

# Hays County Master Naturalists NEWSLETTER



-- right here at home -- in the Hill Country

April, 2007

## APRIL EVENTS

### *April Chapter Meeting*

Dennis Jones Interpreter and Assistant Manager, Brazos Bend State Park, TP&W.

April 26 Senior Room, Wimberley Community Center.

Catered dinner by Our Lady of the Lunch, 6:30 pm. Program at 7.00 pm. The cost of the meal is \$9.00 per person. Please contact Susan Nenny to make your Guaranteed reservations.

For his presentation, Dennis Jones dresses in a Texian costume complete with knife and adopts the persona of a Texian. He gives an inspirational talk about the environment including the prairies, trees, fire, Native Americans, and the early exploration of Texas. His presentation includes demonstrations of survival in the early days including making fire with flint. ✨

### *April Board Meeting*

The Executive Board of Hays County Master Naturalists will meet at 7:00 pm, April 5 at 7:00 pm

#### **Draft Agenda**

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Officer reports
3. Housekeeping
  - HCMN participation at Earth Day (Wimberley Emily Ann Theatre/Butterfly Festival – April 2007.
  - Order of Training Manuals for Chapter members who wish to purchase a copy (not including Training Class)
4. Next Chapter Meeting  
Date, Location, Program, Food
5. Discussion on Chapter Volunteer Projects
  - Focus
  - Revise project list?
  - Set up Volunteer Projects reviewer\committee?
5. Other Business

## HAYS COUNTY MASTER NATURALISTS

### *Board of Directors*

<b>President</b>	Dale Shively
<b>Vice President</b>	Dixie Camp
<b>Secretary</b>	Susan Nenny
<b>Treasurer</b>	Winifred Simon
<b>Past-President</b>	Tom Watson
<b>State Representative</b>	Tom Watson
<b>Training Committee</b>	Nancy Turner
<b>Membership Committee</b>	Judy Telford
<b>Web Master</b>	Herb Smith
<b>Newsletter Committee &amp; Editor</b>	Richard Barnett 512-847-6941 <a href="mailto:news@haysmn.org">news@haysmn.org</a>
<b>Outreach Committee</b>	Walt Krudop
<b>Host Committee</b>	Jean McMeans
<b>Historian</b>	Laurel Robertson
<b>Extension Agent</b>	Bryan Davis
<b>TP&amp;WD Rep</b>	Lee Ann Linam
<b>OTHER:</b>	
<b>Web Master</b>	Herb Smith

- Future Board meeting dates \ Calendar of events

7. Date of Next Board Meeting \ Location

8. Adjourn

As always, board meetings are open to chapter members. ✨

## THE PRESIDENTIAL VIEW

Each month, our newsletter editor asks for a "Word from the Top." As I contemplated what to write about this month, I thought of an idea I would like to share to the membership concerning Nature Tourism.

The goals of nature-based tourism in Texas involve promoting habitat conservation, promoting sustainable economic development, and building broad-based public support for wildlife conservation programs. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has chosen to implement a nature-based tourism program that is uniquely suited to a private land state such as ours.

They have done this by providing wildlife viewing driving trails such as the Great Texas Coastal Birding Trail and Great Texas Wildlife Viewing Trails, and by working with private landowners and communities to develop nature tourism enterprises. The TPWD goal is to connect people with nature by making it easier for them to enjoy the natural resources of Texas and thus to care about conserving them. As Master Naturalists, this is also one of our goals.

In my recent travels to the Harlingen \ Brownsville area I frequently use the Harlingen airport. Last month on my way back to the airport I passed by the Hugh Ramsey Nature Park and decided to stop by and see the sights. Much to my amazement, I found a hummingbird feeder area of the park that was maintained and sponsored by the Rio Grand Valley Master Naturalist Program, complete with custom-made benches.

While I know we have done something similar in a few locations (such as the San Marcos Nature Center), this would be a wonderful project for someone to sponsor in our community park areas that get a lot of public traffic.

In my many years working for governments in the natural resources field I have learned one thing; Public Relations are everything!

If someone would be interested in coordinating one or more natural areas for us to sponsor in Hays County, please let me know. There is much work left to do!

Until then remember, Life is Better in the Outdoors.

Sincerely,  
Dale 🦋

## CHAPTER NEWS

### *Abby Linam update*

Abby started some classes at Wimberley Junior High (Danforth) on Wednesday (March 28). I think her report might read something like: Wednesday-I survived. Thursday-was okay. The size and confusion of the public school has been a little overwhelming I think, and, though Taylor Schaede has been by Abby's side to help her get to classes whenever she could, Abby doesn't know anyone who is in the

classes she is taking. We really feel that Abby needs the instructional services that the public school can offer, but we want her to feel emotionally secure as well. As always, Abby is a trooper--doing what we ask her to do--but please pray that we, her teachers, and her counselors there will recognize the right thing for her spirit.

