

Hays County Master Naturalists NEWSLETTER



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

December, 2010

December 2010 Events

Chapter Board Meeting

There is no board meeting in December. We hope to see you again at the next meeting in January. Please watch your email for details.

If you have any questions or items for the agenda, please contact Jeff Vasgaard, pres@haysmn.org, or by January 1st.

Chapter Meeting

There is no chapter meeting in December. We hope to see you again at the next meeting on January 27th. Please watch your email for details.

If you have announcements you would like to have presented at the chapter meeting or suggestions for topics/speakers, please contact Brad Krimmel, vp@haysmn.org.

Have a happy New Year!



A Naturalist's View

This month we hear from Dixie Camp, our out-going Chapter President.

Members of the chapter, thank you for another great year of activities, events, and accomplishments. Your time and work resulted in 7873 hours, a record number of volunteer hours. When multiplied by the current market value of \$20.00 per hour, your volunteer work for 2010 was worth \$157,460. Contributions of the chapter have significantly benefitted the management of natural resources and natural areas in local and extended communities. The work we do for the environment is really invaluable.

Our chapter accomplishments are the result of a record number of 52 members completing re-certification this year. This increase of 11 reflects a 27% increase over 2009. Certified members are needed in all aspects of our organization and represent a commitment to our mission of developing a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service within our communities.

We have been able to increase our chapter strength because of our continuing record number of dues

Board of Directors

President	Jeff Vasgaard
Vice President	Brad Krimmel
Secretary	Becky Northcut
Treasurer	Larry Calvert
Past-President	Dixie Camp
State Representative	Tom Watson
Training Committee	Jean McMeans
Advanced Training Comm.	Betty Finley
Membership Committee	Beth Ramey
Web Master	Herb Smith
Newsletter Committee	Art Arizpe
& Editor	news@haysmn.org
Outreach Committee	Susan Nenny
Host Committee	Vacant
Historian	Dale Shively
Volunteer Service	Walt Krudop
AgriLife Agent	Richard Parrish
TP&WD Rep	Lee Ann Linam

paying members. At this time we have a total of 98 which is 19 more than 2009, our previous best year, giving us a 25% increase for 2010. Considering the benefits and value of being part of our worthwhile organization, our dues are minimal. We are fortunate to have been able to maintain dues at this level.

In order to increase our recruitment and diversity efforts, the board has made two significant fiscal enhancements. First, tuition for the 2011 training class has been reduced from \$190.00 to \$160.00. This change has been due to fewer requests by members and trainees for reimbursement for preparation of class meals.

Second, a scholarship fund has been established to assist up to three trainees in the 2011 class. Donations to our memorial fund and the chapter's share of the proceeds from the silent auction at the state conference have enabled us to create the scholarship fund.

In order to increase retention of our members, we have provided monthly chapter meetings which included advanced training opportunities; approved 121 advanced training workshops and events in the communities; approved and monitored 55 volunteer service projects; and co-sponsored several community educational events throughout the county.

For 2011, I wish each of you continued success in your endeavors to promote, advance, and fulfill the objectives of the chapter which are to:

- Improve public understanding of natural resource ecology
- Enhance natural resources education and outreach activities
- Develop and maintain a self-sufficient Texas Master Naturalist volunteer network

I am honored to have served you and our board. I look forward to working with you in the future. Happy trails.

- Dixie Camp



Featured Project

"Featured Project" will return in January.



Chapter News

Class of 2010 Graduation and Gala

The Class of 2010 Graduation and Gala was held on November 20th at the San Marcos Activity Center.

For the second year, the event combined the 2010 Class Graduation and the regular Chapter Gala. The event was well-attended with a lively social time, a great dinner, the graduation, chapter award presentations and election of officers.



Dinner time. Photo by Art Arizpe.

Jean McMeans did a fine job as graduation ceremony host. Each graduate walked on stage to receive his or her certificate, shirt, mug and pin.

Congratulations to the Class of 2010, the Prickly Pears!

The Class of 2010

Doug Blanchard
Mary Pat Bolton
Marcy Boyd
Anne Child
Mark Chonko
Cathy Delwiche
Gena Fleming
Adam Kappler
Helen Marsh
Judy McBride
Louis B. Parks
Gordon Richmond
Dan Rivas
Sean Welch

Chuck Blue, Sr.
Dave Boyd
M. Lee Brown
Garry Child
Layla Coleman
Jane Dunham
Leigh Erin Jandle
Julie King
Dick McBride
Chris Middleton
Heather Powdrill
Jean Richmond
Glynn Schanen
Chrissy Wise



Front row, left to right: Adam Kappler, Helen Marsh, Anne Child, Marcy Boyd, Sean Welch, Layla Coleman, Cathy Delwiche.

