

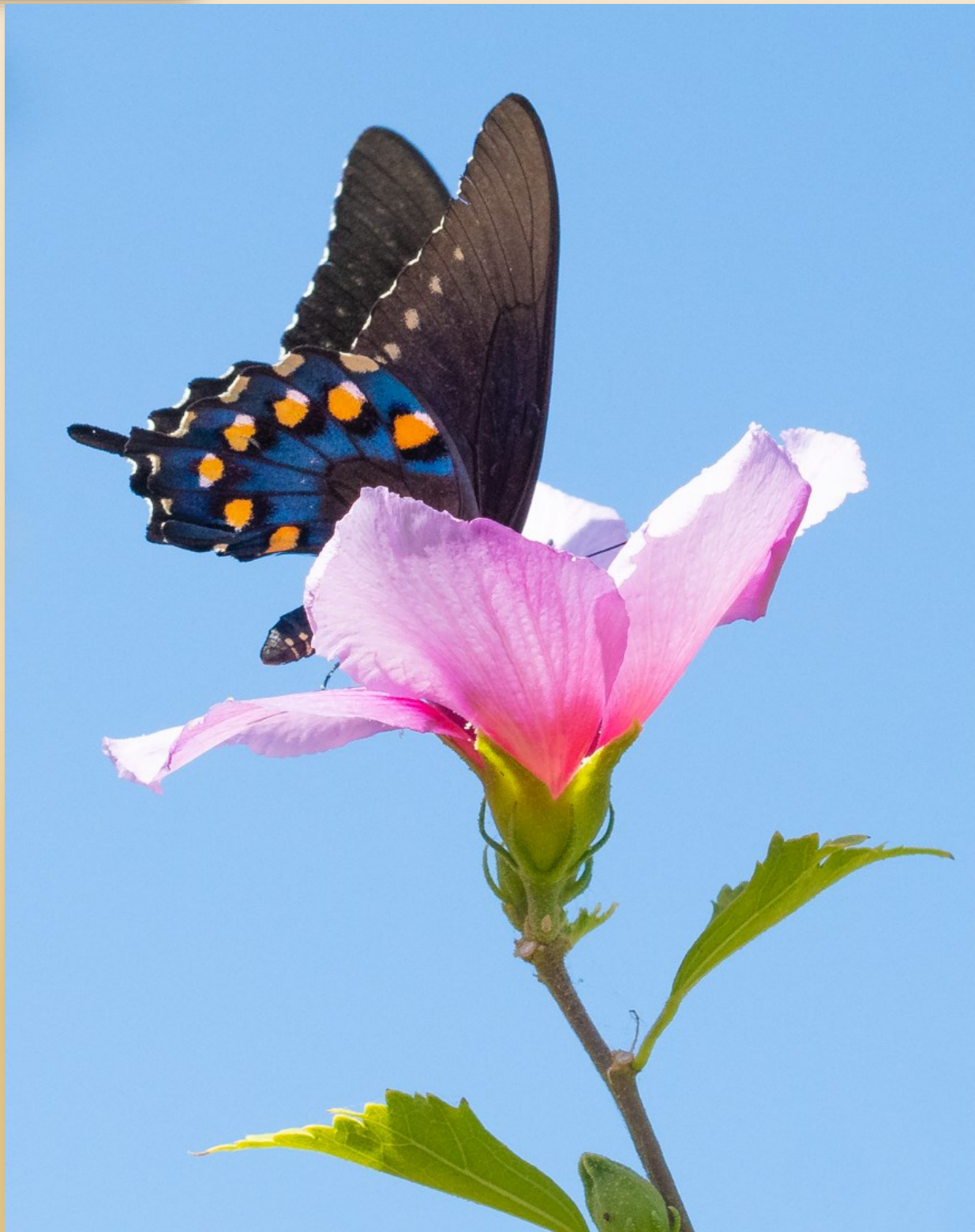
T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™
Elm Fork Chapter



Naturalist News

September 2023 Volume 23, Issue 9



Pipevine Swallowtail (*Battus philenor*) visits a Rose of Sharon flower, from Bryan Lewis

