



Texas Master Naturalist 17th Annual Meeting

OCTOBER
21 - 23rd, 2016

La Torretta Lake Resort,
Montgomery, Texas



MISSION:

“To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas.”

Annual Meeting
Sponsoring Agencies:

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION



About this year's Annual Meeting . . .

*Welcome to La Torretta Lakeside Resort! This year marks our Program's 17th Annual Meeting and the 18th year of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. We have scheduled **98** different presentations and field trips with a variety of topics and speakers from around the state. Outside of the classroom, we also have a great Silent Auction set up that is used to raise funds for the Annual Meeting, plenty of opportunities to meet new friends and old friends alike, some really beautiful artwork and photos entered into our annual contest, and a wide variety of chapter projects and materials on display in the project fair. Enjoy this weekend of comradery and learning! Thank you for being here with us on the shores of Lake Conroe and in the heart of the pineywoods!*

Friday October 21st, 2016

Lunch on your own prior to arrival (Lunch is not provided on Friday)

12:00 - 1:00 **Arrival and Conference Registration**

Conference Registration Area South

12:00 - 6:00 **Texas Master Naturalist Bookstore Open**

Vendors & Swap Shop Open

VMS HelpDesk Open for LIVE support, demo & Q/A * (until 3:30pm)

Versailles Ballroom

1:00 - 5:00 **Set-Up of Chapter Project Fair Displays**

Set-Up of Photo & Art Contest Entries

Set-Up of Chapter Brochure, Scrapbooks and Newsletter Entries

Submission of Silent Auction Items

Versailles Ballroom

1:00 - 5:00 **Friday Afternoon Field Trip**

Rendezvous at Main Entrance of Conference Center

Cook's Branch Conservancy Field Tour

» *Kathy Hutson (Cooks Branch Conservancy, Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation)*
In 1990, the Mitchell family began a major, long-term habitat preservation project at Cook's Branch, the family's 5,600-acre preserve in the Piney Woods of East Texas. Today, Cook's Branch Conservancy operates as a program of the Cynthia and George Mitchell Foundation. The conservancy promotes conservation ethics and demonstrates the resilience of nature in perpetuity, offering a rare glimpse into what a century of regeneration looks like in the East Texas Piney Woods. The transformation of the once clear-cut, overgrazed working ranch into an award-winning nature conservancy exemplifies extraordinary habitat management and wildlife conservation on private land. Heat and water stress associated with climate change is making forests more vulnerable throughout the world. Cook's Branch acts as a field laboratory for the study of such things as carbon flux, drought, ecosystem transition, biodiversity, effects of fire, etc. The conservancy utilizes tools such as restoration timber harvests, prescribed burning, mechanical and chemical midstory control, invasive species eradication, and replanting in various combinations to meet specific habitat goals. Evidence of the immense progress is undeniable. Aggressive restoration initiatives have enabled the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker and Eastern Turkey populations to expand significantly. And, the restored native prairies are bustling with sparrows and Bobwhite quail.

Managing an Endangered Species in an Urban Forest

» *Donna Work (Texas A&M Forest Service), and Heartwood Chapter TMN volunteers*
Managing a public forest for an endangered species in a highly-urbanized area has its challenges. Learn about the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and how its habitat is being managed on a state forest within one of the fastest-growing areas of East Texas. A mixture of slide and video presentations and in-the-field encounters will be used to introduce you to this small woodpecker. Bring binoculars and cameras in case you get a chance to see this forest-dwelling, vocal woodpecker. Wear long pants and shoes appropriate for walking in this habitat of mature pine forests and associated animal and plant life.

Texas Water and Watersheds Field Trip: Showcasing Service Opportunities within Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Inland Fisheries Division

» *Tim Birdsong & Mark Webb (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)*
This field trip will profile service opportunities for Master Naturalists within the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Inland Fisheries Division, including opportunities to lead and participate in angler access improvements, fish habitat restoration, river cleanups, and citizen

science. Additionally, the field trip will spotlight active fish habitat improvement projects at Lake Conroe. The field trip will include a short boat excursion on Lake Conroe and a driving tour. Field trip participants are encouraged to attend the Texas Waters Day on the morning of October 21st, although attendance at the workshop is not a prerequisite for participation in the field trip.

1:00 – 5:30

Friday Afternoon 4 Hour Sessions * (with 30 min. break at 3:00)

Bird Song: a First Guide to Recognizing Songs and Calls – VIGO

» *Scott Kiester (Elm Fork Chapter)*

The experience of birding is greatly enriched by learning the bird vocalizations. This class will concentrate on the songs of many common Texas birds and discuss how to tell the difference between confusing sound-a-like species, as well as how to recognize the common themes and sound patterns of different bird groups.

Geology and Soils of Texas – IBIZA

» *Christopher Mathewson (TAMU Geology & Geophysics)*

"Everything lives on or in our Geology:

The presentation is designed to provide a fundamental understanding of the Physical Environment of Texas and how the geologic environment impacts life, from soil development to geologic hazards, which form the basement of our natural environment. The class is designed for students who do not have any formal training in Geology or wish to review their geology."

1:00 - 3:00

Friday Afternoon 2 Hour - Sessions A

Outdoor Ethics for the Master Naturalist – ROOM A

» *Andre Houser (Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly!)*

A presentation on the principles of Leave No Trace and Tread Lightly! and how they relate to Texas Master Naturalists in the outdoors.

Learning from the Land- an Interdisciplinary Approach – ROOM B

» *Barbara Parmley (Dallas Arboretum)*

The Leopold Education Project (LEP) is an innovative, interdisciplinary conservation and environmental education curriculum based on the essays in A Sand County Almanac. Are you a formal or informal educator who would like to incorporate Aldo Leopold and the land ethic into your instruction in a hands-on, creative way? Participate and learn how to apply LEP and Leopold's own teaching techniques! The curriculum is suitable in formal and informal education settings.

Forums (Part I): Community, Communication, Connection – ROOM C

» *Kevin Pajak (Cross Timbers Chapter)*

Community, the power of this word resonates with all of us. It stands as one of the key reasons we joined the Master Naturalist program. Many of us seek a community of like minded individuals whose goals mirror our own. What does this word mean to us as Master Naturalists? This word conceptualizes unity, like-mindedness, and a desire to work with others, and to share our knowledge with others. This is exactly what the Texas Master Naturalist program does. We can do better. This presentation will discuss how one form of social media, Forums, provide a unique opportunity to extend our efforts by creating a bond between Master Naturalist chapters that does not exist. Chapters are most often isolated. Some chapters even have a fractured unity--cliquish per se. Often, members do not see other members except at chapter meetings, unless they work on the same project or at the same location. There is a path to overcoming this. A chapter's members can meet virtually. We can do even better. We can create a bond between chapters. Doing so can generate potentialities that could not exist. Forums make this possible.

Forums provide a platform for discussions. When a chapter uses a forum, its members can begin to speak with each other outside the chapter meeting and beyond the localized volunteer area. However, forums usefulness significantly increases for Master Naturalists when multiple chapters in the same ecological region join and participate in the same forum. Doing so, unifies these chapters and gives them access to other Master Naturalists who have similar training, volunteer in similar environments, and have access to similar resources. Moreover, imagine the networking potentials that this creates. Imagine the access to increased expertise that these

chapters now have. Sit back, relax, and imagine the potentialities that spring into existence when we begin speaking.

What's that weed? Documenting and identifying plants with iNaturalist – ROOM D

» Sam Kieschnick and Cullen Hanks (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Plants are extremely numerous and diverse in the state of Texas, so identification of any of these can be quite challenging. In this presentation, you will learn some hints and tricks of identifying plants and adding that information to the citizen science platform, iNaturalist. Not only will you learn the name of the plant, but you'll add valuable information about the plant's global distribution. It's a win-win! This session will include a demonstration of the iNaturalist app and website.

Ecological management of small properties – ROOM E

» John Herron (The Nature Conservancy)

How can we manage our properties (whether it's a big backyard or a 'ranchito') in ways that will improve habitat and increase the number of plant and wildlife species that we all love? What is biodiversity and why is important? Learn from a wildlife ecologist about putting science into the practice of habitat management, focusing on the kinds of management that's practical for small-acreage parcels. John Herron, a wildlife ecologist with over 30 years of experience, will show you how you can apply habitat management to your own little piece of heaven.

Restoring Tall Grass Prairie Systems – ROOM J

» Tim Siegmund (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Come learn about how native prairie systems structure and diversity effect the success of restorations. Program will include a brief history of tall grass prairie, common restoration techniques, introduction to various cost-share programs, prairie ecology, and restoration time progression photos.

