

T E X A S

Master  
Naturalist™  
Elm Fork Chapter



# Naturalist News

June 2023 Volume 23, Issue 6



*Ruby-throated Hummingbird, from Regina Dale*

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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Checkered White Butterfly and a Honey Bee  
on Lemon Bee Balm, from Regina Dale



Checkered White Butterfly,  
from Tammie Walters

# What Happens Next

## *Chapter Meeting and Presentation*

Thursday, June 15th • 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Denton County Southwest Courthouse  
6200 Canyon Falls Dr • Flower Mound, TX 76226

### AT Presentation: *“Eighteen is Enough - A Monarch Parenting Adventure”*

**Presentation Summary:** What do a couple of Master Naturalists do when, in early spring, they find a multitude of Monarch caterpillars on a single Milkweed plant in their native plant meadow? They call Carol Clark, Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist, for advice and counsel. In this talk Rick and Lisa will share their adventure raising a batch of baby Monarchs from egg to adult and release, allowing this lineage of Monarchs to continue their northward spring migration. Carol will join Rick and Lisa for this talk, chiming in with relevant Monarch facts and taking a few minutes at the end to tell us what Monarchs need from North Texans.

**Names of Speakers:** Lisa Travis, Rick Travis, and Carol Clark



**Lisa Travis** is a happily retired teacher, and member of the Blackland Prairie chapter, class of 2018, where she is currently serving as the Chapter Training Class Director. Lisa is a trail guide at LLELA, the Heard in McKinney, City of Plano, City of Frisco, and is a Project WILD trainer/facilitator. Lisa is an iNaturalist fanatic, with over 22,000 observations, and over 25,000 identifications made for others. She's a volunteer curator on the site and presents iNaturalist training sessions for the community as well as for fellow Master Naturalists. She's interested in all things nature, but her main focus is on plants, and especially trees.



**Rick Travis** owns a Bachelors' Degree in Forest Management and an MBA, both from Stephen F. Austin State University. With retirement from his business career, Rick is fulfilling a long-deferred desire for involvement in the environmental sciences. He is an active member of the Blackland Prairie Master Naturalist Chapter and is currently serving as Chapter President. He is also a member of the City of Frisco's Urban Forestry Board, and a volunteer trail guide at several places, including the Heard Wildlife Sanctuary, the Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area (LLELA), Plano parks and trails, and Frisco parks and nature trails. Rick is also the Forest Ecology/Trees new class instructor for multiple Master Naturalist chapters in the North Texas area.



**Carol Clark** is an amateur botany enthusiast, a Monarch Watch Conservation Specialist, a member of the Native Plant Society of Texas and a member of the Blackland Prairie Master Naturalists. Carol grew up with a nature photographer father and wildlife artist brother and has spent much of her life looking around in the great outdoors. Her favorite things to do are leading discovery walks in local natural areas and finding and photographing interesting plants.

