



## President's Column

### Greetings:

I hope everyone has been taking advantage of the nice weather recently by working on some great “naturalist” projects like interpretive hikes through the parks, habitat restoration, or hands-on activities showing others what you’ve learned, and staying away from the abundant poison ivy and oak. Unfortunately I think I ran into a little poison ivy mixed with the dewberry vines while I was plucking some juicy berries this afternoon!

We’ve been very busy with the Junior Naturalist classes and will be reporting to you again at our next meeting: Mon. May 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 at the Buescher State Park recreation hall. If the program committee has not secured a speaker, we may be able to present the state naturalists’ Powerpoint presentation which is an overview of our program that we can show to civic groups, environmental groups, church groups, students, or wherever we feel that there might be an interest in our program. I just received it and so far have not been able to view the presentation as it comes up with an error on my computer. Hopefully there’s not a major flaw with the CD. If so, Michal Hubbard has a Powerpoint presentation on fire ecology which she has prepared and presented and we might be able to view that one instead.

Our main concern right now is that it’s already May, and several of our committees are badly in need of more bodies. We need to start planning the next Master Naturalist class—beginning early 2005—but there aren’t enough people on the Education Committee to do the necessary planning. You have all been very helpful with the junior classes and enthusiastic about outdoor volunteer opportunities, but committee work is very important, indeed necessary to keep the group moving forward, and this is part of volunteer work also: Committee planning and preparation time is all counted in your volunteer hours. SO on a rainy day, you might help prepare curriculum, schedule speakers on various topics, bake brownies for our meeting (Nourishment is VERY important!), start writing a grant, lay out a brochure for our Lost Pines chapter, or gather a collection of grasses, wildflowers, photos, etc. to show to our group or perhaps a school group. We really do need everyone to pitch in with committee assignments. Also new members waiting for classes or old members, who are no longer certified, are welcome to attend meetings and participate to the extent of their ability. No one should feel like they have to leave the organization because they can’t devote the time to certification or active participation at the present time.

Thanks again,

— Carol Reidy, President

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### McKinney Roughs Watershed Monitoring

Andy Butler

In October of 2001, Rachel Bauer recruited several Chapter members to help install a watershed monitoring plot at McKinney Roughs, for a research project being conducted by Dr. Baron Rector. “*Time and the River Flowing;*” after pestering Maron Finley about the eventual outcome of this project, he forwarded me a lengthy Progress Report written by Nikki Dittson in Dr. Rector’s office this spring. The demonstration site consists of paired watershed plots. During much of the last two years, the site has been healing from the initial disturbance, and undergoing calibration—a process slowed by the lack of good rain during much of that time. At the site, a rain gauge monitors rain fall, and runoff from each plot is measured. Maron uses a weed eater to trim the grass in the plot to 6” periodically; once the site is fully calibrated, one plot will continue to be trimmed at this height to simulate “proper grazing,” while the second will be cut closer to simulate over grazing; runoff from the two plots will be compared for up to four years. In the meantime,

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**Officers**  
2004

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*2004 Committee Chairs*

- Newsletter—Andy Butler: 512-321-1308,  
[butler@mdanderson.org](mailto:butler@mdanderson.org); Elaine Cearley: 512-360-4161
- Programs & Hospitality—Susan Green & Crystal Flowers
- Volunteer Coordination—Sue Fischer
- Membership—Paul Tuttrup

Remember, 2004 dues are \$10. If you haven't paid yet, please send your check to Marie Medrano, treasurer.

