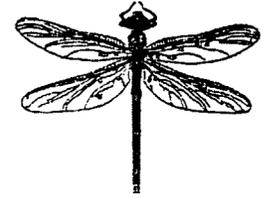


Hays County Master Naturalists NEWSLETTER



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

December, 2006

DECEMBER EVENTS

Joint Master Naturalist and Master Gardener Christmas Party

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 6:00 PM.
Extension Office, San Marcos. 6:30 pm. MGs will bring a meat and MNs can bring a meat. All members attending should bring: A-L salad or vegetable, M-Z bring a desert. If everyone will bring a unisex gift of \$5-\$10 value, we can put them on the table and everyone will pick one. ✨

THE PRESIDENTIAL VIEW

Folks,

Thanks for all that you did to make our Chapter gala a success. The decorations, ceremonies, meal, and overall atmosphere were terrific. I thought that members had an enjoyable evening; I certainly did. I look forward to supporting your efforts in serving the Chapter in the coming year.

Have a very Merry Christmas,
Tom ✨

CHAPTER NEWS

Election of HCMN Officers

State MN Coordinator Michelle Haggerty joined 59 members and guests and Bryan Davis at our gala annual chapter meeting on November 30 in the Wimberley Community Center. The meeting began with the election of officers for 2007. The Nominating Committee's slate of nominees was elected by acclamation. The 2007 Executive Board consists of:

President	Dale Shively
Vice President	Dixie Camp
Secretary	Susan Nenney
Treasurer	Winifred Simon
Past-President	Tom Watson ✨

HAYS COUNTY MASTER NATURALISTS

President	Dale Shively
Vice President	Dixie Camp
Past President	Tom Watson
Secretary	Susan Nenney
Treasurer	Winifred Simon
Training Committee	Nancy Turner
Records Committee	Judy Telford
State Advisory Board	Walt Krudop
Web Master	Herb Smith
Editor	Richard Barnett,
	512-847-6941, news@haysmn.org
Extension Agent	Bryan Davis
TP&WD Rep	Lee Ann Linam

Presentation of Awards

Our gala chapter meeting featured the first annual presentation of awards.

Dale Shively, as Chair of the Awards Committee, presented an **Honorary Membership** to the **Wimberley Valley Watershed Association** in recognition of its contributions to environmental protection that focus on the community's water resources and culminated this spring with the acquisition of the Jacob's Well Natural Preserve.

Past Presidents of HCMN received plaques in recognition of their service and special contributions to the growth of Hays County Master Naturalists.

Linda Keese	2000
Mark Fernandez	2001
David Schwarz	2002
Dell Hood	2003-2004
Randy Moss	2005
Tom Watson	2005-2006

Dale presented plaques to 2006 Training Committee Chair Nancy Turner. In turn, Nancy identified Dr. Ray Franklin as the Training Committee Volunteer of the Year. Ray brought potted plants and seasonal samples of grasses and other vegetation to every class. He involved the class in interactions as they shared

observations. Ray participated in the numerous site visits by identifying and recording vegetation and providing advice to landowners. In addition to his dedication to the Training Committee and the 2006 Class, Nancy noted Ray's enthusiasm for community education. He played an active part in WVWA's "Save It or Drain It" workshop and transported and demonstrated the rainfall simulator at such events as Earth Day and EXPO. Nancy commended Ray for his invaluable contributions to the Training Committee, the 2006 Class, and the community.

the following members in recognition of their Significant Contributions to Hays County Master Naturalists:

- Richard Barnett, Newsletter editor, 2004-2006
- Winifred Simon, Chapter Treasurer, 2004-2006
- Herb Smith, Chapter Web Master, 2005-2006
- Tom Watson, Chapter President, 2005-2006

Dale presented **Five-year Service Awards** to an elite group of active Certified Master Naturalists: Richard Barnett, Delbert Bassett, Gerin Hood, Winifred Simon, Judy Telford, and Betty Watkins.

