



Texas Master Naturalist Newsletter

Volume II No. 2

December 1999

Class Meeting: Tuesday, December 14, 1999

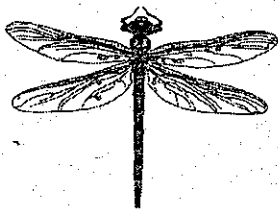
Extension Office 6:00-9 p.m.

Topics:

- ★Meal - Jeanette Butler and Volunteers
- ★Plant Identification, Road kill Survey & Observations - Billy Kniffen
- ★Soils - Charles Stichler, Agronomist, TAEX, Uvalde
- ★Volunteer Opportunities - Delbert Bassett

Billy Kniffen
County Extension Agent
Hays County

"The Nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased and not impaired in value." - Teddy Roosevelt.



December 14th Program

I hope you have been keeping up with your road kill survey. If you forgot - then this is your reminder.

Also, are you observing something each week in nature to jot down? I mentioned porcupines last month; last week I had to pull quills out of the nose of our family dog. This month Charles Stichler, agronomist for all South Texas for the Extension Service will be here to discuss soils. He will discuss in terms you can understand and talk about Hays County soils too. I have a project for you to do to help you analyze your soil (even if there is not much) to determine its particle size and characteristics.

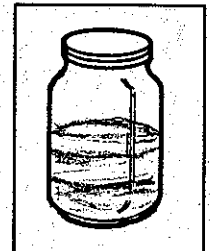
Also I will have some plants for you to identify. **You are welcome to bring some from your place to ID as well.**

Your Project to Bring to class.

1. Get a glass jar with a lid - 1 pint to 1 quart in size.
2. Get about 8 ounces of top soil from your native land. (Some bring in fill dirt for yards).
3. Put the soil in your jar And fill

- almost full with water.
4. Shake a bunch till everything is suspended.
5. Let it settle for at least 24 hours (more does not hurt).
6. **Bring it to class** but don't shape it too much so layers will stay plain and water is clear.

Be sure and thank Jeanette **Butler** for cooking and coordinating the cooking of the meal each month.



Wildflower Tour Next April 27.

This is early notice but it will be on a Thursday. There will be 4 sections (tentative):

- a. morning wildflower tour
- b. afternoon tour - another location
- c. field trip and program at SWT Freeman Ranch
- d. meal and evening program on range ecology and the impact of man.

Books are in

If you ordered books, they are here and you can pick them up now or at our class meeting. Also there are a few extra for sale still, if you need one or want to give one for Christmas.

Projects Needing Help.

I have not had time to contact anyone to help with putting the rain simulator parts together and start the seedball project. I would like to work on them on **December 8 and 9. All day - so if any want to come and help - come on!**

Red Corral Ranch Field day

- **April __, 2000** (date not finalized) A group called Planit Texas which is a coalition of various groups will have a field day on Saturday, April 29 at their demonstration ranch on the Hays-Blanco County line west of Wimberley on FM 2325. We plan to do a prescribed burn there this winter if rains come and the burn ban is lifted. Also there have been a number of things done to preserve its native state and yet be productive. It will be great - plan now to go.

While marking your calendar, there will be a **Water Conference on April 19, 2000 at the San Marcos Activity Center.** I will need some help. This is a Wednesday but there will need to be a booth set up, help with refreshments, registration and the likes.

Joe Elizarde brought some

Hawthorne seeds and I got some carolina buckthorn and coral honeysuckle and others and we cleaned them, scarified some with sulfuric acid. Some are in the refrigerator to stratify the seed so we will be ready to plant some this winter or next spring. We could use a greenhouse to get seedlings started. Know of one?

"A land ethic reflects the existence of an ecological conscience, and this in turn reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land. Health is the capacity of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity." - Aldo Leopold.

Road Kill Records. Please work on them for one week each month. You do not have to do more.

Total for October, 1999:	
Deer.....	143
Racoons.....	80
Armadillos.....	63
Skunks.....	46
Squirrels.....	30
Opossums.....	27
Dogs.....	24
Birds.....	23
Rabbits.....	9
Cats.....	8
Snakes.....	6
Fox.....	1
Feral Hog.....	1
Total.....	461

Also this month we may want to select our **mascot and class name.**

(As a Reminder) **Make-up Missed Meetings.** All meetings must be attended or made up to graduate and receive your prize. Also all will be required to do 40 hours of volunteer duty **to reach full metamorphosis and earn your wings. Volunteer hours can start now** or as you have projects you would like to work on. It would be great if you had your volunteer hours and advanced training in by this time next year. (But it is not required till one year after completion of the course.)

What To Do With Cut Cedars

I see lots of people waiting for the burn ban to be lifted so they can burn their brush pile. Most of these people live in rocky sloping places that erode easily. **The brush would be worlds more valuable laid out in neat windrows catching sediment** and making a great seed bed for seeds and habitat for wildlife. After 1 year they may be removed and burned if desired or left to help the land. We have a demonstration at the Freeman Ranch.

