



President's Column

Greetings, Naturalists! Our chapter has been very busy these last two months! In early June, Lizzie Pincoffs, Volunteer Coordinator for McKinney Roughs, provided volunteer training. The weather prevented a few from attending, but for the most part it was well attended. Lizzie was quite enthusiastic about our future relationship with McKinney Roughs. Give her a call when you're ready to volunteer.

Applications for our fall training session went out the first week of June. Since the summer months are apparently busy for most, we've extended the deadline. Anyone interested in the program may enroll. The first class is August 25th. If you intend to enroll but haven't returned your application, please do so as soon as possible. Having a class size determined prior to August 25th would be terrific.

Please don't miss our Orientation at McKinney Roughs on July 28th beginning at 6:00 pm and ending at approximately 8:30 p.m. EVERYONE IS INVITED! (McKinney Roughs is located on Highway 71 three miles west of the Hwy 21 and Hwy 71 intersection.) This is an opportunity for prospective members to see what we're all about as well as meet the current members of our chapter. Refreshments will be served and we'll even have a few door prizes!

See you soon!

—Janice

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2003 Lost Pines Chapter Training Scheduled

The Lost Pines Chapter training course will begin with an informal orientation on July 28, with formal classes beginning August 25. This series of classes and field trips is an opportunity to learn more about nature, to meet others with similar interests, and to give something back to the community. New volunteers will receive a minimum of 40 hours of classroom and field course work. We are excited at the focus of this year's course on our local ecosystems. Concerning the curriculum, State Master Naturalist Coordinator Michelle Haggerty commented "The new curriculum

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looks great!—A huge improvement from the earlier curriculum I have reviewed for the chapter—I was thoroughly impressed!!”

Upon completion of this initial training, 40 hours of volunteer activities in environmental education, habitat enhancement or demonstration projects, and 8 hours of advanced training in areas of individual interest, new members will be certified as Texas Master Naturalists. If you, or someone you know, is interested in nature and community service, this is a great chance to follow your passion. Contact Janice Rampy (512-303-7994; jlorampy@yahoo.com) or Carol Brown (chbrown@direcway.com) to apply.

"It's not too late at all. You just do not yet know what you are capable of."
—Mahatma Gandhi

The Texas Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Texas Cooperative Extension Agency and by Texas Parks and Wildlife.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR-

Regular meetings of the Lost Pines Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, are the 4th Monday of the month.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, July 28, 2003

6:00 PM, at McKinney Roughs

Informal orientation for all prospective students. Learn about the Master Naturalist program and socialize with current members.

AUGUST

Monday, August 25, 2003

6:30 PM, at Bastrop State Park Refectory

Class 1: What is a Naturalist? Naturalist disciplines, record keeping, significance of early naturalists in Texas.

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Sept 5, 2003. Note the early deadline! Please send information to Andy Butler (butler@mdanderson.org). We welcome relevant contributions, photos, announcements or other material relating to the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program, particularly those pertaining our local area.

CHAPTER WEBSITE:

www.lostpinesmasternaturalist.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Right Here at Home Opportunities

- **Fire-Wise Landscaping Development**—Ongoing; Joan Russell is working with several agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, an urban forester from TPWD, and local fire departments to develop landscaping techniques and landscaping plant materials which will make our homes “fire-wise.” She is looking for volunteers to help with this project which includes developing a list of fire-wise native plants. Call Joan at 321-2718.
- **Bastrop/Buescher State Park Volunteer Activities**—Ongoing; Sue Fischer will serve as our liaison with these parks to provide them with assistance in a variety of activities from trail maintenance to leading group tours. This opportunity is in the development stage. (Please note the August 16 training session for Parks volunteers in this newsletter). For further information, please call Sue at 321-1308; email sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu.
- **McKinney Roughs**—Opportunities for docents, tour guides, exhibit guides, gardeners and education program assistants. For information about volunteering at McKinney Roughs, call Lizzie Pincoffs, 1-800-776-5272, extension 2926; email: lpincoff@lcra.org.
- **Lockhart Demonstration Garden**—Ongoing; contact Lytle Arche for the specific time, and details of future work dates, 512-398-3122; e-mail l-arche@tamu.edu.

Other Opportunities

- **Texas Wild Rice Monitoring**—July 21-25, 9AM-4PM daily, at various locations on the San Marcos River, in San Marcos. Measure the distance and angle to each stand, and measure the length and width of the stand also. Volunteers are needed for both terrestrial and aquatic positions. It's a week-long event, but you can volunteer for half a day to the entire week! It's fun and exhausting, but it's a beautiful river and you get to work with the most endangered plant in Texas! Contact Jackie Poole, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Phone: 512-912-7011 or email: Jackie.Poole@tpwd.state.tx.us.
- **Texas Parks & Wildlife Expo**—October 4-5, 2003, at TPWD headquarters in Austin. What is the Texas Wildlife Expo? It's an outdoor experience where visitors fish, shoot, kayak, rock climb, mountain bike, see and touch wildlife, learn about recreation in the Great Outdoors and see and buy the latest in outdoor gear and services. Most importantly, visitors can learn how they can help to conserve this precious resource. Volunteers will be needed for the Master Naturalist booth, and for any other activity you might be interested in! Contact with Michelle Haggerty at: mhaggerty@ag.tamu.edu.

