

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST ELM FORK CHAPTER

NATURALIST NEWS

Volume 22 Issue 3
March 2022



Mexican Plum (*Prunus mexicana*) —courtesy Dorothy Thetford

We're on the Web www.txmn.org/elmfork

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/

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Volume 22 Issue 3
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Wolf Spider—Jonathan Reynolds



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Special points of interest:

- What are pouches? Find out on p. 11
- What to know more about birds? p. 14
- Chapter looking for a Programs Director
- Get ready Open House is coming



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What Happens Next?

Kimberlee Howell, Woodland Ecologist, is our guest speaker at the March 17, 2022 Chapter meeting. Kimberlee will cover the following topics:

Ecosystems and ecological succession
History of Prairies and Benefits
Prairie Restoration processes
Plant ID review
Common grasses and forbs

Kimberly is with the Texas A&M Forest Service stationed in Mineral Wells. In her current position she assists landowners with Stewardship plans and Oak Wilt. She has a Bachelor of Science degree from Tarleton State University in Wildlife, Ecosystem and Sustainability. In addition, she has a Master of Science Degree from Tarleton in Agriculture and Natural Resources. She previously worked on grassland restoration with Texas A&M Agriculture Resource.

Zoom registration link to meeting March 17, 2022

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEsdO-urzliH9KxaK7UsMdSBmNKJWQl1E6o>



Great Blue Heron—Jonathan Reynolds

What Happens After That?

YOU'RE INVITED

FREE EVENT

Texas Master Naturalist Elm Fork Chapter

Serving Denton, Wise and Cooke Counties

OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, April 21, 2022

9:30 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

DCAC Courthouse
1 Courthouse Drive
3rd Floor, Room 2020
Denton

Come meet local Master Naturalists!

Find out how we serve your Community through

CONSERVATION RESTORATION PRESERVATION



Texas Master Naturalist Elm Fork Chapter

TMN Mission: 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

EFC Vision: In our community, Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program will be recognized as a primary source of information, education and service to support natural resources and natural areas today and in the future



Website:
txmn.org/elmfork

Email:
contact@efctmn.org

Facebook:
Elm Fork Chapter Texas
Master Naturalist

To check updates for this event please refer to our Website, Facebook or contact us through our Email.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is an equal opportunity employer and program provider. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Court of Texas Cooperating. We will seek to provide reasonable accommodation for all persons with disabilities for this program. We ask that you notify the Denton County AgriLife Extension Office of the auxiliary aid or service that will be required.

Inside Outside News

ATTENTION:

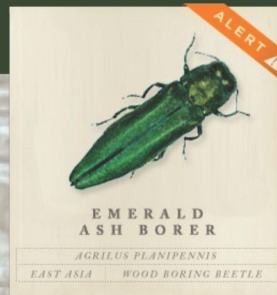
CITIZEN FORESTERS, MASTER NATURALISTS, MASTER GARDENERS

IDENTIFICATION OF ASH TREES IDENTIFICATION/SYMPTOMS/CONTROL OF EMERALD ASH BORER

Monday, April 11, 2022

12:30 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.

**Denton Library, South Branch,
3228 Teasley Lane, Denton**



Class includes a presentation at the Denton Library, South Branch, followed by a short drive to a neighborhood nearby to experience first hand Ash Trees infested with EAB, weather permitting. Please bring binoculars if possible.

Rain or Shine. Limited to 25 Class Participants.

Michele Rawleigh, flower.freak@verizon.net

Mary Morrow, hawkilittle@aol.com

Diane Wetherbee, diane.wetherbee@gmail.com

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Inside Outside News

SUGGESTIONS

Have an idea, a complaint, a question? Then take advantage of the Chapter Suggestion Box.

Member suggestions are welcomed by the Board and may be made on the Chapter's website in the Members area under Suggestion Box or by contacting Harriet Powell directly by email at Suggestions@efctmn.org



From Jim Gerber

To our current CoCoRaHS precipitation monitoring volunteers:

When reporting your time in VMS, please use the following guideline:



For most residential rain gauges, it only takes about 5 minutes to read the gauge and report your reading, so all you need to do is count the number of actual precipitation days in the month (not including zero readings), multiply by 5 and round to the nearest quarter hour. If it takes longer to read your gauge, please let me know so I can notify the VMS team.

You can add a quarter hour for gauge cleaning, if performed.

Remember to use the first and last day of the month for the starting and ending dates.

Thank you! Your precipitation reports are an important addition to the weather picture in North Texas.

TRAINING



Announcement

Applications are now being accepted for the 2022 Initial Training Class. If you know someone interested, please share our webpage <https://txmn.org/elmfork/join-our-chapter/training> and ask them to complete BOTH forms for application.

