

TMN-COT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 9:00 am – 11:00 am (HYBRID)
at Texas AgriLIFE Extension Service, Angleton, TX

9:05 am Call to Order

Kathy Pittman

Kathy Pittman welcomed everyone in attendance and participating online.

Elected Members of Board	Present	Appointed Members of Board/Committees	Present
Kathy Pittman (President)	X	Mickey Dufilho (Immediate Past President)	A
Jimmy Salinas (Vice-President/Programs)	X	Oron Atkins (Volunteer Service Dir.)	X
Kathy Purvis (Secretary)	X	John Boettiger (Membership Dir.)	X
Don Sabathier (Treasurer)	V	Donna Rich (2024 Class Rep.)	X
		Melanie Hollenshead (New Class Dir.)	A
Chapter Advisor(s)		Ruby Lewis (Outreach Dir.)	A
John O'Connell (AgriLIFE Extension)	X	Larry Peterson (Communications Dir.)	V
Jordan Kieffer (TPWD: Sea Center Texas)	V	Kristine Rivers (Advanced Training Dir.)	X
Guests/Other		Rose Wagner (Chapter Host)	A
Luanne Salinas	X		
Patty Brinkmeyer	V		
X - present, V - virtual & A - absent		Quorum	Yes

(see Attendance Record attached as Item 1)

- Agenda Additions/Corrections - None presented.
- Approve Previous Board Minutes - The draft copy of the January 2, 2025, Board meeting minutes was sent via e-mail for review. Requested changes were made prior to the meeting.
- **Minutes Approval -**

Motion	Motion to Approve	Motion Seconded	Vote
Approve the January Board minutes	O. Atkins	John B.	Minutes approved as presented.

Training

Melanie Hollenshead (absent)

K. Pittman reported the orientation class included seven (7) trainees, with one (1) returning intern. She gave kudos to Barbara, John and Sarah for their help with running the program. The training schedule is posted online.

AT Director

Kristine Rivers

K. Rivers announced our AT Day has sold out, with 100 registrations, 20% of which are from outside of our chapter. Information for the display contest was sent out late. She discussed door prizes, including books and plants. Kathy Pittman will check with Debbie Nance about some the books available. Luanne Salinas will check with Brenda about plants from a Sweeney nursery. Kristine will ask Phil Huxtable to bring our back-up microphone system.

State Representative

Open

K. Pittman led the continuing discussion from the previous meeting about revisions to our Chapter Operating Handbook (COH) guidelines as follows:

Clarification to training class representative term of office

CURRENT GUIDELINES FROM PAGE 10:

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

Note about term of office: One Training Class Representative will serve from each training class from January to December and be selected from each of the previous year's graduates. (There may be more than one representative on the board depending on the number of training classes offered the previous year.)

Clarification of Animal Rehab hours

CURRENT WORDING ON PAGE 20:

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 (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.

*** As a reminder - Here is the current procedure to modify the COH:**

- 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.

Board discussion settled on appointment of a Training Class Representative for a period of 12 months as above (Option 2). K. Purvis made a motion for the revision as per Option 2, seconded by K. Rivers and affirmed by unanimous vote. Discussion addressed Animal Rehab Hours, Items c. and d. K. Rivers made a motion to accept the revision as written, seconded by K. Purvis and affirmed by unanimous vote. K. Pittman will make the changes as discussed and distribute the proposed COH revisions to the Chapter membership for discussion and approval.

Action Register Review/Updates (see attached)

Kathy Pittman

K. Pittman reviewed updates to the open items in the Action Register:

- Milestone plaques - The plaques are close to completion, but we are waiting on the logo from State in SVG (Scalable Vector Graphic) format.
- Re-work of the brochure is pending. K. Purvis volunteered to help.



