

Chapter News

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

"The sun, with all those planets revolving around it and dependent on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the universe to do."

~ Galileo Galilei

Wow! Can you believe it? We made it through April's activities and are gearing up for May's and June's long list of opportunities. I hope you are planning your days to join us at several of our Summer Reading Series Programs coming to a Brazoria County Library near you! We also have four DEEP sessions left, and Camp Mohawk will need volunteers the first week of June. So, **please check the website calendar for dates, times, and locations, and thank you in advance for volunteering!**

Congratulations to Chris Kneupper who recently completed 5,000 volunteer hours. Chris received the President's Call to Service Award in March 2020, has been an instructor for both the Columbia Bottomlands and Archeology sections of our Intern training program, and will also present at our Spring AT Day on May 20.

Thank you for your service, Chris.

Congratulations also to Angela Griffin, who led the field for number of

observations during the Houston/Galveston City Nature Challenge. Angela was one of over 1400 observers in our area this year and recorded 715 observations with 365 species identified on iNaturalist



over the three-day challenge. You will frequently find Angela on the Shadow Creek Ranch Trail and Quintana beach sweeps. She

also contributes most of our Facebook/social media posts. Way to go Angela!

Our 2023 Intern program continues over the next month. Training Director Melanie Hollenshead reports that seven interns are close to completing the course of instruction and will be graduating shortly. Melanie and the training team also invite members to attend training sessions that interest you. We also need Mentors to help our interns connect with the Chapter and "navigate the system." Kate Harris, Class of 2022, is coordinating the Mentor program. Please consider stepping up and being a welcome face and friendly voice to one

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Kathy Pittman is the president of the Cradle of Texas Chapter. She can be reached at pittman@tmn-cot.org.

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<https://facebook.com/TMN.COT>

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The Texas Master Naturalist program is coordinated by Texas A&M AgriLIFE Ext. Svce. & Texas Parks and Wildlife TMN programs serve all people without regard to socio-economic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

Masthead photo by Jesse Henslee at Brazos Bend State Park.

Texas Master Naturalist Program
Cradle of Texas Chapter
Chapter News – May 2023

REMINDER

Sign up **NOW** for the May 20 COT ADVANCED TRAINING DAY. Scholarships available. See Page 7.

Register now via <https://tinyurl.com/2023COT-ATday>

Texas Master Naturalist Program—Cradle of Texas Chapter General Meeting and Advanced Training

Wednesday, May 10, 2023, 6 P.M.

at Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, Angleton TX, and via email invite to the
Extension Service's Microsoft Teams Meeting license

5:30 PM	Social Time
6:00 PM – 6:15 PM	Welcome and Volunteer Report
6:15 PM – 7:15 PM	Advanced Training Speaker: Carla J. Dove, Program Director, Feathers Identification Lab, Smithsonian Institution; Kristine Rivers, COT member and founder, Birding for Fun Topic: "Bird Detectives" <i>[Hours for Advanced Training (AT) TBD at close of meeting]</i>
7:30 PM – 8:00 PM	General Membership Meeting <i>[Hours for Volunteer Time (VT) TBD at close of meeting]</i>



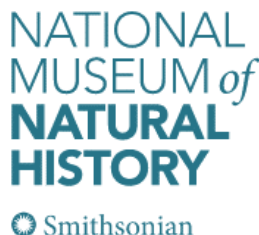
Carla J. Dove

Carla J. Dove is the Program Director of the Feather Identification Lab at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C. She directs a program specifically tailored for determining species of birds from microscopic evidence, DNA analysis, and by using the museum's vast research collection of birds to identify feathers. Her work is essential to the field of aviation safety and is used in studies of prey remains, food contaminations, and in identification of birds used on anthropological artifacts. She received a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Montana, and Master of Science and PhD degrees from George Mason University.



Kristine Rivers

Kristine Rivers is a lifelong birder, author, and the founder of Birding for Fun, an organization offering guided tours, workshops, and family-friendly events meant to make birding accessible to everyone. She is a proud Texas Master Naturalist and served as president of the Cradle of Texas chapter from 2017-2019. She's written popular field journals, birding activity books, and bird-watching guides for kids.



MEMBERSHIP DATA REPORT by Dave Brandes, Data Manager

Congratulations to the following members achieving certifications and milestones as of April 30, 2023.

