

# The Naturalist

Volume 11 Issue 6

June 1, 2026



Photo by Dawn Bissel

The mission of the Master Naturalist Program is "to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the state of Texas."

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T E X A S



# The Naturalist

## President's Corner

by Mike Wenzel

It is 7 p.m. and I am sitting at my desk staring out the window at my dog, Sarge, playing on the freshly mowed lawn. As I mowed earlier today, I realized our summer heat and humidity are quickly arriving. Outreach, learning, and work do not stop because of the heat, so I encourage everyone to make sure you are drinking plenty of water and occasionally mixing in something sweet as well.

I say this because about 26 years ago I was a First Sergeant at annual training at Fort Hood in June. For those that are not aware 100 degree days with horrible humidity are the norm at that time of year at Ft Hood. During those two weeks, and even before the unit arrived, leadership repeatedly reminded the soldiers in our care to drink plenty of water — even when they were not thirsty.

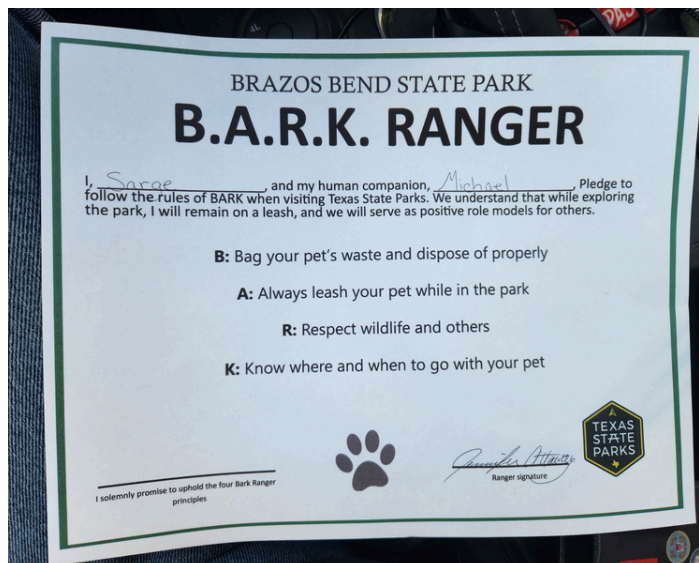
During that training period, I had one soldier suffer a heat injury. My first thought was dehydration, and I immediately assumed both the soldier and I were in trouble. When I met with the doctor, however, he explained that dehydration was not the problem. In fact, it was just the opposite.

As I stood there with a confused look on my face, the doctor explained that the individual had consumed too much water, thinning the body's electrolytes to the point where it could no longer function properly. He told me that while drinking water is essential, we also need to occasionally replace the salts, sugars, and minerals our bodies use. A soda, sports drink, tea, or similar beverage every once in a while, can help provide what the body needs to continue working as designed.

After explaining the situation to my superiors and sharing what the doctor had taught me, our message changed slightly: drink plenty of water, but every once in a while, treat yourself to something else as well.

So, as summer settles in across South Texas, I encourage all the Master Naturalists in our chapter to stay hydrated, stay cool whenever possible, and continue the important work of introducing others to this great place we call home.

The photo is of Sarge at Brazos Bend State Park where he earned the honor of being a "B.A.R.K. Ranger".



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# The Naturalist

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## Lipantitlan - A Bit of Nueces County History

by David Neipert

Because Texas Master Naturalists are progeny of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, knowledge of the local TPWD properties is appropriate. While many state parks, such as Mustang Island or Lake Corpus Christi, are well known, there is a small TPWD area in Nueces County which is relatively obscure.

Before continuing let's consider a story I once heard in England. A man consults his solicitor (i.e. a lawyer) with his sad story. The lawyer asks the man what do you want? The client replies "only justice." The lawyer asks "How much justice can you afford?"

Lipantitlan State Historic Area sits in the Northwest of Nueces County and perhaps it raises the question "How much history has to take place to make a plot of land historic?" There is just a bit of history there. An archeological dig in the 1980s turned up artifacts that indicate Lipan Apaches camped there in the distant past. The site was also thought to have hosted a Spanish Presidio around 1730 but no sign of that is now apparent.

Perhaps the best claim to history took place around the time of the Texas Revolution. During 1825 the Mexican Government became alarmed at the volume of migration from the USA into Texas. A garrison was sent to an area, today in Nueces County, to build a fort to be called Fort Lipantitlan. The purpose was to discourage further US settlement in the area.

