



President's Column

Greetings:

Hope all enjoyed a safe and happy Thanksgiving! Due to this holiday season, our only class and meeting this month will be in Lockhart on December 15 at 6:30 p.m. It should be an enjoyable class with a very important meeting to follow. We'll be electing officers for 2004. Thanks to all of you who have so graciously agreed to have your names placed on the ballot. While we won't be holding a training session in 2004, our chapter will be focusing on matters such as graduation, make-up classes as well as other projects our future president has in mind.

I also wish to remind everyone that Sue Fischer is compiling data for our annual report that must be submitted in January. Therefore, let's show our appreciation for Sue's hard work and get our information to her in a timely manner (by December 15th).

Finally, I want to express my appreciation to the following for your contributions during my presidency. Bill, thanks so much for being an excellent vice president! You've put a lot of time in our policies and by-laws and graciously helped me clear up any policy concern I had this past year. Susan, you've been a very dedicated secretary—thank you for your part in keeping our chapter organized! Sue thanks for handling our funds! Realizing that job wouldn't be very time consuming, you also volunteered to keep record of our volunteer hours and advanced training (our annual report). That does take time and I thank you for doing an excellent job. Andy, our website and newsletter are awesome! Yours is a significant contribution that I truly appreciate. Rick and Carol, as past presidents you've offered invaluable advice and assistance. Marcy, Phyllis, Melba, Carol Reidy, Gerri, Linda, Muriel and

Joan—thank you for your contributions to our 2003 training session. A HEARTFELT THANKS TO ALL FOR YOUR DEDICATION TO OUR CHAPTER AND CAUSE!

See you December 15th

—Janice

Chapter Elections—December 15. Please plan to attend!

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Turn in your hours!

Please submit your volunteer and advanced training hours to Sue Fischer by December 20. Send by e-mail to sfischer@mdanderson.org, or mail to Sue Fischer, 144 Colovista Dr., Bastrop, Tx 78602. Need a form? Download from our website at www.lostpinesmasternaturalist.org.

Officers
2003

- President Janice Rampy
eve. 512-303-7994
day 512-303-6060
E-mail: jlrampy@yahoo.com
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home 830-875-2941
- Secretary Susan Green
- Treasurer Sue Fischer

Committee Chairs

- Newsletter—Andy Butler; 512-237-9461,
butler@mdanderson.org
- Program & Education—Sue Fischer & Joan Russell
- Volunteer Coordination—Janice Rampy
- History—Susan Green
- Fundraising & Project Development—Gerri Martinez
- Policies & Guidelines—Bill Watson

*“Come to the woods, for here is rest.
There is no repose like that of the
green deep woods.”
—John Muir*

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



MARK YOUR CALENDAR -

December

Monday, December 15, 2003

6:30 PM, Lockhart, Caldwell Co. Extension Office

Class: “Urban-Wildland Interface” and “Backyard Wildscape Habitat,” presented by Jan Fulkerson (Texas Forest Service) and Steve Bridges (Kimas Nursery). **This will be our annual election of officers and directors, so it is important for ALL members to attend!**

January

Monday, January 12, 2004

6:30 PM, Lockhart, Caldwell Co. Extension Office

Class: Len Polasek, TPWD, and Paul Robertson, Science Leader, Wildlife Diversity, TPWD will present information on attracting game, and non-game species.

Saturday, January 17, 2004

9:00 AM-Noon, Freeman Ranch (near San Marcos).

Class field trip: J.P. Bock, Freeman Ranch Manager, will give on-the-ground examples of land management for wildlife.

Monday, January 26, 2004

6:30 PM, Lockhart, Caldwell Co. Extension Office

Class: Melba Sexton and Susan Green will discuss methods for Interpretation and Communication of natural history.

JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

January 9, 2004. 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. Please send information to Andy Butler (butler@mdanderson.org); 512-321-1308.

CHAPTER WEBSITE:

www.lostpinesmasternaturalist.org

Please check our website for updated event information and for links to many resources about our region’s natural history.

Volunteer Opportunities

Right Here at Home Opportunities

- **Bastrop/Buescher State Park Volunteer Activities**—Ongoing: Saturday morning (10:00 AM) “Discover the Lost Pines” interpretive hikes at Bastrop State Park. This is a great excuse to go to the park! Lead small groups on a short hike (about 1 to 1 1/2 hr), giving them an overview of the importance of the park, both historically and ecologically. (Note: hikes will resume in early Spring.) To volunteer, contact Sue Fischer at 321-1308; email sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu.
- **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.
- **McKinney Roughs**—Opportunities for docents, tour guides, exhibit guides, gardeners and education program assistants. For information about specific volunteer projects at McKinney Roughs, call Lizzie Pincoffs, 1-800-776-5272, extension 2926; email: lpincoff@lcra.org.

Other Opportunities

- **Bastrop/Buescher State Park Christmas Bird Count Saturday**—December 28, 2003, 6:30 AM. Sponsored by Bastrop Audubon. Meet at the Texas Grill, Hwy 71 and Perkins St. in Bastrop. Contact David Mitchell (dmitch@starband.net) for information.
- **Wild Basin Preserve Trail Maintenance**—Second Saturday of most months (Dec 13 & Jan 10), 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. For other opportunities, call, or visit the website www.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**—The monarchs are coming! Help monitor the fall (and spring) 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. Report your monthly volunteer service to Sue Fischer (144 Colovista Dr., Bastrop, TX 78602; or e-mail sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu). Documenting your hours helps you to become certified, and helps the Master Naturalist Program to justify support from our sponsors. Take a minute **now** to send in your hours.

