



# Chapter News

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The Texas Master Naturalist program is coordinated by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Texas Master Naturalist programs serve all people without regard to socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin.

## A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MIKE

News flash: I have been deputized to find the person or persons who left the gate to the NORTH POLE open and deal with them forthwith. As I write this, we again await freezing rain, sleet, ice, snow — you know, all those things We southeast Texans grew up driving in. Ha.



This latest round will move some more Hudson Woods classes and will delay the start of the 2014 Intern class but, we will prevail. August will get here and it will be 100 degrees again. As of now, we have 18 interns that are chomping at the bit to begin the wonderful journey of being a Master Naturalist. Please as you see a new face introduce yourself and welcome our newest members to the finest group of caring, unselfish persons around.

The Hudson Woods Environmental Education Program (HWEEP) is off and running. When classes can be worked in, weather permitting, it is a great venue and the kids really enjoyed. Volunteer opportunities are cranking up with Sea Center, Migration Celebration, etc. Check the calendar on our website for the latest and greatest. Now a few words to celebrate the chapter's accomplishments for last year:

- 15,086 hours of volunteer time
- 174 events
- 44,969 contacts with adults and kids

- Member's milestones:
- 250 hours — 5
  - 500 hours — 6
  - 1000 hours — 2
  - 2500 hours — 2
  - 4000 hours — 4 (drum roll please)
  - 5000 hours — 1

This is absolutely awesome!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Stop a minute and think about the lives you touched and changed. You do make a difference one kid at a time

One sad note to report. We have lost one of charter members, Ramah O'Gorman. Please keep the O'Gorman family in your thoughts and prayers. The Chapter will miss her smiling face.

—Mike

*Mike Mullins is the President of the Cradle of Texas Chapter. He can be reached at [mcmprm@embarqmail.com](mailto:mcmprm@embarqmail.com)*

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Jerry Eppner, Membership Chair

Hi! It's me again, your friendly, but persistent time keeper. Congratulations!! You did well. In fact, make that a very well. The final numbers for 2013 were that 87 members submitted time sheets totaling 15,086 hours of VT and 1348 hours of AT. That is about 850 more VT hours than was reported in 2013. Give yourself a hand.

The new time sheets are on the Forms Page of the chapter website. Only a few minor differences can be noticed by the discerning eye. The primary difference is we are asking that you differentiate AT taken in a webinar from that taken in regular chapter meetings or other approved AT sessions.

Not familiar with webinars? Read the directions. Also, INEOS as a partner has been replaced with HWEEP, and the Nature Conservancy and Brazoria County Library System have been added as partners.

So get your 2014 time sheets set up and start recording those hours. Congratulations to Barbara Burkhardt and Pete Romfh for being the first to submit 2014 time sheets. That makes me smile.

**Texas Master Naturalist Program  
Cradle of Texas Chapter  
General Meeting and Advanced Training  
Wednesday, February 12, 2014  
AgriLife Building, Angleton**



<b>8:30 AM - 9:00 AM</b>	<b>Fun and Fellowship</b> Refreshment Team: Candace Novak, Dick Schaufhausen, Mary Helen Israel. Susan Conaty
<b>9:00 AM - 9:50 AM</b>	<b>General Meeting</b> <i>This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour Volunteer Time.</i>
<b>10:00 AM – 12:00 PM</b>	<b>Program:</b> Texas Water Issues and Management <b>Speaker:</b> Andrew Sansom, Meadows Center for Water and the Environment <i>This training is approved for Advanced Training. The number of approved hours will be announced at the meeting and will be available after the the meeting at</i> <a href="http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/index.html">http://tmn-cot.org/Advanced/index.html</a>



Dr. Andrew Sansom is the Executive Director of the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment and Research Professor of Geography at Texas State University-San Marcos.

Dr. Sansom, a native of Brazoria County, has dedicated his life to environmental conservation. He has served on the board of trustees of the Texas Historical Foundation, Bat Conservation International, KLRU Public Television in Austin, and The National Audubon Society. Sansom joined the staff of the National Recreation and Park Association in Washington, D.C. in 1969. He served as environmental coordinator for the White House Conference on Youth; Special Assistant to Interior Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton; director of conservation education at the Federal Energy Administration; and deputy director of the Energy Institute at the University of Houston.

