

T E X A S

Master  
Naturalist™  
Elm Fork Chapter



# Naturalist News

March 2023 Volume 23, Issue 3



*Eastern Cottontail at Green Acres, from Jean Mason*

We're on the Web [www.txmn.org/elmfork](http://www.txmn.org/elmfork)

On Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/](https://www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/)



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# Naturalist News

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Spring Beauty from Tammie Walters



# *What Happens Next*

## **Chapter Meeting and Presentation**

**Thursday, March 16th**

**9:00 am to 12:00 pm**

**Denton County Administrative Courthouse**

**3rd floor, 2020 Room**

### **AT Presentation:**

## **Bluestems and Bluebirds: A Year in the LBJ National Grassland by Jerry Hamby**



Jerry Hamby was born and raised in the Texas Panhandle but lived more than half his life in Southeast Texas. For thirty-one years he taught English and Humanities at Lee College in Baytown. Jerry completed training for the Texas Master Naturalist program with the Gulf Coast Chapter in 2014 and for seven years was a lead volunteer at Exploration Green, a 200-acre nature park developed on the site of the former Clear Lake City Golf Course in Houston. He and a co-leader managed an on-site nursery and coordinated the planting of 1,350 trees. Jerry also made several presentations about Exploration Green, including one at the 2017 annual meeting of Texas Master Naturalists. Since moving with his wife Susan to Denton in 2021, Jerry has worked most extensively at the LBJ National Grassland, where he monitors bluebird nesting boxes and records observations for the Great Texas Wildlife Trails Adopt-a-Loop project.



# *What You May Have Missed*

## **The Elm Fork Chapter Annual Awards Meeting and the 2022 Awards went to...**



### **Project of the Year**

**Clear Creek Natural Heritage Center (Clay Thurmond)**



### **Volunteer of the Year**

**Regina Dale**



### **Outstanding Service Awards**

*Education/Outreach*

**Fran Witte**

*Natural Resource Service*

**Becky Bertoni**

*LLELA Turtle Teams*

*Turtles Moms and a Dad* - **Hugh Franks, Karen Peden, Rita Lokie,  
Linda Cox, Mary Morrow**

*Tracking* - **Barbara Beane, Larry Duncan, Scott Kiester**

*Volunteer Network*

**Linda Cox**

**Wanda Odum**

*Public Understanding*

**DFW Wildlife Coalition - Dave Ford, Val Beardsley, Sharon Clark,  
Cecily Pegues, Betty Zajac**

*Most Hours*

*Intern:* **Shaleen Wunrow**

*Veteran:* **Carl Patrick**



# *Awards and Recognition*

## *February 2023*

### *Recertifications*

<i>Pam Bennett</i>	<i>Class of 2019</i>
<i>Whit Dieterich</i>	<i>Class of 2022</i>
<i>Larry Duncan</i>	<i>Class of 2018</i>
<i>Jim Gerber</i>	<i>Class of 2019</i>
<i>Susan Hamby</i>	<i>Class of 2022</i>
<i>Lin Hampton</i>	<i>Class of 2022</i>
<i>David Jones</i>	<i>Class of 2019</i>
<i>Scott Kiester</i>	<i>Class of 2003</i>
<i>Abigail Miller</i>	<i>Class of 2003</i>
<i>Tom Mills</i>	<i>Class of 2014</i>
<i>Marty Newman</i>	<i>Class of 2020</i>
<i>Chryl Prestemon</i>	<i>Class of 2020</i>
<i>Sue Yost</i>	<i>Class of 2017</i>
<i>Betty Zajac</i>	<i>Class of 2003</i>



Continued  
on next page



# *Awards and Recognition*

## *February 2023*

### *250 Hour Milestone*

*Jerry Clark*

*Class of 2021*

*Whit Dieterich*

*Class of 2022*



### *500 Hour Milestone*

*Alice Mankoff*

*Class of 2016*



### *1500 Hour Milestone*

*Pam Bennett*

*Class of 2019*

*Hugh Franks*

*Class of 2019*



### *2500 Hour Milestone*

*Betty Mullenweg*

*Class of 2001*





# *Field Notes in Focus*

## Signs of Spring!



© Denver Kramer Photography

Orange Sulphur Butterfly, by Denver Kramer



# Field Notes in Focus

More Signs of Spring!



