



Chapter News

February 2026

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TMN programs serve all people
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 level, race, color, sex, disability,
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Cover Photo: Sea beans; stock photo

President's Message



"Do your little bit of good where you are. It's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world"

– Desmond Tutu

Well, it's official! Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow on Monday. So did Texas Pete the Rattlesnake and Luckenbach Lloyd the Armadillo. And we all know what that means – absolutely nothing!!!

While it's fun to follow along with our regional traditions, we need to realize that Phil is only right about 35% of the time. I think even a bad weather forecaster has a better record! As I was uncovering all my little citrus trees and folding the old sheets and frost blankets, I couldn't help but hope that I don't have to pull them out again before next winter. The average last frost date for here in Rosharon is February 14th, so I'm gonna keep my fingers crossed!

One thing that I have been reminded of is how it's taking me longer to get things done. I don't move quite as fast as I used to. I started my annual physical journey of meeting with the doctor and getting blood work, X-rays, more bloodwork, bone scans, and so on. My list of "ailments" seems to get a little longer each year. In reality, my aches and pains are, thankfully, absolutely normal and part of getting older. I'll get over it. I am starting to "prune back" on some activities that I can no longer do by myself, or I enlist my husband to help. Maybe we do something similar in our volunteer efforts. Have you changed what you work on or volunteer for? Does it make you a little sad or do you look forward to doing something new or in a different way? Maybe your interests have changed as well. It's all OK. **No matter what event or task you help with, it makes a difference.** Whether it's an event with hundreds of visitors, or a quiet day working on a trail or planting a pollinator garden, all of your efforts, large and small, are GREAT to someone! And all those hours add up to wonderful things for our area. Don't ever take for granted the impact YOU have on the future of Brazoria County!

Our next meeting will be February 11th, at 9 am at AgriLife. Maureen Nolan-Wilde – Galveston Bay Area Chapter will be sharing her knowledge of Sea Beans with our chapter. We will also be discussing and voting on our Bylaws. I hope you will join us! 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

February Chapter Meeting

The February 11th General Meeting will be a hybrid:

Attend in person at the Texas AgriLife Extension Service, 21017 County Road 171, Angleton, TX, or virtually via e-mail invite. Visitors and guests are welcome. Odd months are held in the evening. Even months are held in the morning.

8:30 – 9:00 am	Social Time and Refreshments
9:00 – 9:15 am	Welcome and Awards
9:15 – 10:15 am	Speaker: Maureen Wilde; TMN Galveston Bay Area Chapter Topic: Sea Beans & More - Treasures from a Drifter What exactly is a sea bean and where can you find them while visiting the coastline? Did you know that sea beans can bring you good luck at sea while others helped Christopher Columbus and other explorers on their journeys? This session explores the “what, where and why” of sea beans and even answers the question of whether you can grow sea beans in our area. We will cover everything from the most common to the rarest sea beans and other treasures found during my wanders along the beachfront. At the end, you’ll have the opportunity to see and handle sea beans, sea glass and other treasures from my personal collection gathered over many years of beach combing.
10:15 – 11:00 am	General Membership Meeting (Hours for Volunteer Service (VS) and Advanced Training (AT) TBD at close of meeting)



Maureen Nolan-Wilde is a dedicated member of the Galveston Bay Area Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists, contributing over 12,000 volunteer hours to conservation efforts in the Galveston community.

Drawing on 38 years of experience in global project management and communications in the energy sector, Maureen now channels her expertise into environmental education and stewardship.

As a past chapter president, she serves as Director of the Beach Hero Program—an educational initiative that has engaged more than 2,500 elementary students in marine conservation and coastal ecology.

She also volunteers at the Gulf Center for Sea Turtle Research's rehabilitation hospital, furthering her commitment to protecting Galveston Bay's diverse coastal ecosystems.

Maureen's passion for sea beans and drift seeds inspires her community education efforts, helping others appreciate the fascinating natural treasures that wash ashore along our Texas coast. She is an avid drifter and loves to share the lore of these seaside treasures.

March Speaker: Kathy Adams Clark: Moths

Outreach Opportunities

DEEP - BNWR – 2/17, 2/19, 3/3, 3/5, 3/24, 3/26, 5/5 – contact [Lee Gaston](#)

Spring Break BNWR Discovery Center Open House – March Dates TBA; contact [Ruby Lewis](#)

Migration Celebration – SBNWR – 4/25 & 4/26, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm

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

Volunteer Opportunities

Beach Sweep – Monday, March 2nd (weather permitting), 8:00 am – 10:00 am

Contact [Jimmy Salinas](#) 979-824-4008 or [Luanne Salinas](#)

Odd months: Meet at the Quintana Jetty parking area.

Even months: Meet on the beach at the Quintana Beach 16th street entrance.

NestFest 2025 - Follet's Island, 3/10, 9:00 am – noon. Join NestFest to remove marine debris from nesting habitats for birds and sea turtles. Volunteer participation will require registration.

<https://www.splashtx.org/nestfest>

Wetland Planting at Eagle Nest Lake – BNWR 1/29, 1/30, 2/5 & 2/6; contact [Jennifer Wilson](#).

[See page 4.](#)

Advanced Training Opportunity:

Spring AT Day – February 28th, 8 am – 3:30 pm; Angleton location TBA

Register [here](#) by February 21st. Contact [Kristine Rivers](#) if you can assist.

