

Chapter News

September 2026

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Cradle of Texas Chapter

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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.



President's Message



"We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."
- St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Over the past few meetings, we've been telling you about our preparations in honor of our very special milestone coming up this month.

Think back to what you were doing 25 years ago.... Do you remember? I was starting a new position at work and juggling the activities of two teenagers. I don't think the "me" of 25 years ago would have ever imagined the "me" of today and all the activities that I am fortunate to be able to participate in. I certainly never thought I would be giddy to hold and talk about a 3-foot alligator or various snakes to a library full of children. Or that I'd be excited to record multiple bat species flying over my property on a given night. Or that I'd be out on Follett's Island in the freezing cold trying to find the last darn tagged shrike for the day. It's been a wild ride, and I wouldn't trade it for anything!

We are indebted to the group of Brazoria Co. residents who came together on September 12, 2001, to begin their journey as Texas Master Naturalists. With the horrific events that were still unfolding from "9/11," they could have decided to call the training off, waiting for another time, but they didn't. As one member shared with me a few weeks ago, they weren't going to let the despair of 9/11 derail the training classes and the ultimate formation of the Cradle of Texas Chapter. The members of that first Intern Class were the trailblazers that we continue to follow to this day, and I hope we continue this journey together for many more years to come.

We are planning several events over the next twelve months to honor our twenty-fifth anniversary. I hope that you will participate in as many of these events as possible. And as we celebrate this milestone, let's think of the LIVES we've touched, the DIFFERENCE we've made and the LEGACY we carry on from that initial group of Texas Master Naturalists.

Please plan on attending the Commissioners Court Session on Tuesday September 8th. Make plans to arrive by 8:30 am in order to park and get through security. It would be wonderful to have as many members in the auditorium as possible, to show support for the program and to thank the Court for supporting AgriLife and our programs for all these years.

Our next meeting will be September 9th, at 6 pm at the AgriLife building. Amy Nowlin, Coastal & Marine Resources Agent, Matagorda County Texas AgriLife Extension Texas Sea Grant, will present ***"Shell by Shell, Community-Based Oyster Gardening for Ecosystem Recovery."*** I'm sure this will be an interesting presentation, so bring your questions, and a friend!

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

September Chapter Meeting

The September 9th 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.

5:30 – 6:00 pm	Social Time and Refreshments
6:00 – 6:15 am	Welcome and Awards
6:15 – 7:15 pm	Speaker: Amy Nowlin Topic: Shell by Shell, Community Based Oyster Gardening for Ecosystem Recovery An overview of the 2025 Mid-Coast Chapter Oyster Gardening Pilot Project and updates on the 2026 Season.
7:15 – 8:00 pm	General Membership Meeting <i>(Hours for Volunteer Service (VS) and Advanced Training (AT) TBD at close of meeting)</i>



Amy Nowlin serves as the Matagorda County Marine and Coastal Resources Agent with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, where she leads educational and outreach programs that promote sustainable practices and coastal stewardship. She earned her Master of Science degree from Texas A&M International University. Amy is also an AgriLife Advisor to the Mid-Coast Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists, supporting community-driven conservation and inspiring stewardship of coastal ecosystems.

October – Fall Field Day AT, Brazos Bend State Park

Outreach Opportunities

GCBO Xtreme Hummingbird Xtravaganza (XHX)

Saturdays, September 12 & 19, 8:00 am – Noon.

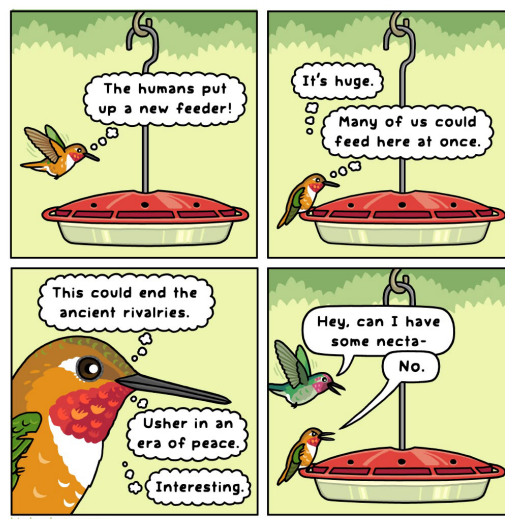
XHX volunteers can man the nature store, help run the activities and booths, sell tickets, and more! contact [Celeste Silling](#) to volunteer with GCBO or [Ruby Lewis](#) to volunteer at the TMN Booth. They also need help setting up on Friday, 11th.