It wasn't much of a fort. A contemporary wrote: "The fort was a simple embankment of earth, lined within by fence-rails to hold the dirt in place, and would have answered tolerably well, perhaps, for a second-rate hog pen."

The fort was manned by Mexico at the time of the Texas revolution. After the Texas victory at Goliad, Fort Lipantitlan was one of only two in Texas still held by Mexico. There was some concern that the fort could be used as a staging area for an attempt by Mexico to recapture Goliad. An expedition was dispatched to capture the fort. Secondly, the Texans hoped to free two Texan prisoners who were held there.

When the Texans arrived, they found that the bulk of the Mexican Garrison had left to mount a patrol, consequently the fort was effectively unmanned. The few Mexicans present agreed not to resist. The Texans dismantled the fort and departed with their two comrades without a shot being fired.

As the Texans returned to Goliad there was an encounter during the Nueces River crossing, later designated as the "Battle of Lipantitlan." Hardly deserving the classification "battle," it was actually a very minor skirmish. One Texan had two fingers shot off and there were some Mexican casualties. The wounded Mexicans went to San Patricio for treatment and the rest retreated to Matamoros.

In 1937 the Bluntzer family donated the five-acre site to the state for designation as a historic area. There is no remnant of the fort, in fact there is nothing there except a small stone monument, an old cistern, and just enough history to be designated "historic."



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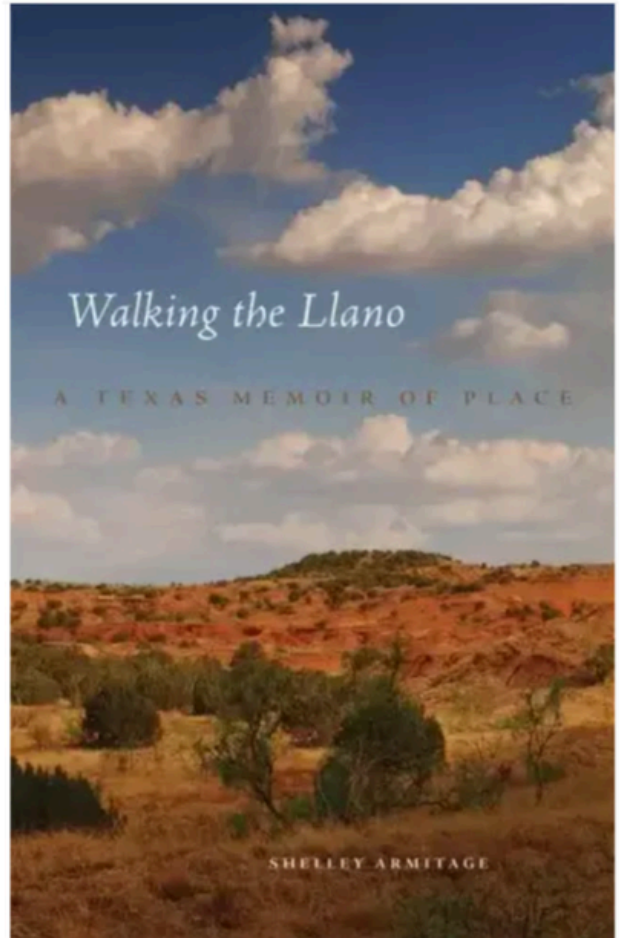
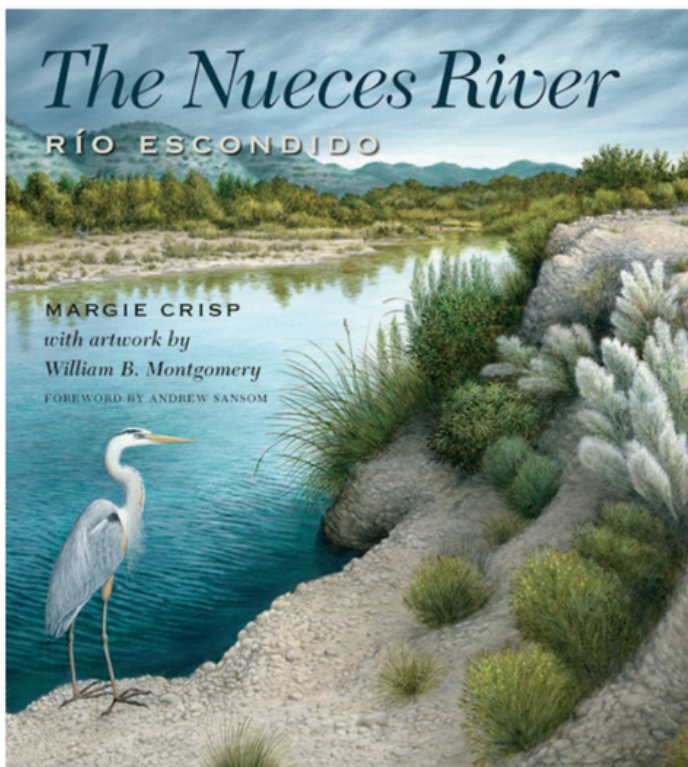
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## Brief Notes on Books a Fellow Naturalist Enjoyed Reading

