



**Texas Master Naturalist™ - Cradle of Texas Chapter
 Minutes of the General Meeting
 Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 6:01 pm - 8:32 pm (HYBRID)
 at Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, Angleton TX**

6:01 pm Call to Order

Kathy Pittman

Kathy Pittman opened by wishing Robin Townsend a happy birthday and welcomed everyone attending and participating online. She recognized our guest speaker, Sarah Belles from the American Bird Conservancy, interns Betty and David Skweres and a visitor, Denis James' wife, Judi.

Approval of the General Meeting Minutes

The draft copy of the minutes of the February 12, 2025, General Meeting was sent via e-mail to the TMN-COT member distribution list for review prior to the meeting. Members voted approval upon the motions of Oron Atkins and John Boettiger.

Membership (Volunteer Hours, Certifications & Milestones)

John Boettiger

Initial Certifications:	Scott Brown Katie Maddox	Nicole Lochmann Robin Townsend	Suzanne Jerabeck
Recertifications:	Kathy Pittman Kristine Rivers	Regina Tippet Barbara Whaley	
Milestones:	Amanda Gabehart	5,000 HOURS!!!!	

Several members who had not received their initial certification awards in 2024 were recognized during the recognition portion of the meeting and received their certificates.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!!!

Impact Data - February 2025

Kathy Pittman

		Month	Year to Date
Hours*	VT	791	1,546
	AT	<u>519</u>	<u>639</u>
		1,310	2,185
Impact data*	Adults	150	150
		<u>138</u>	<u>138</u>
	Total	288	288

**Will not be considered final until mid-April 2025*

AT Presentation - Sarah Belles, "Beach-nesting Bird Conservation along the Upper Texas Coast". Jimmy Salinas introduced Sarah, a Gulf Coast Avian Ecologist with the American Bird Conservancy and a Texas Master Naturalist with the Galveston Bay Chapter. He noted that Sarah holds a BS in Ecology for Environmental Science from the University of North Texas. She promotes and implements local Bird City Texas Initiatives and enjoys the outdoors, including natural areas, and birding. Sarah provided her



contact information as sbelles@abcbirds.org and 800.792.4263, and listed websites: www.splashtx.org and www.helpgulfbirds.org.

Adopt-a-Loop

Cris Tobola

C. Tobola provided a comprehensive, educational overview about the Adopt-a-Loop program and talked about the Great Texas Wildlife Trails. She encouraged those wanting additional information to contact her via e-mail, utc_aal@yahoo.com.

BREAK - Thank you to all our members who brought refreshments this evening!

Outreach

Ruby Lewis

- DEEP Sessions at BNWR - May 1, 6, 8, 13 and 15. Contact Lee Gaston at lee_gaston@fws.gov.
- Spring Break Open House at BNWR - March 8 - 16, contact Ruby Lewis (ph. 979.583.7903, rbylewis77515@ymail.com).
- GCBO Spring Fling - April 5 - May 4 at Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary. Contact Celeste Silling or sign up on the calendar on the GCBO website.
- Nature Day, Sea Center Texas - April 5. See Ruby to volunteer for our Chapter table or contact Morgan at Sea Center to volunteer for other activities.
- Migration Celebration - April 26 & 27, San Bernard NWR. Contact Barbara Whaley at babswhaley@gmail.com.

Chapter Operating Handbook (COH) Updates

Kathy Pittman

K. Pittman provided the current procedure to modify the COH as a reminder:

- 9.2.1 Board approval - Amendments or revisions to this COH must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the board members in attendance, either in person or remotely/virtually, at a regular board meeting
- 9.2.2 Notification requirements - The general membership must be notified in writing (conventional mail, email, or other equivalent means) of the proposed amendments or revisions at least 15 days before the next chapter meeting, with notice that the ratification vote will be held at that meeting.
- 9.2.3 Membership approval - The general membership will have the opportunity to discuss the changes at the meeting. Approval requires a majority vote of those in attendance, either in person or remotely/virtually.

