



Chapter News

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<http://facebook.com/TMN.COT>

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Contact us at

Texas A&M Agrilife
Brazoria County Office
21017 County Road 171
Angleton, TX 77515-8903
979-864-1558 (Angleton)
979-388-1558 (Brazosport)
281-756-1558 (Alvin)
979-388-1566 (Fax)

<http://tmn-cot.org>

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 DAVE



Well, I hope all of you stayed high and dry the last week. It seems that saying "April showers bring May flowers" has become "April showers bring May storms." It's been a

very busy week in our county moving families, animals and possessions to higher ground and shelters. I'm sure the fire ants and snakes moved there as well. It's as if the clock turned back to 1992. There is little worse than these slow motion disasters.

June is a very busy month in our communities as schools adjourn for the summer. I count 47 planned community events just in the Brazosport area. It's a good idea to check our calendar.

You'll find 20 volunteer opportunities this month if we include the summer library programs.

We are investigating some general meeting sound improvements. As you know it can be a little difficult to hear in the back as we pack the room with sound absorbing bodies. We have tried using the auditorium sound system several times without much success. Either the microphones cut in and out or the feedback from the center front speakers squeals at us. You will see us experimenting with some portable PA solutions at upcoming meetings.

I hope to see all of you at our upcoming General Meeting.

Be safe and stay dry.

—Dave

Dave Brandes is the president of Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter. He can be reached at brandes@tmn-cot.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are always needed! Here are three important volunteer ops coming up this summer. Plan now to participate!



All events listed here have been approved for volunteer hours.



Nature Camp

**Camp Mohawk County Park
June 13-16, 2016**

Brazoria County Parks Department
See Page 6



Summer Library Program

**Brazoria County Libraries
June 13-July 29, 2015**

Brazoria County Library System
See Page 7



Sea Turtle Monitoring Program

**Gulf of Mexico Beaches
Through July 31**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
See Page 8

**Texas Master Naturalist Program
Cradle of Texas Chapter
General Meeting and Advanced Training
Wednesday, June 8, 2016
Texas AgriLife Extension Building
21017 County Road 171
Angleton, Texas 77515-8903**



8:30 AM – 9:00 AM	Fun and Fellowship Refreshment Team: Mike Mullins, Pam Peltier, Cindy Goodrum, Phyllis Gerdes
9:00 AM – 9:40 AM	General Meeting <i>This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour Volunteer Time.</i>
9:40 AM – 9:55 AM	Intern Presentation: Nash Prairie Preserve Team: Larry Peterson, Suzie Safley, Melba Beken, Marshana Gill. Mentors: Susan Conaty, Chris Kneupper
10:15 AM – 12:00 PM	Program: <i>Resources to Set a Stewardship Pathway for Wildlife Management.</i> Speaker: James C Cathey, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences, Texas A&M University



Jim Cathey is the Associate Department Head, Professor and Extension Wildlife Specialist for Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service within the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences. Jim started hunting at a very early age with his family and he shaped his passion of the outdoors into his occupation. Jim earned a Bachelor and Master of Science degree in Wildlife Management at Texas A&M University and his Ph.D. from Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas.

Cathey has authored 50+ extension and research publications and fostered the development of many social media outlets. He provides expertise to AgriLife Extension personnel in 72 counties in central and southern Texas. Recent programming revolves around grassland restoration, northern bobwhite, wild pigs, Rio Grande wild turkey, and urban deer,

Cathey is a member of the Wildlife Society, a member and Past President of the Texas Chapter of the Wildlife Society. He provided service to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as Co-Chairman of the Education Committee for Texas Children in Nature and currently serves on the Upland Game Bird Advisory Committee. He is a member of the Texas Outdoor Partners and has been a Texas Wildlife Association Director since 2008.

In December 2012, Governor Rick Perry appointed Jim to the Texas Farm and Ranch Lands Conservation Council, which provided recommendations on conservation easements administered through the program. In 2013, he became the Reversing the Quail Decline in Texas, Project Director leading researchers and educators in the search of factors that harm quail and the solutions needed to bolster quail populations.

