

# Hays County Master Naturalists NEWSLETTER



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

December, 2011

## Chapter Events

### *Chapter Board Meeting*

There is no regular board meeting in December.

The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, January 5<sup>th</sup>, at the Camp Jacob Watershed Education Center at the Jacob's Well Natural Area, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. A map is available [here](#). The meeting is open to members and the public.

If you have any questions or items for the agenda, please contact Larry Calvert, [pres@haysmn.org](mailto:pres@haysmn.org), by January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### *Chapter Meeting*

**There is no chapter meeting this month.**

If you have announcements you would like to have presented at the chapter meeting or suggestions for topics/speakers, please contact Anne Child, [vp@haysmn.org](mailto:vp@haysmn.org).

### *Board of Directors*

<b>President</b>	Larry Calvert
<b>Vice President</b>	Anne Child
<b>Secretary</b>	Chris Middleton
<b>Treasurer</b>	Beth Ramey
<b>Past-President</b>	Jeff Vasgaard
<b>State Representative</b>	Tom Watson
<b>Training Committee</b>	Lin Weber
<b>Advanced Training Comm.</b>	Becky Northcut
<b>Membership Committee</b>	Beth Ramey
<b>Web Master</b>	Herb Smith
<b>Newsletter Committee &amp; Editor</b>	Art Arizpe <a href="mailto:news@haysmn.org">news@haysmn.org</a>
<b>Outreach Committee</b>	Leah Laszewski
<b>Host Committee</b>	Helen Bowie Eva Gomez
<b>Historian</b>	Dale Shively
<b>Volunteer Service</b>	Art Arizpe
<b>AgriLife Agent</b>	Richard Parrish
<b>TP&amp;WD Rep</b>	Lee Ann Linam



## A Naturalist's View

*Jeff Vasgaard is our out-going Chapter President.*

As a result of your efforts, 2011 has been another very successful year – through outreach, awareness and training, we continue to have a positive impact on the people we work with and the environment we live in. One thing that struck me this year, as I met with other organizations and people outside our chapter, was the positive view those people have of the Master Naturalist program and our local chapter.

This year went by in a blink of an eye, it seemed to me. But it was also a personally fulfilling year – another year of progress with our HCMN team at Jacobs Well and the opportunity to meet and work with many of you on chapter projects, plans and events. Many of you have heard me say this before, but I really enjoy being part of a group of people that have a natural curiosity and awareness about the world they live in; people that don't mind giving up some of their time and talents to help make our communities better places to live in.

I believe 2012 will present new opportunities for us, if this drought continues, as we will be called on to identify causes and solutions for tree and plant diseases resulting from the

decreased rainfall, lower humidity and higher temperatures. There may be a similar situation for wildlife, as the amount of forage plants decline for a second year. Major portions of Cypress Creek went dry this year – how does that affect our environment? How can we help others better understand the natural resources in the Hill Country and what we can do to preserve them? I'm not predicting a year of doom and gloom; only that we have an important role to play in this situation.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you as President of this chapter this year. But more importantly, I would like to thank each of you for being a part of this great organization. Special thanks to the outgoing board and committee members for their hard work and service to the organization: Past President: **Dixie Camp**, Vice President: **Brad Krimmel**, Treasurer: **Larry Calvert**, Secretary: **Becky Northcut**, Training Committee: **Jean McMeans**, Advanced Training: **Mary Arizpe**, Volunteer Projects and Newsletter: **Art Arizpe**, Membership and Records: **Beth Ramey**, Website: **Herb Smith**, Calendar: **Tom Hausler**, and Chapter Advisors: **Lee Ann Linam** and **Richard Parish**.

We are a volunteer-driven organization and our continued success is dependent on our volunteers. Please get involved in an area that interests you so that we can continue to make a difference in our communities. Feel free to talk to our board members and offer suggestions for improvement and new ideas.

I'm looking forward to visiting with you at our next meeting.