By Cornelia Gates

Summer is coming, and travel and personal time take the forefront. Such is the influence for this month's book notes.

Several years ago, while visiting my Aunt Ginger at her river house in Uvalde County, she gifted me the book **The Nueces River (Rio Escondido)** by naturalist **Margie Crisp (with artwork by William B. Montgomery)**. This book itself is a downriver journey best read from the beginning (or should I say the "headwaters"?). On foot, by kayak, and by fishing boat, our authors follow the Nueces River from Edwards County to Nueces Bay. Curiosity, coupled with tenacity, fuels their trek, and while the book is a chronicle of their personal experiences, it is foremost a wonderful treatise of the Nueces River itself.



Similarly, **Walking the Llano by Shelley Armitage** is a personal homage to a place dearly loved and cherished. While walking the Llano Estacado for thirty three miles along the meandering Middle Alamosa Creek from her family farm to the Canadian River, she ponders "What does the land say to us?". The book is a poetic and dreamy memoir, balanced by the history and geology of the staked plains of North Texas - it is a literary combination of musings and facts, just what I like.

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## Birds In My Backyard

Photos via Facebook by Riekie Roncinske



Photo By: Riekie Roncinske

### Hummingbird

Hummingbirds have a typical lifespan of 3 to 5 years in the wild. However, those that survive their dangerous first year can live much longer, with banding records showing some individuals reaching 9 to 12 years of age

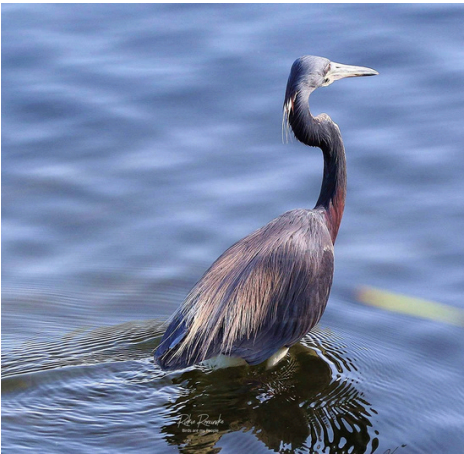


Photo By: Riekie Roncinske

### Tricolored Heron

The Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*), formerly known as the Louisiana Heron, is a medium-sized coastal wading bird. It is easily distinguished by its distinct plumage: a dark blue-gray back, a prominent white belly, and a narrow white stripe running down the front of its long, sinuous neck



Photo By: Riekie Roncinske

### Reddish Egret

The Reddish egret species occurs in two color morphs: a dark morph characterized by a slate-blue body and reddish head and neck, and a white morph that features completely white body plumage. The two-toned bill and shaggy neck are distinctive in both plumages

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# The Naturalist

## Buticulotrema Stenauchenus

By Dr. Chuck Blend

### Published Paper:

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3283763>



Hello again, fellow STMNs. For our June 2026 newsletter, we continue our journey all the way back (~35 years) to the beginning for me as a parasitology M.S. student discovering new taxa of helminth (worm) parasites from the deep sea.