President's Report

Cradle of Texas Chapter
 AgriLife Extension Bldg.
 21017 CR 171, Angleton, TX 77515-8903
<https://txmn.org/tmncot/>

Kathy Pittman

- We extend our condolences to the families who have had three (3) deaths recently - Lorna Witt and Kim Richardson, both from the Class of 2014, and John Goodrum, the son of Cindy Goodrum (Class of 2019) who very recently moved her membership to a local chapter. Kathy attended two (2) of the celebrations of life.
- We need to remind members to keep their profiles updated with their current address and contact information.
- Conflict of Interest forms - These do not need to be signed and returned each year as per State.
- March Board meeting - Kathy requested we move the meeting to another time/date. Discussion agreed the Board could meet on March 6. J. O'Connell will check to see if the conference room is available and advise.
- Updates of the Code of Ethics, CMOP, ByLaws and COH need to be reviewed. The Code of Ethics and CMOP (under the purview of State) documents are available for review online. Suggestions for updates are due from chapters by April. State will finalize and send out standardized updates to chapters in the fall, to be effective January 1, 2026.
- State TMN curriculum - no date on the final version. The current textbook has been on order and should arrive to the TAMU bookstore by mid-February. Orders of 10+ books are \$35 each plus shipping. We have an adequate number currently.
- Recertification pins (2024 and prior) - Requests need to be submitted to Michelle. A supply of 2025 pins was supposed to be available as of February 1, 2025.
- Pollinator Grants - Coastal Prairie, Gulf Coast and Mid-Coast (chapters closest to us) were awarded the HEB grants.
- VMS System upgrade - Testing is expected to begin sometime this fall.

Vice-President/Programs

Jimmy Salinas

J. Salinas reported the following schedule for speakers:

- February - David Gwin (Time to Restore Texas)
- March - Sarah Belles, American Bird Conservancy, Gulf Coast Avian Ecologist and Galveston Bay Area Chapter Texas Master Naturalists (Shore Birds)
- April - possibly Arlan Marsh, a talented Kerrville, Tx photographer would speak about photography.

Jimmy stated most will be virtual presentations. He needs contact information for Susan Barnes and Jason Turnell, who does the nurdle program. Also, Jim Olive has expressed an interest in presenting a program about erosion. Extended discussion included David Paulissen, who posts beautiful wildlife/nature photos on Facebook. Also mentioned was Cris Tobola, to whom Debbie Nance recently turned over her leadership of the Adopt-a-Loop program.

Secretary

Kathy Purvis

There was nothing to report.

Treasurer

Don Sabathier

D. Sabathier reviewed the summary report for January (below; see Item 2 for the Full Income Statement), noting revenue was up in large part because of paid dues. TDECU refunded the money for the unknown Amazon charge to our account, thus resolving the matter.

January 2025

BEGINNING BALANCE	\$10,235.82
Revenue Summary	2,597.35
Expense Summary	<u>222.28</u>
ENDING BALANCE	\$12,610.89

Two (2) members dropped, but he has not identified them. Don has gotten error messages from Square. He asked about increasing the budget for our Go Daddy account. The Board reminded him the budget was approved at the January Board meeting and that it was okay to have a variance between the budget and actual expense.

Membership

John Boettiger

January TMN-COT Hours and Impact Report

Certifications	Certifications
Amanda Smith	Glenn Cullinane (24)
Robin Townsend	

John reported 79 members recertified in 2024, which was higher than in previous years. He is still working to deliver pins to 25 members who have not yet gotten their pins but noted his recent challenges with getting e-mails. February 14 is the deadline for logging hours given in 2024. K. Pittman will remind members to enter their hours in VMS and pay their dues.

VMS Data

Hours*		Jan. 2025	Year to Date
	VT	623	623
	AT	<u>105</u>	<u>105</u>
	Total	728	728
Impact data*		Jan. 2025	Year to Date
	Adults	0	0
	Youth	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	Total	0	0

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

There was no report.

Volunteer Service

Upcoming VT Opportunities – February/March 2025

Oron Atkins

- Exploration Green Workday – every Wednesday, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm; contact Christie Taylor <https://www.explorationgreen.org/>.
- Trash Collection/Disposal Analysis Project – self-directed.
- Beach Sweep – Monday, March 3 (weather permitting), 8:00 am - 10:00 am at Quintana Jetties; contact Jimmy or Luanne Salinas.
- 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.