Different Strokes for Different Folks – ROOM G

» Diane Dismukes (Archeologist, retired from TxDOT/Texas Parks and Wildlife Department), Ruth Mathews (Archeologist, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

People are an element of the Natural Environment and as such adapt to differences and changes in the environment just like all the other flora and fauna. People use their brain and their culture to adapt and create different responses based on their choices. Comparisons will be made if the adaptations of two areas of Texas and how the prehistoric people's living there adapted to those environments. An interactive activity will encourage the audience to design a cultural response based on these two different environments.

TMN VMS Training - Volunteer Management System for the End User (AKA: TMN VMS 101)

» Cheryl Foster, Dale Hughling, Brad James and Clyde Camp (TMN Volunteer Management System Team)

Getting lots of advanced training at the 2016 State Meeting? Does reporting your hours really matter for Texas wildlife and the TMN Program? Find out how to post your volunteer service and training hours in the new Volunteer Management System (VMS) implemented statewide this year. In this session, participants will learn about the on-line VMS Help Desk, learn how to complete their registration as a volunteer, learn how to log in to the VMS software, learn how to post and edit your hours, and learn how to monitor your progress towards (re-) certification and milestones. Please note that during the conference, there is a kiosk booth in the Commons Area staffed by the VMS Implementation Team to answer questions and demonstrate program features.

3:00 - 3:30

Hotel Room Check-in Begins *Room Check-in at Resort Front Desk

Friday Afternoon Break

Versailles Ballroom

3:30 - 5:30

Fri-2B - Friday Afternoon 2 Hour – Session B

Teaching and Learning Big Ecology – ROOM A

» Jaime Gonzalez (Katy Prairie Conservancy)

Great interpretation of local ecosystems/wildlife is critical for the Texas conservation movement. Yet, delivering great interpretive programs requires Texas Master Naturalists and

others to really know their place in the world beyond just the ecological basics like species identification. It requires interweaving interdisciplinary stories from ecology, history, economics, demographics, etc. for your particular region. Katy Prairie Conservancy (KPC) in Houston, TX is a leader in teaching ecology in an interdisciplinary fashion and this has made a big difference in conservation of local prairies. Join award-winning Community Conservation Director Jaime González in a stimulating and interactive dialogue and working session on creating a great set of interdisciplinary interpreter's toolbox for your community.

How To Get Involved with Texas Wildlife Association's Outdoor Learning Opportunities – ROOM B

»Leslie Wittenburg (Texas Wildlife Association)

The Texas Wildlife Association Conservation Legacy works to provide schools with hands-on interactive TEKS aligned activities through our L.A.N.D.S. (Learning Across New Dimensions in Science) programs. Our programs are offered free to schools in Texas and focus on teaching science concepts using land stewardship, wildlife conservation, natural resource literacy and leadership development skills. TWA programs are available to students in kindergarten through 12th grades. Attendees of the session will learn about the many different programs available free to their schools throughout Texas, to include: the L.A.N.D.S. Outreach program, providing TEKS aligned lessons through the use of Discovery Trunks, Distance Learning, and in class Wildlife By Design presentations. In conjunction with the L.A.N.D.S. Intensive year long program, which provides resources for teachers to use in their classrooms paired with outdoor learning experiences at local ranches or water systems. To better understand the value offered by TWA's programs, the attendees will experience some of the hands-on activities that are taught through our in-classroom and outdoor learning opportunities. Session attendees will take home program and contact information to share with their local chapter, school administrators and educators.

Forums (Part II): Administrating, Moderating, and Organizing – ROOM C

»Kevin Pajak (Cross Timbers Chapter)

Forums, as places where multiple people contribute to discussions, and thus create a community, can become chaotic. Most people can simply create posts, chat, and discover, but there are a few people who will need to know how to perform the administration functions. Administrators for forums act as organizers by keeping the discussions on track. They also add new people to the forum. They are responsible for moving discussions that are not on topic. Lastly, they perform general maintenance on the forum and clean it up. Administrators can also appoint people to be moderators for specific boards. These moderators can then assist the administrators to keep discussions on topic and relevant. Never fear, being an administrator takes little time or effort, once a person understands how to perform the functions of administration. We will also discuss the organic versus hierarchical structure of a forum and the reasons for choosing organic.

In this presentation, we will go in depth to learn the pertinent skills an administrator needs to know. We will also discuss how to structure a forum geared towards multiple Master Naturalist chapter use and the reasons for structuring it a specific way. We will even learn a few tips and tricks that will make being an administrator just that much easier. This presentation will also discuss using a Blog to increase the functionality of your forum.

In Search of Missing Species with Texas Nature Trackers – ROOM D

»Cullen Hanks and Sam Kieschnick (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Every county has missing species, species that used to occur in the county, but have not been detected in recent decades or have never been detected. Often, they are missing because nobody has looked for them. Sometimes they are missing because their local populations have disappeared due to changes in habitat or other circumstances. Either way, you can make a difference by learning about the missing species in your area. In this presentation you will learn how to discover what is missing in your county, and how you can search for and document previously undetected populations.

Pollinators and Natives: An Ancient Marriage – ROOM E

»Randy Johnson (Dallas Zoo)

This presentation discusses the co-evolution of native plants and pollinators and their vital role in maintaining terrestrial ecosystems. 1/6 of all described species on Earth are flowering

plants, their relationship with native pollinators is absolutely critical. Philosophies and techniques for increasing habitat and biodiversity are offered here.

Weather and Climate Extremes – ROOM F

»John Nielsen-Gammon (Texas A&M University)

Extreme weather has a disproportionate impact on natural and human environments. It is often said that climate change is making weather more extreme, but the reality is much more complex. This talk will discuss how scientists determine whether various types of extreme weather are changing or will change, and highlight how different ways of describing those changes can convey vastly different messages. Lastly, the nature of evidence and level of confidence in the effect of climate change in several recent extreme weather events in Texas will be discussed.

TMN State Representatives Roundtable – ROOM G

»Michelle Haggerty and Mary Pearl Meuth (Texas Master Naturalist Program)

The TMN Chapter's State Representatives role was established to help be another communication link to the state office for each chapter. This position within a chapter's organization can help to relieve some of the administrative burden from the president, along with review and provide input to statewide policy updates etc. Roughly, about 1/3 to 1/2 of chapters still have this position on their boards and use them to some degree or another. Join this discussion to learn the ways that chapters with active State Representative roles use their members, ways that the State Representatives can function as a whole across the state and other opportunities for this role within a chapter. All State Representatives from the TMN Chapters around the state, or other chapter leadership interested in being a part of this discussion are invited to attend.

5:30 - 6:00 Reception with Cash Bar

Versailles Ballroom

6:00 - 8:00 Dinner and Keynote Presentation

Americas Ballroom

PENDING TITLE

» Erin Franz, Executive Director, Texan By Nature

8:00- 9:00 Final chance to submit Silent Auction donations
Final chance to set-up for Photo & Art Contest
Final chance to set-up all other Project Fair and Contest entries

Versailles Ballroom

8:15 – 9:15 Friday Evening Round Table & Chapter Projects Presentations

Roundtable Discussion: VMS System Administration for Chapter Leaders –

VENICE

»Cheryl Foster, Dale Hughling, Brad James, Clyde Camp (TMN VMS Team)

This roundtable will focus on resources available to help the chapter leadership manage their hours record keeping and reporting. Additionally, chapter VMS administrators are invited to share their experiences and offer suggestions on improving the process. Attendees will have the opportunity to discuss Federal Grant auditor requirements and reporting implications of the VMS, and bring up their chapter's questions. Other chapter leaders may want to attend to gain insight into the VMS conversion process and learn from the experiences of other chapters. Please note that during the conference, there is a kiosk booth in the Commons Area staffed by the VMS Implementation Team to answer questions and demonstrate program features.

3rd Annual TMN Quiz Bowl – CANNES

»Richard Heilbrun (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Join us for a fun-filled, low-stakes, but high energy trivia contest battle between the chapters! Participants will compete for prizes by answering science questions, wildlife facts, and Master Naturalist trivia. Test your knowledge or come to learn! Bring the beverage of your choice or

just bring yourself and a sense of humor and represent your chapter in a contest of knowledge, battle of wits, or throwdown of who can talk the biggest game.

Chapter Projects Presentation: Give Purple Martins a Home – PARIS

»Donna Lewis & Cindy Bolch (El Camino Real Chapter)

Did you know that Purple Martins are now completely dependent upon us to provide them with a place to live and raise their young? Have you ever considered becoming a Purple Martin Housing Landlord? Well if not, then maybe now is the time! Our Purple Martin session will give you an opportunity to learn from Donna Lewis who has accrued over 40 years of Purple Martin care experience. You will get recommendations on the types of apartments most preferred by our martins, where on your property to install your apartment house, how and when to clean their apartments, what nesting materials to provide, how to substitute a food source when the weather turns bad, and many other information tidbits. You will come away from this session not only with an understanding of what these birds need and how to satisfy that need, but also with an affection for the birds you may never have considered.