KBR Kid's Day – 10/18, 11 am to 3 pm – contact [Ruby Lewis](#)

Sea Center Texas - Halloween Spooktacular

10/18, 3 pm to 6 pm – contacts [Barbara Whaley](#)/[Morgan Degner](#)

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



Volunteer Opportunities

Beach Sweep – Tuesday, October 12th (weather permitting), 8:00 am – 10:00 am
Quintana Jetty – Contact [Jimmy Salinas](#) 979-824-4008 or [Luanne Salinas](#)

Abigail Arias Memorial Park – Planting Prep Day – 11/5, times TBA

Abigail Arias Memorial Park - Community Planting – 11/6, 9 am to Noon

We would greatly appreciate any volunteers or support from the TMN-COT chapter and can share more details on the tasks and support needs as we get closer to the event. Contact [Oron Atkins](#)

Resoft Park Plantings, Apple Snails and Fishing Line Removal – TBD after nesting season.

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 – Every Thursday, and 3rd Saturdays of the month 8:00 am – 11:00 am, Contact [Kathy Pittman](#)

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

Citizen Science:

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

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

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

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

BAT PROJECTS UPDATE

Contributed by Mickey Dufilho



We finished up with the **Great Bat Bridge Survey** for 2026 on August 30th. We had two teams survey the last day, for a total of 19 bridges. No new bat bridges. In 2026 we surveyed a total of 283 bridges and found 4 bat colonies in Brazoria County and 1 in southern Fort Bend county. It appears to me that we surveyed all but 30 TXDOT Bridges in the county (not an exact number), which is about 90%, a truly an amazing effort. As far as I understand, the project is complete for our chapter. This winter, we will check the bridges with bats to see if they have migrated or are still in place and report that information to Wendy Anderson.

This was a fun project, and I know we have really contributed some good information to the Texas Department of Transportation for future design of bridges, in order to provide additional habitat for our Texas Bats. Great work everyone. Thank you so much for your effort.



Citizen Science

Mickey Dufilho presented pins to her 2026 Bat Acoustic Monitoring Team.

L to R:

Janet Townsend, John Boettiger, Kathy Pittman, Ken Sluis, Linda Sluis, Angela Griffin, Mickey Dufilho, Oron Atkins, Barbara Whaley, Jimmy Salinas, Phil Huxford, Donna Rich, Susan Conaty





Beginning in September, we invite you to participate in the Texas Master Naturalist – Cradle of Texas Chapter’s *25th Anniversary Challenge!*

We’re challenging all chapter members to participate in 25 activities in celebration of our 25th Anniversary. Participants will receive a special passport-style booklet to record their activities from September 2026 through August 2027. Each time you participate in any *chapter-sponsored activity**, you will receive a sticker to add to your book.

Each chapter member who completes the challenge will be recognized as a *25th Anniversary Challenge Superstar* and receive a special commemorative decal.

Check this dedicated Google Calendar for detailed information on each event.

[EVENT CALENDAR](#) (updated regularly)

Anniversary Events at a glance...

Pick up your record book at our September chapter meeting or October Fall Field Day and add your first sticker!

Kristine Rivers - 25th Anniversary Committee Chair

Butterfly Walk

10/9/2026

Hike & Seek

10/14/2026

Pollinator Garden Planting

11/6/2026

Foraging Walk

11/17/2026

Native Plant Propagation

12/5/2026

Whooping Crane Trip

12/11/2026

Beach Sweep

1/9/2027

Chapter Project Tree Planting

TBD

Advanced Training Day

2/27/2027

Nature Art Day

3/2/2027

Family Picnic

4/3/2027

Evening on the Prairie

5/1/2027

Coastal Watershed Game

6/5/2027

Mothing Night

7/19/2027

The Next Twenty-five...