**Title:** *Echinobreviceca coelorhynchae* n. gen., n. sp. (Echinobrevicecinae n. subf.), a Fellodistomid from *Coelorhynchus coelorhynchus* (Macrouridae) from the Gulf of Mexico

**Authors:** Norman O. Dronen, Charles K. Blend and John D. McEachran

**Journal:** The Journal of Parasitology  
Vol. 80, No. 2 (Apr., 1994), pp. 309-311 (3 pages)

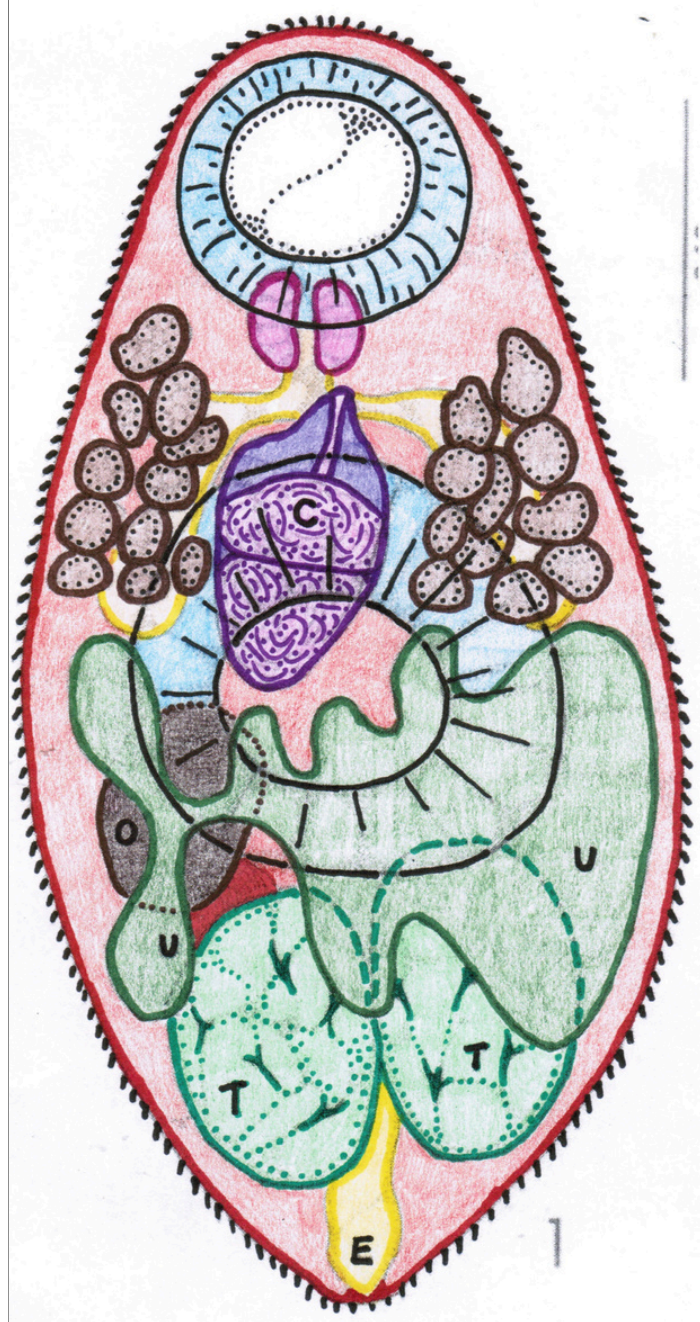
**Meaning of the name:** Genus name – Greek ‘echinos,’ meaning spined (referring to spinous tegument of genus), and the Latin ‘brevis,’ meaning brief (short), and ‘caecum,’ meaning a blind intestine (comes to an dead-end) and referring to the short ceca of the genus. Species name – refers to the genus of the fish from which specimens were collected

**Type host:** The hollowsnout grenadier, *Coelorinchus caelorhincus* (Gadiformes: Macrouridae):

**Type locality:** Gulf of Mexico.

**Brief Summary:** *Echinobreviceca coelorhynchae* n. gen., n. sp. (Fellodistomidae: Echinobrevicecinae n. subf.) is described from the intestine of the hollowsnout grenadier, *Coelorinchus caelorhincus* (Risso, 1810) (syn. *Coelorhynchus coelorhynchus* [Risso, 1810]), from the eastern Gulf of Mexico (off Pensacola and Destin, Florida) at a depth of 473 m. Five of 13 (38%) *C. caelorhincus* examined were infected with this new fellodistomid. Specimens of the bullseye grenadier, *Bathygadus macrops* Goode and Bean, 1886 (Gadiformes: Bathygadidae), the western softhead grenadier, *Malacocephalus occidentalis* Goode & Bean, 1885), and the common Atlantic grenadier, *Nezumia aequalis* (Günther, 1878) (Gadiformes: Macrouridae), collected at the same time were not infected with *E. coelorhynchae* n. gen., n. sp. The new species is most similar to members of the subfamily Baccigerinae, but it differs in having an I-shaped excretory vesicle, a densely spined tegument, a pre-testicular ovary, and a blind seminal receptacle. Echinobrevicecinae n. subf. is separated from other subfamilies in the Fellodistomidae by having an I-shaped excretory bladder. *Echinobreviceca* n. gen. is established as the type and only genus in the new subfamily, and *E. coelorhynchae* n. sp. as the only known species in the genus.

