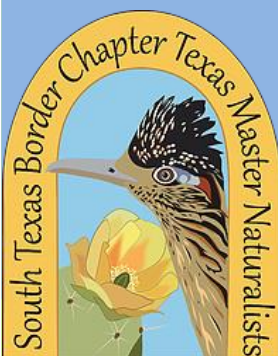


Spring
2017



The Dragonfly

Welcome to the New 2017 Class!

January marked the beginning of a new Texas Master Naturalist Training Class. Twenty-eight nature minded folks signed up to become Texas Master Naturalists. As a master naturalist, they will become part of the corps of well-informed volunteers who provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities.

Before graduating in April, the students will learn about a variety of topics including entomology, interpretation, herpetology, mammalogy, geology, ichthyology, ecology, urban ecosystems, botany, citizen science, and the history of south Texas naturalists. Students will also attend field trips for hand on training at Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, Sabal Pam Sanctuary, South Padre Island, Edinburg Scenic Wetlands, and Estero Llano Grande State Park.

Welcome to our new trainees! We are excited to have you as a part of our group!



STBCTMN member Tom Butler introducing the 2017 class to the Master Naturalist program.
Photo by Veronica Guzman

2017 Recertification Pin

The Kemp's ridley sea turtle, *Lepidochelys kempii*, is our 2017 re-certification pin, representing our Texas State Sea Turtle - the world's rarest and most endangered sea turtle. Females come ashore only to lay eggs and only on Gulf of Mexico beaches; males spend their entire lives at sea. Kemp's ridley population numbers plummeted to only a few thousand turtles due to nest predation, beach development, and losses to fisheries. Legal protections enacted by the U.S., Texas, and Mexico and the efforts of many conservation organizations and volunteers since 1985, including Master Naturalists, have had enormous positive results for the species; turtle numbers have increased and "our" turtle has backed away from extinction's brink.

Want to know more about the different re-certification pins from previous years? Check out this helpful pdf online at <http://txmn.org/gbmn/files/2017/01/WhatShouldaMNKnow-with-pics-2017-update.pdf>

Photo by Tony Reisinger



Save the Date: October 20-22, 2017 State TMN Meeting

The 2017 Statewide TMN Meeting will be held in Corpus Christi, TX, October 20-22, 2017. This is much closer than any recent statewide meeting. Please consider making plans to attend. Some of us might get together a group to carpool.

Plan to sign up early! You will select your preferred field trips and presentations when you sign up. If you are late, many events will be closed. Check the website for notice when the reservation form is available: Learn more about the statewide meeting at <http://txmn.org/2017-annual-meeting/>

You can attend for a single day or for the entire three day event. Registration includes meals. Some field trips have an additional charge which may cover transportation and other expenses.

All presentations and field trips qualify as advanced training. There are many opportunities for volunteers at the meeting. Advanced training and volunteer time can be reported in the VMS just as you normally report your hours.



Call for Proposals at State Meeting

The Texas Master Naturalist 18th Annual Meeting is now accepting proposals for presentations! The Texas Master Naturalist Program welcomes your proposals as contributions to the agenda! Individuals wishing to present are invited to submit their proposal on the Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting Call for Proposals website: <http://www.regonline.com/TXMN2017CallforProposals>

Special topics we are hoping to have presentation focus given to for 2017 include – Developing and utilizing social media resources; non-game species and the roles they play in conservation across the state; engaging diverse audiences in the Master Naturalist programs – as members and as an audience; leadership skills for managing groups of volunteers when conflicts arise; the shared roles of hunters & recreational natural resource users in the larger plan for conservation.

The deadline for submissions is **Thursday June 1st, 2017**. Guidelines for submitting a proposal can be found here: <http://txmn.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2017/02/Call-for-Proposals-2017.pdf>

Creature Feature



Spring is here, and the temperatures are already rising. Can you believe it has already been over a 100 degrees in the RGV?

When the temperatures start to rise, reptiles become more active. Be sure to keep an eye out for them while you are out walking the dog, looking for birds, or hunting for that perfect butterfly photo. Don't forget to look down!

Often people ask what kind of poisonous snakes we have in the RGV. Well, the RGV is home to three venomous snakes, but that doesn't mean the snakes are poisonous.

An easy way to remember the difference is this: If it bites you and you die, it is venomous. If you bite it and you die, it is poisonous.

So, what are the three venomous snakes native to the RGV? Western Diamondback Rattlesnakes (pictured here) are probably the most commonly seen. The Massasauga is a smaller cousin of the diamondback and usually only reaches a length of 24-30 inches. Coral Snakes spend the majority of their time searching beneath leaf litter for food. Their black, yellow, and red coloring is very similar to the non-venomous Milk Snake.

Chapter Meetings and Events

March

3/6 Board Meeting
3/20 General Meeting

April

4/3 Board Meeting
4/18 GRADUATION!!
@ Estero Llano Grande State Park

May

5/1 Board Meeting
5/15 General Meeting

June

6/3 Flash Project at South Padre Island
6/5 Board Meeting
6/19 General Meeting

July

7/10 Board Meeting
7/17 General Meeting

August

7/7 Board Meeting
7/21 General Meeting

September

9/9 Seed and Plant Swap
9/11 Board Meeting
9/18 General Meeting



Spring is Here – Time to Get Out the Hummingbird Feeders

The Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are beginning to move through the area on their journey north, and our resident Buff-bellied Hummingbirds are gearing up for the breeding season. Want to entice them to spend some time in your yard? It's easy to make hummingbird food with just table sugar and water!