Middle row: Chuck Blue, Mary Pat Bolton, Leigh Erin Jandle, Judy McBride, Dave Boyd, Doug Blanchard, Louis Parks, Dan Rivas.

Back row: Garry Child, M. Lee Brown, Glynn Schanen, Mark Chonko, Dick McBride.

NOT PICTURED: Jane Dunham, Gena Fleming, Chrissy Wise, Jean Richmond, Gordon Richmond, Heather Powdrill, Julie King, Chris Middleton. Photo by Art Arizpe.

During the Awards segment, the Chapter recognized many members for their efforts.

The first members to be recognized were the HCMNs who completed the recertification requirements by the date of the Gala. Recertification requires completion, during the calendar year, of at least 8 hours Advanced Training and 40 Hours Volunteer Service.

Each HCMN received the Wood Duck 2010 Recertification Pin.

Important: This list is incomplete because we have until the end of the calendar year to complete the requirements. These are the HCMNs that completed their recertification requirements by the date of the Gala.

2010 Recertification Awards

Karen Archer	Art Arizpe
Margaret Baker	Richard Barnett
Karen Bartell	Mimi Boelter
Deborah Bradshaw	Jack Breese
Donna Browning	Judy Burdett
Larry Calvert	Linda Calvert
Dixie Camp	Trent Carmichael
Steve Carter	Ann Connell
Todd Derkacz	Betty Finley
Ray Franklin	Randy Garst
Ginger Geist	LaRay Geist
Tom Hausler	Lance Jones
Helane Kennard	James Kinscherff
Patty Koeninger	Brad Krimmel
Walter Krudop	Karen Langridge
Leah Laszewski	Jane Little
Sandra Lucas	Jacqueline Mattice
Charles Maxcy	Vicki Maxcy
Jean McMeans	Susan Nenney
Becky Northcut	Al Ohm

**Jean Ohm
Dale Shivley
Diane Spicer
Terry Tull
Dennis Wagner
Lin Weber
Susan Zimmerman**

**Beth Ramey
Herb Smith
Bonnie Tull
Jeff Vasgaard
Tom Watson
Cara Wernli**

The next members to be recognized were the HCMNs who achieved cumulative volunteer hour milestones. Each HCMN received a Dragonfly Pin.

- 250 hours, Bronze

Art Arizpe Deborah Bradshaw Linda Calvert Tom Hausler Jacqueline Mattice	Margaret Baker Judy Burdett Randy Garst Lance Jones Lin Weber
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- 500 hours, Silver

Karen Bartell	Herb Smith
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- 1000 hours, Gold

**Dixie Camp - 1095 hours
Leah Laszewski - 1250 hours**

Important: This list is incomplete because we have until the end of the calendar year to report volunteer hours. These are the HCMNs that achieved their milestones by the date of the Gala.

The next group received the Tenure Award for 5 years of Recertification.

Karen Bartell Jane Little Susan Nenny Bonnie Tull Cara Wernli	Betty Finley Jean McMeans Dale Shively Terry Tull
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Delbert Bassett received the Tenure Award for 10 years of Recertification.

Tom Watson received the the 2010 Outstanding Chapter Volunteer Award.

Del & Gerin Hood received a Significant Contributions to the Chapter Award.

Art Arizpe received a Significant Contributions to the Chapter Award.

Karen Langridge received the Outstanding Training Committee Volunteer Award.

Dixie Camp received a Certification of Appreciation plaque for service to the chapter as Chapter President in 2009 and 2010.

The chapter also held the 2011 Chapter Officer elections. Nominated and elected were:

Jeff Vasgaard	President
Brad Krimmel	Vice-President
Becky Northcut	Secretary
Larry Calvert	Treasurer

Congratulations to our chapter officers and please give them your full support!

Many thanks to the 2010 Graduation and Gala Committee for putting on such a great event: **Jean McMeans, Beth Ramey, Linda Calvert, and Vicki Maxcy.**

2010 Audit Committee Report

The Audit Committee, consisting of Lee Ann Linam, Becky Northcut, and Tom Hausler, met on November 18 to review the financial records of the Chapter from mid-November 2009 through October 31, 2010. Treasurer Larry Calvert provided the committee with records consisting of bank statements, checkbook registers, and receipts for expenditures.

The committee found the records to be in good order and commends Larry on his smooth transition of consolidating funds into one account at Ozona Bank.

Many thanks to Larry for a great job this year!

- Lee Ann Linam
TPWD Chapter Advisor

HCMN 2011 Chapter Dues

Congratulations HCMN Members!

