



# Chapter News

October 2025

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*Chapter News* is published by Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter. Contact us at:

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The Texas Master Naturalist program is coordinated by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

TMN programs serve all people without regard to socio-economic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

*Cover photo by Patty Brinkmeyer*

## President's Message



***"Leave the road, take the trails."*** ~Pythagoras

Fall is (supposedly) finally here. Thank goodness! We all need a break from the heat!

Did you ever find yourself wondering “How did I get to this place” in your life? For me, I would compare it to driving home from someplace and zoning out along the way, forgetting some of the sights and details along the way.

If my 64-year-old self could tell my 40-year-old self “Hey, you’re gonna learn about reptiles and plants and birds and mammals and the environment, and your weekends will be spent engaging with kids and their parents while holding a 3-foot alligator or a snake in your lap,” I probably would have laughed and said, “lady you got the wrong person.” If my parents could see me now, I’m sure they would think I was crazy.

What in your life brought you to the TMN community? Was it a love of nature, or a concern for the future? Was it how your parents raised you, to care for the land and animals around you? Or did you grow up in the city, and had no idea what was “out there” until you were older?

I was not a camper, definitely not a hunter, could barely bait a hook and not entirely comfortable in the outdoors when I was younger. As an adult, I very much appreciate the opportunity to be outdoors, to educate others, and just enjoy seeing what I can find. For me, the journey of “getting here” is not so important now that I “am here.” and, I hope, making a difference for our natural areas. My hope and prayer is that you want to continue to make a difference as well!

**REMINDER – We will not have a regular meeting this month. Please plan to attend our Fall Field Day on October 8<sup>th</sup>, to be held at the Gulf Coast Bird Observatory in Lake Jackson.** I hope we see some of our fall migration birds and we will all learn more about the wonderful work of GCBO. We will also have lunch afterwards under the pavilion area. Our normal monthly meetings resume on November 12th at 6 pm.

Thank you for all you do for our area, and see you soon, OUTSIDE!!!

*Kathy Pittman*

***Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach.*** ~Clarissa Pinkola Estes

# October Chapter Meeting

## 2025 FALL FIELD DAY "Revive and Restore"

Wednesday, October 8, 2025  
8:00 am - 12:30 pm



**Gulf Coast Bird Observatory**  
299 Hwy 332 West, Lake Jackson, TX 77566

**8:00 - 9:00 am**

### **Optional Enrichment Activities:**

#### **Bird Banding Demonstration**

Robert and Kay Lookingbill

#### **Entomology Critter Hunt**

Angela Griffin and Amanda Gabehart

**8:30 - 9:00 am**

### **Main Event Check-in/Social Time**

**9:00 - 9:05 am**

### **Welcome/Group Break-out**

**9:05 am - 12:00 pm**

### **Station Rotation**

**STATION 1: MOTUS Tracking: Martin Hagne, GCBO Executive Director**

**STATION 2: Public Access Improvement: Oron Atkins and Jackie Hicks**

**STATION 3: Native & Water Plant Nurseries: Chris Kneupper**

**STATION 4: Nature Art: Sarah Castillo**

**STATION 5: Bird Walk: Phil Huxford and Kristine Rivers**

**12:00 - 12:30 pm**

### **Lunch**

# Outreach Opportunities

**BEES Fall Open Garden Days – Texas Pollinator BioBlitz** - 10/11, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, Bees Demonstration Gardens, 583 County Rd 443, Angleton. Joint event assisting the Brazoria County Master Gardeners. Help visitors discover how awesome our native plants and pollinators are for our environment.

Contact: [JoAnne Knodel](#)

**Kid's FishFEST** - Bass Pro Shop in Pearland, TX – 10/18, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm – Contact [Nathan Murphy](#)  
Assist with wrangling children, bait and fishing gear.

**KBR Kids Day – Buffalo Bayou Park** - 10/19, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm; Contact: [Ruby Lewis](#)

Volunteers needed to assist with booths. Help is needed with reptiles, butterflies, and wingspan booths. We have participated in this event several years as part of USFW's Urban Initiative. Many of these children have never experienced "nature".

