



President's Column

Greetings:

Part of my summer was spent LEARNING at the Texas Conservation Institute, Project Learning Tree, and Project Wild. At our next meeting on August 16, I'll be reporting on some of the high points, complete with pictures, and will have a lot of material to share that could be used for Junior Naturalist or other volunteer projects. Speaking of volunteering, there are tons of volunteer and advanced training opportunities coming up, I hope everyone can take advantage of these events. In addition, September 18 is National Public Lands day; I will bring information on setting up environmental education or Project Learning Tree events on that day. This would be a great activity for our group to participate in.

Remember that we will ALL need to pitch in and help plan our 2005 new member training class, which will begin in January. So please call me (512) 321-5073, or Nancy Hartke (512-581-9693) if you would like to help in the planning. See you soon!

— Carol Reidy, President

Resources

By Elaine Cearley

Sit down next to your computer for this one. At our July meeting suggestions were made for what you would like to see included in our newsletter. Among those suggestions were requests for resources relating to ecology, environment and endangered species. After doing a little searching I have found some information to report. (This article will be reprinted on our Chapter web site if you want to avoid typing all the URL's listed below).

Endangered Species:

Endangered Species Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife: <http://endangered.fws.gov/> There were no species listed for Caldwell County; bald eagle and Houston Toad were listed for Bastrop County. Within that site are listings for the Southwest Region Ecological Services, headquartered in Austin: <http://ifw2es.fws.gov/AustinTexas/>. On the left side of the page click on "species," there you will find a list of 75 animal and 33 plant endangered species for Texas

Endangered Species of the Edwards Aquifer System: <http://www.edwardsaquifer.net/species.html>. This site offers a concise list of Hill Country endangered species with nice photos and descriptions.

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New Assistant TMN Program Coordinator

by Michelle Haggerty

I am pleased to welcome Milton (Sonny) Arnold as the new Assistant Coordinator for the Texas Master Naturalist program!!!

Sonny comes to the Texas Master Naturalist program with several years of experience working with Texas Cooperative Extension as a County Extension Agent in several East Texas counties. In Sonny's most recent position, as the Dallas County Extension Director, he was instrumental in spawning the development of the North Texas Chapter of the Master Naturalist program and thus the Statewide Texas Master Naturalist program. Sonny brings with him years of experience developing, coordinating, and managing Master Volunteer Programs that I am sure will be a huge asset to the program.

I am excited to be working with such a qualified and high-caliber individual as Sonny and I look forward to the both of us working as a team to better nurture, manage and promote the Texas Master Naturalist program and you as volunteers!

Officers

2004

- President Carol Reidy
Tel. 512-321-5073
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- V. Pres Nancy Flanagan Hartke
Tel. 512-581-9693
- Secretary Marcy Youngman
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2004 Committee Chairs

- Newsletter—Andy Butler: 512-321-1308, butler@mdanderson.org; Elaine Cearley: 512- 237-3021
- Programs & Hospitality—Susan Green, Sue Fischer & Crystal Flowers
- Volunteer Coordination—Sue Fischer
- Membership—Paul Tuttrup
- Policies & Guidelines—Bill Watson

News From Our Sponsors

This month, the Bastrop Ag Extension office will be moving. The new office will be at the corner of Pine and Pecan, across from the old Court House. Phone numbers remain the same (512-332-7286), so call to check on the move before visiting the office.

Good news for Caldwell County: a new Extension Agent has been hired, and will be a familiar face to many of us: **Rachel Bauer**, former Bastrop CEA/Ag, will begin on August 16. Welcome back, Rachel!

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



MARK YOUR CALENDAR-

August

Monday, August 16, 2004

6:30 PM, Bastrop State Park Refectory

Program: Nick Morgan will give a presentation on "The Archeology of Central Texas." Nick is with the Travis County Archeological Society. **Business:** Committees meet and report; planning for 2005 Training;.

September

Monday, September 20, 2004

6:30 PM, Bastrop State Park Refectory

(topic TBA)

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Sept 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; 512-321-1308 or Elaine Cearley: ElaineA@starband.net; 512- 237-3021.

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.

State Program Contacts:

Website: <http://masternaturalist.tamu.edu>

State Coordinator: Michelle Haggerty,
mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu; 979-458-2034.