Marion Couvillion received the **Outstanding Chapter Volunteer of the Year Award** in recognition of over 200 hours of distinguished service. Marion created over 30 gifts for guest speakers. He coordinated and promoted site visits, fund raisers, and chapter workdays. Marion created traveling exhibit boards and built park benches for Margaret's Trail at White Wings Ranch. Marion created our colorful float for Wimberley's Fourth of July Parade and piloted the tractor.

Joe Piazza received the first-ever **HCMN Special Achievement Award** in recognition of his creative and versatile tenure as Curriculum and Training Coordinator from 2000 to 2005. Over 90% of the attendees stood to show that they had benefited from Joe's leadership. Joe received his plaque with congratulations and a standing ovation 🦋

Recertification Pins

The following members received pins in recognition of their completion of a minimum of 8 Advanced Training hours and 40 Volunteer Service hours during 2006:

Ann Allen, Linda Anderson, Richard Barnett, Karen Bartell, Joe Black, Susan Black, Dixie Camp, Marion Couvillion, David Doonan, Betty Finley, Ray Franklin, Ginger Geist, LaRay Geist, Barbara Jacobson, David Jones, Cecilia Kelley, Jamie Kinscherff, Jane Little, Jean McMeans, Susan Nenney, Dale Shively, Winifred Simon, Herb Smith, Judy Telford, Bonnie Tull, Terry Tull, Nancy Turner, Lydia Washam-Morgan, Betty Watkins, Tom Watson, Cara Wernli, KayBeth Williams, and Susan Zimmerman.

Milestone Pins

Members receiving Bronze dragonfly pin for completing 250 hours of Volunteer Service were:

Dixie Camp, Marion Couvillion, Ray Franklin, Ginger Geist, Herb Smith, Nancy Turner, Lydia Washam-Morgan, and KayBeth Williams.

Four members received Silver dragonfly pin honoring their completion of 500 Volunteer Service hours:

Linda Anderson, Marion Couvillion, Ray Franklin, and Winifred Simon.

Tom Watson became the second HCMN member to receive the Gold dragonfly pin for completing 1,000 hours of Volunteer Service. Those were not all administrative hours either. Tom spent a big chunk of those hours at work in the field at places like Onion Creek. 🦋

Chapter Achievements

Tom Watson reports that 72 active members of the Hays County Chapter completed a total of 5465 Volunteer Service hours during the first 10½ months of 2006. These included 2533 Administrative hours (including training), 1486 hours in Habitat Restoration, 80 hours of Trail Maintenance, and 1436 hours of Public Outreach. This record total of volunteer time comes from the largest

number of active members in our chapter's history.

Public outreach events included the first Project Wild presentations, a summer day camp at the Wimberley Birding Society's Preserve, the Land Stewardship Field Day, organization and participation in Earth Day events in San Marcos and Wimberley, and our entry in the Fourth of July Parade. 🦋

2006 Class Graduation

. It was a great evening with a walk through Pioneer Town, on-stage graduation of the Falcons Class of 2006 at the fabulous Opera House, and an intimate dinner and slide show at the Silver Spoon Cafe.

Hostess Nancy Turner welcomed guests to the ceremony honoring the Falcons and shared comments from two graduates on what they learned from the course.

"I learned to look down: I never realized the number of different grasses or the differences in the land ..." – Debbie Wright

"I learned to unselfishly share information and time with people new to the area and in need of guidance ..." -- Karen Hobbs

Extension Agent Bryan Davis delivered a brief and inspirational message to motivate the new members to continue their volunteerism and education in the spirit of this course.

Nancy Turner presented Hays County Master Naturalist certificates and HCMN shirts Bryan Davis awarded HCMN mugs to the following new HCMN members: Lisa Ancelet, Shawn Audlin, Martha Brown, Nick Burkhalter, Caterina Hinshaw, Keith Kealey, and Laurel Robertson.