# Awards and Recognition

## May 2023

### Initial Certifications

Eleanor Hough

Class of 2022



### Recertifications

Marilyn Blanton

Class of 1999

Adelaide Bodnar

Class of 2007

Pat Bragg

Class of 2021

Diana Hatch

Class of 2007

Jan Marie LaPine

Class of 2007

Karen McGraw

Class of 2015

Deborah Meyer

Class of 2012

Sharon Miggans

Class of 2017

Harriet Powell

Class of 2015

Jamie Reneau

Class of 2022

Tammie Walters

Class of 2020

Chris Wayles

Class of 2022

Kathryn Wells

Class of 2017



Continued  
on next page





# *Awards and Recognition Milestones*

May 2023

## *1500 Hour Milestone*

*Mindy Anderson*

*Class of 2015*



## *3000 Hour Milestone*

*Susan Pohlen*

*Class of 2007*



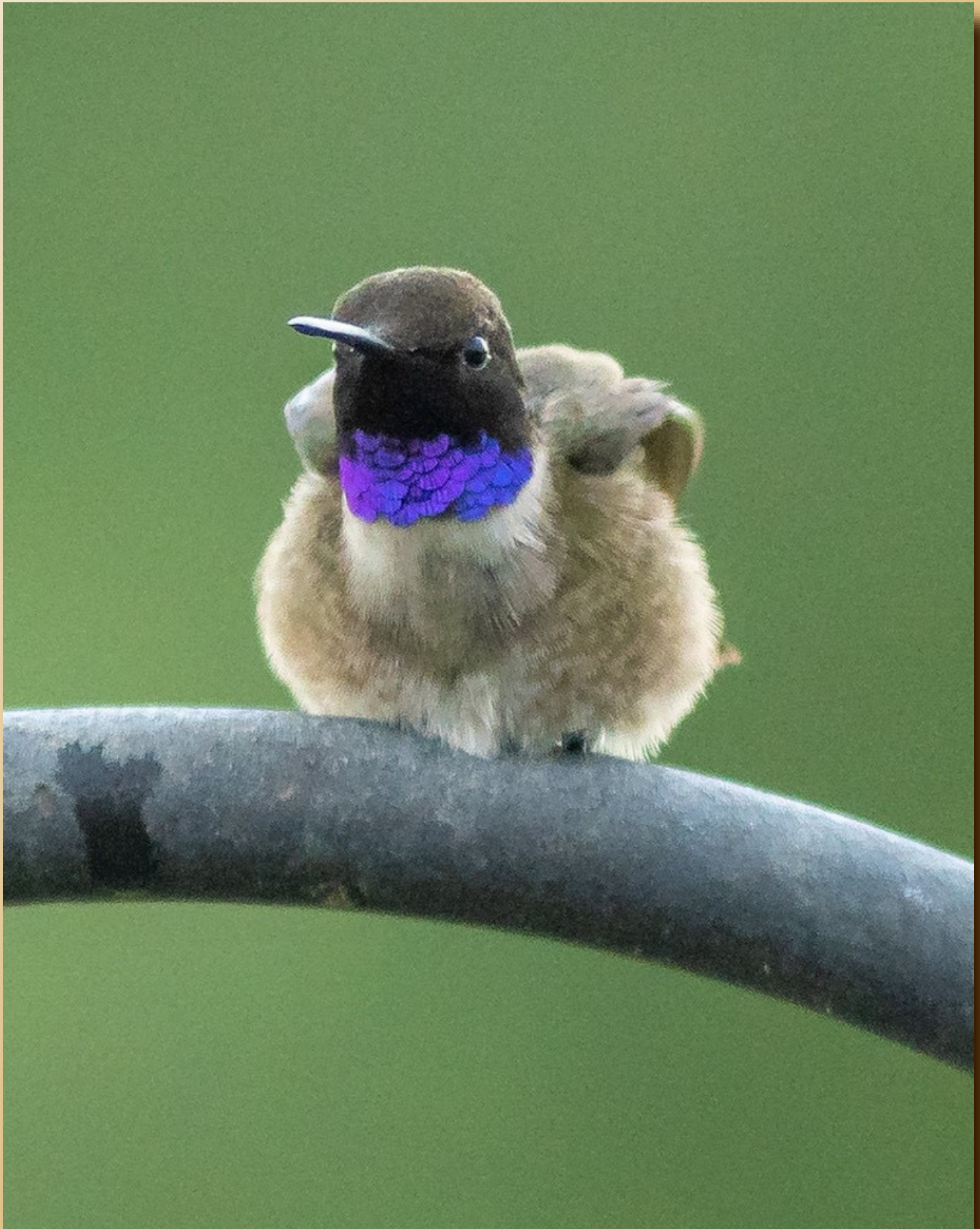
## *3500 Hour Milestone*

*Marilyn Blanton*

*Class of 1999*



# *Field Notes in Focus*



Black-chinned Hummingbird, from Bryan Lewis



# *Inside Outside News*

## Volunteer Opportunities

### Ray Roberts Lake Nature Centers

The Nature Centers at both Isle Du Bois and Johnson Branch Parks need your help so they can be part of the experience for lake attendees.

*Volunteers are needed Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays  
Opportunities are waiting for you!*

Please sign up at the links below:

[Isle Du Bois](#)

[Johnson Branch](#)

### Approved AT

**6/28/2023 (Wednesday at 6:30 PM)**

Scott Weidensaul, author of *A World on the Wing: The global Odyssey of Migratory Birds*, an excellent book on the perils and beauty of bird migration and *New York Times* Bestseller, <http://www.scottweidensaul.com/>