**Sea Center Texas Halloween Spooktacular** – 10/26, 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm; Contact: [Ruby Lewis](#)

Volunteers are needed to assist with TMN booth and/or assist SCT staff.

**Angleton First Presbyterian Church Fall Festival “Trunk or Treat”** – 10/25 (Details pending)

**DEEP** – 10/21, 10/23, 10/30, 11/11, 11/13, 11/18 & 11/20 – contact [Lee Gaston](#)

**TMN-COT Calendar** <https://txmn.org/tmncot/events>

# Volunteer Opportunities

**Fall Intern Class** – Assist with sessions/field trips. 9/6 – 11/22 See [Class Schedule](#). Contact [Barbara Whaley](#)

**Beach Sweep** – Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> (weather permitting), 8:00 am – 10:00 am, \*NEW MEETUP LOCATION\*  
Meet on the beach at the 16<sup>th</sup> Street entrance, directly across from Freeport LNG Headquarters.  
Contact [Jimmy Salinas](#) or [Luanne Salinas](#)

**2025 Texas Pollinator BioBlitz** – 10/10 thru 10/26 – self directed

## ONGOING:

**Exploration Green Workday** – every Wednesday, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm; contact [Christie Taylor](#)

**Trash Collection/Disposal Analysis Project** – self-directed; [Brazoria County Parks](#)

**Nurdle Beach Patrol** – self-directed; <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](#).

**DFNC Educational Pond and Native Garden Habitat Workdays** – October 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> , 8:00 am – 11:00 am  
3rd Saturdays and preceding Thursday – contact [Kathy Pittman](#)

**Upcoming Construction Projects (TBA)** – contact [Oron Atkins](#)

**TMN-COT iNaturalist Data Collection Project**; contact [Amanda Gabehart](#)

**Time to Restore Project** – self-directed; contact [Kathy Pittman](#)

# Acoustic Bat Monitoring Update

Contributed by Mickey Dufilho

Documentation of bat species present is considered extremely valuable data for purposes of evaluating current bat distributions in Texas. In addition, continuation of the study in future years will provide information about variations that may be occurring over the long term.

The data is submitted to Texas Parks and Wildlife and ultimately will be deposited in with [North American Bat Monitoring Program](#) (NABat) and become the permanent repository for all of the Bat Monitoring Data across North America. NABat is a multi-national, multi-agency coordinated continental bat program.

This program is made up of an extensive community of partners across the continent who use standardized protocols to gather data that allow assessment of population status and trends to inform responses to stressors in order to sustain viable bat populations. Our chapter is honored to be a contributor to this effort.



## COT Bat Monitoring Team:

Members present; Oron Atkins, Susan Conaty, Kathy Pittman, Angela Griffin, Mickey Dufilho; Project Lead, Donna Rich, Barbara Whaley, John Boettiger, Luanne Salinas, Ken Sluis, Jimmy Salinas

See Data next page...

The spreadsheet below represents the Bat Project Acoustic Monitoring results of sampling during 2025. The sampling period was April 28 – June 27. Fifteen sites in Brazoria were sampled twice during this time. The sample period for each site started on a Monday, 30 minutes before dusk through Friday, 30 minutes after dawn.

Bat identifications are auto-identifications generated by analyses conducted by Larry Peterson and Mickey Dufilho using Kaleidoscope Pro software from Wildlife Acoustics.