- **Wild Basin Preserve Trail Maintenance**—Second Saturday of most months (August 9), from 9:00 AM to noon. Volunteers are welcome to join Wild Basin Second Saturday crews, to help repair trails, control erosion, and make trails safer. Restoration projects and removal of non-native plants also help maintain the preserve. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and dress for the weather. Tools and work gloves are available. For reservations, call (512) 327-7622, email hike@wildbasin.org.
- **Texas Horned Lizard Watch**—provides instructions for surveying the Texas State Reptile on your property or on public areas. Data from volunteers in the first year have helped biologists suggest possible relationships between fire ant distributions and the distribution of Texas horned lizards. Contact the Wildlife Diversity program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Texas Mussel Watch**—volunteers are helping document the presence or absence of native freshwater mussel species. To volunteer for Texas Mussel Watch, call the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Texas Monarch Watch**—monitor the spring and fall migration of this familiar butterfly on your own property or public lands. Volunteers can call the Monarch Watch hotline at 1-800-468-9710 (in Austin, 326-2231) to report sightings of monarchs or hear a recorded message about the status of the migration in Texas. For more information about Texas Monarch Watch or to receive monitoring kit, call the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Hummingbird Roundup**—provides instructions for monitoring hummingbirds, along with suggestions and supplies for improving hummingbird habitat on your property in Texas. For information, call the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 4644.
- **Texas Amphibian Watch**—a partner with the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program. Use field guides, web sites and audio tapes to learn to identify the various species of frogs and toads native to their area by sight and by listening to their calls. For more information about Texas Amphibian Watch or about related workshops, contact the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Remember**—Get approval *before* you begin a project for volunteer credit. Report your monthly volunteer service to Sue Fischer (144 Colovista Dr., Bastrop, TX 78602; or e-mail sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu). Documenting your service hours helps you to become certified, and helps the Master Naturalist Program to justify support received from our sponsors. Your volunteer work isn't really completed until it is reported...take a minute now to send in your hours.

Advanced Training

Note: Please obtain prior approval for advanced training, and don't forget to report your hours!

- **Lost Pines Park Volunteer and Tour Leadership training**—August 16, 2003. This all day workshop will be led by, TPWD Regional Interpretive Specialist Chris Holmes and Lost Pines Interpretive Ranger Todd McLanahan. This workshop is prerequisite for volunteer activities in Bastrop and Buescher State Parks. Exact time and place to be announced. For further information, contact Sue Fischer, 512-321-1308; email sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu.
- **Ecology of the Hill Country**—July 26, 2003, at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Learn about the relationship of geology, weather, plant communities, human habitation, and wildlife with the Wildflower Center's Restoration Ecologist, Mark Simmons. The class meets from 1:30-5 pm and costs \$30 (\$27 for Wildflower Center members). Register at the website, www.wildflower.org.
- **Working with Nature Around the House**—Sept. 8, 2003 at McKinney Roughs. 9 am-4 pm. Sponsored by LCRA, Aqua Water, and Lost Pines Groundwater District. Topics will include Rainwater Harvesting; choosing plants appropriate for our area (presented by our own **Joan Russell**); composting and soil building; and integrated pest management (presented by **Maron Finley**). Cost for the workshop is \$7, and an optional \$8 charge for a box lunch. Participants must pre-register by Sept. 3rd for the box lunches. For details, contact Maron (m-finley2@tamu.edu)
- **Hill Country Land Stewardship Workshop**—September 20, 2003, at Bamberger Ranch near Johnson City. Stewardship for the large or small landowner or anyone considering buying land, who wants to know how to improve land for all plant and animal species. Topics will include cedar management, water, grass and tree management, and managing land for wildlife. The 8 hour workshop includes some hiking. Registration is \$100, and Master Naturalists receive a \$25 discount. For registration, call 830.868.7303 or visit the website <http://www.bambergerranch.org/regform.htm>.
- **Grasses Workshop**—October 3 (Fri) or 4 (Sat), 2003 at Bamberger Ranch. An outdoor workshop at Selah learning about grasses. Examine different range sites and ecological niches, and discuss the role that grasses play in them. Learn how to read grasses as indicators of hidden springs, seeps, and deep soils. Includes hands on collecting and identification of common grasses. The 8 hour workshop includes some hiking. Registration is \$100, and Master Naturalists receive a \$25 discount. For registration, call 830.868.7303 or visit the website <http://www.bambergerranch.org/regform.htm>

State News and Notes

From Michelle Haggerty

The Texas Master Naturalist listserv averages about 2 messages per week. It's the fastest and easiest way to get information about the statewide Master Naturalist program and upcoming events. Signing on is easy. Just visit <http://taex001.tamu.edu/mailman/listinfo/tmn> and this website will walk you through the process of signing on.



Wildfire Ecology Workshop

Texas Forest Service wildfire and wild land experts will present a 6-week course on wildfire ecology beginning September 9, 2003. Deadline for registration is August 29. The series of five Tuesday evening classes and a Saturday (October 18) field trip is designed to prepare the general public to be firewise stewards of a more balanced ecosystem. Participants will learn to recognize potential fire hazards in the urban wild land interface, then how to alleviate the fire threat on their own property.

Participants will be certified as Citizen Wildfire Ecology Specialists, receive a workbook, a CWES logo denim shirt, and will be eligible for three CEUs from Austin Community College. Registration is \$50.00.

For more information, call the Bastrop TFS office at 512-321-2467.

*"If you obey all the rules,
you miss all the fun."
—Katharine Hepburn*