- Jeff Vasgaard



## Featured Project

The "Featured Project" will return in January.

If you lead or work on a project that you would like to see covered, please contact me with your ideas.

- Art Arizpe, [news@haysmn.org](mailto:news@haysmn.org)



## Chapter News

### *Class of 2011 Graduation and Gala*

The Class of 2011 Graduation and Gala was held on November 19<sup>th</sup> at the San Marcos Activity Center. As always, the event was well-attended with a lively social time, a great dinner, the graduation, chapter award presentations and election of officers.

#### Graduation

Jean McMeans did a fine job as graduation ceremony host. Each graduate walked on



*Social time. Photo by Art Arizpe.*

stage to receive his or her certificate, shirt, and pin.

Congratulations to the Class of 2011, the Painted Buntings!

### *The Class of 2011*



*Front Row L to R: Meg Inglis, Nancy Tunell, Kimberly Pankratz, Lindsay Calvert, Kim Ort, Nancy Russell, Linda Land  
Upper rows together L to R: Scott Butts, Christine Byrne, Steve Janda, Susan Kimmel-Lines, Marilyn Brister, Don Wallace,  
Eva Gomez, Jim Donohoe, Helen Bowie, Susan Richardson, Bob Richardson, Bob Currie, Lucille Kirkham  
Not Pictured: Cody Ackermann, Helen Foster, Tracy Mock, Donovan Osio, Leigh Sebera, Frank Walker, Judy Walker,  
David Womer*

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

### **Recertification**

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 2011 Horned Lizard 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.*

## 2011 Recertification Awards

Karen Archer  
Margaret Baker  
Karen Bartell  
Deborah Bowers  
Deborah Bradshaw  
Donna Browning  
Larry Calvert  
Dixie Camp  
Steve Carter  
Garry Child  
Todd Derkacz  
Ray Franklin  
Ginger Geist  
Tom Hausler  
Lance Jones  
Brad Krimmel  
Karen Langridge  
Jane Little  
Jacqueline Mattice  
Vicki Maxcy  
Judy McBride  
Chris Middleton  
Al Ohm  
Beth Ramey  
Melinda Seib  
Terry Tull  
Tom Watson  
Cara Wernli

Art Arizpe  
Richard Barnett  
Mimi Boelter  
Dave Boyd  
M. Lee Brown  
Judy Burdett  
Linda Calvert  
Trent Carmichael  
Anne Child  
Mark Choko  
Jane Dunham  
Randy Garst  
LaRay Geist  
Barbara Jacobson  
Helane Kennard  
Walter Krudop  
Leah Laszewski  
Sandy Lucas  
Charles Maxcy  
Dick McBride  
Jean McMeans  
Becky Northcut  
Jean Ohm  
Jean Richmond  
Bonnie Tull  
Jeff Vasgaard  
Lin Weber

## Cumulative Volunteer Hour Milestones

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

- 250 hours, Bronze

Donna Browning  
Garry Child  
Brad Krimmel  
Vicki Maxcy  
Dick McBride

Anne Child  
Todd Derkacz  
Charles Maxcy  
Judy McBride  
Melinda Seib

**Diane Spicer**

- 500 hours, Silver

**Mimi Boelter  
Tom Hausler  
Dick McBride  
Lin Weber**

- 1000 hours, Gold

**Larry Calvert  
LeRay Geist**

**Jeff Vasgaard**

**Deborah Bradshaw  
Sandy Lucas  
Bonnie Tull**

**Ginger Geist**

*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.*

### **Tenure Awards**

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

**Karen Archer  
Linda Calvert**

**Larry Calvert**

**Debra Bradshaw** received the 2011 Outstanding Chapter Volunteer Award.

**Dick McBride** received the Outstanding Training Committee Volunteer Award.

**Walt Krudop** received a Significant Contributions to the Chapter Award for Leadership.

**Jean McMeans** received the Outgoing Training Committee Chair Award.

**Jeff Vasgaard** received the Outgoing Chapter President Award.

The chapter also held the 2012 Chapter Officer elections. Nominated and elected were:

<b>Larry Calvert</b>	President
<b>Anne Child</b>	Vice-President
<b>Chris Middleton</b>	Secretary
<b>Beth Ramey</b>	Treasurer

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

Many thanks to the 2011 Graduation and Gala Committee for putting on such a great event!

