

CAMN Officers & Committees

Officers:

President: Norman McGinnis, 339-7567, normandjan7777@cs.com
Co Vice-Presidents: Dan Burke, hm: 821-1628, and Melissa Burton, 444-0768
Treasurer: Sue Wiseman, 259-4106
Administrative Secretaries: Winnie Spitz, 312-282-3125, and Ann Syptak, 453-3804
Recording Secretary: Heide Wittenborn, hm: 267-5147

Communications Committee

Newsletter: Jean Nance, 259-0299, snance@mail.utexas.edu
Web site: Julia Gregory hm: 303-3238, wk: 389-4973 jgregory1@austin.rr.com
Press releases: Kelly Bender 303-5943

Curriculum Committee

Curriculum: Melissa Burton, 444-0768
Advanced training: Debra Cerda, hm: 420-9717

Hospitality Committee

Heide Wittenborn, hm: 267-5147

Volunteer Opportunities Committee

Jimmy Stanley, 477-7724, camnvoc@camn.org

Visit us on the Web: www.camn.org

Email us at: camn@egroups.com



Butterfly Garden and Learning Center Opens

On Oct. 13, the Wildflower Research Center celebrated the grand opening of the Ann and O.J. Weber Butterfly Garden, and the Margaret and Eugene McDermott Learning Center.

The new native plant garden was created as a haven for butterflies and other pollinators. In conjunction with that, the Pollination Partnerships Education Exhibit opened in the Margaret and Eugene McDermott Learning Center.

Pollinators are critical to 90 percent of the world's flowering plants and thus are responsible for a significant portion of the world's food crops, fibers and medicine. They are a valuable natural resource and have an essential role as part of the ecosystem. Ominously, the numbers of certain kinds of pollinators and the native plants on which they depend seem to be declining.

The interactive exhibit includes:

- The plant & pollinator relationship
- Common Texas pollinators
- The ecological services pollinators provide
- Threats to pollinators and native plants
- Solutions that citizens can embrace to protect and re-establish native plants & pollinators

For more info, check out the links on Mike Quinn's Texas Entomology website: home.satx.rr.com/txento/ ☞

Best of Texas Backyard Habitats

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and National Wildlife Federation have teamed up to establish a new certification program called Best of Texas Backyard Habitats (BTBH). According to John Herron, TPWD

Wildlife Diversity Manager, 97 percent of land in Texas is privately owned, and 85 percent of the population lives in urban areas, making the public the primary caretaker of wildlife habitat.

After years of teaching Texans about gardening for wildlife through separate habitat certification programs, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and the National Wildlife Federation (NWF) have established a new level of certification. People now can certify their landscapes as official wildlife habitat sites with both groups under one simple process. Although the average habitat is 1/3 - 1/2 acre, certified sites can range from urban balconies to hundred-acre areas. Participants already certified with either the TPWD or NWF habitat programs will receive the BTHB Certificate of Merit. For more information, call Mark Klym, TPWD, 512-476-9805, or Alice Nance, NWF, 512-476-9805. Or, go to:

www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/texasparks.cfm. ☞

☞ **No general mtg in December.**

☞ **Book Club.** *No December meeting.* Next mtg is Jan. 27. Last Monday of each month, Central Market Café Patio, 40th and N. Lamar. 7:00 pm for socializing and 7:30 pm for the discussion January's selection is the first four chapters of Dan Flores' book *Caprock Canyonlands* (available secondhand on amazon.com for about \$15).

☞ General mtg on Jan. 29th will feature Dr. Frederick R. Gehlbach, Professor Emeritus, Baylor Univ., author of *Messages from the Wild* by UT Press.

☞ Spring classes start Jan. 25.

vol. 3, no. 6

November-December 2002

Field Notes



National Geographic Memorial Fund

Last September 11, three young Washington, D.C., students, their three teachers, and two National Geographic staff were killed en route to outdoor research and conservation studies. In honor of those victims, the National Geographic Society has established the Ferguson/Judge Fund to support continued opportunities for students and teachers to learn about and interact with the natural world.