During the 8-month training period, 18 graduates completed not only the 36 hours of class instruction but 12 hours of Advanced Training and a minimum of 40 Volunteer Service hours, qualifying them as Certified Texas Master Naturalists. Bryan Davis presented dragonfly pins symbolizing state certification. President Tom Watson, assisted by VP Dale Shively, congratulated the new Master Naturalists and presented framed state certificates and personalized name badges to:

Karen Archer, Mary Arizpe, Mimi Boelter, Ken Brocker, Larry Calvert, Linda Calvert Tyler

Carlson, Shirley Couvillion, Ella Heatherly, Karen Hobbs, Dorothy Knight, Sandra Lucas, Linda Morgan, Beth Ramey, Debbie Wright, and Ken Zeiger.

Dinner at the Silver Spoon Café included a slide show featuring over 160 photos collected by Training Committee and class members.

In summary, Karen Archer wrote, I can say this class is one of the most important things I've ever done! I can't wait to share all I've learned and continue my own education."

-- Nancy Turner 🦋

Welcome Rick Norwood

Our newest Master Naturalist following the graduation of the 2006 Class is Rick Norwood. Rick has just joined the Hays County Chapter by transfer from the Highland Lakes Chapter. Rick has been programming database systems for bird management and vegetation restoration for the Nature Conservancy as a volunteer project for the Highland Lakes Chapter. Please help Rick feel at home here. 🦋

City of Austin recognizes Hays County Master Naturalist volunteers.

Each year the Wildlands Conservation Division (WCD) of Austin Water Utilities (AWU) hosts an evening dinner for the purpose of recognizing significant volunteer service to the AWU-WCD conservation programs in the previous year running from Oct. 1, 2005 to Sept. 30, 2006. This year's dinner, on November 18th, was held at Reicher Ranch on the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve near Beecaves and honored five Hays County Master Naturalists: Shirley Couvillion (36 hours), Bonnie Tull (52 hours), Terry Tull (54 hours), Marion Couvillion (188 hours), and Tom Watson (273 hours). All were presented with certificates of appreciation, and Tom and Marion, the two volunteers contributing the most time, were awarded additional honors in the form of a "first aid kit" for treatment of resulting aches and pains. Other Hays County Master Naturalists in attendance were LaRay &

Ginger Geist and John & Cindy Cassidy, who were also volunteers for WCD programs. ✨

Abby Linam's Progress

November 27 was a full day and a good day for Abby. She had great therapy sessions. In OT she was able to sit unsupported for several minutes (I think that the secret was the OT engaged her in playing mock games of basketball and volleyball!). Before this time she had not been able to overcome her muscles spasms in order to sit unsupported more than a few seconds.

In speech therapy Abby is performing better at tasks that require her to discern and choose between different objects. She was also able to vocalize a few sounds today, and our dear friend Jessie is the lucky recipient of her first vocal "hello" on a telephone! She is constantly mouthing words now (as she went to sleep she was silently singing along with a Michael W. Smith CD), so either we have to get her vocalizing more, or I've got to get better at reading lips!

Physical therapy is still hard work, as Abby's tight tendons still make stretching her ankle joints difficult, but she works hard on her walker, nonetheless. She's also still got a lot of tightness in her neck that the PT hopes to work on.

And then there were the social highlights today. Puffy the Shih Tzu therapy dog paid her a visit, and Abby combed her hair (believe me, there's a lot of it to comb!). And then Abby was visited by therapy horses (or at least it was good therapy for Abby!). Her Aunt Linda and Uncle Greg (and cousin Kayla) stopped by on their way home from Arizona with Holliday and Canuck (sp?). Abby's eyes really lit up at the sight of the horses, and the horses even sensed what they needed to do, as they both gently extended their noses to her. Okay, we also had wonderful visits from some very special human friends today too, but you know Abby and her horses and dogs...

Or if you don't, then I'll try to tell you soon about this girl and her love affair with animals. For now, I'll just let you know that the special thoughts you've shared with us about her have warmed our hearts...

Keeping you close to our hearts,
-the Linams

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

Reporting Reminder

Please email your reports to Judy at recordscom@haysmn.org or send them by USmail Mail to 2303 E. McCarty, San Marcos, TX 78666. ✨

CALENDAR

(The dragonfly logo ✨ identifies official HCMN events)

December 5. **Texas' Past, Present and Future.** December Sierra Club Meeting 7.00 pm, LCRA Hancock Building, 3700 Lake Austin Boulevard, Austin.

