

South Texas Border Chapter Texas Master Naturalist

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For immediate release

Registration opens for Annual Texas Master Naturalist training

Los Fresnos, TEXAS—Texas Master Naturalist program training registration for the 2027 new class session is open through November 30. Weekly classes are held each Thursday from January 7 through March 25, 2027. Registration is open to Winter Texans and residents of Cameron, Hidalgo and Starr counties over the age of 18 to join the South Texas Border Chapter that meets in Edinburg.

Texas Master Naturalist is a unique educational volunteer program sponsored by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Sea Grant Program.

“Texas Master Naturalists are volunteers with diverse interests. They receive in-depth training about the wildlife and natural resources of the Rio Grande Valley’s unique ecosystem,” said Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Wildlife Biologist and chapter advisor Ernesto Garcia-Ortega. “Volunteers work with community partners in approved activities and help educate others about the special land in which we live and how to help sustain it.”

Students attend a three-hour evening classes at the Edinburg Scenic Wetlands and World Birding Center, at 714 South Raul Longoria Road. Classes are taught by local university professors and other field experts, including those from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and U.S. Department of Agriculture. Daytime and two evening field trips are arranged for trainees, providing special access and learning opportunities.

Trainees join volunteer teams with other chapter members and work among more than 60 local partners that include the chapter’s special projects, federal and local wildlife parks, coastal naturalist programs, cities, schools, and other public entities. Hundreds of opportunities are available to volunteers from studying wildlife to developing public native gardens, learning about native plants and habitat, citizen science projects, bird migration and shore birds to Gulf and beach inhabitants and trends.

Class size is limited. The cost is \$150 and includes textbook, fees, t-shirt, name tag and one-year membership. Limited scholarships of \$100 are available as first come. Completed form is due by November 30. Use this link to apply for our training class: <https://www.stbctmn.org/the-next-class>.

If you have questions, please contact the new class director, Jim Gerry, at jimgerry@gmail.com or 630-464-4622.

Check out the chapter website at <https://www.stbctmn.org/>. Get a head start, learning about local nature through articles at <https://www.stbctmn.org/blog>, and attend monthly chapter meetings. The South Texas Border Chapter meets at 6:30 p.m., the third Monday each month, except December, with a guest speaker. Meetings are at the Access Esperanza Clinics building at 916 East Hackberry Avenue, Suite A, in McAllen; they are free and open to the public.

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Editor's Note:

Caption for the attached photograph:

South Texas Border Chapter Texas Master Naturalist members (from left) Mirtala Rodriguez, Velma Schmidt, Bob Schmidt and Phoebe Fry set up an outreach table for a local nature park event. (Photo by Ruth Flores)