Cathey is the co-author of *Managing Overabundant White-Tailed Deer*, an online document representing a partnership between Texas A&M University, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, Texas AgriLife Research, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.



White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) are one of the most recognizable and charismatic species of wildlife, but they are the cause of a growing urban wildlife management problem in many metropolitan areas throughout the United States.

Frontispiece from *Managing Overabundant White-Tailed Deer*, co-authored by James Cathey,
<http://www.lakeway-tx.gov/DocumentCenter/View/19212>

CLASS OF 2016 GRADUATION

By the Editors. Photos by Richard Schaffhausen.

ANGLETON, TEXAS – May 11, 2016. At its regular chapter meeting held today at the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, members of the Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter's Intern Training Class of 2016 graduated and were certified as Texas Master Naturalists. Each graduate received a Certificate, a Texas Master Naturalist Polo Shirt, and an engraved nametag.

During the 12-week training program the interns were divided into four independent-study teams. Each team studied a different topic and prepared a report. Three teams presented their reports at the May meeting. These teams and their topics are shown below.

The fourth team, reporting on Nash Prairie Preserve, will present its report at the June meeting.

BRAZORIA NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

We observed Olney Pond over an 8-week period. Our assumption was that we would observe changes in bird life, vegetation and animal life due to changes in environmental variables.

The team documented 48 species of birds, ranging from 2,810 American Coots to 16 species with under 5 individuals observed. We also observed plants and other animals. Normal migratory habits and seasonal progression accounted for the changes observed. Observations over a longer time period and different seasons might support our hypothesis.

Bottom line, we had FUN and learned something about this ecosystem!

This team's PowerPoint presentation is here:

<http://tinyurl.com/Team-BNWR>

CAMP MOHAWK COUNTY PARK

The CMCP team studied the flora of the park with particular emphasis on an abundance of Loblolly Pine growth, a species uncommon in such large numbers on the South Texas Gulf Coast. Addressing the question, "Why are Loblolly Pine Trees growing in the Camp Mohawk area?," the team noted several factors including soil type and the historic utilization of the area as an encampment, private recreational camping area, and designation as a county park.

This team's PowerPoint presentation is here:

<http://tinyurl.com/Team-CMCP>



Larry Ruhr, Oron Atkins, Jackie Hicks, Judy Green, Carolyn May-Monie

Not shown: Team Member Pam Patterson Gonzales; mentors Dave Brandes and Becky McClendon



Karen Leder, Jo Myers, Kristine Rivers, Lisa Myers, Herb Myers, Carolyn May-Monie.

Not shown: mentors Bryan Frazier and Jerry Krampota

QUINTANA BEACH COUNTY PARK



Chip Sweet, Caylie Harris, Carolyn May-Monie, Jimmy Salinas.

Not shown: Team member Denise Kaplan; mentors Patty Brinkmeyer and Rich Tillman

The fourth team's report and presentation on Nash Prairie Preserve will appear in the July issue of *Chapter News*. For more photos of the Class of 2016 graduation see <http://cot-photos.blogspot.com/2016/05/16gr.html>

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Jerry Eppner, Membership Coordinator



Well I am back from our cruise. Unfortunately, a little more of me is back than started, but that is the nature of the beast. While I was out, VMS was updated to eliminate the need to pick the type of hour when entering time. This has significantly

improved the entry accuracy, for which I am very grateful. The few errors being made now are just plain picking the wrong code, and that happens when folks don't consult the cheat sheet on our webpage. Try it you will like it, as will I when you do.

As of June 3, 102 COT members and interns have made 2478 time entries this year into VMS. So you see why accuracy on your part is important to make this as efficient a process as possible. Those entries amount to 7440 hr of VT and 856 hours of AT. This brings the chapter, since inception, to 163,659 hr of VT and 15,346 hours of AT. This something you should all take pride in. You are all assets to your community.

At the June general meeting, we will be recognizing quite a few folks. Interns that have certified since our last report include: Karen Leder, Chip Sweet, Larry Ruhr, Laurel Owen (2015), Jackie Hicks and Denise Kaplan. Congratulations on this official entry into TMN.

