



**Texas Master Naturalist Program
Hays County Chapter**

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office
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Dear Texas Master Naturalist Program Applicant,

The Texas Master Naturalist program is a natural resource-based volunteer training and development program jointly sponsored by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The overall mission of the program is “to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the state of Texas.”

In the Hays County Master Naturalist program, recognized experts in the field teach wildlife and conservation management, focusing their instruction on the native ecosystem of Hays County. If you are accepted as a trainee in the program, you will be required to attend classes, perform approved volunteer work, and attend advanced training in your areas of interest. The course provides you opportunities to learn about natural resource conservation, meet and associate with others of similar interests, and visit different habitats around the county.

The program, including the training classes and activities, will span approximately eight months. The training program begins in February and finishes in October, allowing you to take advantage of seasonal environmental changes. Ten of the classes will be held on Tuesday evenings (6-9:30 p.m.) and two on Saturday mornings (9-12:00 noon). You are also required to attend two site visits to complete the instructional portion of the program. Five optional field trips are also scheduled at sites throughout Hays County. There will be an optional Social meeting on January 31 with the first class on February 7, 2017 at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office, 1253 Civic Center Loop, San Marcos. You will be required to attend all classes or make up any missed classes in order to graduate. You may make up no more than two class meetings and still graduate with your class.

The total cost for the program is \$175.00. A deposit of \$25 must accompany the application. The remainder of the tuition may be paid in full with the application, at the first class, or you may pay \$100.00 at the first class and the balance by the class in June. There are three scholarships available for Hays County residents, each for \$100.00. Information about the scholarships is included with the application.

To become a “Certified Texas Master Naturalist” on graduation day, you must have attended or made up all classes, completed forty hours of approved volunteer service and attended eight hours of advanced training.

As a Texas Master Naturalist you will join a corps of volunteers who serve the local community. Many members are involved in ongoing projects such as Jacob's Well in Wimberley, the Greenbelt Alliance in San Marcos, and Charro Ranch in Dripping Springs. Some of our members are active in educational activities with local schools and make presentations at various events. Still others monitor water quality or amphibian viability. With more than 50 approved projects around Hays County, there are volunteer opportunities to meet a wide variety of interests.

Class enrollment is limited to 42 members. Applications are due no later than January 6, 2017. **Your signed Liability Release as well as your \$25 deposit must be included in order for your application to be deemed complete.** Applicants will be notified by Wednesday, January 18, 2017, of their acceptance into the class. Please call the Extension Office (512) 393-2120 if you need more information.

Jason Mangold
County Extension Agent
Agriculture/Natural Resources, Hays County