Chapter Projects Presentation: Developing an Outreach Trunk – IKARIA

»Whitney Wolf (North Texas Chapter)

A presentation about how to develop an Educational Trunk on a particular topic to use at Outreach and Instructional Events for the Chapter. Examples of Trunks on various topics (Birds, Pollinators, etc.) will be displayed and used as examples for the presentation.

Chapter Projects Presentation: Breaking Boundaries - Bringing Citizen Science To The Overlooked and Forgotten – LARISA

»Barbara Thompson and Mary Ann Nilson (East Texas Chapter)

The East Texas Chapter has been working with disabled veterans; nursing facilities, elderly, shut-ins, and the physically/mentally challenged helping them learn about the world just outside their window, to broaden their boundaries through education about the wonders found in Nature. Join to learn how you can share your time and knowledge with those not able to venture outdoors, by bringing the enjoyment and thrill of discovering into their confining rooms and homes. The reception has been great and the East Texas group hopes other chapters will reach out to these groups in their areas.

Chapter Projects Presentation: Got Nature? Record and share it with iNaturalist – IBIZA

»Nita Schiro (Heartwood Chapter)

Do you like to explore your garden or yard each day just to see what is happening? How many times have you seen something and aren't sure what it is then forgot about it? Using the iNaturalist app on your smartphone makes it easy to become a Citizen Scientist right from your own garden!

In this presentation, we will take a look at the application, which is available to use from a computer, and from your smartphone, so be sure to bring your phone or tablet so you can try it out. The best part of using the iNaturalist app is that like-minded naturalists all over the world can communicate, help with identification and share findings so that we all have a better appreciation for our world and how nature is intertwined in all our lives.

Chapter Projects Presentation: Marketing the Texas Master Naturalist Program Statewide With a Specialty License Plate – ROOM H

»Allison Copony (Heartwood Chapter), Emily Hawthorn, Matt Carly (Alamo Area Chapter)

A specialty license plate for Texas Master Naturalists would be a way to support outreach, start conversations, and be a source of pride for our members. This presentation will explain the process for creating such a plate and seek support from the TXMN chapters.

Saturday October 22nd, 2016

7:00 - 8:00 **Conference Breakfast**
Americas Ballroom

- 7:00 - 8:00 **Registration Open**
Conference Registration Area South
- 8:00 - 6:00 **Chapter Project Displays, Silent Auction Bidding, Popular Vote Contest Voting, Vendors Hallway, Swap Shop and Texas Master Naturalist Bookstore Open** *Ballots for Popular Vote included in Registration Packet
Versailles Ballroom
- 8:00 - 5:00 **Saturday All Day Field Trips**
Rendezvous at Main Entrance of Conference Center *Box Lunches Provided at Registration Desk
Davis Hill State Natural Area
»Kelly Norrid, Ruth Mathews (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department), Chris Mathewson (TAMU Geology & Geophysics)
*The field trip will consist of a hike to the top of Davis Hill (265 ft.) which is not currently open to the public. The vertical hike will take you through a broad range of micro-climates unique to this part of Texas. Joining you on the journey, there will be experts in the field of natural resources, cultural resources and geology to interpret the unique history and ecosystems of this property. ***Special Considerations: This is a primitive area. This area does not have any facilities or improvements. The trail is a primitive trail marked with flagging tape and very little clearing or improvements to the walking surface. Conditions of the trail can change overnight so you must be able to traverse obstacles that may have blocked the trail. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes that are suitable for off-trail hiking. It is highly suggested to bring your own water. Box lunch will be provided.*
- 8:00 - 12:00 **Saturday Morning Field Trips**
Rendezvous at Main Entrance of Conference Center
Prairie Restoration in Sam Houston National Forest
»Cullen Hanks (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department), Rusty Plair (US Forest Service)
Come learn how Sam Houston National Forest is restoring blackland prairie habitat with Forest Service Biologist Rusty Plair. Participants will learn about the tools of the trade used in prairie restoration while walking through an actual prairie restoration project. This will be a valuable opportunity for any TMNs considering taking on a prairie restoration effort.
Lake Creek Greenway
»Glenn Buckley (Heartwood Chapter)
*Short history of the preserve and adjacent natural area
Greenway/Nature Center vision and relationship to other preserves: Cooks Branch, Camp Strake, new acquisitions
Canoe Trail and relationship to preserve/s
Follow with a hike through the preserve trails (about 1/1/2 mile) where we will cross at least 6 habitats including: forested wetland, ephemeral ponds, riparian areas along creek, cut of meanders, open hardwood forest with inland sea oats understory, palmetto forest. We can also demonstrate the control of the soil transition from sandy loam to clay on vegetation and if there is interest core some of the wetland soils and id some of the related plants. The trails are a nice transect from an upland association to a bottomland association to a riparian community at the creek.*
- 8:00 - 12:00 **Saturday Morning 4 Hour Sessions**
How Many Mega Pixels? Camera, Lenses and Techniques for Nature Photography – ROOM A
»John Herron (The Nature Conservancy)
Megapixels, zoom, shutter speed, small cameras, big cameras, Canon, Sony, Nikon, Fuji ... the variety of camera choices seems unending. John Herron, a wildlife ecologist and amateur photographer, will sort through the terminology and 'focus' on the features that are important for nature photography. We'll also discuss the basics of photo composition – how to make a good photo great! After a classroom discussion, the group will move outside for an hour of

practice, then back to the classroom to look at the results. Dress comfortably for a short time outdoors and bring whatever camera you have. If you don't have a camera yet, you can try out one of John's!

Texas Stream Team: Standard LaMotte Kit & Probe Kit Basic Training

»Jenna J. Walker (Texas Stream Team)

If you are looking for a new stewardship opportunity, join Texas Stream Team! Our team will lead these hands-on water quality trainings. You'll gain the knowledge and skills needed to become part of our 25-year-old "early warning system" for Texas waterways and wildlife. New volunteers can get started with the morning session focused on basic water quality parameters include dissolved oxygen, conductivity, pH, transparency, depth, and field observations.

8:00 - 10:00 Saturday Morning 2 Hour Sessions

Interpretive Trail Guiding/Getting Children and Adults Outside – ROOM B

»Dave Powell (Heard Natural Science Museum and Wildlife Sanctuary)

To explain how to be an interpretive trail guide, the tools you can use to bring nature alive. We will be outside for about half the time identifying plants and how to talk about them to children and adults.

Freshwater Macro invertebrates – ROOM C

»Richard G. McCarthy (Central Texas Chapter)

An introduction to the variety of fresh water macro invertebrates. The variety found in water can indicate the water quality Each invertebrate has a different tolerance to oxygen levels. Participants will learn how to catch sort and identify various macro invertebrates; allowing them to determine the quality of the body of water. This will prepare them to provide instructions and training to school children grades K-12 , Boy & Girl Scouts, adults and community leaders in determining the water quality of their local streams, lakes and other water sources.

Engaging Youth in Quail Conservation – ROOM D

»Amanda Gobeli (Reversing the Quail Decline Initiative, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension)

This two hour workshop will cover techniques and talking points for educating youth about quail conservation. The target age group will be high school aged kids approximately 13-17 years, and the primary focus will be demographics that may not have grown up around quail and therefore have little to no background knowledge on their ecological and economic importance. Topics will include quail habitat and food requirements, the ecological role of quail as a prey species and an indicator species, the economic importance of hunting, and land management. The first hour will be a lecture style presentation and Q & A, followed by an outdoor demonstration (if this can be accommodated) of a game called "Run for your Life" which can be used to illustrate the concepts of predation pressure and habitat management. The goal of this presentation is to provide attendees with tools to educate and engage youth in these important concepts, particularly when speaking to kids from urban or suburban environments which are seemingly far removed from prairie ecology. Goals for youth education include demonstrating to the target age group the value of quail conservation and helping them make connections between these concepts and their own lives.

The Lichens: A brief introduction to one of nature's intriguing symbioses – ROOM E

»Dale Kruse (S.M. Tracy Herbarium TAES/TAMU)

Lichens can be rather conspicuous components of many ecosystems, yet very little is known about these organisms in Texas. In this workshop we will explore this miniature world using two approaches. The lecture we will delve into the basics of lichen systematics, morphology, ecology, and biogeography. The laboratory session is designed as a continuation of the introductory class. In this session we will take a detailed look at the morphology of the different lichen growth forms to gain a basic understanding of their intricate morphology. Using dissecting microscopes participants will observe the macro and micro morphological characteristics that are essential for accurate identification of these organisms.

