



President's Column

Greetings—

This month's meeting is very important. This is our annual meeting and we need to assure that we reach a quorum. So please attend! In addition to electing new officers, we will discuss the upcoming training and would like your input.

Also, please make sure to report any unreported hours to Janice by next week so that we can complete our annual report.

—Carol



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Five-Star Restoration Grants

The National Association of Counties, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Wildlife Habitat Council, in cooperation with the U.S. EPA, the Community-Based Restoration Program within NOAA Fisheries, and other sponsors, are soliciting applications for the Five-Star Restoration Challenge Grant Program. The Five-Star Restoration Program provides modest financial assistance on a competitive basis to support

See Five Star, Page 4...

Lockhart State Park Trails

Andy Butler

On a stunning fall day in November, eight Master Naturalists attended the Chapter Trails Workshop at Lockhart State Park. Although our trail design expert from Texas Parks and Wildlife was unable to attend, we learned a great deal about the history of the Park from Phyllis, and evaluated potential trail projects in the Park. We walked two segments of the existing trails and visited the recreation hall, built by the CCC atop a bluff overlooking the Park. Lockhart State Park is truly a forested island in the Blackland Prairie.

The upper or hillside trail shows off a good variety of the Park's terrain and plant life, and provides a good workout as well. The route we followed is about a 0.6 mile loop, and additional existing paths could potentially extend this. With the colorful fall foliage and cobalt sky, it was a delightful walk. Several remnants of the original CCC trail construction were apparent along the way. As is the case in many of the Texas State Park 'trails,' much of this route is also used by the park vehicles for maintenance purposes. Some minor clearing, signing and erosion control would be necessary to make this path useful as a nature trail for school groups or recreational hikers. A few of us also walked part of the creek-side trail, which offers a more intimate experience as it passes through about a half-mile of the riparian hardwood forest along the lovely Clear Fork. The wet weather of fall left several of the drainages across this trail flooded, and a couple of small bridges or culverts and some clearing would be required to make the path usable year around, but this trail has great potential for those interested in communing with nature and enjoying some solitude.

(See photos on page 4)

Officers
2002

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•V. Pres Bill Watson
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•Secretary Susan Green

Treasurer Janice Rampy

Committee Chairs

- Newsletter—Andy Butler; 512-237-9461, butler@mdanderson.org
- Program & Education—Sue Fischer & Joan Russell
- Volunteer Coordination—Janice Rampy
- Hospitality—Bonnie Shimek
- History—Susan Green
- Fundraising & Project Development—Gerri Martinez
- Policies & Guidelines—Bill Watson

**Check our
website for
updates:**



www.lostpinesmasternaturalist.org

The Texas Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Texas Cooperative Extension Agency and by Texas Parks and Wildlife.



*The earth does not withhold, it is generous enough,
The truths of the earth continually wait,
they are not so conceal'd either,
They are calm, subtle, untransmissible by print.*
—Walt Whitman, "A Song of the Rolling Earth"

**Remember—Please report
your volunteer hours to
Janice!**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR-

Regular meetings of the Lost Pines Chapter, Texas Master Naturalist, are the 4th Monday of the month.

JANUARY MEETING

Monday, January 27, 2003

6:30 PM

Sacred Heart Church

ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

FEBRUARY EVENTS

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2003

6:30 PM

Sacred Heart Church

Speaker: TBA

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

February 7, 2003. Please send information to Andy Butler (butler@mdanderson.org). We welcome relevant contributions, photos, announcements or other material relating to the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program, particularly those pertaining our local area.