8/11/2027

*Regularly scheduled chapter meetings, volunteer activities, outreach events and advanced trainings count toward the 25-activity requirement.

FALL FIELD DAY 2026

*Contributed by Kristine Rivers
Advanced Training Director*

"Hike & Seek"

October 14, 2026

9:30 am – 1:30 pm

Brazos Bend State Park

21901 Farm to Market Rd 762
Needville, TX 77461

AGENDA

9:30-10:00am:
Check-in/Social Time

10:00-10:15am:
Welcome/Team Break-out

10:15am-12:45pm:
Scavenger Hunt

12:45-1:30pm
Team Results/Lunch

Register Here

Registration fees:

Free/COT-members;

\$15 Non-members

Registration deadline:

October 7, 2026



The Texas Master Naturalist
Cradle of Texas Chapter is pleased to host
our **9th Annual Fall Field Day**

Our theme this year is **"Hike & Seek"** and we are
looking forward to a fun, hands-on, interactive
event!

The event will be held at Brazos Bend State Park in
lieu of our regular October chapter meeting. The
chapter will provide snacks and a light lunch for all
attendees. Participants will receive 3 hours of
Advanced Training credit.

**Put your 4-person team together now for
our fun and festive Fall Field Day
"Hike & Seek" Scavenger Hunt in
celebration of our 25th Anniversary and
decide on a fun team name!**

Teams will work together to solve riddles as they
hike along the trails seeking each of the items on
the list. Can your team find them all?
(If you don't have a team in advance, no worries!
You can join at team at the beginning of the event.)

We'll be meeting in the Dining Hall within the park.
Park entrance fees are waived for the event; all
participants will need to check in at the office when
entering.

***What has 8 legs and 8 eyes too?
Take your time and think it through!
It walks the trails at Brazos Bend
Solving riddles 'til the end.
"Hike & Seek" is in the fall –
Sign up now, you'll have a ball!***

Summer Programs Recap

Thanks so much to those members that volunteered at the Texas Reptile Library Programs over the summer!

16 Program days

28 Sessions

Over 2,300 youth and adults reached



	YOUTH	ADULT	TOTAL
West Pearland	333	150	483
Clute	109	23	132
Freeport	80	16	96
Pearland	215	22	237
Alvin	210	27	237
Angleton	223	31	254
Lake Jackson	261	26	287
West Columbia	155	18	173
Sweeny	89	34	123
Manvel	93	21	114
Danbury	53	25	78
Brazoria	83	15	98
ADAPTIVE			
Clute	7	25	32
Angleton	4	2	6
Brazoria	5	2	7
Pearland	9	11	20

Back to School Bash

August 4, 2026 – Center for the Arts & Sciences

Members shared live insects, identified caterpillars and shared information about nighttime pollinators. They were also treated to a screening of ***The Extraordinary Caterpillar***, a film by Homegrown National Park.



Kathy Pittman, Brenda Stitt, Kate Harris, Patty Brinkmeyer



Fall Intern Training- September Schedule

For full training schedule and info [CLICK HERE](#)

Current COT Members may sit in on training classes. If tagging along on a field trip, please notify [Barbara Whaley](#) in advance, due to possible restrictions or requirements.

Class	Day	Date	Time	Topic	Text Unit#	Location	Comments
Required Class (IT/AT)	Wed	9/16/2026	9:00 am – 3:00 pm	Orientation Barbara Whaley Nannette Daugherty John O'Connell Dave Brandes Kathy Pittman Kate Harris Mary Schwartz Dick Schaffhausen		AgriLife Extension Service Building – Auditorium	Textbooks & Intern Badges will be issued. Bring: Notebook, Pencil/Pen, Snacks, Lunch and Drink
Required Class (IT)	Wed	9/23/2026	9:00 am – 3:00 pm	Wetlands Class and Field Trip Mike Mullenweg	#19	Tarpon Room at San Luis Pass County Park	Notebook, Pencil/Pen, Snacks, Lunch and Drink, Sunscreen, Bug Spray. Water, Water, Water
Required Class (IT)	Sat	9/26/2026	10:00 am – 3:00 pm	Urban Ecology Class and Field Trip Cris Tobola	#21	West Pearland Library 2 nd Floor Conference Room	Notebook, Pencil/Pen, Snacks, Lunch and Drink, Sunscreen, Bug Spray. Water, Water, Water PLEASE NOTE: FOOD IS NOT ALLOWED IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM, DRINKS MUST HAVE LIDS
Required Class (IT)	Wed	9/30/2026	10:00 am – 3:00 pm	Ichthyology Class and Field Trip Dave Brandes	#14	Sea Center Texas in Lake Jackson	Notebook, Pencil/Pen, Snacks, Lunch, Drink, Sunscreen, Bug Spray. Water, Water, Water