As of the end of the Gala we have 62 members with 2011 dues paid. That is fantastic! A bunch of you told me at the Gala that you'd send a check later, so I look forward to receiving them. Wasn't the Gala lots of fun and good eats? I sure enjoyed it.

For those who have not paid their 2011 dues yet, they are due by January 1, 2011. Please make out a check to Hays County Master Naturalist for \$15 per member. Send it to Larry Calvert, 650 Red Hawk Rd., Wimberley, TX 78676.

- Larry Calvert
HCMN Treasurer

Chapter Host Committee

The Chapter's Host Committee Chair is still open. Perhaps you would be interested in serving on or chairing this committee. Please contact Jeff Vasgaard, pres@haysmn.org.

You may find a description of this committee in the [Chapter Operating Handbook](#), Section B, on our web page.

Jacob's Well Bridge Rebuilt

The recent heavy rains in September washed out a bridge from the creek bank to the weir that protects Jacob's Well.



Building the structural support. Photo by Anne Child.

HCMNs and Jacob's Well docents got together on November 19th to rebuild the bridge.



A good break point. Photo by Anne Child.



Almost done. Photo by Anne Child.

Some of the best views of the colors were from the middle of the creek so there were advantages to getting in the water. The temperature had dipped to 32 degrees that morning but was in the 70s by the afternoon. The spring water was not bad at all.



Jacob's Well's still waters. Photo by Anne Child.

- Anne Child

Jacob's Well Natural Area Fall Volunteer Training

The Jacob's Well Natural Area held a Fall Volunteer Training session on November 6th to recruit and train a new batch of volunteers. As usual, Ray Franklin was a big hit!



Ray Franklin conducts a class on grasses. Photo by Becky Northcut.

- Becky Northcut

Seeking Professional Guidance

The San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance is increasing its stewardship efforts in the seven managed greenspaces that form a loop around the city. In addition to building and maintaining trails in the city-owned natural areas the non-profit is working to limit invasive species. Several members are also Texas Master Naturalists and learned that expert advice and counsel is available for such an undertaking.

Minnette Marr, a long-time Master Naturalist supporter and staff member at the Lady Bird Wildflower Center in Austin, lead a team of SMGA and MN members on a tour of Prospect Park, a 9 acre tract. The natural area lies on the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone and has several karst features. Lower Purgatory Creek flows through the greenspace. It also has extensive ligustrum lucidum or glossy privet, King Ranch bluestem and Johnson grass growth. The ligustrum is particularly troublesome since it is evergreen and shades out most understory. KR bluestem and Johnson grass are not native grasses and crowd out the native grasses of little bluestem, sideoats grama, Texas grama, big bluestem and switchgrass.

Team members discussed possible replacement species suitable for the Edwards Plateau thin soil during the November 28th hike. Marr suggested false dayflower, cedar sedge, and Texas winter grass as alternatives to the barren ground. Milkweed, southwest bristle grass and more forbs were also suggested.



Minnette Marr leads the Prospect Park tour. Photo by Lance Jones.

Several important requirements were expressed by the expert: the need for long range goals and a way to measure results. Prioritizing water conservation, attracting wildlife, and passive recreation were all discussed. Using transects, photo points or other means of measurement were now on the new agenda. Marr proposed measuring only small areas for study as opposed to the larger 9 acre tract. She emphasized that the landscape is dynamic and a mosaic.

Note: Hays County Master Naturalists and the San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance are sponsoring the Texas Invasives workshop at the Hays County Extension Office on Saturday, February 26th. Look for the announcement on advanced training from the Chapter Secretary before the holidays.

- Lance Jones

HaysMN Forum

The forum is a great learning resource. Be sure to check it out. To join the HaysMN Forum, simply go to the haysmn.org web site and look for the Forum application in the menu.

Please let Herb Smith, web@haysmn.org, know if you have any questions or suggestions. Better yet, use the Forum to discuss the Forum.

Reporting Reminder

Reports for November 2010 are due by December 7th. Please submit your reports of Volunteer and

Advanced Training hours by using the friendly report forms at www.haysmn.org.

As a reminder, 8 hours of Advanced Training and 40 hours of Volunteer work are required each year to recertify. You have until the end of the year to complete these hours.

If you are uncertain about your status, please contact Beth Ramey, hourshaysmn@gmail.com, and she can send you a report.

Newsletter Items

Have you read a good book lately? Submit a short review and share with the chapter! Have some neat photos of a volunteer or training activity? Let us see them! Do you have news about yourself or another HCMN? Send it in!

Please send your comments, news items, and photos to news@haysmn.org.



