

Hays County Master Naturalists NEWSLETTER



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

June, 2009

June 2009 Events

Chapter Board Meeting

The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, June 11th at Camp Jacob Watershed Education Center at Jacob's Well Natural Area, from 7:00 to 9:00 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 Dixie Camp, pres@haysmn.org, or 512-517-3111, by June 8th.

Chapter Meeting

The next chapter meeting will be held on Thursday, June 25th, from 6:30pm to 8:00pm. The speaker and location will be announced later.

If you have announcements you would like to have presented at the chapter meeting or suggestions for topics/speakers, please contact Ben Adair, vp@haysmn.org, or 512-773-3668.



A Naturalist's View

This month we hear from Betty Finley, the Chapter Advanced Training Committee Chair.

I came to the Master Naturalist program through the class of 2004. I have a Masters degree in social work and I spent my thirty five year career in the fields of child abuse and neglect, foster care and adoption, and training of social work supervisors.

After the intensity of that career, it seemed a relief to focus on the natural world, so one of the first things I did after retirement was to sign up for MN classes. I looked forward to learning something so different from what I had concentrated on up to that point. Of course, it didn't take too long for me to learn that protection was a big issue for the natural world too. It also didn't take long for me to learn that classes were only the beginning and I would be in the learning process for many years to come.

I was on the training committee for 2 years. Last year I became the Chair of the Chapter Advanced Training Committee. Training opportunities are submitted to me through e-mail or the chapter web site form for that purpose. I receive information from chapter members and through training resources in the community. I review the

Board of Directors

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& Editor	news@haysmn.org
Outreach Committee	Susan Nenney
Host Committee	Jean McMeans
Historian	TBD
Volunteer Service	Walt Krudop
AgriLife Agent	TBD
TP&WD Rep	Lee Ann Linam

information and, if the training is approved, I send the information on to the chapter Secretary. She then sends notices out to the chapter with the training details and the number of hours of credit approved for the training.

The Texas Master Naturalist Program has very clear guidelines for advanced training. Those guidelines are a part of Chapter Management Guidelines posted on the state web site for Master Naturalists. I use those guidelines to review and approve or disapprove the information submitted to me.

Training must be pre-approved. This insures that the Master Naturalist who attends the training knows whether this will credit toward their annual training requirement. There is a second benefit to the pre-approval process. Once I approve the training, the chapter Secretary sends the information out to all of the chapter. This insures that all members have information on training resources available to them.

I enjoy my role in reviewing and approving advanced training. I believe we all became Master Naturalists because we wanted to learn. We wanted to learn by receiving information and by putting the information and experiences into practice. There are many unique training opportunities offered to us and I appreciate being a part of getting that information out to members.

- Betty Finley

Featured Project

**Canyon Lake Gorge,
Project #705**

If you have not had a chance to take a tour of the Canyon Gorge, please do so as soon as you can! You will not be disappointed.



Aerial view of floodwaters escaping over the Spillway. Photo courtesy of GPS.

The Canyon Gorge is located at the Canyon Lake Dam on the Guadalupe River in Comal County. The Gorge was formed when floodwaters escaped over the Spillway at the Canyon Lake Dam during a single flood event in 2002. This was the first time water flowed over the Spillway since the reservoir was completed in 1964 and was caused by the Guadalupe River Watershed receiving more than 35 inches of rain in about a week.



Ground-level view of floodwaters escaping over the Spillway. Photo courtesy of GPS.

The Canyon Gorge consists of about 65 acres of federal property currently leased by the Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority.

The Gorge Preservation Society is a non-profit organization consisting of local citizens, the GBRA and the Army Corps of Engineers. The Society's educational goals include showing the power of water; explaining the Gorge's origin in 2002;

demonstrating groundwater movement; and demonstrating the power of nature to restore equilibrium to a disturbed area by erosion, mass wasting, sediment deposition, and plant succession.

The Gorge also provides an outdoor teaching and research lab for carbonate stratigraphy, structural geology, hydrodynamics, paleontology, and the study of plant succession.