Certifications August 2026

Recertifications

John O'Connell

Lynne Ray

Kenneth Sluis



2026 Pin
Bobcat

Congratulations!



Initial Certifications July

Barbara Whaley; Training Director, Ronald McLaughlin, Rebecca Blaylock, Kathy Pittman; President

July certifications recognized at the August meeting:



Recertifications July

Kathy Pittman; President, Larry Curtner, Scott Brown John Boettiger; Membership Director



Milestones July

Jim Nance 1000 Hours, Herbert Taylor 250 Hours, John Boettiger; Membership Director, Liesa Glover 500 Hours, Kathy Pittman; President



October 22 – 25, 2026 Waco Convention Center

The Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for the Texas Master Naturalist volunteers from around the state to gather, participate in hands-on educational seminars, and receive all their Advanced Training requirements for the year in one weekend. It's also an opportunity for program participants and supporters to network, share new ideas, and to learn from chapters in different regions of the state.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Save the dates!

September 8, 2026, 9 am
County Commissioner Court Proclamation
237 E. Locust St.
Angleton, TX
Please attend wearing your 25th Anniversary shirts.
Arrive early as there is a line to enter the courthouse on CC days.

October 14, 2026, 9 am
Fall Field Day for AT "Hike & Seek"
Brazos Bend State Park
21901 FM 762
Needville, TX

REGISTER NOW
[CLICK HERE](#)

November 14, 2026,
Noon – 2 pm
25th Anniversary Luncheon
BCPD Event Center
41871 State Highway 288
Angleton, TX

REGISTER NOW
[CLICK HERE](#)

TMN-COT 2026 Impact Data		August*	YTD
Hours	VS	573	10,402
	AT	122	1,516
	Total	695	11,918
Impact Data	Adults	21	4,059
	Youth	51	15,117
		72	19,176

*will not be considered final until mid-October 2026

Dave Brandes, Data Manager

From the Editor

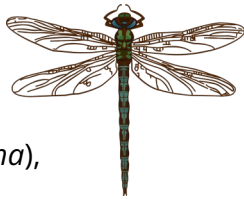
Contributed by Patty Brinkmeyer

Did you know? The TMN State program has a [Brand and Marketing Guide](#) that we must adhere to concerning the use of the TMN trademark and other related materials. Chapters are permitted to create unique marks for special events; HOWEVER, these event marks are not permitted to resemble a chapter logo and MUST have the trademarked logo or approved chapter mark included in the design of all event materials (promotional flyers, merchandise, etc.) You may have noticed the new 25th Cradle of Texas Chapter mark on the header of this newsletter. It's ok, it's approved!

That was the case with our new 25th Anniversary Logo and 25th Chapter Mark design. They were both approved by the State. As Communication Director, I check rules and regulations on how I may represent the Chapter. All publications and Chapter sponsored presentations must include the Logos for Texas Parks and Wildlife, as well as Texas A&M AgriLife.

Fun Fact:

Our dragonfly, the Cyrano Darner (*Nasiaeschna pentacantha*), is the only dragonfly classified in the *Nasiaeschna* genus. It primarily ranges across the eastern and central parts of the state. The Cyrano Darner is named for its long forehead, reminiscent of the nose of the literary character Cyrano de Bergerac from the play written in 1897 by Edmond Rostand.