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

On Facebook: www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistElmFork/

T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™
Elm Fork Chapter



Naturalist News

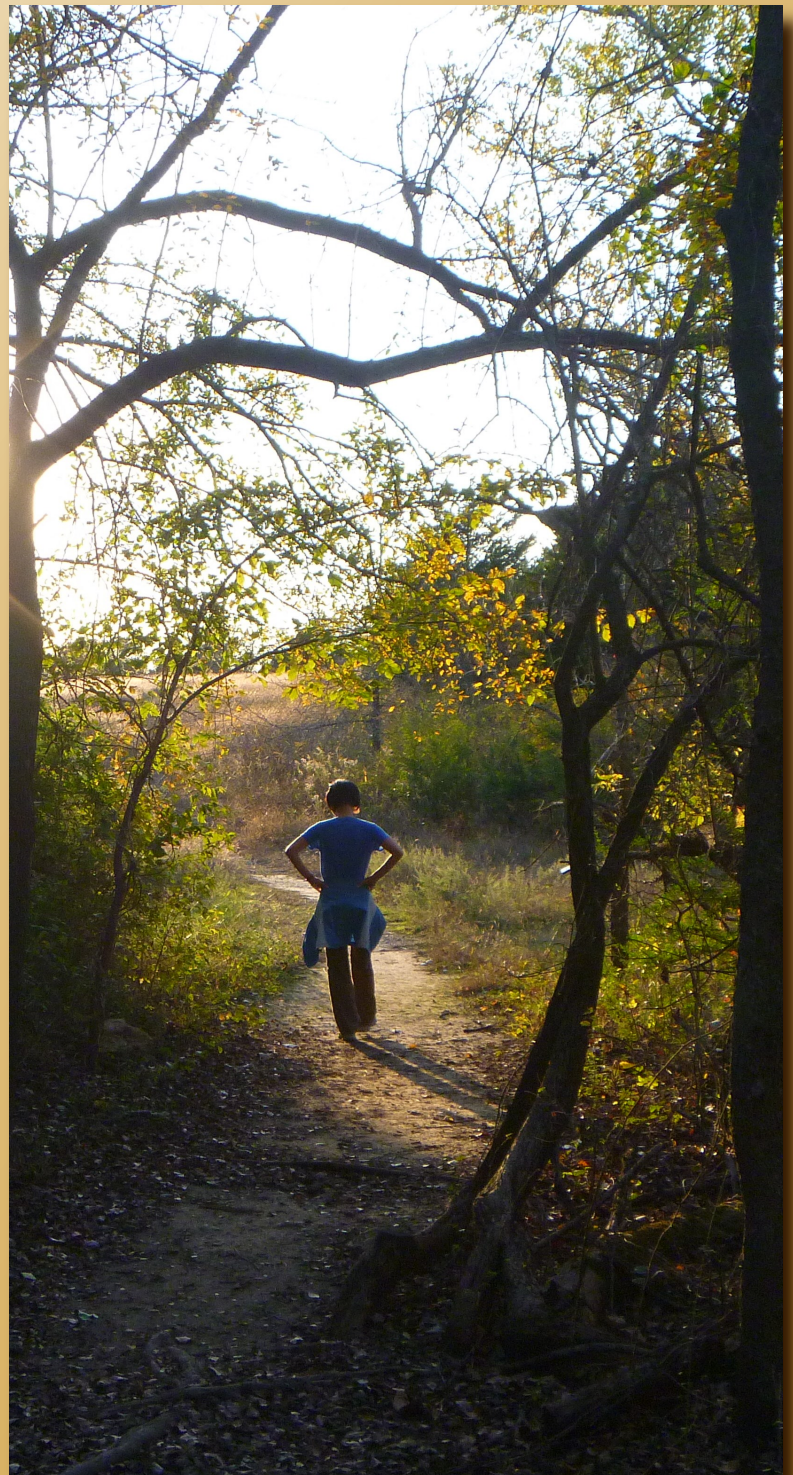


Inside This Issue:

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| What Happens Next..... | 3 |
| Recognition and Awards..... | 6 |
| Field Notes in Focus..... | 8 |
| Inside Outside News..... | 9 |
| Quick Tips..... | 16 |
| Projects in the Community..... | 18 |
| Features..... | 19 |
| Tweet of the Month..... | 20 |
| From Fieldnotes..... | 22 |
| This Month's Contributors..... | 23 |
| Almost Last Word..... | 24 |
| Who We Are..... | 26 |



Autumn is near!



CCNHC, from Jon Reynolds

What Happens Next

Chapter Meeting and Presentation

Thursday, September 21st, 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
Denton County Elections Administration Building
701 Kimberly Drive, Suite A101, Denton, TX 76208



This Month's Presentation:

Monogamy Mythology: Painted Bunting Breeding Ecology at an Urban Prairie

By Alejandra Gage



Scientists have long considered Painted Buntings monogamous or polygynous, but recent evidence from the work done at the Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area (LLELA) suggests that this might not be true. Based on the limited amount of parental care provided by the male of the species and recently collected female home range data, we suspect that female Painted Buntings are mating with more than one male. This presentation will focus on the life history of the Painted Bunting, our recent findings, and the work currently taking place at LLELA by the UNT Painted Bunting Project.

Alejandra Gage is a graduate student pursuing her master's degree in biology at the University of North Texas studying Painted Buntings. Her research is focused on exploring the mating system of the Painted Bunting and the possibility of multiple paternity in the broods. She will be using molecular genetic methods to determine paternity, which is something that has not been done before with this species. Before Painted Buntings, Alejandra did behavioral research on Bumble bees (Dr. Elinor Lichtenberg, UNT) and molecular research on Honey bees (Dr. Nancy Moran, UT Austin).

What Happens Next



REGISTRATION IS OPEN UNTIL SEPTEMBER 29TH!