ONGOING:

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

Camp Mohawk Pocket Prairie – workdays TBA; contact [Dick Schaffhausen](#)

Resoft Park Pollinator Gardens – workdays TBA; contact [Kate Harris](#)

DFNC Educational Pond and Native Garden Habitat Workdays – February 19th (cancelled) & 21st, 9 am – noon
3rd Saturdays and preceding Thursday, Contact [Kathy Pittman](#)

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

Citizen Science:

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

Trash Collection/Disposal Analysis Project – self-directed; [BCPD](#)

Adopt-a-Loop for TMN – self-directed; contact [Cris Tobola](#).

Nurdle Beach Patrol – self-directed; <https://www.nurdlepatrol.org/app/>

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

Yellow-Legged Hornet Project (TBA) – contact [Oron Atkins](#)

Eagle Nest Lake Restoration Project

Contributed by Paula Hanson



Early in December, TMN Cradle of Texas volunteers Paula Hanson and Nannette Daugherty joined U.S. Fish & Wildlife and National Resource Conservation Service, working at the Eagle Nest Wet Meadows restoration project at the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge. The meadow had been a rice field for over 80 years. It had been restored by turning the soil back and unclogging dammed up water back to a native flow. TMN volunteers helped plant 2,500 native grasses to include bushy bluestem, Cherokee sedge, eastern fox sedge, pond flatsedge, fragrant flatsedge, grass leaf rush, and anglestem beaksedge. It was a beautiful day, and the many animal tracks observed were an encouraging sign that the restored land is being used by a variety of wildlife. So many animal tracks; big cat tracks, canine species, as well as deer.



Volunteers are needed for this ongoing project. See page 3 for info.



Certifications January 2025

Congratulations to all!

Milestones

Kathy Pittman

2500 Hours!

Polished Silver Dragonfly



Ana Loonam

250 Hours!

Bronze Dragonfly



2026 Pin

Bobcat

*John Boettiger,
Membership Director*

Recertifications

Hugo Martinez

December Certifications recognized at the January meeting:



Initial Certification

Nannette Daugherty, Barbara Whaley;
Training Director, Kathy Pittman; President



Recertifications

Nannette Daugherty, Sarah Castillo,
John Boettiger; Membership Director,
Alyssa Corona, Kathy Pittman; President

TMN's Got Talent!

In 2020, our own COT member Cynthia Grandjean started a plein air group with a handful of local artists. Plein air (French for "in the open air") refers to the practice of painting outdoors, directly in the landscape, to capture the natural light, atmosphere, and changing conditions of the scene. Their focus is on promoting and painting scenes of the natural resources, parks, natural areas, and landmarks of Brazoria County.

Not one, but FOUR talented COT members, Cynthia Grandjean, Susan Conaty, Jodi Jung and Donna Rich will all have paintings in an upcoming gallery show at the Center for the Arts & Sciences.

Save the Date!



TMN-COT January 2026 Impact Data		January*	YTD
Hours	VS	709	709
	AT	97	97
	Total	806	806
Impact Data	Adults	37	37
	Youth	0	0
	Total	37	37

*will not be considered final until mid-March 2026

Dave Brandes, Data Manager

The Brazoria County Comprehensive *Spider Survey* Project



This 5-year iNaturalist project through the Texas Master Naturalists Cradle of Texas Chapter was created by COT member Melanie Hollenshead in December of 2020. The project served to observe and record the spider species found in the diverse habitats of Brazoria County.

The most observed top three spiders were the Golden Silk Spider, Yellow Garden Spider, and the Bold Jumping Spider.



Banded Garden Spider
Melanie Hollenshead



Yellow Garden Spider
Angela Griffin

Between December 12, 2020,
and December 12, 2025,

748 participants made
9,969 observations of
223 spider species in
Brazoria County.



Audouin's Trapdoor Spider
Amanda Gabehart

[Click for full survey information](#)



Spinybacked Orbweaver
Debbie Nance



Humpbacked Orbweaver
Patty Brinkmeyer



Lined Orbweaver
Kathy Pittman

January Beach Sweep

Contributed by Jimmy and Luanne Salinas

The Beach Sweep 2026 Citizen Science effort had a great start with over 23 volunteers showing up to help make a difference in our coastal community! Since some school holidays were still in effect, we had numerous youths join us and WOW! Did they "get into it"! After a brief explanation on how and why we report the trash collected, using the Clean Swell App, they were off and running and I had to give them an A+ on reporting their collections!

We also had some new volunteers from our local and TMN communities, not to mention our loyal participants.

The weather could not have been better, and as the summary indicates we eliminated a lot of animal entrapment and consumption hazards disguised as unsightly fishing line and trash.

Most of last year we collaborated with the City of Quintana during these efforts, and we continue to enjoy the Quintana volunteers and the breakfast doughnuts and kolaches that Adam and his team provides.



January Beach Sweep



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

Here's a summary of your recent cleanup:

Date	January 05, 2026
Duration	1 hours 57 minutes
Number of People	23
Weight of Trash Picked Up	268.4 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
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Training Class Representative 2025	Nannette Daugherty
Chapter Advisors	John O'Connell, AgriLife Extension Service Jordan Kieffer, TPWD Sea Center Texas
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, Jimmy Salinas, Luanne Salinas, Patty Brinkmeyer, Paula Hanson

Website	https://txmn.org/tmncot/
Facebook	http://facebook.com/TMN-COT
E-mail Listserv	http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail

Texas Master Naturalist Email Lists

TMN-COT Chapter list

- Instructions <https://txmn.org/tmncot/organization/email-lists/>
- Send messages to COT members 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 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 5:00 PM on Thursday before the last weekend of the month preceding the newsletter.

Send submissions by e-mail to *Chapter News* Editor at news@tmn-cot.org.

Submissions may be edited for clarity and spacing.

