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President's Column

-Andy Butler

I hope you are all getting out and enjoying this beautiful spring (rainy days not withstanding). This is a great time of the year to explore nature and to share your enthusiasm for the Texas environment with others.

At our March meeting, we discussed preliminary plans for this fall's introductory Master Naturalist class. Our target start date is Monday, August 13, and the class will continue through mid-December. As has been the case in recent years, we will average perhaps 3 Monday evening sessions per month, plus around five Saturday morning field trips. If you know anyone who has expressed an interest in the class, let them know. We should have application forms available via our website soon. Several members have already volunteered to help contact and schedule speakers. Putting on the class is a fairly intensive, but fun, experience, and the more we can spread the load, the better. Let me know if you'd like to help!

For those of you who were in the 2006 class, but have not already been certified, you have until the end of June to complete your initial 40 hours of volunteer activity and 8 hours of advanced training in order to receive your dragonfly pin. Take a look at the activities in the newsletter for some opportunities. Note that Louise Ridlon is arranging a new Bastrop State Park nature survey project. Also, keep in mind Yesterfest in Bastrop on April 28. We will need volunteers to help out at our chapter's booth. This is a great way to let people in the community know about our

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Advanced Training—the Sequel

-- Marsha Elrod

I hope last month's article on advanced training was helpful. There are just a few more items I would like to mention as a follow up.

First, we already have some additions to the list of "Generally Approved Sponsors." They are the Texas Archeological Society, Texas State University, Texas A&M, St. Edwards University, or any other state-accredited college or university. The entire list of approved types of training and sponsors is posted on the chapter web site.

Next, I have posted a MSWord version of the form to request approval for advanced training not covered by the guidelines on our Yahoo group site. Andy will also be posting it to the website, so you will have the option of e-mailing it for approval.

And, finally, just a few suggestions to keep yourself informed about training (and volunteer) opportunities. If you haven't already done so, sign up for the Texas Master Naturalist list server. Go to <http://taex001.tamu.edu/mailman/listinfo/tmn> and register to receive announcements from TPWD, TCE, and other Master Naturalist chapters about events and opportunities around the state. Also, check your county

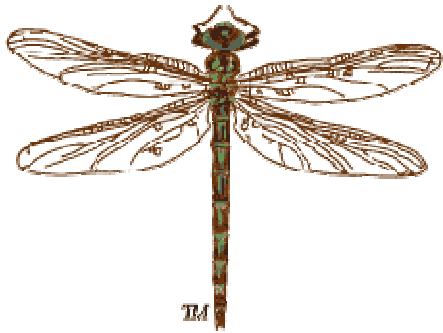
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MISSION STATEMENT

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; 979 458-2034.

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

SPONSOR CONTACTS

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

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

Bastrop/Caldwell Co. Wildlife Biologist: Meredith Longoria, 804 Pecan, Bastrop, 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 members, prospective members, and the general public.

April

Monday, April 16 – Chapter Meeting: Red Rock Community Center, 6:30 PM. Bill Brooks, past national president of the Horned Lizard Conservation Society, will speak on the Texas horned lizard. The regular meeting will be followed by a short board of directors meeting. Officers, other board members, and committee chairs are requested to attend.

May

Monday, May 21 – Chapter Meeting: Bastrop State Park Refectory, 6:30 PM. Speaker to be announced

Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the next issue is **May 11, 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 512 321-7400.

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.

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 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 or mail to

