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[michal@thecorporatecamera.com](mailto:michal@thecorporatecamera.com)

## President's Column

--Mark McClelland

Happy new year! With the graduation of our wildly successful 2007 Lost Pines Master Naturalist's class, followed by the Christmas holidays and the new year, we've had a busy few weeks. We now have a chance to settle down a little and contemplate what 2008 has in store for us.

On behalf of our entire membership, I'd like to recognize and thank the outgoing president and vice-president of our chapter. Andy Butler and Alvin Cearley have been outstanding leaders of the chapter for several years, and they possess a wealth of knowledge about the area that we live in and the chapter itself. I know that they both plan to stay active and continue to lend us their considerable talents. 2007 was a great year for the club, with dozens of projects undertaken, thousands of volunteer hours worked, and a great group of Master Naturalist trainees completing their training class.

As many of you know, I was elected president at the December meeting, and Louise Ridlon was elected vice-president. Kathy McAleese will be staying on as secretary, and Marie Medrano will continue as treasurer. Michal Hubbard will continue as our state representative, and Andy Butler rounds out the board as past president. Special thanks to Kathy, Marie and Michal for their hard work last year and for staying on for another term. Be sure to seek out and introduce yourself to any of the board members that you may not know. We work for you and want to hear your thoughts.

January 1<sup>st</sup> marks the start of the certification year for existing chapter

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## Parting Shots

—Andy Butler

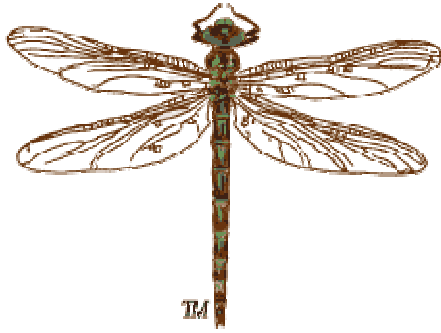
I wanted to take a moment as we begin 2008 to thank everyone in the chapter for making the last year a successful one. It was a pleasure for me to chair the group. It was particularly rewarding to coordinate our recent class. There are too many people to thank individually – all the other officers; everyone who helped with class arrangements; Marsha for the fine job with the newsletter; and all of our members for volunteering your time, energy and ideas in pursuit of the Master Naturalist goals.

Maintaining a volunteer group is always a challenge, and it's important for everyone in the group to pitch in. In that spirit, I'm delighted to pass the

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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](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 Department.

## 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. TPWD Wildlife Biologist:** Meredith Longoria, 804 Pecan, Bastrop, [mltpwd@onr.com](mailto:mltpwd@onr.com); 512 332-7280.



### Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the next issue is **Feb 8, 2008**. 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.

## 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.**

### January

**Monday, Jan 21 – Chapter Meeting and Advanced Training:** Red Rock Community Center, 6:30 PM. Meredith Longoria will be training us on wildlife tax valuation consultation in order to help her consult with landowners and evaluate their property and management plans. This will be followed by a field workshop, date TBA.

### February

**Monday, Feb 18 – Chapter Meeting:** Bastrop State Park Refectory, 6:30 PM. Chapter meeting. Agenda pending.

### 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@yahoo.com](mailto:LPMN-subscribe@yahoo.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); use the on-line reporting form on our website; or mail to  
187 Billingsley Hts  
Cedar Creek TX 78612

# Volunteer Opportunities

- **Colorado River Refuge First Saturday/Sunday Monitoring** – Kathy McAleese leads monthly bird and plant monitoring surveys (and butterflies in season) at the Colorado River Refuge. Time and day may vary from month to month, due to weather or other scheduling conflicts; Kathy will send out an e-mail with exact times prior to the weekend. Bring binoculars, field guides, and water; dress for the weather. 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](mailto: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 in February. To help, contact Sue Fischer at 512 321-1308 or email [smfischer@mdanderson.org](mailto:smfischer@mdanderson.org).
- **Bastrop State Park Nature Surveys** – Louise Ridlon is coordinating nature surveys at Bastrop State Park. Surveys can be done ad hoc on your own schedule, or contact Louise to coordinate a group hike. Contact her at 512 985-5064 or [fridlon@hotmail.com](mailto:fridlon@hotmail.com) for how to report your findings if you would like to participate. Reporting forms are available on the chapter website and Yahoo group site.
- **Bastrop Library Xeriscape/Native Plant Garden** – Volunteers are needed to help the Friends of the Bastrop Library plan and implement a native, xeriscape garden adjacent to the Bastrop Library. As a first step, a committee is being formed to prepare a plan for the space and a strategy for implementing and maintaining the garden. For further information and to volunteer, contact Rue Toovey at 512 237-2306.
- **Adopt A Highway** – Brett Finch is leading the Adopt A Highway project for our chapter. It involves four clean-ups a year, for which TxDOT provides all clean-up and safety equipment. We have adopted a 2-mile section of Hwy 95 to the north and south of FM 2336. The next clean-up is scheduled for February 9 at noon. At least 3 volunteers are needed in addition to Brett, and clean-up should take about 3 hours. For details and to volunteer, contact Brett at [goldward@yahoo.com](mailto:goldward@yahoo.com).
- **McKinney Roughs** – We now have a formal partnership agreement with McKinney Roughs! Volunteer work can be performed during the hours the park is open: 8:00-5:00 Mondays through

Saturdays and noon to 5:00 on Sundays. They do require volunteer forms be filled out, and a background check is done on each volunteer before they start. To volunteer, contact Jen Piland at [jpiland@lcra.org](mailto:jpiland@lcra.org) or 512-303-5073.

