



Chapter News

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Intern Training
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Chapter News is published by Texas Master Naturalist Cradle of Texas Chapter.

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Our 2012 Intern training gets off to a successful start!

ANGLETON - February 1, 2012 — The Cradle of Texas Chapter's 2012 intern training program kicked off today with an orientation session moderated by Chapter Training Chair Ed Johnson.



Representatives from several of our partners spoke briefly about their organizations and the volunteer opportunities offered for Master Naturalists. Below, Bryan Adams of USFWS describes the importance of the DEEP effort.



Photos: Ed Johnson

More photos at
<http://bit.ly/ITC-02-2012>

Upcoming events

This list does not include DEEP or INEOS schedules. These schedules for 2011-12 are posted at:

- DEEP - <http://bit.ly/DEEP-2011-12>
- INEOS - <http://bit.ly/INEOS-2011-12>

Wednesday, February 8, 8:30 AM
 General Meeting and Advanced Training
 Intern Training Class - Session #2
 Agrilife Building, Angleton
Approved for 1.00 Volunteer Hour
Approved for Advanced or Intern Training
See Page 3 for details

Saturday, February 11, 9:00 AM
 Birds and Bottomlands Blitz
 "Lichens and Mushrooms"
 Gulf Coast Bird Observatory
Approved for Advanced Training (if it's not a repeat)
Approved for Volunteer Hours (if you help)

Wednesday, February 15, 8:30 AM
 Intern Training Class - Session #3
 Agrilife Building, Angleton
See Attachment 2 for details
Approved for Intern Training

Saturday, February 18, 8:00 AM
 Monthly Birdbanding at GCBO
 For details see TMN-COT Calendar
<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>

Wednesday, February 22, 8:30 AM
 Intern Training Class - Session #4
 Agrilife Building, Angleton
See Attachment 2 for details
Approved for Intern Training

Saturday, February 25, 10:00 AM
 Gulf Coast Adventure Weekend
 Brazos College Main Campus
 For details see TMN-COT Calendar
<http://tmn-cot.org/calendar/>
Approved for Volunteer Hours (if you help)

Wednesday, February 29, 8:30 AM
 Intern Training Class - Session #5
 Agrilife Building, Angleton
See Attachment 2 for details
Approved for Intern Training

Wednesday, March 7, 10:00 AM
 COT Board Meeting
 Agrilife Building, Angleton
Approved for Volunteer Hours

Saturday, Wednesday, March 10, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
 Levi Jordan Plantation Open House and Preservation Celebration
See Page 6 for details

Birds and Bottomland Blitz

By Tom Morris



Warren Pruess

This month's Birds and Bottomlands Blitz is scheduled for February 11, 2011 at Gulf Coast Bird Observatory.

This month's emphasis is "**Lichens and Mushrooms**," led by Warren Pruess, a local naturalist, who is one of the area's resident experts

in mushrooms and plants in general.

The Columbia Bottomlands supports a variety of mushrooms and lichens and we will walk the trails at GCBO to see what is growing among the fertile ground floor during February. This is the third in a series of outings sponsored by GCBO and the Cradle of Texas Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists.

The first outing was a "Mini Christmas Count" in December followed by "Trees and Shrubs" in January. March 10 will feature "Bird Migration" by GCBO, April 11 - "Wildflowers" by Thomas Adams, and May 12 - "Insects of the forest" by Ed Barrios.

The goal is to improve access to the public and also document the variety of wildlife supported by the bottomland forests.

The program will start at 9:00 AM and end at 11:00 AM. A handout will be provided. Make plans to get outdoors, learn something, and enjoy the trails at GCBO with us!

February						
Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29				
7:00 14:00 21:00						

**Texas Master Naturalist Program
Cradle of Texas Chapter
General Meeting and Advanced Training
Wednesday, February 8, 2012
AgriLife Building, Angleton**



8:30 AM	Fun and Fellowship Refreshment team: Denis James, Gabriella McCrae, Kathy Speights, Andy Smith
9:00 AM	General Meeting This meeting is approved for 1.00 hour Volunteer Time.
9:30 AM	Program: Topic: <i>Wetland Watch - Health of Galveston Bay</i> Speaker: Heather Biggs, GIS Analyst and Independent Consultant. Adjunct Instructor of Geography, University of Houston-Clear Lake This presentation will discuss basic wetland education, aerial interpretation of wetlands, and current policy governing wetland regulations.