Elm Fork Chapter is seeking to fill the position of Program Director (Continuing Education)

Should be a Lifelong Learner with a pulse on what's making news in our surrounding world.

If interested and want more information contact Rita Lokie: at@efctmn.org





**Sat April 2, 2022 10-11 am
Eastern Bluebirds**

Come take a short hike around the 8 Bluebird Boxes at Green Acres with Texas Master Naturalist LeeAnn Weaver and learn all about the Eastern Bluebirds, their nesting practices, and how to start attracting these beautiful birds to your area.

Age: 14-Adult

Location: Green Acres Park, [4400 Hide-A-Way, Flower Mound](#)

Instructor: LeeAnn Weaver, Texas Master Naturalist

Max: 20 but will have a wait list

Link to register: <https://tinyurl.com/2p82d52u>



The Visitor Center is Open! Tram Tours are Running Again!

Tram seats are filling up fast! Make a reservation up for a [tram tour](#) via our new online reservation system today! Come and see the indoor exhibits, and do some shopping in our beautiful Nature Nook.

In this edition:

Find out how to join us online for our [Annual Meeting](#) on March 20, 2022 via ZOOM, learn about wild turkeys on the refuge and enjoy a craft with Puddles.

See you at the refuge!

The Nature Center at Ray Roberts Lake, Isle Du Bois unit and the new Johnson Branch Nature Center needs Master Naturalist volunteers.

Please contact Chuck Thetford if you are not on the Signup Genius list

cthetfordathome@gmail.com

940-765-1418

If you are not already a volunteer at the lake, we welcome you! If you are interested but have not attended orientations and training for the Nature Centers, we will be glad to provide it with the State Park Interpretive Rangers, Izzy Mabry and Mindy Shumate.



Coming Up April 21!

This year our **Open House** will be different. More attention to who we are and what we do. Everyone is invited to come and go. Light refreshments will be served. Stay tuned for more information in coming days. See flyer p. 4

Inside Outside News

Join us Saturday, March 26, for KDB's Great American Cleanup (GAC), Denton's largest and longest-running litter cleanup event. Each year, GAC mobilizes more than 2,000 Dentonites to improve the beauty and health of the Denton community.

Denton's 34th Annual GAC begins at 9 a.m. on March 26, with volunteers cleaning assigned locations citywide. The network of cleanups will then be followed by a Volunteer Appreciation Party at the Denton Civic Center/Quakertown Park from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free lunch for volunteers will be provided along with music, educational activity booths, kids' bounce houses, contest prizes, and more!

Volunteers are asked to maintain at least 6 feet of distance from passersby and those not from your immediate household. When outdoors, masks are encouraged when social distancing is not possible. Masks are required when indoors per the Eighteenth Order of Denton City Council and Ordinance 21-2801.

For more information, visit: www.cityofdenton.com/614/Great-American-Cleanup

Ready to Volunteer?

Online registration is open through March 16 in the Denton Parks and Rec Catalog: <https://bit.ly/denton-gac-2022>

- If you would like to work with other chapter members, please include EF-CMN in the "Group" field.
- An additional waiver is required for this project and is available at www.bitly.com/project-waiver.
- Hours can be submitted for chapter verification under project number P210212 Community Clean Up Events.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you and kind regards,

Carly Weld, CVA

she, her, hers

Program & Volunteer Coordinator

Denton Parks & Recreation Department

321 E. McKinney St.

Denton, Texas 76201

Office: (940) 349-8738

www.cityofdenton.com

Inside Outside News

REMINDER!!! PROJECT NESTWATCH

By Sharon Clark

Starting Date: Anytime
Project # 171207

It is that time of the year again when our feathered friends start nesting!

WHAT IS NESTWATCH?

NestWatch is a nationwide monitoring program (**Cornell Lab or Ornithology project**) designed to **track status and trends** in the **reproductive biology of birds**, including when nesting occurs, number of eggs laid, how many eggs hatch, and how many hatchlings survive. Nest boxes are considered nests.

Enrolling **has no cost** to participants.

Nestwatch is a field research and observation volunteer project.

Please note that construction of, placement of, and maintenance of nest boxes **does not count** as EFCMN volunteer time for this project.

There is **no specific start or stop date** for this project due to the fact that in some states some birds (like owls in January) can be nesting year-round.

The Cornell database is used **to study the current condition of breeding bird populations** and how they may be changing over time as a result of **climate change, habitat degradation and loss, expansion of urban areas, and the introduction of non-native plants and animals.**

HOW CAN YOU PARTICIPATE?

Participating in NestWatch is easy and just about anyone can do it.