Cardinal in the Redbud Tree,  
from Tammie Walters



Eaglelet in the Nest,  
from Denver Kramer

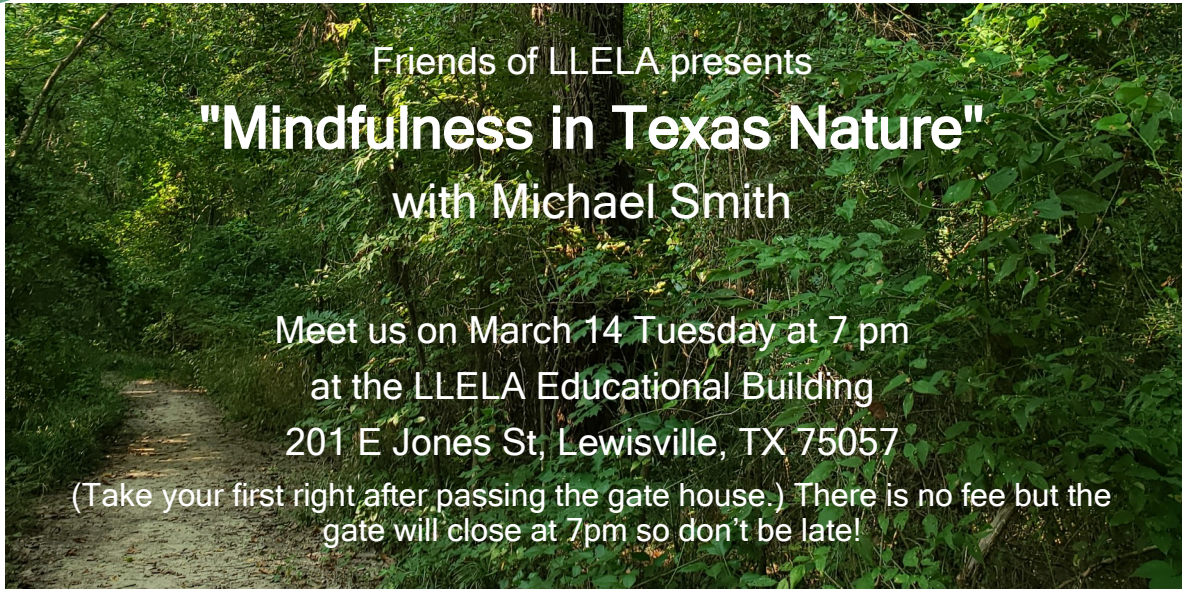


Bluebird in the Nest Box,  
from Denver Kramer



# Inside Outside News

Approved AT



Friends of LLELA presents

## "Mindfulness in Texas Nature"

with Michael Smith

Meet us on March 14 Tuesday at 7 pm

at the LLELA Educational Building

201 E Jones St, Lewisville, TX 75057

(Take your first right after passing the gate house.) There is no fee but the gate will close at 7pm so don't be late!

"Mindfulness in Texas Nature" starts with a discussion of how time spent in nature benefits our bodies and minds, and how we can be present mindfully in the woods and prairies. Is a mindful walk different from searching for particular species and adding to life-lists on our walks? From there, Michael will share some moments - and photos - from the forthcoming book, *Mindful of Texas Nature* (Texas A&M U. Press). [www.livesinnature.substack.com](http://www.livesinnature.substack.com)



Michael Smith is a licensed Psychological Associate ([www.MSmithLPA.com](http://www.MSmithLPA.com)) who has always had a strong interest in nature and has interests in ecotherapy and mindfulness in nature. He has particular interest and affection for the LBJ National Grasslands (<https://LBJGProject.org>). Michael is author or co-author of two books on reptiles and amphibians. He teaches herpetology to Texas Master Naturalists and writes at <https://livesinnature.substack.com>.

(Note from Sue Yost: This AT opportunity is free, so there will be no gate fee. If you run a few minutes late there will be someone to let you in the gate; they lock up at 7:00 p.m. Turn right after the gate house into the Blackjack Trail Parking Lot. Contact Sue Yost for more information or check our EFC Calendar.)

# Inside Outside News



## MONTHLY PLANNING MEETING AND AT/CE

**DATE:** THURSDAY, MARCH 23, 2023

**TIME:** 9:30 A.M.—11:30 A.M.

**BUSINESS MEETING:** 9:30-10:30 A.M.

**AT/CE:** 10:30-11:30 A.M.

### LOCATION:

**CARROLL COURTS BUILDING**

**401 W. HICKORY STREET, DENTON**

**YOU ARE  
INVITED!**

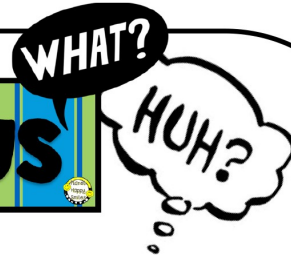
The SWAt team extends this personal invitation to you to join us at our upcoming meeting. Come learn more about us and how you might fit in! Our program is ongoing throughout the year and we are always in need of additional volunteers.

For more information, go to our webpage at: <https://dcmga.com/how-we-serve/youth-programs> or contact Tammie Gurley, Sharon Betty or Marion Arndt at [sciencewithattitude@gmail.com](mailto:sciencewithattitude@gmail.com).

