

Class Meeting: Tuesday, January 11, 2000

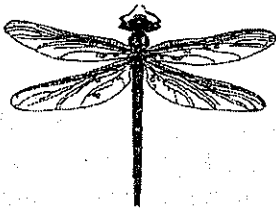
Extension Office 6:00-9 p.m.

Topics:

- ★Meal - Jeanette Butler and Volunteers
- ★Plant Identification, Road kill Survey & Observations - Billy Kniffen
- ★Water - Marshall Jennings (on Aquifers) and Dr. Larry McKinney (Surface)
- ★Volunteer Opportunities - Delbert Bassett

Billy Kniffen
County Extension Agent
Hays County

"A land ethic, then, 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 capability of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity." - Aldo Leopold 1948.



Happy New Year!!!
I hope you have a great year coming up!

January Program -

Water is the most precious commodity we have. Without it we would perish. Watching TV on the population in India, their lack of water is controlling their destiny. Development in Hays County is hinging on water as well. **Marshall Jennings** has been one that has helped form the plan for future development depending on proof of water availability. He has worked close with the Commissioners Court and is monitoring area wells for the Edwards Aquifer Research and Data center at SWT. Also **Dr. Larry McKinney** will give us information on our streams, rivers and area lakes. This should be a very good program.

I hope you have taken time to write down road kill one week during the last month. Delbert Bassett is tabulating the

information. Also don't forget to make observations.

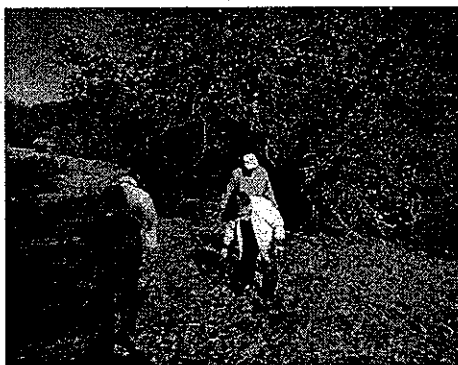
A mascot?

Joe Piazza asked me what organism represents the healthiest environment. So here is a response for you to rebute. It is difficult to find that one measure of natural resource health. **Earth worms** may be the best indicator of soil health. Organic matter and moisture are requirements for their health and may be a good choice. **Armadillos** feed on these worms and have survived so long (our living dinosaur) and may indicate good balance in nature. There are certain organisms in water that indicate clear, pure streams without pesticide and sediment runoff. (We will have a **speaker on that later in the year**). Little or big bluestem and the other grasses of the original grassland prairie are good indicators of land health; and, predators are at the top of the food chain and depend on

all of the building blocks to survive; or, a bird like the Eastern Bluebird requires food shelter space and water in good natural environment to survive and thrive; and the list goes on and on. **In nature no single living organism can live alone.** Each is dependent on another so the answer is a difficult one. I would like your thoughts and comments as we discuss your classes emblem.

Freeman Ranch Water Plots:

There were 6 of us cutting and piling brush on the 28th of December in preparation for 2 plots to be put in that will measure the effect of brush removal (cedar and oak), its effect on water runoff



Workers at plots at Freeman Ranch.

and sediment loss and grass recovery. This will give us a comparison of proper grazing, immature cedar removal and now, brush removal where no grasses currently exist.

We worked again on January 3. Picture above of January 3rd. Thanks Curtis Chubb, Luis and Jocelyn Guajardo, Joe piazza, Wayne Underwood and another (I

forgot who - please remind me I do remember they worked real hard).

"The outstanding scientific discovery of the 20th century is not television or radio, but the complexity of the land organism." - Aldo Leopold.

Master Naturalist Coordinator Training January 14-15.

There will be a 1 ½ day workshop for new areas wanting to begin a Master naturalist Chapter. Delbert Bassett and I will help with the program. If any one would like to help in the leadership of our chapter or is from another county and would like to be involved in starting one there, let me know and I will give you more details. We will need to get new volunteers to lead and be responsible for certain projects. Let me know if you have such interest.

Area Coordinators: there are individuals that I call on to do assistance in areas of the county. They are: **Dell Hood** will be the coordinator in Wimberley to make contacts with those who could make home visits. **Delbert Bassett** will call for help around Dripping Springs and **Alice Johnson** will call for the San Marcos area.

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.)

"Anyone can count the seeds in an apple, but no one can count the apples in a seed." - Anonymous.