Please note: This genus and species are now considered to belong in the family Faustulidae, however, the subfamily, Echinobrevicecinae, was suppressed as a junior synonym of the Faustulidae.



**Illustration:** Camera lucida drawing and subsequent colored rendition of an adult of *Echinobreviceca coelorhynchae* Dronen, Blend & McEachran, 1994; ventral view, showing cirrus apparatus (C), uterus (U), ovary (O), testes (T), and excretory vesicle (E).

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## **Texas Master Naturalist – No June or July Chapter Meetings**

Remember we won't have a meeting in June or July so enjoy your summer! We will meet again in August.

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## **In Case You Missed It - May Chapter Meeting**

### **Coastal Connections: Texas Sea Grant and Community-Based Stewardship**

By April Taylor and Amy Nowlin

Texas coastal systems are dynamic, productive, and increasingly vulnerable to both natural hazards and human pressures. Through the work of Texas Sea Grant at Texas A&M University, scientists, extension agents, and communities are working together to better understand and respond to these challenges. This presentation will provide an overview of Texas Sea Grant and its role in coastal resilience, including efforts focused on flooding, hurricanes, heat, drought, and wind.

In addition, we will explore how community-based projects translate science into action. A featured example is the Mid-Coast Chapter's oyster gardening pilot program, where volunteers are directly contributing to ecosystem recovery—one shell at a time. These efforts demonstrate how local stewardship, citizen science, and applied research come together to strengthen coastal systems and communities. Join us for an evening that connects big-picture coastal science with real opportunities for Texas Master Naturalist involvement along our coast.

April Taylor is a Coastal Resilience Specialist with Texas Sea Grant at Texas A&M University. She holds a master's degree in Earth and Environmental Resource Management and previously served as a Tribal Liaison with the South Central Climate Adaptation Science Center. Her work focuses on extension services related to coastal hazards, including flooding, hurricanes, heat, drought, and wind, and she serves as a lead on the revision of the Homeowner's Handbook to Prepare for Coastal Natural Hazards.

Amy Nowlin serves as the Matagorda County Coastal & Marine Resources Agent with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension and Texas Sea Grant. She leads educational and outreach programs that promote sustainable coastal practices and is an advisor to the Mid-Coast Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists. Her work emphasizes community-driven conservation, including oyster gardening initiatives that support habitat restoration and ecosystem health.



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# The Naturalist

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## Wildlife Watch: Captured by Camera

By Mike Wenzel

Wildlife Watch: Captured by Camera  
Welcome to this month's edition of Wildlife Watch, where I share some of the fascinating birds and wildlife captured by my game cameras—both locally and beyond.

This month features photos I took while on a recent birding trip. I will challenge you to ID the birds and reptile. The only clue I will give you is that all the photos are from either NPI or Port A.



# The Naturalist

## Advanced Training Opportunities 2026

Visit our South Texas Chapter homepage to view all of our June opportunities.

### ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITY



### Beach Debris (flora & fauna) along a Gulf beach

Friday, June 5, 2026

8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Port Aransas South Jetty Beach