CHAPTER WEBSITE:

www.lostpinesmasternaturalist.org

Volunteer Opportunities

Right Here at Home Opportunities

- **Rockne Historical Museum Landscaping**—The Rockne Historical Museum is scheduled for its grand opening on June 14, 2003. Plans are now being made for paths, roads, parking, and landscaping. The Lost Pines Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists has volunteered to help plan, obtain and plant native trees and shrubs. Anyone wishing to donate a plant or help in this project should contact Gerri Martinez (512) 303-5936 or Carol Brown (512-303-7271).
- **Fire-Wise Landscaping Development**—Ongoing. Joan Russell is working with several agencies including the U.S. Forest Service, an urban forester from TPWD, and local fire departments to develop landscaping techniques and landscaping plant materials which will make our homes “fire-wise.” She is looking for volunteers to help with this project which includes developing a list of fire-wise native plants. Call Joan at 321-2718.
- **Bastrop/Buescher State Park Volunteer Activities**—Ongoing; Sue Fischer will serve as our liaison with these parks to provide them with assistance in a variety of activities from trail maintenance to leading group tours. This opportunity is in the development stage. For further information, please call Sue at 321-1308.
- **Lockhart Demonstration Garden**—Ongoing; contact Lytle Arche for the specific time, and details of future work dates, at 512-398-3122 or by E-mail l-arche@tamu.edu.
- **GIS Software Input**—Take a short training course on this software and help our TPWD Wildlife Biologist map wildlife activity in a three county area. Call Len Polasek at 332-7280.

Other Opportunities

- **Bastrop State Park**—The Friends of the Lost Pines State Park will hold a trail maintenance work session on Saturday January 25. Meet at the Bastrop SP pool building at 9:00 A.M.
- **McKinney Roughs**—For information about volunteering at McKinney Roughs, call 512-303-5073, ext. 8040 (Bastrop Area) or toll-free, 800-776-5272, ext. 8040.
- **Wild Basin Preserve Trail Maintenance**—Second Saturday of most months (October 12; December 14), from 9:00 A.M. to noon. Volunteers are welcome to join Wild Basin Second Saturday crews, to help repair trails, control erosion, and make trails safer. Restoration projects and removal of non-native plants also help maintain the preserve. Wear sturdy shoes, bring water and dress for the weather. Tools and work gloves are

available. For reservations, call (512) 327-7622, E-mail hike@wildbasin.org or visit the Wild Basin website, www.wildbasin.org.

- **Texas Horned Lizard Watch**—provides instructions for surveying the Texas State Reptile on your property or on public areas. Data from volunteers in the first year have helped biologists suggest possible relationships between fire ant distributions and the distribution of Texas horned lizards. Contact the Wildlife Diversity program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Texas Mussel Watch**—volunteers are helping document the presence or absence of native freshwater mussel species. To volunteer for Texas Mussel Watch, call the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Texas Monarch Watch**—monitor the spring and fall migration of this familiar butterfly on your own property or public lands. Volunteers can call the Monarch Watch hotline at 1-800-468-9710 (in Austin, 326-2231) to report sightings of monarchs or hear a recorded message about the status of the migration in Texas. For more information about Texas Monarch Watch or to receive monitoring kit, call the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Hummingbird Roundup**—provides instructions for monitoring hummingbirds, along with suggestions and supplies for improving hummingbird habitat on your property in Texas. For information, call the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 4644.
- **Texas Amphibian Watch**—a partner with the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program. Use field guides, web sites and audio tapes to learn to identify the various species of frogs and toads native to their area by sight and by listening to their calls. For more information about Texas Amphibian Watch or about related workshops, contact the Wildlife Diversity Program at 1-800-792-1112, ext. 7011.
- **Project Prairie Birds**—Answer questions about Texas' wintering sparrows and their avian grassland neighbors. Project Prairie Birds can be conducted in any temperate grassland site. For more information, contact Cliff Shackelford, 512-912-7045 or by E-mail: clifford.shackelford@tpwd.state.tx.us.
- **Remember**—Get approval *before* you begin a project for volunteer credit. Report your volunteer service to Janice Rampy (512-398-2357). Documenting your service hours helps you to become certified, and helps the Master Naturalist Program to justify support received from our sponsors. Your volunteer work isn't really completed until it is reported...take a minute now to send in your hours.

Advanced Training

Note: Please obtain prior approval for advanced training, and don't forget to report your hours!