Get excited for our **Texas Master Naturalist 2023 Annual Meeting** – to be held **Thursday, October 12th through Sunday, October 15th** this year at the southernmost point of the South Texas Plains ecoregion in **McAllen, Texas**.

For our 24th Annual Meeting, we are excited to gather at the **McAllen Convention Center**, which sits between multiple nature centers and wildlife refuges along the Rio Grande Valley. McAllen also offers a unique opportunity this year as a close location to **view an annular solar eclipse!** The Lower Rio Grande Valley is famous for its diversity of birds, butterflies, and endangered species like Ocelots, Texas Tortoises, Sabal Palms, and Piping Plovers that call the region home.

More details along with the session agendas can be found [HERE](#).

What Happens Next

T E X A S

Master
Naturalist™
Elm Fork Chapter



Elm Fork Chapter Turns 25 in 24!

The TMN Elm Fork Chapter will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2024. The anniversary committee is thrilled to share this milestone with you. Our goal is to ensure that all members of our chapter feel included and valued during this special occasion. To achieve this, we are asking members a few questions about their involvement with the TMN program. Our plan is not a single event, but instead to celebrate each month with a special edition newsletter highlighting anecdotes from each year. This does not replace our usual newsletter.

We want to make the process easy for you. You have three options to submit your answers: you can click on the link and fill out the [Google form](#), email your responses, or give us a number where we can reach you and ask the questions over the phone. The deadline for submission is October 15, 2023.

Additionally, if you have any photos you would like to share, we'd be delighted to include them in our stories. Please contact us to discuss the most convenient way to collect them.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at Team25@efctmn.org.

Thank you,

Team 25

Regina Dale, Jean McMeans, Marty Newman, Kere Post, Susan Warren

Awards and Recognition

August 2023

Initial Certifications

| | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Heidi Barr | Class of 2022 |
| Matt Brown | Class of 2022 |
| Kayla Lipinski | Class of 2022 |



Recertifications

| | |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Daniel Arenas Richieri | Class of 2017 |
| Patricia Barry | Class of 2017 |
| Jerry Clark | Class of 2021 |
| Rebecca Cortines | Class of 2021 |
| Sarah Goodrich | Class of 2016 |
| Kaye Jackson | Class of 2015 |
| Tyler Leverenz | Class of 2022 |
| Alice Mankoff | Class of 2016 |
| Missy McCormick | Class of 2019 |
| Ann O'Lone | Class of 2020 |
| Wanda Odum | Class of 2005 |
| Jody Springer | Class of 2018 |
| James Terry | Class of 2017 |
| Donna Wolf | Class of 1998 |



Continued
on next page



Awards and Recognition

August 2023

250 Hour Milestone

Jon Thomlinson
Skip Warren

Class of 2022
Class of 2021



1500 Hour Milestone

Jean Mason

Class of 2017



3500 Hour Milestone

Becky Bertoni
Jerry Hamby

Class of 2015
Class of 2014



Congratulations!!!

Field Notes in Focus



American Bumblebee on Mexican Sunflower, by Jean Mason

Inside Outside News

Volunteers Needed



It's Fall Y'all, and That Means DISD School Days at Clear Creek!

Once again, we have an opportunity to impact the future of a 4th Grader.

**Hike Leaders
NEEDED!!!**

Please join us all day!

Or hike just the morning (9:45-11:45)

or

Help in the afternoon with learning stations at the center (11:45-1:45)

For more information and to view the calendar or sign up,
click this link:

SIGN UP HERE

LISD 7th-GRADE ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING

September 25th - December 14th

From September 25th until December 14th, approximately 3,500 7th-grade students accompanied by teachers, aides, and parents will visit LLELA Monday through Thursday in two groups a day. One group in the morning and the second in the afternoon.

Four volunteers will be requested for two shifts, the morning shift from 9:00 AM until Noon. The second shift begins at 12:15 PM until 3:30 PM.

LISD staff will manage the students. Master Naturalists will assist with the placement and planting of native plants and the distribution of seed bombs. Each shift will collect and return equipment to the staging area. Weekly information will appear in Plan-Your-Week and on the TMNEFC website calendar.

For more information contact Scott Kiester through the Members Area Directory, or through projects@efctmn.org.

Inside Outside News

Volunteers Needed

Glory Park Tree Planting

Saturday, October 7th and October 14th, 7:30a-12p
at Glory Park/Parque La Gloria
301 E Southwest Pkwy, Lewisville, TX 75067

The City of Lewisville Parks and Recreation was awarded a grant from One Tree Planted, which focuses on projects that address environmental justice issues when selecting Urban Forestry proposals. This grant offers the opportunity for members of the community, individuals, organizations and One Tree Planted sponsors to plant the trees that will live in this park. We wish to work with the Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists, Keep Lewisville Beautiful and apartment complex managers in the neighborhood for these events. Volunteer shirts and supplies will be given on-site the day of each event.