Heather Biggs is a certified wetland delineator and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) professional. She currently specializes in wetland education and GIS mapping of habitats for watershed protection. She has worked in both the public and private sectors and has a unique understanding of our ecosystems and watersheds.

Biggs holds a Master's in Environmental Science from the University of Houston Clear Lake (2005). She has had over 14 years of experience working in the environmental community in the Houston-Galveston Area, with emphasis in wetlands, water quality, watershed management and geographic information systems (GIS).

Biggs works with Galveston Baykeeper, a non-profit organization that focuses on the loss of wetlands and the effects this loss has on water quality in Galveston Bay and in the Gulf. Galveston Baykeeper is a member of Waterkeeper Alliance, a global environmental movement uniting more than 190 Waterkeeper organizations around the world and focusing citizen advocacy on the issues that affect our waterways, from pollution to climate change.

The vision of the Waterkeeper movement is for fishable, swimmable, and drinkable waterways worldwide. Our belief is that the best way to achieve this vision is through the Waterkeeper method of grassroots advocacy.

Professional Bio: <http://prtl.uhcl.edu/portal/page/portal/HSB/HOME/faculty/Boggs/bio.html>

All 2012 Interns have been invited to participate in this meeting as part of the training program.

Current members: This training is approved for Advanced Training credit. Approved credit hours will be announced at the meeting, and will be available after the meeting at <http://tmn-cot.org/advanced-training>

Interns: This training counts as part of the training program. Please record your attendance as directed by the Training Director.

Membership Report

Jerry Eppner

The deadline for submitting 2011 hours has come and gone. The chapter had a very good year in helping our community and our environment. Sixty-eight members submitted time sheets. Of those, 46 recertified for 2011 and eight certified as Texas Master Naturalists.

As a chapter, we reported 13,866 hours of Volunteer Time and 559 hours of Advanced Training. This took our chapter cumulative total VT since inception to 108,072 hours.

We had nine members submit over 500 hr of VT: Jim Calvert (513), Laura Brandes (544), Ed Barrios (564), Barbara Burkhardt (675), Marty Cornell (759), Neal McLain (760), Sandy Henderson (803) and Phil Huxford (815).

Congratulations to all chapter members on a job well done.

Now is the time to set up your 2012 time sheet (available on the chapter website) and start recording your time for this year.

Revised Intern Training Schedule

The 2012 intern training schedule has been revised effective February 2, 2012. Among other changes, Tom Prentiss will replace David Heinicke for the Herpetology class and field trip on February 29. The latest schedule is at: http://bit.ly/Feb_25_BBSP

Junior Duck Stamp Competition

By USFWS



March 15 is the mailing deadline for the 2011 Junior Duck Stamp Competition. Students from across the country will compete to create waterfowl artwork and learn about waterfowl habitat and conservation.

The Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest is the culmination of the Junior Duck A Group Three Junior Duck Stamp Contest Entry. Stamp educational program. After studying waterfowl anatomy and habitat students may articulate their newfound knowledge by drawing, painting or sketching a picture of an eligible North American waterfowl species.

Students from around the United States submit drawings to their state, territory or district competition. Winners from these competitions, called the "Best of Show," are then submitted to the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest. One image from the 53 Best of Show entries will become the next Junior Duck Stamp.

Junior Duck Stamps are sold for \$5 each by the U.S. Postal Service, Amplex Corporation, and various National Wildlife Refuges. Proceeds from the sale of Junior Duck Stamps are returned to states for environmental and conservation education programs.

For further information and entry forms, see <http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck/ArtContest.htm>

Happy Birthday, NWRs!

March 14 is the 109th birthday of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

On that date in 1903, President Teddy Roosevelt established the first national wildlife refuge on Florida's Pelican Island to protect wild birds from bounty hunters. Today, the Refuge System's 556 national wildlife refuges and 38 wetland management districts provide vital habitat for thousands of animal and plant species.