The Brand and Marketing Guide gives several visual examples of the correct and incorrect way to use the trademarks in promotional materials.

Pop Quiz:

Out of the 49 TMN Chapters, which Chapter's brochure is used in the Guide as the correct example?

CORRECT BROCHURE



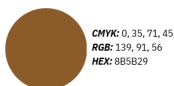
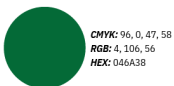
The TMN logo appears on the front. The sponsor logos and EO statements are correctly included.

You may have noticed a subtle difference to the newsletter this month.

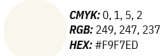
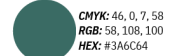
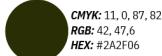
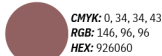
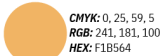
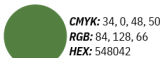
It is not a requirement of TMN newsletters, but this one is formatted entirely with Brand Guide colors and fonts. It turns out that it made my life much easier, using a small color palette and font selection, so I will continue this way, except for maybe special occasions!

BRAND COLORS

Primary Colors: The Texas Master Naturalist primary color palette is the basis of the overall color scheme and allows clients to quickly identify our brand. TMN Green should always have a strong presence in professional designs. The primary colors should also be the most notable colors on your web page.



Secondary Colors: Secondary colors are used in smaller proportions and should never overwhelm the primary colors. Use these as accent colors in professional designs and on your web page.



BRAND FONTS

LOGO FONTS

The Texas Master Naturalist program has two primary fonts used for the logo and chapter marks. **These are the only fonts permitted in logo and chapter mark materials, as they are part of the trademark and the approved chapter mark.**

Carlson Open Face Regular

[Carlson Open Face Regular](#) is the main title font for the trademark logo. It can also be used as a headline or title font in documents.

Open Sans Regular

[Open Sans Regular](#) is the font used in option 1 for chapter marks. Also usable as body text in digital and print applications.

PROFESSIONAL MATERIAL FONTS

These fonts are recommended for brand consistency. In professional documents, flyers, socials, etc., use the fonts above in addition to:

Oswald

[Oswald](#) is a versatile sans-serif font. Use it predominantly for headlines and titles.

Crimson Text

[Crimson Text](#) is a classic serif font recommended for print. Georgia, a standard system font, can be a substitute for Crimson Text in digital environments.

Satisfy

[Satisfy](#) is a decorative font and should be used sparingly as headings and titles when the design warrants it.

August Beach Sweep

Contributed by Jimmy and Luanne Salinas

Beach Cleanup was a success! We had some Texas Master Naturalist kindergarteners “our future” come out to help. We had a great turnout (what a blessing! 🙏) 19 volunteers total and the amount of collected items was proof positive that we can make a difference in this small part of our environment. Many thanks go out to our partners, Adam and the City of Quintana volunteers, and individuals who support this effort, not to mention all our TMN members who showed up.



Thank you for cleaning up with *Clean Swell*!

Here's a summary of your recent cleanup:

Date	August 11, 2026
Duration	1 hours 40 minutes
Number of People	19
Weight of Trash Picked Up	168.4 lbs
Group Name	Team Q
Distance Covered	1.5 Miles

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

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Secretary
Treasurer
State Representative
Immediate Past President
Spring Training Director
Fall Training Director
Membership Director
Advanced Training Director
Volunteer Service Director
Outreach Director
Hospitality Director
Communications Director
Training Class Representative 2025
Training Class Representative 2025

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Donna Rich, Angleton
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John Boettiger, Lake Jackson
Kristine Rivers, Manvel
Oron Atkins, Lake Jackson
Ruby Lewis, Angleton
Rose Wagner, Sweeny
Patty Brinkmeyer, Brazoria
Betty Skweres, Houston
Nannette Daugherty

Chapter Advisors

John O'Connell, AgriLife Extension Service
Morgan Degner, TPWD Sea Center Texas

Non-voting positions:

Chapter Librarian
Data Manager

Debbie Nance, Alvin
Dave Brandes, Lake Jackson

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Website <https://txmn.org/tmncot/>
Facebook <http://facebook.com/TMN-COT>
Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/tmncot.brazoria>
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.