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*"To him that is determined  
it remains only to act"*  
—Italian Proverb

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



**MARK YOUR CALENDAR-**

**May**

**Monday, May 17, 2004**

**6:30 PM, Buescher SP Recreation Hall**

**June**

**Sunday, June 30, 2004**

**Chapter Potluck (Tentative) Details to follow.**

**JUNE NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

**June 4, 2004.** We welcome relevant contributions, photos, announcements or other material relating to the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program, particularly those pertaining to our local area. Please send information to Andy Butler ([butler@mdanderson.org](mailto:butler@mdanderson.org)); 512-321-1308 or Elaine Cearley, 512-360-4161

**CHAPTER WEBSITE:**

[www.lostpinesmasternaturalist.org](http://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. We are looking for volunteers for May and beyond. To help, contact Sue Fischer at 321-1308; email [sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu](mailto:sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu).
- **Bobwhite quail relocation study**—TPWD released approximately 98 bobwhite quail on a 2,200 acre ranch in Caldwell County. The hens were fitted with radio transmitters. There are still approximately 32 hens left on the property that we track 3 times per week. The volunteer opportunity is for one volunteer to travel along each time with a biologist to listen for the quail. Surveys could be any day between Monday and Friday, but usually are conducted on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The days are long with us getting to the ranch at 8AM and sometime not leaving until 8PM. Volunteers will have to bring their own lunch and be willing to stay in the pasture for up to 12 hours if the birds are difficult to locate. The volunteer opportunity is for the month of May for sure. We may have college students available in June to conduct the surveys. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Len Polasek at 512-332-7280.
- **State youth wildlife habitat evaluation contest**—Sponsored by the Texas Cooperative Extension - Wildlife and Fisheries Program; will be held just outside Caldwell on May 22nd. This contest is for youth who have participated in a wildlife habitat evaluation program within their county to prepare for this event. The contest committee needs volunteers who are not members of the contest to help grade answer sheets, listen to verbal reasons, etc. If you are interested and will be available that Saturday or just want more details about the contest, please contact Larry Hysmith (979-845-4865 or [lhysmith@tamu.edu](mailto:lhysmith@tamu.edu)) or Byron Wright, Contest Coordinator (830-278-9151 ext. 115 or [bdwright@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:bdwright@ag.tamu.edu)). Contest website is <http://whep.tamu.edu>.
- **McKinney Roughs**—Opportunities for docents, tour guides, exhibit guides, gardeners and education program assistants. Volunteers are needed to help with the gardens; there are canoe trips scheduled for March 27 and April 10, rafting on May 15, and wildflower programs on April 3. Other opportunities include exhibit guides and educational programs. For specific volunteer projects at McKinney Roughs, call Lizzie Pincoffs, 1-800-776-5272, extension 2926; email: [lpincoff@lcr.org](mailto:lpincoff@lcr.org).

- **Fire-Wise Landscaping Development**—Ongoing; Joan Russell is working with several agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, 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.

## Other Opportunities

- **Wild Basin Preserve Trail Maintenance**—Second Saturday of most months (April 10 and May 8), 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. Opportunities for a variety of educational activities, as well. For information, call (512) 327-7622, email [hike@wildbasin.org](mailto:hike@wildbasin.org), or visit the website [www.wildbasin.org](http://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. **Please note the Mussel Watch workshop, June 18/19, listed under Advanced Training**
- **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. **See Advanced Training for two Amphibian Watch workshops: June 18/19.**
- **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](mailto:sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu) ). 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!

