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2000-2001

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From the Desk of the President

Since our last meeting, we have been involved in planning sessions that will provide volunteer opportunities and build a strong partnership with McKinney Roughs. We met with Director Dr. Betsy Carpenter and volunteer coordinator Athena Phillips while at our TMN booth at Yesterfest Festival in Bastrop on Saturday, April 28. A follow-up meeting at McKinney Roughs established four areas in which we will be partnering with them: 1) Junior Ranger Program kickoff Sat. June 9—working with kids 8-16 years of age in several summer projects; 2) Ropes Course and Trail project—help build and complete various stages of the course and trail and then help with groups as guides along the trail; 3) Bio-diversity Exhibit indoors—help setup and identify various exhibits (insects, amphibians, mammals, etc) around

May 20 for the June 1 opening, and volunteer as spokespersons for the summer season; and 4) Develop and setup long-range demonstration projects like rainwater collection and birdhouse distribution and monitoring.



We will also discuss partnerships with Lockhart State Park, Luling Foundation, and City of Lockhart for trails projects and wildlife monitoring. These projects will take place over this summer. So you all should feel that there

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Reminder: The May meeting and class will be on **Tuesday, May 29th**, because of Memorial Day.

Bamberger Ranch Field Trip

On May 12, a group of about 40 Master Naturalists met at Selah, the 5500 acre ranch near Johnson City that David Bamberger used to demonstrate how to restore a diverse habitat to what was once badly abused, over-grazed land. Mr. Bamberger described the philosophy, concepts and methods behind the decades-long restoration project and his vision of Bamberger as a living environmental workshop, and Margaret Bamberger showed us many of the trees that have been reintroduced on the ranch. **See pictures on page 5.**

Master Naturalist News from Around the State

Denton County Chapter Changes Name: The Denton County Chapter rang in the New Year with a change in their Chapter Name. Their new name is now the **Elm Fork Chapter** of the Texas Master Naturalist Program.

In honor of Ferdinand Lindheimer's (The "Father of Texas Botany") 200th Birthday, the **Lindheimer Chapter** (New Braunfels) of the Texas Master Naturalist the Daughter of the Republic of Texas, the New Braunfels Conservation Society, and other local organizations, invite everyone to attend this day-long celebration in the city of New Braunfels on Monday, May 21st, 2001! A variety of free events are planned for the all-day celebration. In addition, from May 20th through July 20th the Lindheimer botanical collection from the Smithsonian Institute will be on display at the Sophienburg Museum. For more information, call (830) 629-5401 or see the New Braunfels Chamber of Commerce web page at <http://www.nbcham.org>

The **Alamo Area Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists** (San Antonio) will hold their Fourth Annual Naturalists Awards Banquet on June 1, 2001. In recognition for significant contributions, awards will be presented to MR. THOMAS CLEAVER in the area of EDUCATION, to AMERICAN FUNDS in the area of PRESERVATION and to the ROBERT L. B. TOBIN ESTATE in the area of CONSERVATION. This banquet will be held at Ultramar Diamond Shamrock Corporate Headquarters, 6000 North Loop 1604 West, San Antonio, Texas from 6:00p.m. to 10:00p.m. Tickets are \$20.00 and may be purchased by calling the Master Naturalist Office at 210/647-0773. The event includes live music and a silent auction.

Jeff Quayle, of the **Cross Timbers Chapter** (Fort Worth) recently reported on the progress of the flowering of Quayle's Ragwort (*Senecio quaylei*), a new species which he discovered last year, at Lake Mineral Wells State Park. Jeff estimated 50-60 plants

at the site of his original discovery, more than double last year's population, as well as some other scattered sites in the area. Earlier this year, Jeff was honored with the designation of the plant as *Senecio quaylei* in the Botanical Research Institute of Texas' journal SIDA. For those of you who missed the original news release announcing the discovery of *Senecio quaylei*, it can be viewed at: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/news/news/001225g.htm>. Since the announcement, Jeff has been a busy speaking for various meetings and nature centers on his discovery.

