

Hays County Master Naturalists NEWSLETTER



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

September, 2007

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Executive Board Meeting

The HCMN Executive Board will meet at Susan Nenny's residence on Red Hawk Road, Wimberley from 2:00 to 4:00 pm on Sunday, September 16.

Topics for consideration include the September chapter meeting; installation of new board in November; recruitment of members to serve on the board; and awards committee for 2007.

September 27 Chapter Meeting

"Groundwater Issues in Hays County and the Science behind Them"

Presented by Andrew Backus, President of the Hays-Trinity Groundwater District. Wimberley Community Center, 7:00 pm.

The program begins at 7:00 pm and is open to the public at no charge. Refreshments of tea and cookies will be served. Donations for meeting expenses will be accepted. ✨

THE PRESIDENTIAL VIEW

As you may have heard from news reports last week, a giant spider web (or series of webs) was found at the Lake Tawakoni State Park in Wills Point, Texas, near Dallas. The webs stretch around the perimeter of the lake for over 200 yards and were found in early August. It was thought that the spiders were social spiders that sometimes work together to build webs and capture prey. Some researchers now have stated that over 11 spider species are involved and do not include the social spiders (at least in the one sample collected by naturalists). Whether the web(s)

HAYS COUNTY MASTER NATURALISTS

Board of Directors

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

were made by communal spiders or as the result of a mass dispersal as is seen sometimes in nature, the end result is the same. . . lots of mosquitoes captured.

As Master Naturalists, we can be as effective as these spiders in "dispersing" ecological knowledge to the general public by continuing to work together for a common cause. Likewise, some issues in the Chapter need to be addressed to help it function more smoothly and I need your "communal" input.

A new Board will soon be established for the upcoming 2008 year. New volunteers are needed to serve on that Board as elected officers and Committee members. For those who would find it rewarding to serve the Chapter in a new capacity and would like your name placed on the upcoming ballot, please let me know by email (pres@haysmn.org) or phone (512-389-4686). The pay is poor, and hours sometimes long, but the benefits are great!

The second item of interest is the structuring of the Master Naturalist Training Class Committee. I am setting up a workshop (date to be announced soon) to gather Chapter member input into how the committee functions and is structured. The purpose is to develop a proposal that will go before the Chapter for input into the Standard Operating Procedures Manual. Issues that will be discussed include: size of committee; key positions; establishment of committee in mid-year; training locations; and other topics. The workshop will be approximately 2 hours. To speed the process, I will send out some ideas for feed back by email. Anyone who cannot attend the workshop can still provide input by contacting me in the same manner as above.

This is your Chapter so your input and participation is greatly appreciated.

Naturally yours,

Dale ✨



CHAPTER NEWS

August 23 Chapter Meeting *"Here Come the Hummingbirds!"*

Mark Klym of Texas Parks and Wildlife says the fall migration of hummingbirds is in progress. Mark told an enthusiastic audience at the Wimberley Community Center to expect the fall migration to reach its peak in the third or fourth week of September. Five species were observed passing through Hays County last fall, in comparison to 9 in Bexar County.

To attract migrating hummingbirds to your garden, Mark says you need not depend on feeders if you provide water, native plants and cover. The best native plants have tubular flowers and include honeysuckle, coral honeysuckle, Turk's Cap, trumpet vine, cross vine, acanthus, Salvia greggi, yellow bells (Esperanza), and lantana. Hummingbirds prefer a moving water supply—a fountain or something with a trickle or a drip.

Hummingbirds are solitary for most of the year, and aggressively antisocial and protective of their territory and feeders. Mark says they

tolerate each other's presence only during migration, when they have to double their body weight in preparation for the journey south. You may increase the sugar content in their feeders from 1 part sugar to 4 parts water to 3, but higher concentrations risk being lethal. No food coloring, please! ✨

Calling all Hays County MNs,

We need a few good volunteers to staff the **Texas Master Naturalist** booth at **Texas Parks and Wildlife EXPO, October 6-7**. Dixie Camp is coordinating. She needs 24 people to help in six-hour shifts. Please RSVP directly to Dixie at dixie_camp@yahoo.com with all questions and to sign up. Thanks.

Susan, Secretary ✨

Abby Linam update

Abby . . . very much wants to be back among her classmates at Hill Country Christian School, and I'm very glad for that. It's a warm, supportive environment, with a lot of Godly love. Because she was so far ahead in her schoolwork before the accident, the great news is that Abby will be able to start with her regular 8th grade classes. The downside is that I'm feeling like a tearful mother of a kindergartener again! I'm always very emotional the night before school begins, anyway, and this year brings extra emotions. One is that I know Abby may face some challenges in areas where she's never had them before. Please pray for her as she begins this year and faces those challenges. But the other side is mainly me--Abby and I have spent so much time together over the last 10 months. We're truly closer than we have ever been before (how many mothers of a 13-year-old can say that??), and I'm going to miss having her near me. So, say a little prayer for me too, okay? (She would be saying, "Okay, Mom, no crying.")

But, like all nights before school begins, there is much to do, so I'd better close--thanks for reading...

Love, --the Linams ✨

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

Volunteers Needed for Committee Assignments

Dixie Camp needs volunteers to assist her with 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 this committee and earn volunteer hours, please contact Dixie or Susan Nenny. ✨

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 USsnail Mail to 2303 E. McCarty, San Marcos, TX 78666.

