

Hays County Master Naturalists NEWSLETTER



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

January, 2007

JANUARY EVENTS

January Board Meeting

The Executive Board of Hays County Master Naturalists will meet at 7:00 pm, Monday January 15 at 820 Red Hawk Road (4 mi east of Wimberley off RR-3237), the home of Susan Nenney.

Draft Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda (additions \ deletions)
2. Housekeeping
 - Board members in good standing – dues paid for 2007?
 - 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).
3. Appointment of Committee Chairpersons \ Board Members (Operating Handbook B:)
 - Historian (results from contact with Laurel Robertson)
 - Chair – Newsletter Committee (conversation with Richard Barnett)
 - Appointment of State Representative \ Discussion of Role
 - Propose Tom Watson as State Representative
 - Setup Nominating Committee for proposal of other Appointments to report back at next Board Meeting (Volunteer Service Projects; Advanced Training; Outreach; Host)
4. Training Committee
 - Class location within Wimberley for 2007 Training Class – Discussion and resolution of location.
 - Discussion and feasibility of a second shortened Training Class (proposed by Tom Watson).
5. First Chapter Meeting in **February**
 - Date

HAYS COUNTY MASTER NATURALISTS

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

- Program
 - Food
6. Other Business
 7. Date of Next Board Meeting \ Location
 8. Adjourn

As always, board meetings are open to chapter members. 

THE PRESIDENTIAL VIEW

As we come into a new year, it is a time for resolutions, new ideas, and a renewed sense of motivation to those causes we hold dear. I hope that one of those causes is your commitment and participation in the Hays County Master Naturalist Program.

Your newly elected Chapter Board is already hard at work to make 2007 Chapter activities and events go smoothly. Our first meeting took place on 19 December 2006 and, among other items, we established the 2007 Training Class Committee with Nancy Turner as the new Chairperson. We also appointed Judy Telford as the new Membership Chairperson.

My resolution for the Chapter this year is to enter into an expanded public relations program in which we "Get the Word Out" in a big way. I believe the key to our success in fulfilling the mission of the Chapter is to stay in the eye of the public and focus on a few, select Chapter projects that have a large impact on the community and are recognized by the public. That means we will need the input and support of each Chapter member. How we do that will be addressed in future Board and Chapter meetings.

I hope you will continue to see your Board as the vehicle for your input into directing the Chapter. Are we doing a good or bad job? Is the Chapter heading in the right direction? How can we improve things? Your input is invaluable. Please feel free to contact me or any Board member to give your input and comments. Better yet, come to the Board meetings and let us hear from you!

To those long-standing and committed members *and* to those who just finished the 2006 Training Class, I wish you a Happy New Year from your Chapter Board and will see you at our first Chapter Meeting in February!

Dale ✨

CHAPTER NEWS

Abby Linam's Progress

On December 20, our 12-year-old daughter Abby was able to return home for the first time following her accident on October 3. Though Abby still has far to go in her recovery from her head injury, we are so thankful for the progress she has made thus far. We are also so thankful for the outpouring of support that we have received from so many Master Naturalists. Though we may never get to thank all of you personally, please know that your calls, cards, emails, gifts, visits, and prayers have helped to hold our family up. Thank you and Merry Christmas!

--Lee Ann & Gordon Linam

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

Reporting Reminder

Please email your reports of Volunteer Service hours and Advanced Training immediately to Judy Telford, preferably at recordscom@haysmn.org, or send them by USnail Mail to 2303 E. McCarty, San Marcos, TX 78666.

Judy must have this information **ASAP** for her annual report to the TMN state office, which must report to the upper levels that approve the Master Naturalist program. ✨

Certification Update

Several members have completed all the requirements for certification or recertification in 2006 since our Gala party in November.

The amended list now includes:

Ann Allen, Linda Anderson, Richard Barnett, Karen Bartell, Joe Black, Susan Black, Dixie Camp, Cindy Cassidy, Marion Couvillion, David Doonan, Betty Finley, Ginger Geist, LaRay Geist, Melinda Gumbert, Karen Hayward, Barbara Jacobson, David Jones, Cecilia W Kelley, Margie Kidd, James Kinscherff, Walter Krudop, Jane Little, Minnette Marr, Jean McMeans, Jim McMeans, Susan Nenney, Rick Norwood, Dale Shively, Doug Shomette, Winifred Simon, Herb Smith, Judy Telford, Bonnie Tull, Terry Tull, Nancy M. Turner, Lydia Washam-Morgan, Betty Watkins, Tom Watson, Cara Wernli, KayBeth Williams, and Susan Zimmerman.

Rick Norwood, after transferring his hours, has not only recertified for 2006 but also has reached the milestone levels of 250-, 500- and 1000-volunteer hours.

-- Judy Telford ✨

Annual Dues

Annual dues of \$12.00 are now payable. Please send your check payable to Hays County Master Naturalists c/o Winifred Simon, Treasurer. 600 Red Hawk Rd, Wimberley, TX 78676. ✨

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CALENDAR

(The dragonfly logo ✨ identifies official

HCMN events)

January 3, 10, 24, & 31: **Beekeeping Classes** at 7:00 pm, San Marcos Public Library. Presented by Gordon Holt and SMA Bee Wranglers. Free. Recommended by Dale Shively. For more info please contact Denise Benson at DeniseBenson@grandecom.net or http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SMA_BeeWranglers. Qualifies for Advanced Training Credit.