Panel Discussion on the Use of Social Media for Chapters – ROOM F

»Whitney Wolf & Kristi Kerr Leonard (North Texas Chapter)

A panel discussion between those responsible for communications for Master Naturalists chapters across the state to share ideas and practical experience on the use of social media.

8:00 - 9:00

Saturday Morning 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions A

Alternative Funding: A Pivotal Moment for Wildlife Conservation – ROOM G

»*Karly Denkhaus Robinson (Teaming With Wildlife: True To Texas)*

Despite the hard work of conservation groups, our nation is in a state of conservation crisis. Fortunately, we are on the precipice of what could possibly be the biggest wildlife conservation “win” in American history in the form of alternative funding for wildlife conservation at the national level. This presentation provides an overview as to the current status of alternative funding legislation and what that legislation would mean for Texas, as well as a walkthrough of how to be involved with the lobbying effort without breaking Master Naturalist rules.

Big Business & The Environment: Forming Partnerships – ROOM H

»*Mary Waters (Gulf Coast Chapter)*

Do you or your chapter have a project that needs funding? These days most big companies have corporate social responsibility budgets. How do you get on their list? This presentation will highlight several existent partnerships between environmental groups and oil and gas companies, the valuable projects that have come out of those partnerships, and explore how to form partnerships with corporations in order to further your environmental project goals.

Avoiding "Death by PowerPoint" – ROOM I

»*John Donaho (University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston)*

PowerPoint is a powerful communications and educational platform often abused to the point that "death by PowerPoint" has become a common complaint. Using a few simple techniques will elevate your presentation from inducing drowsiness to fully engaging your audience. Why should you know the age of the oldest person in your audience? There's a simple tip for deciding the best font size based on the age of the oldest audience member. Learn to look at images with a critical eye. If you are apologizing for image quality you should have left that picture at home. Small changes to a presentation can give you greater audience engagement, participation and transfer of knowledge.

Fifty Shades of Green – ROOM J

»*Ricky Linex (Natural Resources Conservation Service)*

This presentation will show 50 species of native plants that are beautiful and sometimes unusual and can be used in your native landscaping. Some of these can be purchased but many are un-common and will have to be collected in the wild. A one page listing of the 50 plants including common and scientific names will be provided to attendees. This list also includes whether the plants provide values for pollinators. The list will be useful as you begin your search for these neat natives.

9:00 - 10:00

Saturday Morning 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions B

Healthy Soil, Healthy Gut, Healthy Life – ROOM I

»*Stuart Nunnally (Nunnally/Freeman Dental)*

The link between the microbiome of the soil and the microbiome of the gut are inextricably related. Many of today's common human diseases have their origins in an unhealthy soil microbiome, and conversely a healthy soil microbiome sets the stage for nutritional and systemic health. This presentation magnifies the importance of a healthy soil microbiome and the role it plays in our gut microbiome and the impact it has on our overall health.

Working Together Isn't Always Easy: Managing Conflict in Volunteer Groups – ROOM H

»*Kris Shipman (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)*

Conflicts are a normal part of group interactions and depending on how they are managed can create rifts and additional conflict or promote understanding, creativity, and open communication. In this interactive session, discuss the leadership and communication skills needed to guide a group of volunteers through conflict. Learn why it is important to manage conflicts and receive the tools and skills necessary to manage difficult interactions, differences in opinions, and group conflicts with diplomacy, respect, and tact. Participants should be

willing to have an open dialogue and share examples of conflicts they have experienced within their volunteer groups and how they dealt with them.

Flipboard: Making online digital magazines about anything Master Naturalist – ROOM I

»Penelope Boyer (Land Heritage Institute)

Flipboard: Your News Magazine is used by millions of people every day. It's a single place to keep up on news, follow topics you care about and share stories, videos and photos that influence you. Dr. Boyer actively adds to ten Flipboard magazines Including "Bees," "Land Art/Land Use," and the "FemTechNet Digest." Her Flipboard magazine, "My Master Naturalist Training" captured hundreds of stories pertinent to her experiences in Class 38 of the Alamo Area Master Naturalists. Learn to make your own Flipboard magazines in minutes!

How a Community Reduced Their Water Costs by 60% With Conservation Efforts and Education –

»John Kiser (Stone Oak POA)

The Stone Oak area in San Antonio is known for their 11 miles of landscaped medians with emphasis on sustainable landscape, tree preservation, and water conservation efforts. This, along with their community education and outreach, has made Stone Oak a much desired, and unique community.

10:00 - 11:00 **Saturday Morning Break**

Versailles Ballroom

10:00 - 11:00 **Saturday Morning 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions C**

Partnering with State Parks: A Winning Combination! – ROOM B

»Audrey Muntz (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

By partnering with State Parks, TMNs can work alongside passionate staff and volunteers, earn volunteer hours, and gain new knowledge while supporting special projects and conserving and stewarding Texas lands. During this training, learn about two model TMN State Park partnerships: Washington on the Brazos (WoB) State Park's partnership with Gideon Linceum TMN and Sheldon Lake State Park's partnership with Galveston Bay and Gulf Coast TMNs from State Parks Volunteer Manager, Audrey Muntz, Park Ranger at Sheldon Lake and TMN, Hannah Buschert, and representatives from the Sheldon Lake TMN partnership.

At WoB, TMNs help with snake talks, invasive species removals, native garden planting, and more. At Sheldon Lake, they help with prairie and wetland restoration and events throughout the year. The 12 year restoration program has led to the planning, recovery, and growth of hundreds of acres. Learn how these State Parks and TMN chapters work together to make the most of these mutually beneficial relationships.

Gain a better understanding of how a partnership with State Parks can lead to:

- *Opportunities for Advanced Training Hours*
- *Development of special projects that align with your TMN interests*
- *New and diverse projects to gain required hours*
- *You being a stakeholder and advocate for the needs you identify in your state park*

We will share tips on how to support existing projects, identify new projects, and work with park staff and volunteers. We will also cover the project proposal review process for state parks so you can better understand state park timelines. Create new state park partnerships, strengthen existing partnerships, and work successfully with your State Parks!

Wildlife Watching using Automated, Autonomous Cameras – ROOM G

»Claire Moore (Heartwood Chapter)

Automated, autonomous cameras facilitate wildlife watching without having to dedicate hours or days in a blind with a camera. Example photos as well as videos will be shared as well as tips and techniques for placement and settings for the best results.

Building a Following - Is Facebook the Answer? – ROOM I

»John Donaho (University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston)

We have many tools available to us today to promote our chapters. Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram are but a few of the players in the social media marketing game. We can

leverage the power of these applications to reach far beyond our local area or region. Let's talk about how to use each of them to gain maximum benefit with little or no cost.

Agricultural Producers as Environmental Stewards – ROOM J

»John Tomecek (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service)

In Texas, most wildlife conservation happens on private lands, the majority of which are under some form of agricultural production. This presentation explores the contributions to conservation that can be made by agriculture, how to carefully manage the land for both production and conservation, and how Master Naturalists can be involved with agricultural producers in their area.

11:00 - 12:00 **Saturday Morning 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions D**

How To Put On a BioBlitz With Teaming With Wildlife: True To Texas – ROOM G

»Karly Robinson (Teaming With Wildlife: True To Texas)

Thanks to apps like iNaturalist and the ability to organize via social media, it has never been easier to get average citizens involved in collecting scientific data. Throughout this presentation we'll walk through the necessary steps to hosting a bioblitz, including garnering citizen & expert participation, and buy-in from relevant dignitaries, as well as some lessons learned from the team involved in putting on the largest ever Texas-based bioblitz.

Creating a Natural System – ROOM G

»Lisa Tuck (Heartwood Chapter)

A natural system can be any size and anywhere. This presentation covers (1) a rural 4-acre restoration project which incorporates existing forest, new plantings of native longleaf pines, a new pond, new wetlands, and planting of native prairie mix, and (2) a 75-square foot flowerbed project incorporating native plants in urban Houston.

Using Google Calendar to Organize a Chapter's Activities: Who's doing What When and Where? – ROOM I

»Kevin Pajak (Cross Timbers Chapter)

Have you fully explored how Google Calendar can increase your chapter's unity? Google Calendar as a dynamic tool allows a Master Naturalist Chapter to organize its membership's activities, but it does much more. Google Calendar can act as a tool to organize a chapter's activities, its members, its events, and it can color code all of them. This short presentation will illuminate how a chapter can take advantage of more of what Google Calendar has to offer. Prior to the advent of Google Calendar, people would open their day planners or head to the kitchen to pen an activity or moment on the calendar. This has all changed. Although there are many calendar programs out there, Google Calendar offers more of what a Master Naturalist chapter needs. It allows a chapter to have a single calendar that can function like many calendars. Huh? you say. It is true. The dynamic nature of Google Calendar allows a single calendar to have multiple calendars that can be precisely shared. How so? The key is that people can sign-up for only those calendars that contain events of interest to them.