-- Judy Telford ✨



CALENDAR

(The dragonfly logo ✨ identifies official HCMN events)

✨ September 6. **2007 Class Site Visit.** See below.

September 11. **Wimberley Valley Water Issues.** "Water-related Demographics" by Village of Wimberley and TSU. Wimberley City Hall, 6:00-8:00 pm.

✨ September 15, **2007 Class Meeting,** John Knox Ranch. Water Quality & Fish, Chapter 12. Amphibians, Chapter 13.

✨ September 18. **Wimberley Valley Water Issues.** "Water Regulatory Authority Matrix" by Greg Ellis. Wimberley City Hall, 6:00-8:00 pm.

September 19. **Tap into Rainwater.** 8:00 am--4:00 pm. McKinney. For information and registration form, **click here.**

✨ September 20. **2007 Class Site Visit.** See below.

September 25. **Tap into Rainwater.** 8:00 am--4:00 pm, Boerne Convention Center, Boerne. For information and registration form, **click here.**

✨ September 27. **Chapter Meeting.** "Water Supplies in Hays County" by Andrew Backus, Hays-Trinity Groundwater District. Wimberley Community Center, 7:00 pm.

✨ October 2. **2007 Class Meeting.** Urbanization & Land Fragmentation, Chapter 20. Volunteers as Teachers, Interpretation, Chapter 21.

✨ October 6-7. **WILDLIFE EXPO 2007,** TP&WD, Austin. More info below.

✨ October 12-14. **TMN Statewide Annual Meeting,** San Antonio. More info below. **Click here** to download the Registration Packet.

✨ October 18-21. **The Blackland and Grand Prairies and Grasslands of the Edwards Plateau.** NPSOT Symposium, Sun City/Georgetown. More info below.

✨ October 27, **2007 Class Graduation.**

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

October 26-27: **Texas Forest Expo:** "Lending a Hand to You and Your Land." Lone Star Convention Center, Conroe Texas Oct. 26, noon - 7 p.m.; Oct. 27, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m. For more information, please check <http://texasforestexpo.tamu.edu>

✨ November 3, 10, and December 1. **Certification Program for Citizen Wildfire Ecology Specialists.** Comal Co Extension Office. More info below.

November 14-16, **Texas Invasive Plant Conference,** LBJ Wildflower Centre, Austin. For more information, please check <http://www.texasinvasives.org/conference07/conference.html>.



ADVANCED TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Go Native U Texas Union Informal Classes

FALL 2007 SCHEDULE

Go Native U is a new informal program at the LBJ Wildflower Centre that is designed to teach beginning gardeners to become certified native plant gardeners. Through a series of fun and interactive classes students will learn about the benefits of gardening with native plants. Classes may be taken individually for those wanting to build on their current gardening skills or as a series for those pursuing a certificate of merit in native plant gardening.

Certification classes begin September 1. All classes will be held on Saturdays at the Wildflower Center's beautiful campus in south Austin.

Sign up for the entire sequence of Go Native U courses and receive a 15% discount on your registration (General: \$230, UT & WFC: \$184). For a certificate of merit in native plant gardening, participants must complete the entire sequence of Go Native U classes.

Learn more about Go Native U and becoming a better native plant gardener by visiting www.wildflower.org/gonativeu.

September Site Visits

SEPTEMBER 6, 6-8 PM.

Ben Adair Property, 13100 Rooster Springs Rd, Austin. Tel: 512-394-9501, Cell, 512-773-3668.

Ben's property is 7.75 acres of gently rolling terrain. There is a mixture of native and non-native grasses with a variety of native and non-native trees. Ben would like to identify all of the native grasses.

Ben has a variety of wildlife with good habitat. There are some erosion problems but most have been addressed by a pond, another detention area, the development of grasses, and use of brush piles.

Don't forget to bring water, sunscreen and wear the appropriate clothing and footwear.

DIRECTIONS: Property is located off Hwy 290 east of Dripping Springs. Rooster Springs Road is the first road east of Sawyer Ranch Road (entrance into the Polo Club). Drive to the end of the road. There is parking inside the gate on the circular drive or on the cul-de-sac outside the gate.

2 Hours Advanced Training Credit

SEPTEMBER 20, 2007, 6-8 PM

Art Arizpe Property, 990 Windmill Run, River Mountain Ranch, Wimberley.

Tel: 512-847-2355, Cell: 512-626-3738

Art and Mary Arizpe have owned their 91-acre property for over 10 years. The land is 50% pasture and 50% woods. They have an agriculture exemption. The property has a grass lease and is unfenced.

The Arizpes have two issues: 1) How much livestock (cattle) can their property handle. 2) They have an interest in transferring into a Wild Life Management Program. Their goals are to restore, maintain and improve habitat and develop diversity.

The property has a wet water creek and feral hogs. A rainwater collection system with a 12,000 gallon storage tank supplies water to the house.

Remember to bring water, wear sun screen and bug spray, and wear appropriate clothing and shoes.

DIRECTIONS: Take FM 150 from Kyle to County Rd 3237. Follow 3237 approximately 5 miles to River Mountain Ranch Rd. Take a left on River Mountain Ranch Rd to the dead end at Windmill Run. Go left on Windmill Run to the Arizpe property at 990 Windmill Ranch Rd.

From Wimberley: Take 3237 toward Kyle approximately 3.5 miles to River Mountain Ranch Rd. Turn right and drive to the dead end at Windmill Run. Go left on Windmill Run to the Arizpe Property.