Geologist Christopher Bell will present "Texas: Past, Present and Future" at the Sierra Club monthly meeting, Dr. Bell, associated with the Department of Geological Sciences at UT Austin, will show slides and present a scientific discussion of the observations and assumptions scientists make in order to interpret the fossil record and make predictions about the future. The lecture explores the challenges associated with interpreting ancient environments and conditions that shaped the distribution of modern biota.

For more information, please see <http://www.texas.sierraclub.org/austin/>

❖ December 10. **Regional Master Naturalist Christmas Party** at Cibolo Nature Centre in Boerne, hosted by Alamo Chapter. Please watch this space for more details

❖ December 20. **Joint Master Naturalist and Master Gardener Christmas Party**, Extension Office, San Marcos. 6:30 pm. MGs will bring a meat and MNs can bring a meat. All members attending should bring: A-L salad or vegetable, M-Z bring a desert. If everyone will bring a unisex gift of \$5-\$10 value, we can put them on the table and everyone will pick one.

✧ February 2 to 4, 2007. **Birds of a Feather.**
Texas Master Naturalist 2007 Campout at Brazos
Bend State Park, Needville, Texas. More info below.



ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Hill Country Foundation

The Austin Water Utilities/Wildlands Conservation Division has some upcoming trainings that qualify for MN Advanced Training. These events on Water Quality Protection Lands (WQPL) are offered by their partner, the Hill Country Foundation (HCF) for the Wildland Conservation Division (WCD).

The Hill Country Foundation will conduct the two-day training workshops to assist the WQPL in their efforts to provide conservation education as well as volunteer activities for the citizens of Austin and the surrounding areas. When volunteers have completed the training, the WCD program will manage and direct the activities of trained volunteers.

Three workshops will be offered -- one interpretive guide training and two trainings for land stewards -- as detailed below. The city is seeking individuals who are experienced and comfortable in a wildland setting, either through participation in Wildland volunteer or other activities. Each of these trainings is a two-day commitment over a single weekend, 7-8 hours on Saturday and 4-5 hours on Sunday afternoon.

Land Steward Training -- December 2 & 3, 2006 and again on January 13 & 14, 2007. This training will be conducted on a WQPL tract where classroom and hands-on field training will be provided. Training activities will include plant identification, seed collecting, reseeding, cave clean outs, tree planting, and others. Volunteers will be trained to lead groups of volunteers in performing some of the tasks mentioned on a recurring basis and with minimal supervision.

For more information on trainings and how to apply, please contact Mary Gay Maxwell at 472-5958, or by email at marygaymaxwell@sbcglobal.net.

Birds of a Feather

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST 2007 CAMPOUT

FEBRUARY 2-4, 2007, AT BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK

- Advanced Training Opportunities
- Presentations by
- **Birds** by Dennis Jones, Assistant Park Director, Brazos Bend State Park
- **Spring Migration** by Scott Keister, Texas Master Naturalist and educator
- **Raptors: Bringing in the Hawks** by Dick Benoit, President, Galveston Bay Master Naturalists

Pre-registration is required. Registration is limited to first-come/first-served. Spouses are welcome. No pets. \$25 per person for Saturday only (no camping); or \$40 for overnight Friday and Saturday in the Dining Hall. For more information and reservations, please contact Sarah Smith Sarahbethsmith1@aol.com or Becky Bailey at (281) 320-8443.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Blue Hole Project Proposal

Sponsor: Wimberley Parks & Recreation Board;
512-847-1231

Contact: Dell Hood, hood@alumni.utexas.net

Activity: Removing non-native plants from Blue Hole Regional Park, Wimberley

Starting date: August 1, 2006

End date: indefinite

Activity type: Habitat restoration

Description:

Blue Hole Regional Park, Wimberley, is owned by the Village of Wimberley. Large areas of the park are planned to remain natural and undeveloped. Non-native plants will be removed wherever possible in order to ensure the best possible diversity of Central Texas native plant species and to improve habitat for native fauna.