In The News

An interview with our own Bill Watson recently appeared in “Country World—The Rural Newspaper of Texas.” Bill discussed his reasons for involvement in the Master Naturalist programs, particularly his interest in land stewardship and his desire to pass his love of the land on to his grand-children. Way to go, Bill! Read the article at <http://www.countryworldnews.com/Editorial/SCTX/2003/sc0828master.htm>.

Master Naturalists in Kerrville were recently featured in the “Kerrville Daily Times,” <http://dailytimes.com/story.lasso?wcd=8186>. The article described a restoration project the group undertook on a burned area in Kerr County in cooperation with the Texas Forest Service. The project initially focused on clearing a portion of the area and protecting it from deer with a tree barrier, to encourage regrowth of native hardwoods and grasses.

Advanced Training

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

- **Tree Talk and Winter Walk: Trees for the Homeowner**—Saturday, January 24, 9 AM-5 PM, at the Wildflower Center. Everything you need to know about selecting, growing and pruning trees, with an emphasis on natives. Free. See <http://www.wildflower.org/> for more information.
- **Tree Care and Pruning Workshop**—Sunday, February 8, 1-4:30 PM at the Wildflower Center. Join arborist Don Gardner to learn how to keep your trees healthy and how (and when) to prune your trees. Fee \$30 (members), \$35 (nonmembers). See <http://www.wildflower.org/> for more information.
- **Prescribed Burn School**—Monday-Friday, February 9-13, 8 AM-5 PM, at the Wildflower Center. This five day course is approved by the Texas Prescribed Burn Board, and earns 16 CEU from the Society of Range Management. Keith Blair will cover topics including weather, fuel moisture, ecology, burn plans and regulations, and post-burn management. Fee: \$500 before January 10; \$600 afterwards. See <http://www.wildflower.org/> for more information.
- **Texas Trees and Their Uses**—Saturday February 14, 9 AM-Noon, at the Wildflower Center. Discover how native Americans and settlers used trees for food, fiber and more from Patty Leslie Pasztor, co-author of *Texas Trees—a Friendly Guide*. She will highlight both human uses of native trees, and their importance to wildlife. Workshop includes both a classroom presentation, hands-on look at baskets, roots, dyes, etc., and a walk through the center grounds to study the trees up-close. Fee \$25 (members); \$30 (non-members). See <http://www.wildflower.org/> for more information.
- **Hill Country Land Stewardship Workshop**—Saturday, March 27, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM, at Bamberger Ranch, near Johnson City. A day on the Ranch with emphasis on "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. Learn about cedar management, water, grasses, trees, managing for wildlife and endangered species. Includes a short hike; dress for the weather. Fee, \$100 (includes lunch); Master Naturalists are given a discount. For information, see www.bambergerranch.org/.



Discover the Lost Pines

Andy Butler

Our first series of interpretive hikes in Bastrop State Park has been a great success. With Todd McClanahan helping to round up hikers from the camp grounds, we've had as many as 47 people on a hike (!), although this is unusual. Hikes were conducted every Saturday from November 8 through December 6. A big thanks to everyone who has helped lead a hike! We plan to take the winter off, and will start the hikes again in March. Before then, we will try to have an informal 'refresher' for those interested in leading hikes. This will provide you with a brief list of 'talking points' to use during a hike. You only need to know a few key concepts (like how to distinguish poison ivy from Virginia creeper) to provide an enjoyable experience to park visitors. We also plan to produce a brief handout to give visitors something to remember from the Park-and the Master Naturalists-when they go home.

State News and Notes

Michelle Haggerty, State Master Naturalist Coordinator

MASTER NATURALIST MERCHANDISE

All of our Texas Master Naturalist merchandise (shirts, caps, license plate frames, patches, etc.) can now be purchased on line at: <http://tcebookstore.org> under the ENVIRONMENT links. This move of merchandise sales from the State Coordinator's office to the Extension Resource Center location will offer faster service and the ability to purchase on-line using a credit card. It also allows you to see if your preferred size is in stock at the time of purchase. All items are now listed at this site and pictures of the items will also be up soon. For those of you that have asked-wholesale prices are still available for chapters wanting to order large quantities and save some costs. To receive wholesale prices, an order must have a minimum of 10 items in each category (shirts, vests, hats/caps and Sand County Almanacs only)

NEXT NEW CHAPTER COORDINATORS TRAINING SCHEDULED:

The next New Chapter Coordinators Training has been scheduled for March 19-20, 2004 at Bamberger Ranch near Johnson City. This training is for developing and newly developed chapters-it's also a good "refresher" course for older chapters or newly elected officers. If anyone knows of someone interested in attending this training please contact Michelle to add them to the list to receive further information as it becomes available.

2004 ANNUAL STATEWIDE MEETING SITE SELECTED:

The 2004 Statewide Annual Meeting will again be held at MO Ranch in Hunt, TX. October 22nd—24th, 2004.