**REGISTER HERE for THIS ZOOM EVENT: JUNE 28, 2023**

**From FaCT Ohio Distinguished Speaker Series**

<https://www.factohio.org/dist-speak>

# 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 click on the Calendar*



<div> <div> <div>TEXAS</div> <div>Master Naturalist</div> </div> <div>Elm Fork Chapter</div> <div> <div>TEXAS A&amp;M AGRILIFE EXTENSION</div> <div>TEXAS PARKS &amp; WILDLIFE</div> </div> </div> <div> <a href="#">Home</a> <a href="#">About</a> <a href="#">Join Our Chapter</a> <a href="#">Photo Gallery</a> <a href="#">Activities</a> <a href="#">Calendar</a> <a href="#">Members Area</a> <a href="#">Donate</a> <a href="#">References</a> </div>						
<div> <div>Advanced Training</div> <div>Board Meeting</div> <div>Chapter Meeting</div> <div>Special Events</div> <div>TMN Annual Meeting</div> <div>Volunteers Needed</div> </div>						
<b>11</b> 8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	<b>12</b> 8:30 am - 11:00 am Clear Creek Workday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	<b>13</b> 7:30 am - 10:30 am LLELA Trailhead Tuesday 8:00 am - 11:00 am Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday 8:00 am - 11:00 am Green Acres Workday 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm #TMN Tuesday - AT 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm Mysterious Moths: Growing the Darker Side of Butterflies - AT	<b>14</b> 8:00 am - 11:00 am Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	<b>15</b> 9:00 am - 12:00 pm Chapter Meeting 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	<b>16</b> 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	<b>17</b> 8:00 am - 2:00 pm Denton County Master Gardener Association Annual Fruit, Vegetable, Herb and Flower Show 8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed 9:00 am - 11:00 am Furneaux Creek Volunteer Day on the Trail 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit
<b>18</b> 8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed 9:00 am - 10:30 am Thrive Nature Walk - AT 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	<b>19</b> 8:30 am - 11:00 am Clear Creek Workday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	<b>20</b> 7:30 am - 10:30 am LLELA Trailhead Tuesday 8:00 am - 11:00 am Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday 8:00 am - 11:00 am Green Acres Workday 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm Mothing at Green Acres Memorial Park	<b>21</b> 8:00 am - 11:00 am Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday 9:00 am - 11:00 am Corbino Monarch Waystation Workday	<b>22</b> 8:30 am - 11:00 am Clear Creek Workday 9:00 am - 11:00 am Thursdays@Thrive Workday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	<b>23</b> 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	<b>24</b> 7:30 am - 10:30 pm Bird Walk at Clear Creek - AT 8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed
<b>25</b> 8:00 am - 2:00 pm LLELA Visitor Center - Volunteers Needed 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du	<b>26</b> 8:30 am - 11:00 am Clear Creek Workday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	<b>27</b> 7:30 am - 10:30 am LLELA Trailhead Tuesday 8:00 am - 11:00 am Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday	<b>28</b> 8:00 am - 11:00 am Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday 9:00 am - 12:00 pm LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday	<b>29</b> 8:30 am - 11:00 am Clear Creek Workday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Johnson Branch Unit	<b>30</b> 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake State Park - Isle Du Bois Unit 10:00 am - 4:00 pm Ray Roberts Lake	<b>1</b> 9:00 am - 11:00 am Early Bird Watch and Walk at Furneaux Creek - AT 9:00 am - 2:00 pm First Saturday LLELA



# Quick Tips From Our Webmaster

Gale Bacon



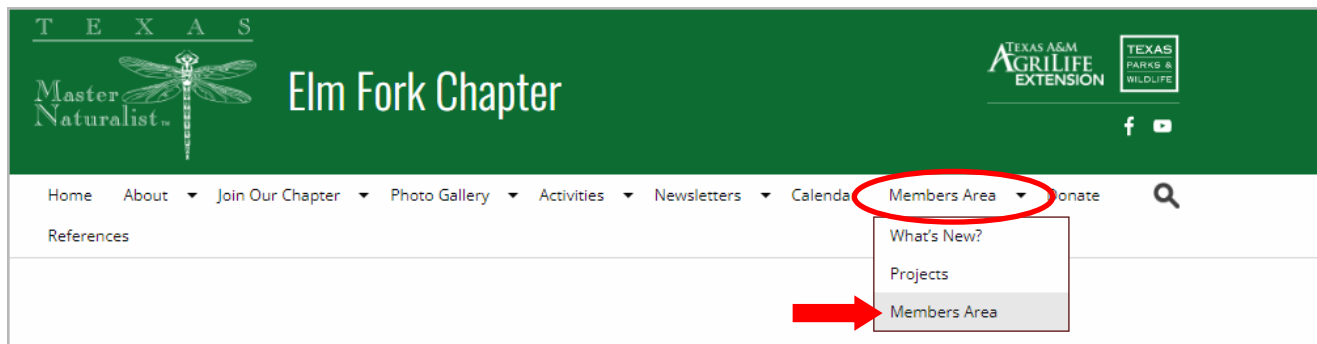
## Membership Roster

*Need contact information for someone in our chapter?*

*Our Elm Fork Chapter Membership Roster is located in the Members Area, under Membership Directories.*

*The roster is updated twice a year and the revision date is displayed next to the link.*

- From the main menu, select Members Area -> Members Area



- Enter the website password if prompted
- Scroll down to the Membership Directories section

## 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](#)
- [2023 Membership Roster \(April 2023\)](#)
- [Training Class Photos \(Feb 2022\)](#)