And, bummer, now that she's in public school, we have to get up and get ready on Fridays as well, so I guess I'd better start checking notebooks, school clothes, lunches, etc.

Love,  
-the Linams 🦋

For latest information about Abby's progress, please check <http://www.hillcountryschool.net/index.php>.

### *Certification Completed*

Lisa Ancelet is the most recent graduate of the 2006 Training Class to have completed all the requirements for Certification as a Texas Master Naturalist. Please join me in congratulating Lisa and welcoming her into our active membership.

Judy Telford 🦋

### *Volunteers Needed for Committee Assignments*

Judy Telford and Dixie Camp need volunteers to assist them in their Chapter Committee Assignments.

Judy is Chair of the Membership committee and deals with record keeping, database input, collecting volunteer hours, and reporting results to the Chapter Board.

Dixie, as VP, sets up the Chapter Programs for our bi-monthly meetings. She needs assistance in finding and coordinating speakers and working with the Host committee on arranging chapter meeting locations and accommodations.

If you would like to help on either of these committees to earn volunteer hours, please contact Judy, Dixie, or Susan Nenney. 🦋

### *Reporting Reminder*

Please email your reports of Volunteer Service hours and Advanced Training

immediately to Judy Telford, preferably at [recordscom@haysmn.org](mailto:recordscom@haysmn.org), or send them by USnail Mail to 2303 E. McCarty, San Marcos, TX 78666.

-- Judy Telford ✨



## CALENDAR

(The dragonfly logo ✨ identifies official HCMN events)

April 1 to June 30: **A.R. Valentien Botanicals Exhibit.** LBJ Wildflower Center. This exhibit is on loan from the San Diego Natural History Museum.

April 4: **Texas Nature Writing Symposium,** University of North Texas, Denton, Texas. For more information please check <http://www.unt.edu/union/literaryweb.htm>

✨ April 5: **HCMN Board of Directors,** 7:00 pm. Residence of Winifred Simon, 600 Red Hawk Road, Wimberley.

✨ April 5: **Gardening for Wildlife Workshop,** San Marcos Nature Center. More info below.

✨ April 14 and 15: **Workdays at Jacob's Well.** 1405 Mt Sharp Rd. 8:00 am-4:00 pm.

April 14 and 15: **Spring Plant Sale & Gardening Festival.** LBJ Wildflower Center. <http://www.wildflower.org>

✨ April 21: **Earth Day Celebration** at Emily Ann Theatre's Annual Butterfly Festival. 9:00 am-3:00 pm. More info below.

✨ April 21, **Earth Day Plant Walk with Tom Watson** at Onion Creek. 10:00 am to Noon. More info below.

✨ April 22, **Earth Day Celebration,** Aquarena Springs. Noon to 6:00 pm. More info below.

April 24-29, **Nature Quest 2007.** Concan, Texas. For hard copy of the brochure and registration form send an email to [ken@thcrr.com](mailto:ken@thcrr.com) with your name and address. Ken Cave, Executive Director, Texas Hill Country River Region. 221 North Getty, Upper

Suite, Uvalde, Texas 78801. Phone 830-591-1074, fax 830-591-0031; 800-210-0380. [www.thcrr.com](http://www.thcrr.com).

✨ April 26: Chapter Meeting. **Interpreting Nature.** Dennis Jones, Assistant Director, Brazos Bend State Park, TP&W. Wimberley Community Center. Catered dinner at 6:30 pm. Program at 7:00 pm.

✨ June 28: Chapter Meeting. **Fire Prevention:** Jan Fulkerson, Texas Forest Service. Wimberley Community Center. Catered dinner at 6:30 pm. Program at 7:00 pm.

October 25. Texas Bluebird Society Annual Meeting, McKinney Falls State Park.



## ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### *Gardening for Wildlife Workshop*

APRIL 25, 6:00 TO 8:00 PM, SAN MARCOS NATURE CENTER

Participants will learn the necessary steps to plan, design and transform their landscape into a wildlife habitat. Wildscapes provide food, shelter and water for local wildlife and a beautiful, low-maintenance landscape for the owner. Focus will be on techniques necessary to transition an existing landscape into an outdoor living area that is ecologically balanced and provides a habitat for wildlife. Topics include appropriate plant selection and maintenance techniques. Butterfly and hummingbird gardening will also be included. Plant identification will also be covered through a tour through the Nature Center wildlife habitat. Participants will take home a certification packet from the National Wildlife Federation and several plants to get their new landscape started. Participants should bring a survey plat, pictures, and site information.

Fee: \$20.00. Registration deadline: Monday, April 2. For registration or information, please contact Andrea Dravigne, M.Ed., San Marcos Nature Center, 430 Riverside, San Marcos, Texas 78666. Office 512-393-8448; Cell 512-740-1779. Parks and Recreation 512-393-8400. <http://www.smgreenbelt.org>.