January 13, 2007. **Wildlife Habitat Gardening Workshop**, Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, Austin. Presented by Kelly Bender, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and Bill Stout of National Wildlife Federation. 8:30 am to 4pm. A nominal registration fee includes lunch. For information and registration, please contact Kelly Conrad Bender, Urban Wildlife Biologist Central TX, 1106 College Ave, Suite A, Bastrop TX 78602. Kelly.bender@tpwd.state.tx.us, 512-308-0979. Qualifies for Advanced Training Credit.

January 13, 9:00 am-3:00 pm. **Texas River Watch River Monitoring Training**

For info and registration, please contact Jason Pinchback at jp30@txstate.edu or 512-245-9148.

The minimum number of students required to attend the class is 12. Thirteen people in last year's class signed up for the river monitoring training which usually is held on the Texas State University campus in San Marcos. Jason will let you know whether or not the class makes.

Qualifies for Advanced Training Credit.

✧ January 20. **Karst Feature Inventory at Onion Creek**, Rutherford Ranch. 9:00 am to 12:45 pm. More info below. Qualifies for volunteer hours.

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



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.

One workshop remains -- 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. This workshop requires a two-day commitment over a single weekend, 7-8 hours on Saturday and 4-5 hours on Sunday afternoon.

Land Steward Training -- 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.

Qualifies for Advanced Training Credit.

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 Sarabethsmith1@aol.com or Becky Bailey at (281) 320-8443.

Qualifies for Advanced Training Credit.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Karst Feature Inventory at Onion Creek

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 9:00AM TO 12:45PM

HCMN PROJECT #426

The objective is to find, flag, and inventory karst features (caves, sinkholes and other aquifer recharge features) on Onion Creek's Rutherford Tract.

The Wildland Conservation Division had a prescribed burn on the Rutherford tract in September of 2006. This burn has temporarily cleared the herbaceous vegetation in the burn unit. We have a golden opportunity to find and document karst areas in the burn area before the vegetation regenerates.

Volunteers will stand approximately 15-20 feet apart in a line and slowly walk across the area, searching for caves, sinkholes, or other karst features. Once found, karst features will be flagged and documented. The goal is to inventory all the karst features so their significance can be determined. This inventory will help inform our land management practices at the site.

The work area contains loose rocks, leaves, and other tripping hazards. Volunteers must wear long pants and closed toes shoes,

preferably hiking or work boots that support the ankle. Long sleeved shirts are advised. Participants should also bring a bottle of water, a snack, and dress for the weather.

Participants will meet at the gate on FM 967 that is located between Buda and Driftwood. From there they will drive to the work location.

Training will be provided. For more information or registration, please contact Daniel Dietz at daniel.dietz@ci.austin.tx.us or 512-263-6443.

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.

Wildscape Garden, San Marcos Nature Center

HCMN PROJECT #405

Light freezes at the end of November and beginning of December froze back all the lantanas and passion vines that were attracting butterflies in November.

Modest September rains encouraged bluebonnet seeds to sprout. Mostly dry weather since then has not been helpful but we seem to have a goodly number of healthy bluebonnets. Competing hedge parsley and sow thistles have also thrived and require regular control.

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. ✨

CONTACT: Richard Barnett,
news@haysmn.org.

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, 2006.

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 for public benefit. ✨

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

2007 Recertification Pins

The 2007 TMN program re-certification pin made its debut at the recent TMN Annual Meeting. The 2007 recertification pin is the Shrimp--one of the program logos available on the current approved marketing and identity logo list. The shrimp will be the first all-aquatic species in the Re-Certification pin collection. Please remember, Master Naturalist volunteers are eligible for this re-certification pin once they complete 40 hours of approved Volunteer

Service and 8 hours of approved Advance Training within the 2007 calendar year.

As a reminder, service conducted in 2006 cannot be carried over, nor is it eligible toward 2007 re-certification.

The Texas Master Naturalist Re-Certification pins are specially designed, jewelry quality, limited edition pins and they recognize the achievement of re-certification standards for the current certification year. ✨

Texas Monarch Watch

From the Monarch's winter home in Mexico: "¡Las primeras mariposas han llegado!"

29 DE OCTUBRE DE 2006

It seems that today was the first day that butterflies "officially appeared". Mr. Germán Medina was at "El Cerrito" --the small forest where butterflies make a halt before climbing up to the Sanctuaries--and could see small groups of 5, 10-20 butterflies flying around. And in town, we could see exactly the same quantities and distribution overflying us. So the big arrival will take place over the days to come now.

The raining season seems to be over now. Since yesterday, and after very cloudy, windy and rainy weeks, we have deep blue sky and sunny days, with very icy cold mornings and evenings, though.

2 DE NOVIEMBRE DE 2006

Germán Medina told me this morning that at El Cerrito there must be now about 50 trees with a fairly good number of butterflies, while in El Rosario there must be about 30 trees with Monarchs (though fewer per tree). So we can say that the monarchs have officially arrived!

-- María Estela Romero, Angangueo, Michoacan (19° N -100° W), in the mountains near two of the largest monarch sanctuaries.

-- from <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch>

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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

Light freezes early in December the final fall flowerings to an end and sharply cut the numbers and variety of butterflies seen in October and November.

Butterflies observed in and around Wimberley during December include Dainty Sulphur, Little Sulphur, Sleepy Orange, Lyside Sulphur, Gray Hairstreak, Great Purple Hairstreak, Painted Lady, American Lady, Red Admiral, White Peacock, Gulf Fritillary, Variegated Fritillary, Buckeye, American Snout, Checkered Skipper, and Sagem.

We saw the last Monarch of the year on November 29 and the last American Snouts on December 18. White Peacocks, observed for the first time in Wimberley in October, lingered until December 22.

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.bambergeranch.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 – txforestservicetamu.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