HL - Highly Likely L - Likely P - Possible NMD - Need more data	Big Brown - S5	Silver-haired	Eastern Red - S4	Hoary - S3	Southern Yellow	Northern Yellow - S4	Seminole - S3	Evening	Tri-colored - S2	Brazilian Free-tailed	Big Free Tailed - S3	Total Species
Dufilho	NMD	L/P	P/NMD	HL	HL/L	P/NMD	HL	HL	HL	HL	0	10/10
Salinas	NMD	P	P	HL	P	L	HL	HL	P/HL	HL	0/NMD	10/10
Sluis	P	HL/P	P	HL	HL	L/HL	HL	HL	HL	HL/P	0	10/10
Boettiger	NMD	L	HL	HL	P	P	HL	HL	HL	P	0	10
Atkins	P	L/P	HL	HL	HL	L/HL	HL	HL	HL	P/NMD	0	10/10
Conaty - Brazos Woods	ND/NMD	ND/L	ND/P	ND	ND/HL	ND/HL	ND/HL	ND/HL	ND/HL	ND/NMD	ND/0	0/9
Whaley	ND	ND/P	ND/L	ND	ND/HL	ND/P	ND/HL	ND/HL	ND/HL	ND/NMD	ND	0/8
Peterson	P	HL	P/HL	HL/NMD	L/HL	L	L/HL	HL	0/P	HL/P	0	9/10
Griffin	NMD	HL	NMD/L	HL	L	L/HL	HL	HL	L/HL	HL	0	10/10
Cullinane/Rich	0/0	P/0	L	0	L/HL	P/L	HL	HL	HL	NMD/0	0	8/6
Conaty - Nash Prairie	NMD	L/P	NMD	HL/NMD	HL	L	HL	L/NMD	O/P	HL	L	10/9
Jones	NMD	P/NMD	P	HL	P/HL	P	HL	HL	HL	P	0	10/8
Pittman	P	HL	0/P	HL	P/HL	L	HL	0/L	0	HL/P	0	7/9
Townsend	NMD	L/P	NMD/L	HL	P/HL	L/HL	HL	HL	0/NMD	HL/P	0	9/9

\*\*\*\*\*Bats highlighted in red are SGCN

Codes for SGCN

S1: Critically Imperiled – very few found. In steep decline with extirpation possible without intervention.

S2: Imperiled – due to very restricted range, few populations, steep declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation.

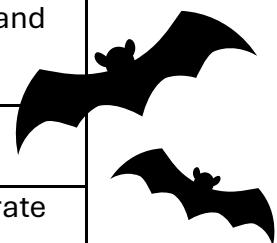
S3: Vulnerable – due to restricted range, relatively few populations, recent and widespread declines, or other factors.

S4: Apparently Secure – Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.

S5: Secure – Common, widespread, and abundant

Although observations from a single year cannot be used to determine how many individuals of each species were present, future extensions of the project may provide some estimates of population numbers. Based on the statistical analysis each bat identification was categorized using a standard protocol in table below.

Category	Pulse Count	Match Ratio	Confidence Level	Notes
Highly Likely	≥ 15	0.860 – 1.000	86–99%	Strong call structure and excellent match
Likely	≥ 15	0.750 – 0.859	~75–85%	Decent structure, moderate match
Possible	Any	0.600 – 0.749	~60–74%	Low structure, moderate match
Unlikely/Need More Data	Any	≤ 0.599	<60%	Low match score or low-quality call



# FALL CLASS OF 2025

## Meet the Interns



### **Susan Barnes**

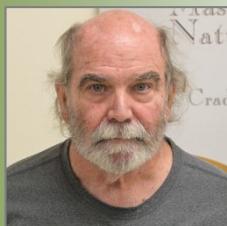
I was born in England. I live in Missouri City, in Fort Bend County, with my husband, James, and dogs Max and Gracie. I enjoy photography, reading/collecting books and sewing. I am a former park ranger, office manager, desktop publisher and journalist. I began my wildlife career birding, participating in bird counts and volunteering for local wildlife events.

I went on to serve as a board member for Friends of the Great Plains Nature Center and became a wildlife rehabber for the Wildlife Center of Texas. The Texas Master Naturalist Program encompasses nature opportunities across all the areas that I have interest in- preserving the natural world and teaching others about the importance of it.



### **Becky Blaylock**

I am excited to be a part of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. I heard about the program through a friend and have been looking forward to joining. Living in Alvin, I enjoy spending time in the nearby parks, such as Camp Mohawk and Resoft County Parks, with my daughter and grandsons. I love being outdoors and cannot wait to learn more about all of the nature around us. I have enjoyed seeing the members' wildlife photography on Facebook.



### **Larry Curtner**

I live in Alvin and heard about the class through a newspaper article. I have spent 46 years as a Piping Designer/Construction Specialist and Motorcyclist. I am interested in learning more about the care and stewardship of our land.