### ***2012 Membership and Dues***

2012 Membership is doing great!

We are already at 87 members for 2012 including 20 from the class of 2011. For those that haven't yet paid the membership dues for 2012 they are due by December 31, 2011. Let's get those checks in so we can exceed our membership of 110 for 2011. Please send a check made out to Hays County Master Naturalists in the amount of \$15 and send it to:

Larry Calvert  
HCMN Treasurer  
650 Red Hawk Rd.  
Wimberley, TX 78676

### *New Chapter Committee Chairs*

Congratulations and thanks to our new Chapter Committee Chairs!

Advance Training Committee Chair	<b>Becky Northcut</b>
Host Committee Co-chairs	<b>Helen Bowie</b>
	<b>Eva Gomez</b>
Outreach Committee Chair	<b>Leah Laszewski</b>

These committees are all very important to the Chapter's operation. Please make sure you thank these folks for serving!

### *On the Trail*

#### **A Grand Finale**

The 2011 MN trainee class assembled in San Marcos on Saturday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, for a festive evening and their much anticipated graduation. After ten months of classes, field trips, site visits, and volunteer work, everyone marched proudly across the stage as training coordinator **Jean McMeans** presented each with a certificate, dragonfly pin, and monogrammed denim shirt signifying their accomplishment as a Certified Texas Master Naturalist. Several classmates shared what they thought of their Master Naturalist training experience:

**Cody Ackermann:** *The Master Naturalist course connected me to the outdoors and gave me the information that will help me form a stronger bond with the natural world. The practical knowledge gained was by far the best feature and I appreciate how each presenter stayed true to giving relevant and current information. This course meant a lot to me and I look forward to sharing this information with others.*

**Don Wallace:** *The Master Naturalist program introduced me to the many great natural resource assets of Hays County such as Jacobs Well, the Blue Hole, and Aquarena Springs. In addition, the site visits gave me some insight as to how I can be a better steward of our own ranch in North Central Texas and around our home in San Marcos. I really enjoyed being with my classmates who willingly shared their own expertise. And, the opportunity to serve the community as a volunteer - it's just a great feeling to be able to give back. Great experience!*

**Eva Gomez:** *My experience in MN was very enjoyable. I got to learn useful facts, see new places, and meet wonderful people. At every gathering all these would come together and lead to a great time. I am glad to be associated with such a wonderful organization.*

Applications are now being accepted for the MN trainee class of 2012. Tell your friends. Tell everybody! Don't let them miss out on this wonderful lifetime experience!

- Lucille Trail Kirkham

### *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](http://haysmn.org) web site and look for the Forum application in the menu.

Please let Herb Smith, [web@haysmn.org](mailto: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 are due by December 7<sup>th</sup>. Please submit your reports of Volunteer and Advanced Training hours by using the friendly report forms at [www.haysmn.org](http://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](mailto:hourshaysmn@gmail.com), and she can send you a report.