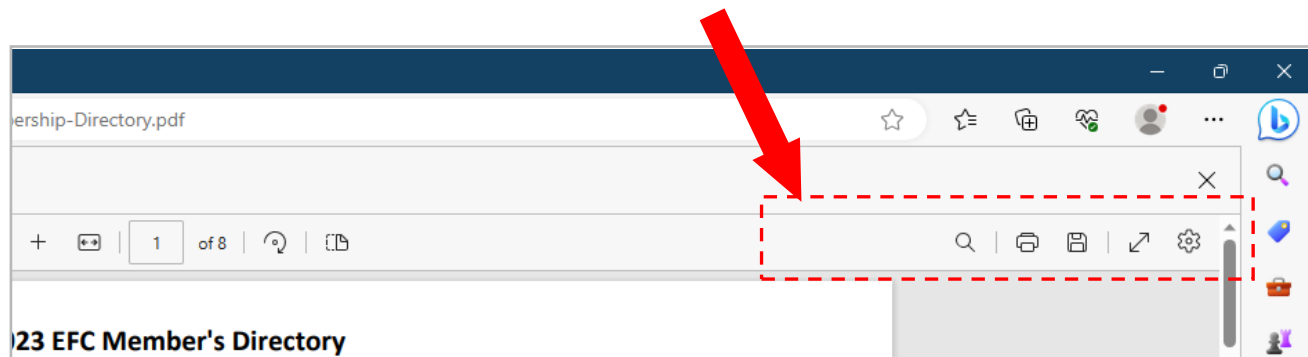
- Select the 2023 Membership Roster link above. A new tab will open displaying the Membership Roster PDF file.

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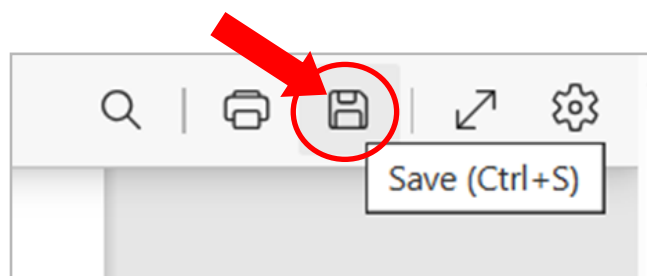


## Quick Tips (Cont.)

- To save it, move your cursor to the top of the screen until you see the navigation bar (see below).



- Click the SAVE icon in the upper right corner of the navigation bar to save the PDF file to your laptop or tablet. Or follow the instructions for your particular phone type to download this file to your phone.



- *Or, simply read the info you need and save yourself a step!*



# Projects in the Community

## *It was a Great Day for **BENTHIC MONITORING!***

Photos by Jamie Reneau



*Brynne Bryan is working the kick-net  
to collect invertebrates*



*This is not an invertebrate!  
(Turtle egg shell?)*



*Theresa Page is ready with the trays*



*Brynne transferring the collection to the tray*





## *Benthic Monitoring (cont.)*



*Tammie Walters passing the water quality samples to Brynne*



*Adelaide Bodnar, Project Manager*



*American Water Willow (*Justicia americana*)  
on the bank of South Hickory Creek*



*Tammie in South Hickory Creek, a beautiful  
new site for benthic monitoring*



# Projects in the Community



Mark Tilley and the Guzzler

## Eagle Scout Guzzler Project at Green Acres

By Becky Berton

We appreciate Mark Tilley of Boy Scout Troop 424, his troop members, and his dad Jason for our new Guzzler at Green Acres! It was installed earlier this spring over Saturday-Sunday, April 22-23, near the monarch station.

This project developed over time. We started talking about a guzzler at Green Acres last year, as the pandemic was ending, and it was approved by Chuck Jennings, Flower Mound Parks & Recreation.

The Guzzler at Green Acres is a super-duper model:

- 275 gallon IBC tote to hold the rainwater
- 8 ft by 8ft corrugated metal roof and gutter system to fill the tank
- 3 outlets:
  - 1) a basin for animals on the east side
  - 2) a basin for birds/butterflies plumbed to a corner of the monarch station
  - 3) an overflow plumbed to the east side of the monarch station

The 8 ft by 8 ft roof has a larger area than the tote, so it's supported by four sturdy wooden posts. The rain barrel is framed and covered with stained slats of wood for a neat appearance. The slats are screwed on and

can be removed if there is a need to get close to the rain barrel.

For each one inch of rain the roof collects 40 gal of rain for the rain barrel. It will take almost 8 in of rain to fill the 275 gal tote. We wait for more rain!

Also Mark made an educational sign using Envirosigns about rainwater harvesting and it is displayed in front of the project. Flower Mound kindly helped with the cost of the sign.