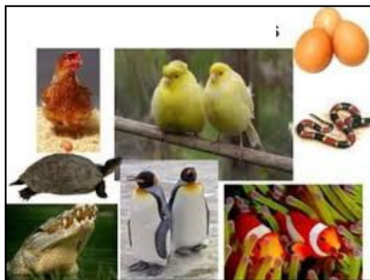
## Training



## Oviparous



### OVIPAROUS ANIMALS LAY EGGS



### HATCHING EGGS IN THE CLASSROOM



**Everything you ever wanted to know about OVIPAROUS animals but were afraid to ask!**

**Oviparous**...now that's a word for you!

Simply stated it refers to animals that reproduce by laying an egg, which will in turn hatch into a juvenile animal.

- ♦ **Sharon Betty, Master Naturalist**, will discuss various animals that are egg-layers—reptiles and amphibians, snakes, turtles, and frogs.
- ♦ **Colleen Carpenter, 4-H**, will demonstrate a new SWAt kit—*Hatching Eggs in the Classroom—An Egg-to-Chick Life Cycle Study*. This kit is available to teachers for extended checkout periods. The objective is to help students learn biological concepts and develop a deeper understanding of the life sciences. Classroom experiments with chicken embryos can help students learn complex systems such as nutrition and the circulatory system, or more basic skills such as data measurement, collection, and analysis.





# Inside Outside News

Approved AT

## Advanced Training (AT) Offered by other Texas Master Naturalist Chapters

At the Board of Directors meeting on Thursday, March 9, 2023 the Board unanimously agreed to allow Elm Fork Chapter members to attend AT, offered by other chapters during their monthly meetings, for AT credit.

### Here are the requirements:

1. The meeting must be attended “live”, in person or via zoom, to receive AT credit per state, Texas Master Naturalist, guidelines.
2. You must stay until the end of the presentation and listen and/or participate in the “live” question and answer session.
3. Only the AT can be submitted for approval if you attend another chapter’s meeting. You cannot submit or request service hours for the chapter meeting itself.
4. When you submit the AT request in VMS, please specify which chapter made the presentation you attended and what date you attended it on.
5. Please use: “AT: Project Specific AT - Elm Fork: TMN AT Hours” when reporting the AT in VMS.

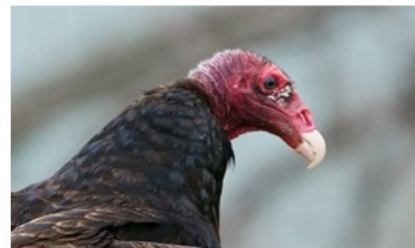
## Volunteer Opportunities

### DFW Wildlife Coalition

#### LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

- Volunteer for a 2 or 3 hour shift
- Once a week from your home
- 6 hours of Online Training

If interested or for more information contact [projects@efctmn.org](mailto:projects@efctmn.org), or call:  
Cecily Pegues (see Members Area Directory)  
Betty Zajac (see Members Area Directory)



# Inside Outside News

## Volunteer Opportunities

### HELP DESPERATELY NEEDED!!!

Ray Roberts Lake State Park-Isle du Bois unit has an urgent need for Master Naturalist volunteers to help out with their upcoming school groups. Help introduce these kids to the outdoor world. ASAP! Please contact Park Interpreter Mindy Shumate, [Mindy.Shumate@tpwd.texas.gov](mailto:Mindy.Shumate@tpwd.texas.gov)  
Details below for the two groups this month.

**PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING AT THIS IMPORTANT PROJECT LOCATION.  
TPWD IS ONE OF OUR MN PROGRAM SPONSORS!**

**March 23, 9:00am-3:00pm**  
(includes setup and clean up)

Selz Middle School, Pilot Point ISD,  
107 students

Activities include a food web activity, wetland watercolor (creating art using water, a very important resource), and a guided hike.

**March 30, 9:00am-2:00pm**  
(includes setup and clean up)

Nette Shultz Elementary 5th Grade, Denton ISD, 110 students

Activities include talking about Skins and Skulls or a guided hike





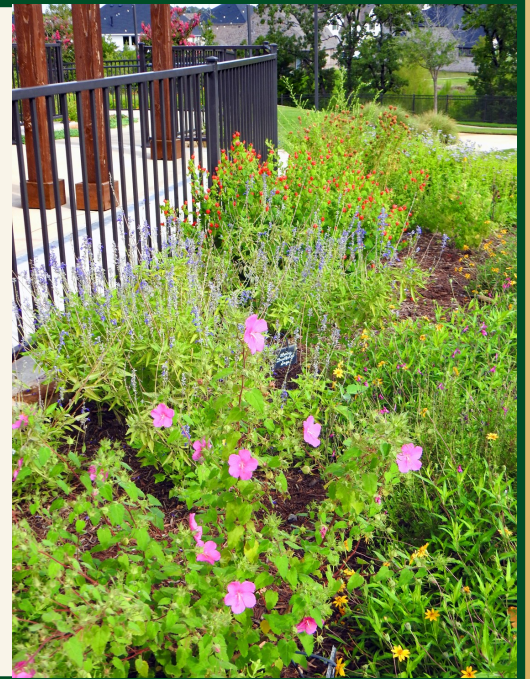
# Inside Outside News

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Lantana Monarch Waystation Workday

