

# Texas Master Naturalists ROLLING PLAINS CHAPTER

## NEWSLETTER

Vol. 13, No. 12

<http://txmn.org/rollingplains>

December 2021

### President's Report

'Tis the season to be thankful and I am thankful for you! I am amazed at all the good work our Chapter members have done and how many hours have been recorded. You are truly making a difference for our partners and in our community! I am also thankful for the Board members and Committee Chairs that have helped me through this first year as your-President. I wouldn't have made it this far without you!

I am looking forward to our Christmas party – I can't wait to see your photo and art entries! We will have good food, lots of laughs and just a tiny bit of business to tend to. One order of business will be our elections. Alex Nelson has agreed to serve as Vice President so our Election slate at this time is: Laura Gillis, President; Alex Nelson, Vice President; Sandy Underwood, Secretary and Lynn Seman, Treasurer. It's not too late to throw your hat in the ring for Secretary if you are interested!

We will also be celebrating certifications for Terry McKee, Tami Davis and Becky Trammel. While we are on the topic of certifications, please be sure to log your hours. The State office will again be distributing the "Against All Odds" pins for 2021. To get this pin, you will need to have logged at least 1 volunteer hour for 2021. Hours must be recorded BEFORE February 15, 2022.

If your New Year's resolution includes getting outside more (and getting Master Naturalist hours), you can kick-start your New Year with a First Day Hike at Lake Arrowhead State Park. (There may be two hikes to choose from so details will be coming soon.)

Also in January, the Board will be having a retreat and working on some exciting things for the Chapter. If you have anything that you would like the Board to consider for the upcoming year, please let us know and we will be happy to add it to the agenda.

Our December Meeting & Christmas Party will be held at the NALC Building, 5310 Southwest Parkway, Wichita Falls, (beside Wichita Valley Nursery). If you haven't paid already, Lynn will be collecting \$5 for the meal the night of the party. (This money will in turn be donated to our partner, Wild Bird Rescue. The Chapter will also match all donations received up to \$250.)

### LOCALS

**DECEMBER 7: *Rolling Plains Chapter Meeting and Christmas Party*** will be held at Letter Carrier Hall, 5310 Southwest Parkway at 6 pm. Cost for the meal will be \$5 a head. There will be the Bad Santa gift exchange. You can also pay your yearly dues: Single dues - \$15 a year Couple dues - \$25 a couple a year. Home and Garden tickets can be purchase for \$8.00 each.

**December 11 - Bird Outing @ 8:00 am - 10:00 am**  
Join Penny Miller, other members and guests at Lake Arrowhead State Park for a bird outing. Look for and identify birds found at the park. This is a leisurely hike on level ground (handicap accessible). Binoculars helpful, but not required. You can borrow a birding pack (bird book/binoculars) from the State Park headquarters. This outing happens on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

To join us, pay at the State Park entrance, drive to the second left and turn left. Take the next right. The dump station is the third driveway on your left. Pull around the circle road and be sure to park off of the pavement so RVs can use the dump station.

Don't forget the "Bad Santa" gift exchange and be sure to vote for your favorite photo and art entries.

Home & Garden tickets will also be available at the meeting. These are \$8 each and they make great stocking stuffers! If you would like to get a jump on January, you can also pay your dues at the December meeting. (\$15 for individuals, \$25 for a couple.)

I hope to see you at the party and I wish everyone a safe and very happy holiday season!

—Laura

## How to Get Rid of Hammerhead Worms

You may have noticed a spike in media attention about hammerhead worms, but these long snake-like flatworms have been around since the 80's.

This predatory worm preys on earthworms, secretes chemicals through their skin that can cause skin irritations to humans, and can carry parasitic nematodes within them. All the media attention has been a great help in educating the public and encouraging

people to report sightings, which increasing our data collection, and helps expand our knowledge on the worm's established geological range; however, this doesn't really help the people that are left with the worms. You should not cut the worm into pieces because each section can regenerate into a fully developed worm within a few weeks. So, what should you do if you find a hammerhead worm?



Hammerhead worm (*Bipalium* sp.). These worms are typically light/honey colored, with 1 to 5 dark dorsal stripes, and long snake-like bodies.

apply salt, vinegar, or orange essence (citrus oil) directly to the worm, seal the container, and place it in the freezer for 48 hrs. The container should then be disposed of in the trash. If a glass jar was used, the container can be washed out, but will need to be disinfected with alcohol or a strong disinfectant. For more information about hammerhead flatworms, see the [Texasinvasives](#) info page.

First, take a picture and report it to [invasives@shsu.edu](mailto:invasives@shsu.edu). Next, collect the worm and place it in a sealable container, such as a zip lock bag or a glass jar. \*\*It is important to note that when handling live flatworms please use gloves, a paper towel, or a stick, and hands should be washed in warm soapy water, and rinsed in alcohol or hand disinfectant.\*\*

Once you have your flatworm in a container,

**December 14** - TMN Tuesday @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

The Future of Conservation- Will it look the same? TPWD Hunter Education Coordinator Steve Hall will be joining us! Link will be added when it is released.