His published works have appeared in *Texas Monthly*, *The Texas Observer*, *Houston City Magazine*, *Politics Today*, *Texas Highways*, *Texas Parks and Wildlife*, and *Texas Town & City*. His first book, *Texas Lost*, was photographed by Wyman Meinzer and published in November 1995. His most recent book is *Texas Past*, photographed by Wyman Meinzer and published in November 1997.

Under his leadership at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Dr. Sansom spearheaded a number of important programs, including:

- Creating the Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, which funds a number of department programs through private donations.
- Opening two state-of-the-art hatcheries that also serve as research laboratories, educational centers and aquariums -- the Sea Center Texas in Lake Jackson and the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens.
- Creating new urban fish and wildlife programs designed to promote awareness of conservation issues in large urban areas where most Texans live. These include KIDFISH, Becoming an Outdoors Woman, Outdoor Kids, and the Buffalo Soldiers Program.
- Reducing the agency's dependence on general tax revenues and slashing the backlog of deferred maintenance in the Texas State Parks System by eighty percent by directing the most comprehensive repair program in the Department's history.

*Source: Texas State University News Service.*

**MORE ABOUT DR. SANSOM**

Texas State University  
<http://tinyurl.com/ASansom-1>  
Pugsley State Medal Award  
<http://tinyurl.com/ASansom-2>  
*Austin American-Statesman*  
<http://tinyurl.com/ASansom-3>  
*Texas Observer*  
<http://tinyurl.com/ASansom-8>  
Gulfbase.org  
<http://tinyurl.com/ASansom-6>  
Books on Amazon.com  
<http://tinyurl.com/ASansom-7>

## Meet the Intern Class of 2014

By Roy Morgan, Training Director

The training classes have started for our 2014 interns. **Wow!!** We have a full house. There are 20 applicants wanting to become new Master Naturalists from all parts of the county.

The first session took place on January 29 at the AgriLife Building. Most of the board members braved the chilly/cold weather to greet the new interns. Barbara Burkhardt fed everyone some great Taco soup and Jerry Krampota provided some delicious deserts.

It looks like it will be an active class since several of them are already getting volunteer hours. At our next meeting, we will get their pictures so Neal can get them posted on our website along with a brief "bio" on each. That way you can get a chance to meet and greet them at our February monthly meeting.

Be sure to make them feel welcome!

## Good Stuff on Facebook

By Dick Schaffhausen, Facebook Editor

For those of you who have not checked out the Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Facebook page, I hope you check it soon! We try to include what is happening within our chapter as well as other information that TMN-COT folks would be interested in. So check us out and if you like what you see, hit the "LIKE" button to follow us.

To those who follow us on Facebook, if you see a photo or news item you like hit the item's "like" button so I will know that the article or photo was interesting.

Click the following to see our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/TMN.COT>

## Webinars and Apps

By Neal McLain, Webmaster

Thanks to our Advanced Training chair, Tom Morris, we've added some new features to the Chapter's website recently. Check them out!

### • **Webinars**

Tom has approved several webinars for advanced training hours. Click the following link a list of approved webinars along with instructions for using them.

<http://tmn-cot.org/Webinars/index.html>

### • **There's and app for that!**

The State office of the Texas Master Naturalist Program has compiled a list of apps for iPhones and other smartphones. Here's a sampling of what's available:

- Astronomy
- Birding
- Field Guides
- Geography and Geology
- Nature Tracking or Surveys
- Navigation
- Plants
- Productivity
- Travel
- Utility
- Weather and Climate

Click the following link for a complete list:

<http://txmn.org/files/2013/09/NatureApps3-2013.pdf>

## In Memoriam: Ramah O'Gorman

Ramah O'Gorman, of West Columbia, passed away on January 13, 2014. Ramah held a degree in biology from the University of the Incarnate Word and a Master of Science in Elementary Education at the University of Houston Clear Lake. She taught at Angleton's Rancho Isabella Elementary School for many years. She was honored as Rancho Isabella *Teacher of the Year* in 1991. She positively impacted the lives of many students in and around Brazoria County.

Ramah was a member of the Cradle of Texas Chapter's Class of 2001. She participated on our training programs and numerous volunteer activities. From her home in Columbia Lakes she participated in the Cornell University Ornithology Lab *Project FeederWatch* for several years. *FeederWatch* is a winter backyard birdwatch program that runs from November to April. Her report about *Feederwatch* is available on the Chapter website.