We will hold the first workday of the spring **Wednesday, March 15, 9:00am-11am**, at the Lantana Monarch Waystation, 1301 Haverford Lane, Lantana (may also say Argyle on your GPS). This month we'll be cleaning out the dead material from the winter, do some weeding, and plant a few fill-in plants. Please bring your gardening gloves, pruners/clippers and your favorite weeding tool. As usual, wear your sun protection and bring a water bottle. I hope to have the door to the restroom unlocked. More info or to let me know you're coming:

Diane Wetherbee (see Members Area Directory),  
or email [projects@efctmn.org](mailto:projects@efctmn.org)



### The Flower Mound Workday

Looking for some weekend service hours? We will hold a workday on The Flower Mound prairie, 2400 Flower Mound Rd, on **Saturday, March 18, 9:00am-noon**. We will mostly be pulling bastard cabbage, digging Johnsongrass, and cutting woody invasives. If you have them, please bring loppers, a sharpshooter shovel, and/or hand pruners. Wear sun protection, long pants,

work gloves, and bring water. Please note that there are no restroom facilities on The Mound, itself, but there is a nearby coffee shop that will let us use their facilities. More info or to let me know you're coming:

Diane Wetherbee (see Members Area Directory),  
or email [projects@efctmn.org](mailto:projects@efctmn.org)



# Inside Outside News

*Be sure to see **Plan Your Week** or the **Elm Fork Chapter Calendar** for more volunteer service projects and advanced training opportunities.*

*Click here: <https://txmn.org/elmfork/members-only-calendar/>*

*Or on the Calendar*

*(Just LOOK at all of these opportunities!)*



TEXAS Master Naturalist - Elm Fork Chapter

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

Home About Join Our Chapter Photo Gallery Activities Newsletters Calendar Members Area Donate

Advanced Training Board Meeting Chapter Meeting Special Events TMN Annual Meeting Volunteers Needed

12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed	9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Trailhead Tuesday Workday	8:00 am - 12:00 pm Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday	9:00 am - 12:00 pm Chapter Meeting	10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	9:00 am - 11:00 am Clear Creek Workday	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm Green Acres Workday	9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit	9:00 am - 11:00 am Furneaux Creek Saturday Workday
10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Beginner Birding Virtual Classes - AT	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm #TMN Tuesday - AT		7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Next Level Birding Workshop - AT		9:00 am - 12:00 pm Texas Our Heritage (TOH) Native Demonstration Gardens Workday
						10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed	9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Trailhead Tuesday Workday	8:00 am - 12:00 pm Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday	9:00 am - 11:00 am Thursdays@Thrive Workday	10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	7:30 am Bird Walk at Clear Creek - AT
9:00 am - 10:30 am Thrive Nature Walk - AT	9:00 am - 1:30 pm Environmental Discovery and Adventure (EDA)	9:00 am - 1:30 pm Spring DISD School Days	9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	9:00 am - 11:00 am Clear Creek Workday	10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit	8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed
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				7:00 pm - 8:30 pm Next Level Birding Workshop - AT		



# Quick Tips From Our Webmaster

Gale Bacon



*Curious about who shares  
your interests and hobbies?  
Or who is knowledgeable in specific subject matter?  
Our member photo directory can help!*

## HOW TO SEARCH THE PHOTO DIRECTORY

- On the EFCTMN website, visit the Members Area page: <https://txmn.org/elmfork/members-area/> (enter website password, if prompted)
- Scroll down to the **Membership Directories** section and click on [Photo Directory Search Criteria](#)

### Membership Directories

Information in the membership directories are **only** to be used for TMN-EFC business. Directory information should not be used for business or personal use.

- [Photo Directory and Photo Directory Search Criteria](#)
- [2022 Membership Roster](#) (Dec 2022)
- [Training Class Photos](#) (Feb 2022)

- Review the Photo Directory Search Criteria PDF file. It contains a list of search keywords.
- Click the SAVE AS ICON to save this list to your computer.