Volunteers are asked to pre-register here:

<https://forms.gle/2gnJxeiStRhXUtFM8>

For additional information, contact Mary Morrow through projects@efctmn.org.
Enter VMS as ***Project: NPA Lewisville Extending the Green***

DFW Wildlife Coalition

Looking for Volunteers

Volunteer for a 2 or 3 hour shift

Once a week from your home

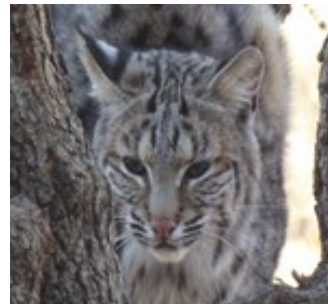
6 hours of Online Training

If interested or for more information

Projects@efctmn.org

Cecily Pegues

Betty Zajac



Inside Outside News

Volunteers Needed

Ray Roberts Lake Nature Centers *still need your help!*

The nature centers at both Isle Du Bois and Johnson Branch are suffering from lack of volunteers.

Volunteers are needed Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays

Please check your calendars and
click on the links below to sign up:

[Isle Du Bois](#)

[Johnson Branch](#)

The Volunteer Opportunities are endless!

So be sure to see Plan Your Week,
or go to our [Elm Fork Chapter Website](#),
and click on the Calendar for more
Volunteer Service Projects!

Inside Outside News

Approved AT

Texas Waters Specialist Certification - AT Update

A new decision has been made regarding reporting AT for the Texas Water Specialist (TWS) certification.

Based on the fact the TWS website (<https://tpwd.texas.gov/education/water-education/texaswatersprogram/texaswatersspecialist>) states:

- Attend Texas Waters live webinars (registration links and recorded webinars below)
 - ◊ General public: recorded webinars can be viewed individually for AT.
 - ◊ Master Naturalist: a small discussion group is highly encouraged to view recorded webinars for AT.

and

- The TWS website has a link to the "[Texas Waters Specialist Volunteer Registration and Reporting Guide](#)", a guide that explains how the general public can set up an account to record hours, be they from viewing a live webinar or viewing one that's recorded - as far back as 2017.

It is only fair we should allow our members to report any of these recorded webinars as TWS AT since the TWS specifically allows the general public to do so.

Here are the guidelines for reporting AT for viewing a recorded TWS webinar:

- This AT code must be used to report the AT: "AT: TX Water Certification Training: TMN AT Report Hours".
- This AT code cannot be used to report the AT: "AT: Chapter Approved AT-Elm Fork: TMN AT Report Hours."

Should a chapter member view a TWS webinar live, they may report the webinar using either of the following codes:

- "AT: TX Water Certification Training: TMN AT Report Hours" - if they want the AT to count towards TWS certification.
- "AT: Chapter Approved AT-Elm Fork: TMN AT Report Hours" - if they do not want the AT to count towards TWS certification.

Thanks –

Dave Jones, Advanced Training Director
at@efctmn.org

Inside Outside News

Approved AT



NPSPOT-Trinity Forks Chapter Presents:
Wild DFW and the North Texas Ecotone
Thursday, September 28th, 6:30 - 8:30 PM
Live at TWU or on Zoom

Nature is more than someplace we visit – it's where we live. In this talk from naturalist and journalist Amy Martin, author of *Wild DFW: Explore the Amazing Nature Around Dallas-Fort Worth*, discover North Texas's rare prairies, diverse bottomland forests, limestone escarpments, wetlands, and more, as well as the river that defines us, the Trinity. Learn how this area arose from a primordial inland sea, how its varied layers of bedrock create its diversity, and how it serves as an ecotone linking eastern forests to western plains.

Amy is a North Texas Master Naturalist, Social Media Director for Native Prairies Association of Texas, columnist for GreenSourceDFW, and for 15 years has managed a 75 acre nature preserve.

Location: The Ann Stuart Science Complex (ASSC) Room 259 at TWU
[Campus Map](#)

Parking is available beginning at 6pm.

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83237641371?pwd=dzhGUlptdnowQk1XQ29iby9LbFYydz09>

Website: <https://npsot.org/chapters/trinity-forks/tf-events>

Inside Outside News

Approved AT

Texas Talks Presents: Dr. Reid Ferring - A Look at the Aubrey Clovis Site

Wednesday, October 4th at 6:00 PM

Denton County Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum

110 West Hickory Street

Denton, TX 76201

Join the Denton County Office of History and Culture for the Texas Talks Speaker Series!

On Wednesday, October 4 at 6 PM, archaeologist Dr. Reid Ferring will present "Discovering the First People of Denton County" in the Commissioners Courtroom at the Courthouse-on-the-Square Museum. This presentation is sponsored by the Denton County Historical Commission in celebration of Texas Archaeology Month.

On Dec. 2, 1988, Dr. Ferring and his eight year old son, Taylor, were on a mission to collect fossils for Taylor's 3rd grade class near their home in Aubrey, Texas. What they discovered that day turned out to be one of the oldest campgrounds in North America—well over 11,000 years old.