**REGISTER NOW** - one week away - space is limited.



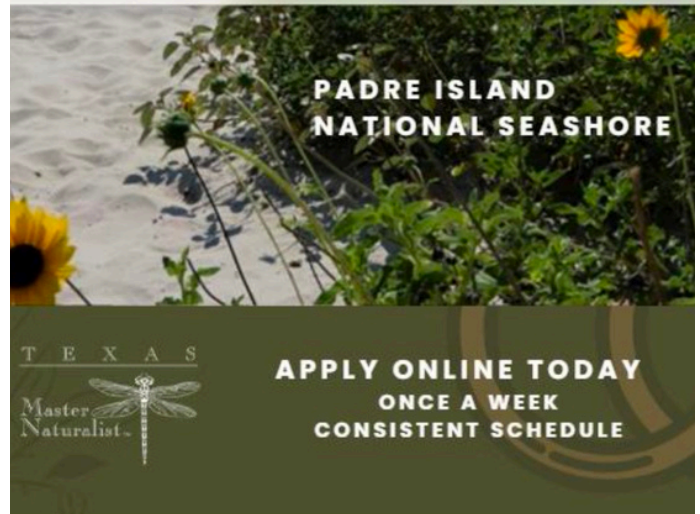
## Volunteer Opportunity

Scan the QR Code to APPLY ONLINE:



### Interpretation & Visitor Center Assistant (FY26)

National Park Service - Padre Island National Seashore



## Volunteer Opportunity

June 19, 2026

Discover Aransas County  
Hiking • Bicycling • Trails • Learning  
www.AransasPathways.com

PATHWAYS IN MOTION:  
**KAYAK AT SUNSET**  
Paddle. Connect. Community.

Be part of the story!

FRIDAY  
JUNE 19, 2026  
6:00 - 8:30 PM

MURPH PARK  
ROCKPORT, TEXAS

A FREE COMMUNITY  
EVENT FOR ALL AGES!

**CALL FOR**  
VENDORS, SPONSORS & EXHIBITORS!

We're inviting local businesses, organizations, artists, food vendors, and community partners to join us for an unforgettable evening on beautiful Copano Bay.

- ✓ CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY
- ✓ SHOWCASE YOUR BRAND
- ✓ SUPPORT OUTDOOR RECREATION & ECOTOURISM
- ✓ ENGAGE WITH VISITORS & PADDLERS
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Contact Aransas Pathways today!

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ONE COUNTY,  
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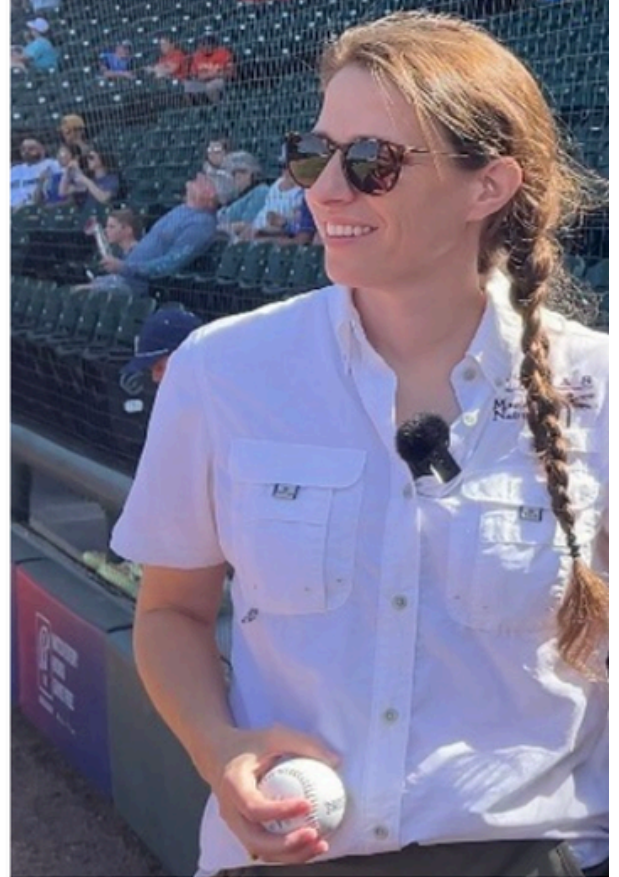
**SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2026**  
**FIRST PITCH 7:05 PM**  
**WHATABURGER FIELD**  
**CORPUS CHRISTI**

## NIGHT AT THE BALLPARK

SOUTH TEXAS CHAPTER  
MID-COAST CHAPTER



**PURCHASE YOUR DISCOUNT TICKETS NOW!**



Purchase your discounted tickets now for Father's Day weekend for the 2nd annual Texas Master Naturalist NIGHT AT THE BALLPARK. We'll join forces with the Mid-Coast Chapter at Whataburger Field to reach thousands of Hooks baseball fans.