Read aloud 1 of 1

**Photo Directory Search Criteria**

Search for any word on this list, except words within parentheses

Subject Matter Interests	Personal Hobbies and Interests
Trees (and shrubs)	Art (drawing; painting; illustration)
Forbs (flowering plants; wildflowers)	Crafts (sewing; pottery)
Grasses (and grasslike plants)	Fishing
Mosses (and lichen)	Gardening
Bees	Hiking
Butterflies (and moths)	Photography (nature)
Dragonflies (and Damselflies)	Rainwater (harvesting)
Macroinvertebrates	Recycling (composting)
(Other) Insects	Woodworking
Water birds	
Perching (tree-clinging) birds	<b>Administrative Interests</b>
Hawks (and owls)	Admin (and Membership Support)
Upland (ground) birds	(Communications) Writing
Mammals	(Communications) Graphic Design
Frogs (and salamanders)	(Communications) Photography
Turtles	(Communications) Outreach

Continued  
on next  
page



# Quick Tips (cont.)

- Navigate back to the Membership Directories and select [Photo Directory](#)  
(Enter the website password if prompted)

## Membership Directories

Information in the membership directories are **only** to be used for TMN-EFC business. Directory information should not be used for business or personal use.

- [Photo Directory](#) and [Photo Directory Search Criteria](#)
- [2022 Membership Roster](#) (Dec 2022)
- [Training Class Photos](#) (Feb 2022)

- In the select box, choose how to search. For example, by Last Name, First Name, Subject Matter Interests, etc.

(select)

First Name  
Nickname  
Last Name  
City  
County  
Class  
Subject Matter Interests  
Personal Hobbies and Interests  
Administrative Interests  
Other Organizations

PROTECTED: PHOTO DIRECTORY

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Click [here](#) for help on using the directory.

(NOTE: When using the SEARCH feature, use the (select) dropdown box to chose which field you wish to search on and then put your search term in the gray line below that. To return to the beginning of the Directory after a search, click the CLEAR button.)

Search:  

(select) ▼

SEARCH CLEAR

- Next, type a search keyword in the light gray box and press the **SEARCH** button. (For example, this search would return a list of members interested in Birds.)

Search:

Subject Matter Interests ▼

Birds

SEARCH CLEAR

- Be sure to scroll down the page to see the search results!



# Projects in the Community

## CIVIC Volunteer Workshop for Blue-Green Infrastructure

By Jamie Reneau and Sue Hudiburgh

On Saturday, February 25th a group of dedicated Elm Fork Master Naturalist volunteers attended a second workshop in order to increase their knowledge and understanding of how nature can be used to benefit the urban environment. The day began with information about the concept of blue-green infrastructure and the Community Green Asset Management (CGAM) tool that scientists from Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, Texas Water Resources Institute, and UNT are developing. Blue-green infrastructure, consisting of natural approaches to stormwater management, promises to be a sustainable and cost-effective solution for cities. It can control floods and urban stormwater runoff while addressing water quality impacts and provides triple-bottom-line benefits such as urban greening.



Dr. Fouad Jaber of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension



Evaluating a BGI Site at UNT

Dr. Kelly Albus, of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, has asked the Master Naturalists, community members and other interested groups to assist them with feedback on developing a tool that will be beneficial to Denton County and other cities and counties. This tool will help cities to identify, maintain and create blue-green infrastructure. At the workshop, Master Naturalist volunteers evaluated a beta version of the CGAM tool on paper and on their phones, and toured an actual BGI site to take a more detailed look at the area, allowing them to better understand the practical applications of the CGAM tool. A future workshop, the date to be announced late in March or April, will concentrate on refining the tool by evaluating many of the BGI sites in Denton County. The CGAM tool, if approved for funding, promises to be a fantastic way to better care for the precious resources within cities. The Master Naturalists attending the workshop benefited from the unique

opportunity to learn, offer new perspectives and gain new insights on how to use nature to create more sustainable and resilient landscapes.

If you would like more information on this project, contact Texas Master Naturalist Sue Hudiburgh (see Members Area Directory)

You can also go to

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/4c01774334c14b39a0c6deba5e1721e0>

or use the QR Code





# Projects in the Community

## *Green Acres iNaturalist Photography Exhibit and More... It Takes a Village!*

By Becky Bertoni

In the fall of 2022 my daughter-in-law suggested showing the Green Acres iNaturalist photos, after viewing our iNaturalist project photos. I pursued it with Flower Mound Parks & Rec, and visited some possible display sites. Only the library had display panels that would work for us. Library Director Sue Ridnour liked the idea of having an exhibit of iNaturalist photos from Green Acres, and we were off and running!

Our planning meeting with the library was December 19, 2022. I was very happy to have **Lin Hampton**, EFCTMN class of 2022, and an artist familiar with how to set up an exhibit, with me as we made plans with Beth Walter, the librarian assigned to work with our exhibit. Lin had information on printing the photos, and also made the point to run the display for longer than a month, because of the effort to get it together. Lin suggested mounting the photos on black foam board or black alligator board. Lin also set up a schedule from January through March 31, our set-up day. We asked about possible donors to help with the costs.