2 Hours Advanced Training Credit

TMN Statewide Annual Meeting

OCTOBER 12-14, SAN ANTONIO

2007 is the 10th Anniversary of our founding Texas Master Naturalist Chapter--The Alamo Area Chapter! So come on for a Texas Master Naturalist Fiesta to celebrate this special milestone for this chapter and our state program.

San Antonio has more natural areas to see and Advanced Training field sessions than we can offer through just one weekend! You won't be disappointed! This year's annual meeting will be hosted by the Alamo Area Chapter and sponsored in part by the San Antonio Parks & Recreation Department.

Location: One major difference for this year's annual meeting is that we will use a hotel as our conference facility. The **Hilton San Antonio Airport** will be our host hotel and the primary location of our group events. We have planned an agenda with as much outdoor time as our past meetings. San Antonio has much to offer for the naturalist enthusiast wanting to learn about and conserve our ever-changing habitats, species and populations and the conservation of those resources faced with the numerous natural resource challenges of an urban or urbanizing area.

You can make your room reservations today at the Hilton. Room costs will be separate from your annual meeting registration costs. However, the two costs combined will be comparable--if not the same as-- past years' fees of \$180 for the full event).

ROOM COSTS:

Rooms cost \$85.00 per night for a King sized room OR a double room. King-sized rooms allow up to two people with a king-sized bed.

Double Rooms allow up to four people per room with two double beds (roll-aways can be ordered at an extra cost if you so desire) You will need to make your room arrangements and payments directly with the Hilton. If needed, room rates may be extended three days prior to and after the event, based on availability.

BOOKING YOUR ROOMS

Attendees can book online or by phone today! You must mention the group code when booking the room. This will allow the reservations department to pull up the special group rate. It is vital you mention this code. There is also a spot online to input this code.

GROUP CODE: TPWD

Room rates guaranteed with Reservations made by September 14th, 2007. Phone: 1-888-728-3031. Online:

<http://www.sanantonioairport.hilton.com>

HIGHLIGHTED ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA ITEMS:

*The Annual Meeting registration and information packet is now available. **Click here to download the pdf file.***

- Geology and Plants Training at the Canyon Lake Gorge
- The ever-popular Annual Meeting volunteer project
- Awards banquet (where you can bring your spouse and/or family members)
- Rainwater Harvesting Training
- many other regular Annual Meeting happenings.
- lots of new events being planned by the Alamo Area Chapter as the host chapter for this year's event!
- and several more surprises!

BRING THE FAMILY!

Given the affordable overnight accommodations and the space available to us at the Hilton San Antonio Airport, I hope that you will consider bringing your families and making this trip a family event. We're planning a banquet and meal Saturday evening that I hope you will attend with family to celebrate your accomplishments and awards as a Texas Master Naturalist volunteer! We are planning a special fee for non-registered family members wishing to purchase a banquet ticket when attending with a TMN Member registered for the Annual Meeting.

RENT A VAN?

Your chapter might want to consider car-pooling or renting a van as a chapter to cut down on the gas costs (if this is something your chapter considers, let Michelle know, we might be able to figure out some cost-sharing if we can utilize the van for off-site field trips while on site at the Annual Meeting).

Looking forward to seeing you in San Antonio at this year's Annual Meeting!

Michelle M. Haggerty
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Master Naturalist Program Coordinator
309 Sidney Baker South, Kerrville, TX 78028
Ph: 830-896-2500
Fax: 830-792-6167
Mobile: 979-587-2627
mhaggerty@wfscgate.tamu.edu

*The Blackland and Grand
Prairies and Grasslands of the
Edwards Plateau*

*Efforts to Identify, Restore, Conserve and
Celebrate a Natural Treasure.*

NPSOT/NPAT SYMPOSIUM, OCTOBER 18-21.

You will have an opportunity to meet and visit with our members and guests who care deeply about our environment, especially native plants and plant ecosystems. Many of our combined 2000 members of NPSOT and NPAT will travel from cities all over Texas. These individuals promote the conservation, research and utilization of native plants and plant habitats of Texas through education, outreach and example.

Our speakers, including keynote speaker Matt White, author of the inspirational new book, *Prairie Time*, are already committed. They will address participants and answer questions in the newly enlarged Social Center Ballroom and other meeting rooms of Sun City Texas in Georgetown. The speaker list, schedule of events, and information about how you can participate in the symposium are described below, and on the event web site <http://npsot.org/symposium2007>. This web site will be regularly updated with the names of sponsors and vendors.

To request a registration packet, please visit our website <http://npsot.org/symposium2007>.

The caliber of our speakers and our central Georgetown location is expected to attract 400-500 registrations.

Conservation and restoration of our native prairies and grasslands has received a great deal of attention recently. More people are beginning to appreciate the beauty, and great loss, of the prairie habitat and the importance of the grassland ecosystem which captures and retains moisture, requires no fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides, develops extensive root systems which prevent soil erosion and does a fine job of taking in the carbon dioxide emissions implicated in global warming. Today, native, undisturbed, prairies in Texas are very rare and what remnants do remain continue to be lost to farming, grazing and development.

Every acre of high quality prairie habitat has 200 to 300 different kinds of wildflowers and grasses that are native to the American prairies. The Tallgrass Prairie is a proud part of our heritage. It is the original unchanged land that the ancestors of our community walked upon, the landscape of our pioneer heritage.