## *The GLOBE Program*

The GLOBE Program (Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment) is a worldwide hands-on, primary and secondary school-based education and science program. It is an interagency program funded by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and the National Science Foundation (NSF), supported by the U.S. Department of State, and implemented through a cooperative agreement between NASA, the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR) in Boulder, Colorado and Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. GLOBE is a cooperative effort of schools in partnership with colleges and universities, state and local school systems, and non-government organizations. Internationally, GLOBE is a partnership between the United States and over 100 countries that manage and support their unique national and regional program infrastructure and activities.

We are happy to announce a GLOBE "Train the Trainer" workshop on April 16-18, 2007. These particular days were chosen for educators because the statewide TAKS tests will be given that week. The cost of the training will be \$150.00. Please go to the following URL for more information and registration. Space is limited to 35 participants, so please register early. For more information about the GLOBE Program, visit [www.globe.gov](http://www.globe.gov).

## *Earth Day Plant Walk with Tom Watson*

APRIL 21, 10:00 AM TO NOON, ONION CREEK PRESERVE, DRIFTWOOD.

The flora at Onion Creek is going to be spectacular this year thanks to the rains! Our excursion will include identification of the common wild flowers of the Hill Country, present and past uses for selected plants (ethnobotany). Tom Watson will also give brief overviews of the geology and plant ecology of the Hill country and prescribed burning as a land management tool.

One of the City of Austin's Water Quality Protection Lands, Onion Creek is open only through special activities such as this.

We will meet at the entrance on FM 967.

To Sign Up: This hike is limited to 20 individuals and pre-registration is required. Participants under 18 must be accompanied by

an adult. To register, please call 512-263-6433 or email to [nancy.didonato@ci.austin.tx.us](mailto:nancy.didonato@ci.austin.tx.us) with your name, evening telephone number, email address, and number of people in your group. After registering you will receive a confirmation with a map and directions to the property entrance.

This event is a joint project of Austin Nature Days and HCMN. For more information, please contact Gail McGlamery, Conservation Program Coordinator, City of Austin-AWU-Wildland Conservation Division. Tel: 512-263-6437, fax: 263-1276. <http://www.austinnatureday.org/> and <http://www.cityofaustin.org/water/wildlands.htm> ✨

## *Bats! An Educator's Workshop*

Bat Conservation International is pleased to announce "Bats! An Educator's Workshop" to be held April 27, 2007 from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm at the Austin Nature and Science Center. The workshop is designed for educators working with grades 3-5, but everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend.

Through a combination of inquiry-based activities and interactive lectures, participants will learn about world-wide bat diversity, their unique adaptations, common local bats and positive conservation strategies. Tying in important concepts in environmental education, the workshop will also include learner-centered discussions and real-world bat conservation projects. All participants will receive the TEKS-aligned activities used in the workshop, a resource packet for further investigation, a certificate of completion and an assortment of bat goodies. Educators will also have the opportunity to view live bats.

The workshop price is \$30 and is limited to 25 people. Registration is on a first-come first-serve basis. Please bring a sack lunch. Coolers will be available but there will be no microwaves. Coffee, tea, water and snacks will be provided.

Additional information, including a draft workshop agenda and registration forms, can be found on BCI's website ([www.batcon.org](http://www.batcon.org)) in the Educators/Kids area.

Please direct all inquiries to Kari Gaukler ([kgaukler@batcon.org](mailto:kgaukler@batcon.org)) or Sara Zahendra ([austineducator@batcon.org](mailto:austineducator@batcon.org)), 512-327-9721

## *Endangered Species Workshop*

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 2007, 9am-4pm, W.G. Jones State Forest, 1328 FM 1488 Rd., The Woodlands/Conroe.

Learn about the endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker in a specially themed Project Learning Tree Workshop for formal and informal educators, pre-K to 8th grade. Sponsored in part by the Heartwood Chapter Texas Master Naturalists.

Participants receive a Project Learning Tree curriculum guide, lunch, and endangered species resource materials. Dress for the weather and in comfortable clothing appropriate for walking in the woods. Bring your binoculars.

To register, send a check or money order for \$20 (made out to Texas PLT) to Texas Forest Service, 1328 FM 1488 Rd., Conroe, Texas 77384, ATTN: Endangered Species Day

Include your Name, Address, Phone #, E-mail and if applicable, school and grade level.

Contact: John R. Warner, Urban District Forester, Texas Forest Service, 936273-2261 [jwarner@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:jwarner@tfs.tamu.edu).

## *Invaders of Texas Volunteer Workshop*

Saturday, June 2, 2007, 9am-5pm. Texas State Technical College-Waco Campus Electronics Center, Room 164. Airline Dr. at 4th Street. (IH 35 to Crest Dr., east on Crest to Airline)

Come Learn About Invasive Plant Species in Our Area. We will learn to identify, document and track invasive plants in central Texas. A "Citizen Scientist" Program.

Cost: \$12 to cover lunch, snacks and computer room. All other supplies will be provided.