HCMNs examining a fault. Photo by Art Arizpe.

You can read more about the Gorge at the Gorge Preservation Society's web page:

www.canyongorge.org.

HCMN became involved with the project in 2007 when the Gorge opened to the public and the Gorge became an official chapter project the same year.

Our chapter contacts for the Canyon Gorge project are Jamie Kinscherff and Richard Barnett.

Jamie was in the HCMN class of 2003 and became interested in HCMN when he was living on a large ranch and responsible for the 1-D-1 Wildlife program. He met Kaybeth Williams and she told him about the chapter. Many chapter members know Jamie from his 4 years of service on the Training Committee. Jamie has been a guitar maker for 30 years and recently started Argus Eco-Services to help landowners become good stewards. Jamie is also on the GPS Board of Directors and is the Gorge trail boss.

Richard completed the MN training in 2001 with the Gulf Coast Chapter and transferred to our chapter when he and his wife moved to Wimberley in the summer of 2002. Richard served as the chapter's newsletter editor for 5 years. He is a lifelong naturalist and was a docent with the Houston Museum of Natural Science. Richard was a petroleum geologist and also was an earth science instructor at Houston Community College.

There are many volunteer activities available to HCMNs including trail maintenance, leading tours

and helping in the office. The GPS has an immediate need for a web master. Future plans include developing a north rim trail with access for the disabled.

Please contact [Jamie Kinscherff](#) or [Richard Barnett](#) if you would like to help.

Chapter News

Chapter Historian Position Open

The chapter has an immediate opening for the position of Historian.

The Historian maintains the historical records of the chapter. Historical records include but are not limited to: Training classes, projects, recognitions, events, elections, meetings, and Chapter Newsletter archives. Also included is keeping track of the chapter's tax info and files, photos, and compiling a scrapbook.

Here's your chance to help the chapter in an important record-keeping position! Please contact Dixie Camp, pres@haysmn.org, or 512-517-3111, if you would like to help.

Chapter Reporting Update

Part of our chapter's annual reporting requirements to the state organization include the number of outreach/education events, both direct and indirect and also a count of the number of youths, adults or private landowners who attended.

Also included in our reports are the total acreage impacted through new chapter projects and the number of trail miles developed or improved.

If you're a project leader or coordinator please remember to record this information and to help compile it for our report.

Please contact Dixie Camp, pres@haysmn.org, for more information.

Class June Schedule

Ch. #	Date	Location	Topics	Speaker
17	June 9	Aquarena Center Conference Ctr	Aquifers and the Birth of a River	Diane Wassenich
18			Wetlands, Riparian Areas and Restoration	Jamie--plant walk

Class of 2009 Moniker

Please welcome this year's class members, the Dire Wolves, to our prestigious list of HCMN classes! The class came up with the unique name after Dr. Britt Bousman's interesting lecture on archaeology of Texas.

Here is the list of names for our chapter:

- 2009 - Dire Wolves
- 2008 - Roadrunners
- 2007 - Madrones
- 2006 - Falcons
- 2005 - Cougars
- 2004 - Dragonflies
- 2003 - Wild Things
- 2002 - Ringtails
- 2001 - Wild Turkeys
- 2000 - Redtail Hawks
- 1999 - Roadrunners

- Mimi Boelter

Rooster Springs Elementary 2nd Grade Event

On May 1st, HCMNs participated in an event with the 2nd grade classes at Rooster Springs Elementary in Dripping Springs. The presentations covered several aspects of water conservation.



Ray Franklin explains the effects of rainfall. Photo by Mimi Boelter.

HCMN Ray Franklin used the Rainfall Simulator to show the students how native grasses capture the most rainwater and how important it is to keep the rainwater where it falls.



Randy Lenz demonstrates water flow through an aquifer. Photo by Mimi Boelter.

Randy Lenz, a trainee in this year's Master Naturalist class of Dire Wolves, demonstrated to the 2nd graders in Dripping Springs how water flows through an aquifer and what can happen if pollutants contaminate the water source.