She noted the first two (2) bullet points had been accomplished and that the third (Membership Approval) was needed. Kathy presented the full text of current and proposed changes e-mailed to the membership on Tuesday, February 25 (15 days before the meeting):

Update 1 – Clarification to term of Office, Training Class Representative

Summary

Current: serves from end of one training class to the next.

Proposed: 1 rep from each class, will serve for 12 months from completion of training (may still be working on initial certification)

Clarification to training class representative term of office

CURRENT GUIDELINES FROM PAGE 10, CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK:

3.3.6 Training class representative

Note about term of office: Class representative serves from the end of a training course until the end of the next training course.

- a. See 3.1 – Duties of all board members
- b. Represent the previous training class as a member of the board, attending board and chapter meetings
- c. Participate as a member of the annual financial examination committee [see 5.2.1]
- d. Report back to the previous training class to provide information about chapter business
- e. Talk to the current training class about selecting a training class representative
- f. Optional: participate as a member of the training committee [see 5.1.4] planning for the subsequent class

Suggested revision

3.3.6 Training class representative

Note about term of office: Upon completion of each training class, one representative will be appointed to the Board and serve for a period of 12 months following the end of the class. This representative must have completed their training hours, but may still be working on their initial certification hours. There may be more than one Training class representative on the board depending on the number of classes offered during the year.

- a. See 3.1 – Duties of all board members
- b. Represent the previous training class as a member of the board, attending board and chapter meetings
- c. Participate as a member of the annual financial examination committee [see 5.2.1]
- d. Report back to the previous training class to provide information about chapter business
- e. Talk to the current training class about selecting a training class representative
- f. Optional: participate as a member of the training committee [see 5.1.4] planning for the subsequent class

Members voted approval upon the motions of Kristine Rivers and Herb Myers.

Update 2 – Hours allowed for at Animal Rehab at home

Summary

Current: Limit of 3 hours per week

Proposed: 150 hours per year

Added clarification from State Office and definition/limits on “Other” volunteer service category

Clarification of Animal Rehab hours

CURRENT GUIDELINES FROM PAGE 20, CHAPTER OPERATING HANDBOOK:

11.1.6 Animal Rehab Done at Home

- a. Because at-home animal rehab includes limited or no involvement of others, the state TMN suggests that credit for volunteer hours on this activity is limited. The COT Board limits at-home animal rehab to three hours per week. Any variance to this rule may be appealed to the Board. All animal rehab volunteer work must be reported under the "Other: Animal Rehab" opportunity code.

Suggested revision

11.1.6 Animal Rehab Done at Home

- a. The TMN State Program recommends limiting volunteer service hours spent on animal rehabbing. The TMN mission is better aligned with supporting overall habitat and population management as opposed to individual species/animal management. In addition, the care of rehab animals at-home includes limited or no education and outreach of others. The TMN State Program advises that the total of hours reported by the chapter in the "Other" volunteer service category should not be more than 5% of the total volunteer service time reported by the chapter.
- b. The chapter does not limit volunteer service time reported for transporting injured, native wildlife to a licensed wildlife rehabilitation service. Volunteer service conducted whole picking up and transporting injured native wildlife often involves outreach and education of others.
- c. The chapter limits at-home animal rehab to 150 hours per year. Any variance to this rule may be appealed to the Board.
- d. The COT Board closely monitors all volunteer service reported in the "Other" category on a quarterly basis. The board, at its discretion, may limit the number of hours recorded in the "Other" category so that the state limit of 5% is not exceeded.
- e. All animal rehab volunteer work done at home must be reported under the "OT: Animal Rescue/Animal Rehab" opportunity code. There are other volunteer service hours that are reported in the "Other" category and count towards the chapter's total hours in this category.
 - (i) OT: Animal Rescue/Rehab (Service Project) - this is used for rehabbing as well as pick up and transport.
 - (ii) OT: Incidental Project Activities - this is used for working on the Friends board (ex. treasurer duties).
- f. Item 11.1.6.c does not apply if the animal cared for at home is listed by Texas Parks and Wildlife as a "Species of Greatest Conservation Need" (SGCN). In this case, it is considered a "species rescue" and should be reported under the Natural Resource Management opportunity code. Volunteer service hours reported for SGCN are not limited since they do not fall in the "Other" category.

