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President's Column

--Mark McClelland

Our 2009 Master Naturalist Training Class is completed, and it was a tremendous success. The class began with 29 folks, with all but three making it to graduation. My special thanks go out to Andy Butler for coordinating this class, handling the applications, communications, scheduling, etc. Thanks also to the many members who assisted with arrangements, presented material, organized field trips, provided refreshments, and helped in many other ways.

I also want to give a great big "thanks" to the class members themselves! I really enjoyed spending time with this group, and quickly found their endless enthusiasm and energy rubbing off on me.

We had our first canoe/kayak trip of the year on May 24th. We had a big group, with first-timers and experienced paddlers alike. The weather was perfect, and the river conditions superb. There was enough current to keep us moving along, and just enough breeze to keep us cool without blowing us backwards. We took an opportunity to conduct an impromptu Mussel Watch on a gravel bar. We found lots of old shells, but nothing that looked very fresh. The exception being the always plentiful, introduced Asian clams. We have another trip on Saturday, June 20th, and I hope that we have a good turnout for that trip as well.

– Continued on Page 5

The Torch Passes

--Marsha Elrod

It has been my pleasure to serve as editor of the LPMN newsletter for the last 2½ years, but as the talent pool in our group grows with each new class of graduates, I am passing the torch to one of our newest members, Wendy Sera. Wendy brings her enthusiasm for the Master Naturalist program, along with her writing skill and editing experience, to the task. Continue to update her with information, articles, and photos so she can share them with all our membership and friends.

Thanks to my eagle-eyed proofreaders, Andy and Sue, Alvin and Elaine, Mark and Louise, and to all who contributed newsletter content. Thanks to Rosemary and Gladys at the extension office for printing and mailing the newsletter timely, even when I was late. And thanks to Wendy, for stepping forward to accept the torch and keep it burning!

Inside This Issue

1	President's Column
1	The Torch Passes
2	Chapter Calendar
3	Volunteer Opportunities
3	River Trip Reservations
4	Advanced Training
5	Nature Quotes

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,
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The Texas Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

SPONSOR CONTACTS

Caldwell Co. Extension Office: Jeff Watts; Caldwell-tx@tamu.edu; (512) 398-3122

Bastrop Co. Extension Office: Rachel Bauer, CEA-AG/NR; Bastrop-tx@tamu.edu; (512) 581-7186

Bastrop/Caldwell Co. TPWD Wildlife Biologist: Meredith Longoria, 804 Pecan, Bastrop, mltpwd@onr.com; (512) 332-7280.



Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the next issue is **July 10, 2009**. 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 Wendy Sera: wendy_sera@hotmail.com, (512) 652-8605.

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.

June

Monday, June 15 – Chapter Meeting and Advanced Training: Bastrop State Park Refectory, 6:30 PM. Tara Tucker, Regional Interpretive Specialist with TPWD, will present a program on creating interpretive presentations.

July

Monday, July 20– Chapter Meeting and Advanced Training: Red Rock Community Center, 6:30 PM. Steven Gibson, Manager of the University of Texas Stengl Lost Pines Biology Station, will present "An update on using parasitic phorid flies as a biological control for the red imported fire ant."

August

No regular meeting in August - Join us instead for our annual summer social and potluck picnic at Lockhart State Park, **Sunday, August 23**. Details to come!

Chapter Website

<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 mLPMN-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or log on to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LPMN/>.

Reporting Training & Volunteer Hours

Send your advanced training and volunteer hour reports to Marsha Elrod: melrod1@earthlink.net; use the on-line reporting form on our website; or mail to
187 Billingsley Hts
Cedar Creek TX 78612

Volunteer Opportunities

- **Austin Butterfly Forum's Annual 4th of July Butterfly Count** – Saturday, **June 27**, 8:00 AM in the Zilker Botanical Garden parking lot. For more information (and if there is to be a rain delay) contact Dan Hardy, mdhh787@yahoo.com. Everyone is welcome, including all skill levels. This is the butterfly equivalent of the Christmas Bird counts. For full details, visit <http://www.austinbutterflies.org/calendar>.
- **TPWD Junior Angler Clinics** – Saturday, **June 13** and select Saturdays June-August, 8:00 AM-12:30 PM, Bastrop and Buescher State Parks. Volunteers are needed to assist with this free learn-to-fish clinic for boys and girls ages 6 to 13. This is a very basic clinic, and you don't need to be a fisher-person to help out. The kids really have a good time, and parents accompany their children. Park entrance is free for volunteers, and necessary training will be provided on site. Clinics will be held on
 - June 13** at Buescher State Park
 - June 20** at Bastrop State Park
 - July 11** at Buescher State Park
 - August 1** at Buescher State ParkAt least 7 volunteers are needed for each clinic. This is a fun project for kids, parents, and volunteers! Contact Bill Brooks at (512) 581-0377 or bgbrooks@mail.utexas.edu to participate.
- **McKinney Roughs Nature Survey** – Kathy McAleese is coordinating a long-term project to survey trails through the burned-out areas of McKinney Roughs. Plans call for at least 2 surveys per month, one during the week and one on weekends. Actual days and times will vary based on the weather and Kathy's schedule. Please contact her at (512) 718-1313 or kmcaleese@austin.rr.com if you are interested in leading or participating in either weekday or weekend surveys, or both.