Folks recertifying since our last report include: Howard Allen, Oron Atkins (2016 Intern!!), Ed Barrios, Patty Brinkmeyer, Jean Britt, Barbara Burkhardt, Susan Conaty, Gary Ellis, Janet Jackson-Ellis, Cindy Goodrum, Ed Johnson, Anna King, Vicki Kirby, Anne Lange, Patsy Lepper, Neal McLain, John Minkert, Roy Morgan, Tom Morris, Mike Mullins, Kim Richardson, Carole Wenny, and Patrick Wilson. Congratulations!!

Those reaching VT milestones include: Pete Romfh (2500), Phyllis Gerdes (500), Kim Richardson (500) and Sheree Muzny (250). Great effort!!

Just a heads up, I will be out for almost a month starting June 17 so if you need advice/help with VMS please contact Dave Brandes or Pete Romfh or Peggy Romfh. They are experts in the process and pretty user-friendly.

IN MEMORIAM: SANDRA SMITH



Baker Funeral Home

Sandra Lynn Horn Smith, 73, died peacefully in her home in Brazoria County in May 2016 after a brief battle with pancreatic cancer.

Sandra was the Administrative Assistant and Agriculture/Natural Resources and Horticulture Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service prior to her retirement in 2010. At the time Rich Tillman was the AgriLife Marine Agent and COT Chapter sponsor. Rich relied on Sandra to perform numerous duties.



Sandra and AgriLife Marine Agent Rich Tillman both retired at the same time. In this photo, taken during the retirement party, Rich and Sandra show off plaques honoring their many years of service.



During a Cradle of Texas Chapter meeting State Representative Ed Barrios presented a plaque to Sandra in recognition of her support of the chapter.

ACHENES AND CAPSULES AND CATTAILS, OH MY!!

By Peggy Romfh, Photo Gallery Editor

The April and May downpours filled ditches, creeks and rivers with water. As a result, it appears that spring mowing along county roads has been minimized or delayed, which is good news for anyone hunting plant species. Sedges and rushes were in full display everywhere, and we also enjoyed the sight of lilies and iris flowers and fruit. Cattails were blooming profusely along waterways throughout the county.

Achenes – Speciation of sedges often depends on the ability to remove and identify the achenes, the tiny, sometimes microscopic seeds that are formed. Each has a distinctive shape that is unique to the species.



5 mm squares



Indianola Beaksedge, Rhynchospora indianolensis and achene; *Anglestem Beaksedge, Rhynchospora caduca* and achene – May, 2016, Angleton, ditch near Hwy 288

Capsules – From April flowers come May fruit, sometimes in the form of large (walnut size or larger), green ovoid seed-containing capsules like those of spider lilies and iris.



Spider lily, Hymenocallis sp. - April 2014, Nash Prairie, seed capsule – May, 2016, ditch, CR 227; *Iris, Iris sp.* – April 2013, Quintana Neotropical Bird Sanctuary; seed capsule – May, 2016, San Bernard NWR ditch

Cattails – Two species of cattail predominate in Brazoria County, the Southern Cattail, distinguished by male and female flowers interrupted, i.e., not meeting on the spike, and the Common Cattail, where the male and female flowers are not separated, i.e., meeting on the spike.



Are we terns
or gulls?

How about
gull-billed
terns?

“Gullible” Terns at
BNWR, May 2016



Southern cattail, Typha domingensis May, 2016, Brazoria NWR;
Common cattail, Typha latifolia, May, 2016, CR223, Brazoria County

[photos by P&P Romfh]

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for NATURE CAMP at CAMP MOHAWK COUNTY PARK

(Reprinted from May issue of *Chapter News*)

By Ed Barrios, 2011

Nature Camp at Camp Mohawk is sponsored by Brazoria County Parks Department. Nature Camp is unique among the environmental education programs in that TMN-COT members lead the training. It is a 4-day event in which the same kids attend every day.