Minimum: 15 participants

Bring your digital camera, cable to hook it into the computer, and GPS units if you have them.

Registration deadline is May 19, 2007. Please send the registration fee and a completed copy of the "volunteer interest form" [from [butterflydragon@juno.com](mailto:butterflydragon@juno.com) ] to: Jeanene Betros, PO Box 20306, Waco, TX 76702.

Confirmation/questions via e-mail: [butterflydragon@juno.com](mailto:butterflydragon@juno.com). Sponsored by: Heart of Texas Master Naturalists, Texas Forest

Service and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. TEEAC and SBEC credit pending



## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

### *Overseeding at Onion Creek*

#### RSVP NEEDED

Overseeding of prescribed burned areas is continuing on the Onion Creek properties through the month of April.

Volunteers from HCMN have been working on various conservation projects with the Austin Water Utilities' Wildlands Conservation Division for the past 3 years. The properties at Onion Creek are located in highly porous limestone karst formations which feed directly and rapidly into the Barton Creek portion of the Edwards Aquifer which supplies the water to Barton Creek and the swimming pool in Austin and water wells for homes in Northern Hays County.

The overseeding project involves hand-scattering of native grass seeds (bluestems, grama and Indian grass, sprangletop) over areas that have undergone prescribed burning. The project requires walking over rocky terrain and through dense juniper/shrub thickets with buckets of seed. This project will continue at least through the month of April and perhaps into early May. We meet at the properties in the early morning or afternoon and seed for about 4 hours. These excursions are scheduled for the following dates if you would like to participate:

April 7<sup>th</sup> – 8:30 am

April 11 – 8:30 am

April 14 – 8:30 am

April 15 - TBA

April 21 - TBA

April 22 – TBA

Please RSVP as soon as possible to Tom Watson at [twatson11@austin.rr.com](mailto:twatson11@austin.rr.com) but no later than two days prior to the date that you desire to participate. The number of volunteers will have to be limited to 10 and is open to volunteers from the Austin area in addition to HCMN. ✨

### *State Youth Water Camp*

Master Naturalist Volunteers are needed to assist with the State Youth Water Camp to be held July 8 to 12 in Monahans, Texas. The Camp organizers need instructors and youth leaders/mentors.

Please contact the Texas Cooperative Extension, Ward County at 432-943-2682 or 943-4112 for more information about the camp and a volunteer leader application.

Master Naturalists assisting with the camp may receive both Master Naturalist service hours and advanced training credit for assisting with and participating in this event depending on their level of involvement.

The State Youth Water Camp provides a wonderful opportunity and environment for high-school aged youth to participate in field trips, tours and hands-on group project work that relate to water-related issues and needs. It is truly a unique and memorable experience for all who participate!

### ***Earth Day Celebration***

***Annual Butterfly Festival  
at Emily Ann Theatre,  
Saturday April 21, 9:00 am– 3:00 pm***

#### **HCMN PROJECT #602**

Volunteers are needed for two shifts:

1. Set up booth and staff 9:00 am to 12:00 noon
  2. Staff booth and tear down 12:00-3:00 pm
- Interested volunteers should please contact Karen Hulene Bartell at [hulene1@austin.rr.com](mailto:hulene1@austin.rr.com) or 512-894-0105.

Advanced training hours can be earned for attending the Rain Simulator Demonstration (Ray Franklin) and/or the Plant Identification Walk (Minette Marr) during the EmilyAnn Earth Day Celebration and Butterfly Festival. ✨

### ***Earth Day at Aquarena***

#### **APRIL 22, NOON TO 6:00 PM**

Aquarena is planning a big family celebration for Earth Day. It will offer environmental education at "education stations," information booths, food and vendor booths, and live musical entertainment. Betty Watkins has organized an education station on the effects of water pollution on waterfowl. Betty needs volunteers to help staff the station.

Aquarena would also welcome an HCMN Information booth and additional education stations. For more information or to join the fun, please contact Betty at 512-357-9967 or [tedbettyw@austin.rr.com](mailto:tedbettyw@austin.rr.com). ✨

### ***Quayle's Ragwort Search***

The Cross Timbers chapter is sponsoring a spring camping trip to Lake Mineral Wells State Park April 20-22. Walks and activities will be coordinated by CTMN member Jeff Quayle, a well known botanist from the north Texas area.

Arrive at your own leisure Friday night, April 20. Friday night, Saturday and Sunday activities may include exploration of "Penitentiary Hollow" and the rare plants that inhabit it, searching for Quayle's Ragwort (*Senecio quaylei*), exploration of Lost Lake and the Rock Creek tributary drainage into Lake Mineral Wells. Also a program entitled "Owl Prowl" will be put on by the park staff Saturday night.

Quayle's Ragwort is a rare plant species discovered by Mr. Quayle along the Lake Mineral Wells Trailway in 2000. It is listed by TPWD, with a state rank of S1. Depending on conditions, it usually blooms in mid April to early May. Go to [www.ctmn.org](http://www.ctmn.org) to see photos and information.