On the Second Tuesday of each month at the noon hour (12PM Central Standard Time), the TMN State Office will offer an hour-long virtual advanced training event (sometimes including some fantastic new and returning guest speakers). For information: <https://txmn.tamu.edu/tmntuesdays/>

\*\* This is one of the few webinars that can be watched at a later day for AT hours. Members should enter this as AT: TMN Tuesday. Enter the date you watched the webinar (live or recorded) and the webinar title.

**December 18** - Christmas Bird Count

There is a specific methodology to the CBC, and all participants must make arrangements to participate in advance with the circle compiler within an established circle, but anyone can participate. Please contact Debra Halter, the compiler for the Wichita Falls area count.

**January 1, 2022** -First Day Hike – Lake Arrowhead State Park @ 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Join Ranger "L" and other member of the Rolling Plains Chapter for a First Day Hike at Lake Arrowhead State Park. We will be checking out the winter birds in the area, and anything else that presents itself

If we have enough members interested, we are wanting to sponsor or organize the second hike at 1:00pm with our group.

What I need to know is: Who will be able to be there at 1:00pm on January 1 at Lake Arrowhead State Park? (and is interested in helping)

Please respond by the end of this week if possible.

Thank you,  
Lynn Seman



Female California condors don't need males to have offspring—joining sharks, rays, and lizards on the list of creatures that can reproduce without mating. They procreate through a process called parthenogenesis.

There are 1000 types of sheep breeds in the world and it's estimated that fat tailed sheep represent 20-25% of the world's sheep population. Also called fat rumped sheep, they are found mostly in the extreme environments in Africa, the Middle East and Asia. The tails can weigh as much as 26 pounds. Similar to a camel's humps, they accumulate fat for subsequent use during the dry season.



Castoreum is a heavily-vanilla scented brown or tan goo that is secreted from a beaver's castor gland, which is located nail-bitingly close to its anal gland. Castoreum has been used as a natural food flavoring for nearly the last century. It has been used as a replacement for vanilla, raspberry, or strawberry in some flavorings and foods. Castoreum is labelled by the FDA as "generally recognized as safe." Yum!

## Texas Man Busted!

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY, Texas** – A man in Montgomery County was busted in August for illegally capturing and keeping an alligator and several invasive and endangered species at his home.

Wardens also discovered a room full of aquariums when they were inspecting the property, TPWD said. One of the wardens recognized some of the animals as freshwater stingrays, which are an invasive species and illegal to possess.

The man told the wardens he also removed a small alligator snapping turtle from Lake Livingston and was keeping it in one of the tanks.

Alligator snapping turtles are the largest freshwater turtle in North

America and are also a threatened species. It is illegal to capture or possess one without a permit, Texas Parks and Wildlife officials said.

Wardens spoke with the man about the illegally captured animals and he agreed to help wardens locate them to better suited facilities.

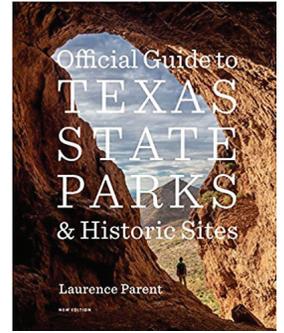
The alligator snapping turtle was donated to Spring Creek Nature Center, which is permitted to possess native species and display them for educational purposes.

The freshwater stingrays were taken to Moody Gardens to help educate the public about different ecosystems and the harm that invasive species can cause to local wildlife.

# RESOURCE CORNER

*Official Guide to Texas State Parks and Historic Sites: New Edition Paperback*  
 by: Laurence Parent  
**Paperback:** 240 pages  
**ISBN-13:** 978-1477315408  
**Price on Amazon:** \$27.95

Since it was first published in 1996, Official Guide to Texas State Parks and Historic Sites has become



Texans' one-stop source for information on great places to camp, fish, hike, backpack, swim, ride horseback, go rock climbing, view scenic landscapes, tour historical sites, and enjoy almost any other outdoor recreation. Freshly redesigned, this revised edition includes eight new state parks and historical sites, completely updated information for every park, and beautiful new photographs for most of the parks. The book is organized by geographical regions to help you plan your trips around the state. For every park, Laurence Parent provides all of the essential information:

- The natural or historical attractions of the park
- Types of recreation offered
- Camping and lodging facilities
- Addresses and phone numbers
- Magnificent color photographs

So if you want to watch the sun set over Enchanted Rock, fish in the surf on the beach at Galveston, or listen for a ghostly bugle among the ruins of Fort Lancaster, let this book be your complete guide. Don't take a trip in Texas without it.

### Chapter Contacts:

Laura Gillis, President, to 733-4467, gillis.laura5319@gmail.com; Debra Halter, Vice President 632-8557, chickadeekes@aol.com; Sandy Underwood, Secretary, 867-9905, sandyleau@gmail.com; Lynn Seman, Treasurer 867-3006, rlynnseman@gmail.com

### Committees Chairperson:

Paula Savage, Newsletter Editor and Designer 691-0231, pasavage15@gmail.com; Debra Halter, Website Manager 632-8557, chickadeekes@aol.com; Lisa Taylor, Communication Chair 781-9695, nothingbbblueskz@gmail.com

**Advisor:** Robert Mauk, TPWD Advisor 766-2383, Robert.Mauk@tpwd.Texas.gov