In January Lin reviewed the iNaturalist photos, and we chose 30. Lin sent in the print order. Just in time we gratefully received a donation of \$200 for display costs from DATCU.

In February the photos were attached to the foam core or alligator board that Lin had on hand. **Nancy McClendon** and **Suzanne Barnard** from the Green Acres crew joined Lin and me for this activity. Lin attached the title and artist label for each photo on black cards, again from her inventory. I sent in the information to the library for publicizing through the Town of Flower Mound—and we became Green Acres iNaturalist Photography Exhibit.

Meanwhile materials were gathered and /or prepared for the outside of the display panels: Elm Fork Chapter, iNaturalist, Green Acres, and also NPSOT. **Fran Witte** helped with materials from the Resource Room, and gave us brochures to give out. **Elise Spain** sent copies of the large Elm Fork Master Naturalist Projects map and project list folder from Open House. **Mary Morrow** offered to do an iNaturalist poster similar to the one she used for the iNaturalist project at Open House. A senior clerk recording at Denton County sent the 1855 land patent, and other sales through the years. **Bill Coleman** and Marc at Bill's surveyor office helped in identifying the land transfers by plotting the surveys, and in locating and printing historical



Gulf Fritillary by Lori Moraine



American Bumblebee by Win Goddard



Coyote by Lori Moraine



## *Green Acres iNaturalist Photography Exhibit (cont.)*



Ligated Furrow Bee by Diane Wetherbee

maps. Later a DentonCAD employee sent copies of appraisal cards for the Davis property from 2004 and 2006. **Suzanne Barnard** designed the rack card for Green Acres. **Michele Rawleigh** provided QR codes. **Win Goddard**, photographer, volunteered several bird models to supplement the display, figured out how to show our actual woodpecker nest from a cedar elm tree at Green Acres, and worked on the fact sheets on the birds. **Jean Mason** transcribed the handwritten land patent documents to typed Word documents with explanatory notes. **Gina Steiner** at the AgriLife office was a wonder at getting things printed and she provided good input throughout the process. And for future locations for our display, **Marilyn Blanton** introduced Lin and me to staff at two locations in Denton where she shows her 4<sup>th</sup> grade Denton ISD wildflower art drawings!

One of the intriguing parts of gathering information was tracking down and calling or visiting with neighbors and recommended people who might remember Green Acres Farm 1969-2005.

During that time, it was owned by Larry and Agnes Pyne Davis, and was a horse farm with Saddlebred and Tennessee Walker horses. So far, the most interesting connection was found by **Craig Brazier**, who, in talking to someone in the community about the exhibit, was told that her father did the heat and air conditioning work at Green Acres Farm. This gentleman still lives nearby, and I hope to meet him at Green Acres and walk around and hear what he remembers. He told me Larry Davis's daughter, Wayne Westbrook, was the one who showed the Tennessee Walker horses. The search goes on!



American Robin by Win Goddard

Planning this display has been a great collaborative effort; I thank each person who helped in the process! We look forward to introducing Flower Mound Library patrons to Green Acres, Elm Fork Chapter Texas Master Naturalists, iNaturalist, and Trinity Forks Native Plant Society of Texas.

You are invited:

**Green Acres iNaturalist Photography Exhibit**

April 1-May 25, 2023

Flower Mound Library

3030 Broadmoor Ln

Flower Mound, TX 75022

Call for hours: 972 874 6200



# Projects in the Community

## Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition (Update)

From Marilyn Blanton

Artwork from the Texas Native Plant Exhibition is now displayed at the South Branch, North Branch and Emily Fowler Libraries in Denton. The exhibits feature 334 pictures created by fourth grade students from 22 DISD elementary schools. All of the 279 award-winning pieces are displayed, plus extra ones where space allowed. We had 802 pictures submitted, so there's lots of artwork! The displays will be in place at the libraries through the month of March.

The annual Appreciation Reception will be held on Wednesday, April 26, at the DISD Professional Development Center. Plan now to join us! The reception is in honor of the students and their art teachers and recognizes the display hosts and the project sponsors (the Texas Master Naturalist, the Native Plant Society of Texas and TWU College of Arts and Sciences). It's so much fun to see the students with their families and the art teachers admiring their work. All 802 pictures will be displayed at the reception. There will also be other displays and refreshments! Volunteers for this event are always welcome! Please contact Marilyn Blanton, or [projects@efctmn.org](mailto:projects@efctmn.org) to help.



Here's some photos of our volunteers setting up the displays.





# Projects in the Community

## Texas Stream Team - Monitoring Water Quality

By Karen McGraw

Water is an essential part of life, yet many people don't think about water and water quality very often. But no natural resource is more important to our future than water. That's why every month, citizen scientists from our chapter monitor water at different sites throughout our area--from Lake Ray Roberts to Marshall Creek, and beyond. We work individually, in pairs, or in small teams to collect water quality data. We conduct field assessments and monitor pH, dissolved oxygen, and other indicators of water quality at our selected sites. The data we provide supports research, reveals trends, and serves as an early warning system for water quality. Plus, we get to spend time streamside!