Comments:

Our immediate priority is removing an invasive plant, Asian marshweed (*Limnophila sessiliflora*), from Cypress Creek in the area of the riffles immediately downstream from the swimming area of Blue Hole. Minette Marr will give instruction on the procedure

for removing the plant so as to prevent its further spread.

The initial project complements the Invader program to remove invasive species. Next year, we may work on trails or plan and plant habitat. After that, the park will need docents.

Margaret's Nature Trail, White Wings Ranch

HCMN PROJECT # 601

You may remember that last summer off RR12 near San Marcos a snake fatally bit a woman from Wimberley. It turns out that she was both a member of the Unity Church and very much a nature enthusiast. She bequeathed a small amount to the church for the creation of a nature trail on the 43 acres that is owned by the church. The money is to go for signage, a tri-fold brochure, interpretive material etc.

Pastor Mindy Audlin and her husband Shawn have made great headway in the actual layout and construction of the trail. Joe Piazza, myself and a few other Master Naturalists went for a visit and were well impressed with the progress thus far. They have asked for our help to complete the construction of the trail and ID the plants along the route. They have also asked us to help in the design and writing of an interpretive tri-fold brochure about the trail and Hill Country ecosystems. We have talked about planting a native grass garden and a butterfly garden. Once the trail is complete, besides helping maintain it, we are to be available to give guided walks to interested folks.

Unity Church has learned from their insurance company that they can allow non-members access to the trail and they want to open it up to the public for educational and outreach programs. This would include school groups and scouting groups as well.

The area where the trail has been located is very diverse, going from grasslands dotted with various trees and forbs to a lovely riparian zone with the associated flora and fauna. Its length is about 1/2 mile, with spots to sit and enjoy views along the way.

-- Jamie Kinscherff, HCMN Contact;
Jamie@kinscherff.com ✂

Wildscape Garden, San Marcos Nature Center

HCMN PROJECT #405

Gulf Fritillary caterpillars were still attacking the passion vines during the first half of November. Blue mistflowers continued to attract Monarchs and Queens, and lantana cultivars were Monarchs and other butterflies.

Modest September rains encouraged bluebonnet seeds to sprout and take hold, but dry weather since then has not been helpful.

As usual, there's no stopping invasive plants and bermudagrass. Elm and pecan seedlings pop up regularly. We have to pull up these aggressive invaders to control them. Ruellias have also moved in and need aggressive control to keep them from crowding out the bluebonnets.

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

Jacob's Well Nature Centre

HCMN PROJECT #603

HCMN Project Coordinator:

Marion Couvillion, marion@hcmn.org
512-858-1609

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

Starting date: 4/1/2006; end date: open

The first HCMN work Day at Jacob's Well was July 15.

Project Description: The project will help the Wimberley Valley Watershed Assoc. plan and restore the Jacob's Well surroundings to a natural condition using native plants, conduct nature tours, provide education classes at the completed nature center, help with trail building, plant native plants, etc.

Activity type: Habitat restoration, Restoration and Management planning, Direct outreach, Indirect outreach, Trail construction and maintenance, Data collection, Native plants maintenance

Comments: This will be a great opportunity to

become associated with a nature center where we can apply our Master Naturalist training to benefit the public. ✨

Tree Folks Project Proposal

HCMN PROJECT # 605

NAME OF ACTIVITY OR EVENT: Habitat Restoration; Planting Trees with Tree Folks
STARTING DATE: January 1, 2006.
ENDING DATE: to be determined
TYPE OF ACTIVITY:

TreeFolks restores the urban forest of Central Texas through tree planting, education and community partnerships. They invite businesses, schools, government, community groups and individuals to join in creating a healthier environment and enhancing the quality of urban life. Since its inception in 1989, TreeFolks has planted tens of thousands of trees in Austin and Central Texas at schools, Retirement homes, Housing Projects, Parks, Green Spaces, Rights of Way and Medians, Neighborhoods, Preserves, Green Belts

SPONSOR: Tree Folks; PO Box 704; Austin, Texas 78767. TreeFolks, Inc. is a 501C3 non-profit corporation.