<http://txmn.org/cradle/files/2012/05/ProjectFeederWatch.pdf>

Ramah's husband, Leo O'Gorman, is a member of the TMN-COT Class of 2011.



**Ramah and Leo at Intern Training Class *Dragonflies and Damselflies*, GCBO, May 2011**

# Photo Gallery Monthly Highlights – February Newsletter

By Peggy Romfh, Photo Gallery Editor

## Sparrow Close-ups Show they are More Than “Little Brown Birds”

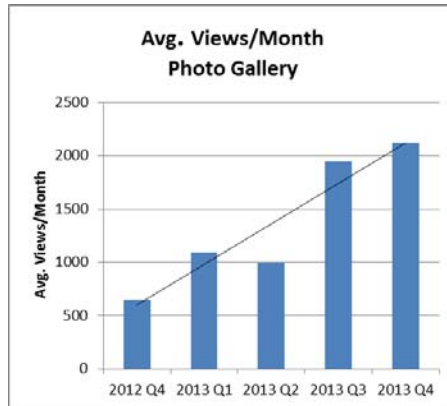
Tom Taroni captured a photo of a LeConte’s Sparrow at Eagle Nest Lake in Brazoria County.



Denis Mudderman captured a photo of a Harris’s Sparrow during the December Christmas Bird Counts.



## Photo Gallery Views



Thanks to all of the master naturalist contributions, the Photo Gallery has become a vibrant, active site. It currently boasts over 1,600 images of about 630 different species. Viewing has more than tripled in the last year to over 2,000 views per month. Our goal for 2014 is to reach 1,000 species photos on the site!

Winter is a great time to do bird photography.

## Cottonmouth Shows Fierce Side at Brazoria NWR



Denis Mudderman captured a photo of a Western Cottonmouth in January at Brazoria NWR. When frightened, the snake will pop its mouth open, showing the bright, white skin inside. The open mouth obscures the flat-topped head and the dark cheek stripe characteristic of the species.

The cottonmouth is found over the entire Eastern half of the state and occupies nearly every kind of stable aquatic environment, from brackish coastal marshes to upland streams.

## American Bittern at BNWR

American Bitterns are almost always solitary. They are difficult to see as they hide among wetland vegetation or stretch their necks high to look more like sticks and bushes.

Bittern are seen along the canals at Brazoria NWR as they forage.

They typically hunt in low light; these were seen late in the day on January afternoons. ...They take on heron-like poses, from a short, bunched-up look to a long-necked stretch.

Will the real American Bittern please stand up?



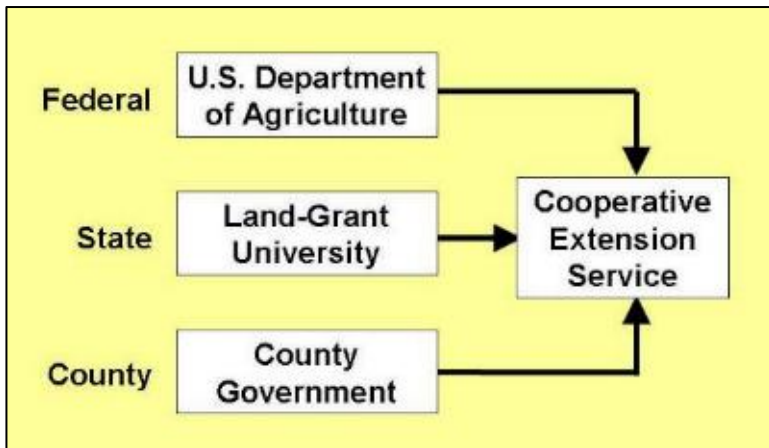
Bittern photos by P. Romfh

## What is the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service?

By Neal McLain, Editor

The **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service** is the Cooperative Extension Service in the State of Texas. Historically, it was known as *Texas Cooperative Extension Service*. It was renamed *Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service* in 2008.