On April 22, the Dallas Morning News had a feature article about the **North Texas Master Naturalist Chapter's** "White Rock Prairie Fest," (held in conjunction with Earth Day) which celebrated the Chapter's efforts at restoring 115 acres of native prairie near White Rock Lake. See the article at: http://www.dallasnews.com/metro/stories/346011_earthday_22met.html

Second statewide annual meeting and advanced training set for October 26th-28th, 2001

From Michelle Haggerty,
State Program Coordinator

Plans are underway for the second year of this event to be held at Camp Balcones Springs again this year. All Texas Master Naturalists—certified, trained, in training, and administrators of local programs—are encouraged to attend. This will be the perfect opportunity to meet Master Naturalists from around the state, see what other chapters are doing, share ideas, and obtain your annual advanced training requirements in one weekend. We received many great ideas and comments on the 2000 Annual Meeting and will incorporate what we are able into the agenda. On top of the list of priorities for this year's event is more time dedicated to Advanced Training opportunities. Also during this weekend will be the third meeting of the Chapter Volunteers' Representatives Council. If there are Advanced Training topics you would like to see covered at the Annual meeting, now is the time to submit your request to Michelle Haggerty by email at mhaggerty@wfsc.tamu.edu.

will be many projects locally that you can volunteer for. It is up to you to pursue that which is of interest to you. Call me if you want to start early on McKinney Roughs, otherwise there will be sign up sheets at our next meeting.

Yesterfest was our first event to show and talk about our chapter and TMN Program. Andy Butler, Sue Fischer, Linda Lenocho, Janice Rampy, Carol Reidy and I answered many questions and were encouraged by the interest in our chapter and the general TMN Program. We have plans to improve next year's exhibit and have several prospects for future chapter membership.

Finally, we are meeting with and part of the organizational board of Bastrop County Nature Festival scheduled to open during Spring Break 2002. This is to be an annual event involving Lost Pines TMN, Bastrop Audubon Society and Bastrop Chamber of Commerce.

I will be out of town during the Bamberger

Tour and look forward to a good report from all who attend. For this month's meeting, we will meet with the new class on May 29 for advanced training on history, pioneer naturalists, soil characteristics and surveys.

See you all there.

Rick Johnson

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.

—Aldo Leopold

MARK YOUR CALENDAR-

Regular meetings of the Lost Pines Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, are the 4th Monday of the month.

MAY MEETING

Rockne Church

May 29 2001 (Note: **Tuesday** meeting)

6:00 PM

Program— History and Pioneer Naturalists—
History of the Blackland Prairie/Post Oak Savanna. Soil characteristics of Bastrop & Caldwell Counties and how to use soil surveys. Taking field notes and journal entries.

JUNE MEETING

Rockne Church

June 25 2001

6:00 PM

Program— Wildlife management, writing management plans, and local wildlife management associations, by Len Polasek.

JUNE FIELD TRIPS

Tour McKinney Roughs

Date & Time to be set (contact Rachel Bauer, 512-591-7186 for information)

The tour will focus on woodland and grassland ecosystems, plant identification, and native landscaping.

June 30, 2001

9:00 AM-1 PM

Tour Neasloney Wildlife Management Area

Tour an area actively managed for wildlife habitat, and learn how to manage for various wildlife species.

JUNE NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

June 10, 2001. Send information to Andy Butler (butler@mdanderson.org) or Doyle Kolle (kolle@totalaccess.net). We welcome relevant contributions, photos, announcements or other material relating to the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program, particularly those pertaining to the Lost Pines area.

Volunteer Opportunities

McKinney Roughs Volunteer Opportunities

These are some current opportunities at McKinney Roughs. Details of our Chapter projects arranged by Rick and Rachel will be available at the May 29 meeting, or call either Rick or Rachel. For more information, about McKinney Roughs, call 512-303-5073, ext. 8040 (Bastrop Area) or toll-free, 800-776-5272, ext. 8040.

- **Trails and Parks support**—Activities include monitoring trail activities, ecological restoration, trail maintenance & construction projects data collecting on native plants and wildlife
- **Education activities**—Serve as guides for student groups, give orientations, assist in preparation for student & teacher groups.

Lockhart Demonstration Garden

- Contact Lytle Arche at 512-398-3122 or by e-mail l-arche@tamu.edu for specific dates.

Bastrop County Health Fair

- Friday, June 8. Volunteers are needed to hand out water test kits. Please contact Rachel Bauer for information at 512-332-7286.