Members News

Winifred Simon

Congratulations to **Winifred Simon** for winning 1st Place in the Botanical category of the Wildflower Center's first photography contest!

There were more than 2500 entries from 700 photographers. You can read more about the contest [here](#).

Winifred's beautiful, winning photograph of a bluestem prickly-poppy (*Argemone albiflora*) is shown below.



Prickly-poppy, a prize winner! Photo by Winifred Simon.

Tom Hausler

Tom Hausler reports that his wildlife camera caught a rare shot of a coyote (*Canis latrans*) on November 22nd.



A curious coyote. Photo by Tom Hausler.

This section is your opportunity to update the chapter about what you've been doing. Perhaps you went on an interesting field trip and took some nice photos; basically, anything you'd like to share.

Please send your news items to news@haysmn.org.



Advanced Training Opportunities

Cibolo Nature Center

Cibolo Nature Center
140 City Park Road
Boerne, TX 78006
Ph.: 830-249-4616

For additional information on projects below go to <http://cibolo.org/calendar>

Dec 3, 2010

Short Course Part II: Habitat Management for WTV

3.5 Hours Advanced Training

Grassland and Woodland Management

Time: 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

Location: CNC auditorium

Dec 4, 2010

Winter Sparrows & Wrens Workshop

6.0 Hours Advanced Training

Presenter is Byron Stone, expert birder and sparrow specialist from Austin.

Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Location: CNC auditorium and park

Hays County Invaders

The following workshop is approved for 6.0 Advanced Training Hours

Hays County Invaders

Location: Hays County Extension Office, 1253 Civic Center Loop (San Marcos, TX)

Trainers(s): Travis Gallo

Time: 9 am – 4 pm Saturday, Feb. 26th, 2011

Notes: Please bring a GPS and camera if available. Lunch plans TBD.

Local Host: Hays County MN & San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance

Become A Citizen Scientist

Do you want to help slow down the spread of harmful invasive species and reduce their ecological and economic damage? The first step is to locate where invaders have arrived and get that information to those who can do something about it. That's where citizen scientists come in. Citizen scientists are volunteers who receive expert training to identify and track important invaders in our area.

The Hays County Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists and the San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance are hosting an Invaders of Texas Citizen Scientist Workshop at the Hays County Extension Office Saturday, February 26th, 2011 from 9:00 a.m to 4:00 p.m.

The workshop includes classroom training about invasive species, GPS use, digital photography and reporting observations.

If you are seriously interested in joining in helping slow the spread of invasives, download the attached Volunteer Interest Form and eMail the application to lancej1s@gmail.com.

You will receive a notice of acceptance and additional information approximately one month before the class.

Payment is not due until after you have received notice of acceptance into the class. Space is limited to 35 participants.

For more information about the Invaders of Texas program, visit <http://www.texasinvasives.org>

- Lance Jones



Volunteer Opportunities

Watch this space and your email for upcoming Volunteer Opportunities.



State and National News

More species means less disease

NatureNews has a interesting article about biodiversity and its link to diseases:

"Biodiversity protects ecosystems against infectious diseases, researchers have concluded. The finding suggests that loss of species from an environment could have dangerous consequences for the spread and incidence of infections, including those that affect humans."

You may read the full article [here](#).



Local News

Hays County Habitat Conservation Plan

From the [Hays County Habitat Conservation Plan](#) web page:

November 24th:

Hays County has purchased approximately 1,000 acres of the Nicholson Ranch in western Hays County as the first habitat preserve for the RHCP. The property contains approximately 800 acres of quality GCW habitat and will provide the initial balance of conservation credits needed to implement the RHCP as soon as the permit is issued. [Click here](#) for a November 24, 2010 article in the Hays Free Press about the purchase. The USFWS is in the final stages of processing the County's permit application, and issuance of the permit is anticipated in early 2011.



Links to Chapter Sponsors and Partners

Sponsors:

Texas Master Naturalist -- State Website -- masternaturalist.tamu.edu
Texas AgriLife Extension -- texasextension.tamu.edu
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department -- www.tpwd.state.tx.us/

Agencies of Interest:

Bamberger Ranch -- bambergerranch.org
Native Plant Society of Texas -- www.npsot.org
San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance -- www.smgreenbelt.org
San Marcos River Foundation -- www.sanmarcosriver.org
Texas Outdoor Women's Network -- 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 -- www.nrcs.usda.gov
Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority -- www.gbra.org

Partners

Austin Nature Day -- www.austinnatureday.org
LBJ Wildflower Center -- www.wildflower.org
San Marcos Nature Center -- www.ci.san-marcos.tx.us/departments/parks/Nature_Center.html
Gorge Preservation Society -- www.canyongorge.org