River Trips Reservations

Be sure to contact Rising Phoenix Adventures to reserve a vessel for our river trip planned for June 20. Rental prices range from \$40 for a single kayak to \$65 for a canoe. Call (512) 677-2305 or (512) 985-5057 or visit their website at <http://www.risingphoenixadventures.com>.

- **Bastrop State Park** – Katie Raney, the Interpretive Ranger at Bastrop/Buescher SP, has asked for our assistance with a wonderful set of programs that she has proposed for this summer.

June

- 12** – First Night Hike (then every Friday night through August 21)
- 20** – Frog & Toad Watch – Bastrop? (LPMN will run)
- 27** – Aquatic Life Monitoring (Buescher) (LPMN will help)

July

- 18** – Frog & Toad Watch – Bastrop? (run)
- 25** – Aquatic Life Monitoring (Buescher) (help)

August

- 15** – Frog & Toad Watch – Bastrop? (run)
- 21** – Last Night Hike
- 22** – Aquatic Life Monitoring (Buescher) (help)

If LPMN members volunteer to lead half of the hikes, Katie will lead the other half. The Night Hike is for the experience of walking around outside in the darkness, and will not be like our regular interpretive hike.

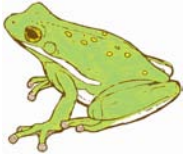
The Frog and Toad Watch programs are tentatively planned as a brief program on toads and frogs, listening to a few calls, and going to one of the ponds to listen for calls. This will fulfill the requirements of our Amphibian Watch program, and give us a chance to help educate campers and members of the community about these creatures. Mark will be putting the presentation and calls together, so it will be ready for anyone who wants to utilize it.

The Aquatic Life Monitoring will be similar to the program that many of us have gone through at Aquarena Springs—dip-netting at the edge of a pond, then using identification cards to identify the critters and judge the water quality.

There will a "dry run" of the Aquatic Monitoring program at Buescher SP on Sunday, June 13th at 9:00. If you are interested in participating, contact Mark McClelland (markmcc@prodigy.net; (512) 281-5516) or Katie Raney.