Already, the fund has helped students from troubled neighborhoods engage in active, hands-on, outdoor learning. For example, it has allowed Washington, D.C., to set aside polluted islands in the city for conservation and education. There, area children have taken part in environmental cleanup, nature studies—even a tree planting in honor of their fallen friends. For more information or to donate to the fund, visit this website:

www.nationalgeographic.com/help/urgentfergusonjudge.html ☞



Going Batty at the September General Meeting

CAMN President Norm McGinnis opened the meeting with several announcements,

including the award bestowed on Jackie McFadden by the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club in recognition of her environmental education efforts and her program EEANT (Environmental Education Academy for Non-Traditionalists), and the election of Sue Wiseman as president of the statewide Native Plant Society.

Heidi Wittenborn, Hospitality Chair, solicited for volunteers to help with refreshments for the general meetings. Debra Cerda noted the addition to the CAMN website of programs from past general meetings that had qualified as advanced training.

The evening's speaker, Chris Krejca of Bat Conservation International, gave a slide presentation on bats, with focus on the great diversity among bats, particularly in regard to appearance, food sources, habitat, and the contributions they make to our world. Highlights included:

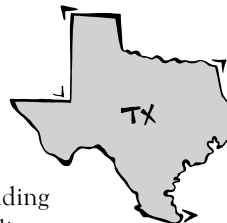
- Bat sizes vary from a bat with a six-foot wingspan to a bat weighing less than a penny.
- Many bats feed on fruit, nectar, and insects, with our own Mexican free-tails consuming from 600 to 1200 insects in an hour.
- Less common are the bats that feed on fish and frogs; and of course, there's the vampire bat, much smaller than many pictures depict.
- If bats are disturbed and forced to move while in hibernation, they might lose a month's worth of fat. Those bat species that don't hibernate have longer life spans. The Mexican free-tailed, for example, can live 30 years.

There are significantly fewer bats than there were ten years ago. Back then, it took bats four hours to emerge from under the Congress Avenue Bridge. Today they're gone in an hour. Bracken and Frio Caves' populations have suffered similar losses. Although reasons for declines are not clear, habitat destruction appears to be a major culprit.

For more information, contact Bat Conservation International in Austin, (512) 327-9721, or visit their website at www.batcon.org/. ☞

"Texas Watch" Featured at October General Meeting

CAMN President Norm McGinnis opened the meeting with some announcements, including congratulations to Melissa Burton and Winnie Spitz, who received their service pins at the recent statewide Texas Master Naturalist meeting, for 250 hours and 500 hours, respectively. Norm also received a service pin for 250 hours.



Debra Cerda talked about changes in the advanced training requirements, taken from the state chapter management guidelines, which will become effective in January (*see related article in this newsletter*).

Guest speakers this month were Eric Mendelman, Program Coordinator, and Amanda Ross, Education Specialist, from Texas Watch. They spoke about the environmental education resources and outreach tools their program can offer.

Texas Watch receives funding through the nonpoint-source-pollution funding provisions of the Clean Water Act. They use their water testing and monitoring as an educational tool to promote better land-use practices in Texas.

Only a small percentage of state stream-miles (14,000 out of 191,000) are currently monitored. The monitoring program includes evaluation of dissolved oxygen, pH, conductivity (measuring salts), water clarity, and water temperature.

The Texas Watch goal is to build a network of volunteers for monitoring and community outreach programs to educate Texans about the causes and ways to prevent nonpoint-source pollution. Eric and Amanda outlined a three-step approach:

1. education
2. monitoring
3. community outreach

The aims are first to build awareness and understanding of the problem, then to change behavior, and finally to develop partnerships with local communities.

Amanda demonstrated some of the educational tools they use, ranging from simple to complex. One simple but effective demonstration illustrated the difficulty of evaluating water quality by using four glasses filled with apparently clear water, but actually containing tap water, Sprite soft drink, alcohol, and vinegar.

A more complex tool was the Enviroscape—a model, hands-on landscape to demonstrate how urban and rural land-use can affect water quality throughout the local watershed. The model landscape included houses,

roads, a sewage treatment plant, a factory, a farm, streams, and a lake. Kool-Aid was sprinkled over the landscape to simulate pollution, and a hand-held water mister simulated rainfall washing pollutants down the streams and into the lake.

Eric and Amanda ended their presentation by urging all CAMNers to volunteer as water-quality monitors and educational speakers.

You can find out more about the Texas Watch Program by calling their San Marcos office (housed in the Geology Dept. at Southwest Texas State University) toll-free at 877 506-1401, or by visiting their website at: www.texaswatch.geo.swt.edu/ ☞

The Environmental Protection Agency, Region 6 (based in Dallas), says that approximately **60 percent of waterways nationwide are safe for fishing and swimming today** as compared to only 30 percent that were considered safe in 1970!