NAME OF CONTACT: **Scott Harris, Executive Director**; 512-443-LEAF, admin@treefolks.org

HCMN CONTACT: Marion Couvillion, 512-858-1609; PO Box 872; Dripping Springs, TX; marion.hcmn@gmail.com

HCMN COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR THIS PROJECT: volunteers needed

Project Description:

Tree Folks sponsors several environmental projects:

City Shade is a large scale, high-impact and highly organized planting program for public parks and other public lands. This program gives citizens opportunities to participate in public tree plantings to improve their communities.

CommuniTrees is a dynamic and effective grant program that offers trees to eligible individuals or groups planning tree planting projects on publicly accessible land. Since 1992, CommuniTrees has provided trees to dozens of schools and institutions as well as educational programs and materials for participants and expertise for the long term care of the trees.

TreeFolks provides education through speakers, fun, organized workshops and expertly crafted and beautifully illustrated publications that greatly expand our service beyond simply planting trees.

Every October TreeFolks hosts Sapling Days, distributing seedlings every week in October.

The Urban Orchard Project places fruit and nut trees in public spaces. Program participants take part in a training program that teaches them the basics of organic fruit and nut tree care, pruning and harvesting techniques. The **NeighborWoods** Program is designed to plant trees to save energy and to combat the Heat Island Effect. Temperatures in urban centers are 6-15 degrees hotter than the surrounding countryside. Planting trees in positions to shade pavement is a highly effective and economical way to combat that effect. Every year, with sponsorship and support from Austin Energy, TreeFolks places over 4000 of these "street trees." ✨

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.

NAME OF GROUP: The Nature Conservancy

M.N. CONTACT: Rick Norwood, 830-693-5901; rnorwood@tstar.net

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



State News

Texas Monarch Watch

1) Status of the Population

This has certainly been an interesting year for monarchs. The overwintering population in Mexico for the winter of 2005-2006, though a modest 5.92 hectares, survived the winter well and there were no reported episodes of mortality due to storms or other calamities. As

the winter's survivors moved north in the spring, they evidently encountered conditions that allowed them to reproduce at an exceedingly high rate. The result of this reproduction was the largest wave of first generation monarchs to move north in the history of Monarch Watch (14 years) and in the memories of many long-term monarch observers. The arrival of large numbers of first generation monarchs and the large numbers of second generation larvae reported from most areas north of 42N gave rise to numerous enthusiastic reports and high expectations for one of the best migrations in a decade or more. Some of these expectations were met and others were not. Observers in the east, along the coast from Maine to New Jersey, but especially those in Massachusetts, Rhode Island as well as Long Island, reported extraordinary numbers of monarchs. I received at least 8 "once in a lifetime" reports from members of the public who witnessed thousands of butterflies either clustered on trees, feeding on seaside goldenrods or in flight. In Massachusetts, a number of long time butterfly observers declared that this was the largest monarch migration in 30-40 years. Further, at Cape May, Dick Walton, in collaboration with Lincoln Brower and others, recorded the second highest number of monarchs in the 15 year history of that program. Being the second highest is a bit misleading since, as I will explain below, the highest numbers recorded at Cape May are related to Hurricane Floyd.

While there is no doubt that the monarch population in the east was robust, the population in the Midwest, from Wisconsin to the eastern Dakotas, was disappointing and ranks as one of the lowest populations of migrants we've seen from that region since we began the tagging program in 1992 (the poorest year being 2004). The crash of the monarchs in the upper Midwest appears to have been due to high temperatures in July and early August and an extensive drought as I outlined in last month's Update. 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.