2023 Recertifications as of April 30

Dennis Charleton	Mel McKey
Pam Lewis	Kristine Rivers

5000 Hours Milestone Award

Chris Kneupper

Hours Totals YTD—as of 30 April 2023

6,216 Hours VT 808 Hours AT

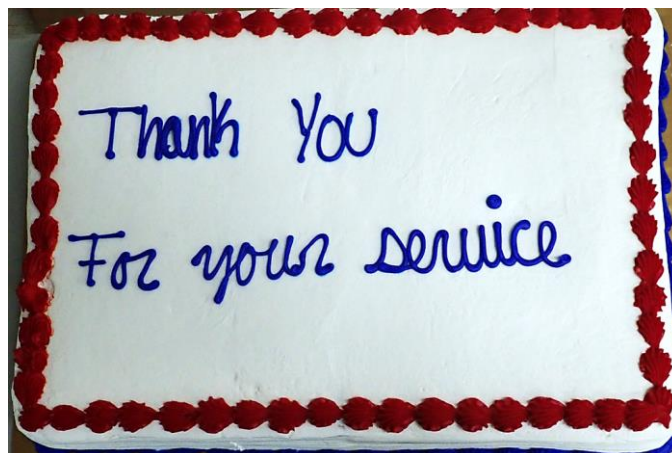
Impact Data YTD—as of 30 April 2023

3,011 Adults 9,960 Youth 12,971 Total

*April only: VT 1,654; AT 169



At the April 12 General Meeting, Membership Director John Boettiger (third from left) and President Kathy Pittman (third from right) recognized those members who recertified or achieved VT milestones. From left, Oran Atkins, Dick Schaffhausen, Larry Kirby, Dave Brandes, Barbara Yoder, Rainbo Johnson, Debbie Nance, and John O'Connell (1000 hours). Not Pictured: James Calvert and Kim Richardson (recertifying), and George Valadez (1000 hours). Photos left and below by Dick Schaffhausen.



As April is Volunteer Appreciation Month, the COT board honored all COT volunteers with a banner and cake.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Continued

or more in our Intern class.

Registration for the 2023 Spring AT Day, our sixth such event, is off to a great start! It will be held on Saturday, May 20, from 8 am to 3:30 pm at the First Presbyterian Church of Angleton, with a virtual attendance option via Zoom. This year's theme is "A Look Back at Texas History." AT Director Kristine Rivers and her committee have a great slate of speakers lined up, and I hope you will join us. See the COT website or your email for further details.

Our meeting this month will be at 6 pm on Wednesday, May 10. NOTE THE NEW START TIME! Featured speakers will be and Carla J. Dove, Program Director, Feather Identification Lab, Smithsonian Institute, and Kristine Rivers, AT Director, former Chapter President, and also founder of Birding for Fun. Carla and Kristine co-authored the book "Bird Detectives—Science Sleuths and Their Feathered

Friends." Thanks to a generous donation by member Neal McLain, we have several copies of their book available to members to check out. See Deb Nance if you would like to borrow one!

We celebrated Volunteer Appreciation in April, but for me, every month should be Volunteer Appreciation Month! We can't educate and reach out to the public without you and your support. Your love of our natural resources and willingness to share your knowledge drives our volunteer program, and we can't do it without you. Thank you!

See you outside!

Kathy Pittman

"For most of history, man has had to fight nature to survive; in this century he is beginning to realize that, in order to survive, he must protect it." ~Jacques-Yves Cousteau

MEMBERS "OUT STANDING" IN THE FIELD



The San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge's Information Building was repainted in April in preparation for Migration Celebration. Friends of BWR's Dick Schaffhausen coordinated help from Marty Cornell, David Dungan, Oron Atkins, Mickey Dufilho, and Brenda Martin. Photos by Dick Schaffhausen.