- ▶ **Tree Talk and Winter Walk**—January 18, 2003 (Noon to 4:00 P.M.), at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 LaCrosse Ave., Austin, TX. Learn about: the historic trees of Texas; proper tree care; oak wilt; landscaping with trees; and how Native Americans and early settlers used native Texas trees. Visit the website, <http://www.wildflower.org>, or call (512) 292-4200 for details.
- ▶ **Propagating Woody Plants**—February 8, 2003 (Noon to 4:00 P.M.), at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 LaCrosse Ave., Austin, TX. Learn the secrets of propagating woody plants with Pat McNeal, owner of McNeal Growers. This four hour session will cover the basics of seed and cutting propagation for woody plants. There will also be limited information on seed collection, seed cleaning and maintain stock plants for cutting propagation. Registration: \$35 (M) \$40 (NM). Visit <http://www.wildflower.org> or call (512) 292-4200 for details.
- ▶ **Texas Trees and Their Uses**—February 16, 2003 (1-4:00 P.M.), at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 LaCrosse Ave., Austin, TX. Discover how Native Americans and early settlers used trees for food, medicine, fiber, dyes, ceremony and more, with Patty Leslie Pasztor co-author of "Texas Trees - A Friendly Guide," will highlight human uses of our native trees, and their importance to wildlife. The workshop will include: classroom presentation; a hands-on look at baskets, roots, dyes, etc., and a walk through the Center grounds to study the trees discussed. Registration: \$25 (M) \$30 (NM). Visit <http://www.wildflower.org> or call (512) 292-4200 for details.

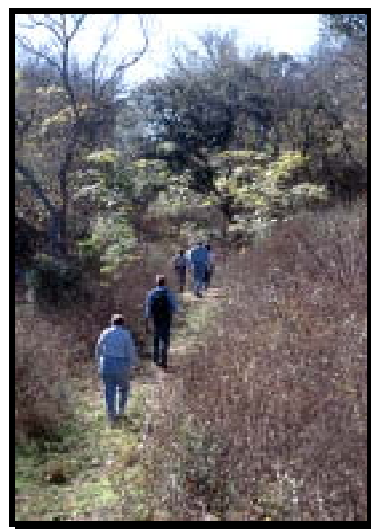
- ▶ **Native Plant Spring Symposium 2003: Historic Flora of Texas**—March 1, 2003 at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 LaCrosse Ave., Austin, TX. This workshop includes lectures on Historic Flora of Texas, Fossil Pollens of Texas, and Historic and Current Ecological Conditions of Big Bend National Park. Afternoon workshop topics will include butterfly gardening, plant identification, seed harvesting and propagation, butterfly and caterpillar behavior and propagation of madrones. Registration: \$25 (M) \$30 (NM). Visit <http://www.wildflower.org> or call (512) 292-4200 for details.
- ▶ **Hill Country Land Stewardship Workshop**—March 22, 2003 at Bamberger Ranch. A day on the Ranch with emphasis on "Stewardship" for the large or small landowner or anyone considering buying land, who wants to know how to improve land for all plant and animal species. Transportation is on the "Bluebonnet". This eight hour, outdoor workshop will be conducted by our experienced ranch personnel. You will look at and examine the many projects that demonstrate the principles which have been successfully used on this ranch. Registration: \$100 (discounts available to Texas Master Naturalists). Visit the Bamberger Website, <http://www.bambergerranch.org/workshops.htm>, or call 830-868-2630 to obtain a registration form.

Five Star Challenge, Continued from Page 1

community-based wetland, riparian, and coastal habitat restoration projects that build diverse partnerships and foster local natural resource stewardship through education, outreach, and training activities. The Five-Star Restoration Challenge Grant program is open to any public or private entity. Applications must be postmarked by March 3, 2003. <http://www.nfwf.org/programs/5star-rfp.htm>



Stone steps at Lockhart State Park



Exploring Lockhart Trails