Cooperative Extension Service agencies exist in every state in the United States, most territories, and the District of Columbia. Cooperative Extension Service gets its name from its origins: it's a cooperative venture supported by three levels of government:



**Land Grant Colleges and Universities** were created by act of Congress known as the *Morrill Act of 1862*, sponsored by Representative Justin Smith Morrill of Vermont. The purpose of Land Grant Colleges was stated as follows:

*"...without excluding other scientific and classical studies and including military tactic, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts, in such manner as the legislatures of the States may respectively prescribe, in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life."* [1]



Justin Smith Morrill [2]

Note the following words from the act: "agriculture and the mechanic arts". The first land grant college in Texas adopted these words in its name: *The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas*.

Which, of course, is now known as *Texas A&M University*.



The Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas, 1883 [3]



Texas A&M University, ca 2011 [4]

The Morrill Act was amended in 1890. Under this amendment, if a state's land-grant university was not open to all races, a separate land-grant university was to be established for each race.

This act led to the creation of separate colleges for blacks (now known as "historically black colleges") in segregated southern states. In Texas, *Prairie View A&M University* is the historically black college. Originally known as the *Agricultural and Mechanical College for the Benefit of Colored Youth*, Prairie View is the second oldest public institution of higher education in Texas.



Prairie View A&M University, 2013 [5]

*Continued...*

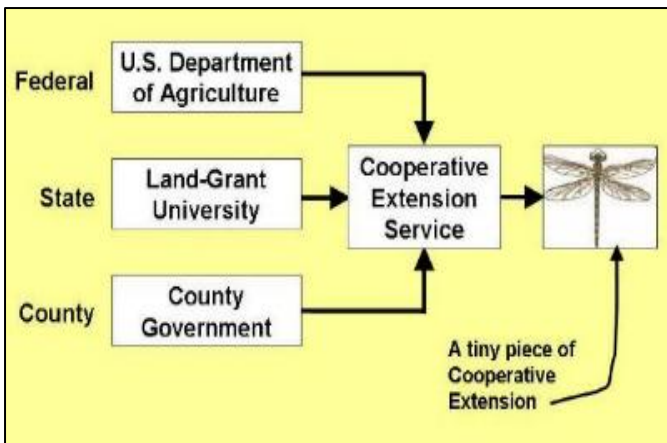
*What is the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service? continued*

The **Cooperative Extension Service** was created by another Congressional Act, *The Smith-Lever Act of 1914*. This act specified that Cooperative Extension agencies would be administered by the land-grant universities.

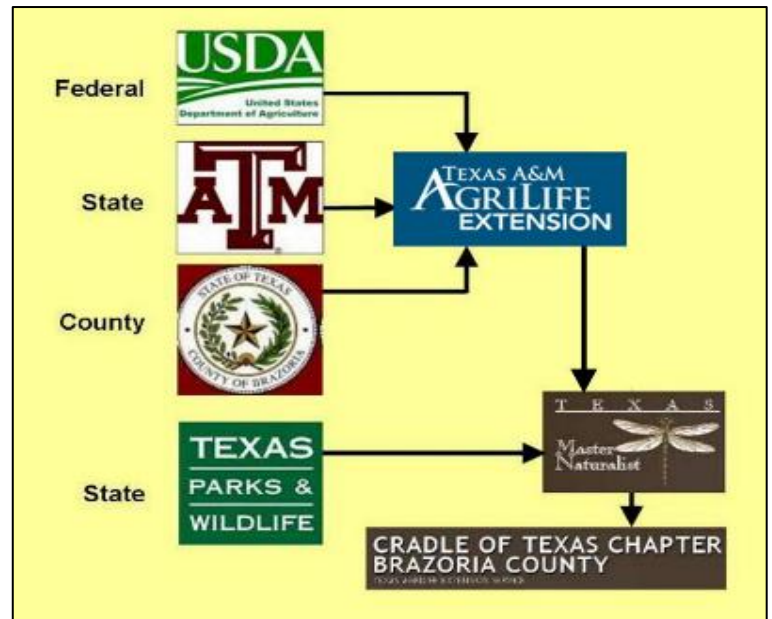
The curricula were largely left to the universities, but one objective was "to inform people about current developments in agriculture, home economics, and related subjects." In most states the educational offerings included agriculture and food, home and family, the environment, community economic development, and youth and 4-H.

Here in Texas, the Master Naturalist Program is jointly sponsored by Texas A&M University, Agrilife Extension Service and the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. The Texas TMN State Office is located in Kerrville, Texas.