We are delighted with this Eagle Scout Project—we have a constant basin of water for animals (mainly dogs that are there for a walk), water available for birds, butterflies, and other insects, and when we get enough rain to fill the tote, the overflow will go to the monarch station. It is a great example of rainwater harvesting for parkgoers to see and learn about!



Boy Scouts at Work



# Features

## Harriet Tubman, an Unsung Naturalist

By Sue Yost class of 2017

Celebrating Black Birders' Week



Harriet Tubman. Conductor on the Underground Railroad. We all know the name, but did you know she was a naturalist? She was also an expert birder. Botany, geography, astronomy, herbal medicine, and wildlife biology all factored into her ability to survive and guide others to safety.

Harriet Tubman, née Araminta Ross, was born sometime around 1820, Dorchester County, Maryland, U.S. and died March 10, 1913.

Harriet Tubman spent much of her young life in close contact with the natural world. She grew up in an area full of wetlands, swamps, and upland forests, giving her the skills she used expertly in her own quest for freedom in 1849. Her parents were enslaved, and Tubman's owners rented her out to neighbors as a domestic servant as early as age five. At seven, she was hired out again, and her duties included walking into wet marshes to check muskrat traps. Tubman also worked as a field hand, in timber fields with her father and brothers on the north side of the Blackwater River, and at wharves in the area. All of this helped when, later, Tubman made 13 trips back to Maryland between 1850 and 1860 to guide people to freedom.

It was in those timber fields where she learned the skills necessary to be a successful conductor on the Underground Railroad including how to read the landscape, how to be comfortable in the woods, how to navigate and use the sounds that were natural in Dorchester County at the time.

The Underground Railroad conductor followed the North Star and the Big Dipper by night to orient herself and hid in potato holes and dense swamps by day. And she had a trained ear for mimicking animal calls.

As a naturalist, she knew the flora and fauna, what to eat and what she couldn't eat, what was dangerous and what wasn't, and how it was going to help her live and survive the next day. In today's world she would be called a survivalist.



## Harriet Tubman (cont.)

Freedom-seekers often relied on the rules of nature to know the direction they were traveling in; migrating birds fly north in the summer, and moss usually grows on the north side of trees. Botany proved another necessary skill; people used plants for food and other survival needs. Whether it was using certain plant life to quiet babies, or it could be relieving pain or cleaning wounds, this was the type of knowledge that Tubman had. Those traveling north often used tree bark for shoe soles, and women would brew a drink out of wild lettuce to control their menses.

She became well known during her service with the Union Army in the Civil War for her knowledge of how to exploit plants for medicinal use. A Union surgeon called Tubman to Florida to help cure soldiers of dysentery. She boiled roots and herbs that she foraged from swamps, a terrain she was thoroughly acquainted with, into a medicinal tea. Tubman healed infections with resin and leaves from the sweet-gum tree. She learned about the tree from her father.

In these final days celebrating Black Birders' week, Harriet Tubman mastered the hoot of the Barred Owl, using it as a signal throughout the Underground Railroad to let freedom seekers know she had arrived. Listen to Bird Notes below: <https://www.birdnote.org/listen/shows/freedom-song-harriet-tubmans-barred-owl-call>. She used the call of an owl to alert refugees and her freedom seekers that it was OK, or not OK, to come out of hiding and continue their journey. If you used the sound of an owl, it would blend in with the normal sounds you would hear at night. It wouldn't create any suspicion and they could move about without being found. She used bird calls to help guide some 300 people, including her parents and four brothers, escape slavery.

Harriet Tubman. A naturalist. A birder. A black female making her mark in history. Now you know the "naturalist" side of the history of Harriet Tubman.





# Features



## *Papilio glaucus*, the Eastern Tiger

**Swallowtail** is native to eastern North America. It is one of the most familiar butterflies in the eastern United States and is one of our largest butterflies, with a wing span of 5.5 inches.

It flies from Spring until Fall and produces two to three broods during this time.

Adults feed on the nectar of many plants, mostly from those of the families Apocynaceae, Asteraceae and Fabaceae - think milkweed, coneflowers and indigo.

The larvae (caterpillars) feed mainly on woody plants and are known to feast on non-native plant species, such as purple loosestrife\*. Females lay their large green eggs singly on plants in the Magnolia and Rose families.

Young caterpillars are brown and white and resemble bird droppings. As they mature, the caterpillars turn bright green and have two amazing black, yellow and blue false eyespots on the thorax above and behind their true eyes.

When provoked they release a foul-smelling blend of defensive acid secretions that are wiped onto the attacking animal, produced from a set of bright orange glands (resembling tentacles) from the neck region.