Use table sugar rather than honey to make hummingbird food—when honey is diluted with water, bacteria and fungus thrive in it. The normal mixture, especially ideal during hot or dry weather, is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of sugar per cup of water. If you mix up small quantities of sugar water every day or two, there's no need to boil the water. But if you mix up larger batches and refrigerate part for later use, then it's wise to make the mixture with boiling water.

There's no need to add red food color to sugar water, or to use red-colored commercial mixes. Nectar in flowers is clear, after all, and red food coloring may be harmful for hummingbirds. It's the flowers themselves that are brightly colored, not the nectar—and that's why hummingbird feeders typically are designed with red parts to attract the notice of hummingbirds.



Just for Fun

WebDonuts.com



I just get this feeling she's trying to get rid of me.



Plant Sale and Seed Swap

Are you good at propagating seeds? Do you like to teach others how to grow plants from seeds? We are looking for volunteers to help us collect seeds for our upcoming Seed and Plant Swap, September 9, 2017. From now till September, we will be collecting seeds for the swap, and propagating them for the plant sale. Please contact Elizabeth Perdomo for more information or if you would like to help.

STxBorderTMN@gmail.com



Anacua

The Anacua Tree may be one of the most easily recognized in South Texas. Many of them are covered in diminutive white star shaped blooms right now. After a brisk wind, the ground under an Anacua may look like it is covered in snow! These trees are a great source of food and shelter for wildlife. They produce a small yellow/orange fruit that attracts all kinds of birds including chachalacas, thrashers, and Clay-colored Thrush.

The tree is covered with leaves that are rough to touch, much like sandpaper. The name Anacua is from the Mexican name for the tree, Anacahuite. Anacahuite is a combination of words from the



Nahuatl language of the Aztecs: amatl meaning paper and cuahuatl meaning tree. Other names for the tree include Sugarberry Anacua, Anaqua, Anacahuite, Knockaway, Knackaway, and Sandpaper tree.

Anacuas can grow to 50 feet tall, though it can sometimes be found as a shrub on dry hillsides.

Photos from Wikipedia.

Vannie Cook Cancer Center Project

Our Vannie Cook Cancer Project is moving right along. Phase One was completed with a new large pond featuring a three ton stone! Phase Two was completed last month with the help of our trusty volunteers. With spring migration starting up, butterflies and birds will be visiting the new habitat and entertaining the children visiting the center for treatment. THANK YOU to everyone who helped make this project possible! Photos by Ron Renk and Javier DeLeon



Chapter Items for Sale

Don't forget we have items with the South Texas Border Chapter logo for sale!

Coffee Mugs	\$10
T-shirts	\$8.50
Flash Drives	\$7



New Chapter Website

Have you visited the new chapter website? Special thanks goes out to webmaster Tom Butler for getting all of our information moved over to the new site <http://www.stbctmn.org/>.

The website is a great source of information about chapter projects, volunteer and advanced training opportunities, and the chapter calendars. Information about our chapter partners, the new class schedule, and members in the news can also be found on the new site.

Head over and take a peek.
Then let us know what you think!



Recycling Tips

Did you know...

- 2.5 million plastic bottles are used every hour and most are thrown away
- Only around 27% of plastic bottles are recycled
- At least 90% of the price of a bottle of water is for things other than the water itself like bottling, marketing, packaging, and shipping
- Because plastic water bottles are shielded from sunlight in landfills, they do not decompose for thousands of years
- Recycling plastic saves twice as much energy as burning it in an incinerator



2017 Officers and Board of Directors

Officers (Elected, Voting at Board Meetings):

President	Kelly Smith
First Vice President	Robert Hernandez
Second Vice President	Elizabeth Perdomo
Secretary	Stephanie Lopez
Treasurer	Sylvia Casselman

Board Members (Appointed, Voting Members of Board):

Immediate Past President	Sylvia Casselman
State Program Representative	Kathy Tonn
Membership Director	Monica Barrera
New Class Director	Becky Reyes
Communications Director	Becky Jones
Advanced Training	Elizabeth Perdomo
Volunteer Service Project Director	Veronica Guzman
New Class Representative	Ralph Philp
At-Large Member	Marisa Oliva-Rodriguez
TPWD Advisor	Javier DeLeon
Tx AgriLife Advisors	Tony Reisinger
	Ashley Gregory

It takes many people to keep the Chapter operating. We have several hard working members who are wearing several hats. If you can step up and take some of the work off their shoulders or are interested in filling a vacancy, contact Kelly Smith (australe88@gmail.com). All time working on Chapter administration at home or in board or committee meetings counts as volunteer time.

Committee Chairs (Appointed, Non-voting):

Host Committee	Ruth Watkins
	Diana Padilla
Finance	Sylvia Casselman
Archivist/Historian	Kathy Tonn
Newsletter	Kelly Smith
Outreach	<Vacant>
Publicity	Becky Jones
Website/Webmaster	Tom Butler
Annual Financial Examination	Robert Hernandez
Chapter Operating Handbook Revision	Mike McClure
Volunteer Management System	Sylvia Casselman
	Veronica Guzman
	Becky Reyes
	Monica Barrera
	Marisa Oliva-Rodriguez



Submit your article to the Newsletter

Hey you! Yes, you! Have you taken some awesome photos or volunteered somewhere and want to share your experience? Let us know! We are always looking for new and interesting articles to include in the newsletter. Contact Kelly Smith if you have a submission or a new idea. australe88@gmail.com