Online Butterfly Checklist Available

Mike Quinn, Invertebrate Biologist with TPWD, announced: "I've been working on putting Chris Durden's Austin butterfly records into an on-line checklist. This is a large file that will no doubt be slow to download for most people. If you are interested in printing a copy, you will probably have to adjust the left and right margins of your print area to 0.5 inches (default settings are usually 0.75 inches).

"Chris has been collecting data, mostly along Barton Creek, since the late 1960's."

Mike cites the online address of the Travis County Butterfly Checklist as: home.satx.rr.com/txento/Travis.htm

He continues, "Data were gleaned from this publication that maybe available at the Texas Memorial Museum: *Guide to Butterflies of Austin*. Chris J. Durden. 1990. Texas Botanical Garden Society, Austin.

"The common names are in agreement with those used in this user-friendly field guide that covers the central Texas area: *Butterflies Through Binoculars, The West*. Jeffrey Glassberg, 2001. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

For more information, Mike can be contacted at mike.quinn@tpwd.state.tx.us ☞

TMN Program Highlighted in NYTimes Article

In the *New York Times* November 19, 2002, issue, an article by James Gorman included mention of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. In "On the Taxonomy of the Naturalist (Amateur or Official)," Gorman began, "With the decline of nature comes the rise of naturalists. There may be fewer songbirds and swamps, fewer forests and meadows. But naturalists are everywhere, at parks small and large, at nature centers, leading bird walks and teaching children about the habits of squirrels and frogs.

"Like plants that put forth more seeds in hard times, nature itself is spawning its own tour guides, it seems, as a form of self-defense."

Even though, as he says, "Naturalists, in uncertified form, have been around for centuries," he sees the "certified" naturalist as a response to modern ecological problems. "Whereas earlier naturalists may have been able to enjoy an evening in the study contemplating a butterfly collection, their modern descendants are more likely to be out, certificates in hand, making sure that there is enough milkweed for the monarch migration."

He concludes by pointing out that "A changing environment demands changes in behavior. Loss of habitat is one of the primary threats to many species worldwide, and because naturalists themselves depend on nature, all habitat loss is, in effect, a personal threat. Where would naturalists be without nature? Facing extinction, with or without certificates." ☞

New Books and Other References

- ❖ *Texas Rivers* by Graves and Meinzer. Photographs and essays about the rivers of Texas. Published by University of Texas Press. www.utexas.edu/utpress/books/gratex.html
- ❖ *Texas Natural History – A Century of Change* by Dr. David Schmidly. What's happened since the original Biological Survey of Texas.*
- ❖ *Junior Master Gardener Level 2, Operation Thistle: Seeds of Despair, Plant Growth and Development, a Teacher/Leader Guide*. The newest in the 2002 Junior Master Gardener series, designed for grades six to eight.*
- ❖ *Of Moths and Men: An Evolutionary Tale*, by Judith Hooper. Intriguing account of the finding of a calico-maker/amateur lepidopterist in Manchester, England in 1848. Sixteen years after he discovered an all-dark form of the off-white peppered moth, he found that the dark form outnumbered the typical light form and wrote his discovery in the British magazine *Entomologist*. (During those 16 years, Darwin published his *On the Origin of Species*.) Interesting too, that by mid 19th century, Manchester was thick into the Industrial Revolution and covered in soot.
- ❖ *God's Country or Devil's Playground: An Anthology of Nature Writing from the Big Bend of Texas*, by Barney Nelson. UT Press, November 2002.
- ❖ *Texas Rangeland* by Burton Pritzker. UT Press, November 2002
- ❖ *The Condor* is online—all 101 years of it. *The Condor*, a great resource for ornithological information, is now available and searchable for free on the Cooper Ornithological Society homepage at www.cooper.org. ☞

*May be ordered through *Naturally Curious, Inc*, 888-258-4687, or www.naturallycurious.com/Home.htm



(Unless otherwise specified, all phone numbers use a 512 area code.)

