

TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST



CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER Chapter News – January 2010 Editor, Mary Helen Israel

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, Carl Dodson

I was once told “You will never get there if you don’t know where you have been.” As I get older I understand the statement a little better. What brought this train of thought on? I am sitting here watching the end of an era within the Cradle of Texas – Master Naturalist. Rich Tillman and Sandra Smith are retiring at the end of January.

Rich is one of two original Chapter Advisors for COT and along with Connie Stolte, holds the record for being the first Chapter Advisors in the state to become Certified Master Naturalist. Rich's leadership, backing, effort and in some cases prodding has had a major effect on the growth of COT.

Now no one can do this job alone and in this case we were very lucky that Sandra came along with the deal. Sandra has answered our phone, kept our records, made sure there was a sign-in sheet for our meetings and performed many other tasks that have ensured the growth and smooth function of the chapter.

We will miss both of them!

But all is not lost. Rich will remain a member of the chapter and has promised to attend the meetings, sit in the back of the room and ask the same insightful questions he has become famous for.

Rich and Sandra will attend the General Membership meeting on Jan. 13th so be sure to attend and wish them well. Remember that we will not meet in our usual place but in the Court House Annex (bottom floor next to the Tax office). If you are unsure where this is you can find directions and a map on the web site.

Now as long as I am being nostalgic, let me ask some questions about COT history that you should know the answer to.

1. What date was the first “Official” meeting of the chapter held?
2. Where was this meeting held?
3. What was unique about the meeting other than being the first?
4. What was the date the first training class was held.
5. Who were members of the first class?

I’ll give you the answers Wednesday.

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT,
Jerry Eppner**

As 2009 finally ends, the chapter has a lot to be proud of in terms of volunteer service to our communities. The year-end push to get the final time sheets submitted has generated a lot of good results. So far, the chapter membership has reported 10,870 hr of VT for the year, which results in a total of 80,559 hr of VT since the chapter was formed. In other words, chapter members contributed more than five man-years of service in 2009. Well done!

Chapter members recertifying for 2009 in December include: Janet Clemenson, Jane Eppner, Candace Novak, Clyde Zilliox and Steve Zilliox. One intern certified, and that was Mary Holler. In addition, Candace Novak and Denis Mudderman reached the 250 hr of VT milestone. Congratulations to all.

As previously disclosed, it is time to start recording hours on our slightly revised 2010 time sheet. Only minor changes were made to the 2009 time sheet to better reflect what projects we are supporting, so most folks won't even notice a difference. Neal McLain has more on the 2010 time sheet in this newsletter.

**Reminder from Chapter Hosts,
Jerry Krampota and Justina Dent**

The following folks signed up to bring refreshments for the January meeting: Jerry Krampota, Justina Dent and Mary Helen Israel.

January Meeting*
Wednesday, January 13, 2010
Intern Training, and Advanced Training

8:30 a.m. - Coffee and Social Time

9:00 a.m. - Business Meeting

9:30 a.m. – Topic: Texas Archeology and Karankawa

Indians presented by Johnney Pollan

Johnney is Brazoria County's selected archeologist and is always called upon to check potential Indian sights. He will lead a Field trip on Saturday, January 16th at the Abner Jackson Plantation in Lake Jackson which is required for the Interns and open to TMN Members.

***Note change of location: Conference room in West Annex of Brazoria County Courthouse, directly across Velasco St. from the courthouse.**

TRAINING REPORT, Laura Brandes

INTERNS: Congratulations to all the currently active Interns. Everyone showed up for at least one Bird Count in December as their field experience. The feedback that I received was all positive and noted how much they learned from their Leaders during the counts. The most used word was "practical" and "applicable"--just what an Internship should achieve.

Welcome to two new Interns that joined us in December, 2009--James and Irama Wesselman. Yep, they're married, love the outdoors and already participated in the bird count. Jim and Irama are enthusiastic additions to the chapter. Please welcome them to our group when you meet them.

CLASSES: The next Intern class will be on January 13th at the General Meeting when Johnney Pollan presents "Texas Archeology and the Karankawa Indians". The Karankawas is a new presentation that was prompted by the 2009 Interns who enjoyably learned a lot about our Gulf Coast natives, lifestyle, habitat and the invasion of an exotic species--the Europeans.

The Archeology field trip is scheduled for January 16th at the Abner Jackson Plantation in Lake Jackson (behind the car dealerships between Lake Road and Hwy 332 marked by a parking lot for commuters). Please dress for the weather and bring water plus paper and pen. We will finish by 12:00 Noon.

