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## President's Column

Elaine Cearley

Hope you are all having as much fun as I am this time of year. We had a great State Meeting with the best turnout ever for our chapter. The classes were interesting with such subjects as rainwater harvesting, mammal tracking, and seed collection, among others. Alvin Cearley won first place in the wildlife photo contest. We were well represented.

The cool weather has brought us the migrating winter birds and the opportunity for a chance to “botanize” the Pines and Prairie Land Trust property at Yegua Knobbs. I know there are many more opportunities out there this season.

Please be sure to attend our next chapter meeting on November 20 at Bastrop State Park Refectory where Pat Richardson will give her talk on soil biology, including the creatures found there. I have been told this a fantastic talk, one not to be missed, so bring your friends.

I am also happy to announce that the first person from this year's class to receive her certification as a Master Naturalist is Louise Ridlon. Please join me in congratulating her. Her certificate and dragonfly pin will be presented at the meeting.

We will also have our quarterly board meeting at the November meeting, will announce the slate of officers willing to serve for the coming year, and will plan our Christmas party for the December meeting.

See you there,

—Elaine

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## Editor's Notes

*Marsha Elrod*

It's that time of year again. Seems like I just start digging for the Halloween decorations, and then I'm panicking because it's 2 days before Christmas and I realize I haven't gotten a present for someone MAJOR! These months blow by so fast; then suddenly it's a new year, and we're starting all over again.

—Continued on Page 4



### MISSION STATEMENT:

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.

### STATE PROGRAM CONTACTS:

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

State Coordinator: Michelle Haggerty,  
[mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu](mailto:mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu); 979-458-2034.

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

### SPONSOR CONTACTS:

Caldwell Co. Extension Office: Rachel Bauer, CEA-AG/NR; [Caldwell-tx@tamu.edu](mailto:Caldwell-tx@tamu.edu); 512-398-3122

Bastrop Co. Extension Office: Maron Finley, CEA-AG/NR; [Bastrop-tx@tamu.edu](mailto:Bastrop-tx@tamu.edu); 512-581-7186

Bastrop/Caldwell Co. Wildlife Biologist: Meredith Longoria, 804 Pecan, Bastrop, [mltwpd@onr.com](mailto:mltwpd@onr.com); 512-332-7280.



## CHAPTER CALENDAR

Chapter meetings alternate between Bastrop State Park's Refectory and the Red Rock Community Center and are normally held at 6:30 PM on the third Monday of each month. Meetings are open to prospective members and to the general public.

### November-December

**Monday, November 20— Chapter Meeting & Advanced Training:** Bastrop SP Refectory, 6:30 PM. Pat Richardson will give a program on the nitty-gritty of soils and the communities of creatures which live in and help create the soil.

**Monday, December 18— Chapter Meeting & Advanced Training:** Red Rock Community Center, 6:30 PM. Meredith Longoria, TPWD Bastrop-Caldwell Co. Wildlife Biologist, will speak about deer and deer management: How to attract them and how to repel them.

### Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the next issue is **Jan 3, 2007**. 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 Marsha Elrod: [melrod1@earthlink.net](mailto:melrod1@earthlink.net) 512-321-7400, or Vernon Berger: [vberger@austi.rr.com](mailto:vberger@austi.rr.com) 512-454-0840.

### 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.

### LOST PINES CHAPTER YAHOO GROUP

Subscribe to our Yahoo Group to keep up with the latest Chapter happenings. Send an email to [LPMN-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:LPMN-subscribe@yahoogroups.com) or log on to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LPMN/>.

### REPORTING TRAINING & VOLUNTEER HOURS

Send your advanced training and volunteer hours reports to Marsha Elrod: [melrod1@earthlink.net](mailto:melrod1@earthlink.net) or mail to

187 Billingsley Hts  
Cedar Creek TX 78612

# Volunteer Opportunities

## ► **Bastrop State Park Activities**

**Interpretive Hikes**—Ongoing: Saturday mornings (10:00 AM) “Discover the Lost Pines” interpretive hikes at Bastrop State Park. Last hike will be December 16. To help, contact Sue Fischer at 512-321-1308; or email [smfischer@mdanderson.org](mailto:smfischer@mdanderson.org).

► **First Saturday Monitoring**—Dec 2, 8:00 Am to 9:30 AM. We are beginning a monthly series of plant and bird (and other wildlife, too) monitoring at Colorado River Refuge and Bastrop State Park. Bring your bird, tree, or wildflower guide, binoculars and walking shoes. Dress for the weather. We hope to alternate between the two sites; if enough people have the time and interest, there may be mid-week events as well. Contact Kathy McAleese ([kmcaleese@austin.rr.com](mailto:kmcaleese@austin.rr.com)) for more information.

► **Earth Science Outdoor Laboratory**—Lockhart State Park and Lockhart’s Clear Fork Creek Elementary School are collaborating in a series of monthly outdoor classroom instructional program designed to increase the knowledge base of fifth grade earth science students. The program will be conducted at Lockhart State Park. Volunteers will work with Liz Larue, LSP interpretive ranger. Anyone who has an interest in the earth sciences, the natural environment, and our youths’ education is qualified to instruct a lab class, and three volunteers are needed each month. For more information and to volunteer, contact Liz LaRue ([Liz.Larue@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:Liz.Larue@tpwd.state.tx.us)).

► **FireCAP Facilitators**—Facilitators will make presentations to home owners on how to protect their homes against wildfire, through creating defensible space and instituting other protective measures. Please contact Michal Hubbard 512-517-1416 or by email [Michal\\_photog@yahoo.com](mailto:Michal_photog@yahoo.com) for details. If you have not received FireCAP Facilitator’s training, contact Michal.