Please join us for an event that will help define a better future for all Texans.

Kerr WMA First Saturday Tours

In an effort to reach more landowners the Kerr WMA has moved its First Friday Tours to the first Saturday of each month.

First Saturday Programs will begin in July and run through October with each program starting at 1 pm and wrapping up around 5 pm.

The program is an ecosystems approach as it pertains to range and wildlife habitat management. Topics discussed will include white-tailed deer management, grazing management, prescribed burning, brush control, and endangered species. The program will also include over 20 years of nutrition and genetics research conducted in the Donnie E. Harmel White-tailed Deer Research Facility.

Dates are as follows: July 7, August 4, September 8 (to avoid Labor Day weekend), and October 6.

Please pass this information along to anyone that may be working with landowners and/or cooperators who are interested.

For more information or registration, please call Dale F. Prochaska, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept., Kerr WMA, 2625 FM 1340, Hunt, TX 78024. Office 830-238-4483; Fax 830-238-4738
windy.altum@tpwd.state.tx.us
www.tpwd.state.tx.us

*Certification Program for Citizen
Wildfire Ecology Specialists*

NOVEMBER 3, 10, AND DECEMBER 1.
COMAL CO EXTENSION OFFICE.

Texas Forest Service, Texas Extension Service, and Texas Master Naturalists present this 30-hour course to help citizens prepare themselves and their properties before wildfires strike. The course covers wildfire ecology and fire risk recognition, assessment, and reduction. It includes individual and group firewise

planning projects and a hands-on field trip. For more information or registration, please contact Jan Fulkerson, Texas Forest Service, P O Box 1692, Wimberley, TX 78676; 512-847-7837; jfulkerson@tfs.tamu.edu. The registration fee is \$50.00 ✨



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Invasive Species Corps

Date and Time: Training is on September 8 2007.

Location: Training to take place in Bee Caves. Volunteer work to take place in several locations on Balcones Canyonlands Preserve in western Austin and Travis County.

Description: The Invasive Species Corps will survey and map the location and density of invasive plant populations on the city of Austin's 13,000 acre Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP). BCP staff need this information to prioritize control work and create an invasive species plan for the preserve. The September 8 training will introduce volunteers to the data collection protocol. Volunteers will then be expected to attend two workdays over the next year. There will be the opportunity for both independent volunteering and volunteering with a group. To learn more [click HERE](#). To register for the training, please [click HERE](#) to download an interest form, and then send it to Daniel Dietz. (daniel.dietz@ci.austin.tx.us 512-263-6443)

Balcones Canyonlands Interpretive Guides

Date and Time: Multi-day training is on September 22 (8:30am to 4pm), September 23 (8:30am to 2pm), and September 29 (8:30am to 12:30pm)

Location: Training and volunteer work to take place in several locations on the city of Austin's Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) in western Austin and Travis County.

Description: Recruitment is underway for volunteers to become BCP Interpretive Guides. Volunteers will be trained to co-lead a general interpretive hike on three different properties highlighting endangered species' habitat,

ecological connections, and land management. To learn more [click HERE](#). Applications are due August 6. [Click HERE](#) for an application, and then send it to Daniel Dietz. (daniel.dietz@ci.austin.tx.us 512-263-6443)

Water Quality Protection Lands of the City of Austin

HCMN PROJECT #426:

The Water Quality Protection Lands at Onion Creek in Hays County consist of 4 tracts of land totaling approximately 3,500 acres of typical Texas hill country with brush and grasslands. These properties are only a short distance from Wimberley, Kyle, and Dripping Springs being located only 1.3 miles E of the Hays City Store at the intersection of FM 150 and FM 3237.

The city of Austin purchased these properties in 1999 with bond money from a 1998 election for the purpose of protecting the quality and enhancing the quantity of water recharging the portion of the Edwards Aquifer that feeds Barton Creek in the city. The aquifer also serves to supply wells for thirsty rural dwellers. The properties and certain wildlife preserves are managed by a division within Austin Water Utilities dedicated entirely to that purpose and known as the Wildlands Conservation Division (WCD). The totality of properties managed is known as Water Quality Protection Lands, Onion Creek properties being one of those lands.

The properties are situated on karstified Glen Rose limestone, which has a multitude of caves and crevices through which surface waters pass on their way down to the aquifer. Onion Creek flows through the properties on their South perimeter. The creek was flowing in 2004 but dried during the droughts of 2005 and 2006. Today, thanks to the replenishing rains, its crystal clear water flows over limestone bedrock and tumbles over small waterfalls. At one spot on the creek there is a large whirlpool where water rushes into a cave formed under the creek bed.

This spring, the uplands were awash in color from the first succession stages following prescribed burning. Visitors found fields of Brown-eyed Susan, Lemon Beebalm, Phlox, Crow Poison, Celestials, Mealy Sage, Indian Blanket, Evening Primrose, Mexican Hat, and Rain Lilly amid a myriad of grasses. White,

blue, purple, pink, red, and yellow colors form a mosaic upon a carpet of green.

To achieve the main objective of conservation management in the upland properties, WCD is reducing the woody vegetation, especially Junipers, and enhancing grass growth. In the bottom lands, the objective is to restore the riparian vegetation, apparently removed when the properties were actively ranched or perhaps by flooding, in order that the floodplains will better absorb and cleanse runoff from the uplands. Secondary objectives of management at Onion Creek are to eradicate invasive species where possible and to improve wildlife habitat.