Volunteer Project Contacts

For information about ongoing volunteer opportunities with the following organizations, contact the designated person:

- ♦ **Austin Nature & Science Center.** Melissa Burton, 444-0768, melissab@bga.com (plants, wildlife)
- ♦ **Austin Preserves (central, eastern).** Renee Barrera, 327-7723, Renee.Barrera@ci.austin.tx.us (plants, trails, non-native species removal)
- ♦ **Barton Creek Habitat Preserve.** Mike Wiesner, 301-2206. (plants)
- ♦ **Hornsby Bend.** Dan Rivas, 443-5496 (environmental education)
- ♦ **Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center.** Daniel Dietz, 292-4200, x262, ddietz@wildflower.org (plants)
- ♦ **Native Plant Society.** Sue Wiseman, 259-4106, Swiseman@ccsi.com (plants)
- ♦ **Sierra Club.** Jackie McFadden, 990-9396, eeant@austin.rr.com (environmental education)
- ♦ **Travis Audubon Society.** Stennie Meadours, 239-2505, Stenmead@aol.com (birds)
- ♦ **TPWD.** Mark Klym or Kelly Bender, 389-4644, mark.klym@tpwd.state.tx.us kelly.bender@tpwd.state.tx.us (special events, plants, wildlife)
- ♦ **Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge.** Jean Nance, 259-0299, snance@mail.utexas.edu (birds, plants, special events)
- ♦ **City of Austin Xeriscape Board.** Tom Neale, 442-8807. (planning xeriscape projects, events. Flora-rama Xeriscape School.)
- ♦ **Campfires.** John Koontz, 246-9554, and Mina Loomis, 454-1237. (naturalists leading youth)

PLEASE NOTE: Do not be confused by the similarly named Balcones Canyonlands Preserve system (operated by City of Austin and Travis County, plus several other organizations) and the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge (part of the federal refuge system operated by U.S. Fish & Wildlife

Service). Different areas dedicated to the same goal—preserving habitat for our Central Texas endangered species.

Monitoring Opportunities

- ☛ **Texas Nature Trackers** projects coordinated by TX Parks/ Wildlife or partner organizations. A variety of projects across the state:
 - ♦ **TX Horned Lizard Watch.** Survey the Texas state reptile on your property or in public areas. Call 800-792-1112 x7011.
 - ♦ **TX Monarch Watch.** Monitor migration of butterflies on your property. For monitoring info and tagging kits, call TPWD, 800-792-1112 x4464. To report monarch sightings, call the Monarch Watch hotline at 800-468-9719.
 - ♦ **TX Mussel Watch.** Gather info about freshwater mussels native to your area. To volunteer, call Bob Howells, aquatic biologist, 830-866-3356, or Ann Miller, outreach coordinator, 800-792-1112 x7011.
 - ♦ **TX Amphibian Watch.** Partner with North American Declining Task Force. Monitor frogs/toads during breeding season. Information will help scientists better determine decline of Texas amphibian populations. Call Ann Miller, 912-7025, ann.miller@tpwd.state.tx.us.
- ☛ **Project Prairie Birds** is a citizen-science project. Collect basic field data and help answer questions about Texas' wintering sparrows and their avian grassland neighbors. Call Cliff Shackelford, 1-800-792-1112, ext. 4970.
- ☛ **Adopt-A-Species Projects.** Take place on public properties that support populations of rare TX plants/animals. Learn monitoring techniques. Volunteers agree to continue monitoring for set period of time. (Not available in all parts of state.) 800-792-1112 x7011.

- ☛ **Insect collecting/identifying activity at ANSC.** Melissa Burton needs volunteers to help collect and identify aquatic insects monthly. For details, contact her at 444-0768, melissab@bga.com.

- ☛ **Monthly Hornsby Bend survey.** Starts at 7am on the second Saturday of each month at the Hornsby Bend facility located on FM973.

Bright Leaf State Natural Area

- ☛ Lead nature hikes and perform trail maintenance/non-native vegetation removal. Hikes are done by appointment. Dates for restoration activities are Feb. 1, 2003, and June 7, 2003. Training is required before you can lead hikes. Water is provided only on workdays, so bring your own for hikes. Hiking boots or sturdy shoes are recommended. Sponsored by Friends of Bright Leaf SNA. Contact Beck Runte at 453-3804 or BRunte@austin.rr.com.