Reservations to Mr. Quayle are appreciated. There is no limit. Bring your own camping gear and food. Attendees are responsible for making their own campsite reservations.

[http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/park\\_reservations/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/park_reservations/), 512-389-8900.

Jeff Quayle, [s-quaylei@earthlink.net](mailto:s-quaylei@earthlink.net), 817-729-0283

### ***Trail Building at WQPL Slaughter Creek Tract***

The Austin Ridge Riders is constructing a trail on one of the city of Austin's Water Quality Protection Lands near FM 1826 and Slaughter. This multi-use trail will be a great asset to the community. For more information and for work dates go to [www.austinridgeriders.com/trailwork.htm](http://www.austinridgeriders.com/trailwork.htm)

### ***Wildscape Garden, San Marcos Nature Center***

#### **HCMN PROJECT #405**

March rains favored the growth and flowering of our bluebonnets. Lindenheimer

Texas star daisies and Golden Corydalis are also in bloom, and Gaillardia were beginning to open on March 24. Sow thistles, hedge parsley, black medicago, and red henbit also compete aggressively, and appear undaunted by regularweeding. Even so, our bluebonnets are now the star attraction of the Nature Center.

We welcome contributions of seeds or seedlings of annual and perennial wildflowers to improve the diversity of our garden. 🦋

CONTACT: Richard Barnett,  
[news@haysmn.org](mailto:news@haysmn.org).

### *Jacob's Well Nature Centre Spring Cleanup, April 14 and 15*

#### **HCMN PROJECT #603**

Volunteers are needed for our Spring Cleanup at 1405 Mt Sharp Road. Hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm on both days. Lunch will be served!

The Hays County Commissioners voted unanimously on March 13 to support protection of Jacob's Well Natural Area. The commissioners are reported to favor funding property improvements through a bond package that will come before Hays County voters on May 12.

Sponsor Contact: David Baker,  
Wimberley Valley Watershed Association  
P. O. Box 2534, Wimberley, TX 78676.  
512-847-1582 512-847-1582 🦋

### *Cibolo Nature Center Wildlife Field Research*

APRIL 29–MAY 5.

For more information and registration, please contact Suzanne at 830-249-8240.

### *Nature Conservancy Project Proposal*

#### **HCMN PROJECT #606**

STARTING DATE: 9/1/2006

ENDING DATE:

TYPE OF ACTIVITY: Environmental conservation and education.

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

M.N. CONTACT: Rick Norwood, 830-693-5901;  
[rnorwood@tstar.net](mailto:rnorwood@tstar.net)

M. N. COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THIS PROJECT: none at this time. 🦋



## **State News**

### *Texas Monarch Watch*

(1) Monarchs are on the Move Heading North Through Texas! Monarchs have been flowing through Texas for several weeks now, a few have even reached the Red River.

Monarch Map as of March 23, 2007 - Journey North <http://tinyurl.com/3x45cc>

As is the norm, the spring monarch migration is a more subdued affair when compared to the often spectacular fall migration. Last fall's monarch migration through Texas as noteworthy for how condensed it was. On October 20, 2006, Journey North posted the following report: Migration News: A Dramatic Surge Across Texas!

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch/fall2006/Update102006.html>

Please report any spring sightings you have and I'll pass the information on to Journey North for mapping purposes:

<mailto:mike.quinn@tpwd.state.tx.us>

(2) Overwintering Population in Mexico  
Dr. Chip Taylor, of the University of Kansas, has been monitoring monarchs for 14 years. Each fall, Chip bravely publishes his estimate of the coming winter's monarch population size. His estimates are not always on the mark, but this time he was nearly dead on. In September and October of 2006, Chip estimated that the overwintering monarchs would occupy 6.5 hectares (or 16 acres) of forested habitat. This equates to "roughly 325 million butterflies." Last winter, the butterflies covered 6.67 hectares.

Winter Population Estimates - Journey North: <http://tinyurl.com/2o3ewp>.

Last September, Chip wrote quite prophetically: "The contrast between the monarch populations in the east this year, with its generally favorable conditions throughout the summer, and the Midwest, with extreme drought and high temperatures, once again demonstrates how monarch population size is largely a function of the weather."

Monarch Watch Update - September 2006  
<http://www.monarchwatch.org/update/2006/0930.html#1>

Monarch Watch Update - October 2006  
<http://www.monarchwatch.org/update/2006/1031.html#1>

### (3) Mexico's New President Sets His Environmental Agenda

President Felipe Calderón announced his far reaching environmental agenda in a speech that took place near the Sierra Chincua Monarch butterfly sanctuary in Michoacán, Calderón's home state.

Ricardo Gómez, reporter for the El Universal, wrote the following article on 25 February 2007: President unveils green initiatives.