Corinne Dundon, also from this year's class, used the aquifer model to show children the importance of conserving water.

May Chapter Meeting

Dr. Andrew G. Gluesenkamp, a biologist who studies cave and karst organisms, primarily salamanders was our guest speaker on May 28th. His talk was entitled "Cave Fauna of Central Texas, Hidden Diversity Beneath Our Feet."

He covered the unique aspects of the cave environment which can be summed up as "dark and delicate". The uniform physical parameters, such as stable temperature, high humidity, no light and little energy, all contribute to the fragile and special environment.

Regarding the importance of conservation, he reports that 77% (10 of 13) of the federally endangered arachnids are in the Austin-San Antonio area. Also, 50% (6 of 12) of endangered beetles are in this area.

Contributing to the conservation challenges are rapid urbanization, invasive species, and little public support. These are all areas in which MNs can help educate the public.

Request for Help with Master's Project

I'm doing research this summer on interactions of birds (particularly the white-winged dove) at urban feeders and we need sites we can get permission to use around San Marcos, San Antonio, Austin, Lockhart, Seguin, Canyon Lake, etc. (basically any urban setting we can find that works). Would anyone be willing to let me set up a feeder (cookie sheet) and blind in their yard for half an hour a morning one week this summer? I'd only have to be in the yard or outside somewhere around the property, not in or around your house/apartment.

If you know anyone or any business/school/church/etc. that you think would be receptive to us using their property too, I'd greatly appreciate any recommendations.

If you're interested or willing, would you please send me an e-mail letting me know and I'll be glad to give you all the details and talk more about it. (af1291@txstate.edu)

Thank you very much! Hope you all have a great summer!

Alayne B. Fronimos
Masters student
Historian

HaysMN Forum

Activity on the forum has been light during May.

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 May 2009 are due by June 7th. Please submit your reports of Volunteer and Advanced Training hours by using the friendly report forms at www.haysmn.org.

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

Tom Hausler

Tom shares a couple of photos taken at his Hummingbird feeder. Thanks Tom!

The photos were taken in N. Hays Co. on Plant Lady Lane. Tom has 4 hummingbird feeds out, 3 tube feeders (one for finches, 2 sunflower feeders) and 2 tray feeders on poles with a bird cam. The 2 photos shown here were taken with a Sony DSC-H7, using a telephoto lens.

The Hummingbird feeder is a Best 1, with the holes drilled out (about twice as large), for the Orioles, but as you can see, the Woodpeckers like it too.



A Scotts Oriole. Photo by Tom Hausler.



A Golden-fronted Woodpecker, aka "a Texas Size Hummingbird". Photo by Tom Hausler.

Calendar

Class Site Visit

There will be a Class Site Visit on Tuesday, June 2nd. Please contact Ann Connell for directions and more info (512.913.1441).

Birding with Jesse Huth San Marcos Nature Center

Thursday, June 25th, from 6:15 to 8:00pm. Cost is \$3.00 per person. Ages 12Y and up. Jesse is a young man, but he's been birding for over 12 years!

Among other things, he has been a team captain of the youth team at the Great Texas Birding Classic for 6 years, he constructed a bird blind at Patsy Glen Refuge and he teaches birding classes at Wimberley ISD.

For all interested, there will be a free birding trip on Saturday, June 27th, in San Marcos (location TBA). Please register at the Parks and Recreation office no later than Wednesday, June 24th.



Advanced Training Opportunities

Eco Day 2009

Saturday, June 20th, 10am – 5:30pm. Each workshop is approved for 1 hour of advanced training.

10am-11am, Jamie Kinscherff with Argus Ecoservices will speak about land management and land stewardship.

11am-12pm, Bryan Davis, Natural Resource Agent in San Antonio, will talk about oak wilt and easy-to-make wildlife rainwater collectors. He will

arrive early to assemble one of these "guzzlers" to be given away as a door prize.