Simply follow the directions on the website (www.nestwatch.org) to become a **certified NestWatcher**, then **find** a bird nest (in a bush/tree, in a nest box, in riparian area, etc.) using the helpful tips offered on the web site, **visit** the nest every 3-4 days and **record** what you see, and then **report** this information on the NestWatch website.

You can also download the **NestWatch Mobile App** for iOS and Android and record what you see at the nest in real time. Direct email for Nestwatch is : nest-watch@cornell.edu.

Your observations will be added to those of thousands of other NestWatchers in a **continually growing database used by researchers** to understand and study birds. Simply put, without your help it would be impossible to gather enough information to accurately monitor nesting birds across the country. And while you are contributing extremely valuable information to science, you will learn firsthand about birds and create a lifelong bond with the natural world.

Eastern Bluebird hatchlings

Photo courtesy of EFCM Member Sharon Clark



Inside Outside News

Second Saturday: Spring Bird Migration with Dr. Wayne Meyer

Saturday March 12, at 10:00 AM Online via ZOOM

(Registration Required)

Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge, like many others, was established to provide a stop-over habitat for migratory birds. Certainly, many other species benefit from the refuge and at other times of the year, but migrating birds are the focus of much of the refuge's work. So, it would be useful to understand what migration is, why it occurs and how birds do it. This month's program will discuss all of these topics, and at just the right time of year, when birds are beginning to head north for the spring again.

Dr. Wayne Meyer is an Associate Professor of the Biology department at Austin College, where he has been teaching for 28 years. He started birding at 13 in Connecticut. In 1993 he finally achieved his life's dream of being paid to look at birds when he joined the faculty of Austin College. He has birded both coasts of the U.S. extensively and now has spent a quarter-century birding in Texas and Oklahoma. The proximity of Austin College to Hagerman NWR has made research on prairie birds easy and convenient and he has been studying song learning and singing in Painted Buntings for over a decade. Meyer is also a sought-after speaker for Master Naturalist groups and a frequent speaker for the Friends of Hagerman.

[Registration](#)

Projects in and around the community

From Kathy Webb

Updated summary of the Wildlife Rehabber Support project.

Our project supports wildlife rehab groups in the DFW area who rescue and rehabilitate wildlife so they may be returned to the wild. The mammal species most frequently coming into rehab where bedding items are used are squirrels, opossums, bunnies and raccoons. They might be orphaned babies or injured adults.

We sew pouches and hammocks that are fastened inside the caging to provide comfort and security for these small animals while they are being cared for. These are supplied ahead of the busiest rehab times of the year, Jan., June and Sept.

Volunteers are needed. You should be able to sew and have a sewing machine plus other basic sewing essentials. The work is done at home, sewing as few or as many items as you choose. Completed items are gathered up periodically for delivery to the rehab group. Last year we provided over 100 bedding items for the Texas Metro group of wildlife rehabilitators, aiding in many wild animals being returned to health and release in proper environments.

Projects in and around the community

Pouches in use



Projects in and around the community

Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition

From Marilyn Blanton

The Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition is being showcased in the South Branch, the Emily Fowler Central and the North Branch Libraries during the month of March. Over 300 pictures of Texas native plants created by 4th grade students are displayed in the libraries.

The Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition is raising awareness and appreciation of native plants through childrens' art. The Discover Denton Visitor Center on the Denton Square will host a small exhibit for the first two weeks of April. The Appreciation Reception will be held on Wednesday, April 20 from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at the Denton ISD Professional Development Center. The reception honors the students and their teachers, acknowledges the exhibit hosts and recognizes the Native Plant Society of Texas, the Texas Master Naturalist and Texas Woman's University College of Art and Sciences as sponsors of the project. Please plan now to attend. The last display will be at the Denton Redbud Festival on Saturday, April 23 at the Denton Civic Center. All of the artwork will be returned to the schools before the end of the school year.

I'd like to thank everyone for their support of this project, especially the volunteers that have helped make it fun and successful!



Projects in and around the community

Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition— cont'd



Jerry Hamby—photographer



Expand Your Knowledge—Explore the Many Surprises of Nature



Clip art

Tweet of the Month

By Sue Yost class of 2017

White-winged Dove. Zenaida asiatica

Did you know White-winged Doves never used to be in our area? Yep. They were only found way down in south Texas. They have expanded their range all the way to the mid-west where birders get excited about seeing them! I always say, “be careful what you ask for!” One of the earliest reports according to Warren Pulich’s “Birds of North Central Texas” there are 5 records from 1969-1982 of sightings in our area. Now they are everywhere.