The reduction of Juniper canopy in the uplands will allow more water to reach the soil surface and reduce evapo-transpiration loss, which draws water from the soils. A thicker grass cover will decrease surface runoff and promote infiltration of water into the soils, thereby increasing the amount of water reaching the aquifer.

In addition to increasing water infiltration and percolation, preserving the lands from residential and commercial development will avoid the inevitable pollution. Restoration of the bottom lands along the creek and its floodplain will promote absorption of runoff from the uplands by the riparian ecosystem, regulate surface flow into the creek, and promote long-term storage of groundwater. As a result, sustained seepage should help keep Onion Creek flowing when the rains subside during the dry season.

Restoration of the native grasslands in the uplands should promote the return of indigenous wildlife. There already seem to be larger numbers of bobwhite and dove in the uplands. Restoration of the riparian area should encourage the return of aquatic species.

The pursuit of these objectives includes prescribed burning and removal of Junipers manually and by machine. Hydro-mulching and manual removal of the Junipers in the uplands has been extended to the floodplains of the creek. After prescribed burns and hydro-mulching, the cleared plots have been over-seeded with native grasses in an attempt to reintroduce lost grass species, such as Little and Big Bluestem, and to promote grassland restoration. Seeding with native grasses is standard because these grasses are better adapted for long-term survival and are preferred foods for native wildlife.

The manual removal of Junipers along the floodplains will be followed by planting of tree and

shrub seedlings grown from seeds that were collected along the creek from plants currently growing there in order to restore the native riparian ecosystem. Plantings will begin when the seedlings have reached the appropriate growth stage.

Significant karst features have been mapped and cleared to enhance flow into the aquifer. Invasive trees, such as Retama and Chinaberry, are being located and mapped by GPS coordinates for later removal by WCD's pest control group. Currently 117 sites with invasive trees have been GPS mapped.

Beginning in 2004, Master Naturalists and MN trainees have been and are still involved in most all stages of the ongoing conservation practices at Onion Creek. Members of our Chapter have contributed more than 2000 volunteer hours. HCMN volunteers have cleared 3 to 5 acres of Juniper in the riparian zone, sowed seed in the burned and hydro-mulched areas, searched for karst features, helped install protection for archeological sites, monitored vegetation transects for plant succession in the treated areas, inventoried the flora, and mapped the locations of invasive trees.

To show appreciation for our involvement, WCD invites all volunteers to an annual appreciation dinner. It is quite a gala affair with great food. If you are interested in volunteering for some of these activities where you will work in a relatively isolated, tranquil, beautiful, and interesting environment, please contact Tom Watson, a WCD Land Steward and HCMN, at twatson11@austin.rr.com. 🌿

Texas Outdoor Education Conference

The Texas Outdoor Education Association Fall Conference, October 5, 6, and 7 at the H.E.B. Foundation camp near Leaky, Texas will offer a Project Wild workshop and a Science & Civics workshop. The WILD workshop will be 6 hours and Science & Civics is a minimum of 2 hours.

Please let me know if you would be interested in conducting either or both workshops. I believe that you will be able to pick the date that best fits your schedule. TOEA will provide food and lodging at the HEB camp for the Facilitator. (We hear they have new cabins and the food is great. Fresh baked cookies every afternoon!)

Thanks for your consideration and keeping Texas WILD!

Windy Altum, Outdoor Learning Programs,
Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept., 4200 Smith
School Rd., Austin, TX 78744. 512-389-8183;
Toll Free: 1-800-792-1112, ext 8183; Fax: 512-
389-8042. windy.altum@tpwd.state.tx.us;
www.tpwd.state.tx.us

Texas Parks and Wildlife Expo

OCTOBER 6 & 7

Mark Klym, TP&W's Design With Nature
Coordinator, invites Hays County Master
Naturalists to be a big part of the team for this
event.

Mark will have 4 stations for EXPO this
year, requiring 6 people per day per station (2
from 8 -12, 1 from 10 to 2, 1 from 12 to 4, and
2 from 2 to 6 (probably getting away a little
earlier but can not be certain depending on
traffic). Volunteers should contact Susan
Nenney soon as possible with:

Area they prefer to work in (Wildscapes,
Hummingbirds, Backyard Habitat Questions,
Children's Area)

Shift(s) they would like

Shirt Size

Any special needs

Any special skills (Spanish would be
ESPECIALLY Helpful)

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Wildscapes: will be located close to the
actual wildscape. Will have a display that
involves simulating the change over time (by
doing a little each month) that can take place
from the typical suburban development yard
(two trees, one dead one alive and box hedges)
to a wildscape.

Hummingbirds: will be under a canopy.
They will have a game (Hummingbird
Identification) and those that do well will
probably get a poster (not confirmed yet).
They will answer general questions about
hummingbirds/hummingbird habitat, and refer
any trickier questions to myself (Yes, Mark will
be there this year!)

Backyard Habitat Questions: this is
mainly to take some pressure off the
Wildscapes area, but they will answer ID
questions, what plants would we recommend,
hand out wildscapes and Best of Texas
literature, when can I expect the Bluebirds,
etc. (Bluebird Society will be here so specific

bluebird questions can be referred to them or
me).

Children's Area: Will be close to the
Wildscapes area designed to get the kids'
attention so that we can talk to the adults. Two
games - *Where Would I Nest* and *Am I A Native
Texan*. Hand out prizes.