Archaeological excavations of this site in Aubrey by Dr. Ferring revealed an exceptionally preserved record of Late Pleistocene environments and the activities of Clovis people along the Trinity River. Over 9,000 stone artifacts and 25,000 bones of animals provide evidence of Clovis food procurement and processing. At 13,500 years ago, these are the earliest records of Clovis in Texas.

About the speaker:

Dr. Reid Ferring is a Professor Emeritus at the University of North Texas, as well as an archaeologist and geologist, focusing on Eurasia and the North American Great Plains. He maintains research interests in Clovis Paleoindian occupations of the Southern Plains and lithic technology. Dr. Ferring teaches a variety of courses including Physical Geology, Soils Geomorphology, Geology of Texas, Origins of Civilization, and regional archaeological surveys of the Old World and New World. He advises graduate students and supervises their research in their chosen areas as well as his research projects.

Website:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/texas-talks-dr-reid-ferring-a-look-at-the-aubrey-clovis-site-tickets-691164440447>

Inside Outside News

*There are so many Advanced Training opportunities being offered...
too many to list in this newsletter!
So be sure to check Plan Your Week
and the Elm Fork Chapter Website and Calendar for MORE!*



T E X A S

Master Naturalist

Elm Fork Chapter

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION

TEXAS PARKS & WILDLIFE

f

▶

Home

About

Join Our Chapter

Photo Gallery

Activities

Newsletters

Calendar

Members Area

Donate

🔍

References

Advanced Training

Board Meeting

Chapter Meeting

Special Events

TMN Annual Meeting

Volunteers Needed

| | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>17</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Isle Du Bois Unit</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> | <div>18</div> <div>7:30 am - 10:30 am</div> <div>LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday</div> <div>9:00 am - 1:30 pm</div> <div>Environmental Discovery and Adventure (EDA)</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> | <div>19</div> <div>7:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday</div> <div>7:30 am - 10:30 am</div> <div>LLELA Trailhead Tuesday</div> <div>8:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Green Acres Workday</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>10:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Dementia Friendly Nature Walks – Flower Mound</div> <div>+ 1 More</div> | <div>20</div> <div>7:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday</div> <div>7:30 am - 10:30 am</div> <div>LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday</div> <div>8:00 am - 10:00 am</div> <div>Lantana Monarch Waystation Workday</div> <div>9:00 am - 1:30 pm</div> <div>Environmental Discovery and Adventure (EDA)</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>+ 1 More</div> | <div>21</div> <div>9:00 am - 12:00 pm</div> <div>Chapter Meeting</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> | <div>22</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Isle Du Bois Unit</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> | <div>23</div> <div>8:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Fumeaux Creek Volunteer Day on the Trail</div> <div>9:00 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>TPWD Basic Fly Fishing Class – AT</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Isle Du Bois Unit</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> |
| <div>24</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Isle Du Bois Unit</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> | <div>25</div> <div>7:30 am - 10:30 am</div> <div>LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday</div> <div>9:00 am - 1:30 pm</div> <div>Environmental Discovery and Adventure (EDA)</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> | <div>26</div> <div>7:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday</div> <div>7:30 am - 10:30 am</div> <div>LLELA Trailhead Tuesday</div> <div>8:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Green Acres Workday</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>10:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Dementia Friendly Nature Walks –</div> | <div>27</div> <div>7:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Beulah Acres Agroforest Workday</div> <div>7:30 am - 10:30 am</div> <div>LLELA Monday & Wednesday Workday</div> <div>9:00 am - 1:30 pm</div> <div>Environmental Discovery and Adventure (EDA)</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>10:00 am - 11:00 am</div> | <div>28</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> <div>2:00 pm - 5:00 pm</div> <div>Milkweed Seed Processing</div> <div>7:00 pm - 8:30 pm</div> <div>Wild DFW and the North Texas Ecotone – AT</div> | <div>29</div> <div>9:30 am - 2:00 pm</div> <div>Fall DISD School Days at Clear Creek</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Isle Du Bois Unit</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> | <div>30</div> <div>8:00 am - 11:00 am</div> <div>Fumeaux Creek Volunteer Day on the Trail</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Isle Du Bois Unit</div> <div>10:00 am - 4:00 pm</div> <div>Ray Roberts Lake State Park – Johnson Branch Unit</div> |

Quick Tips From Our Webmaster

Gale Bacon



What's NEW in the Members Area?

- Click on the **Members Area** of our webpage to see what's **NEW!**



- * (The Members Area is password protected, so enter the password if prompted.)

Protected: Members Area

This content is password protected. To view it please enter your password below:

Password:

- VMS Opportunities List** - Current list of VMS opportunities. Two new projects were added in September: Milkweed Seed Conservation and Wellness In Nature. For more details on any project, select the Volunteer Service Projects link and click on a project number.

Time Entry

VMS

TXMN Federal Activity Codes explained
(when to use PO, TR, NPA, RM, etc.)