- Construction Projects - Dates/times TBA, contact Oron Atkins if interested.
- Delores Fenwick Nature Center (DFNC), Educational Pond and Native Garden Habitat Workdays - future date(s); contact Kathy Pittman
- NestFest 2025 Folletts Island - Tuesday, March 11, 9:00 am - 12:00 pm (four (4) stations along Folletts Island); contact Celeste Silling or register at the NestFest website, <https://www.splashtx.org/nestfest> (see link in our newsletter).

Kristine Rivers reported another volunteer opportunity, The Great Backyard Bird Count, which is scheduled for February 14 - 17 and is self-directed. She will send P. Brinkmeyer a link for that as well. There was also mention of GCBO's upcoming event, Brew on the Bayou. This is a fund-raising event and K. Pittman noted that, while many of our members volunteer for it, those cannot be reported to VMS.

Outreach

Ruby Lewis (absent)

Kathy Pittman presented the activities in Ruby's absence:

- Spring Break BNWR Discovery Center Open House - Saturday, March 8 to Sunday, March 16, 11:00 am - 4:00 pm; contact Ruby Lewis.
- Brazoria Heritage Day - March 1 (tentative); more information is needed.
- DEEP - Thursday, February 20 and 27 - West Columbia Elementary, third grade.
- DEEP - Thursday, March 4 and 6 - Bess Brannan Elementary, fourth grade.
- GCBO Spring Fling - coming in April; contact Celeste Silling or sign up on the GCBO website.

Chapter Host

Rose Wagner

There was no report.

Communications

Larry Peterson

Analytics 2025 - Website and Social Media Analytics

Website

2025	Sessions	Pageviews	Users
Jan.	546	1,071	286
2024	Sessions	Pageviews	Users
Dec.	335	656	192
Nov.	390	748	248
Oct.	355	632	212
Sept.	328	690	179
Aug.	416	741	235
Jul.	382	631	283
Jun.	601	1,060	342
May	514	893	298
Apr.	354	668	210



Mar.	398	787	222
Feb.	423	896	217
Jan.	304	531	224

Facebook

2025

Jan.	2,092	4.9K	223
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2024	Followers	Reach	Engagement
Dec.	2076	5.1K	306 (25 posts)
Nov.	2071	6.2K	3.1K (22 posts)
Oct.	2074	1.7K	5.41K (37 posts)
Sept.	2074	9.8K	1.5K
Aug.	2061	10.4	1.5
Jul.	2037	1.1K	422
Jun	2028	2.5K	1.26K
May	2011	4.7K	2.7K
Apr.	1989	2.14K	1.2K
Mar.	1978	3.6K	1.8K
Feb.	1802	3.1K	1.3K
Jan.	1728	8.4K	1.2K

Larry reported a 40% increase in views on Facebook, although the number of posts was down. The average number of posts for last year was 50 and we're seeing about one-half of that.

Class 2023 Representative

Donna Rich

There was no report.

Chapter Advisors

John O'Connell/Jordan Kieffer

J. Kieffer reported Sea Center is now at the end of a slow season. J. O'Connell mentioned that he, Kathy Pittman and Larry Peterson completed training on the AV equipment. There are some challenges in that with the AV equipment we are unable to take questions during a presentation. Those present will be asked to keep sidebar conversations to a minimum. K. Pittman, Barbara Whaley and John completed the CPR/First Aid training. John also mentioned that Kimberly, the horticultural agent, dropped off the ATV at the maintenance barn. She has the keys to it. He also announced a large tract of land along Chocolate Bayou was donated to A&M.

New Business

All

K. Rivers mentioned an update on the Eco Fund project for last year by B. Stitt will be provided at the Chapter meeting. Discussion also noted Brenda will do another planting on February 19 from 9 am - 11 am. O. Atkins will follow up with Brenda to confirm details.

The next General meeting will be held at 9:00 am on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. Please send any agenda items for the meeting to K. Pittman no later than Sunday evening prior to the meeting.