[http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/miami/vi\\_23537.html](http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/miami/vi_23537.html)

### (4) Texas Moth News (That's right, M-O-T-H news)

Texas is currently undergoing a veritable explosion of wild silk moths! So far, it's primarily Polyphemus Moths which are popping out in unusually large numbers across Texas. Numerous Polyphemus Moths have been reported from south of Dallas, east and west of Austin and north of Corpus Christi. Other silkmoths being reported include: Cecropia, Promethea (in eTX), Calleta (in sTX) and Luna moths.

Here are links to photos of these spectacular moths:

Polyphemus Silkmoth

<http://tinyurl.com/2cxvrg>

Cecropia Silkmoth

<http://tinyurl.com/2m9zuj>

Calleta Silkmoth

<http://www.naba.org/chapters/nabast/Calleta.htm>

Promethea Silkmoth

<http://booksandnature.homestead.com/prometheas.jpg>

Luna Moth

<http://www.fugue.com/~elemon/digipics/digipics-Images/6.jpg>

Cecropia Moth - Life Cycle

<http://www.geocities.com/rainforest/5479/>

I've constructed Texas-centric webpages for the following day-flying moths that you may see visiting flowers:

Eight-spotted Forester - *Alypia octomaculata*,  
<http://texasento.net/octomaculata.htm>

Grapevine Epimenis - *Psychomorpha epimenis*,  
<http://texasento.net/Psychomorpha.htm>

White-tipped Black - *Melanchroia chephise*,  
<http://texasento.net/Melanchroia.htm>

Scarlet-bodied Wasp Moth - *Cosmosoma myrodora*,  
<http://texasento.net/Cosmosoma.htm>

### (5) Thanks!!!

Thanks all for your continued support, data collection and reporting!

Mike Quinn, Texas Monarch Watch,  
[www.texasento.net/dplex.htm](http://www.texasento.net/dplex.htm)

Invertebrate Biologist, Rare & Nongame Species, Texas Parks & Wildlife

3000 I-35 South, Suite 100, Austin, Texas 78704; 512-912-7059, Cell: 512-577-0250, Toll Free at: 800-792-1112 ext 7059

<mailto:mike.quinn@tpwd.state.tx.us>

## *Chimney Swift Sightings*

The first Chimney Swifts of 2007 have been spotted on the Gulf Coast. Once again this year we will be plotting the swifts' movements northward over the next few months. Please let us know when you see the first ones in your area. The results will be posted on our web site at: [www.chimneyswifts.org](http://www.chimneyswifts.org)

You can help us get the word out by passing this message along to any groups or organizations who might want to contribute.

We look forward to hearing from you! Best regards,

Paul and Georgan Kyle, Driftwood Wildlife Association, 1206 West 38th, Suite 1105 Austin, TX 78705.

## *Rachel Carson Online Book Club*

Beginning in March and continuing through November 2007, the online book club will focus on the life and work of Rachel Carson including her role as a female leader in science and government. Through the study of her writing, the book club will provide an opportunity for dialogue and discussion of current environmental issues in light of Carson's legacy. For more information visit the book club website at: <http://rcbookclub.blogspot.com/>



## *Hundreds of Bills on Environmental Issues Filed*

Friday, March 9 was the deadline for filing bills in the Texas Legislature. The Sierra Club's Donna Hoffman reports that the environmental groups' lobbyists are still analyzing the new bills (30% of all bills are filed at deadline) and are working to pick out the key ones.

As a general rule, no bills may be passed until the filing deadline, but some of the high profile bills have been through committee hearings in either the House or Senate.

One very important matter, a vacancy on the three-member Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, was resolved by the Senate's unanimous approval of H. S. "Buddy" Garcia of Austin to serve on the commission. Garcia's term will expire August 31, 2011. Garcia has been a special assistant to the governor on Texas/Mexico issues, working on trade, water and wastewater, and sales of electricity to Mexico. He was legislative director for former Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr.

The Senate passed a bill allowing state regulators to review TXU Corp.'s pending sale.

Here are some of the bills that environmental groups are following:

The House Committee on Business and Industry heard HB 9, by Rep. Myra Crownover, which proposes a statewide smoking ban on Monday, but left the bill pending in committee. Senator Rodney Ellis is sponsoring an identical bill, SB 368.

HB 6, which eliminates the cap on the use of the "sporting goods tax" for parks, was reported out of the House Committee on Culture, Recreation and Tourism on March 7. On March 2, the chair of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission, Joseph B. C. Fitzsimons, and the Chair of the Historical Commission, John L. Nau, III, sent a letter to the committee chair stating that they had agreed that 25 historic sites should be transferred to the Historical Commission. The letter notes that there had not been public input on the list of properties to be transferred and that public input should come through the legislative process.

The Park People organized a group of Houston activists to visit the legislature last

week to show their support for increased park funding. George Bristol, president of the Texas Coalition for Conservation, says that the challenge ahead is obtaining appropriation committee approval for the Texas Parks and Wildlife's budget request.