### *Newsletter Items*

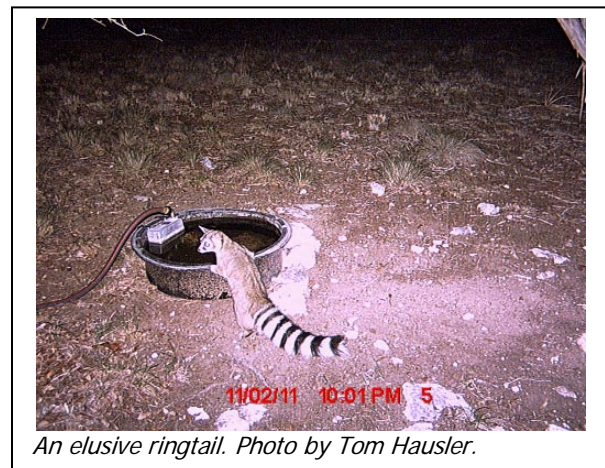
Have you read a good book lately? Submit a short review and share with the chapter! Have some neat photos of a volunteer or training activity? Let us see them! Do you have news about yourself or another HCMN? Send it in!

Please send your comments, news items, and photos to [news@haysmn.org](mailto:news@haysmn.org).

### **Members News**

#### *Tom Hausler*

Tom continues to have many visitors to his water dish. Here's a couple of recent ones.



*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](mailto:news@haysmn.org).



## **Advanced Training Opportunities**

### ***Monthly Bird Walks***

Here's a link to Stephen Ramirez' web page about his monthly bird walks. They have been approved as Advanced Training.

[San Marcos Monthly Bird Walk](#)

*Please watch your emails for upcoming Advanced Training Opportunities.*



## **Volunteer Opportunities**

*Please watch your emails for upcoming Volunteer Opportunities.*



## **State and National News**

### ***Study finds lightly regulated wastewater plants polluting Edwards Aquifer***

From statesman.com:

"Dozens of lightly monitored wastewater plants west of Austin are degrading the waterways that feed Barton Springs, according to a report commissioned by the Save Our Springs Alliance and San Antonio-based Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance."

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



## **Local News**

### ***San Marcos River Wild-Rice Public Meeting***

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), in conjunction with Texas State University and the City of San Marcos, will hold initial scoping meetings and take public comment on the potential designation of a segment of the San Marcos River as a new State Scientific Area to protect federally endangered Texas wild-rice and its habitat.

The next meetings are December 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. You may find out more about the meetings [here](#).





## Links to Chapter Sponsors and Partners

### *Sponsors:*

Texas Master Naturalist -- State Website -- [masternaturalist.tamu.edu](http://masternaturalist.tamu.edu)  
Texas AgriLife Extension -- [texasextension.tamu.edu](http://texasextension.tamu.edu)  
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department -- [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/)

### *Agencies of Interest:*

Bamberger Ranch -- [bambergerranch.org](http://bambergerranch.org)  
Native Plant Society of Texas -- [www.npsot.org](http://www.npsot.org)  
San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance -- [www.smgreenbelt.org](http://www.smgreenbelt.org)  
San Marcos River Foundation -- [www.sanmarcosriver.org](http://www.sanmarcosriver.org)  
Texas Outdoor Women's Network -- [www.townsanmarcos.org](http://www.townsanmarcos.org)  
Texas Cooperative Extension -- Sea Grant Program -- [texas-sea-grant.tamu.edu](http://texas-sea-grant.tamu.edu)  
Texas Forest Service -- [txforestservice.tamu.edu](http://txforestservice.tamu.edu)  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers -- [www.usace.army.mil](http://www.usace.army.mil)  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service -- [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)  
U.S.D.A. Natural Resource Conservation Service -- [www.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov)  
Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority -- [www.gbra.org](http://www.gbra.org)

### *Partners*

Austin Nature Day -- [www.austinnatureday.org](http://www.austinnatureday.org)  
Gorge Preservation Society -- [www.canyongorge.org](http://www.canyongorge.org)  
Hill Country Photography Club -- [hcphotoclub.org](http://hcphotoclub.org)  
LBJ Wildflower Center -- [www.wildflower.org](http://www.wildflower.org)  
San Marcos Nature Center -- [www.ci.san-marcos.tx.us/departments/parks/Nature\\_Center.html](http://www.ci.san-marcos.tx.us/departments/parks/Nature_Center.html)