### Volunteer Opportunity

**June 19, 2026**

We'd love for you to sign up for a short one hour shift(s) at our outreach table during the game.  
SIGN UP link for outreach table:



# The Naturalist

## Who Did What in April

by Cindy Frank

(total volunteer hours for month = 1523.50)

(total people seen for month = 1476 adults and 1117 youth)

**ARK-PO** – Paula Baker

**ARK-RM** – Neesy Tompkins, Paula Baker

**Blucher Park-PO** – Sharon Heilman, Bibi Dalrymple, Michelle Alvarez

**Blucher Park-RM** – Bibi Dalrymple, Sharon Heilman, Ann Flanagan, Jon Brandt, Sue Barley, Joan Wolfe

**CC Museum-PO** – Bill Beaman, Denise Beaman, Dawn Bissell

**CC Museum-RM** – Chuck Blend, Christy Blend, Katie Heuermann, Bill Beaman, Denise Beaman, Randy Bissell

**Citizen Science-FR** – Cindy Frank, Jon Brandt, Cornelia Gates, Jill Smith, George Gardiner, Dawn Bissell

**Community Presentations-DO** – Randy Bissell

**Community Service-TG** – Bibi Dalrymple, Cindy Frank

**ComPartServ-PO** – Jean Meadors, Aracely Negrete, Mandi Bever, Cindy Frank, Bill Beaman, Denise Beaman, Mike Wenzel, Lari Jo Edwards, Brad Stockman, Kathy Cima, Chad Huckabee, Randy Bissell, Rick Martin, Nada Martin, Julie Findley, Stephanie Lewis, Pat Clark, Cindy Hanifen, Cherie Heimann, Neesy Tompkins, Josie Gunter, Ann Flanagan, Bibi Dalrymple, Dawn Bissell

**Flour Bluff-DO** – Chad Huckabee, Janice Knezek, Janice Ainbinder

**Flour Bluff-PO** – Cindy Frank, Chad Huckabee, Denise Beaman, Bill Beaman, Rick Martin, Nada Martin

**Flour Bluff-RM** – Cindy Frank, Chad Huckabee, Rick Martin, Nada Martin, Pat Clark, Janice Ainbinder

**Lake CCSP-PO** – Steve Schiwetz, Monica Garcia, Daniel Garcia

**Mustang Island SP-PO** – Cindy Frank

**Mustang Island SP-RM** – Dawn Bissell, Debbie Plowman

**NCCPS-RM** – Adel Casiano, Carol Singleton

**NDP-DO** – Cindy Frank, Phil Woods, Toni Briscoe

**OBWPNC-PO** – Gerry Vahle

**OBWPNC-RM** – Gerry Vahle, Leslie Albrecht, Mike Wenzel

**PINS-PO** – Patti Baker, Randy Bissell, Hope Warne, Rick Martin, Nada Martin, Toni Briscoe

**PINS-RM** – Elaine Tiller, Cindy Frank, Carol Singleton, Rick Martin, Phil Woods, Ann Flanagan, Jenny Dailey, Kathy Cima, Brad Stockman, Jessica Bruyere-England, Hope Warne, Claude Smith, Suzanne Smith

**Port A Nature Preserve-DO** – Julie Findley, Phil Woods

**Port A Nature Preserve-PO** – Cindy Frank, Paula Baker, Phil Woods

**Port A Nature Preserve-RM** – Ann Flanagan, Michele Connolly, Cindy Frank, Julie Findley, Paula Baker

**Public CleanUp-RM** – Michele Connolly, Morgan Pyle, Pat Clark, Ingeborg Holt, Gerry Vahle, Patti Baker, Christina Lee, Jim Butcher, Erica Salinas, Jill Smith

**Sea Turtle-PO** – Neesy Tompkins, Pat Clark

**Sea Turtle-RM** – Michele Connolly, Cindy Frank, John Wilkins

**STBGNC-DO** – Adel Casiano

**STBGNC-PO** – Adel Casiano, Carol Singleton, Hannah Upton, Holly Ahern, Michelle Alvarez, Bill Beaman, Denise Beaman

**STBGNC-RM** – Adel Casiano, Margaret Cleaves, Carol Singleton, Pat Clements, Grace Lopez

**TSA-RM** – Patti Baker

**TSC-RM** – Patti Baker, Stephen Warne

**UTMSI-PO** – Jenny Dailey, Kathy Cima, Brad Stockman, Ann Flanagan, Michele Connolly, Randy Bissell

## Who Did What in May

by Cindy Frank

List of who did what – May, 2026

(total volunteer hours for month = 1420.75)