Size of the Fall/Winter Population

In the [August Update](#), based on the information available at that time, I estimated that the overwintering population this year

would be close to 5.5 hectares. My pessimism was due to the low numbers of monarchs that seemed to be originating from the upper Midwest, an area that normally contributes substantial numbers of monarchs to the fall migration. Throughout late August and September reports from the upper Midwest consistently indicated a low population. Further, for the first time, many of the taggers in this region returned large numbers of unused tags. Although the population in the east was already known to be quite large, I did not feel that the numbers of monarchs from the east alone would be sufficient to populate Mexico with the average number of hectares of monarchs. So, I was conservative but made one provision, namely that I would raise the estimate to 6.5 hectares if the drought conditions in Texas improved enough to generate sufficient flowers for the migrating monarchs. There is still a significant drought in Texas, but conditions did improve enough to allow the monarchs to pass through the state without high losses due to lack of water and nectar. We will have to wait until February, after all the colonies have been measured, to see if this prediction is accurate. For my record in predicting overwintering populations – some hits, some misses – see the Update for August 2006.

By Chip Taylor
Monarch Watch

<http://www.MonarchWatch.org/update/2006/0831.html#!>

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Texas Entomology: www.TexasEnto.net
I can be reached Toll Free at: 800-792-1112 ext 7059



Local News

Wimberley Butterfly Watch

American Snouts (*Libytheana carinenta*) remain ubiquitous, though their numbers have dropped since mid-November. The numbers of

migrating Monarchs has tapered off. Southern Dogfaces

We observed two White Peacocks during the second week of November and a Soldier (Tropical Queen) for the first time in Wimberley on November 26. Butterflies seemed to abound everywhere they could find nectar plants during the mild weather of the second week of November, culminating with over 40 different species on November 11.

The nectar plant butterflies flock to most in late October and early November is White Mistflower. Every butterfly gardener needs to plant a bush or two in a south- or west-facing location with full exposure to sunlight. Butterflies of all sizes and a number of interesting moths absolutely cluster on White Mistflower during their week or so of peak bloom.

Butterflies observed in and around Wimberley during November include Giant Swallowtail, Pipevine Swallowtail, Black Swallowtail, Checkered White, Cloudless Sulphur, Alfalfa, Southern Dogface, Orange Sulphur, Large Orange Sulphur, Orange-Barred Sulphur, Dainty Sulphur, Little Sulphur, Sleepy Orange, Lyside Sulphur, Gray Hairstreak, Juniper Hairstreak, Scrub Mallow Hairstreak, Great Purple Hairstreak, Ceraunus Blue, Reakirt's Blue, Buckeye, Painted Lady, American Lady, Red Admiral, White Peacock, Gulf Fritillary, Variegated Fritillary, Texan Crescent, Vesta Crescent, Theona Checkerspot, American Snout, Common Mestra, Carolina Satyr, Monarch, Queen, Soldier, Cloudywing Skipper, Funereal Skipper, Juvenal's Duskywing, Horace's Duskywing, Checkered Skipper, Fiery Skipper, Southern Skipperling, Dun Skipper, Sachem, Eufala Skipper, Ocola Skipper, and other little brown skippers.

If you spotted something we missed, please email your editor@hcmn.org. ✨

Butterfly Calendar

Melody Lytle of Austin has published a 14-month (11/06 – 12/07) calendar that is illustrated with photographs of native butterflies of Travis County. Butterflies ignore political

boundaries, and the calendar is equally representative of butterflies in Hays County.

The calendar is free for downloading and printing. Pass it along and let Melody know if you find mistakes.

http://home.austin.rr.com/dljokes/Lep_cal/index.htm



Links to Chapter Sponsors and Partners

Sponsors:

Texas Master Naturalist - State Website - masternaturalist.tamu.edu

Texas Cooperative Extension – agextension.tamu.edu

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department – www.tpwd.state.tx.us/

Agencies of Interest:

Bamberger Ranch --

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

Native Plant Society of Texas – 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/

Texas Forest Service – txforestservice.tamu.edu/

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers –

www.usace.army.mil/

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – www.fws.gov/

U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service – .nrcs.usda.gov/

Partners

Austin Nature Day --

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

LBJ Wildflower Center -- www.wildflower.org

San Marcos Nature Centre -- http://www.ci.sanmarcos.tx.us/departments/parks/Nature_Center.html?menu=DP13