### **Derek Dabelgott**

I live in Sweeny, Texas. I am currently a full-time student at the University of Houston, Clear Lake, majoring in Biological Science with specialization in Ecology/Microbiology/Aquatic Marine. I also work part-time at Brazosport College as a Supplemental Instructor Leader.

I found out about the program from a biology professor at Brazosport College. I am looking forward to completing my training and hours. I think this is an awesome opportunity!

# FALL CLASS OF 2025

## Meet the Interns



### Nannette Daugherty

I am a recently retired strategic learning and organizational development leader with over 15 years of experience designing and leading enterprise-wide talent, leadership, and workforce development initiatives. I currently serve in a volunteer role as President of the Houston Association for Talent Development (ATD).

My hobbies include gardening, birdwatching, foraging for wild foods, and doing my best to photograph interesting insects. I grew up in Duluth, Minnesota, where my love of nature was born. I moved to Texas in 1997. I am excited to join the intern program for the Cradle of Texas Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists.



### Barbara Lund

I moved to Houston from Georgia in 1981 and have lived in Alvin since 1987. I worked as an ophthalmic technician for 30 years, then as clinical research coordinator for ophthalmic research for 15 years. I am now "mostly" retired, but working part-time at Alvin ISD in the Human Resources Department.

At this time in my life, my special interests mostly revolve around my 9 grandchildren, which is the reason I decided to take the Texas Master Naturalist course. I need to educate myself so that I can better educate my grandchildren about the world they are inheriting. I have volunteered for the Gulf Center for Sea Turtle Research as a nest patroller for the past two seasons and look forward to many more seasons. This is just the beginning!



### Ron McLaughlin

In my younger years, I had a hard time trying to figure out what I wanted to be. One thing I have gotten serious about is being an author. I first heard of the Texas Master Naturalist Program recently from my grandmother, even though I had plans for other things, I think it would be fun to help people understand animals.



### Julie Orr

My husband and I moved to Danbury in October, 2024. I have subbed for Santa Fe ISD, Friendswood ISD and now I'm at Danbury ISD. I love working with kids but found I like the outside classroom better! I was visiting Sea Center Texas in Lake Jackson when I met Mason and picked up a brochure and applied.

My husband and I are very much outdoor people. We fish when we can and love to garden. We also love animals. We have 3 large dogs and a fat cat that thinks he is a dog. We have a full Weimar (Barracuda), half lab/Weimar (Moose) and a rottie/lab (Gaytor). Our cat's name is Rabbit. I am open to any new activity or adventure. Thanks for having me!

# FALL CLASS OF 2025

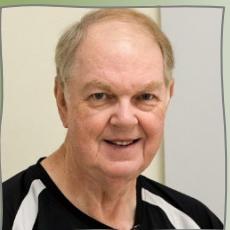
## Meet the Interns



### Carrie Scott

I am currently a student with plans to become a doctor. I should be ready to apply to medical school in 2026. I'm not sure what specialty I will do, perhaps family medicine or infectious disease. Before returning to school, I worked as a night shift nurse in a hospital for a few years. I love science, learning, and nature.

There is a huge overlap between public health and nature conservation, which are both important topics today! I joined the Texas Master Naturalist Program to help conserve nature, benefit from spending valuable time outside and assist in educating the public about sustainability. My hobbies include baking, attempting to garden, playing video games and reading. I live in Pearland.



### Ed Stiles

I am retired and live in Clute. I was a teacher and tennis coach for 8 years. I worked at a petroleum refinery in Houston for 32 years, eventually becoming the Training Superintendent for Operation and Maintenance. I have a BS degree in History, minor in Biology from Stephen F. Austin State University and MSOE (Master of Science in Occupational Education) from the University of Houston, with an emphasis on Training and Development.

I have been volunteering at Sea Center Texas for 6 years, serving as a Hatchery Tour Guide. I love sports, especially basketball. I was a basketball official (aka referee) for 23 years. I am married to my wife, Nancy. We have 2 sons, both in Virginia. I have raised Bichons (dogs) for about 40 years.