(total people seen for month = 922 adults and 1936 youth)

**ARK-PO** – Paula Baker

**ARK-RM** – Neesy Tompkins, Paula Baker, Kathy Cima, Brad Stockman

**Blucher Park-RM** – Bibi Dalrymple, Sharon Heilman, Jon Brandt, Sue Barley, Ted Cleaves, Margaret Cleaves, David Major

**CC Museum-RM** – Chuck Blend, Christy Blend, Katie Heuermann, Randy Bissell, Jessica Hernandez

**Citizen Science-FR** – Cindy Frank, Randy Bissell, Cindy Hanifen, Jessica Hernandez, Neesy Tompkins, Julie

Findley, Phil Woods, Aracely Negrete, Holly Ahern, Jim Butcher, Erica Salinas

**Community Presentations-DO** – Randy Bissell, Chad Huckabee

**Community Service-TG** – Cindy Frank, Chad Huckabee, Rick Martin, Lari Jo Edwards

**ComPartServ-PO** – Mike Wenzel, Pat Clark, Debbie Plowman, Erica

Salinas, Jim Butcher, Mandy Bever, Ingeborg Holt, Lari Jo Edwards, Jason Edwards

**Flour Bluff-DO** – Chad Huckabee, Janice Knezek, Janice Ainbinder, Julie Findley, Grace Lopez

**Flour Bluff-PO** – Cindy Frank, Chad Huckabee, Denise Beaman, Rick Martin, Nada Martin, PJ Pratt

**Flour Bluff-RM** – Cindy Frank, Chad Huckabee, Rick Martin, Pat Clark, Janice Ainbinder, Janice Knezek, Suzanne Smith

**Lake CCSP-PO** – Phil Woods

**Mustang Island SP-PO** – Chad Huckabee, Randy Bissell, Dawn Bissell, Bill Beaman, Denise Beaman, Rick

Martin, Nada Martin, Pat Clark, Ann Flanagan

**Mustang Island SP-RM** – Dawn Bissell, Bill Beaman, Denise Beaman

**NCCPS-RM** – Adel Casiano, Carol Singleton

**NDP-DO** – Cindy Frank, Phil Woods, Chad Huckabee

**NDP-RM** – Phil Woods, Cindy Frank

**OBWPNC-DO** – Randy Bissell

**OBWPNC-FR** – Dawn Bissell

**OBWPNC-PO** – Gerry Vahle

**OBWPNC-RM** – David Major, Margaret Cleaves, Ted Cleaves

**PINS-PO** – Patti Baker, Gerry Vahle

**PINS-RM** – Elaine Tiller, Cindy Frank, Carol Singleton, Rick Martin, Phil Woods, Ann Flanagan, Jenny

Dailey, Kathy Cima, Brad Stockman, Hope Warne, Claude Smith, Suzanne Smith, Bill Beaman, Ingeborg Holt

**Port A Nature Preserve-DO** – Julie Findley

**Port A Nature Preserve-PO** – Paula Baker

**Port A Nature Preserve-RM** – Cindy Frank, Julie Findley

**Public CleanUp-RM** – Michele Connolly, Morgan Pyle, Pat Clark, Gerry Vahle, Patti Baker, Christina Lee, Jill Smith, Aracely Negrete, Margaret Cleaves, Ted Cleaves, David Major, Jenny Dailey, Kathy Cima, Brad

Stockman, Jason Edwards, Julie Findley

**Sea Turtle-PO** – Neesy Tompkins

**Sea Turtle-RM** – Michele Connolly, Cindy Frank, John Wilkins

**STBGNC-DO** – Adel Casiano, Grace Lopez

**STBGNC-PO** – Carol Singleton

**STBGNC-RM** – Adel Casiano, Margaret Cleaves, Pat Clements, Dawn Bissell

**TSA-RM** – Patti Baker

**TSC-PO** – Patti Baker

**TSC-RM** – Patti Baker, Elaine Tiller

**UTMSI-PO** – Jenny Dailey, Kathy Cima, Brad Stockman, Ann Flanagan, Michele Connolly

**WWF-PO** – Phil Woods

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs, activities, education and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunities throughout Texas A&M AgriLife.

TEXAS A&M  
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