Wild Basin Wilderness

- ☛ Volunteer ambassadors for **Wild Basin.** Opportunities in educational programs and tours, trail maintenance, and office and gift shop. Call the Wild Basin office at 327-7622 for more information, or: www.wildbasin.org/html/volunteer.html

Around Austin

- ☛ **Diaz Freedom Community Garden** at Meadowbrook Apartments, W. Live Oak and S. 6th. Gardeners needed—volunteer opportunities exist from basic eat-what-you-grow or cooperative organic gardening to sponsoring a resident family or conducting workshops. The Freedom Garden participates in Spread the Harvest, a consortium that supports community gardens to provide nutritious foods to low-income and elderly people. Vegetable gardening is a naturalist field. It involves: the role of humans in the environment; the interconnectedness of habitats, watersheds, soils, etc; community garden as a place to teach a diverse audience about the naturalist world view. Sponsored by Capital Area Master Naturalists as a natural teaching laboratory. For more information, contact Victor Diaz, 447-8939, or Rick Chafey, 560-2606.

☛ **Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge.** Volunteers to give talks, lead walks for children. Training provided. Jan.-April 2003. Call Mike Wiesner, 301-2206, mikew@ecpi.com.

☛ **Help create wildscape.** Becker Elementary. Goals include tree installations in conjunction with TreeFolks, plant propagation, workshops to train teachers how to integrate wildscapes into curriculum. Contact Rick Chafey, rickchafey@hotmail.com, 444-5445.

☛ **Neighborhood Greenway Planning,** sponsored by Austin Metro Trails & Greenways. Work with neighborhood organizations to develop local greenway plans. Help assess current conditions, restoration opportunities, possible trails, etc. Contact Jeb Boyt, 467-0753, jeboyt@hotmail.com, www.austinmetrotrails.org.

☛ **City of Austin Xeriscape Board** needs board members. Meet monthly at the City of Austin Water Conservation Department offices (downtown) for two-hour planning session, every second Tuesday, 4-6 p.m. Duties include planning xeriscape projects on City of Austin property and participation in events including Florarama and weekend Xeriscape School. Contact Tom Neale at 442-8807.

☛ **Ongoing. McKinney Roughs** offers volunteer opportunities at the Education/Visitor Center, as tour or trail guides, gardener, and animal and education assistants. Call 303-5073 or 800-776-5272, or visit: www.lcra.org/lands/roughs/volunteer.html

Record volunteer service hours on the proper form and mail to CAMN, 301 Nature Center Way, Austin, TX 78746. Or, **go online** to report volunteer and advanced training hours directly on our website at camn.org!

Remember to get approval before beginning any projects you wish to have considered for volunteer credit. For approval, submit info to Jimmy Stanley, camnvoc@yahoo.com.



Checklist for submitting volunteer projects for approval:

1.	Name of sponsoring organization.
2.	Short description of project needs (for example, need volunteers to work with after-school youth ages 6-10 in nature science projects including: wildscaping, wild-life and plant survey work, aquatic biomonitoring.)
3.	Date/time
4.	Location
5.	Contact name, phone number and/or email
6.	Special notes (for example, bring water. Wear gloves. No bathroom.)

Advanced Training



Remember to record advanced training time from programs at our general meetings on your tally sheet!

☛ **The Wildflower Center.** 4801 La Crosse Ave., Austin, TX, 78739; www.wildflower.org. Call 292-4200 for information and registration. (Many programs meet CAMN requirements but topics vary; confirm with Debra Cerda.)

☛ **Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. Project WILD.** You must pre-register for all workshops. Facilitator training requires previous training. For info, call 800-792-1112 x4369.

☛ For information on **Education Programs at McKinney Roughs** Environmental Learning Center, call 303-5073 or 1-800-776-5272, x8004.

☛ **Informal Classes at UT Austin.** Call 471-0270.

☛ **Texas Nature Trackers Programs** For Texas Amphibian Watch Monitoring Workshops, Texas Mussel Watch Monitoring Workshops, contact Marsha Reimer 912-7062 or marsha.reimer@tpwd.state.tx.us.

☛ **Barton Springs Splash Lecture Series.** Beverly S. Sheffield Education Center hosts free lecture series every 2nd Thursday, monthly (except December). Lectures and workshops bring in experts and artists to talk about Barton Springs as an amazingly rich and diverse meeting spot both culturally and ecologically. 7pm at the Scheffield Education Center, Barton Springs bathhouse, Zilker Park. Call 481-1466 or 478-3170 for more information.

