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President's Column

--Louise Ridlon

"April prepares her green traffic light and the world thinks Go."
~Christopher Morley, *John Mistletoe*

With the full-blown arrival of Spring, the activity level of the naturalist community has cranked up, too. Take a look at the Austin Nature Days supplement from the Statesman, which lists opportunities galore for recreation, education, and service in the Austin area (www.AustinNatureDays.org).

Many of our local organizations are planning special events in April and calling for Master Naturalists to participate. The Pines and Prairies Land Trust is sponsoring a workshop on Central Texas Groundwater on April 23 from 1 to 4:45 p.m. in String Prairie. See their Web site at www.pplt.org for details. We'll check to see whether this would qualify for advanced training.

The fabulous weather and spectacular wildflower displays are drawing people outdoors in droves. Saturday hikes at Bastrop State Park are continuing. McKinney Roughs' Earth Day Festival on April 17 offered varied activities for all ages, from kayaking to nature-themed speakers to music, fun, and games. The Lost Pine Master Naturalist Chapter's booth

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The CCC's Legacy in Texas

--Wendy Sera

The Look of Nature: Designing Texas State Parks in the Great Depression is an extensive and impressive new Web site that explores the architectural heritage of the activities of the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) in Texas. The CCC was a depression-era federal program created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933 that put 2.5 million unemployed young men to work on public works projects across the country. The program ended in 1942 as the economy recovered and WWII began. During its existence, 50,000 CCC workers in Texas laid the groundwork for more than 50 parks across Texas. The legacy of the CCC is still visible today at 29 parks operated by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

Those of you who have seen the CCC's workmanship in our Texas State Parks know that the structures they built are truly impressive and still functional today! This Web site is also impressive with extensive photo archives and video. Visit <http://texascccparks.org/> for a real treat!

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MISSION STATEMENT

To develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.



STATE PROGRAM CONTACTS

Website: <http://masternaturalist.tamu.edu>

State Coordinator: Michelle Haggerty,
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The Texas Master Naturalist program is sponsored by the Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

SPONSOR CONTACTS

Caldwell Co. Extension Office: Jeff Watts; Caldwell-tx@tamu.edu; (512) 398-3122.

Bastrop Co. Extension Office: Rachel Bauer, CEA-AG/NR; Bastrop-tx@tamu.edu; (512) 581-7186.

Bastrop/Caldwell Co. TPWD Wildlife Biologist: Meredith Longoria, 804 Pecan, Bastrop, Meredith.Longoria@tpwd.state.tx.us; (512) 332-7280.



Newsletter Deadline

Deadline for the next issue is **May 9, 2010**. We welcome relevant contributions, photos, announcements, or other material relating to the mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program, particularly those pertaining to our local area. Please send information to Wendy Sera: wendy_sera@hotmail.com, (512) 652-8605.

Chapter Calendar

Chapter meetings generally alternate between Bastrop State Park's Refectory and the Red Rock Community Center and are normally held at 6:30 pm on the third Monday of each month. Meetings are open to members, prospective members, and the public.

April

Monday, April 19 – Chapter Meeting: *Bastrop State Park Refectory, 6:30 pm.* Jeff Raasch from the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department will give a presentation on wetland ecology. (Joint meeting with 2010 training class.)

May

Monday, May 17 – Chapter Meeting: *Bastrop State Park Refectory, 6:30 pm.* Val Bugh will give a presentation on insects, and Kelly Bender will talk about the urban-wildlife Interface. (Joint meeting with 2010 training class.)

June

Saturday, June 19 at Noon – Annual Picnic and Social: *McKinney Roughs Nature Park, Dining Hall.* **This event replaces our normal Monday chapter meeting for June.** There will be a brief presentation about the LCRA's work in conservation and education, and their nature parks. A short business meeting will be followed by lunch. The presentation will begin promptly at Noon. Come early and enjoy the gardens and trails!

Chapter Web site

<http://www.lostpinesmasternaturalist.org/>

Please check our Web site for updated event information and for links to many resources about our region's natural history.

Lost Pines Chapter Yahoo Group

Subscribe to our Yahoo Group to keep up with the latest Chapter happenings. Send an e-mail to mLPMN-subscribe@yahoo.com or log on to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/LPMN/>.