Craig Blow Collecting a Water Sample for Monitoring at the Elm Fork Trinity River

Are you a certified Texas Stream Team citizen scientist who is actively monitoring a site? Please send your Site ID to our new project manager, Karen McGraw, who is compiling a map of sites our chapter monitors so we can visually see our impact. Or, if you are a certified Texas Stream Team citizen scientist who is not actively monitoring, we can help get you set up to monitor a site near you.



Tammie Walters and Craig Blow Conducting Field Monitoring Tests on a Water Sample



Karen McGraw Conducting a Field Test for Dissolved Oxygen



# *Tweet of the Month*

By Sue Yost, class of 2017

## **Carolina Wren** **(*Thryothorus ludovicianus*)**

*Teakettle! Teakettle! Teakettle!*  
*Teakettle! Teakettle! Teakettle!*

That is the very loud call of the little Carolina Wren. This call usually wakes me in the early morning hours. The male sits on the back of the patio chair and sings over and over and over and over! This year, again, they have started building a nest full of small sticks and leaves in the bowl of a straw hat hanging on one of my backdoors. Wrens are notorious for nesting in the oddest places. Buckets, shoes, hanging baskets, backpacks, BBQ grills and that cutesy little house you bought just for decoration! Many times, the male will start multiple "dummy" nests. He shows the female all the sites he picked, and she picks the one she likes! Just like a woman! Both pair share the duty of nest-building. He brings the goods, and she decorates! Just like a woman! The nest building usually occurs in the morning. They will make about 100 trips back and forth with nesting material to build the nest. This construction takes anywhere from 4-7 days to complete.



Adult Carolina Wren at a Bark Butter Feeder  
Photo by Sue Yost

The easiest identifying feature of the Carolina Wren and wrens in general is the medium length cocky tail and long, slightly decurved bill. They use this long pointy bill to probe into tiny places for insects, caterpillars and spiders. Carolina Wrens also sport a buffy white eye stripe. They are described as a chunky bird, rusty brown in color. Its home range stretches from southern New England through the southeastern states to Texas and Florida. It does not migrate, and pairs of Carolina Wrens will stay together throughout the year on permanent territories. They reside year around in the eastern 2/3 of Texas. They inhabit woodlands, swamps, and tree-lined suburban backyards.

She will lay 4-6 spotted eggs. They will hatch after 12-14 days of incubation by the female. With a steady diet of insects fed by the pair, the nestlings grow



## *Tweet of the Month (cont.)*



Carolina Wren Nestlings  
Photo by Sue Yost

quickly and fledge in about two weeks. The pair usually has 2 or 3 broods a year. The male will take over feeding the young while his mate begins her next clutch. They will sometimes nest again and again in the same spot making any minor repairs as do my little pair in the straw hat!

Now back to that "Tea kettle! Tea kettle". Biologists have reported that a male Carolina Wren sings as many as 40 different versions of their song, repeating one several times and then switching to a new one. Neighboring males may match that song from the boundaries of their territories and courting pairs often sing duets. They will also aggressively scold and chase off intruders.



Carolina Wren Nest in an Old Squirrel Feeder.  
(A few days after this was taken, the nest was destroyed by raccoons.)  
Photo by Sue Yost

Carolina Wrens will readily come to backyard feeding stations for shelled peanuts, suet, and live or dehydrated mealworms. They love a bird bath filled with fresh water and of course housing. And yes, they will nest in a nesting box [with a 1.25" entrance hole] but one just never really knows what that pair of Carolina Wrens will claim as a nesting site.

Listen.            Look.

And you may just find a cocky little Carolina Wren in your backyard!

# Unexpected



## IT HAPPENS

By Missy Adair

Have you seen a red tailed hawk, floating in the sky, the sun gilding its feathers? Suddenly, out of nowhere there is a lump in your throat and your eyes are moist. You've choked up. The beauty and wonder have hit you and you feel your soul and nature speak.

We all choke up. Sometimes it's in front of people and we feel embarrassed or even ashamed of our emotion. Please remember, Intellect keeps us rooted in our love of nature; emotion bonds us to it.

Leading a hike you see a squirrel scamper around a tree. You've seen this hundreds of times. This time you feel the staggering connection of the squirrel, the tree, the sky and the earth. And you know your place in it all.

You choke up. Naturally. Will some of the hikers ask if you are ok? Probably. Will a couple offer you water? Inevitably. Will one hiker understand? Almost always there is one, but you may never know which one.