- **Agriculture and Tax Valuation Workshop** – Mon Feb 25, 8:30 AM – 3:15 PM, McKinney Roughs. Volunteers are needed to assist Meredith Longoria with set-up and registration. We also need volunteers to set up and work our chapter booth. Please let the chapter president know if you are interested.
- **Bastrop-Caldwell County WMA Extravaganza** – Sat April 12, noon - 7:00, Riverbend Park, Smithville. Volunteers are needed to work our information booth and distribute seedlings. Volunteers will receive free food and drinks, plus a T-shirt. If you would like to participate or coordinate this activity for the chapter, please contact the chapter president.
- **Lost Pines Garden Club** – LPGC is looking for a speaker for their May 12 meeting to give a 30 - 45 minute presentation on drying, pressing and preserving flowers and other plants. The meeting will be at 6:30 PM in the community meeting room of the Assembly of God Church at 609 Pecan Street in Bastrop. Contact Karen Sterling at [good2go2k@aol.com](mailto:good2go2k@aol.com) if you are interested.

—Parting Shots, continued

role of president on to Mark McClelland, and I look forward to Mark's ideas for making our group even better in the coming year. Personally, I look forward to helping the group in whatever ways I can, but I also hope to have more time for projects in the field this year.

## Nature Quotes

Look at the trees, look at the birds, look at the clouds, look at the stars... and if you have eyes you will be able to see that the whole existence is joyful. Everything is simply happy. Trees are happy for no reason; they are not going to become prime ministers or presidents and they are not going to become rich and they will never have any bank balance. Look at the flowers - for no reason. It is simply unbelievable how happy flowers are.

~Osho

# Advanced Training

- **Lost Pines Native Plant Society of Texas** – first Tuesday of each month, 7:00 PM (Learner's Corner at 6:30), First National Bank, Smithville. Presentations count as advanced training. Contact Alvin Cearley at [acearley@starband.net](mailto:acearley@starband.net) for program information.
- **McKinney Roughs: Ranger in the Roughs** – 3rd Thursday of each month from September 20 through February 21, 7:00-8:00 PM. Presentations are free and open to all ages. Nicholas Cowey will speak about the native animals that inhabit the land in and around the Colorado River, focusing on the natural and scientific history of one animal and its folklore per month. The schedule includes:
  - January 17 - American alligator
  - February 14 - Nine-banded armadilloThese presentations will be held in the outdoor amphitheater. No registration is required. Call McKinney Roughs Nature Park at (512) 303-5073 or email [outdoorprograms@lcra.org](mailto:outdoorprograms@lcra.org) for additional information.
- **Balcones Canyonlands Sparrowfest** – Sat Feb 2. Sparrowfest is currently sold out, but you can get on a waiting list. For details, see <http://www.friendsofbalcones.org/sparrowFest.html>.
- **Wildlife Management Practices and Landowner Incentives** – Sat Jan 26, 6:00 – 8:00 pm, Lockhart Sate Park Recreation Hall. Overview of wildlife management practices, property tax valuation, ranch logistics, land use practices, and the TPWD landowner incentive program. Contact Liz Larue at 512 398-3479 or [liz.larue@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:liz.larue@tpwd.state.tx.us) for additional information.
- **Agriculture and Tax Valuation Workshop** – Mon Feb 25, 8:30 AM – 3:15 PM, McKinney Roughs. This is the same event listed under volunteer opportunities. However, you may register and attend for advanced training (AT) credit. You may receive AT credit for sessions you attend while working as a volunteer, but you may not claim both volunteer time and AT credit for those sessions. For new members still needing to complete their basic training, this workshop can be used as a make-up for the Cooper farm field trip or the Lockhart range management class. For additional information on workshop topics, see <http://bastrop-tx.tamu.edu/EventsNEW.cfm>.
- **Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo Ranching and Wildlife Expo** – Wed Mar 5 – Sat Mar 8. Multiple workshops on topics covering wildlife

conservation, ranching and landowner issues, predator control, and game animal management. See [http://www.hlsr.com/ag/ls/hls\\_rawe.aspx](http://www.hlsr.com/ag/ls/hls_rawe.aspx) for a complete agenda and registration information.

- **Austin Butterfly Forum** – Mon Feb 25, 7:00 pm, Zilker Botanical Garden center. Ro Wauer speaks on "The Marvelous Maderas del Carmens," the Mexican counterparts to the Big Bend's Chisos mountains. For additional information, go to <http://www.austinbutterflies.org/Calendar/>.

## 2008 Dues Due

Just a reminder, yearly dues are payable to our treasurer, Marie Medrano. Bring a ten spot to the next meeting, or mail a \$10 check to Marie at 505 Olive St, Smithville 78957. Members of the 2007 training class do not need to pay, as their 2008 dues were included in the class registration fee.

—President's Column, continued

members. This means that we start on the 40 hours of volunteer time and 8 hours of advanced training that is required to renew our annual certification. Members of the 2007 class have until December of this year (one year after the last formal class) to complete the volunteer hours and advanced training required for their initial certification. Don't forget to turn in those advanced training and volunteer hour reporting forms. I know from personal experience that it is much easier to keep up with them month by month than to try and remember what you did over the past six-month period. There may be a new year's resolution in there somewhere...

Volunteering is the backbone of the Master Naturalist program. Whether your interests run toward plant and animal census, community outreach, environmental advocacy, or working with youth, volunteer projects are out there for you! Check the newsletter and website for ongoing and new volunteer activities. But remember that you are not limited to just those activities. You are encouraged to look for potential projects that appeal to your interests and then to get that project rolling. To get a new project approved, just fill out a simple form and submit it to the volunteer committee. Find a cause and make it your own. You may be surprised at how many of your fellow chapter members join you!

I look forward to seeing you at our January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting at the Red Rock Community Center.