☛ **Workshops offered by: North East Independent School District, San Antonio Water Systems, San Antonio Parks and Recreation Department, Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept, and the Alamo Area TMN Chapter.** For more info on workshops, call 210-804-7142, x376, or 210-348-6350:

♦ **Special Features in Your School Habitat.** Feb. Teachers learn how to plan and create woodland and prairie areas and install structural features like trails, seating areas, and signs.

♦ **Using the School Habitat.** Mar 1. Workshop focuses on how to use nature to enhance the curriculum of any subject. Explore the links of the outdoor classroom, interdisciplinary opportunities, curriculum resources, TEKS alignment, and much more. Learn how to take the nature experience from the pre and post activities in the classroom to learning opportunities in your school habitat and on to your favorite natural area.

♦ **Field Investigations and Technology.** April 5. Hands-on workshop walks through baseline research methods and explores use of technology in studying nature. Learn basics of scientific method and formulate questions, selecting field methods, collecting data, and analyzing results. Learn how technology can be applied in study of natural systems.

Remember that all advanced training must be pre-approved. To get approval, submit info to Debra Cerda, 420-9717, cerda.debbie@usa.net. ☛



News from Other Texas Chapters

by Beck Runte

If you look at the newsletters and web sites of other Texas Master Naturalist chapters, you will find that there are many similarities and some differences between what they are doing and what the Central Texas chapter is doing.

According to the state Texas Master Naturalist site, ten of the seventeen chapters have web sites; seven do not. One also does not yet have an email address posted on the Texas Master Naturalist site. (There are also eleven chapters in development.)

Some chapters publish paper newsletters, but many use only their web site. The primary purpose of the web sites and newsletters is to keep members informed about training and volunteer opportunities. (Members of the Central Texas chapter are blessed living in a community with several colleges and places like the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. We have a lot more advanced training opportunities than some other chapters.) Some chapter newsletters and web sites have other articles too, some do not.

Some chapters have primary volunteer projects. The East Texas chapter, for instance, lists most of their projects as being at their local nature center. The Cross Timbers chapter sponsors four projects: Veteran's Park Wildscape, Stella Rowan Prairie Workdays, Holland Lake Workdays, and Randall Mill Park, though they also have a long list of other volunteer opportunities.

A small sampling of the projects in which chapters are involved include: a herbarium project and the development of a bird list for a local water treatment facility (East Texas chapter); the development of a Junior Master Naturalist program (Alamo Area chapter); trail building and habitat restoration and maintenance in local natural areas (Alamo Area chapter); leading bird hikes (Cradle of Texas chapter in Brazoria County); Trinity River Watch, Audubon Society

Bird, and Native Plant Seed Collection (Cross Timbers chapter). Many chapters provide volunteer hours for interpretation, habitat restoration, school habitat development projects, and flora and fauna monitoring. Sound familiar?

Organizationally, most of the chapters deal with the same issues we do. Apparently everyone has trouble getting their reports in on volunteer hours. One chapter will not accept reports of volunteer hours completed over two months prior to submission. The East Texas chapter is considering a proposal to begin collecting dues of \$10 a year. The Gulf Coast chapter already charges dues of \$15 for individuals and \$20 for couples. And other chapters besides us have trouble keeping Board and committee positions filled.

And if you contact the folks who publish the newsletter and keep the web sites up-to-date, as I have, you will find them to be responsive and enthusiastic.

Next newsletter, I will look at more chapter newsletters and web sites and let you know more about what is going on in other chapters. ☞

... And News From Our CAMN Chapter

Upcoming Certification Ceremonies

As Winnie Spitz reminds us, CAMN is going to a calendar year for recordkeeping purposes, which means fall class graduates have until Dec. 31, 2002, to fulfill requirements to become certified.

Our **certification ceremony** will be Feb. 2, 2003, at McKinney Falls State Park. You must submit your hours by Jan. 5, 2003, so they may be included in the Annual Report we are required to submit to the State Office.

Volunteer and advanced training hours can be submitted online through our website at camn.org. Winnie urges everyone to submit their hours on a timely basis—monthly or at least each quarterly—so we can maintain a record

of the current status of students and also know about the great work the CAMN program is accomplishing.

If you need help, you can contact Winnie at 512-282-3125 or WinnieS@aol.com.