Mark is trying to get TPWD staff to man
the literature and sales tables but if that falls
through, may have to come to the Master
Naturalists for additional staff.

Other groups with us this year in addition
to other chapters: the Master Naturalists table;
Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (not
confirmed); Texas Bluebird Society; Outdoor
Connections (not confirmed)

For more information, please contact Mark
Klym, Design With Nature Coordinator,
mark.klym@tpwd.state.tx.us. ✨



Wildscape Garden, San Marcos Nature Center

HCMN PROJECT #405

July's unprecedented rains ended after
August 2 until Tropical Storm Errin brought
heavy rain to sustain tropical rates of growth
but few seasonal wildflowers. Pecan and elm
seedlings pop up through the undergrowth, and
passion vines are overgrowing parts of it. Gulf
Fritillary butterflies thrive in such conditions,
and they whirl around you while you work.
Bordered Patches have nearly disappeared, but
Queens, White-striped Longtails, Checkered
Skippers, and Silver Spotted Skippers are
common. Eastern Tiger Swallowtails an
occasional Crimson Patch pass through from
time to time.

Sow thistles, black medicago, and pecan
and elm seedlings thrive regardless of regular
weeding.

We welcome contributions of seeds or seedlings
of annual and perennial wildflowers to improve the
diversity of our garden. Indian paintbrush, phlox,
larkspur, Zexmenia, gayfeathers, standing cypress,
and even Texas prickly poppy would be welcome,
but we have not been able to grow them from seed.



CONTACT: Richard Barnett,
news@haysmn.org.



Jacob's Well

HCMN PROJECT #603

Walt Krudop and Dale Shively met with David Baker (Executive Director) and Michael Pape of the Wimberley Valley Water Association on May 21.

Discussions involved how the HCMN can play an organized role in the various phases of the Jacob's Well project. Volunteer work at Jacob's Well has been pre-approved but a new project leader and a strategic plan needs to be developed. Walt will work on a draft concept and will form a committee to get plans developed. Before volunteers begin work, the HCMN plan for the project will be drafted and then a call for volunteer work groups\dates arranged. This project will constitute a formal Chapter-sponsored volunteer activity. More to come. ✨

Passionate Prairie People

Texas Parks and Wildlife is looking for some TMN prairie experts to assist with the Wildlife EXPO's "Settler's Prairie" exhibit, October 6-7, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

At the entrance to the Expo grounds is a small Indian and Little bluestem grass prairie. It sits across from Smith Elementary School where teachers use the prairie as an outdoor classroom. Each year at EXPO the students come to the prairie (in costume) and perform reenactments of life on a Texas prairie as Native Americans (with a tipi) or settlers (with a covered wagon). We also have a tent with a seedball activity and a few exhibits.

Visitors can make a few seedballs and take a few dry ones home. The exhibit draws many Hispanic and African American children, mostly from the urban areas of Austin, who probably know very little about Texas grasslands. For that reason we'd like to recruit some talented folks with a passion for prairies who like to work with kids.

Our tent includes all the materials to make and take seedballs, a display of live prairie plants and a photo exhibit of prairie animals. Volunteers are welcome to bring in their own exhibits and or outreach materials and activities. Teachers from Smith School manage

the children doing the reenactments so volunteers would be working primarily with Expo visitors.

We need 4 to 6 volunteers for each day. If this sounds like something you'd like to do please contact: Pat Morton, 512-912-7020 or patricia.morton@tpwd.state.tx.us. We can offer you an Expo t-shirt, tickets to the Expo banquet on Saturday evening and an opportunity to enjoy the myriad of exhibits and activities that showcase the diversity of ways to be involved in the great outdoors of Texas! ✨

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

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



State News

Spider Web Snares State Park Visitors and News Media

A giant colonial spider web at Lake Tawakoni State Park attracted close to 3,000 public visitors who came specifically to see the web this past holiday weekend. The visitors were coming in large part because of a tidal wave of news media coverage. Both factors have had employees hopping to respond to inquiries from the public, media and scientific community, especially park Superintendent Donna Garde and Wildlife Division Entomologist Mike Quinn. The list of news organizations that have covered the big web includes National Geographic Magazine, CBS and NBC network TV news, the BBC and many others. On Friday, a writer for the New York Times emailed Garde to say "the story is currently No.1 on the list of most emailed stories from today's edition of the

New York Times, and it's the lead story in the Nation section of the print edition." That same day, the park recorded 172 people visiting the park to see the spiders. On Saturday, 812 people came, and on Sunday the number climbed to 1,077. On Monday, Labor Day, the park recorded 1,275 people visiting specifically to see the amazing web. Garde emailed "If I could just train them to give a good foot massage, I think all of my staff would appreciate it. We are happily exhausted. The field rangers and park hosts, besides keeping the park cleaned up, took turns and sometimes teamed up to handle the crowds down at the web site.(ha!) And the rest of us were scrambling to collect all of their money, hand them out maps, answer their questions, and oh yeah, register our regulars to camp, fish, hike, bike, boat, swim and have fun. Saturday one family of spiderweb seekers mentioned reading about the web in their home area (Switzerland!) and made sure that on their trip to the states that they came out to see the amazing web sight/site. And today we had a couple mention their drive from Kansas! We also have Hank Guarisco, Adjunct Curator of Arachnids with the Sternberg Museum of Natural History, Fort Hayes State University, Kansas, coming tomorrow to begin a five-day study of the web and its inhabitants." Quinn dropped other business and headed to the park late last week when it became clear the web was a major natural and media phenomenon. He also did numerous news interviews and collected spider samples and took them to Texas A&M University for analysis. For details, see the Times story (http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/31/us/31spider.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&oref=slogin <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/31/us/31spider.html?_r=2&oref=slogin&oref=slogin>) or see a video featuring interviews with the state park staff on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haf3X5i7XEI> <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=haf3X5i7XEI>>).