VMS Opportunities List (new September 2023)

NEW!

Quick Tips (Cont.)

- 2023 Training Class Photos - Meet our new Members-in-Training!

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](#) (Aug 2023)
- [2023 Training Class Roster](#)

NEW!

- Initial Training Class Presentations - Need to brush up on a topic?
If our 2023 speakers allow us to post their presentations, we'll publish them here:

Initial Training Presentations

- [2023 Initial Training Presentations](#)

NEW!

Projects in the Community

The Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition

Project Update

By Marilyn Blanton



All 25 of the Denton ISD elementary schools are participating in the **Texas Native Plant Art Exhibition** this year!

Information packets have been delivered to the art teachers. Their fourth grade students are working on their art now. We'll pick up the artwork on November 3, judge it the following week and set up the first display at the Denton Senior Center.

We are so excited to have all the schools joining us this year and looking forward to seeing the artwork! We will have hundreds of pictures of Texas native plants! Volunteers to help with this project are always welcome!

To join us contact Marilyn Blanton at projects@efctmn.org or through the Members Area Directory.

Features

History Lost

By Team 25

For almost 25 years the members of the Elm Fork Chapter of Texas Master Naturalist have been busy serving the communities of Cooke, Denton, and Wise Counties. They have monitored water quality, cleared trails, collected data, taught children about nature, and participated in many other activities designed to conserve and preserve our natural resources.

At the beginning of the Chapter's existence, members wrote articles for the Newsletter about their activities on various projects. They even kept scrapbooks which were full of photos of members working in the community. Unfortunately, that type of historical record-keeping has not been maintained for several years. The last scrapbook was in 2015. Since 2019, we have stored photos in our Google Drive, but without the stories, they are only snapshots. Our members are not sharing as many stories about our projects as they once did in the Newsletter.

As the members of our 25th Anniversary Committee began researching the records for information to share in next year's celebration, we found recent historical records to be very scarce. Oh, we have statistics! We know who the officers were, we know who won awards, we know when projects were started, etc. What we don't have is a narrative from our members' point of view. Those Newsletter articles are few and far between in recent years. That is why we sent a survey to the membership, asking you to help fill in the blanks. Tell us your story as it completes the story of the Chapter.

The contributions we are making to the communities as Master Naturalists are wonderful, but the recording of those activities is equally important. Let's make a collective effort to not lose the history of who we are and what we have done.

So, if you have not filled out the survey or you want to add more to what you have already completed, please do so by clicking the link below.

[Survey](#)

Tweet of the Month

By Sue Yost, class of 2017

Baltimore Oriole (*Icterus galbula*)

Fall is just around the corner, days are getting shorter, and birds are preparing for their migration southward. For 2 weeks in the fall and 2 weeks in the spring we can see the Baltimore Orioles migrate through our area. LLELA is a good place to find them, but they can be attracted to your backyard too! More on that below.

George Calvert, Lord Baltimore, rose to prominence in the Court of James I and was granted land to find a colony north of the Potomac River. The 17th century colonists noted that a beautiful orange and black bird they first called "fiery hang-nest" wore the family colors of the Lords Baltimore, and they named it Baltimore-bird. In 1758 Linnaeus described it as the Baltimore Oriole. It later became the state bird of Maryland and the name of a baseball team!



In the spring, males establish a territory then display to females by singing and chattering while hopping from perch to perch in front of them. Males also give a bow display, bowing with wings lowered and tail fanned. Depending on their receptiveness, the females may ignore these displays [much like a human female!] or sing and give calls or a wing-quiver display in response. The wing-quiver display involves leaning forward, often with tail partly fanned, and fluttering or quivering slightly lowered wings.



Photo by Denver Kramer

We are on the outer edges of the Baltimore Oriole range. They are slowly expanding into North Texas. The Baltimore Oriole is quite the avian architect when it comes to nest building. It constructs an elaborately woven hanging pouch and suspends it 23 to 30 ft above the ground from the tip of a cottonwood, elm, maple, willow, or apple tree where it just swings freely with the warm breezes. The females do most of the building of the nest. Check out YouTube videos of the Baltimore Oriole nest building. A great example of beak adaptations! *HOW do they DO THAT!!* Amazing!

The incubation of the 3-7 blue-gray eggs is 12 to 14 days. Once the nestlings hatch, they are fed by regurgitation by both parents and brooded by the female for two weeks.

The Orioles' diet consists of insects, fruits, and berries. A magnet in the spring is a mulberry tree. They can't get enough of those berries! Unlike American Robins and many other fruit-eating birds, Baltimore Orioles seem to prefer only ripe, dark-colored fruit. Orioles

Tweet of the Month (cont.)

Photo by
Sue Yost

seek out the darkest mulberries, the reddest cherries, and the deepest purple grapes, and will ignore green grapes and yellow cherries even if they are ripe. Baltimore **Orioles** sometimes use their bills to "gape", stabbing their closed bill into soft fruits, then opening it to lap the juice with their tongues. During spring and fall migration, nectar, oranges, grape jelly, and other sugary foods are readily converted into fat, which supplies energy for their long journey. There are specialty feeders designed for **orioles**. And we can't forget the importance of water!