Members voted unanimous approval upon the motions of Rose Wagner and Angela Griffin.



Financial Report

Don Sabathier

D. Sabathier presented the summary report for February (see Item 1 for the Full Income Statement).

February 2025

BEGINNING BALANCE	\$12,610.89
Revenue Summary	799.02
Expense Summary	<u>1,094.34</u>
ENDING BALANCE	\$12,315.57

On reviewing the full report, Don pointed out that a \$150 donation was made to the church for use of their meeting room for AT Day. Most of the February expenses were related to AT Day. He reminded members about the deadline for payment of Annual Dues of \$25 coming up March 31. Current interns do not owe dues.

Volunteer Opportunities

Oron Atkins

- Exploration Green Workday – every Wednesday, 8:30 am - 11:30 am; contact Christie Taylor <https://www.explorationgreen.org/>.
- Trash Collection/Disposal Analysis Project – self-directed.
- Beach Sweep – Monday, April 7 (weather permitting), 8:00 am - 10:00 am at Quintana Jetties parking area; contact Jimmy or Luanne Salinas, jimmy.salinas217@gmail.com, mshuhu@gmail.com.
- Great Backyard Bird Count - February 14 - 17, self-directed. Sponsored by Cornell Audubon, <https://www.birdcount.org/>.
- Nurdle Beach Patrol – self-directed; contact Jace Turnell, <https://www.nurdlepatrol.org/app/>.
- Brazoria County Comprehensive Spider Survey – self-directed, contact Melanie Hollenshead.
- Adopt-a-Loop for TMN – self-directed, contact Cris Tobola, tcatl baker5@yahoo.com.
- DFNC Educational Pond and Native Garden Habitat Workdays - contact Kathy Pittman.
- TMN-COT iNaturalist Data Collection Project - contact Amanda Gabehart, sylshessa@aol.com.

Discussion was raised about the bat monitoring team. Mickey Dufilho sent out two (2) surveys about training and actual monitoring. Oron also mentioned the Nurdle Beach Patrol and cited the nesting season, which typically begins April 1 and runs through the end of July. He is still unsure about the logistics and the patrol schedules to be set up, but stated volunteers can still look for turtle tracks.

Open Board Position - State Representative

Kathy Pittman

K. Pittman reported Connie Stolte stepped down at the end of last year from this long-held position and we are looking for a member to fill it. She briefly reviewed the duties and encouraged anyone interested to contact her directly. Some of the duties include:

- Work as a chapter liaison with the TMN state program coordinator
- Help guide and educate the chapter's new officers and directors using the state governing documents
- Review draft state documents as requested
- Lead review of the chapter's COH and update if necessary to reflect actual chapter policies and procedures as well as to ensure compliance with all TMN state governing documents



Final Items

- Angela Griffin talked about the iNaturalist competition and City Nature Challenge.
- Ed Barrios reminded members he had tickets available for the Friends (FOBWR) Migration Celebration Takeout Dinner on April 12. This is a fundraiser to offset the costs of Migration Celebration. Volunteers are still needed for the event.

Meeting AT and VT Hours

- AT - 1.75 hours
- VT - 0.75 hour plus travel

The next regular meeting will be held Wednesday, April 9, 2025, at 9:00 am.

Kathy Pittman adjourned the meeting at 8:32 pm.