We have three National Wildlife Refuges right here along the Texas Gulf Coast! Check them out at <http://1.usa.gov/TMCNWRWeb> Or better yet, go visit the refuges in person!

An Urban Wildlife Refuge Along the Rio Grande

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service News Release, January 11, 2012



Sandhill cranes forage on former dairy farmland along the Rio Grande. The land was authorized in September 2011 by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to become an urban national wildlife refuge. Photo: Bill O'Brian / USFWS

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has big plans for America's most recently authorized national wildlife refuge, a 570-acre flatland that hugs a fish and wildlife habitat-rich stretch of the Rio Grande outside Albuquerque, New Mexico.

One goal is to provide "a valuable showcase for the public as they come on the property to see those restoration activities, participate in them and

witness the evolution of the property as those things are restored," says regional refuge supervisor Tom Harvey. Read the full story in the January-February issue of [Refuge Update](#), Page 5.

http://www.fws.gov/refuges/RefugeUpdate/pdfs/refUp_JanFeb_2012.pdf

TPWD Amends Nuisance Alligator Permit Process

TPWD News Release, Jan. 30, 2012

AUSTIN – Landowners will be able to contract directly with nuisance alligator hunters under new rules adopted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission.

Over the past 20 years, once imperiled alligator population in Texas has rebounded spectacularly. Increased suburban, exurban, an industrial development in an adjacent to coastal counties, particularly along the mid- and upper coast, has resulted in increasing number of nuisance alligator complaints, especially in areas biologically characterized by diminishing or little to no habitat.

The new protocol will authorize a permitted control hunter to contract directly with landowner or landowner's agent (including a political subdivision, governmental entity, or property owner's association) for a fee or other compensation for the removal of nuisance alligators

The new protocol requires that each nuisance control hunter complete a certification process that includes an application to TPWD, a department-administered course and a test on nuisance control.

Reporting requirements will ensure that only bona fide nuisance alligators are taken by permitted control hunters. An annual permit fee is also required.

Prior to the new rules, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department had contracted with qualified individuals for the removal of nuisance alligators. Each hunter bid for the privilege to conduct nuisance control activities in a specific territory, agreeing to pay a per foot price to the department for every alligator removed. In return, the control hunter was allowed to keep the alligator and could sell the skin and meat. All removals were authorized on a case by case basis by the department.

Persons interested in the nuisance alligator control program should contact Amos Cooper at 409-736-3625 (office) or 409-293-2836 (cell). Prospective permittees can also request the information by email at amos.cooper@tpwd.state.tx.us.

LEVI JORDAN PLANTATION

state historic site

First Saturday - Preservation Celebration!
Come and share in our progress!



In partnership with the
Brazoria Heritage Festival
Saturday, March 3, 2012
9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Preservation Ceremony:
3 p.m. – 5 p.m.
FREE
Site Tours • Museum Activities



Levi Jordan Plantation
State Historic Site
P.O. Box 940
Brazoria, TX 77422
979.798.2202
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www.visitlevijordanplantation.com



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Attachments

There are two attachments to this issue of *Chapter News*:

Attachment 1 - Minutes of the General Meeting of January 11, 2011
http://tmn-cot.org/files/2012/02/2012-02-Att-1_Minutes.pdf

Attachment 2 - Intern Training Schedule
http://tmn-cot.org/files/2012/02/2012-02-Att-2_Intern-Schedule-P2-V11.pdf

Reminders - February 8 General Meeting

- The refreshment team includes Denis James, Gabriella McCrae, Kathy Speights, and Andy Smith
- Our new interns have been invited to join us. If you meet a new intern, please introduce yourself!
- This meeting is approved for Advanced Training for current members *and* intern training for the new intern class.
- Current members are asked to leave the first row of tables open for interns.

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
Training Director	Ed Johnson
Membership Director	Jerry Eppner
Volunteer Service Chair	Neal McLain
Advanced Training Chair	Tom Morris
Outreach Chair	Ruby Lewis
Chapter Host	Jerry Krampota
Webmaster	Neal McLain
Chapter Advisors	Connie Stolte (Texas Parks & Wildlife Department) Corrie Bowen (AgriLife Extension Service)
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