The next two classes are those that are required by the State. "Introduction #1" will be held on January 18th and "Introduction #2" is scheduled for January 20th. Both classes will be held at the AgriLife Building in Angleton and begin at 6:00 p.m. Please bring your Intern packets and State Curriculum. Refreshments will be provided. RSVP to Laura (ljb823@comcast.net) no later than January 15th.

The INEOS program will begin its second "semester" on January 22, 2010. There is an allowance for Intern training and field described in your packet. Please read it. If you want to participate, let Laura know your intentions and contact Carl Dodson, INEOS Coordinator.

TO ALL TMN MEMBERS: PLEASE INVITE A FRIEND, NEIGHBOR, CO-WORKER, et al, TO JOIN YOU AT OUR JANUARY MEETING. YOU ALL HAVE THE BROCHURE AND MORE ARE AVAILABLE. USE THEM. WE NEED INTERNS AND THE MORE, THE MERRIER!!!

NOTE: Frances Fraser is a new Volunteer at BNWR this year. Many of us have met her and have seen her beautiful art work. Frances is one of three exhibitors spotlighted by the Brazosport Art League in their new exhibit. The opening reception will be January 9, 2010, this Saturday, from 7 to 9 at the Art Gallery in the Center for the Arts and Sciences on College Drive. Try to attend (the ears are fantastic!) and give Frances a show of support from the TMN-COT; and when you see her, extend your congratulations. Remember, the only person poorer than a Volunteer is an Artist!

Jim Renfro Receives 5,000 Service Hours Milestone Award

By Neal McLain

December 9, 2009 -- The Cradle of Texas Chapter has announced that member Jim Renfro has accumulated over 5000 hours of volunteer time on behalf of the Chapter and its partner organizations. In recognition of his efforts, Jim was presented with the *5,000 Service Hours Milestone Award* at the Chapter's general meeting held today in Angleton. The award included a gold dragonfly pin set with a diamond.

Jim was a member of the Class of 2001, the first training class offered by the Cradle of Texas Chapter. He was certified as a Texas Master Naturalist in December 2001 and has recertified every year since.



Since joining the Chapter, Jim has shared his knowledge with other Chapter members and with members of the public. A partial list includes:

- Chapter Training Chair (2002-03).
- Team instructor of the "Birds & Birding" class at Brazosport College's Adult Life and Learning Program (2006-09).
- Team instructor of "Introduction to Ornithology & Bird Identification" for Chapter Interns (2006-09).
- Instructor for various groups on the general subject of birds.
- Field trip leader and bird bander at Migration Celebration (1995-2009).

Jim has served as team leader for several data-collection projects:

- Bird censuses for US Fish & Wildlife Service, collecting data used to determine wildlife populations in the Columbia Bottomlands.
- Breeding Bird Surveys, collecting data used by US Geological Survey and USFWS in determining North American bird population distribution.
- Winter bird population surveys, measuring winter bird population dynamics at the Big Pond Unit of the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. This project has been conducted each winter since 2001. Data have shown that several species of migratory songbirds return to the same winter location year after year. A scientific paper on the project was presented in 2007 at annual meeting of the American Field Ornithologists (AFO) at the University of Maine in Orono. Work has begun to publish findings of the project in a scientific journal.

- Year-round bird banding studies on private properties.

Jim notes that:

Bird banding is a method of biological research where wild birds are trapped and marked with a metal leg band having a unique 9-digit number. The band number and other identifying information are recorded and kept in a database administered by the USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center Bird Banding Laboratory in Patuxent, Maryland. Subsequent encounters with previously banded birds provide data on population distributions, migration timing, breeding success, life span, health and other important information.

Jim holds a Master of Science degree in chemistry at Sam Houston State University, and was employed with Dow Chemical Company for almost 30 years. He has served as president of the Lake Jackson Lions Club, and as a member of the Lake Jackson Parks Board, the City Council, the Zoning Board, and the Planning Commission.



Presentation of the 5,000 Service Hours Milestone Award to Jim Renfro. From left: Jerry Eppner, Cradle of Texas Membership Chair, Renfro, and David Brandes, Chapter President.



Jim Renfro (right) with bird banding team.

NEW TIMESHEETS AVAILABLE FOR 2010

By Jerry Eppner and Neal McLain

New timesheets, for use during 2010, have been posted on the Chapter website. Please use a new timesheet for all hours accumulated on or after January 1, 2010.