Come see how your chapter can take advantage of Google Calendar's unique ability to Sync with a person's calendar. Use of Google Calendar is not always required to take advantage of this. Minimal understanding of Google Calendar will be helpful. Presenter is willing to discuss in depth after presentation.

Spiders of Central Texas – ROOM J

»Sheryl Smith-Rodgers (Highland Lakes Chapter)

Attendees will learn basic spider biology and common spiders of Central Texas along with other fun facts about spiders.

12:00 - 1:00 **Conference Lunch**
Americas Ballroom

12:30 - 1:00 **Gentle Yoga & Envisioning Nature**
Lakeshore Deck *Outside Versailles Ballroom
Join us in a gentle 30 minute exploration of the Essence of Yoga & Nature on the Lakeshore patio. We will focus on breathing, centering, easy nature yoga poses, and deep stretching.

Designed to alleviate the kinks from conference sitting and envision the nature that gathered us this weekend. Bring a pool towel or a yoga mat. No yoga experience is necessary.

1:00 - 5:00

Saturday Afternoon Field Trips

Rendezvous at Main Entrance of Conference Center

iNaturalist Field Trip to Sam Houston National Forest

»Cullen Hanks (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

The goal of this field trip is to explore habitats within the Sam Houston National Forest, discover plants and animals unique to the region, and document our observations with iNaturalist. iNaturalist is a powerful tool for documenting, identifying, and learning about the species you discover in nature. In addition to being a fun naturalist field trip, this will be a good opportunity to learn how to use iNaturalist for both the beginner and the advanced observer. Techniques for photodocumentation will be demonstrated using both the iNaturalist app and a DSLR camera. Note: if you want to use the app, be sure download the iNaturalist app beforehand.

Elmer Kleb & Kleb Woods Nature Preserve

»Allison Copony (Heartwood Chapter)

Participants will learn about the history of how Kleb Woods Nature Preserve came to be and how it relates to the early conservationist, Elmer Kleb. Participants will learn about the various species found in the preserve.

1:00 - 5:00

Saturday Afternoon 4 Hour Sessions

Nature Photography: Good to Better and Better to Best – ROOM A

»Carol Henrichs (Carol Fox Henrichs Photography)

The shift from film to digital has allowed virtually anyone to be a photographer. Because nature photography can be a medium for communication, nature appreciation, and conservation, we should strive to produce the best possible images.

Carol Fox Henrichs, member of the Brazos Chapter and award-winning professional nature photographer, will share concepts and techniques for creating images that are truly useful for Master Naturalist activities, Citizen Scientist projects, and research, as well as inspirational works of art. Session topics may include, equipment selection, photography fundamentals, the importance of accurate metadata, and ethics. After the initial presentation, participants may practice during a self-guided shooting session, then return to share images, discuss file formats, image size, and ways to help protect images posted online or in social media. This session is appropriate for all skill levels and all cameras. The best camera is the one you have with you-- so bring it to the session!

Texas Stream Team: Advanced Training

»Jenna J. Walker (Texas Stream Team)

If you are looking for a new stewardship opportunity, join Texas Stream Team! Our volunteers gain the knowledge and skills needed to become part of our 25-year-old "early warning system" for Texas waterways and wildlife. Certified Volunteers, join our afternoon session to expand your skills, with topics covering: Advanced water quality parameters include bacteria, nitrates, phosphates, turbidity and flow.

1:00 - 3:00

Saturday Afternoon 2 Hour Sessions

Chronic Wasting Disease in Texas: What Folks Need to Know – ROOM D

»John Tomecek (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service)

Since the discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease in Texas, there has been a great amount of fear and misinformation about the disease. Although a serious, often mysterious condition, it is critical that Texans understand the threats to native species from this condition, what can be done to control its spread, and how Master Naturalists can be a part of the solution. We will cover what folks need to know, including the history, epidemiology, monitoring, management, and future of the disease.

Big Chapters - Unique Challenges – ROOM F

»Jo Lynne Merrill (North Texas Chapter) *"This presentation will be a panel discussion, with power point presentation and audience participation, about the special management, record-*

keeping, reporting, financing and communication issues faced by large urban chapters. Topics for discussion will include:

- * How to most effectively organize and administer a large chapter to serve an urban community;
- * How to coordinate large, diverse groups of volunteers without losing chapter cohesion;
- * How to select and manage large numbers of simultaneous urban-specific conservation and outreach projects;
- * How to raise money, budget, use and audit large chapter funds most effectively;
- * How to maintain fast and effective communication with a large, diverse membership;
- * How best to train, educate and integrate massive classes of new trainees;
- * How to reflect urban diversity in chapter membership, and how to meet the conservation and outreach needs of a diverse urban population. "

Texas Estuarine Resource Network - Citizen Science Connecting Communities to Colonial Waterbird Conservation – ROOM C

»Kari Howard (Audubon Texas)

Texas Estuarine Resource Network or T.E.R.N. is a community-based citizen science program designed to train members of the community to collect bird monitoring data used to assist researchers with projects and scientific conservation management. This two session training program will transform volunteers to citizen scientists and teach how to identify local species of colonial water birds and to monitor these bird species at wetland foraging habitats, how to use current scientific survey protocols and data collections, and how this data will assist researchers with conservation. The first session workshop is Colonial Waterbird Identification-covering coastal colonial waterbirds and how to identify them during spring and winter plumage as well as what juveniles look like. This class will be 2 hours of presentation with a 15 minute break. The second session workshop TERN Foraging Monitoring Training, covers how to monitor these waterbird species in foraging habitats, observing a variety of behaviors and how birds use local habitats. This class will be 2 hours total, 1 hour of presentation with 15 minute break and 45 minutes of an actual bird survey on site to practice use of the datasheets. TERN is managed by the Audubon Texas Coastal Program. The Coastal Program began in 1923, when Audubon established a system of island sanctuaries along the Texas Coast. These island sanctuaries are home to twenty-plus species of colonial waterbirds, several of which are considered endangered or threatened. The majority of waterbirds that nest along the Coast nest on an Audubon owned or leased island. The TERN program continues Audubon's legacy of protecting colonial waterbirds by engaging citizens in the community to gather valuable data about bird populations in foraging grounds and rookery habitats. The data collected through citizen science programs can be incorporated into management and conservation plans, and influence local, state and federal policy development.

Bryophytes, The Forest Under Your Feet – ROOM E

»Dale Kruse (S.M. Tracy Herbarium TAES/TAMU)

Bryophytes (mosses, liverworts, hornworts) can be rather inconspicuous components of many ecosystems, especially in many of the drier regions of Texas. However these organisms serve many vital functions in nature and can be found in most habitats with a little training. In this workshop we will explore this miniature world using two approaches. The lecture we will delve into the basics of bryophyte systematics, morphology, ecology, and biogeography. The laboratory session is designed as a continuation of the introductory class. In this session we will take a detailed look at the morphology of mosses, liverworts, and hornworts to gain a basic understanding of their intricate morphology. Using dissecting microscopes participants will observe the macro and micro morphological characteristics that are essential for accurate identification of these groups. All equipment needed for the class will be provided.

Life on Earth Depends on Natural Darkness: Save the Night and Participate in Globe at Night Citizen Science Project – ROOM B

»Cindy Luongo Cassidy (International Dark Sky Association - Texas Section)

Almost every living thing on our planet uses the cycle of light and dark to trigger life processes. Humans are, for the most part, diurnal and have come to depend on artificial light for nighttime activities. So, how does our artificial light at night effect fauna and flora? It's hard for us to see what habitat destruction by artificial light looks like. This program helps us

understand the effects of artificial light on living things, including ourselves, and how we can reduce the negative effect of our lights.

Additionally, participants will take home a new awareness about the lighting practices, which allow humans to have the light they want or need for nighttime activities while minimizing the negative effects of artificial light. These practices save energy costs, reduce glare, increase safety, reduce light trespass, limit the negative consequences on the environment, and create a more aesthetically pleasing nocturnal environment for humans.

In the second part of the session, you will learn how to participate in and engage others in the Globe at Night Citizen Science Project to raise awareness of the need for darkness and measure light pollution at your location. After you enter your data you can compare your location to thousands of other data points depicting the level of light pollution around the world.

1:00 - 2:00

Saturday Afternoon 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions E

Caddo, The Lake, The Battle – ROOM G

»Carl Turner (Cypress Basin Chapter)

Caddo Lake, the only natural lake in Texas and the second largest natural lake in the South, is under attack from Giant Salvinia. A history of the lake and a survey of its flora and fauna will be followed by a description of the community and state's efforts to fight Giant Salvinia.