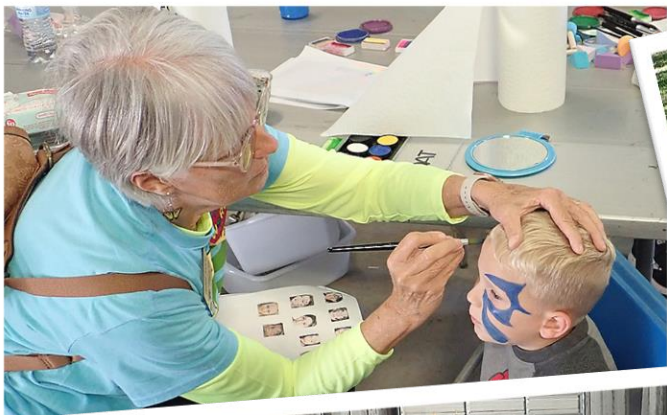


Geologist Randy Bissell (right) returned to AgriLIFE for COT New Member training entitled "Geology of Brazoria County..." to which members were also invited.



Brazosport Mall Outreach (above) on April 15 promoted FOBWR's upcoming Migration Celebration at SBNWR. Kim Richardson shows the speckled king snake to visitors. Cynthia Grandjean... All photos from TMN-COT Facebook page.

COT MEMBERS FILL MIGRATION CELEBRATION VOLUNTEER ROSTER!



MIGRATION CELEBRATION IMAGES IN THE FACTS

Photos by Mike Felix/The Facts




VT/AT OPPORTUNITIES



May 9, 2023
12pm
#TMNTuesdays

Title: Roving Interpretation: Making Casual Connections that Matter

Ben Horstmann
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department



<https://txmn.tamu.edu/tmntuesdays/>

TMN-COT 6th Annual Advanced Training Day on Saturday, May 20, 2023, from 8am-3:30pm First Presbyterian Church of Angleton, with a virtual option via Zoom.

- All presentations are hybrid, with a mixture of both in-person and virtual speakers.
- Breakfast and light refreshments provided by chapter volunteers, and the chapter will provide a lunch of baked potatoes with all the fixings and beverages for in-person attendees.
- Participants receive 6 hours of Advanced Training credit.

Theme: "A Look Back at Texas History"

- **"The Forts Velasco"** – Chris Kneupper, Texas Master Naturalist – Cradle of Texas Chapter
- **"Commemorating El Camino Real de los Tejas"** – Tom Byrd, Past President of El Camino Real de Los Tejas National Historic Trail Association
- **"Vernon & Florence Merriam Bailey"** – David J. Schmidly, Biologist and Professor, Past President of Texas Tech University and Oklahoma State University
- **"Regenerative Ranching in the Native Prairies of Texas"** – Casey Wade, President and CEO, Dixon Water Foundation
- **"Black Indians: The Lost Culture"** – Dr. Lisa Uhler, Professor of Government, Tarrant County College

This year's event also includes a **display contest**, with prizes awarded by an anonymous panel of judges based on relevance to theme, presentation of content, and creativity, and a People's Choice Award determined by attendees. If you would like to create a display, contact Advanced Training Director, Kristine Rivers, at kristine@birdingforfun.com.

In-person attendance limited to 100; no limit for virtual attendance.

Registration fees: in-person \$25-COT members, \$30 non-members; virtual \$10 COT-members, \$15 non-members. Registration deadline: May 13, 2023

Register now via <https://tinyurl.com/2023COT-ATday>

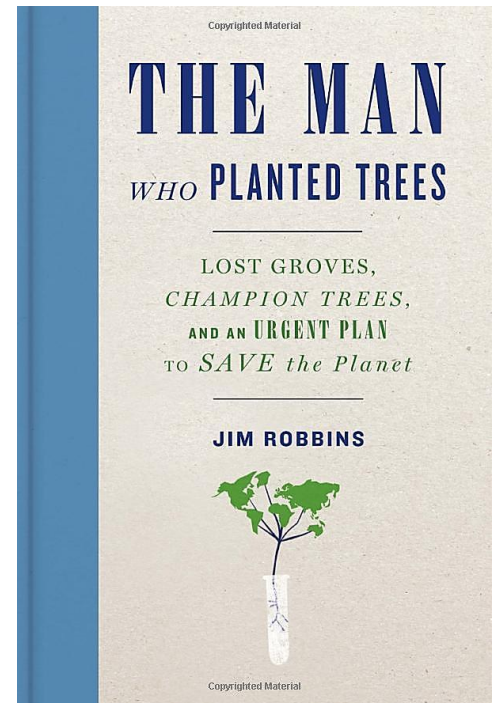
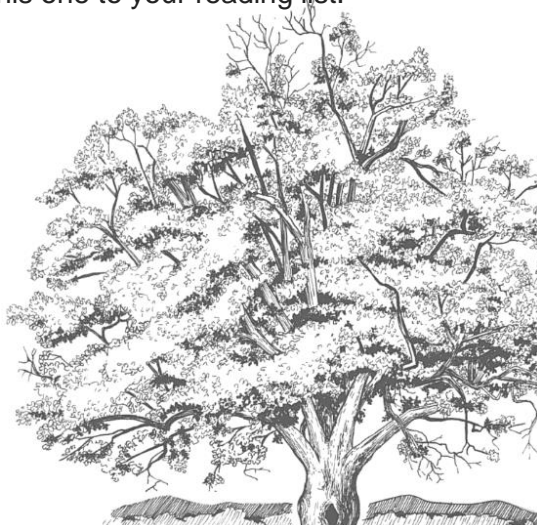
BOOK REVIEW OF *THE MAN WHO PLANTED TREES: LOST GROVES, CHAMPION TREES, AND AN URGENT PLAN TO SAVE THE PLANET*