TMN State Meeting Well Attended

CAMN was well represented with eleven of our members attending the **Texas Master Naturalist Annual Conference** held in October at Mo Ranch in Hunt, Texas. Included were John Barr, Jeb Boyt, Melissa Burton, Debra Cerda, Diane Lapiere, Nada Lulic, Norm McGinnis, Sally Scott, John Smith, Winnie Spitz, and Tomye Zettner.

Saturday evening during the awards portion of the program, Melissa Burton and Norm McGinnis received bronze dragonfly pins for 250 hours of volunteer service each. Winnie Spitz was awarded the silver (and bronze) pin for 500 hours of volunteer service.

Congratulations to all!

From the attendees' feedback, the conference was fun and informative. Mark your calendars now for the next annual meeting, which will be held October 24-26, 2003, at Camp Allen in Navasota, Texas.

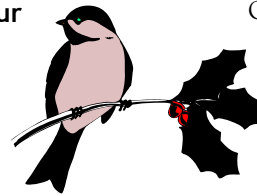


Changes at the Top

During the October CAMN board meeting, Heide Wittenborn was elected to replace Cindy Wright as Recording Secretary, since Cindy is moving out of our area.

We all (especially those of us working on this newsletter!) want to thank Cindy for all her contributions, and especially for her warm and generous spirit. From her committee and board work to her involvement in many CAMN volunteer activities, Cindy set an excellent example of a dedicated and active Master Naturalist. She will certainly be missed on many fronts!

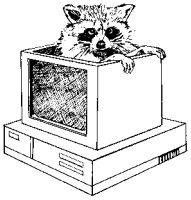
Also at that board meeting, Melissa Burton volunteered to replace Norm McGinnis as chair of the Curriculum Committee to better balance the



workload of board and committee work.

In that spirit, Winnie Spitz has announced that Ann Syptak will be helping her by taking on the responsibilities of a co-Administrative Secretary.

Additionally, Jimmy Stanley has agreed to take on the tasks of the Volunteer Opportunities Coordinator, replacing Rick Chafey, but you can still submit your service hours to camnvoc@yahoo.com. ☞



Online Resources

Have you taken advantage of the Yahoo! groups section set up for

CAMN? Several CAMN members have posted interesting files there, under groups.yahoo.com/group/camn/files/, including:

- ◆ information on native Texas palms
- ◆ pictures of CAMN activities such as bat-watching at Congress Street Bridge
- ◆ a taxonomy chart
- ◆ a chart of geologic eras with their associated plants and animals

The CAMN Yahoo! group web pages also include photos, links to other useful websites, an archive of email that has been sent to the CAMN group, and more. Any member can post messages or photos by sending email to camn@yahogroups.com.

You must have a Yahoo! ID and password to login to the CAMN Yahoo! group web pages, and your web browser must be set to accept "cookies" (refer to your browser's help if you don't understand how to set cookies with it).

If you don't have a CAMN group ID/password, start by going to groups.yahoo.com/ and registering as a new user. ☞

FAQ on Advanced Training

From Debra Cerda comes the latest word on advanced training information and requirements in the form of this FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions):

What constitutes an advanced training (AT) opportunity?

A workshop, class, symposium, or field activity that advances your knowledge about nature or teaching people about nature beyond the scope of the CAMN Training Program. Other types of activities may also be counted as advanced training (see below). The goal of advanced training is to provide you with knowledge and/or experience that will help you be a more informed CAMN volunteer.

If I take an AT to make up a regular class, can I count it as AT too?

No. You may take an AT class as a make-up, but it may only be counted as a make-up. No "double counting."

Does an AT opportunity need to be approved prior to taking it? How do I do that? What criteria are used?

Yes. The procedure is similar to having a volunteer opportunity approved. Submit the opportunity in writing to the Advanced Training Coordinator. The AT Coordinator has authority to approve the request under the advice of the AT Committee, and will attempt to reply within 3 business days of the request. The AT Coordinator may elect to bring the opportunity to AT committee and/or the Board for discussion. In those cases, CAMN members may attend the event (as always), but are not guaranteed that the event will be approved for CAMN credit.

What if it isn't possible to get the AT opportunity approved prior to the event?

The CAMN member may attend the event (as always), but the event may not count as CAMN advanced training. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Secretary, under the advice of the AT Coordinator and the AT Committee when the Secretary is reviewing activities for certification. Every effort should be made by the requestor to advertise the event to other CAMN members, making sure to note that the activity has not been

reviewed for approval.