HB 3, which relates to the management of water resources including the protection of instream flows and freshwater inflows was reported out of its committee.

Several representatives from Houston are sponsoring bills that put forward various actions for TCEQ to take to reduce ambient levels of toxic contaminants, and to create greater access to information of "toxic air" spots. The bills are: HB 2722 by Rep. Senfronia Thompson, HB 2475 by Rep. Scott Hochberg, HB 2890 by Rep. Hubert Vo, HB 440 & HB 2363 by Rep. Ana E. Hernandez and HB 1740 by Rep. Ellen Cohen. The Texas League of Conservation Voters is supporting these bills.

These bills are also included in the "Cheaper, Cleaner, Cooler Legislative Plan" from Public Citizen, Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, and SEED Coalition.

Other bills on the "Cheaper, Cleaner, Cooler" list are:

SB 860 by Ellis & HB 2320 by Gallego, which are identical bills relating to a two-year moratorium on authorizations for certain coal-fired electric generating facilities; a variety of bills requiring more efficiency from utilities; and several bills requiring more efficient appliances, offering sales tax exemptions for energy efficient products, purchasing power management software for state agencies, and funding weatherization programs.

The plan also includes a variety of bills regarding more efficient buildings and better enforcement of building codes. Support for more efficient buildings also comes from the U.S. Green Building Council, Houston Chapter, which is encouraging its members to write their representatives to express support for SB 899. This bill relates to high-performance, sustainable design and construction standards for new or renovated state buildings, public school facilities, and higher education facilities.

Texas Campaign for the Environment works on trash & recycling issues. Its key bills are:

HB 3758, HB 2714 and SB 1324, which require electronics producers to take back their products for proper recycling and disposal. Dell and HP support these bills. The Texas Campaign is lobbying to have televisions included in the bills, because TVs also have

many toxic components. The group expects that many TVs will be trashed when all broadcasts are in high definition.

The group also supports HB 3599, which restores the right to a public meeting when new waste facilities are proposed and HB 3388/SB 1864, which beef up the permit review process for trash permits.

The group Environment Texas is tracking bills about air pollution, water flows, renewable energy, global warming and other issues. Some of the bills on its list are HB 231, which provides that property owners' associations cannot restrict individuals' legal installation of renewable energy technology; HB 344/SB 124, which implement a low-emissions vehicle program corresponding to Phase II of a program of the same nature in California; and HB 722, which establishes a global warming task force.

This is the 80th regular session of the Texas Legislature. It will end on May 28, 120 days after it began. The governor may call special sessions of the Legislature, but the agenda is limited to items on his call. To find out anything that you want to know about the Texas legislature, go to <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us>. To find out who your legislators are, see <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us>.

By Ella Tyler, Citizens Environmental Coalition Newsletter, March 16, 2007.

### ***Texas Universities Score Low on Sustainability Test***

The Sustainable Endowments Institute, a special project fund of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, has released its report card on the sustainability practices of the country's 100 best-endowed colleges and universities. These schools hold more than \$258 billion--approximately 75 percent of all higher education endowment investments.

The University of Texas earned a C+, the best grade of the eight Texas schools on the list. Southern Methodist University and Texas A&M made Cs, and Rice University made a C-. Baylor University earned a D+, Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Christian University made Ds and Trinity University made a D-. No other Texas colleges were rated.

Nationally, the highest grade, A-, went to Harvard University, Stanford University, Dartmouth College, and Williams College.

The grades are based on seven main categories: climate change and energy, green building, food and recycling, administration, endowment transparency, investment priorities, and shareholder engagement.

The only A that any Texas school earned was on Endowment Transparency. The report said, "The University of Texas states that the open records law requires proxy voting records and a list of endowment holdings to be available to the public. This information is emailed to individuals upon request."

Interestingly, Texas A & M, which is subject to the same open records law as UT, got a C in Endowment Transparency. The report says, "The university makes its proxy voting record available only to trustees and senior administrators. Investment managers must be posted on the website per statute, while individual holdings are generally shared only within the treasurer's office."

SMU and Baylor did well in Investment Priorities, earning Bs for inventing in renewable energy activities, but most schools studied scored poorly in Endowment Transparency, Investment Priorities, and Shareholder Engagement. For example, Rice earned Bs in Administration and Green Building but failed Transparency and Shareholder Engagement.

Even if these categories seem unrelated to sustainability, they are important factors in this report because these schools' combined endowments total more than \$300 billion in institutional investor capital. The institute encourages schools to consider climate change in their investments as well as their campus activities.

The report says, "While school trustees and investment professionals carefully weigh financial data, the risk that climate change poses for the bottom line of endowment returns is largely being overlooked. Thus, few schools have exercised their proxy votes on climate change and no schools have introduced shareholder resolutions on this vital issue."