Reporting Training & Volunteer Hours

Send your advanced training and volunteer hour reports to Marsha Elrod: melrod1@earthlink.net; use the online reporting form on our Web site or mail to:

187 Billingsley Hts
Cedar Creek TX 78612

Volunteer Opportunities

- **McKinney Roughs Nature Survey** – Kathy McAleese is coordinating a long-term project to survey trails through the burned-out areas of McKinney Roughs. Plans call for at least two surveys per month, one during the week and one on a weekend. Actual days and times will vary based on the weather and Kathy's schedule. Please contact her at (512) 718-1313 or kmcaleese@austin.rr.com if you are interested in leading or participating in either weekday or weekend surveys, or both.
- **Bastrop State Park Interpretive Walks** – We need volunteers each Saturday morning from **March into June**. Hikes are from 10 AM to about 11:30 AM. Remember, these hikes are literally a "walk in the woods": one leisurely mile. Meet at the kiosk next to the playscape rest rooms (down the road from the Refectory and swimming pool). Please contact Sue Fischer to volunteer at smfischer@mdanderson.org or (512) 321-1308.
- **Hornsby Bend – Ecological Literacy Days – Last Saturday of every month, 9 am - 1 pm** – Combining volunteer work with learning about local ecology, the Ecological Literacy Day at Hornsby Bend begins with several hours of outdoor work - ranging from trail maintenance to habitat restoration to work in the native plant nursery - and ends with at least an hour of learning about local ecology - birds, bugs, and more! Wear boots and work clothing, and bring your binoculars. For more information, contact Kevin Anderson at coordinator@hornsbybend.org or (512) 972-1960.
- **Hornsby Bend – Monthly Bird Survey – Second Saturday each month** – Meet at the **Center for Environmental Research at 7:00 am** for the morning survey [coffee and donuts at 6:30 am] and **4:00 pm** for the afternoon survey. All levels of birders are welcome - the survey is a great way to improve your skills since we form teams matching experienced and novice birders. For more information, contact Eric Carpenter at ecarpe@gmail.com.
- **Colorado River Refuge – Nature Education Classes** – Joan Russell has organized a series of nature education classes for homeschooled. Master Naturalists can volunteer to assist with these classes, held on Thursday mornings from 10:00-12:00. Class sessions will be held at the Water District Building in Tahitian Village just off Hwy. 71 on Tahitian Drive. Dates for the upcoming

classes are **April 22** and **May 6 & 20**. Contact Joan Russell to volunteer at joanrussell@suddenlink.net or (512) 321-8618.

- **Smithville Community Gardens – Smitty's Garden Tour (a fundraiser)** – Saturday, **May 1**, Noon to 4 pm – Smithville, TX. Looking for volunteer experts to pair in each of the gardens on the tour. There may be some workshops (if they can find experts) from 10 am-Noon, as well as at some sites. Some of the ideas for topics include:
 - Wildflowers
 - Butterflies, Hummingbirds, & Bees
 - Vermiculture
 - Organic Gardening
 - Vegetable Gardens in Central Texas
 - Composting
 - Rainwater Harvesting
 - Watershed Issues
 - Native Plants / Xeriscaping
 - Gardening with Kids

For additional information, visit <http://www.ci.smithville.tx.us/Smithville-Comprehensive-Plan/Community-Development/About-the-Smithville-Community-Gardens.aspx>. If you would like to volunteer for this project, contact Jill Strube at 512-237-3282 (x 2109) or jstrube@ci.smithville.tx.us.

- **Texas Parks & Wildlife Department – Family Fishing Clinics** – Volunteers are needed to assist with learn-to-fish clinics for boys and girls ages 6 to 13. You don't need to be a fisherman to help out. Park entrance is free for volunteers, and necessary training will be provided on site. Clinics will be held on:
 - June 12** at Bastrop State Park
 - June 19** at Buescher State Park
 - July 10** at Bastrop State Park
 - July 1** at Buescher State Park

Volunteers should be there at 9:00 am. Contact Bill Brooks at (512) 581-0377 or bgbrooks@mail.utexas.edu to participate.



