

**Texas Master Naturalist Program
Cradle of Texas Chapter
General Meeting and Advanced Training
Wednesday, April 12, 2017
Texas AgriLife Extension Building
21017 County Road 171
Angleton, Texas 77515-8903**



8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Fun and Fellowship Snack Team: Donna Graham, Mike Mullins, Pete and Peggy Romfh, Joan Simonsen, JoAnna Harlan, Julia Gielser
9:00 AM – 9:50 AM	General Meeting and Nature Notes Nature Notes: TBA <i>This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour volunteer time</i>
10:15 AM – 12:00 PM	Program: The Columbia Bottomlands: New preserves in Brazoria County established by The Nature Conservancy Speaker: William “Billy” Ward, TNC Field Representative



William “Billy” Ward is the Columbia Bottomlands Field Representative for The Nature Conservancy. . He has previously worked at Mad Island Marsh Preserve. He has been reassigned to the West Columbia area to open and manage two new nature preserves in Brazoria County. Before working for TNC, Billy worked as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Fiji Islands in environmental education. He is a native of New Mexico, and earned his degree in Zoology from Western New Mexico University in Silver City.

The Columbia Bottomlands

In 2016 The Nature Conservancy established two new preserves in Brazoria County:

- Brazos Woods Preserve
- San Bernard Woods Preserve

These new preserves were funded by an \$8 million gift from BHP Billiton,

The Conservancy will manage the land and restore river frontage, grasslands, bottomland forests and wetlands on both preserves. Ongoing wildlife surveys and water quality monitoring in the San Bernard and Brazos rivers will measure how our work helps mitigate the impacts of encroaching development. The Brazos Woods Preserve will house an open-air educational pavilion for surrounding communities and visiting groups from Houston.

The Columbia Bottomlands is an ecologically rich, 700,000-acre expanse that feels like a million miles away from the frenetic pace of Greater Houston. The region is a unique mix of native Texas grasslands, hardwood forests and coastal wetlands. It connects us to the storied history of generations past. In the 1800s, Stephen F. Austin chose this region — which encompasses present-day Fort Bend and Brazoria counties — to settle a colony of 300 people; by the time of the Texas Revolution, some 30,000 immigrants called the Austin’s Colony home.



Text and photo by Nature Conservancy
<http://tinyurl.com/TNC-April-12>