



NTMN Trunk Guidelines

Trunk Description

A NTMN "trunk" is a collection of exhibit materials relating to some specific subject on TX natural history, and is used in events with outreach/education booths to educate the public about this subject. Exhibit materials typically include posters, brochures for handouts, interactive activities (especially for kids), physical objects such as bird boxes, track casts, water quality test kits, etc. These materials are stored in plastic tubs (trunks) for easy transport, and the exhibit materials are typically set up on at least one and sometimes two 6' folding tables supplied by the event.

Members use our trunks at the outreach events to educate the general public about Texas natural history, and to inform them about our TMN program. Exhibit venues are usually of one of two types:

1. Visitors are attending the event for other reasons, and something about our display catches their attention enough for them to stop and learn more. Examples would include an outreach booth at the State Fair of Texas, and a booth at an Earth day event. These events are frequently, but not always outdoors.
2. Visitors are already interested and motivated to learn about the exhibit's subject matter, and form a "captive" audience. Examples would include a classroom of students learning about natural science, and an information booth at a MN regional conference. These are frequently, but not always, indoors.

Suggestions and Guidelines

Plan to include materials and displays both types of venues can be handled:

1. For the general public, we must first capture their attention and then we have a relatively short amount of time to tell our story before they move on. Need eye-catching display materials (trifold/poster/objects/etc), limited amount of information and resources on where to go to get more info. For outdoor venues, make everything rugged because breezes are always a factor.
2. For the captive audiences, we have a much longer time to tell our story. Can have more diverse & more quantity of information, activities, for kids, reference materials and/or reference sources to answer questions. Include info on what people can do - citizen science monitoring, conservation activities, watching wildlife, etc.

Required items for each trunk

1. Binder describing how to set up and use the trunk contents
2. Picture of a typical set up of the contents
3. Flash drive with the documents included in the binder
4. Inventory of the contents which describes where each item can be purchased and the cost
5. If there are any pamphlets which need to be available for the set up, they should be included in the binder
 - a. If the content of the pamphlets was developed by the class team, the file should be on the flashdrive
 - b. If they come from another source, please list the source; i.e. TPWD. If possible, obtain a PDF file from this source so that we may reproduce the pamphlet ourselves.
6. If anything needs to be made for the trunk, like the plaster casts of tracks in the mammal trunk, instructions about how to do that.
7. Table cloths and tie downs
8. Document holder appropriate for the handouts
9. Trunk containers should be easily transportable
 - a. One-man lift for each container
 - b. If large enough use containers with built-in wheels, or provide a luggage carrier
10. Identification of the NTMN chapter as sponsor of the exhibit and information about how to join.
11. Any oversized poster & trifold intended for outdoor use should be weatherproofed, such as laminating or printing on foam core board or corrugated plastic boards .