Texas Monarch Watch

The Migration to Mexico is Underway!
First signs of migration:

Although it seemed early, the reports appeared on the map and the telltale signs of migration were clear. Notice what people watch for:

8/5/07 Brooklyn Park, MN (45 N, -93 W)
 "I observed a fresh-looking monarch about 40-50 feet up flying south in a most determined pathway," wrote Minnesota's Oscar Johnson, a Master Birder and former teacher.

8/5/07 Grygla, MN (48 N, -95 W)
 "On August 5, most of the recently emerged monarchs in extreme northern Minnesota were exhibiting southward migratory behavior and evening clustering behavior," noted Paul Cherubini.

By mid-August, monarchs roosting at points across the north. In Ontario, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, New York and Vermont people saw monarchs like these.

8/19/07 Mississauga, ON (44 N, -80 W)
 "Hundreds of monarchs flying and checking out flowers in the garden, then finding each other and landing and roosting in a silver Maple tree on the same branches. When they closed their wings they looked like dried leaves. It was spectacular to witness."

Monarchs reappear in the south: At the same time, people began to report their **first** monarchs of the season in southern states like Texas, Georgia and Alabama. Why now? Because monarchs are absent or scarce during the summer months, then reappear sometime in August. This is what caused the curious pattern you see on the map, with a gap across the mid-latitudes. It's clear that monarchs are migrating in the north, and the first may be arriving in the south, but it's difficult to tell if they are traveling in the gap between.

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/monarch/fall2007/Update083107.html>

New Monarch Website

A new website for monarchs has been created by the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign, and Bureau of Land Management. Numerous monarch specialists and interest groups contributed to this endeavor as well. Check it out at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/monarchbutterfly/>

Wildlife and Fish Management Calendar for Texas and the Southeast: a Landowner's Guide

This new publication, hot off the press, gives Texas landowners month by month management activities to conduct by species. Developed by Billy Higginbotham, Professor and Extension Wildlife and Fisheries Specialist, this publication provides wildlife managers with details on what they need to do monthly. It is also the perfect tool to strategically plan management activities for white-tailed deer, waterfowl, largemouth bass, channel catfish, quail, doves and more.

Need to learn about feral hog control? It's in there!

Aging deer by tooth wear and replacement or by field judging? It's in there!

Fish stocking rates and species composition for your farm pond? It's in there!

Attracting waterfowl to your wetlands? It's in there!

The publication is more than a management guide and more than a calendar. It takes the best of both formats and features beautiful color photos of Texas wildlife each month. It's a must have for landowners serious about managing their wildlife resources.

Landowners can order the publication two ways. Log on to the Texas Cooperative Extension Bookstore website at <http://tcebookstore.org> or call the TCE Bookstore toll free at 1-888-900-2577.

To find the calendar select "Animals" on the Bookstore home page then click "wildlife". The calendar appears on page 5 of the wildlife selections. You may also find it by selecting the search option and entering publication number B-6197.

The publication cost is \$7.95 plus tax and shipping. Cost is reduced to \$3.50 per copy for orders of 50 or more.



Local News

San Marcos Celebrates Spring Lake Preservation

The City of San Marcos dedicated its new Spring Lake Preserve on Monday, August 20 in a ceremony at the Texas Rivers Center.

The city purchased the 251-acre tract upstream from Aquarena Springs from real estate developer Terry Gilmore for \$5.1 million. The San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance was instrumental in the campaign for funds to buy the tract. Plans are to maintain the preserve as undeveloped green space with a few hiking trails and to introduce educational programs in cooperation with Texas State University.

SMGA Wins National Trails Grant

A big win for Ringtail Ridge and the citizens of San Marcos made The August 31 hike extra special. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission awarded National Recreational Trails funds to the Ringtail Ridge Trail Project in the amount of \$40,087. The grant will reimburse 80% of the total cost (\$50,000) for this exciting trail project. The San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance is very fortunate to be awarded this grant, as the "competition was fierce with over twice the request for funds as funds available," according to Andy Goldbloom of Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Improvements and amenities will include 2 miles of trail renovation, construction of a 1/2-mile accessible trail, wildlife viewing stand, bike racks, trash cans, interpretive kiosks and signage, and parking lot improvements.

Special thanks to Chris North, Melanie Howard, Minnette Marr, Todd Derkacz, and many others who contributed material, edits, and design concepts for this terrific, grant-worthy project! Construction will begin as soon as the environmental and historical reviews are completed and the proper approvals are in place. For information on how you can help with this project, call Todd at 512-754-9321.

"The San Marcos: A River's Story"

**SEPTEMBER 1-30, McDERMOTT
LEARNING CENTER, LBJ WILDFLOWER
CENTER, AUSTIN**

Enjoy Jerry Touchstone Kimmel's stunning photographs of a river and its ecosystem that are part of our region's history and culture. Kimmel's skills as a respected watercolorist have influenced her talents as a photographer.