Texas Nature Tracker Biological Inventory Teams Need You – ROOM H

»Marsha May (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Are you an enthusiastic and knowledgeable naturalist? Texas Nature Tracker's biological inventory team is looking for folks like you to help with assisting landowners and TPWD biologists by conducting surveys of plants and animals on private property. Please attend this talk and learn more about this project and see how you can get involved.

Bringing the Prairies back to Houston – ROOM I

»Jed Aplaca (Houston Parks and Recreation)

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department has been working with many local partners to restore native prairie to the urban landscape. The processes and problems will be discussed along with ideas for future projects.

Be Prepared--Not Just for Boy Scouts – ROOM J

»Connie Barron (Highland Lakes Chapter)

As a group hike leader, you need to be prepared. Learn how to pack a basic first-aid kit and how to use what's in it. Spot heat related conditions and know how to treat the most likely minor illnesses or injuries.

2:00 - 3:00

Saturday Afternoon 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions F

Giant Salvinia vs. the Weevil – ROOM G

»Lee Eisenberg (Caddo Biocontrol Alliance)

Invasive species, such as giant salvinia, can be devastating to aquatic flora and fauna, degrade water quality, and limit opportunities for recreational activities. We present information on giant salvinia and other invasive aquatic species. We also present our plan to mitigate the salvinia infestation at Caddo with a greenhouse specially designed to raise the salvinia weevil, the only biocontrol agent known to be effective against giant salvinia.

From Crosswalks to Boardwalks: A trails project on a budget – ROOM H

»Laurie Gonzales (Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge)

National Wildlife Refuges are foremost for wildlife and habitat but they are also available to visitors to view these natural resources. However, lack of staffing and budget for visitor services left a huge gap in visitor services on many refuges. Through many partnerships, the Refuge has been able to overcome such obstacles and provide and even increase the number of miles of trails available to hikers each year. The style of trails and resourcefulness of volunteers has created a network of trails for the people by the people. In this presentation, the audience will gain an understanding of ways to create a network of hiking, biking, and paddling trails on a serious budget. This will include how to go about implementing a trail system starting with a budget of practically zero dollars. Many partnerships will also be highlighted.

Plants of the Prairie – ROOM I

»Jed Aplaca (Houston Parks and Recreation)

We will look at the break down of plant families found in the coastal prairie of the Upper Texas Gulf Coast and what makes them distinct.

Outdoor Ethics are "Caught - Not Taught" – ROOM J

»Steve Hall (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Teaching 'Outdoor Ethics' is somewhat of a conundrum since we rarely have a lot of time to shape or influence individual values and character outside of mentor, friend and family relationships. However, based on the hunter education model that has existed since 1946, there are specific ways to effectively "plant ethical seeds" during presentations or lessons --both indoors and outdoors --with our students and the public. Speaker will introduce participants to several of those methods.

3:00 - 4:00

Saturday Afternoon 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions G

Bringing Lake Livingston to Life – ROOM G

»Ronald Diderich (Piney Wood Lakes Chapter)

Lake Livingston is a reservoir lacking sufficient aquatic vegetation. We are working with other organizations and schools to remedy this with native vegetation. Why was the water willow chosen for this project, and what benefits do we hope to achieve. This project has widespread support and has earned national recognition. Its scope and timeframe are ambitious.

Determining Baseline Data on Wintering Bats and Roosts in Texas: How You Can Help – ROOM H

»Melissa Meierhofer (Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources)

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is a deadly disease which has led to substantial declines in bat populations in eastern United States. WNS has been documented in Oklahoma, and has the potential to spread into Texas within the next few years. To understand the potential threat WNS is to bats in Texas, we will continue to collect baseline data on bat species distribution, abundance, and environmental data from the hibernacula from winter roosts over the next three years. Citizen scientists can play a key role in this state-wide monitoring study by locating bat winter roosts and documenting sightings on the Bats of Texas project in iNaturalist. Baseline data on winter roosts and bats in Texas will play a critical role in developing management plans prior to the arrival of WNS, and how to proceed should it arrive.

Wildflowers of the Llano Estacado – ROOM I

»Daria McKelvey (Texas Tech University)

"There's nothing out there!" is an all too common phrase heard when asked to describe west Texas...and it's completely FALSE! This short-grass prairie boasts a subtle beauty that is one of the best kept secrets of Texas. This presentation will focus on the incredible diversity of wildflowers found on the Llano Estacado, and explore the unique environments they inhabit.

The Organic Meat Movement – ROOM J

»Steve Hall (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Whether you call them locavores, foodies or adult onset hunters, there is an ever-increasing movement afoot by Americans seeking to obtain wild fish and game for the table -- people who have not traditionally fished or hunted themselves nor who grew up in an environment that supported such activities. Wild, organic meats represent nutritional, sustainable protein sources and whether you learn how to harvest game yourself or make friends with a hunter and/or angler, wild game meat is an excellent alternative to cellophane-packaged, domestic meat sources. Learn about today's locavore movement from a veteran hunter who grew up in a family of 12 where fish and game meals were the norm.

Status and History of the Red Wolves – ROOM K

»Edward Craven (Armand Bayou Nature Center)

Red wolves ranged from Eastern Texas to Florida and along the Southern Atlantic Coast. In fact, it is safe to say that red wolves roamed throughout Eastern Texas in forests and prairies. Unfortunately, by the mid-seventies, red wolves were being genetically swamped by coyotes invading from the West. Ground Zero included East Harris County, Chambers County, and extreme Southwest Louisiana. The Harris County community came together to study the species and save this unique and beautiful animal.

As one of the very first test cases of the new Endangered Species Act, the red wolf was saved by dedicated red wolf champions. Animals were darted, tranquilized, and genetically tested. By

1980, only fourteen pure red wolves remained, including the last mated pair captured in Sabine Pass. These animals were taken to a breeding facility in North Carolina and subsequently released into the wild on the Albemarle Peninsula.

Learn about the clever and innovative techniques developed to save these charismatic predators and the including the latest DNA analyses of the status of these animals.

4:00 - 5:00

Saturday Afternoon 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions H

Urban Coyotes: The Unlikely Neighbors – ROOM H

»John Tomecek (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service)

Today, urban residents are increasingly aware of the flora and fauna that surround them. In cities, however, coyotes are a growing presence. Although they serve a role in the ecosystem, it is important for urban residents to understand their other neighbors. This presentation will address the biology and ecology of urban coyotes, and provide recommendations for being a good neighbor.

Large Restoration Efforts at the Connemara Meadow – ROOM I

»Bob Mione (Connemara Conservation Foundation)

Presentation provides a 15 month history of large native grass restoration efforts at the Connemara Meadow Nature preserve. What worked, what did not work, how we have moved forward.

11 Things You Need To Know About Poison Oak & Ivy – ROOM J

»Amy Martin (Itchy Business)

Painful encounters with poison oak and ivy create negative feelings about the environment, lessening the public's concern for it. Teach others to fear nature no more with this humorous talk. By gaining a deep understanding of the rash process, you will be able to intuitively show how to treat it and dissuade sufferers from using remedies that worsen it. Discover the four stages of the rash (you can even catch it early and stop it!) and why one product doesn't treat all. Learn how to treat the itch and rash through the 3 Cs – calm, cool and constrict – using anti-inflammatory topical herbs and minerals, mind-body techniques, and more. From the author of *Itchy Business: How to Treat the Poison Ivy and Poison Oak Rash, Prevent Exposure and Eradicate the Plant*. www.Itchy.biz

History and Status of Ivory-billed Woodpeckers in Texas – ROOM K

»Edward Craven (Gulf Coast Chapter)

John James Audubon wrote about the Ivory-billed Woodpecker more than any other bird. He noted that Ivory-billed Woodpeckers were most numerous along Houston's forested bayous. In 2005, Mr. Craven was selected by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to join the Ivory-billed Woodpecker Recovery Team. His duties included collecting data throughout the Cache River Wildlife Area and the White River Wildlife Management Area. Mr. Craven has subsequently conducted additional searches working alongside some of the world's top woodpecker experts. Mr. Craven has also conducted searches in the Big Thicket of East Texas. While searching, he encountered magnificent black bears, large alligators, quicksand, cottonmouths and six-foot timber rattlesnakes. Mr. Craven will summarize and discuss the history, behavior and ecology of Ivory-billed woodpeckers and where they lived and may still live, including recent searches and findings.