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. Volunteers are needed for **October** and November. To help, contact Sue Fischer at 512-321-1308; email sa83161@odin.mdacc.tmc.edu.
- **White-tailed deer monitoring**—Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will be conducting white-tailed deer herd composition surveys throughout **August**. Volunteers can drive rural county roads in the early morning or late evening hours to record bucks, does, and fawns. Volunteers will use their own vehicles and conduct the surveys as often as they like. Binoculars are required. Contact Len Polasek (lenptpwd@onr.com; 512-332-7280) for additional information.
- **Dove hunt monitoring**—During the first 2 weekends of **September**, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will be surveying hunter participation on public dove hunting lands in Bastrop and Caldwell Counties. Volunteers would travel to leases in their personal vehicle during the early morning and late evening to record the number of hunter vehicles at the lease and the number of shots heard in a 5 minute time period. Contact Len Polasek (lenptpwd@onr.com; 512-332-7280) for additional information.
- **Lockhart Demonstration Garden**—The Chapter Demonstration Garden now has a native wildflower plot, a prairie tallgrass plot, and small trees have been planted so that a shade garden can develop. Turf demonstration plots are installed, but since Lytle left, they are not being cared for. The garden is evolving to a demonstration of native plants for the home landscape. To help, contact Muriel Lem at 512-398-9427.
- **Bastrop State Park Butterfly Garden**—Friends of the Lost Pines State Parks is planning to build a butterfly garden in Bastrop SP. This project is just getting underway and there is opportunity for anyone to volunteer to help make this a reality. Call Joyce Barrett, 512-303-1321 for information.
- **McKinney Roughs**—LCRA's oldest volunteer program still has opportunities for people who have a special interest in the Colorado River, and special skills such as boating or animal care. Volunteers are also needed to act as docents, gardeners, educational assistants, front-desk staff and tour guides. For specific volunteer projects at McKinney Roughs, see <http://www.lcra.org/community/volunteer.html> or call Lizzie Pincoffs, 1-800-776-5272, extension 2926;

email: lpincoff@lcra.org.

- **TPWD Expo**—October 2-3. TPWD can use assistance at our upcoming Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo in Austin. The opportunity in the Design With Nature area includes: Interpreting Wildscapes; Interpreting caterpillars and Crysalids; Leading youth interactive games; Assisting with literature distribution and / or sales. Another group is bringing the butterfly tent, so our volunteers won't be stuck in the tent all day. Shifts are available from 9-noon, noon-3 and 2-5. Contact Mark Klym (mark.klym@tpwd.state.tx.us; 512-321-1256) as soon as possible. He needs to know your preferred shift, T-shirt size, and preferred area to volunteer in.

Other Opportunities

- **Wild Basin Preserve**—Second Saturday of most months (Aug 14; Sept 11), 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. In addition, anyone may volunteer to take **tour guide training** to work with students during the school year or with visitors for weekend guided tours. The **Wild Basin office and gift shop is staffed with volunteers** who have taken responsibility for various tasks such as newsletter preparation, membership accounting, T-shirt and publication sales, reception of visitors, and clerical duties. All volunteers are welcome. For information, call (512) 327-7622, email hike@wildbasin.org, 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.
- **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

See Volunteer, page 4...

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). 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!

- **Wild Basin is training new guides!**—Beginning Weds, August 18, 9:00 A.M.-Noon. Trail guides lead groups of school children on hikes through the preserve highlighting the natural features that make Austin and the Texas Hill Country special. Training includes geology, native plants, and animals and well as group management. No natural science or hiking experience is necessary. Fee: \$25 (refundable after first season of tours) **Commitment:** One weekday morning a week until December 9, 2004. For information, call (512) 327-7622, email hike@wildbasin.org, or visit the website www.wildbasin.org.
- **Hunter Education Course**—August 10-12; 31-September 2 - 2004 - Bastrop SP. The course is mandatory for all Texas hunters born on or after Sept. 2, 1971 and covers the topics of firearm safety, wildlife management, wilderness survival, first aid, basic hunting techniques, and wildlife identification. The course is recommended to any hunter regardless of age or experience. Certification is good for life and is accepted in all 50 states and Canadian Provinces. Must be 12 or older to be certified. Pre-registration is required. 6 -10 p.m. daily; fee \$10; reservations required, (512) 237-2241 or (512) 321-2101.
- **IBEP Bowhunter Education Course**—August 20-21, Buescher State Park. This is a comprehensive course for bowhunters covering the following topics: bowhunter responsibilities and safety, methods and equipment, game trailing, outdoor survival, tree stand safety, shooting and much more. Must be 12 or older to be certified. 6 p.m. Friday-5 p.m. Saturday; fee \$10 per person; reservations required, (512) 237-2241.
- **Creating Schoolyard Habitats**—Sept. 18-19, 8:30 am-4 pm both days, at the Wildflower Center. At this two day workshop, you'll gain a better understanding of what your school offers as wildlife habitat. Learn to create a schoolyard habitat including site inventory,

design, and native plant selection, understand the importance of creating a habitat team, explore how to integrate outdoor classroom activities with required curriculum content, and participate in fun, hands-on activities (K-8). Fee: \$70. Call Marya Fowler at 512-476-9805 or email fowler@nwf.org. Space is limited. Registration deadline is September 13th, 2004.