The related book by her husband, Jim Kimmel, tells the fascinating story of this Hays County river and provides information about the native, non-native, prehistoric and modern day plants found there, as well as the animals and people that inhabit its banks. Prints of her images, along with the book, will be available at the Wildflower Center store for the duration of the exhibit. A book signing will be held in the store from 1 to 3:30 p.m., Saturday, September 1.

Container Water Gardening

SEPTEMBER 20, 6:00-8:00 PM, SAN MARCOS NATURE CENTER.

Learn how easy water gardening can be! Container water gardens are fun, peaceful and attract wildlife. Learn about container styles, plant selection, setup and maintenance for small ponds with plants and fish. We will create a demonstration container garden and all participants will take home several aquatic plants, a pump and other essentials for their own patio or backyard water garden. Container is not included in the workshop fee, so participants should plan to bring their own ceramic, plastic, fiberglass or metal container to the workshop. Fee includes a pump, 5 aquatic plants, decorative rocks, container sealer (if needed), and a water testing kit.

Ages: 16Y and up

Fee: \$30.00. Registration deadline:

Thursday, September 13. You must register for the workshop at the Parks and Recreation Department at 512-393-8400.

Children's Fall Workshops

SAN MARCOS NATURE CENTER

The San Marcos Nature Center invites children 3 to 9 to its Fall series of ten exciting.

The workshops will each have two sessions that meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month. Morning session times are 10:00 to 11:00 am, and afternoon sessions meet between 3:30 and 4:30 pm. Here's the list:

September 11-	Dragonflies
September 18-	Pond Life
October 2-	Butterflies
October 16-	Bats

November 6-	Texas Snakes
December 4-	Insectigations
December 18-	Nature Crafts
January 15-	Wild Life
February 5-	Carnivorous Plants
February 19-	Science Experiments

Come meet the animals, walk through our gardens and participate in nature lessons & experiments.

The Registration Fee is \$5.00 per child. For groups of more than 5 children, registration at the group rate is \$3.00 per child. The Registration deadline for each session is 5 pm the Friday before the workshop. *Register by phone at 512-393-8400.*

Organic Living Club

SEPTEMBER 24

Join us for a free workshop on Useful Plants of Texas. The club focuses on educating people about sustainable living and organic lifestyles. Membership is FREE and the group meets the last Monday of the month. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Please access our website at www.organiclivingclub.org or contact David Will at 830-629-9876. Please RSVP at 512-393-8448.

Wimberley Butterfly Watch

Butterflies observed in and around Wimberley during August remained low in number of species and individuals. Estivation and the onslaught of summer heat, martins, and swallows usually account for the seasonal change. Bordered Patches and Texas Crescents have all but disappeared. Cloudless Sulphurs were less common than last summer until August 17, and other large sulphurs have been absent. Persistence, however, will reward diligent observers.

Among August's surprises:

- A few Monarchs have lingered all month.
- Occasional Zebra Heliconian females have been observed ovipositing, their first sighting in Wimberley since 2005.
- 2 or 3 Red-Spotted Purples seen regularly for the first time in Wimberley
- Common Mestras reappeared August 28.

	1- 10	11- 20	21- 31
Giant Swallowtail	x	x	x
Pipevine Swallowtail	x	x	x
Black Swallowtail	x	x	x
Eastern Tiger Sw'tail	x	x	x
Checkered White			
Orange Sulphur		x	x
Southern Dogface			
Lyside Sulphur			
Cloudless Sulphur		x	x
Large Orange Sulfur			
Little Yellow	x		x
Sleepy Orange	x	x	x
Dainty Sulphur	x	x	x
Great Purple Hairstr.			x
Dusky Blue		x	
Groundstreak			
Henry's Elfin			
Juniper Hairstreak	x		x
Oak Hairstreak			
Soapberry Hairstreak			
Gray Hairstreak	x		x
Reakirt's Blue		x	
Eastern Tailed Blue		x	
American Snout			
Gulf Fritillary	x	x	x
Zebra Heliconian	x		x
Variiegated Fritillary			
Bordered Patch	x	x	x
Theona Checkerspot	x	x	x
Pearl Crescent	x	x	x
Phaon Crescent			
Texan Crescent		x	
Question Mark			
Eastern Comma			
Red Admiral			
American Lady			
Painted Lady	x	x	x
Common Buckeye	x	x	x
Common Mestra			x
Red-spotted Purple		x	x
Goatweed Leafwing	x		
Tropical Leafwing	x	x	x
Red-spotted Purple		x	x
Hackberry Emperor			
Tawny Emperor		x	x
Empress Leilia			x
Common WoodNymph			
Red Satyr		x	x
Little Wood Satyr			
Carolina Satyr			
Monarch	x	x	x
Queen	x	x	x
Silver-spotted Skipper			

Long-tailed Skipper			x
Northern Cloudywing	x	x	x
Sickle-winged Skipper			x
Juvenal's Duskywing	x	x	x
Horace's Duskywing			
Funereal Duskywing			
Sleepy Duskywing			
Checkered Skipper	x		
Orange Skipperling			x
Fiery Skipper	x	x	x
Dun Skipper	X	x	x

If you spotted something we missed, please email your editor at news@haysmn.org



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 -- <http://www.wildflower.org>

San Marcos Nature Centre --
<http://www.smgreenbelt.org>