Attendance:	In-person	44
	Virtual	<u>17</u>
	Total	61

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Purvis, Secretary

cc: Board Members
Clara Tyler, AgriLIFE Secretary (Clara.tyler@ag.tamu.edu)



Item 1. February Income Statement

COT MASTER NATURALIST INCOME STATEMENT for 2025						
	2025					
	Budget	January	February	March	Totals	Budget Delta
Opening Balance		\$10,235.82	\$12,610.89	\$12,315.57		
INCOME ITEMS						
Membership Dues	3,250	1,158.90	673.55		1,832.45	1,417.55
Interest Income	10.00	0.20	0.19		0.39	9.61
Member Donations	300	23.79	23.79		47.58	252.42
Sponsor/Non-member Donations		10.00			10.00	-10.00
Member Payments for New Shirts	40				0.00	0.00
Special AT-Remote/Non Member fee	100	238.67	101.49		340.16	-240.16
Amazon Debit Reimbursement		114.39			114.39	-114.39
Sub Total	3,700	1,545.95	799.02	0.00	2,344.97	1,355.03
New Intern Class Receipts	5,250	\$1,051.40			1,051.40	4,198.60
INCOME TOTALS	8,950	\$2,597.35	799.02	0.00	3,396.37	5,553.63

COT MASTER NATURALIST INCOME STATEMENT for 2025						
	2025					
	Budget	January	February	March	Totals	Budget Delta
EXPENSE ITEMS						
Approved Donations	300		150.00		150.00	150.00
Speakers Bureau					0.00	0.00
Speaker Travel Mileage/Motel/Tolls	200				0.00	200.00
Membership Director Expenses	50				0.00	50.00
Office Supplies, Postage Etc.	30	7.52			7.52	22.48
Special Annual AT Event/Fall Field D	1,750		869.34		869.34	880.66
Member Shirt Purchases (if any)	40				0.00	40.00
Special Recognition	200				0.00	200.00
Travelers D&O Ins. Premium (3 years	1,600				0.00	1,600.00
Godaddy Website maintenance	200	214.76			214.76	-14.76
New Officer/Member Name Tags	40				0.00	40.00
State Annual Conference						
Registration & Expenses	1,500				0.00	1,500.00
State Meeting Sponsorship &						
Scholarships	750				0.00	750.00
Materials	500				0.00	500.00
EcoFund Projects	500				0.00	500.00
Field Research Bat Project	750				0.00	750.00
Chapter Host-Meeting/Party Supplie	400				0.00	400.00
Chapter Host- Recognition Party/Cak	175				0.00	175.00
Unknown Amazon Debit						
Sub Total	8985	222.28	1,019.34	0	1,241.62	7,743.38

(continued, next page)



(Item 1. February Income Statement, continued)

COT MASTER NATURALIST INCOME STATEMENT for 2025						
	2025					
	Budget	January	February	March	Totals	Budget Delta
6 TMN Text Book Order	1500				0.00	1,500.00
7 Zeiglers-Intern T-Shirts	1200				0.00	1,200.00
8 Intern Name Tags	150				0.00	150.00
9 Intern Class Marketing	100				0.00	100.00
0 Intern Class - Zoom Annual fees	250				0.00	250.00
1 Intern Class Supplies	200				0.00	200.00
2 Intern Class Scholarships-2	150				0.00	150.00
3 Intern Registration Reimbursement			75.00		75.00	-75.00
4 Sub Total	3550	0.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	3,475.00
5						
6 EXPENSE TOTALS	12,535.00	222.28	1,094.34	0.00	1,316.62	11,218.38
7	(3,585)					
8						
9 Ending Balance		12,610.89	12,315.57	12,315.57		
0						
1 COT Chapter Lifetime membership Dues \$400.00						
2 COT 2025 Annual Dues \$25.00						
3 2025 Intern Class fee: \$150.00						
4 Members attaining 4,000, 5,000 or 10,000 VT hours are exempt from dues the next calendar year						
5 2025 Travel reimbursement: c67/mile						
6						
7						