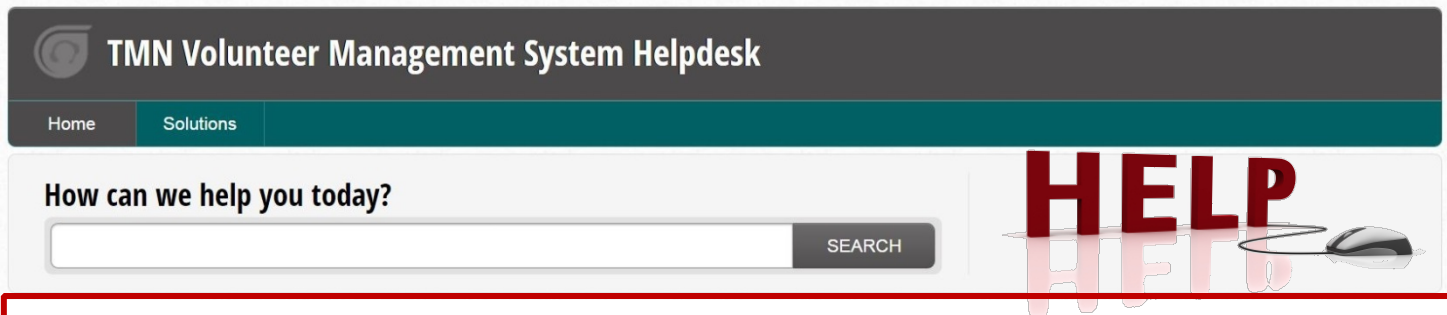
Texas Ecosystems and Virtual Mapping

»Laura Clark (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Texas Parks and Wildlife's Landscape Ecology Program has developed a Google maps based application, Texas Ecosystem Analytical Mapper (TEAM), to deliver the Ecological Mapping Systems of Texas (EMS) data to Texas citizens. The TEAM application is an interactive mapping tool that will assist users in understanding Texas habitats and integrate vegetation data with land management and resource planning of all types. Wildlife biologists, land managers, naturalists, planners, and conservationists are able to use TEAM to view and print the EMS data in relationship to other natural feature layers such as soils, geology, hydrology, and ecoregions. Currently, TEAM allows the user to view and print custom maps and reports of habitat data from uploaded kml and shapefiles, or areas of interest drawn within the application. Other capabilities include: exporting the map and report to a pdf; and calculating the number of acres of each vegetation type within the area of interest. Future updates include improved functionality in addition to a data entry module for crowdsourcing vegetation data

and individual profiles for users. TEAM supports land management and conservation approaches incorporating the most current data. It also provides an avenue for community involvement in habitat understanding.

- 5:00 - 6:00 **TMN Social, Year in Review, and Family Reunion with Cash Bar
Project Fair Display Judging**
Versailles Ballroom
- 6:00 - 8:30 **Dinner and TMN Awards Ceremony**
Americas Ballroom
- 7:00 - 10:00 **Black Light Station for Night Flying Invertebrates**
Meet at Waterfront behind Versailles Ballroom
- 9:00 **Silent Auction Bidding, Project Contest and Popular Vote Contests
Closes**
Versailles Ballroom
- 9:00 – 12:00 **Social Time Campfire, Music Gathering**
Versailles Shorefront ****If inclement weather, moved to Conference Atrium**



The TMN Volunteer Management System Helpdesk team will be providing LIVE demo, support and Q&A throughout the Annual Meeting. Help Desk Hours are Friday 3-5:30pm, Saturday 8am-5pm.

Sunday October 23rd, 2016

6:30 - 8:00 Chapter President's Breakfast and Chapter Advisors

*(Or Chapter President Designee)

Essence Café - access through outside entrance only

7:00 - 8:00 Conference Breakfast and Chapter Directors/Chairs Roundtable

Americas Ballroom

8:00 - 10:00 Texas Master Naturalist Bookstore and Swap Shop Open
Silent Auction Winners Settle Bids

Versailles Ballroom

8:00 - 8:45 Annual Meeting Contest Awards & Special Presentations

Americas Ballroom

9:00 - 12:00 Sunday Morning 3 Hour Sessions

Identifying and Protecting Yourself from Poison Oak & Ivy - ROOM A

»Amy Martin (*Itchy Business*)

*Poison oak and ivy is the bane of Master Naturalists, even worse than bug bites and sunburn. Naturalists who lead nature walks must know how to protect both themselves and their charges from the noxious plant. Learn how to identify the four species in all seasons and regions, and anticipate where they will grow. Discover personal habits, clothing and barrier creams that prevent itch-inducing urushiol from reaching the skin. Find out weird and tragic ways we spread around urushiol and get rashes from secondary indirect exposure. (Hint: It's your dog.) Discover the right way to clean urushiol from skin and everything else. From author of *Itchy Business: How to Treat the Poison Ivy and Poison Oak Rash, Prevent Exposure and Eradicate the Plant*. www.Itchy.biz*

Wild Game Preparation 101 - a Healthy Food Choice! – ROOM B

»Steve Hall (*Texas Parks and Wildlife Department*)

Wild game such as deer, quail, turkey and fish are excellent food sources to go with your home grown vegetables. Whether you hunt or fish for food, yourself, or get donations of meat from a friend, wild game represents an organic, healthy protein source for you and your family. Learn how to prepare wild game meats/fish "from field to table" in a hands-on fashion. Field dressing, transporting, processing and cooking tips will be included for a variety of fish and wildlife found in Texas.

Geology of Texas - "It's Out There" – ROOM C

»Ray Kozusko (*Central Texas Chapter*)

Introduction to Geology

Major Rock Groups and Distribution in Texas (specimens display)

Structural Geology and Mountain Building

Ground Water Geology and Aquifers of Texas

Evolution of Landforms (Geomorphology)

Closing Observations

Plant Identification by Family Association and use of Written and Online Botanical Keys – ROOM D

»Ricky Linex (*Natural Resources Conservation Service*)

Participants will gain an understanding of how Texas plants have been collected and identified through the past 200 years. Plants will first be identified by use of Family Associations and then followed by written and online botanical keys. Participants will learn how to quickly key out plants arriving at the proper identification. Session will be indoors, copies of the keys needed will be provided for all. Magnifier, tweezers, and knife would be useful. Handouts of Family Associations and list of useful plant ID books will be provided. Never again will you fear the challenge of keying out a plant.

TMN VMS Administrators Training 201 –

»Cheryl Foster, Dale Hughling, Brad James and Clyde Camp (TMN VMS Team)
Join us to review some of the more advanced features of the Samaritan TMN VMS system and procedures that coincide with the usage of the system. We will go over the process of transferring volunteers to and from your chapter. As well as handling volunteer opportunities in neighboring chapters when your volunteers join them. We'll discuss maintenance of your chapter's data. Cleaning up logbooks, opportunities and volunteer entries, and managing the Volunteer's drop-down box in eRecruiter. Advanced topics will also include along with a thorough discussion of opportunity categories, exporting data to excel and using the email functionality for logbooks entries. Do you have a need to see data in a unique way? We will show you how to create grids for your chapter. Need to modify a large group of volunteer records? We will show you how to run an 'Automation' event to make those changes.

»Cheryl Foster, Dale Hughling, Brad James and Clyde Camp (TMN VMS Team)
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9:00 - 10:00

Sunday Morning 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions A

Texas Nature Tracker Advanced Opportunities For Your Chapter – ROOM E

»Marsha May (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Texas Nature Tracker program needs your help. Texas Nature Trackers tracks the status of wild populations of plants and animals throughout Texas. One way to participate is to set up an advanced opportunity designed by your chapter with the help of Texas Nature Tracker biologists. Learn about what another chapter is doing and come up with ideas for your own.

Update on Texas Master Naturalist Endowment Campaign – ROOM F

»Darin Paine (Texas A&M AgriLife Extension)

Join us for an update on the development of the Texas Master Naturalist Endowment Campaign. Launched in 2015, this campaign has been established to build a sustainable funding opportunity for the future of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. With advanced sustainable funds, the possibilities for program enhancement are limitless – chapter grants, advanced training programs, conservation tools and so much more can be added to the hands of the Master Naturalists to make more great impacts on the state of Texas. Help us build this dream!

Be A Star Award – ROOM G

»Cindy Luongo Cassidy (Hays County Chapter)

Learn the "hows & whys" of this new award to recognize those who have "Nature, Neighbor, & Night Sky Friendly Lighting". Award presentations to several Master Naturalists will be held as part of this program.

Very Basic Birding – ROOM H

»John Herron (The Nature Conservancy)

Do barely know the difference between a red-bird and a robin, but wish you could bird watch with 'real birders'? If you find birds interesting, but aren't sure about getting started – this is the class for you! John Herron, a wildlife ecologist with over 30 years of experience, will show you the basics – how to select and use binoculars, simple bird-recognition skills, choosing and using a field-guide book. We'll talk about attracting birds to your backyard, too. Bring binoculars if you have them.