The Master Naturalist Program is one of dozens of educational programs sponsored or co-sponsored by Cooperative Extension Agencies:



And here's where our chapter fits in:



The National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the USDA is designated as the funding agency for Smith-Lever Act services in cooperation with state and county governments and land-grant universities.

It should be noted, however, that not all Master Naturalist groups are sponsored by Cooperative Extension Agencies. Some Master Naturalist groups are sponsored or co-sponsored by state agencies, municipal governments, non-governmental organizations. Examples:

- Idaho Department of Fish and Game [6]
- City of Fort Collins, Colorado [7]
- City of Edmonton, Alberta [8]
- Montana Natural History Center [9]

[1] Wikipedia contributors. *Morrill Land-Grant Acts*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 5 Jan. 2014. Accessed 1 Feb. 2014.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morrill\\_Land-Grant\\_Colleges\\_Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Morrill_Land-Grant_Colleges_Act).

[2] Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division. Brady-Handy Photograph Collection. *Hon. J. S. Morrill*.

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cwpbh.01802>

[3] Historical Images Collection at the Cushing Memorial Library and Archives, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas. *Texas A&M as it looked circa 1883, taken from the 1883-1884 A&M catalog*.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Texas\\_A%26M\\_1883\\_campus.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Texas_A%26M_1883_campus.jpg).

[4] Wikimapia contributors. *Texas A&M University (TAMU) (College Station, Texas)*. Original source unknown.

<http://wikimapia.org/7071/Texas-A-M-University-TAMU>.

[5] Prairie View A&M University. Framegrab from *PVAMU Promotional Commercial*.

<http://www.zinch.com/videos/pvamu-promotional-commercial>.

[6] Idaho Department of Fish and Game. *Idaho Master Naturalist Program*

<http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/public/wildlife/?getPage=233>.

[7] City of Fort Collins, Colorado. *Master Naturalist Program*.

<http://www.fcgov.com/naturalareas/pdf/application06.pdf>.

[8] City of Edmonton, Alberta. *Master Naturalist Program*.

[http://www.edmonton.ca/environmental/natural\\_areas/master-naturalist-program.aspx](http://www.edmonton.ca/environmental/natural_areas/master-naturalist-program.aspx).

[9] Montana Natural History Center. *Montana Master Naturalist Program*.

<http://www.montanaturalist.org/montana-master-naturalist-course>

Diagrams used in this article are frames from the Powerpoint presentation *Partnerships* presented to the Cradle of Texas Chapter by Phil Huxford on June 9, 2010.

<http://refugefriends.org/TMN/Downloads/Partnerships.pdf>.

### CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

President	Mike Mullins, Sweeny
Vice President/Program	Peggy Romfh, Houston
Secretary	Becky McClendon, Lake Jackson
Treasurer	Gerald Forrest, Damon
State Representative	Ed Barrios, Lake Jackson
Past President	Barbara Burkhardt, Lake Jackson
Training Director	Roy Morgan, Lake Jackson
Membership Director	Jerry Eppner, Lake Jackson
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Advanced Training Chair	Tom Morris, Lake Jackson
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Webmaster	Neal McLain, Brazoria
Facebook Editor	Dick Schaffhausen, Alvin
Intern representatives to Board	Chris Kneupper, Brazoria; Dick Schaffhausen, Alvin

Chapter Advisers	Connie Stolte (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension Service)
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Newsletter Editor	Neal McLain
Newsletter Writers	Mike Mullins, Peggy Romfh, Jerry Eppner, Dick Schaffhausen, Neal McLain

Website	<a href="http://tmn-cot.org">http://tmn-cot.org</a>
Facebook	<a href="http://facebook.com/TMN.COT">http://facebook.com/TMN.COT</a>
Email Listserv	See details below



### MASTER NATURALIST EMAIL LISTS

#### ***TMN-COT Chapter list***

- Instructions [http://tmn-cot.org/Email\\_Lists/index.html](http://tmn-cot.org/Email_Lists/index.html)
- Send messages to [TMN-COT@googlegroups.com](mailto:TMN-COT@googlegroups.com)
- Message Archive <http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail>
- All messages are sent immediately.

#### ***State Master Naturalist list***

- Instructions <http://txmn.org/staying-connected/sign-up-for-tmn-listserv/>
- Subscribe [listserv@listserv.tamu.edu](mailto:listserv@listserv.tamu.edu)
- All messages are held for moderation by the TMN State Coordinator