The adults' broad yellow wings are edged in black and have four black stripes. The bottom edges of the hind wings are especially colorful with bluish scales and red spots. Male Tiger Swallowtails have darker blacks and none of the bluish and red scales on their hind wings.

There is also a black morph. Black replaces the yellow expanses and they have bluish and red scales on their hind wings.

The Eastern Tiger Swallowtail is the state butterfly of Alabama, Delaware, Georgia and South Carolina.

\*Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is invasive and illegal to possess or transport this species in Texas.

Article by Mary Morrow, photos from Magoo's Gardens

# Features



## What's in a Name?

By Wanda Odum

"What someone or something is called or labeled is arbitrary compared to their intrinsic qualities". So what is there in a name? This idiom is a reference to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* wherein Juliet bemoans Romeo's last name of Montague because they are the family's sworn enemy but decides that a name did not matter.

When the bard used the phrase so many centuries ago, who knew it would catch on? For instance:

*What's in a Name* (short story), a 1956 short story by Isaac Asimov

*What's in a Name?* (play), a 2010 French comedy play

*What's in a Name?* (1934 film), a British comedy film

*What's in a Name?* (2012 film), a French; Belgian comedy film

*What's in a Name* (album), an album by Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich

Consider, what's in the name "Lapis Lazuli"? It is a "blue stone" but is that all it is? That label was given to a deep blue metamorphic rock, semi-precious stone - Lapis Lazuli (or simply Lapis). Lapis beads were found in Neolithic burials; in the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC Lapis Lazuli was mined in the Sar-I Sang mines in Shortugai; ancient Egyptians used the stone to make jewelry and figurines and as a paint, evidenced by finds in ancient Egyptian tombs. The stone was first exported to Europe in the Middle Ages where it was ground into powder and used to make a pigment known as ultramarine. It was the finest and most expensive of all blue pigments theretofore used by Renaissance and Baroque artists such as Masaccio, Perugino, Titian and Vermeer. A central figure, such as the Virgin Mary, was often depicted in this ultramarine pigment.

Being such a brilliant color, is it any wonder that this name would eventually make it into the bird world? T.S. Eliot once used the phrase "Water out of sunlight" when referring to the refractive blue color in a pool. If he had observed a "little azure jewel drop out of the sky and land on a shrub in the American West," he might have expanded his metaphor to Lazuli Buntings to say "feathered beings made of sunlight." There is no better representation of that than the Lazuli Bunting (*Passerina amoena*).

They are small finch-like birds but more closely akin to Cardinals, Dickcissels and Blue Grosbeaks than Finches. Adult breeding males are brilliant blue in the upper body with a pumpkin-color breast and a white belly. There is also a white shoulder patch that can be seen when the bird is perched or flying. Females, as is often the case, are a more drab color of warm grayish-brown in the upper body with just a blue tinge on wings and tail, two buff wing bars, and a pale cinnamon or tan breast.

This bird lives in brushy hillsides, near streams, wooded valleys, thickets and hedges along agricultural fields and residential gardens. They are often seen in recently burned areas.





## What's in a Name (cont.)



*Lazuli Bunting Drawing by Wanda Odum*

Their food consists of caterpillars, spiders, grasshoppers, ants, beetles, butterflies, and other insects from leaves and grasses in the understory, berries and seeds from serviceberry, chokecherry, wild oats, chickweed, and other grasses. They can also be found at bird feeders especially when white proso millet is available.

The nests are built in shrubs within 3 ft of the ground where the female lays a clutch of 3-4 pale blue to faint greenish-blue or white eggs. The incubation period is 11-14 days, and there are usually 1-2 broods.

Lazuli Buntings are found throughout the west and their numbers were fairly stable between 1966 and 2015 ac-

ording to North American Bird Breeding Survey, but recently it has been determined that does not hold in all areas. Lazuli Buntings, as a cup-nesting species, are vulnerable to Brown-headed Cowbirds who lay their eggs in nests of other birds. The unsuspecting parents (the host) then raise cowbird young at the expense their own.

The Lazuli Bunting is native to North America and according to the Native American culture it represents the spirit of freedom and joy, traits welcomed by all.

“Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth.”

George Washington

“I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy.”

Rabindranath Tagore

Take care of our birds and their habitats to enable them to thrive, sustain their freedom in the skies and to bring joy throughout. Happy birding!