Printed with permission of the reviewer, Madeleine K. Barnes of TMN Galveston Bay Area Chapter for its Heritage Book Study group

Are you a lover of trees? It's hard not to be awed when you see and touch them. If so, you may be interested in learning more and about one man's massive mission to save the "best" examples of many species that are under attack or endangered and to propagate them for posterity.

Jim Robbins, the author of *The Man Who Planted Trees*, is a science and environmental writer and an enthusiastic tree lover. He has written several books and writes for numerous and varied publications. While not a scientist himself, he has documented the quest of an ordinary, non-scientist, nurseryman David Milarch, to save trees with his Champion Tree Project. This book documents a long and arduous search, begun years ago, to locate the oldest and healthiest trees and then clone them in order to save them, the forests, and the ecosystem. This journey in the book is fraught with setbacks and successes. Robbins introduces others along the way who are scientists and forestry experts providing facts, history, and current knowledge about trees as remediators that filter and treat the air, absorbing carbon, and removing pollutants from water.

Robbins describes Milarch, with all his flaws, including some "woo" tales of visions that are the basis of his mission to save the trees. I would not let that put you off from reading this intriguing book. Robbins has written a very readable book, focusing on what ordinary people and scientists can contribute to stewardship and how they can affect changes in conservation. We also see how we can advance our learning while making a difference one tree at a time. I hope you consider adding this one to your reading list.



News about the Zoom Heritage Book Study hosted by the TMN Galveston Bay Area Chapter: Cheryl Barajas is the new facilitator for the book study as of January 2023. Also, the time has changed from 10am to 1pm to be more convenient for you to participate and earn AT hours. If you want to join us, please contact Cheryl Barajas at cherylbarajas9@gmail.com to be added to the list for additional information and to receive the Zoom meeting link and password.

We welcome your participation each month for two hours on the first Monday of the month starting at 1pm for these AT meetings. Please note that we welcome anyone to participate. We look forward to seeing you and let us know if you have read any good naturalist books lately. Happy trails!

Cradle of Texas Chapter Board

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Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Coordinator	Kristine Rivers, Manvel
Data Manager	Dave Brandes, Lake Jackson
Social Committee Coordinator	Mickey Dufilho

Chapter Advisors	John O'Connell, AgriLIFE Extension Service Jordan Kieffer, TPWD Sea Center Texas
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Twitter	https://twitter.com/tmncot
E-mail Listserv	http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail



Master Naturalist Email Lists

TMN-COT Chapter list

- Instructions <https://txmn.org/tmncot/organization/email-lists/>
- Send messages to TMN-COT@googlegroups.com
- Message Archive <http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail>
- All messages are sent immediately.

State Master Naturalist list

- Instructions <http://txmn.org/staying-connected/sign-up-for-tmn-listserv/>
- Subscribe listserv@listserv.tamu.edu
- All messages are held for moderation by the TMN State Coordinator.

Chapter News is published monthly on Monday before the General Meeting by the Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter. Submissions are welcome; submission deadline is 5:00 PM on Thursday before the General Meeting. Send submissions by email to *Chapter News* Editor at news@tmn-cot.org. Submissions may be edited for clarity and spacing.