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

- Maintaining trails, watering gardens, collecting seeds, helping in the store. Contact Megan Murphy, Director of Volunteer Services, at (512) 292-4200 to arrange for a volunteer interview, or E-mail megan@wildflower.org

Wild Basin Preserve

- Trail Maintenance—Volunteers welcome. Help repair portions of trails, control erosion, and make our trails safer for everyone to enjoy. 9 A.M to Noon, scheduled dates include June 9, July 14, and August 11. For information, call (512) 327-7622 or e-mail hike@wildbasin.org

Texas Nature Trackers

Projects coordinated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department or partner organizations. Some projects available:

- **Texas Horned Lizard Watch**—provides instructions for surveying the Texas state reptile on your property or on public areas. For more information, contact the Wildlife Diversity program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Texas Mussel Watch**—volunteers are helping us

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. **Please** also note several Mussel Watch training workshops, listed under Advanced Training, below.

- **Texas Monarch Watch**—monitor the spring and fall migration of this familiar butterfly on your own property or public lands. Volunteers can call the Monarch Watch hotline at 1-800-468-9710 (or if you are in Austin, 326-2231) to report sightings of monarchs or hear a recorded message about the status of the migration in Texas. For more information about Texas Monarch Watch or to receive monitoring kit, 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 more 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. Texans involved in this project will 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. **Please** also note Amphibian Watch training workshops, listed under Advanced Training, below.
- **Project Prairie Birds**—Answer questions about Texas' wintering sparrows and their avian grassland neighbors. Project Prairie Birds can be conducted in any temperate grassland site. For more information, contact Cliff Shackelford, 512-912-7045 or by email: clifford.shackelford@tpwd.state.tx.us.
- **Adopt-A-Species Projects**—Takes place on public properties that support populations of rare Texas plants or animals. Learn monitoring techniques. Volunteers agree to continue monitoring for a set period of time. Suitable for schools, club or civic groups. (Not available in all parts of the state). Contact the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Remember**—Get approval before you begin a project that you want to count for volunteer credit. Record your volunteer service and hours and submit to Gerri Martinez (512-303-5936). Documenting your service hours helps you to become certified. In addition, it helps the Master Naturalist Program to justify support received from our sponsors.

Bamberger Ranch Field Trip



David Bamberger describes the advantages of native prairie restoration



Mr. Bamberger's reminder that the fate of humanity is dependent on our ability to be good land stewards

Melba Sexton pointed out the following National Parks Service web page on Fire Ecology, which should be of interest to Master Naturalists:
<http://www.fire.nps.gov/fire/ecology/docs/toc.html>

Plant of the month: *A. drummondii*

Andy Butler

Purple Pleat-leaf is a beautiful, delicate perennial of the Iris family. The plants grow from small, shallow bulbs and form scattered colonies in well-drained soils of semi-shaded openings in pine-oak woodlands in east Texas and surrounding states. The flowers usually appear in May and June in our area, are up to two inches across with three large, rounded, rich velvety purple outer petal segments, and three smaller, cupped inner petals. The center is yellowish with reddish-brown spots. Flowers are at the tip of thin zigzag stems, usually about 12 inches tall, which may have one or a few blooms. The blooms are ephemeral, opening in mid-morning and lasting only until late afternoon. A single plant may have many flowers over an extended blooming season. The leaves are 12 to 24 inches long, narrow, alternate, mostly basal and iris-like. Pleat-leaf is fairly common along bluffs above the Colorado near Bastrop and in Bastrop and Buescher State Parks. (They can usually be seen blooming along Park Rd 1C between the Anne Powell Road and Science Park in Buescher SP).

Nomenclature for this plant is confusing. An alternate common name is Pine woods lily. Many Texas wildflower guides list the pleat-leaf as *Eustylis purpurea*, however the currently accepted name is *Alophia drummondii* (according to the Checklist of the Vascular Plants of Texas, <http://www.csd.tamu.edu/FLORA/taes/tracy/regecoNF.html> (Alophia, Greek for "without a crest" and drummondii for the Scottish botanist and discoverer of the plant, Thomas Drummond.) To make matters worse, *A. drummondii* is often applied to a distinct plant, *Herbertia Lahue*, another irid native to Texas and Louisiana. The seed germinates fairly well, and by any name, *A. drummondii* is a lovely addition to the perennial garden.



Advanced Training

Please obtain prior approval for advanced training, and don't forget to record your hours! (Events listed in chronological order).