- **Hill Country Land Stewardship Workshop**—September 19 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. Transportation is on the Bluebonnet. This workshop will be conducted by experienced ranch personnel. Examine projects that demonstrate the principles which have been successfully used on this ranch. Topics include cedar management, water, grasses, tree planting, wildlife management, endangered plants and animals and wildlife exemptions. Eight hours (8:30-4:30), outdoors, dress for the weather. Cost, \$100/person, but substantially discounted for Master Naturalists. For registration forms, see the website, www.bambergerranch.org/workshops.htm (preferred) or call 830.868.2630.
- **Fifth Annual Renewable Energy Roundup**—Sept. 24-26 at Fredericksburg. Presentations include: Solar, Wind, Water Use & Reuse, Energy Conservation, Rainwater Harvesting, Green & Sustainable Building, Organic Growing, Alternative Transportation, and Straw Bale Construction. Gate entry fee \$8 for Friday or Sunday, \$10 for Saturday or \$16 for a 3-day pass (children under 12 free) includes: exhibits and on-going demonstrations, speakers and workshops, fun learning activities for kids, and musical performances. For more information see: <http://theroundup.org/>.
- **Grasses Workshop**—Range management and conservation. October 2 at Bamberger Ranch, near Johnson City. The importance of grasses in conservation, protecting and building soils, as well as improved water infiltration and aquifer recharge will be discussed. We will be examining different range sites, and ecological niches and discuss the role that grasses play in them. When you know grasses you can "read the landscape". We will have demonstrations, "hands-on" collecting and identifying common grasses. Eight hours (8:30-4:30), some walking outdoors, dress for the weather. Cost, \$100/person, but substantially discounted for Master Naturalists. Register at www.bambergerranch.org/workshops.htm (preferred) or call 830.868.2630.
- **2004 Annual Statewide Meeting**—Oct 22-24. The 2004 Annual meeting will be held at the MO Ranch near Hunt, TX. This always features lots of advanced training opportunities! Registration details will be at <http://masternaturalist.tamu.edu>.

Environment and Ecology

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality: <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us/>. In the blue box on the right click on "air", "water", or "waste". The "waste" link goes to a TNRCC page listing all kinds of waste and how to deal with it (recycling). The "air" link goes to a full page covering just about everything you may want to know about air quality, monitoring, citizen involvement and much more. The same is true for the "water" link.

What can we do in our own lives, in our own homes to save the environment? This list/theme is repeated in many sites. Here is one with a concise list all on one page of 50 ways we help save our environment:

<http://www.justgive.org/html/guide/50waysenvironment.html>

Next month, I will cover recycling options in our area.

*"How could we be here were it not
for this planet that provided our very shape?"
—Gary Snyder, The Practice of the Wild*

Sustainable Family Farming

Thanks to Tom Dureka for submitting this piece

Marjory and David Glowka are producing a second workshop for those of us interested in responsible agriculture.

Have you ever thought of moving to the country, supplementing your income on your small farm by raising crops or animals, naturally and organically? Would you like to grow more than enough food for your family, and have surplus to share with friends? Have you ever dreamed of being 'off grid'—free of utility bills and water/electric regulations? All of this, and more, is possible on less than an acre of land. If you are interested in re-establishing the small family farm, and local food sources, then please come to this free introductory talk given by Dick Pierce on **Friday August 13, 2004**. Dick Pierce is a Texas Master Gardener, a Texas Master Naturalist, and a dedicated and highly experienced permaculture teacher. Dick has been working with the Sustainable Food Coalition for many years. He is an enthusiastic and entertaining presenter, and regularly gives talks on gardening, sustainability, permaculture, the weather, and the natural history of Central Texas. 7 pm-9 pm, at the Red Rock Community Center (114 Red Rock Rd. Red Rock, Texas 78662). Light refreshments will be served after the talk.



A peaceful walk in Bastrop State Park is a great way to get closer to Nature!