What's in a name? Does Lapis Lazuli (Lapis, Lazuli) denote a stone; a gem; a pigment; a bird? Yes! “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”

### Sources:

Allaboutbirds.org/guide/lazuli\_bunting/life history

Flatheadaudubon.org/bird-of-the-month/lazuli-bunting/

A Guide to Field Identification Birds of North America, Golden Press 1983

“Lazuli Spiritual Meaning, Symbolism and Totem”. Article by Kristen Hawkins February 20, 2023 (spiritandsymbolism.com)

McGraw-Hill Dictionary of American Idioms and Phrasal Verbs. © 2002 by The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Wikipedia.com



# Features

## Fourpoint Evening Primrose, *Oenothera rhombipetala*

By Marilyn Blanton

The Fourpoint Evening Primrose, *Oenothera rhombipetala*, is a showy native that blooms from May on into the summer. It's also known as Diamond Petal Primrose because each of its four petals that flare from an elongated tube are diamond shaped. The flowers are bright yellow and can be up to 3 inches wide. A noticeable feature of the flower is its eight long stamen surrounding the stigma that has four branches in an X shape. The flowers whorl around the top of the flower stem that grows to three feet or more. There are usually several stalks to a plant.

In the wild, the Fourpoint Evening Primrose is found growing in sand or loam. It needs well drained soil and sun to partial shade. The plant prefers dry conditions but will bloom more abundantly with extra water. The leaves are alternate and narrowly oblanceolate. They are usually twisted with a wavy edge and spiral up the stems getting smaller as they grow up the stem.

The Fourpoint Evening Primrose is a winter annual or biennial. Like many wildflowers, the plant sprouts in the fall and grows as a basal rosette through the winter. The tall flower stalks produce many tiny seeds that will bring more flowers the next spring. The seeds need bare soil and light to germinate. Sometimes the original plant will rebloom the next year. The plant grows best from seed because it has a long taproot and does not transplant well. Seeds can be purchased from companies such as Native American Seed.



*Photo by Marilyn Blanton*



*Photo by Marilyn Blanton*

The flowers provide a food source for night active insects, including various sphinx moths which pollinate the flowers. The flowers also attract bees, but only specialized bees can pollinate them. The plant is a host plant for the small but beautiful nocturnal Primrose Moth, *Schinia florida*. The moth has a pink head and a pale yellow or creamy white thorax and abdomen. The moth's forewings are pink with pale yellow markings and the hindwings are a creamy white. During the day the moth may be found resting in the flowers.

The Fourpoint Evening Primrose has a range that extends from Texas to Minnesota through the middle of the country. The plant belongs to the family Onagraceae. It is not a true primrose. Look for this showy plant in dry sandy prairies and along the roadside. If you look closely, you might be lucky enough to see a Primrose Moth!



# Tweet of the Month

By Sue Yost, class of 2017



French colonists called it *nonpareil*, "without equal". Spanish-speaking settlers called it *mariposa pintada*, the "painted butterfly". Roger Tory Peterson calls it "the most gaudily colored American bird". There are few people who do not gasp in surprise and disbelief when seeing their first Painted Bunting. Most first-timers think it is a caged bird that has escaped! More on that later.

Males are stunningly colored with blue heads, red underparts, and green backs. Females and immatures are a uniform, bright yellow green overall, with a pale eye ring.

The Painted Bunting arrives in open fields, brushy thickets, streamside woodlands and prairies in Texas in April. Males arrive first to claim their territory and get ready to woo the dull green females. Male Painted Buntings stake out territories of up to several acres through song and displays. Each male aggressively defends its territory and will fight intruding males by pecking, grappling, and striking with their wings. These fights sometimes end in the death of one of the males. Males sing their bright warbling songs from higher in the trees, partly hidden among foliage or sometimes out in the sun on an exposed perch. They will nest in most of Texas except the panhandle. Painted Buntings will start their winter migration in October or November ending up in Mexico and South America.

One male may have more than one mate. The nest is placed in dense bushes,



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



messy vines, or low in trees, usually 3 -9' above the ground. The nest (built by female) is an open cup woven of grass, weeds, leaves, lined with fine grass, rootlets, and animal hair. Females will incubate 3-5 speckled eggs for about 12 days. They will fledge in about 2 weeks after hatching. They feed mainly on seeds, primarily those of grasses and weeds; sometimes they eat berries and fruits. Painted Buntings also eat many insects, including beetles, caterpillars, grasshoppers, flies, and others. It likely eats more insects in early summer and

feeds them to its young. After fledging the diets will consist mainly of seeds. To attract them to your yard [if you have the correct habitat] they are easily tempted with a tube feeder of fresh millet.

One of the biggest factors in Painted Bunting decline is habitat loss, both on its breeding grounds and at migration stopover sites. The species is also a frequent victim of window collisions and is vulnerable to cowbird parasitism.

Because of their great beauty, Painted Buntings were once a popular caged bird. Capturing or possessing native birds is illegal here in the United States but such practices of capturing and selling colorful birds in local markets continues south of the border. This practice is a major threat to this species which is already suffering from the effects of habitat loss and climate change.