12:30pm-1:30pm, Peter Pfeiffer, FAIA, from Barley & Pfeiffer Architects, will speak about green building. Clips from his appearances on The Today show and This Old House can be seen on his website: www.barleypfeiffer.com

1:30pm-2:30pm, Billy Kniffen, Rainwater Specialist with Agri-Life Extension Service, will speak on rainwater catchment systems for the home. bkniffen@tamu.edu

2:30pm-3:30pm, Jan Fulkerson, Urban Wildland Interface Specialist with the Texas Forest Service, will speak about the Firewise Program and how to landscape around your house to help prevent the spread of wildfire. jfulkerson@tfs.tamu.edu

3:30pm-4:30pm, Roger Jennings, from Texas Solar Power Company, will speak about solar energy solutions for the home. www.txspc.com

4:30-5:30, Ray Franklin, HCMN, will demonstrate the Rainfall Simulator and talk about how the land has changed throughout history and the importance of preservation. rayfranklin@wildblue.net



Volunteer Opportunities

Texas Wild Rice

Hey everyone - It's not quite Texas wild-rice monitoring time yet (that will be July 7-10 and 14-16), but the combination of low flows and floating vegetation mats is killing wild-rice. I'm looking for some volunteers to help clean off the floating vegetation mats the morning of May 28th.

We'll be carpooling from TPWD Austin HQ at 8:15 am and meeting in San Marcos at 9 am in Sewell Park by the first footbridge. We'll be gently pulling the floating mats of vegetation off wild-rice and then hauling the floating mats up onto the bank where others will put them into the trucks and haul them away to a compost pile. I'm hoping that we'll get enough people to easily do this in a few hours. The work in the water is of course wet but it's also very muddy so old clothes that you don't mind getting wet and muddy are required as well as shoes that won't pull off your feet easily. Bank work is a little less wet and muddy. I also recommend long pants and sleeves as the vegetation is irritating to some people. And of course sun screen, hats, and water are recommended. If you're still interested, just let me know where you'll be meeting us on the 28th and I'll put your name on the list. Thanks!

Jackie Poole
Jackie.Poole@tpwd.state.tx.us
Office Phone: (512) 389-8019

Eco Day 2009

Saturday, June 20th

9:30am-6:00pm

Hays MN Project #804

Help out with ongoing demos, set-up and clean-up, directing people, manning HCMN booth.

For more information, contact Mimi Boelter, mboelter@txwinet.com.

Elephant Ear Removal

Wednesday, June 3 and 17th

4:00pm-7:00pm

Hays MN Project #408

The unique and critical habitat of Spring Lake requires a carefully managed habitat conservation program. Volunteers meet the first and third Wednesday of each month to remove the invasive Elephant Ear plant that grows along the banks of the lake. Work begins at 4pm.

For more information, contact Leah Laszewski (laszewski@yahoo.com).

Hyacinth Removal

Saturday, June 27

9:00am-12:00pm

Hays MN Project #408

The unique and critical habitat of Spring Lake requires a carefully managed habitat conservation program. The San Marcos River Foundation works with Aquarena to provide regular water hyacinth removal the 4th Saturday of every month. Volunteers meet at the Wetlands nursery at 9 AM and work until about noon.

For more information e-mail Diane Wassenich (wassenich@grandecom.net).



State and National News

Texas Expo Cancelled!

As you may have heard Expo has been canceled for this year and next. At that point TPWD will decide if the event will be resumed or eliminated permanently.

It appears that several corporate sponsors backed out of the event. Without their support, TPWD found it impossible to have Expo.

Local News

***5th Annual Naturescapes
Photography Contest***

Calling all photographers! Here's your chance to share your creativity and to showcase the natural beauty of Hays County.

The 5th Annual Naturescapes Photography Contest and Exhibition, sponsored by the San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance and the Hill Country Photography Club is accepting entries starting April 1st. The deadline is July 6th. More information is available here: hcphotoclub.org/naturescapes.html.



**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