When I had lived in Alabama a few years I returned to Texas, driving my worldly goods and my animal companions back West. The drive was long. Then we hit North Texas. I saw my first Post Oak standing over a field and burst into tears. I was aghast! What was wrong with me? Nothing at all to worry about. Just that good old choked up feeling going strong.

When you get choked up it is an epiphany, a gift, a joy. It is your soul and the earth as one for just a long moment in time. Choking up is something humans do. Cherish it.



Post Oak at Green Acres, Photo by Malou Evora



## *This Month's Contributors*



Missy Adair



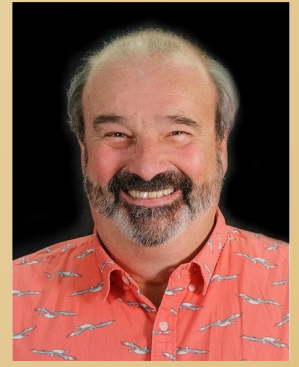
Gale Bacon



Becky Bertoni



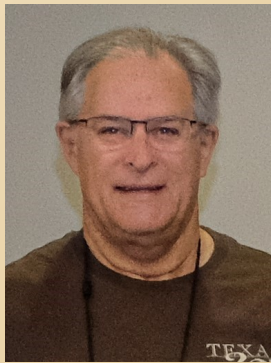
Marilyn Blanton



Dave Jones



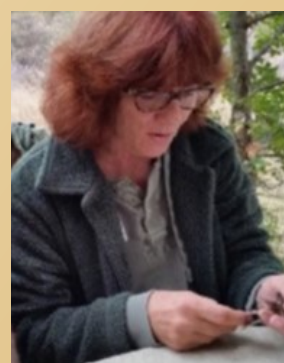
Sue Hudiburgh



Denver Kramer



Karen McGraw



Mary Morrow



Jamie Reneau



Diane Wetherbee



Sue Yost



Betty Zajac



Tammie Walters, Editor

*Thank you all!*

Articles and photos for the *Naturalist News* are always wanted and welcomed!

Please send submissions to: [newsletter@efctmn.org](mailto:newsletter@efctmn.org)

Deadline for the April 2023 submissions is Friday, April 14th.

# Almost the Last Word

## Use of "Request for Approval of AT" Form

From Dave Jones, Programs Director and AT Approver

Hello everyone, I'd like to ask a favor of you. When you submit a request for AT, please use the official "Request for Approval of AT" form which can be found on the chapter website. You can find it by going to the Chapter Website, highlighting "Activities" on the navigation bar and clicking on "Advanced Training", the second item that appears on the drop down menu. Once you do that, you'll be taken to the "Advanced Training" page. Read the information on that page and then click on "this form", in the fourth paragraph and it will open up the "Request for Approval of AT" form. Fill out all the fields and then click on the "submit" button at the bottom of the page. Your request will be submitted and reviewed.

Why am I asking all of you to do this? It makes it easier for me - and the entire AT Committee if necessary - to review all the submittals for AT by providing similar information for each request. Additionally, some emails do not have the necessary information requiring additional steps before an AT request can be reviewed, evaluated and approved.

Here is a direct link to the "Request for Approval of AT" form: <https://txmn.org/elmfork/request-for-approval-of-at/>





# *Almost the Last Word*



Are you or do you know of an EFC member in need of a little SUNSHINE?  
Please email [mnsunshiners@efctmn.org](mailto:mnsunshiners@efctmn.org) and we will reach out to a member  
to see how we can assist. All information will be kept confidential.

If you would like to spread a little SUNSHINE please email  
[mnsunshiners@efctmn.org](mailto:mnsunshiners@efctmn.org) to be added to the MN Sunshiners group.

# Who We Are



## Texas Master Naturalist–Elm Fork Chapter

<https://txmn.org/elmfork/>

### OFFICERS

President - Jerry Betty

Vice President - Kathy Webb

Treasurer - Ray Kreutzfeld

Secretary - Missy McCormick

### BOARD POSITIONS

Immediate Past President – Jan Deatherage

Member-at-Large – Janet Gershenfeld

### BOARD DIRECTORS

Membership - Sharon Betty

VMS - Shaleen Wunrow

Initial Training - Steve and Lori Carroll

Communications - Karen DeVinney

Volunteer Service Projects - Jerry Clark

Advanced Training Programs - David Jones

Outreach/Adult Education - Fran Witte

New Class Representative - Christina Wayles

### CHAPTER ADVISORS

AgriLife – Janet Laminack, Extension Agent

Texas Parks and Wildlife – TBD



### Our 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 for the State of Texas.”*

### Our Vision

*“In our community, Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist will be recognized as a primary source of information, education, and service to support natural resources and natural areas today and in the future.”*

### Regular Monthly Chapter Meetings

Meetings are 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.

### Board Meetings

The Board meets each second Thursday of the month at 9:30 a.m.

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.*

### Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

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