Each schools report specifies the reason for the grade assigned, allowing readers to argue about their school's grade or find out how to get good grades themselves. As an example, Rice's B in Administration is "because a former Rice president signed the Talloires declaration in 1995 and the board of trustees adopted a sustainability policy in 2004. The university employs a full-time sustainability planner and the facilities engineering and planning department excels in green cleaning practices and in creating a socially sustainable working environment for its custodians. Rice is working to connect campus environmental performance with class projects, independent study projects, and student extracurricular activities so that the campus acts as a hands-on laboratory for students to learn about sustainability and to make real changes."

Sustainable Endowments Institute is engaged in research and education on the sustainability of higher education endowments. It has also conducted a survey of officials at the top 331 college and university endowments regarding proxy voting, transparency of endowment holdings and related policy issues. It creates case studies analyzing the best practices of college and university endowment shareowner programs and offers workshops in how students can make their schools more sustainable.

By Ella Tyler, Citizens Environmental Coalition, week of Feb 24, 2007. The entire report and each school's report card are available at <http://www.endowmentinstitute.org>.



## Local News

### *Pollinator-Friendly Parks*

A new publication from the Xerces society contains practical advice on how to provide for the habitat needs of native bees and butterflies--including choosing plants that offer nectar and pollen, hostplants for caterpillars, and creating nest sites for solitary bees--in all types of parks.

**Pollinator-Friendly Parks:** How to Enhance Parks and Greenspaces for Native Pollinator Insects, by Matthew Shepherd, Mace Vaughan, and Scott Hoffman Black. 2006. The

Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation, Portland, OR. 54 pp. For more information on this publication, go to: [http://www.xerces.org/pubs\\_merch/Pollinator\\_Park\\_Guidelines.htm](http://www.xerces.org/pubs_merch/Pollinator_Park_Guidelines.htm). To download a free copy, go to <http://tinyurl.com/3apm qc> (PDF - 1.8MB file).

### *Wimberley Butterfly Watch*

Butterflies observed in and around Wimberley on warm sunny days of March increased in number of species and individuals.

	1-10	11-20	21-31
Pipevine Swallowtail	x	x	x
Black Swallowtail	x	x	x
Easter Tiger Sw'tail			x
Checkered White	x		x
Southern Dogface	x		
Large Orange Sulfur			x
Little Yellow	x	x	x
Sleepy Orange	x	x	x
Dainty Sulphur	x	x	
Great Purple Hairstr.	x	x	x
Henry's Elfin	x	x	
Juniper Hairstreak	x	x	x
Gray Hairstreak	x	x	x
Gulf Fritillary	x		
Variiegated Fritillary	x		
Theona Checkerspot			x
Red Admiral	x	x	x
American Lady	x	x	x
Painted Lady	x	x	x
Carolina Satyr		x	x
Monarch		x	x
Silver-spotted Skipper			x
Northern Cloudywing			x
Juvenal's Duskywing		x	x
Funereal Duskywing		x	x
Sleepy Duskywing		x	
Checkered Skipper	x	x	x
Fiery Skipper			x

Agarita attracted small butterflies early in the month, but lost their appeal when native plums and redbuds came into flower. Texas Mountain Laurels made a weak show during the middle of March, and dewberries came into flower on March 24. Other annual and perennial wildflowers are responding brightly to improved March rainfall, and Pink Mimosa bushes appear ready to flower. Wet and cloudy weather has kept butterfly numbers low during the second half of March, but March 31 brought out a

Large Orange Sulphur, Theona Checkerspots, and a Silver-spotted Skipper. April sunshine should bring a greater number and variety of butterflies.

If you spotted something we missed, please email your editor at [news@haysmn.org](mailto:news@haysmn.org)



## Links to Chapter Sponsors and Partners

### *Sponsors:*

Texas Master Naturalist - State Website - [masternaturalist.tamu.edu](http://masternaturalist.tamu.edu)

Texas Cooperative Extension – [agextension.tamu.edu/](http://agextension.tamu.edu/)

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department – [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/)

### *Agencies of Interest:*

Bamberger Ranch --

<http://www.bambergerranch.org/workshops.htm>

Native Plant Society of Texas – [www.npsot.org/](http://www.npsot.org/)

San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance --

<http://www.smgreenbelt.org>.

San Marcos River Foundation –

<http://www.sanmarcosriver.org>.

Texas Outdoor Women's Network -

<http://www.townsanmarcos.org/>

Texas Cooperative Extension – Sea Grant Program –

[texas-sea-grant.tamu.edu/](http://texas-sea-grant.tamu.edu/)

Texas Forest Service – [txforestservice.tamu.edu/](http://txforestservice.tamu.edu/)

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers –

[www.usace.army.mil/](http://www.usace.army.mil/)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – [www.fws.gov/](http://www.fws.gov/)

U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service –

[.nracs.usda.gov/](http://.nracs.usda.gov/)

### *Partners*

Austin Nature Day --

<http://www.austinnatureday.org/>

LBJ Wildflower Center -- <http://www.wildflower.org>

San Marcos Nature Centre --

<http://www.smgreenbelt.org>