TxDOT and Pollinators – ROOM I

»Dennis Markwardt (TxDOT)

TxDOT manages over 800,000 mowable acres of right of way that produces some outstanding stands of wildflowers and pollinator habitat. TxDOT has been increasing its efforts towards pollinators and increasing pollinator habitat. This presentation will show efforts that are currently being done and express other efforts that could be done to increase pollinator habitat.

Hill Country Flora Virtual Herbarium Search Engine – ROOM J

»Raul Pena (Hill Country Chapter)

There are many virtual herbariums but ours has a user-friendly interface that facilitates identifying wildflowers. What many people see may actually not be taxonomically correct. This search engine can identify a plant that you think has two petals but in fact actually has three petals. We usually narrow the search down to between 1 to 4 plants out of 400 by just providing bloom color, the bloom month, the number of petals, leaf shape and arrangement. If more characteristics are needed then the leaf apex, margin, base and structure can also be specified. If you do not know the taxonomic terms in the drop-down menus there are view buttons that display a picture and description of each term from which you can select. You don't need to know the meaning of the taxonomic terms but as you use it you will learn the meaning of the taxonomic terms.

10:00 - 11:00

Sunday Morning 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions B

A new era for wildlife management – ROOM G

»Richard Heilbrun (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

New legislation was introduced into Congress this year that will completely change the landscape of wildlife conservation, environmental education, and the recovery of our most imperiled plant and animal populations. The bill would implement the recommendations of specially formed Blue Ribbon Panel to dedicate \$1.3 Billion from existing revenue structures to the conservation of at-risk wildlife populations. These funds would be automatically appropriated and apportioned to the states using a formula based on land size and population. Texas would likely receive \$50-64Million annually to implement the Texas Conservation Action Plan, which is our roadmap to recovering 1,310 of our most at-risk species. This money would be distributed in a similar manner to the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program, so states would be required to spend this money solely on plant and wildlife management. We all have a role to play in educating and informing the public of the impact of this legislation.

Join us for an interactive discussion on the role that Master Naturalists and chapters can play to make perhaps the biggest change to wildlife management since 1937.

Partners in Refuge Management – ROOM E

»Laurie Gonzales (Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge)

Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge is a small Refuge in east Texas. To overcome challenges such as a small staff, the Refuge has completed projects via partnerships and volunteer service projects. This presentation will explore these partnerships and projects while also asking Master Naturalists what they recommend as ways to improve projects for volunteers as well as how to ensure fulfilling experiences for volunteers as we create a budding partnership with the Lower Trinity Master Naturalist Chapter.

Cultivating an "intense consciousness" - the value and challenges of engaging with college students – ROOM F

»Sam Whitehead (Concordia University Texas)

The Balcones Canyonlands chapter is the state's first and only "collegiate" chapter. While many other chapters engage college students, our chapter is designed to build-up our college students into future leaders in conservation. Toward that end, the chapter reserves officer positions for college students, and Concordia University offers academic incentives to encourage participation. As a professor of conservation, my job is to lead my students down a path toward a meaningful career, and a growing part of that is TMN certification. However, I have encountered a significant hurdle in pursuit of this goal: too few of these students seem to find meaning in the work they do, whether in class, in internships, or in their TMN work. Aldo Leopold observed this phenomenon among the general public and declared that most people lack an "intense consciousness of land"; that they are separated from the land by myriad distractions. I find this to be poignantly true in modern society, and particularly among the current generation we call "millennials." In my presentation, I will discuss these challenges in

greater detail, explain the value of involving college students in TMN, describe my efforts to effectively engage students, and ask the audience for ideas on how to improve these efforts.

eBird Basics: how to post your observations and exploring data on eBird – ROOM H

» Cullen Hanks (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

This workshop will provide a practical introduction and live demonstration of the eBird smartphone app and online data portal. There will be plenty of time for questions, and we will focus on the topics of greatest interest to the audience.

Chapter Project Presentation: Ecology of Dark Skies – ROOM G

» Bridget Langdale (Hill Country Chapter)

To become aware and understand light pollution and its impact on wildlife, plants, human health and safety. Learn how dark skies affects our society in general, amateur astronomers research, and your ongoing knowledge and enjoyment of a sky filled with stars, planets, satellites, and the moon. Be a part of the solution to a darker night's sky.

The Ancient Llano Mountains of Reveille Peak Ranch – ROOM H

» Frank Caramanica (Geologist)

The unique ancient geology exposed at the Reveille Peak Ranch In western Burnet County, Texas shows evidence that at least 1.2 billion years ago, the rocks at the ranch represents the roots of an ancient mountain range. This shows that the collisional plate tectonic process occurred, similar to the current processes occurring around the periphery of the Pacific Ocean basin – The Pacific Fire Ring. In the ancient past, the ancestral North American plate collided with another ancient plate – Rodinia. The rocks at Reveille Peak show that their predecessors were pushed many miles deep and subjected to extreme pressures and temperatures – in some cases completely remelting the rocks. There are however, some remnant rocks that show that many were deposited in deep lake or oceanic water, indicating that they were once sands and muds.

11:00 - 12:00

Sunday Morning 1 Hour Sessions – Sessions C

Updates to the Chapter Management and Operations Protocols (CMOP) – ROOM F

» Michelle Haggerty (Texas Master Naturalist State Office)

With an ever expanding corps of volunteers, these updates to our guiding documents will allow our chapters to run more effectively and efficiently. We will review the changes made and discuss other updates to come.

Don't Run Out of Gas! How to Fuel Your Content Sustainably - ROOM E

» Merry Bateman (The University of Texas at Austin)

The key to standout content on your website or across your social media platforms is the same thing that has connected humans since the dawn of history.: compelling storytelling. This presentation will show how master naturalist chapters can rev-up their storytelling engines to create relevant content and build stronger relationships with their target audiences.

How the Earth Works/Plastic Pollution Prevention – ROOM G

» Stennie Meadours (Plastic Pollution Prevention Partnership)

The presentation begins with a historical, and biological overview on how the earth works to produce the abundant life we as TXMN celebrate and work to conserve. This topic is followed by a summary of the history of human use of earth's resource. The presentation is concluded with plastics role on earth and how GBAC-TXMN has addressed this issue.

Amphibians and Reptiles of Texas – ROOM H

» Rachel Richter (Texas Parks and Wildlife Department)

Participants will learn about the basic biology of amphibians and reptiles. This presentation will also focus on the Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) in Texas and discuss critical habitats and causes of decline.

Designing Rainwater Harvesting into Landscaping Systems – ROOM I

» Chris Maxwell-Gaines (Innovative Water Solutions LLC)

Rainwater harvesting can accomplish many goals within a landscaping system. While the practice is viewed mostly as a strategy to provide supplemental water for irrigation, it can accomplish many other goals, both for the landscape plants as well as for the regional water system. Rainwater can be harvested in active and passive methods, both of which are beneficial to landscaping systems. Active harvesting is defined as the typical harvesting of rain from a roof surface into a cistern to be stored for later use. Passive harvesting includes methods to

capture rainwater in the landscape form prior to it running off the site. Passive harvesting includes techniques such as rain gardens, infiltration trenches, biofiltration ponds, permeable pavers, and green roofs, just to name a few. While the idea of each type of rainwater harvesting is simple to understand, the difficulty arises when one is attempting to seamlessly integrate these practices into the landscaping system. Each type of system has its own requirements which determine whether or not it can be used effectively. This presentation will detail all of the pros and cons of the different rainwater harvesting systems. It will showcase all of these practices and provide information about to design and install these various systems into the landscaping system. From the rainwater cistern to the rain garden, you will learn how to integrate these practices into your landscaping systems.

Smoke Signals: Reaching Our Youth, Creating a Social Media Presence & Social Media for Large Events – ROOM J

»Kristi Kerr Leonard (North Texas Chapter)

This session will cover the gamut from creating and building a social media presence to actually using it for a large event. Why? The future of our planet is our youth. The future of communications is social media. Youth use Social Media, so let's start reaching them! We will also cover a Social Media Overview to consider for your chapter, such as defining Chapter Objectives for Social Media (recruitment, excitement, increase participation, etc.), structure (after define platforms, designate a volunteer per platform), support (build a team that will engage, share, brainstorm, send content ideas), longevity and Social Media Calendar (how to keep it going), and Hootsuite - a great tool for scheduling and sharing duties. Case Study: Native Plants & Prairies Day 2016 for North Texas Master Naturalists @ White Rock Lake.

12:00 - 1:00

**Conference Closes (Lunch on your own)
Hotel Room Check Out Before 1:00pm**

To Guest Suites Tower