187 Billingsley Hts
Cedar Creek TX 78612

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Colorado River Refuge First Friday Monitoring** – Kathy McAleese leads monthly bird and plant monitoring surveys at the Colorado River Refuge. The time has been changed to the first Friday of each month while the Bastrop State Park interpretive hikes (see below) are being conducted. The next survey is scheduled for May 4 from 9:00-11:00, or so. Bring your binoculars and field guides, as we will be looking both for birds and new plant life. Dress for the weather; boots are advisable. The CRR is located in Tahitian Village past the Pine Forest Golf Course clubhouse 0.7 miles beyond where the pavement ends. Contact Kathy at 512 718-1313 or kmcaleese@austin.rr.com for more information.
- **Bastrop State Park Interpretive Hikes** – ongoing: Saturday mornings (10:00 AM) “Discover the Lost Pines” interpretive hikes at Bastrop State Park. Hikes start again February 17 and continue through May. To help, contact Sue Fischer at 512 321-1308 or email smfischer@mdanderson.org.
- **Bastrop State Park Nature Surveys** – Louise Ridlon has volunteered to lead a monthly survey at Bastrop State Park similar to the CRR survey led by Kathy McAleese. Contact her at 512 985-5064 or flridlon@hotmail.com if you would like to participate.
- **Yesterfest** – Saturday April 28, Bastrop. Volunteers are needed to help with our chapter booth. Contact Rachel Riffe at rachelriffe@academicplanet.com or 512-253-6408.
- **TPWD Junior Angler Program** – Sat Jun 16, Jul 21, Buescher State Park; Jun 2, Jul 14, Bastrop State Park, 8:15 – 12:30. Volunteers are needed to assist with free learn-to-fish clinics for boys and girls ages 6 to 13. You don’t need to know how to fish, so come out and help these enthusiastic angler-ettes learn the rules, as well as the techniques, of fishing. Parents must accompany their children. Park entry is free for volunteers, and training will be provided on site. At least 7 volunteers are needed for each clinic. For additional information and to volunteer, contact Bill Brooks at 512 581-0377 or Bgbrooks@mail.utexas.edu.
- **Earth Science Outdoor Laboratory** – Apr 13, May 11, 8:00 – 1:00, Lockhart State Park. LSP and Lockhart’s Clear Fork Creek Elementary School are collaborating in a series of monthly outdoor classroom programs designed to increase the knowledge base of fifth grade earth science students. Volunteers 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. Three volunteers are needed each month. For more information and to volunteer, contact Liz LaRue at Liz.Larue@tpwd.state.tx.us.
- **Training Class Committee** – We have decided on a late summer/early fall start date for our next training class. If you missed the March meeting and would like

to help with contacting speakers or arranging field trips, contact Andy Butler at 512 321-1308 or butler@mdanderson.org.

- **Friends of the Yegua Knobs** – Pines and Prairies Land Trust would like to start a “Friends” group for the Yegua Knobs preserve. Volunteers are needed to survey plant and animal life, identify and clear camping areas and trails, plus other fun and rewarding tasks. Go to <http://www.pinesandprairieslandtrust.org/> for more information on Yegua Knobs. To volunteer, contact Jeremiah Jarvis at 512 281-2762 or jfrog@flash.net.
- **Hornsby Bend Monthly Bird Survey** – 2nd Sat, 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM. All levels of birders are welcome. The survey is a great way to improve your skills since teams are formed matching experienced and novice birders. For more information see <http://www.hornsbybend.org/>.
- **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 at 512-517-1416 or by email at michal@thecorporatecamera.com for details. If you have not received FireCAP Facilitator’s training, contact Michal.
- **Lockhart State Park prairie restoration project** – Native Caldwell County prairie species will be used to create an attractive, educational display for park visitors that will also be useful to wildlife. Volunteers are needed to assist with planting. To help, contact Muriel Lem at 512-398-9427.

—President’s Column, Continued

program, and it is a really enjoyable way to get some hours in. Contact Rachel Riffe, 512-253-6408 or rachelriffe@academicplanet.com to help out.

Our April 16 meeting at Red Rock will feature a talk by our own Bill Brooks on one of his passions, horned lizards. Bill is always informative and entertaining, so don’t miss it. In addition to our monthly chapter meeting, we will hold a brief board of directors meeting afterwards. See you then!

Nature Quotes

I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don’t notice it.... People think pleasing God is all God care about. But any fool living in the world can see it always trying to please us back.

~Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, 1982

Advanced Training

- **Lunchtime Lecture Series on Urban Ecology** – Center for Environmental Research, Mon Apr 16, noon-1:00, Waller Center Rm 105, Austin. Kevin Anderson speaks on “The Lifeworld of Hornsby Bend: Nature and Placemaking in the Wasteland”. In the current edition of Audubon Magazine, Hornsby Bend is profiled in an article entitled “Birding in a Wasteland” as one of 10 great sewage pond birding spots in America. Kevin’s talk this month will examine why birders would venture into the wasteland by looking in depth at Hornsby Bend. Check out the Audubon magazine article online at <http://audubonmagazine.org/solutions/solutions0703-webexclusives.html> Waller Ctr is at 625 E 10th St, between Red River and IH 35. For additional information contact Kevin Anderson at Kevin.anderson@ci.austin.tx.us or 972-1960.
- **Texas Master Naturalist Program** – Writing course at Cibolo Nature Center, Boerne, Tuesdays, April 10, 17, 24, May 8, 15, 10:00 to noon. Presenters are Dani Vollmer and Ann Cain, who have been popular writing teachers for many years, Ann at Texas A&M and Dani at BHS. This course takes you to each of the Cibolo’s natural areas to soak up the sensory secrets you can use to tell a story in poetry or prose. Tips on focusing, note taking, and fashioning art from your experience will be provided quietly so as not to interrupt your conversation with the Cibolo. Each class is in a different natural area: April 10-Prairie, My Companion; April 17-Streaming; April 24-Marsh Madness; May 8-It’s a Woodland Out There; May 15-All Together Now. Class is structured as follows: 1. How to focus: mapping, listing, drawing, etc.; 2. Inspired note taking: senses and symbols; 3. What Nature said today: reflection and note sharing; 4. Nurturing the idea: silent writing and editing; 5. Well said: Polishing and sharing. Cost is \$15.00 per session, limited to 20 participants, and pre-registration is required. For more information and to register call 830-249-4616.
- **Exploring Nature through Tracks and Signs** – Apr 19, 7:00 PM, Travis Audubon Society (TAS). Speaker is Dwight Wilson. The meeting is free and will be held at LCRA, 3700 Lake Austin Boulevard, Austin 78703. For details see <http://www.travisaudubon.org/meetings.html>.
- **Animal Tracking and Signs** – Apr 21. This 8-hour class by Dwight Wilson will be held outdoors in the Austin area. The class fee is \$45 for TAS chapter members and \$55 for non-members. Class size is limited. See <http://www.travisaudubon.org/classes.html> for details. To register, e-mail Roxie Roachat at tastrack@austin.rr.com or call 345-6935.
- **Balcones Songbird Festival** – Fri Apr 27 - Mon Apr 30, Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge: a celebration of nature through a collection of interpretive events to experience birds, butterflies and wildflowers. All Nature Tour (NT) events qualify as advanced

training. All Family Events (FE) also qualify except for *Singing Like a Bird* and *Miss Poppy the Clown*. For information on the Festival, click on “Events” at <http://www.balconessongbirdfestival.org>.

- **Austin Butterfly Forum Workshop** – “How to Know and Grow Austin Butterflies,” Saturday May 5, 10:00 - 4:00 at the Zilker Botanical Center. Cost is \$35 and includes a light lunch. Contact Jeff Taylor at 255-0368 or kscjctaylor@prodigy.com for information.
- **Bamberger Ranch Wildflower Field Day** – May 5, 9:00 - 12:30, \$15. Spend a morning with botanist Laura Sanchez identifying wildflowers at Selah.
- **Bamberger Ranch Land Stewardship Workshop** – May 12, 8:30 - 4:30. \$100. A day on the Ranch with emphasis on “Stewardship” for the large or small landowner who wants to know how to improve land for all plant and animal species. TMNs receive a 25% discount.
- **Bamberger Ranch Water Workshop** – May 19, 8:30 - 4:30, \$100. Learn about the design and function of dams and lakes, how to identify sites on your land that can hold water when ponds are properly constructed, and inexpensive projects to help you develop hidden water resources. TMNs receive a 25% discount on workshops. For more information on these 3 events, go to <http://www.bambergeranch.org/tours/>.

—Advanced Training—the Sequel, Continued

Extension Service website. Both Bastrop <http://bastrop-tx.tamu.edu/> and Caldwell <http://caldwell-co.tamu.edu/> counties post newsletters and event calendars.

What else are you interested in – butterflies? native plants? Then plan regular visits to web sites like <http://www.austinbutterflies.org/Home/> (Austin Butterfly Form), <http://www.npsot.org/symposium2007/home/index.shtml> (Native Plant Society of Texas), and <http://www.wildflower.org/> (Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center). Add them to your *Favorites*, and get your training – and volunteer – hours doing what you most like to do!

A Murder of Crows

It’s spring, and creepy crawly things are out and about again. So just what is a bunch of:

1. butterflies
2. caterpillars
3. cockroaches
4. locusts

See below for answers!

1. rabble 2. army 3. intrusion 4. plague