- **Texas Amphibian Watch workshop**—Austin, TX (Wild Basin) Wednesday, May 16th. 6 to 10 p.m. Learn techniques for identifying local frogs and toads by their calls. Dress comfortably for an evening hike and amphibian monitoring after classroom instruction. Bring a flashlight! Fee is \$16—boxed supper included. Reservations required. To register, or for information, contact Carol Knepp at 327-7622 or Ann Miller at 12-912-7025 or ann.miller@tpwd.state.tx.us.
- **Gardening for Wildlife**—Saturday, May 19, 9am to 1pm at The Wildflower Center. Registration fee: \$25. For registration information please contact Alice Martin, National Wildlife Federation, 512/476-9805; Fax 512/476-9810. This National Wildlife Federation workshop will teach you how to transform your yard into a haven for birds, butterflies, hummingbirds and other wildlife, and to conserve water resources through the use of native plants. Plan to explore the grounds of the Wildflower Center in a Habitat Value tour and participate in a site inventory/analysis activity to help you find the perfect location for you own personal wildlife habitat
- **Restoration Planning and Design Workshop**—Monday & Tuesday, May 21 & 22; 9am to 5pm , at The Wildflower Center. Current Wildflower Center and SER Members \$200/Non-members \$225 (includes materials and lunches) Co-sponsored by the Society for Ecological Restoration. Call (512) 292-4200 for registration details. Get a solid grasp on the mechanics of managing an ecological restoration project. The course will address the major issues involved in the planning and design of restoration projects and common problems in restoration planning using Texas ecosystems as examples. Participants will develop an understanding of the connections between various elements of a restoration project including project management, defining a project, site analysis, developing concept plans, establishing schedules, specification writing, site evaluation, and monitoring concerns.
- **Trees and Shrubs Workshop-Identification and Management**—May 26 at Bamberger Ranch. (Saturday, 8:30-4:30, \$90; Call 830.868.7303 or see <http://www.bambergerranch.org> for registration forms) Learn how to identify trees and shrubs using the leaf form and leaf attachment as key characteristics. It is easy to learn how to identify woody plants and to insure that you have information to take home, you'll collect leaves in a notebook for future reference. Diversity of trees and shrubs is important for the health of you land

and your wildlife. Topics include: What plants are good for wildlife food, and how to care for them? - What is Oak Wilt and which oaks are the least likely to get it? - Which trees tolerate the Hill Country soil? - How to plant trees and shrubs. - Ball moss-killer or nuisance? 8-hour workshop includes some hiking, coffee breaks and lunch. Dress for the weather.

- **Insect Photography**—Saturday, June 2 . 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Wild Basin. Insects are tricky and butterflies tease us, but you need to be prepared to capture their beauty on film. Techniques known to longtime, very experienced photographers will be shared so that you can enjoy summer outings observing and photographing Central Texas insects, as well as other small critters of our rocks and hills. The course is geared to the use of 35 mm cameras. A list of supplies and an agenda will be sent upon receipt of registration. Bring a brown-bag lunch and prepare to spend hands-on instruction time out on the trails. Fee: \$50 (\$45 members). Space is limited. To register, call (512) 327-7622 or e-mail hike@wildbasin.org.
- **McKinney Roughs Environmental Center near Bastrop**—Friday, June 8th This 6-hour workshop prepares teachers to participate in monitoring projects with students, involving students in real science investigations in cooperation with TPWD scientists. To register and for more information, call Lisa Smith at 1-800-776-5272 ext. 8004.
- **Natural History of the Texas Hill Country Workshop Series** Saturday, June 23 and June 30, 9am -12:30; 1:30-5pm, at The Wildflower Center. Full Series: Members \$65/ Non-members \$85, Individual Workshops: Members \$20/ Non-members \$25. Expand your time scales and gain a better understanding of the origins of the natural world that surrounds you, with special attention to the plant communities of Central Texas. Take one or all four workshops. **Pre-registration required.** June 23, Saturday, 9am to 12:30pm: Cultural History-with Dr. Phil Dering.; June 23, Saturday, 1:30 to 5pm: Geological History with Dr. Bill Ward; June 30, Saturday, 9am to 12:30pm: Vegetative History and Evolution with Mark Simmons, M.S.; June 30, Saturday, 1:30 to 5pm: Ecological History with Dr. Steve Windhager.
- **Texas Mussel Watch Workshop**—Denton, Tuesday, Aug 7th, 8:30 A.M-2 P.M. Workshop, at Lewisville ISD field trip fee includes lunch. To register or for more information, contact Steven Spurger at 940-565-3710 or spurgers@lisd.net or Ann Miller at 512-912-7025 or ann.miller@tpwd.state.tx.us.