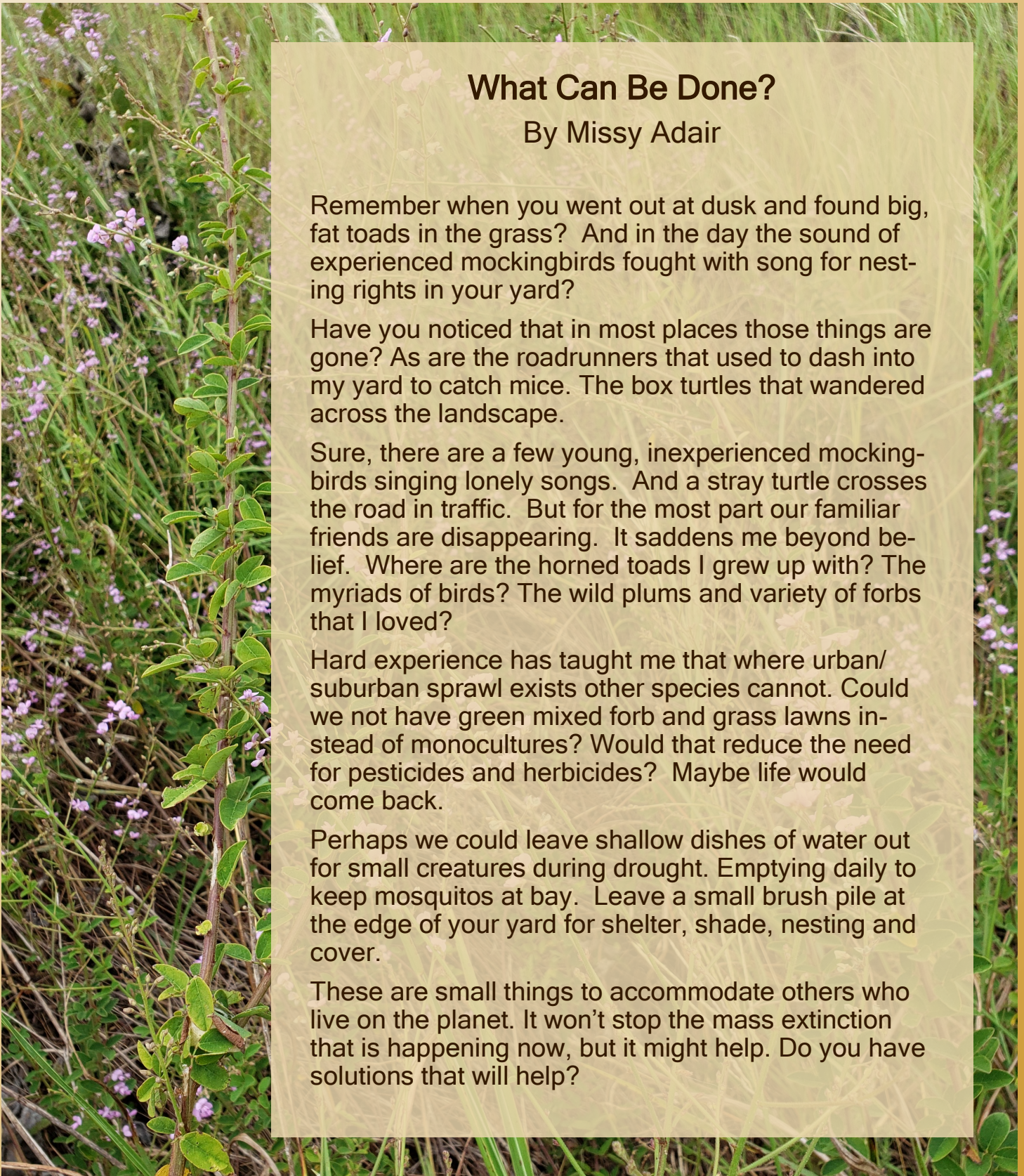
Their favored prey is perhaps the forest tent caterpillar moth, which they typically eat in their larval stage, and can be a nuisance species if not naturally regulated by predation. (Eliminates the need for pesticides!) The larvae caterpillar is beaten against a branch until their protective hairs are skinned off before being eaten. **Orioles** will also consume beetles, grasshoppers, wasps, bugs, and spiders.

For several years I attracted **orioles** to my yard. Then they stopped coming. But every year I put out my orange-colored nectar feeder, my orange halves and grape jelly feeder hoping they will stop and fuel up in my yard. I did see a female **oriole** a few weeks ago, but she only enjoyed the water. But there is still time!! Maybe this will be the year of the **oriole**!!



Photo by Sue Yost

From Fieldnotes



What Can Be Done?

By Missy Adair

Remember when you went out at dusk and found big, fat toads in the grass? And in the day the sound of experienced mockingbirds fought with song for nesting rights in your yard?