Date June 13-16, 2016, 9:00am – 12:00pm
Location . Camp Mohawk County Park
GPS 29.3345531, -95.2854484
Map <http://tinyurl.com/2016-CMCP2>
Website: . <http://tinyurl.com/2016-CMCP1>

Each day has a different theme and the activities support the theme for the day. The kids are divided into three groups, based age, and each group participates in three 50-minute activities every morning.

We need volunteers to work on the planning of the event and volunteers to help with implementation. Some of the typical events include Birds and Bird Rehab, Owl Pellets, Pond Life, Fish Casting, Snakes, gators, and turtles, Bug Sweeping, Animal Tracks, and Archery

This is a very rewarding opportunity teach the same group of kids every day. They are so excited to be there. You kind of get attached to these little People. Our first planning meeting will be announced soon.

To volunteer, please contact Ed Barrios:
979-297-1815 (home)
979-415-4998 (cell)
ed77566@comcast.net

This event is approved for volunteer time by TMN-COT for members who assist with the planning and execution of the event. You may claim.

This event is approved for **up to 5.00** hours of VT plus your travel time.

VMS Code: **“TR: I trained Others”**

Type: **“Service Project”**

Description: **“BC: Nature Camp at Mohawk”**



Photos: Marty Cornell, 2011



BRAZORIA COUNTY SUMMER LIBRARY PROGRAM SCHEDULE – SUMMER 2016

(Reprinted from May issue of *Chapter News*)

By the Editors

TMN-COT conducts a series of educational programs for Brazoria County Elementary Schools during the Spring and Fall. Library Programs are coordinated by TMN-COT Member Ruby Lewis with assistance from other chapter members. Volunteers are needed to assist with the administration and execution of the library programs.

Volunteer duties include providing class instruction, demonstrating animals, conducting activities, and assisting with program administration. To volunteer please contact:

Ruby Lewis, BCLS program administrator.

979-549-0940

rubylewis77515@gmail.com



Ruby Lewis

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
June 13 WES 2 pm	14 ALV 10 am 2 pm & 4 pm	15	16 MAN 1 pm & 3 pm	17
20 FRE 2 pm	21 DAN 3 pm	22	23 CLU 10:30 am & 1:30 pm	24 SWE 2 pm
27 PEA 12 pm 2 pm & 4 pm	28 ANG 10 am & 2 pm	29 LAK 2 pm & 4 pm	30 BRA 12 pm & 2 pm	July 1
July 4 CLOSED	5 BRA 2 pm	6	7 SWE 2 pm	8
11 WES 2 pm	12 ANG 2 pm	13	14 MAN 2 pm	15
18	19 DAN 3 pm	20	21 CLU 1:30 pm	22
25 FRE 2 pm	26	27 LAK 2 pm	28 ALV 2 pm	29 PEA 2 pm

Maps to libraries:

<http://tmn-cot.org/Maps/index.html#BCLS>

Library websites:

<http://bcls.lib.tx.us/>



ALV - Alvin
 ANG - Angleton
 BRA - Brazoria
 CLU - Clute
 DAN - Danbury
 FRE - Freeport
 LAK - Lake Jackson
 MAN - Manvel
 PEA - Pearland
 PWS - Pearland Westside
 SWE - Sweeny
 WES - West Columbia

VMS coding:

Each session is approved for up to 3.00 hours of VT + Travel Time

VMS Code: "PO: Public Outreach"

Type: "Service Project"

Description: "BCLS: Location" (of the library)

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR SEA TURTLE MONITORING PROGRAM

(Reprinted from May issue of *Chapter News*)

By the Editors

The Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter participates in the annual Sea Turtle Monitoring program. The program is now in progress and will continue through July. Volunteers are needed to help complete the current breeding season.

Sea Turtle Patrol is an ongoing project sponsored by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Here in Brazoria and Matagorda Counties the project is administered by San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge staff. Vicky and Bryan Adams and Cheri Young administer the program during the 2016 breeding season on behalf of the refuge.