► **Lockhart Demonstration Garden**—The Chapter Demonstration Garden now has a native wildflower plot and a tallgrass prairie plot. Some small trees have been planted so that a shade garden can develop. The garden is evolving to a demonstration of native plants for the home landscape. To help, contact Muriel Lem at 512-398-9427.

## **Monitoring Activities**

► **Individual monitoring activities**—In addition to Chapter activities and events with our partners agencies, a variety of individual monitoring activities, such as those listed here, may qualify for Volunteer service, particularly when they involve reporting your results as part of a broader monitoring effort. Please get these

activities approved by Chapter officers, preferably before you begin.

- **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.

## **Lockhart State Park Local Heritage Series**

—Rick Johnson

This Fall, our Chapter is again assisting Lockhart State Park with a series of presentations. The schedule of talks is as follows:

- November 14, 2006 “Lockhart State Park and the CCC, Part I”, by Liz LaRue
- December 12, 2006, “Lockhart State Park and the CCC, Part II”, by Liz LaRue.

## **Field Notes**

This is your section to let us know what’s of interest to you. It could be a photo you took of something that intrigued or puzzled you, such as an insect, or a question about plant identification. I know I always have questions I would like an answer to or guidance on. Send them in, and we will see what answers come from our group. We all have knowledge we can share about nature and conservation.

Please send photos or graphics in jpg or eps format and your questions or comments with pertinent information to Vernon ([vberger@austin.rr.com](mailto:vberger@austin.rr.com)). You may also want to post it to the Yahoo group site.

Here is a photo of an interesting caterpillar at Hornsby Bend on October 28, 2006.



# Advanced Training

—Editor's Notes, Continued

- **Ecological Literacy Days** – Nov 25, Hornsby Bend, 9 am - 1 pm. Combining volunteer work with learning about local ecology, the Ecological Literacy Day at Hornsby Bend begins with several hours of outdoor work - ranging from trail maintenance to habitat restoration to work in the native plant nursery - and ends with at least an hour of learning about local ecology - birds, bugs, and more! Wear boots and work clothing, and be sure to bring your binoculars. For more information contact: Kevin Anderson at Kevin.Anderson@ci.austin.tx.us or 512-972-1960
- **Land Steward Training on Austin's Water Quality Protection Lands – Dec 2&3 and Jan 13&14, 2007**  
The Hill Country Foundation is conducting the two-day training workshops in order to assist Austin's Water Quality Protection Lands (WQPL) in their efforts to provide conservation education as well as volunteer activities for the citizens of Austin and the surrounding areas. When volunteers have completed the training, the WCD program will manage and direct the activities of trained volunteers. We are seeking individuals that are experienced and comfortable in a wildland setting, either through participation in Wildland volunteer or other activities. Each of these trainings is a two-day commitment over a single weekend, 7-8 hours on Saturday and 4-5 hours on Sunday afternoon. This training will be conducted on a WQPL tract where classroom and hands-on field training will be provided. Training activities will include plant identification, seed collecting, reseeding, cave clean outs, tree planting, and others. Volunteers will be trained to lead groups of volunteers in performing some of the tasks mentioned on a recurring basis and with minimal supervision. For more information on trainings and how to apply, please contact Mary Gay Maxwell at 472-5958, or by email at marygaymaxwell@sbcglobal.net.

**See our Web site for more events!** Note: For events not listed in the newsletter or web site, please obtain **prior** approval for advanced training credit (approval forms are available on the Chapter web site).

## December meeting – Sneak Peek

Here's another great reason not to miss the December meeting. In addition to an advanced training presentation, we will be having a pot luck dinner and Chinese auction! Bring something yummy to share with the group and a wrapped gift that has some connection with nature. It can be one of your white elephants, something you made, or something you found. It should definitely NOT be expensive. But do wrap it, and we will have some fun!

But what a new year to look forward to in our chapter! As often is the case, it signals some changes ahead. First, we have a brand new group of graduates who are working hard on their initial certifications. They have already contributed fresh ideas and energy to our meetings and volunteer events.

Second, we have a new slate of officers to present at our November chapter meeting. Being an officer can involve a lot of work, and we owe these folks a debt of gratitude for stepping forward to serve.

And, third, the reason you're hearing from me at all, is that Vernon Berger and I have agreed to take over the newsletter. I consider it a bit of a daunting task, as Andy has certainly set a high standard for us to live up to. While we have no intentions of fixing what "ain't broke," individual styles being what they are, you may see some changes creeping in over the next few months!

The newsletter will continue to be the primary communications mechanism for the chapter in keeping everyone updated on chapter meetings, advanced training, and volunteer opportunities. We will also be sharing news of our chapter activities and member accomplishments. Vernon and I welcome your input and suggestions for the newsletter, so please feel free to send us any items you feel appropriate for publication.

## Time Change

-Marsha Elrod

With the coming of the new year, there will be a slight change in time reporting to enable me to use the new database program provided by TPWD. This program requires that travel time be broken out when reporting volunteer hours. You still receive credit for the travel time, but TPWD prefers to track it separately, since not all chapters give credit for it.

Andy will post the new form to the web site, and I'll add it to the YAHOO group site as well. I'll also bring hard copies to the chapter meetings, so everyone should have access to it in one form or another.

I also need to correct some information I provided earlier regarding how to count "impact." We had previously been advised that everyone involved in a project should report all contacts made. This is not the case, as it does create duplicate counts.

Therefore, for any project or activity involving multiple participants, only one person should report the number of contacts made, acres impacted, and miles improved. Generally, someone takes the lead in coordinating an activity, and logically, this would be the person to report the impact data. You just need to agree among yourselves who will report it. Let me know if you have any questions.