Advanced Training

- **Lost Pines Native Plant Society of Texas** – Select **first Tuesdays of each month**, 7:00 PM, First National Bank, Smithville. Presentations count as advanced training. Some meetings this year will be held at member's homes to conduct plant surveys. Contact Bill Brooks at (512) 581-0377 or bgbrooks@mail.utexas.edu for more information.
- **TPWD – Project WILD Science and Civics: Sustaining Wildlife Workshop – June 20, 2009.** Designed for high school or post-secondary educators. Participants receive a curriculum guide and SBEC credit. Held at ESC Region XIII, 5701 Springdale Rd, Austin, 9:00 am-3:30 pm; fee is \$25; preregistration required. Contact Jennifer Jordan-Kaszuba at Jennifer.Jordan-Kaszuba@esc13.txed.net or (512) 919-5368. For details about project WILD workshops, visit <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/calendar/?calpage=a0181>.
- **TPWD – Project WILD Workshop – July 15, 2009** – Learn how to teach young people about ecology and wildlife using fun, hands-on educational activities. In this 6-hour training workshop, participants will sample activities and receive a curriculum and activity guide. Activities are adaptable for all grade levels, integrated with core subject curricula and aligned to the TEKS. Teachers, informal educators, and youth group leaders may take the training. SBEC credit available for teachers. Bring a sack lunch. Held at Westcave Preserve, 24814 Hamilton Pool Road. 9 AM -4 PM; fee \$10; preregistration required. To register, send e-mail to: info@westcave.org or call (830) 825-3442.
- **Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center – Nature Nights**, 6:00-9:00 PM, select nights in spring. Events scheduled: Fossils on **July 9**. Bees on **July 23**. Stream ecology on **July 30**. Admission is \$1.00. For additional information, visit <http://www.wildflower.org/nature/>.
- **Austin Butterfly Forum – Tips for Identifying Butterflies (club meeting)** – Monday, **June 22**, 7:00 PM, Zilker Botanical Garden Center. Dan Hardy will present the traditional warm-up program for the upcoming butterfly count. For additional information, visit <http://www.austinbutterflies.org/calendar>.
- **Travis Audubon Society – Shorebird Identification** – Wednesdays **July 22** and **August 5 & 19**, 6:30-8:30 PM, Hornsby Bend Center for Environmental Research. There will be local field trips on Saturdays July 25 and August 8, and an optional trip to the Texas coast on the weekend of August 29-30. Tim Fennell's Shorebird Identification Class is a great way for intermediate birders to learn how to distinguish the Least, Semipalmated, and Western Sandpipers, Lesser and Greater Yellowlegs, and other similar shorebirds. Tim teaches science at the Liberal Arts and Science Academy High School in Austin and has been teaching the Shorebird Identification Class for Travis Audubon since 1998. The tuition is \$75 for TAS members and \$85 for non-members. For those who go to the coast, there will be an additional fee to cover Tim's expenses, ranging from \$30 to \$45, depending upon how many sign up. Birders who want to take this class should register by sending an e-mail to Tim at tfennell@flash.net. For more details, visit <http://www.travisaudubon.org/classes.html>.
- **TPWD – Texas Amphibian Watch Workshop – June 30, 2009** – Learn how to identify frog and toad species and participate in scientific research. SBEC and TEEAC credit available for educators. Sponsored by the Capital Area Master Naturalists. Held at the Beverly S. Sheffield Education Center (Splash Exhibit next to Barton Springs Pool in Zilker Park), 2201 Barton Springs Dr., 6:30-9:30 PM; fee \$10 includes materials; registration required. To register and for more information, contact Kathy McCormack at VEFL21@yahoo.com or (512) 698-9880.
- **Travis Audubon Society – Digital Photography – Focus on Birds** – Classes will be held on two consecutive Tuesdays (**June 16 and 23**) from 7:00-9:00 PM in west central Austin (Tarrytown). The tuition for TAS members is \$40; \$55 for non-members. Class size is limited to 15. For more information, visit <http://www.travisaudubon.org/classes.html>. To register, or learn more about material to be covered, contact Jim deVries at jimdevries@austin.rr.com.
- This year's **Statewide Annual Meeting and Advanced Training** will be held **October 23-25, 2009** at Mo Ranch in Hunt, TX. The annual meeting always offers great advanced training opportunities, volunteer activities, and a chance to meet and mingle with fellow Master Naturalists from around the state. Details in late August.



- President's Column, continued

As promised at the May meeting, I've sent an e-mail to all members outlining the various committees that make our club work. I've fallen behind on keeping track of who is currently involved with each committee, so with the influx of new members, this seems like the perfect time to verify current members and solicit new ones.

Katie Raney, Interpretive Ranger for Bastrop & Buescher State Parks, has enlisted our help with a full program of activities for the summer. She has planned Friday night hikes, Frog and Toad evenings, and aquatic wildlife programs and sampling. I sent out a tentative schedule of these events, and we can definitely use your help as these activities come around.

At Lockhart State Park, the planning and construction of the new interpretive trail continues full speed. The ribbon cutting for this new trail is planned for Sunday, August 23rd. We have decided to hold our August

Nature Quotes

Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left.

~Aldo Leopold

meeting/picnic at the park on this date, so mark your calendars! The recreation hall has been reserved for the event, and we look forward to seeing everyone out there for the big unveiling.

The June meeting will feature Tara Tucker, TPWD Regional Interpreter. She will present a program on "Interpretation: Conveying the meaning of our natural resources to the public." I look forward to hearing Tara's approach to interpretation. Interpretation is a big part of our contact with the public, and each person involved with it brings their own perspective to the activity.

I hope to see all of you at the June meeting on Monday, June 15th at the Bastrop State Park Refectory. The meeting will begin at 6:30.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATES OF THE LPMN 2009 TRAINING CLASS!



Back row: Al Hoerig, Gene Moulten, Mike Turner, Dave Radke, Chris Contreras, Jim Baker
3rd row: Angie Morrison, Wendy Sera, Paulette Boudreaux, Lisa King, Mona Greenlee
2nd row: Judy Turner, Debbie Radke, Liz Pullman, Mary Ann Melton, Martha Mobley, Peggy Olson
1st row: Nancy Newell, Tina Pereboom, Lori Fraser, Joan Baker, Susan Crone, Tim Watson

Photo by
Andy Butler