Objectives of the Sea Turtle Program:

- Locate Kemp's ridley's nests to excavate the eggs and transport them to an incubation facility at the Padre Island National Seashore.
- Locate live turtles stranded and transport them for rehabilitation at the NOAA facility in Galveston.
- Document any dead or stranded turtles.

Most of these activities require specialized training beyond the turtle patrol training. Never handle a sea turtle or try to locate the eggs yourself. Always call **866-turtle-5**.

We accomplish this mission with the help of volunteers. Volunteers may patrol the beach by walking, by bicycle, or by driving a USFWS off-road vehicle. Agency training is required before using any USFWS vehicle.

Even if volunteers can't donate more than a couple hours of time a week, that is still a big help. The more eyes we have on the beach the better.

You must have the training class to patrol for the refuge. Training classes for the 2016 breeding season were offered during April and are no longer available. However, interested volunteers may ride along with authorized drivers to learn the basics before the next training classes in April 2017..

For those of you who have had training in the operation of USFWS vehicles, keep in mind that the training is good for three years. If you need to update your training please let Vicky know.



Kemp's ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys kempii*) at Padre Island National Seashore Photo: Wikipedia

CREDIT (TMN-COT MEMBERS ONLY)

• **Training: Approved** for Advanced training for actual hours for *first-time trainees only*. Not approved for members who have had the same training in 2014 or 2015.

• **Program Participation: Approved** for Volunteer time for all turtle-patrol activity including travel..

VMS Coding:

- *RM: Managing Natural Resource Areas & Wildlife*
- *Type: Service Project*
- *Description: USFWS: Turtle Patrol*

CONTACT INFORMATION

Turtle hotline 866-887-8535 or 866-TURTLE-5
Curtis Jones 979-299-3965 (San Bernard NWR manager and primary contact if you spot a sea turtle or sea turtle tracks)
Roland Davis 979-799-8950 (San Bernard NWR assistant manager in charge of the Sea Turtle Program)
Vicky Adams 979-373-6971 (Volunteer Coordinator)
Email sanbernardseaturtle@gmail.com

To volunteer contact:
Vicky Adams, Volunteer Coordinator
sanbernardseaturtle@gmail.com

IMMEDIATELY REPORT

ALL SEA TURTLES
ON THE BEACH



Call 1-866-TURTLE-5

CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Dave Brandes, Lake Jackson
Vice President/Program	Jill Carroll, Pearland
Secretary	Jean Britt, Lake Jackson
Treasurer	Donald Sabathier, Pearland
State Representative	Ed Barrios, Lake Jackson
Past President	Mike Mullins, Sweeny
Training Coordinators	Carolyn May-Monie, West Columbia Laurel Owen, Brazoria
Membership Coordinator	Jerry Eppner, Lake Jackson
Volunteer Service Coordinator	Pete Romfh, Houston
Advanced Training Coordinator	Peggy Romfh, Houston
Outreach Coordinator	Ruby Lewis, Angleton
Chapter Host	Pam West, Freeport
Publicity Coordinator	Richard Schaffhausen, Alvin
Publications Coordinator	Neal McLain, Brazoria
Class of 2016 representatives	Kristine Rivers, Pearland Larry Ruhr, Lake Jackson
Chapter Advisers	Connie Stolte (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) John O'Connell (AgriLife Extension Service)
Newsletter Editor	Neal McLain, Brazoria
Newsletter Writers	Ed Barrios, Dave Brandes, Jerry Eppner, Neal McLain, Peggy Romfh, Larry Ruhr
Website	http://tmn-cot.org
Facebook	http://facebook.com/TMN.COT
E-mail Listserv	http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail



MASTER NATURALIST EMAIL LISTS

TMN-COT Chapter list

- Instructions http://tmn-cot.org/Email_Lists/index.html
- Send messages to 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
- All messages are held for moderation by the TMN State Coordinator

Chapter News is published monthly on Monday before the General Meeting by the Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter. Submissions are welcome. Submission deadline is 5:00 PM on Saturday before the General Meeting. Submissions should be sent by email to *Chapter News* Editor at tmn.cot@gmail.com. Submissions may be edited for clarity and spacing.