Have you noticed that in most places those things are gone? As are the roadrunners that used to dash into my yard to catch mice. The box turtles that wandered across the landscape.

Sure, there are a few young, inexperienced mockingbirds singing lonely songs. And a stray turtle crosses the road in traffic. But for the most part our familiar friends are disappearing. It saddens me beyond belief. Where are the horned toads I grew up with? The myriads of birds? The wild plums and variety of forbs that I loved?

Hard experience has taught me that where urban/suburban sprawl exists other species cannot. Could we not have green mixed forb and grass lawns instead of monocultures? Would that reduce the need for pesticides and herbicides? Maybe life would come back.

Perhaps we could leave shallow dishes of water out for small creatures during drought. Emptying daily to keep mosquitos at bay. Leave a small brush pile at the edge of your yard for shelter, shade, nesting and cover.

These are small things to accommodate others who live on the planet. It won't stop the mass extinction that is happening now, but it might help. Do you have solutions that will help?

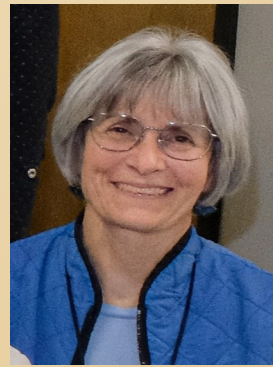
This Month's Contributors



Missy Adair



Gale Bacon



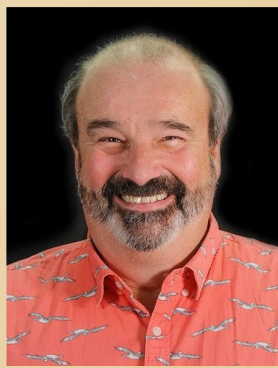
Becky Bertoni



Marilyn Blanton



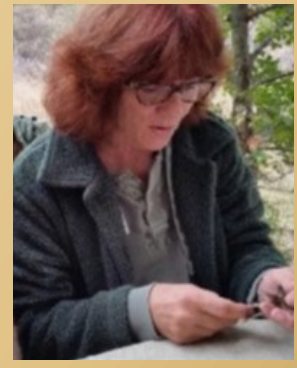
Regina Dale



Dave Jones



Brian Lewis



Mary Morrow



Jean Mason



Jonathan Reynolds



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

Deadline for the October 2023 submissions is
Friday, October 13th.

Almost the Last Word

With great sadness...



Linda Cox

Hospitality Manager, Plan Your Week

Passed away the morning of September 9th.

She started with TMN-EFC in 2005.

Linda has been the Hospitality Manager, providing refreshments for every Chapter Meeting, organizing luncheons for special occasions, since forever!

In addition, she took over Plan Your Week, volunteered at LLELA, as a Turtle Mom, in the Greenhouse, out on the Prairies and anywhere she was needed. She also helped at Green Acres, Thrive, Clear Creek, well, just about all of our projects in addition to serving on several committees. She was one of our go to historians and always willing to provide that extra hand when needed.

She will be missed by many and was loved by all.

Although her journey has been a short one, it was well fought

And she remained upbeat to the very end.

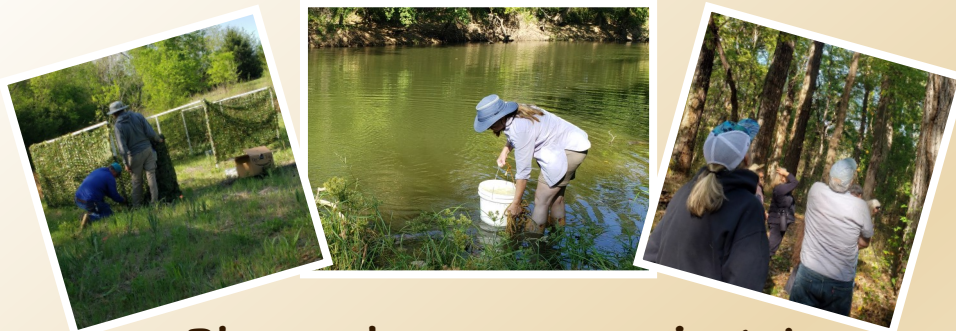
Farewell Linda, one day we will see you on the trails again.

(Linda requested her ashes be spread at her Family Farm, there will not be a formal service)



Almost the Last Word

Naturalist News Needs Your Input!



Please share your projects!

We would all love to read about and see what you are working on! All it takes is one small paragraph and a few photos!

Send them to newsletter@efctmn.org.

We all want to know what you have done!

Thank you! Tammie Walters, Editor

Funny Finds from Sue Yost!



Who We Are



Texas Master Naturalist—Elm Fork Chapter

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

OFFICERS

Acting President - Kathy Webb

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 – Zach Davis

Texas Parks and Wildlife – Mindy Shumate



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

Joseph A. Carroll Building

401 W. Hickory Street

Denton, TX 76201

940-349-2883