Advanced Training

- **AgriLIFE Extension – Using Rainwater in the Home: A Do-it-yourself Course** – Thursday, **May 27**, 8:30 am-5:00 pm at Hays County Extension, 1253 Civic Center Loop, San Marcos, TX. Course goes beyond the rainwater basic courses to give the participant a detailed understanding of how they can use rainwater for indoor use, too (potable and non-potable uses). Fee: \$70, \$95 onsite. To register, visit <https://agrilifevents.tamu.edu> and search “rainwater” or call (979) 845-5385, or go to <http://rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu>.
- **Travis Audubon Society** has also scheduled numerous workshops on **How to Attract and Care for Bluebirds, Bird Drawing, Hummingbird Gardening, Hummingbird Identification, Introduction to Shorebird Identification, and Superzoom Digital Cameras for Wildlife Photography**, starting in June and July. Visit their Web site for more information and to register: <http://www.travisaudubon.org/classes.html>
- **Bastrop State Park Alum Creek Walks – Select weekends, April & May.** Learn about the area on a nature walk led by a Master Naturalist. The walk will also serve as training if you wish to volunteer to lead one of these hikes in the future. Hikes are scheduled for **April 10 and 24**, and **May 8 and 22**. Meet at the parking area between the Refectory and the swimming pool. Dress for the weather, bring water and sunscreen; wear shoes or boots that you don't mind getting wet. The hike is not difficult, but is about 3 miles long (2-2 1/2 hours). **Please be punctual**, as the hike requires a short car shuttle and late comers may be left behind. Please contact Andy Butler to volunteer at abutler@mac.com or (512) 321-1308.
- **TPWD – Project WILD and Other Workshops** – Numerous workshops are being offered across Texas. Here are some close by:
 1. **Growing Up WILD Workshop** – Saturday, **April 24** – Austin, TX
 2. **Wildlife Activities and Practices Workshop** – Friday, **April 30** – Ledbetter, TX
 3. **Project WILD Aquatic Workshop** – Saturday, **May 8** – San Antonio, TX
 4. **Women of the Land** – Friday, **May 14 to Sunday, May 16** – La Bandera Ranch, Carrizo

Springs, TX

5. **Project WILD Aquatic Workshop** – Wednesday, **July 14** – Austin, TX

For additional information, visit

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/calendar/?calpage=a0181>

- **Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center – Nature Nights**, 6:00-9:00 PM, select nights in Spring. Events scheduled: *Endangered Species* on Friday, **May 21**. Admission is \$1.00. For additional information, visit <http://www.wildflower.org/nature/>.
- **Colorado County Farm Bureau, Colorado County Soil & Water Conservation District #333, & TPWD – Wildlife Workshop** – Saturday, **May 1**, 9 am-3:45 pm at St. Roch's Parish Hall, 1600 Frelsburg Rd, Mentz, TX – Morning session topics will include *White-tailed Deer 101*, which will cover detailed deer anatomy, fetus aging, browse/stomach contents, and teeth/jaw aging. Afternoon session topics will include pond management, predators, and the lifecycle of feral hogs. Registration is \$20 made payable to Colorado County SWCD and includes a catered lunch. Mail registration form and payment (no refunds) to 316 Spring Street, Room 108, Columbus, TX 78934. **Pre-registration is required and must be received by April 23**. For additional information, contact Beverly Tuck at (979) 732-9565 or Gloria Ilse or Erin Young at (979) 732-2383.



offered visitors the opportunity to make wildflower seed balls to take home for planting.

The Pines and Prairies Land Trust has announced their Spring Field Day and bird census at the Yegua Knobbs Preserve in McDade. If you haven't been out to this beautiful site, calendar the date and come out for a hike around the bog. It's a truly unique area. Again, visit their Web site at www.pplt.org for more information. Also, on May 1, Smithville Community Gardens is hosting "Smitty's Garden Tour." See more details in this newsletter under Volunteer Opportunities.

I'm sure the members of the 2010 Training Class are eagerly anticipating their "graduation" on May 17. It's been an intense few months. Kudos to all who stuck with it—and to Paulette, Andy, and all who made it happen.

Our best wishes to past president Mark McClelland and Teri, who retired at the end of March. They'll be hitting the road with their travel trailer, exploring the natural wonders of Texas and beyond. We'll miss Mark's leadership and expertise. Happy trails, and send us a Yahoo shout once in a while!

Our **April 19** meeting will be held at **Bastrop State Park's Refectory** at 6:30 pm and will

Nature Quotes

Ah, summer, what power you have to make us suffer and like it.

~Russell Baker



feature Jeff Raasch from Texas Parks and Wildlife speaking on wetland ecology. This presentation is part of the training class as well as advanced training for veteran members.

I hope to see many of you at one or more of these Spring events—enjoy and share nature at its best!

Spring is nature's way of saying, "Let's party!"
~Robin Williams

The Lost Pines Master Naturalist 2010 training class on their April 3 fieldtrip.



Back Row: Jeannie Jessup, Carl Altman-Kaough, Ralph Smoot, Bob Crone, John Stock, Drew Williams; **2nd Row:** Alice Attaway, Nancy Parish, Nick Nichols, Ann Smoot, Sydney Gorton, Gayla Stock, Susan Smith, Caroline Easley; **Front Row:** Carole Minnix, Tana Rogers, Lori Baumann, Roxanne Hernandez; **Not pictured:** Phil Cook, Sherryl King, Scott Moore, Kelly Overdorff, Bob Price, PK Scott, Hudson Smith