Can general meetings be counted as AT? How?

Many general meetings will have short (1 hour) presentations or activities that will count as Advanced Training. The Board has dedicated 8 meetings per year for these opportunities. The normal meeting announcements (through the website, listserv, hotline, and postcards) will explain the structure of the monthly meeting.

Can nature programs (TV or movie) be counted as AT?

No.

Can university courses be counted as AT? How? Hour for hour?

Yes. Submit the request just like any other AT opportunity. The classes may be counted hour for hour.

*Advanced Training opportunities **must meet** the following criteria: 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8. It is suggested that the remaining criteria also be a part of the opportunity.*

Does the Advanced Training opportunity:

1. Promote continued learning and development of naturalist skills?
2. Provide Master Naturalists with knowledge and skills to work in volunteer efforts?
3. Direct trained volunteers toward specific programs in need of their services?
4. Provide practical information and training for application in volunteer efforts?
5. Take advantage of local partnerships?
6. Provide Master Naturalists an opportunity to focus their interests in one or a few specific topics?
7. Build on the core curriculum initially provided by the local chapter?
8. Provide natural resource management issues and information applicable to Texas? ☞

This grand show is eternal. It is always sunrise somewhere: the dew is never all dried at once: a shower is forever falling, vapor is ever rising. Eternal sunrise, eternal sunset, eternal dawn and gloaming, on sea and continents and islands, each in its turn, as the round earth rolls.

John Muir (1838-1914)

Notes from the Field

Maggie Burnett alerted email readers to the **Leonid meteor showers** expected to arrive on Nov. 19, and included some interesting background information.

The Leonid meteor storms happen when Earth plows through clouds of dusty debris shed by comet 55/P Tempel-Tuttle. Earth will travel through the dust ejected in 1767 (visible from Europe) and 1866 (visible from the Americas).



Comet Tempel-Tuttle orbits the sun once every 33 years. When the comet is close to the sun, it comes close to Earth's orbit, replenishing the vicinity with fresh meteoric debris. It is just after this comet passes close to Earth's orbit, as it did in 1999, that we have a higher probability of a meteor storm. Fortunately, the comet crosses Earth's path when the Earth is on the other side of the sun so there is no chance the comet slamming into Earth.

The annual Leonid Meteor Shower gets its name because it appears to emanate from, or point back to, the constellation Leo. This point of origin of the meteors is called the "radiant."

NASA's website (leonid.arc.nasa.gov) summarized the results of the 2002 Leonid showers. European observers saw peak zenith hourly rates (ZHR) equal to 2,300/hr, and American observers registered a peak of ZHR equal to 2,600/hr. University of Alaska at Fairbanks researcher Hans Stenbaek-Nielsen operated a high-speed camera onboard a DC-8 and confirmed the formation of a "shock front" to the shower. In addition, the peculiar diffuse high altitude beginning of two bright fireballs was captured, among many other interesting reports from observers around the world.



Shari Forbes posed a question about the endangered or threatened status of **the Jollyville Plateau salamander**, and Julia Gregory responded with this information: "Since the Jollyville Plateau salamander was only described in 2000, it is unlikely enough study has been done to determine its status. I noticed a couple of references to it being a species of concern on the Preserves. Here are some pages I found on the web that provide more info, some with photos:"

www.txpeer.org/Bush/Salamander_Wars.html

www.ci.austin.tx.us/watershed/rptjolly.htm
www.ci.austin.tx.us/preserves/fotoz2.htm
www.epa.gov/fedrgstr/EPA-IMPACT/1999/April/Day22/i10051.htm
nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/texas/files/animaltrack12_01.pdf
home.bsu.edu/~MLANNOO/Plethodontidae/Eurycea/Eurycea_maps.html#13a



CAMN *Field Notes* is a bi-monthly publication for members of the Capital Area Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists.


We welcome all input. Submissions may be edited for clarity or brevity.

All original material © 2002 Capital Area Master Naturalist Program.

All rights reserved.


Printed on recycled paper.

Texas
Master
Naturalist



Cyano Darner

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE



Texas Cooperative
EXTENSION
The Texas A&M University System

Capital Area Master Naturalists
301 Nature Center Way
Austin, TX 78746