### Shannon Wilson

I have lived in Brazoria County for about 10 years. I grew up in Sugarland and received my associate's degree from University of Houston. I worked at SPECS in corporate sales for about 8 years, then moved to the area and worked at a local dealership. I quit there to pursue my photography career and as soon as that took off, life handed me a curve ball with my dad getting sick, then going through a divorce, which turned out to be a massive blessing. I got more time with family and getting back into what I love, Nature. I was hired by Texas Parks & Wildlife at Brazos Bend State Park. I learned about the Texas Master Naturalist Program visiting BNWR and then, when working at the park, learned more about the program. Nature is my happy place, and now my biggest hobby/passion, is wildlife photography. I have captured many great shots at the refuges and have truly gained a whole new level of love for nature.



## X TREME HUMMINGBIRD X TRAVAGANZA!



On September 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, COT members spent time doing outreach at partner Gulf Coast Bird Observatory's XTX event.





Next year our Cradle of Texas Chapter will celebrate 25 years!

How should we commemorate it?

Please share your ideas with Kathy Pittman on ways to celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and YOUR accomplishments throughout 2026!

## Phishing Scams/Emails

Recently, COT has seen an uptick in bogus emails. It can happen to many organizations. BE AWARE!!

- DON'T CLICK anything, don't forward, don't reply to unsolicited emails from an unfamiliar source.
- What is in the message? We will not ask you if you shop at Amazon, ask for a favor, ask for a check, etc.
- Look at the originating address – it's usually (but not always) bogus.
- If in doubt about the request, email or call the person separately (i.e., don't just hit "reply")
- Be cautious with ANY unsolicited email and be careful where you "surf" for your information. Don't fall for "clickbait"

## TMN-COT September Impact Data 2025\*

		September*	YTD
Hours	VT	858	10,355
	AT	176	1,673
	Total	1,034	12,028

Impact Data	Adults	100	3,421
	Youth	22	9,858
	Total	122	1,3279

\*will not be considered final until mid-November 2025

*Dave Brandes, Data Manager*

# Certifications September 2025

Congratulations to all!

## Recertifications

Malcolm Mosis  
Karen Mosis  
Rainbo Johnson  
Jackie Hicks  
Herbert Taylor



2025 Pin  
Roadrunner

*John Boettiger, Membership Director*



John Boettiger; Membership, Barbara Whaley,  
1,000 hours, Kathy Pittman; President

## August awards at the September General Meeting:



Alyssa Corona; Initial Certification,  
Barbara Whaley; Intern Director



John Boettiger; Membership, Amanda Smith;  
Recertified, Kathy Pittman; President