The next Board meeting will be held at 9:00 am on Wednesday, March 5, 2025. K. Pittman has a schedule conflict with that date, however. Discussion agreed it could be moved to March 6 possibly if necessary. Please send any agenda items to K. Pittman no later than Sunday evening prior to the meeting.

President: K. Pittman adjourned the Board Meeting at 10:47 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Purvis, Secretary

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

Item 1. Attendance Record 2025

Attendance 2025	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Elected Board Members													
Kathy Pittman - President	X	X											
Jimmy Salinas -VP	X	X											
Kathy Purvis - Secretary	X	X											
Don Sabathier - Treasurer	V	V											
Advisors													
John O'Connell - AgrLife	X	X											
Jordan Kieffer - TPWD	V	X											
Immediate Past President													
Mickey Dufilho	A	A											
Appointed Board/Committee Members													
Oron Atkins – Volunteer Ops	X	X											
John Boettiger- Membership	X	X											
Donna Rich - 2024 Intern Rep	X	X											
Melanie Hollenshead - Training	A	A											
Ruby Lewis - Outreach	A	A											
Larry Peterson - Communications	V	V											
Kristine Rivers – AT	X	X											
Rose Wagner, Chapter Host	A	A											
Guests													
Luanne Salinas	X	X											
Patty Brinkmeyer	V	V											



Item 2. January Income Statement

COT MASTER NATURALIST INCOME STATEMENT for 2025					
	2025				
	Budget	January	February	Totals	Budget Delta
Opening Balance		\$10,235.82			
INCOME ITEMS					
0 Membership Dues	3,250	1,158.90		1,158.90	2,091.10
1 Interest Income	10.00	0.20		0.20	9.80
2 Member Donations	300	23.79		23.79	276.21
3 Sponsor/Non-member Donations		10.00		10.00	-10.00
4 Member Payments for New Shirts	40			0.00	0.00
5 Special AT-Remote/Non Member fee	100	238.67		0.00	100.00
6 Amazon Debit Reimbursement		114.39		114.39	-114.39
7 Sub Total	3,700	1,545.95	0.00	1,545.95	2,154.05
8					
9 New Intern Class Receipts	5,250	\$1,051.40		1,051.40	4,198.60
0					
1 INCOME TOTALS	8,950	\$2,597.35	0.00	2,597.35	6,352.65
2					
COT MASTER NATURALIST INCOME STATEMENT for 2025					
	2025				
	Budget	January	February	Totals	Budget Delta
EXPENSE ITEMS					
5 Approved Donations	300			0.00	300.00
6 Speakers Bureau				0.00	0.00
7 Speaker Travel Mileage/Motel/Tolls	200			0.00	200.00
8 Membership Director Expenses	50			0.00	50.00
9 Office Supplies, Postage Etc.	30	7.52		7.52	22.48
0 Special Annual AT Event/Fall Field D	1,750			0.00	1,750.00
1 Member Shirt Purchases (if any)	40			0.00	40.00
2 Special Recognition	200			0.00	200.00
3 Travelers D&O Ins. Premium (3 years	1,600			0.00	1,600.00
4 Godaddy Website maintenance	250	214.76		214.76	35.24
5 New Officer/Member Name Tags	40			0.00	40.00
6 State Annual Conference					
7 Registration & Expenses	1,500			0.00	1,500.00
8 State Meeting Sponsorship &					
9 Scholarships	750			0.00	750.00
0 Materials	500			0.00	500.00
1 EcoFund Projects	500			0.00	500.00
2 Field Research Bat Project	750			0.00	750.00
3 Chapter Host-Meeting/Party Supplie	400			0.00	400.00
4 Chapter Host- Recognition Party/Cak	175			0.00	175.00
5 Unknown Amazon Debit					
6 Sub Total	9035	222.28	0.00	222.28	8,812.72
7					

(January Income Statement continued, next page)