- **Propagating Native Plants with Pat McNeal**—May 10 & 12, 4:00 PM- 6:00 PM, at the Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave, Austin. Learn how to grow your favorite plants from seeds, cuttings, or divisions. Fee, \$35 (member)/\$40 (non-member). Pre-register at <http://www.wildflower.org/> or call 512-292-4100.
- **Trees and Shrubs Workshop**—Identification and Management—Saturday, May 15, 8:30 AM-4:30 PM. Learn how to identify trees and shrubs using the leaf form and leaf attachment as key characteristics. It is easy to learn how to identify woody plants and to insure that you have information to take home, you'll collect leaves in a notebook for future reference. Diversity of trees and shrubs is important for the health of your land and wildlife. Selecting the best plants for soil and range site is important. Eight-hour workshop includes some hiking, coffee breaks and lunch. Dress for the weather. \$100. For information see [www.bambergeranch.org](http://www.bambergeranch.org).
- **Butterfly Gardening Nature's Way**—Saturday, May 22, 9 AM to Noon--Learn about our Central Texas butterflies at the Wildflower Center. Learn basic butterfly biology, how to attract them to your site, and how to design plantings using native habitats. Fee: \$35 (members, \$30) Register at <http://www.wildflower.org>.
- **Name that Wildflower**—Saturday, May 29, 2 to 4 PM Join Wildflower Center staff this spring to learn some basic botany and enjoy the grounds of the Wildflower Center. Participants will walk away from this class being able to identify and name at least 10 new Texas Wildflowers. (Class repeats the last Saturday of the month through spring, and will focus on different plants each time. You must sign up for each class individually.) Fee: \$18 (members, \$15) Register at <http://www.wildflower.org>.
- **Texas Amphibian Watch and Texas Mussel Watch Training Workshops**—June 18 & 19. These workshops, held at Austin's Center for Environmental Research 2210 South FM 973 (at Hornsby Bend), are sponsored by the Capital Area Texas Master Naturalists and provide advanced training for Texas Master Naturalists. SBEC credit available for teachers. Begins at 5 PM. June 18 through evening June 19; registration fee \$10 per workshop; pre-registration required; for registration or more information contact Roger Myers at [rw.myers@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rw.myers@sbcglobal.net) or Melissa Macdougall at (512) 445-4406.
- **Rainwater Harvesting Seminar**—Saturday, July 17, 9 AM-12:30 PM, at the Wildflower Center. Join the "mayor" of Tank Town, Richard Heinichen, and Austin Green Building Program's Dick Peterson, for an

intensive introduction into rainwater harvesting. Peterson will introduce participants to a wide range of rainwater harvesting systems. Then tour the Wildflower Center's 78,000 gallon Rainwater Harvesting System showcasing the award winning landscapes and architecture of the Wildflower Center. The final third of the workshop will be dedicated to the nuts and bolts of a whole-house rainwater harvesting system with Richard Heinichen. Fee: \$35 (members, \$30 ) Register at <http://www.wildflower.org>.

- **2004 Annual Statewide Meeting**—Oct 22-24. The 2004 Annual meeting will be held at the MO Ranch near Hunt, Tx. Lots of advanced training opportunities!

...Mckinney Roughs Watershed, from Page 1

data has been collected on the soils of the area, and the plant life has been surveyed several times to monitor succession under current management practices. These results will be compared with results obtained under simulated over-grazing once the site becomes fully operational. Hopefully, monitoring can involve some additional volunteer opportunities for Master Naturalists. If any one would like to read through the Progress Report, I can send you the PDF file (if you can't use PDF files, I can send you a printed copy), complete with before and after photos and the data on soils and vegetation.

\* after the title of Francois Leydet's book, edited by David Brower, on the drowning of Glen Canyon.

### Loblolly?

Elaine Cearley

We all know the scientific name *Pinus taeda*, its commercial uses, its growth range, the fact that it's a yellow pine and sometimes called oldfield pine. But, have you ever wondered about the word "loblolly"? It is a curious sounding word. The dictionary defines it with several meanings: a thick bubbling pot of gruel, from the 16<sup>th</sup> century, to its usage in the American West as any unappetizing meal. And there's the loblolly boy who was a surgeon's assistant on a ship, but with such a lowly status that he was actually the assistant's assistant.

And speaking of lowly, early colonists used the word to describe a low area, a slough, a swamp or a moist depression. It has also been described as having a crust on top reminiscent of those old pots of porridge, an area in which people would get stuck if they struggled, which sounds like quicksand. They also discovered that our pines flourished in those areas, thus the name loblolly pine for the area in which it grew.

So it appears that you could eat loblolly, get stuck in loblolly, live in a loblolly, chop down a loblolly or even BE a loblolly on board a ship. Now you know the rest of the story!