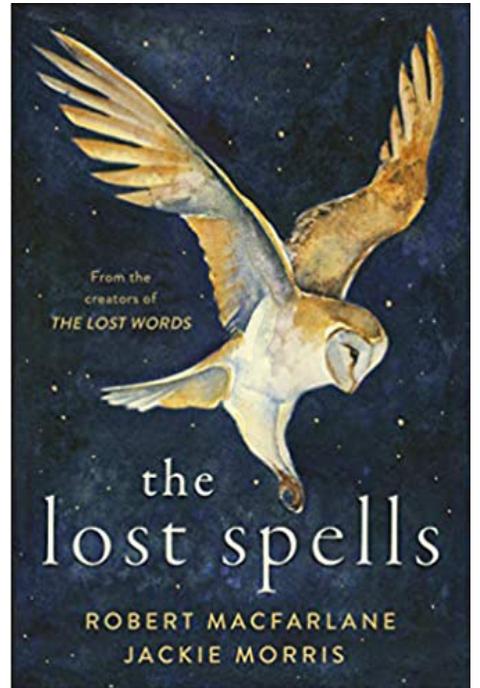


There are more trees on Earth than stars in our galaxy. NASA experts believe there could be anywhere from 100 billion to 400 billion stars in the Milky Way galaxy,

Snopes reports. However, a 2015 paper published in the journal *Nature* estimated that the number of trees around the world is much higher: 3.04 trillion.

*The Lost Spells*

by Robert MacFarlane and Jackie Morris  
Hardback: 120 pages  
ISBN-978-1487007799  
Price: \$22.99 on Amazon



"Elegant There is enough magic here to summon wild things even for those who are snug indoors." - *Wall Street Journal*

Since its publication in 2017, *The Lost Words* has enchanted readers with its poetry and illustrations of the natural world. Now, *The Lost Spells*, a book kindred in spirit and tone, continues to re-wild the lives of children and adults.

*The Lost Spells* evokes the wonder of everyday nature, conjuring up red foxes, birch trees, jackdaws, and more in poems and illustrations that flow between the pages and into readers' minds. Robert Macfarlane's spell-poems and Jackie Morris's watercolour illustrations are musical and magical: these are summoning spells, words of recollection, charms of protection. To read *The Lost Spells* is to see anew the natural world within our grasp and to be reminded of what happens when we allow it to slip away.

**Four Texas Parks and Wildlife Films Featured in Wild Texas Film Tour**

AUSTIN — The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will have four short films featured in this year's virtual Wild Texas Film Tour *starting on Dec. 1*. The films spotlight experimental paddlefish stocking in Caddo Lake, Black Skimmers along the Texas Coast, research surrounding the Swift Fox in the Panhandle Plains and the diverse bayou habitats throughout the city of Houston.

The Wild Texas Film Tour, hosted by filmmaker and conservationist Ben Masters, is a short film tour showcasing wildlife, adventure and conservation stories from across the state. During this year's free virtual tour that runs through December, viewers will meet the characters in the films, those behind the cameras and the conservationists that are working to keep Texas wild for future generations. More information about the Wild Texas Film Tour and how to watch the films can be found on their website.

A preview of the TPWD films can be found on the TPWD YouTube Channel.

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