	COT MASTER NATURALIST INCOME STATEMENT for 2025				
	2025				
	Budget	January	February	Totals	Budget Delta
TMN Text Book Order	1500			0.00	1,500.00
Zeiglers-Intern T-Shirts	1200			0.00	1,200.00
Intern Name Tags	150			0.00	150.00
Intern Class Marketing	100			0.00	100.00
Intern Class - Zoom Annual fees	250			0.00	250.00
Intern Class Supplies	200			0.00	200.00
Intern Class Scholarships-2	150			0.00	150.00
Intern Registration Reimbursement				0.00	0.00
Sub Total	3550	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,550.00
EXPENSE TOTALS	12,585.00	222.28	0.00	222.28	12,362.72
	(3,635)				
Ending Balance		12,610.89	0.00		
COT Chapter Lifetime membership Dues \$400.00 COT 2025 Annual Dues \$25.00 2025 Intern Class fee: \$150.00 Members attaining 4,000, 5,000 or 10,000 VT hours are exempt from dues the next calendar year 2025 Travel reimbursement: c67/mile					

Cradle of Texas Action Item Register (UPDATED 02/05/25)

Action Item	Assigned to	Due Date	Status	Comments
Review and update partners webpage (Aug 2019) (see below also)	Oron Atkins, Larry Peterson	1st Q 2023	Ongoing	Apr/May/June/Jul 2021: No update Aug: Oron will provide current info to Larry and he will update webpage (including State's definition of "partner" Sep: Oron submitted page updates to Larry including deleting Phillips 66, the combined arts organizations at Center for the Arts Oct/Nov: No update Jan 2022 No update Dec, 2022 - 1st Q 2023 will be done Mar 2024 - update website
Update VPAR agreements (Aug 2019)	Oron Atkins	1st Q 2023	ongoing	Apr/May/June/Jul/Aug 2021: No update Sep: Oron has created a revised Partnership Agreement template and is reviewing existing VPARs Oct/Nov: No update Jan 2022: No update Dec. 2022 Get with Dave and see if people are volunteering - Eliminate if not volunteering
VPALS need to be updated for website	Oron and Larry	1st Q 2023	Ongoing	
Develop Virtual Option - Milestone Plaques	Kathy Pittman		in progress	Apr 24 - Kathy Pittman - discussed options with Brigid Norris (contact from Mickey). Once we get plaques back, we will send pictures and names to Bridgett - she is willing to create file and update for us as needed. Chapter will print/publish as needed May 2024 - KP - I have the plaques back from the engravers and will send pictures to Bridgett this month. June 2024 - K. Pittman sent a photo to B. Norris to assist her with designing a printable paper plaque suitable for posting online. The President's Call to Service Award (PCTSA) will continue to recognize service hours. We will continue to showcase those recipients on the website. Nov 24 - no response from B. Norris. Will reach out to next graphic arts contact Dec 2024 - B Norris continues to update. We are waiting for the Chapter logo fin SVG format from the State.
Plan redo of TMN-COT brochure	Kathy Pittman	June review	pending	Dec 2024 no progress. Jan 2025 pending Feb 2025 pending

Cradle of Texas Action Item Register (UPDATED 02/05/25)

Action Item	Assigned to	Due Date	Status	Comments
Review/update COH Guidelines			in progress	<p>May 2024 - Review Appendix 11.1.6(a) of the Chapter Operating Handbook (COH) re volunteer time limitation and Species of Greatest Conservation Need as per the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) endangered species list #1279 (link sent by C. Stolte); J. O'Connell to consult with state coordinators, the Executive Board, elected officers and advisors for input and help.</p> <p>June 2024 - met with State. Total "other" up to 5% of Total Volunteer hours. Variance granted to member for rehab efforts for this season.</p> <p>Nov 2024 - Connie Stolte provided first draft to Board for review for Rehab. Board discussed and will review again in Dec.</p> <p>Dec 2024 - discussed options for rehabbing and term of office/number of Class reps. Connie to rewrite based on discussions and send to Mickey and Kathy for comment</p>
Annual AT Day	AT director/ Committee	Start Planning in Oct/Nov	in progress	<p>Dec 2024 - Planning has started. Speakers being scheduled, venue reserved for Feb 15th.</p> <p>Jan 2025 - Craig Hensley will be the keynote speaker.</p>