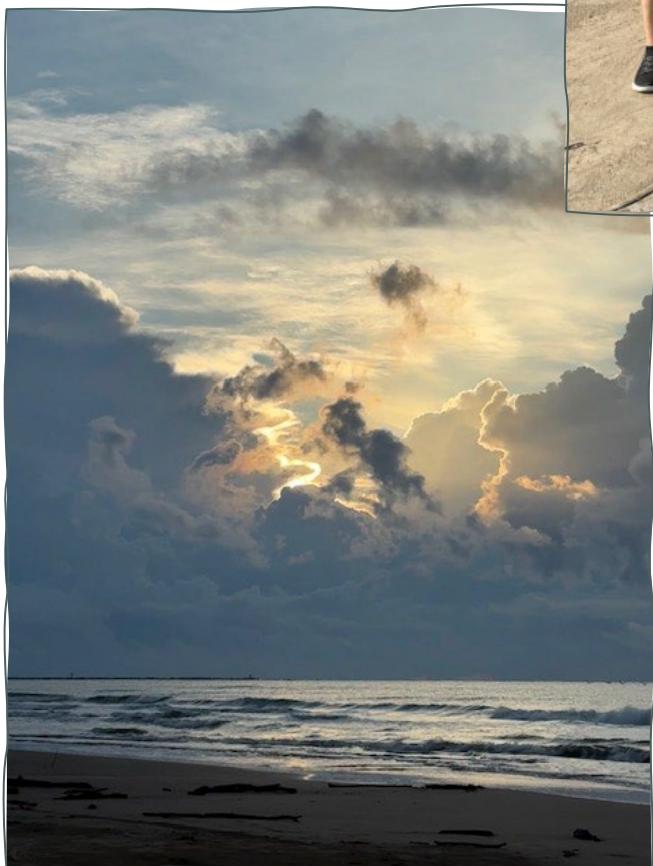


Jodi Jung; Initial Certification,  
Barbara Whaley; Intern Director

# September Beach Sweep

We had a great morning. The surf was fairly calm (I fished earlier but NO LUCK) and the morning was awesome! We had 14 volunteers (1 from Needville) combing Quintana Beach for trash left by Labor Day visitors. Working from our staging location at the 16th St. entrance, we were able to cover a significant area of the beach. City of Quintana volunteers showed up in force and brought donuts and pigs in a blanket to fuel the help. Thanks to all who showed up to help! The beach flora and fauna appreciate it.

*Blessings,  
Jimmy & Luanne*



Ocean Conservancy

Thank you for cleaning up with  
***Clean Swell!***

Here's a summary of your recent cleanup:

Date	September 02, 2025
Duration	1 hours 55 minutes
Number of People	14
Weight of Trash Picked Up	273.3 lbs
Group Name	Team Q

Your cleanup makes a difference! Thank you for being part of a global community, identifying ocean trash and helping find solutions. Check out what others are cleaning and more ways to get involved at <https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/icc/>. (Reprint courtesy of Ocean Conservancy)

## Cradle of Texas Chapter Board

President	Kathy Pittman, Rosharon
Vice President/Programs	Jimmy Salinas, Freeport
Secretary	Kathy Purvis, Richwood
Treasurer	Donald Sabathier, Pearland
State Representative	David Skweres, Houston
Immediate Past President	Mickey Dufilho, Brazoria
Training Director	Barbara Whaley, Alvin
Membership Director	John Boettiger, Lake Jackson
Advanced Training Director	Kristine Rivers, Manvel
Volunteer Service Director	Oron Atkins, Lake Jackson
Outreach Director	Ruby Lewis, Angleton
Hospitality Director	Rose Wagner, Sweeny
Communications Director	Patty Brinkmeyer, Brazoria
Training Class Representative 2024	Donna Rich, Angleton
Training Class Representative 2025	Betty Skweres, Houston

Chapter Advisors	John O'Connell, AgriLife Extension Service Jordan Kieffer, TPWD Sea Center Texas
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### **Non-voting positions:**

Chapter Librarian	Debbie Nance, Alvin
Data Manager	Dave Brandes, Lake Jackson
Newsletter Editor	Patty Brinkmeyer, Brazoria
Newsletter Contributors	Kathy Pittman, Dave Brandes, John Boettiger, Oron Atkins, Ruby Lewis, Kristine Rivers, Jimmy Salinas, Luanne Salinas, Barbara Whaley, Patty Brinkmeyer, Richard Schaffhausen, Mickey Dufilho

Website	<a href="https://txmn.org/tmncot/">https://txmn.org/tmncot/</a>
Facebook	<a href="http://facebook.com/TMN-COT">http://facebook.com/TMN-COT</a>
X	<a href="https://x.com/tmncot">https://x.com/tmncot</a>
E-mail Listserv	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail">http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail</a>

## Texas Master Naturalist Email Lists

### **TMN-COT Chapter list**

- Instructions <https://txmn.org/tmncot/organization/email-lists/>
- Send messages to [TMN-COT@googlegroups.com](mailto: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](mailto:listserv@listserv.tamu.edu)
- All messages are held for moderation by the TMN State Coordinator.



*Chapter News* is published monthly on the weekend following the monthly Board Meeting (first Wednesday of each month) by the Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter. Submissions are welcome; submission deadline is the day after the monthly Board meeting. Send submissions by e-mail to *Chapter News* Editor at [news@tmn-cot.org](mailto:news@tmn-cot.org). Submissions may be edited for clarity and spacing.