Painted Buntings are regular summer visitors at LLELA. In fact, the ornithology students at UNT, under the guidance of Dr. Bednarz, have been conducting a study of the Painted Buntings' nesting habits at LLELA for several years. Many have been banded.

If you have never seen one of these beautiful "rainbow" birds, take a hike on the Cottonwood trail at LLELA, listen for that sweet song and look up at the treetops and be ready to gasp with excitement at the sight of a Painted Bunting!!

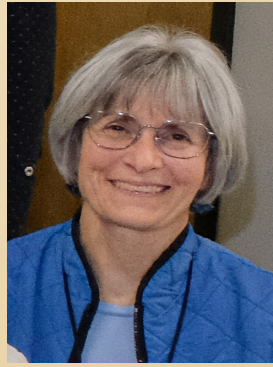




## *This Month's Contributors*



Gale Bacon



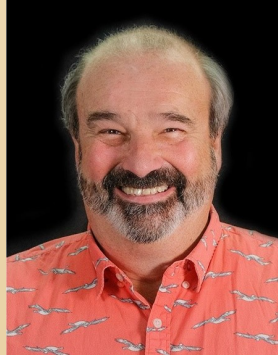
Becky Bertoni



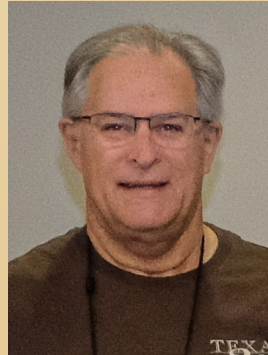
Marilyn Blanton



Regina Dale



Dave Jones



Denver Kramer



Brian Lewis



Mary Morrow



Wanda Odum



Jamie Reneau



Sue Yost



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 July 2023 submissions is  
Friday, July 14th.



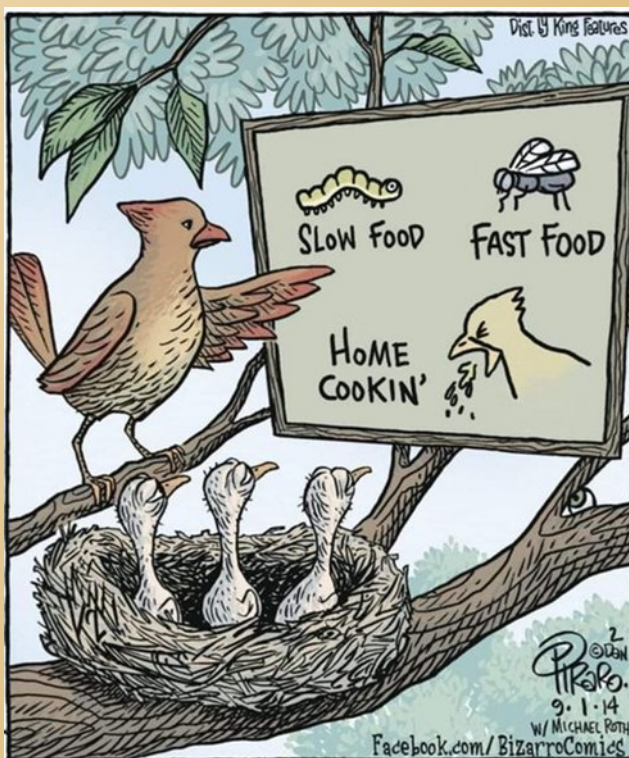
# Almost the Last Word



**Congratulations to Becky Bertoni and all the Green Acres Volunteers for a successful photo exhibit at the Flower Mound Library!**

**And congratulations to Lori Moraine, Best of Show winner for her photo, Eastern Bluebird Pair!**

## Funny Finds from Sue Yost!





# *Almost the Last Word*



We know that YOU know a thing or two about native plants!

Please share your knowledge with our chapter by writing a brief article about a native plant that might be showing its glory at this time, and submitting it to [newsletter@efctmn.org](mailto:newsletter@efctmn.org).

Articles can be as short as 200 words or as long as 600 words, or more. And please include a photo or two of the plant.

Thank you!

## *Naturalist News Needs Your Photos!*



Please share your photographs of native plants and flowers, birds, insects, mammals, reptiles... anything that you would like to share & have published in the

*Naturalist News*

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

*We all want to see what you have seen!*

Thank you! Tammie Walters, Editor

# 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 - Mike Hatch

Initial Training - Elise Spain

Communications - Karen DeVinney

Volunteer Service Projects - Larry Duncan

Advanced Training Programs - David Jones

Outreach/Adult Education - Fran Witte

New Class Representative - Christine 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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