Accounts of early settlers’ state that from about 1870 to 1920 there were several million in the lower Rio Grand Valley. Those numbers rapidly declined by 1930 once land started to be cleared. Hunters also played a role in their decline by having contests on who could kill the most. Every September, they remain a big game bird during dove season. I wonder, do they taste like chicken?

The White-winged Dove is a heavy bodied bird with distinctive large white wing patches visible when in flight. White also lines the edges of the wings. They weigh about 5 ounces and measure in at 11.5” in length with a wingspan of 19”. The call is a rhythmic hooting very similar to a Barred Owl’s “who cooks for you” call. Generally found in large flocks, when disturbed at feeding stations, they make an explosive retreat to cover. They are notorious for hitting windows and are an easy prey item for Cooper and Sharp-shinned Hawks.

Previously nesting in scrub woodlands, [which were turned into farmland] the doves moved to nesting in mature citrus groves and by 1950 almost 80% of the doves were nesting in orange and grapefruit trees. Increasing crop diversity and periodic freezes killed the old groves. Heavy spraying of pesticides and herbicides also took a heavy toll on the birds. Today they will nest in riparian woodlands or thickets [especially mesquites]

Like other dove species, they make a crude nest out of sticks where the female will lay 2 white to buff colored eggs. Both parents will incubate the eggs for about 2 weeks. Doves are the only family that does not feed its nestlings insects. Doves make a crop milk that is then regurgitated into the nestlings mouths. Both male and females produce this milk. After about 4 days then they start to get seeds in addition to the crop milk.

White-winged Doves will eat just about any kind of seed that is available. They are typically ground and platform feeders. White wings have taken over feeding stations and have slowly pushed out the Mourning Doves.

If you have a feeding stations you likely have White-winged Doves as they have adapted very well to living in the burbs!

Contributors This Month



**wanda odum class
2005—editor**



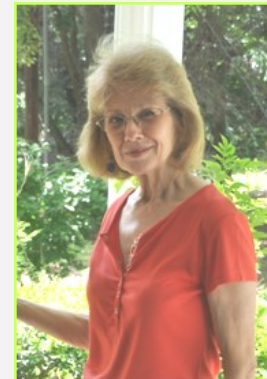
**Judy Elliott class
2009**



**Harriett Powell
class 2015**



**Jonathan Reynolds
class 2014**



**Marilyn Blanton
class 1999**



**Mary Morrow
class 2014**



**Sharon Clark
class 2014**



**Dorothy Thetford
class 2001**



**Check Thetford
class 2011**



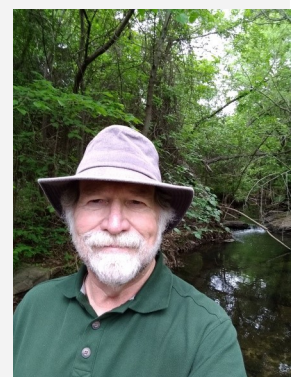
**Becky Bertoni
class 2015**



**Susan Yost class
2017**



**Rita Lokie class
2013**



**Jim Gerber class
2019**

**Kathy Webb
class 2017**



**Guest contributor
(t-i-c)**



FIELD NOTES IN FOCUS



Mockingbird from the gallery of Jonathan Reynolds—at North Lake

If you would like to be featured on either front page or in Field Notes in Focus—
send photos to wanda.odum@gmail.com



Famous Last Words



Good things are
JUST AHEAD.

Great things can happen when it doesn't matter who gets the credit....H.S. Truman

Who we are



Texas A&M AgriLIFE Extension
 Joseph A. Carroll Building
 401 W. Hickory Street
 Denton, TX 76201
 940-349-2883

We're on the web
<https://txmn.org/elmfork>

Our mission . . . "to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our community"

Our vision . . . "in our community, Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist program will be recognized as a primary source of information, education and service to support natural resources and natural areas today and in the future."

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

PRESIDENT—Jan Deatherage
IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT—Jerry Betty
VICE-PRESIDENT—Kathy Webb
SECRETARY—Barbara Bean
TREASURER—Ray Kreutzfeld
MEMBER-at-LARGE— Harriet Powell
CLASS 2021 REPRESENTATIVE— Karen DeVinney 2021
ADVISORS:
 Janet Laminack, Extension Agent
 TPWD—Daniel Rios

Regular Monthly Chapter Meetings

Meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. preceded by a social time at 9:00 a.m. Chapter meetings are open to the public. Next meeting March 17, 2022
 Kimberlee Howell, Woodland Ecologist-
 topics various

Board Meetings

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m. The Board last met March 10, 2022. Next monthly Board meeting April 12, 2022
 Monthly Board meetings are open to members.

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.



Never despair—look for
 a bluebird pair!! —
 wanda odum