To download a copy, go to the website at <http://grovesite.com/tamu/tmn> and click on "Forms." Three timesheet formats are available:

- **Excel timesheet for the Year 2010**
Use this form for all hours accumulated on or after January 1, 2010. This form includes instructions for entering your hours electronically and for submitting the form by e-mail.
- **Microsoft WORD document the year 2010.**
This form may be used if you are not able to use the Excel version. To submit this form electronically, enter your hours electronically and submit the entire form by email. If you are not able to use this form electronically, you may print it and submit the paper version. Microsoft WORD is required for download.
- **PDF document for the year 2010**
This form may be used if you cannot use either the Excel or WORD version of the time sheet. To use this version, print it and enter your hours manually. Adobe Acrobat reader is required for download.

Please use the Excel version if possible. It's the most accurate way to do it, and it makes life a lot easier for our Membership Chair.

If you are unable to download any of these three versions, paper copies will be available at General Membership meetings.

Please submit electronic versions (Excel or WORD) to the chapter Membership Chair at TMNmembership@gmail.com

Paper copies may be mailed to:
Jerry Eppner, Membership Chair
233 Huckleberry Dr
Lake Jackson TX 77566-4414

Or just hand a copy to Jerry at a meeting.

Following is a list of "Partners or Events" categories available in 2010. **Green text** indicates new or changed categories.

BBSP	Brazos Bend State Park	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of BBSP. Please don't record BBSP time under TPWD.
BCP	Brazoria County Parks	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of any Brazoria County Park. A list of all Brazoria County Parks is available at http://www.brazoria-county.com/parks/locations.asp

COT	Cradle of Texas - Master Naturalist	Use for approved Chapter activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced Training conducted by the COT Chapter. • All Intern Training. • Volunteer time spent on Chapter activities.
DEEP	Discovery Environmental Education Program	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of the DEEP program. Most DEEP activities take place at the Discovery Center at BNWR or at Hudson Woods Unit of SBNWR. Please don't record DEEP time under USFWS.
GCBO	Gulf Coast Bird Observatory	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of GCBO except XHX. Please don't record XHX under GCBO (use separate category listed below).
GCWR	Gulf Coast Wildlife Rescue	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of GCRW activities.
INEOS	INEOS Environmental Education Program	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of the INEOS Environmental Education Program. These programs take place at the INEOS facility near Chocolate Bayou.
LEEP	Linville Environmental Education Program	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of the LEEP Program. These programs take place at the ConocoPhillips facility near Old Ocean, and are conducted for students of Sweeny ISD .
MC	Migration Celebration	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of Migration Celebration. Please don't record MC time under USFWS.
SCT	Sea Center Texas	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of Sea Center Texas. Please don't record SCT time under TPWD.
TPWD	Texas Parks & Wildlife Department	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of Justin Hurst WMA, Nannie M. Stringfellow WMA , or activities that directly benefit TPWD facilities. Please don't use this category for events at BBSP or SCT (use separate categories listed above).
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Use for approved activities at or on behalf of any UWFWS program except DEEP or MC . USFWS facilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Betty Brown Unit of SBNWR • Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge • Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge except DEEP • Dow Woods Unit of SBNWR • Discovery Center at BNWR except DEEP • Hudson Woods Unit of SBNWR • Halls Bayou Unit of SBNWR • San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge except MC • San Bernard Oak Trail • Sea Turtle Patrol • Any other unit of SBNWR Please don't use this category for DEEP or Migration Celebration (use separate categories listed above).
XHX	Xtreme Hummingbird Extravaganza	Use for time spent at or on behalf of Extreme Hummingbird Extravaganza. Please don't record XHX time under GCBO.
Other	Anything not covered above	Use for time spent at or on behalf of any activity not listed above. Any time recorded as "other" must be pre-approved as Advanced Training, Intern Training, or Volunteer Hours by the appropriate chapter officer.

ATTACHMENTS

There are two attachments included with the newsletter:

January10-Attach-1.pdf - Minutes of the December 9, 2009 General Meeting
January10-Attach-2.pdf - Cultural History: Congressional Township Numbering System

CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Carl Dodson
Vice President/Program	Carolyn Schlein
Secretary	Ed Johnson
Treasurer	Sandy Henderson
State Representative	Ed Barrios
Past President	Dave Brandes
Membership Director	Jerry Eppner
Training Director	Laura Brandes
Volunteer Service Chair	Gerald Forrest
Advanced Training Chair	John Battle
Outreach Chair	Ruby Lewis and Justina Dent
Chapter Host	Jerry Krampota and Justina Dent
Webmaster	Neal McLain
Newsletter Editor	Mary Helen Israel
Sponsors	Connie Stolte (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) Rich Tillman (Texas AgriLife Extension Service)

Website	http://grovesite.com/tamu/tmn
FaceBook	http://tinyurl.com/BrazosBook
E-mail Listserv	http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail

