

# TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST



## CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER Chapter News – January 2011 Editor, Mary Helen Israel

In lieu of the President's message and in recognition of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the COT-TMN, we have a historical remembrance from Tom Collins to start off the year. I think you will find this very interesting reading. Tom also contributed book reviews to the monthly Chapter News for several years after relinquishing the responsibility of the newsletter to another Chapter member.

### **The Founding of the Cradle of Texas Master Naturalist Chapter Thomas Collins**

Well it all started sometime in early 2001. I had completed my training and certification for a Brazoria County Master Gardener Program when Rich Tillman, Marine Agent for Brazoria County Extension Service, stopped me in the hall and handed me a copy of a copied article about a program called Master Naturalist. He asked me if I had heard about this program and I replied no, but I told him I was very interested. He said he would look into it and it must have been several weeks or a couple of months when we again passed in the hall and he asked me to drop into his office. He had fresh copy of an announcement that a class in the Gulf Coast Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalist was beginning soon and wanted to know if maybe we should show up to learn more about it. I agreed and suggested that we take Connie Stolte, Texas Parks and Wildlife employee at Sea Center Texas, along as I had recently started doing some volunteer work at Sea Center Texas and based on the information from the first copy of the program, it mentioned it was sponsored by both the Texas Extension and Texas Parks and Wildlife.

A few weeks later we attended the class' first meeting and Michelle Haggerty was the featured speaker on the history and organization of the Texas Master Naturalist program. After the meeting we went out to lunch and after an hour of discussion we were anxious to take the next steps that Michelle had outlined.

First we had the initial paper work to fill out, and then form a Coordinating Committee from local nature and state and federal groups – USFW, TPWD, NRCS, Gulf Coast Rescue, and Brazoria County Parks. The initial paper work required us to come up with a name – that honor goes to Rich Tillman – Cradle of Texas. Next we had to pick a logo – I requested the Monarch Butterfly, but was refused as it was not on the accepted list – so we picked the Cyano Darner Dragonfly. The biggest challenge was to come up with the initial training schedule. We had seen several examples from other chapters so we quickly drafted one. All of this along with the filled out paper work was sent to the

State Committee for their review and approval. We must have done a reasonable job as we were approved to take the next step.

That however ended the easy part.

Next came the setting a fee for the first class members, putting together a form to register for the class, and finding speakers for the program. We were very lucky to have Connie and Rich as they were able to twist some arms, call in chits, and quickly we had most of our speakers. I called Gary Clark, a friend and Houston Chronicle Nature Columnist, and got him to agree to speak at the final graduation class meeting.

In order to become a full Chapter you must have 20 people completing the 40 hours of training and then complete the 8 hours advanced training and 40 additional volunteer hours – Certified Master Naturalist.

We worked hard and got 20+ people signed up – as I recall the tuition was \$100, but I could be wrong. Our only expenses were the class supplies, some donation money for speakers and TMN Shirts.

Everything appeared to be pulling together and we were scheduled to begin our first class on September 12, 2001. You probably recognize this date or for sure the day before – 9/11. I sat in amazement watching the Twin Towers going down and at the same time asking myself what should we do about class tomorrow. I called Rich and Jim Renfro. We agreed that we would not let terrorists stop us from our way of life and the class was on. This may be the only first class of any chapter to begin with a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance – not an eye was dry as every class member was there. Connie Stolte and Rich Tillman led us through the Introduction of the Texas Master Naturalist program as Michelle was unable to make our class and we were off and running.

Some 40+ hours of training later we still needed all 20 members to get certified and we needed By-Laws and Operating Procedures written. There were no standard By-Laws – Michelle had sent us some 8-10 examples of By-Laws from other chapters and a few suggestions on Operating Procedures. While the rest of the class set about doing great Master Naturalist volunteer activities, I logged admin hours by editing, cutting and pasting, and proof reading By-Laws that Rich and I were trying to assemble so we could complete our tasks to become a fully certified chapter. After weeks of sending the By-Laws and our draft Operating Procedures and Practices, Michelle approved them. Now we only need to get all 20 members certified. We continued to hold monthly meetings, collect hours, devise AT programs to get all the required 8 hours and I began the first Newsletter. There were times when I didn't think I would get to do real volunteer activities with all the other paperwork still needed to be kept up as I continued work on the Chapter Operating Practices and Procedures. Sometime in early 2002 the last of our 20 Class members became certified and we became a full fledged chapter. We held our first election and I was elected the first president of the chapter.

Two foot notes:

After serving my initial Chapter President term, I stepped down and asked to join the State Committee. I was accepted and my first task was to get Michelle to work on

developing a Standard Chapter By-Law and Chapter Operating Procedures manual as I was still unhappy with all the admin time I had logged to get us past this hurdle. I did have the chance to work on this with Walt Krupp and Michelle. We spent countless hours over many months, more admin time for me, until we produced the State mandated By-Laws and Operating Practices and Procedures. Those have now been standardized for all chapters saving hundreds of man-hours in time for new chapters that can now be applied to real TMN activities.

At the time of the first training class I had asked Connie and Rich to get certified too. This was as I thought a way to show the rest of the class members how dedicated our sponsors were. I did not know at the time that no sponsor had ever gone through the full training, and had completed the AT and volunteer's hours to become certified. That is still true today to the best of my knowledge. This had to be hard for Connie and Rich as they had to come up with additional volunteer hours outside their regular jobs and make up time while attending AT, but they did it and were certified along with all the class members.

Thank you Connie and Rich (Texas Master Naturalists) for all the hard work you did – You were the Heroes behind the formation of the Cradle of Texas Chapter.

Happy 10th Year Anniversary - Cradle of Texas Chapter

Tom Collins  
First President, Cradle of Texas Chapter  
Certified TMN, Hill Country Chapter  
TMN State Committee Member

PS – As I recently turned 70 years of youth, any errors or misstatements in this historical review can now be blamed on my senior moment as I attempted to get all the facts as correct as I can recall....

### **Report from Membership Chairman, Jerry Eppner**

As of January 7, 61 chapter members have submitted 11,553 hours of volunteer time. This represents about 200 more hours reported than in 2009, and we still have a couple of outstanding time sheet submissions to go. Of the 61, 55 members have either certified for the first time or recertified.

We are in the process of closing out the books for time volunteered in 2010 so that we can make an accurate report to the state organization. Please make an effort to get your hours together and submit them for recording by January 10. The state chapter depends on VT hours as documentation to justify grant money. If you need some kind of special dispensation on this deadline, talk to Jerry.

Recognition at the next meeting for recertifying in 2010 will include Janet Clemenson, Justina Dent, Al Fedoruk, and Candace Novak. Congratulations to Janet for reaching the 500 hr VT milestone. And a special recognition to Laura Brandes for reaching the 2500 VT milestone. Well done, both of you!

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

Jerry Krampota, Neal McLain, Candace Novak and Barbara Burkhart agreed to bring refreshments for the January meeting. If for some reason you have a conflict, please call Jerry Krampota at 281-585-3249 or email at [jkrampota@hotmail.com](mailto:jkrampota@hotmail.com). At the January meeting, a signup sheet for 2011 refreshments will be passed around. We need four people to bring refreshments for the meetings because of our large attendance so please have your calendars available when the signup sheet is passed around.

**January Meeting  
Wednesday, January 12, 2011  
Intern Training, and Advanced Training  
PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN MEETING LOCATION -  
BRAZOSPORT CENTER FOR THE ARTS AND SCIENCES,  
COLLEGE BOULEVARD, LAKE JACKSON**

- 8:30 a.m.** - Coffee and Social Time
- 9:00 a.m.** - Business Meeting
- 9:30 a.m.** - Presentations by several shell experts on identification and collection of sea shells.

**Training, Laura Brandes**

**RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS!!!** Every Member is responsible to work on increasing the COT membership. January is the first recruitment month in 2011 so we need to be hustling.

“Hustling” will begin at this week’s General Meeting held in The Center for the Arts and Sciences on College Boulevard. There will be a brief comment on the procedure being implemented, a sign-up sheet for Volunteers to take a packet of 25 brochures to their chosen location, and someone at the exit door to make sure that you have the brochures to deliver. No “get-ee out-ees” for this activity!

Meanwhile, look around your activities (ex church, poker group, lunch buddies, favorite bait shop, etc.) and identify any that would be appropriate to distribute the TMN-COT brochure. You can add this to the sign-up sheet and get your 25 brochures to deliver. Keep in mind that “Members are the great Recruiters!”

Cradle of Texas Chapter  
Field Trip to Matagorda Island

► **May 1, 2011 – Limited To 20 People** ◀

Sunday, May 1, 2011 **Matagorda Island Field Trip** with biologist, guide and instructor ***Dr. Wayne McAlister*** and wife ***Martha***. The registration fee of **\$40.00 per person** includes transportation to/from Matagorda Island aboard "***The Skimmer***" w/***Capt. Tommy Moore***, AND guided wagon & hiking Naturalist Tour/Field Trip of the 6 eco-communities (time dependent) of Matagorda Island including materials & equipment. **Field Trip Leaders: Doc & Martha McAlister.**

***If weather or other factors require the trip to be canceled, refunds will be given, minus any unrecoverable expenses incurred.***

COT-TMN Advanced Training will be awarded to all attendees.

More details will be available at the January COT meeting. Due to the limited number of spaces available (20), **January registration will be limited to members/interns who have NOT previously attended this trip.** If you are unable to attend the January meeting and want to register, contact Steve Zilliox at [SZilliox@sbcglobal.net](mailto:SZilliox@sbcglobal.net) . Beginning at the February COT meeting, the remaining spaces will be available to previous attendees. Trip organizers, Clyde & Steve Zilliox will provide a detailed information package to all who register.

Respectfully submitted,  
Clyde & Steve Zilliox

## **Dan Ashe Nominated to Lead U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

From National Wildlife Refuge Association

Dan Ashe has been nominated by President Obama to fill the position of Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Dan Ashe (USFWS photo)

Ashe brings over 28 years of public service to the post, most recently as Deputy Director for the USFWS and previously as USFWS Science Advisor and Chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Ashe has strong ties to the USFWS and NWRS; he spent his childhood on refuges while his father was a career employee of the USFWS.

“Dan Ashe is a visionary leader who combines passion for wildlife conservation with scientific integrity,” said Evan Hirsche, President of the NWRA. “He has long advocated for a landscape approach to conservation and will utilize innovative strategies to protect and restore wildlife habitat.”

Ashe is set to replace Rowan Gould, currently the Acting Director of the USFWS. The position was vacated tragically last winter with the passing of the late Sam Hamilton – who was an ardent supporter of moving the Service and Refuge System towards a more holistic and science based landscape approach.

If confirmed by the Senate as Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ashe will be responsible for managing the National Wildlife Refuge System and National Fish Hatchery System as well as enforcing the Endangered Species Act.

## ***Birds of America* sold at auction for £7.3 million,**

By Wikipedia authors<sup>[1]</sup>

Abridged and edited for *Chapter News* by Neal McLain

On December 7, 2010, a complete copy of the first edition of *Birds of America*, by John James Audubon, was sold in London by auction house Sotheby's for £7,321,250 (approximately \$11.5 million) during the sale of *Magnificent Books, Manuscripts and Drawings* from the Collection of Frederick, 2nd Lord Hesketh. The winning bid was a record auction price for a printed book and was placed by London-based art dealer Michael Tollemache, who outbid three others bidders.

According to the provenance details reported by the auction house, the copy's original owner was Henry Witham of Durham. The first volume of the set bears a presentation inscription from Witham's wife dated June 24, 1831. Lord Hesketh bought the copy from a descendent of Witham's at a July 3, 1951 Christie's auction, paying £7,000.

*Birds of America* contains paintings and scientific description of a wide variety of birds of the United States. It was first published as a series of sections between 1827 and 1838, in Edinburgh and London. The work consists of hand-colored, life-size prints made from engraved plates measuring around 39 by 26 inches (99 by 66 cm). It includes images of six now-extinct birds: Carolina Parakeet, Passenger Pigeon, Labrador Duck, Great Auk, Esquimaux Curlew, and Pinnated Grouse.

<b><i>The Birds of America</i></b>	
Author	John James Audubon
Original title	<i>The Birds of America</i> ; from original drawings.
Illustrator	John James Audubon
Country	United Kingdom
Subject(s)	Birds — North America;
Publication date	1827
LC Classification	QL674 .A9 1827



[1] Wikipedia contributors. "Birds of America (book)." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. 11 Dec. 2010. Accessed 11 Dec. 2010. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birds\\_of\\_America\\_%28book%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birds_of_America_%28book%29)>.

## ATTACHMENTS

There are two PDF Attachments to the newsletter:

Minutes of December general meeting:  
[January2011\\_Attach-1\\_Minutes-12\\_08\\_10.pdf](#)

Dunes Day 2011:  
[January2011\\_Attach-2\\_DunesDay\\_2011.pdf](#)

### CRADLE OF TEXAS CHAPTER OFFICERS

President	Barbara Burkhart
Vice President/Program	Mary Holler
Secretary	Marty Cornell
Treasurer	Sandy Henderson
State Representative	Ed Barrios
Past President	Dave Brandes
Membership Director	Jerry Eppner
Training Director	Laura Brandes
Volunteer Service Chair	Neal McLain
Advanced Training Chair	Candace Novak
Outreach Chair	Ruby Lewis and Justina Dent
Chapter Host	Jerry Krampota and Justina Dent
Webmaster	Neal McLain
Newsletter Editor	Mary Helen Israel
Chapter Advisors	Connie Stolte (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) Corrie Bowen (AgriLife Extension Service)
Website	<a href="http://tmn-cot.org">http://tmn-cot.org</a>
FaceBook	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/BrazosBook">http://tinyurl.com/BrazosBook</a>
E-mail Listserv	<a href="http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail">http://tinyurl.com/TMN-COT-Mail</a>

