The Best-Laid Plans of Bison and Men

Last spring, the Nature Center sold the bison herd’s breeding bull, keeping one of his young sons as his replacement. One of the reasons for doing this was to reduce the number of calves to lessen the impact of grazing on the herd’s pastures. Bulls usually do not start breeding until they are at least four years old. However, the Nature Center’s new bull, the aptly named Maverick, has not acted like a typical young bull. Instead of our herd holding at 16 bison, we now have 22 thanks to Maverick’s precocious activities. Fortunately, thanks to recent rains, sufficient grass is now available to keep the herd healthy.

North Texas’ Natural Color is Not Brown

After many years of drought, the dominant color for the region has seemed to be brown...bare brown soil, dried brown plants, shallow brown water in the river...brown. Amazing what a little (really, a lot of) rain will do to change the status quo. The Nature Center crew, in conjunction with colleagues from the Fort Worth Fire Department, conducted two prescribed burns earlier this year. The burns, performed on the Alice Ashley Savanna and the Deer Mouse Savanna/Bison Hay Meadow areas, blackened the surface but also added vital nutrients to the soil, which led to green vegetation growing in great profusion after the recent rainfall. Even a small portion of the demonstration prairie that fell victim to an arsonist over Spring Break has bounced back from blackened obscurity to become the lushest grass on the property.

Nature Center Strives to Reduce Diversity

Normally, the Nature Center strives to increase diversity through proper land management, but sometimes, diversity is bad. Over the past 50 years, in the name of adding elements important to our visitors, improvements have been implemented without much thought to uniformity. Unfortunately, this has given the Nature Center’s infrastructure an overly eclectic look. In an effort to remedy this problem, the Nature Center staff has undertaken a number of projects that have decreased visual diversity.

Nature Center Technician Nic Martinez has been working on a project to replace every bench in the west region of the Nature Center and add a few new ones in spots where weary hikers have long wished a bench could be found. Benches have always been an integral part of the Nature Center’s infrastructure, but until now, bench styles have

continued on page 4

~ FONC MISSION STATEMENT ~

“To preserve, protect, and conserve in perpetuity the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge.”
LOCATION:
Four miles west of loop I-820 on Jacksboro Highway (Texas 199).

HOURS:
HARDWICKE INTERPRETIVE CENTER:
Daily: 9 AM—4:30 PM

REFUGE:
Refuge hours
May 1st—Sept. 30th:
Mon.—Fri. 7:00AM—5:00PM
Sat.—Sun. 7:00AM—7:00PM
Please call 817-392-7410 with any additional questions

GATE FEES:
Non-members:
Adults (13-64) - $5
Seniors (65+) - $3
Children (3-12 yrs) - $2
Under 3 years—Free
Active/retired military with valid ID and their families—$1 discount per person.

BLUESTEM NEWS:
Sharon McKone       Editor-in-Chief
Rosemarie Hayward   Layout & Graphics

FONC BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
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FORT WORTH NATURE CENTER:
www.fwnaturecenter.org

July—September 2015
3rd Quarter Edition
The FONC Board would like to invite you to the Annual Business Meeting to be held Saturday, July 11 at 1:30 pm at the Hardwicke Interpretive Center on the grounds of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge. We have a terrific program planned for you this year…new Board member and Texas conservation hero George Bristol.

George, a businessman, fundraiser, politician, conservationist, poet, and author, was born in Denton but spent his teenage years in Austin, later pursuing a pre-law (economics) degree at the University of Texas. He and his wife, Gretchen, spend time in both Fort Worth and Austin near grandchildren. George and Gretchen shared the same homeroom in high school, where, Gretchen says, “he drew me pictures every morning of Elvis Presley…and he would still be happy to draw you one today.”

George’s book, *On Politics and Parks*, narrates the convergence of influences that led him to an influential political career that included active involvement in national campaigns for Lyndon B. Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, Lloyd Bentsen, and Jimmy Carter. After working for the Democratic National Committee and Bill Clinton’s 1992 presidential campaign, George was asked to join President Clinton’s administration. He also received what he really wanted, a place on the board of the National Park Foundation, where he established a highly successful fundraising strategy and spearheaded efforts to elevate the image of the National Park Service. He then turned his efforts to the state of Texas, where he solidified support and fundraising for the Texas park system by founding the Texas Conservation Coalition, the non-profit organization that fought for full claim of the sporting goods tax for use by the state parks. This transpired in 2007, with the Texas legislature nearly doubling the operating budget for parks. All of these experiences combined to make George an ideal consultant for Ken Burns when he developed the PBS series *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea.*

George’s early exposure to Glacier National Park nurtured an interest in photography and poetry. He has received numerous awards and accolades for both. In 2013, he was awarded the Preservation Achievement Award from Historic Fort Worth for his “dedication to opportunities for America’s irreplaceable parkland.” The Texas State Park Director has commented, “What a champion of the state parks system. George Bristol never quit. He did not do it for himself; he did it for the people of Texas.” And the chair of the TPWD Commission has said of him, “It is hard to identify someone in recent history who has done more for the health and vitality of Texas parks than George Bristol. His tireless advocacy and leadership on their behalf are without equal. The citizens of Texas owe him an enormous debt of gratitude.”

George sums up his passion for parks this way, “The reason for conserving the last best places for the greatest number of citizens is to let all be of the Earth in a most wholesome setting. From that connection comes civility and patriotism...deep and lasting civility and patriotism because having a sense of, and a stake in, place gives every experiencing citizen pride of ownership.”

George’s book, *On Politics and Parks*, will be available for sale at the annual meeting, and the first 20 members to RSVP for the meeting will receive a free copy (as of this printing, we have one RSVP, so get your RSVPs in soon!) Nevada Press, in celebration of 100 years of national parks, is completing a series on national parks, and George will be writing the book on Glacier National Park.

We are incredibly fortunate to have George on the Board of the Friends, adding our beloved Nature Center to his list of parks that he has befriended. We look forward to having him speak at our annual meeting and hope to see you there. You do not want to miss it.

Marty Leonard
FONC President
Around the Nature Center…

been almost as diverse as the vegetation in which they are nestled. Now, thanks to Nic’s efforts, a single style of bench, one designed for comfort, durability, and ease of construction, will be found throughout the area west of Buffalo Road and north of Shoreline Road. After completing the west region, Nic will progress to the southern-most portions of the Nature Center.

Signs play an important role in educating visitors to the Nature Center, but they also make tempting targets for vandals. The challenge is to create a vandal-proof mounting system. Russell Lasiter, Nature Center Technician, has rebuilt all the sign frames located around the Interpretive Center, including recent additions for the red-shouldered hawk, the geology kiosk along Caprock Trail, and the official Texas Wildscape sign at the Hardwicke Courtyard, to be vandal proof. Building a sign mounting system that can be free-standing or mounted on a stone kiosk is a challenge, but they all look and work great and, just as important, match!

The Nature Center is also trying to reduce visual diversity among our many trail bridges. In recent years, we have replaced major bridges on Forked Tailed Creek Trail and Riverbottom Trail, learning better construction techniques in the process. New bridges are now built the same, making maintenance considerably easier and much more predictable. Now that we know how best to tackle these projects, it is time to reconstruct the “Slough Bridge” on Riverbottom Trail between Shoreline Road and the Boardwalk. This exceptionally long, two-part bridge has been in decline for several years and was recently dismantled with help from Natural Guard volunteers. Look for the new and improved bridge to be completed over the summer. A much smaller Riverbottom Trail bridge located just south of Shoreline Road was replaced this spring using Natural Guard sweat equity.

Student Research

Nature Center Intern Jimmy Greene has been working on an ongoing trail camera wildlife survey project for the past year. Jimmy completed his internship with the Nature Center this spring. During his study, he collected interesting information on the incidence of sarcoptic mange in Nature Center coyotes, ultimately presenting a research poster at the Student Research Symposium at Texas Christian University. Jimmy’s project, titled “Trail Camera Observation of Sarcoptic Mange-Affected Coyotes,” showed an interesting pattern of mange-affected coyotes in the Nature Center. The mange-affected coyotes were most likely to be found along the fringes of the Nature Center, where it was theorized they have increased access to anthropogenic foods in local neighborhoods. Jimmy also found that the affected coyotes were more likely to be active during daylight hours than their healthy kinfolk, possibly because the affected coyotes cannot compete with healthy individuals in hunting for prey.

In other student research news, Ann Mayo, a PhD candidate from the University of Texas-Arlington, recently completed her dissertation on Comanche harvester ants. Much of Ann’s work was performed on Todd Island and other areas in the northern reaches of the Nature Center.

A new sign at the Hardwicke Interpretive Center courtyard shows Russell Lasiter’s custom-made frame and mounting system. Photo by FWNCR Staff

A coyote showing the extensive hair loss typical of sarcoptic mange triggers a trail camera. Photo by FWNCR Staff
Around the Nature Center… continued from page 4
Also, Texas Christian University graduate student Melissa Mills completed the field work and is writing her thesis on the use of trail cameras to survey bobcat populations. Melissa utilized two study areas, one of which included the Nature Center as well as other lands adjacent to Lake Worth.

Canoe Dock Finally Floats
Three years ago, the Nature Center crew, including some interns and a number of Natural Guard volunteers, completed work on the canoe dock at Big River parking lot. Thanks to the drought and minimal amount of water released from Eagle Mountain Lake, the floating dock has sadly been resting on the bottom of the river since it was built. On Tuesday, May 12, 2015, we finally saw it floating and could enjoy the view of the rapidly flowing river from the comfort of the gently rolling dock. Three years is a long time to wait to see if our design actually worked. Be sure to check it out before the water drops.

Rob Denkhaus
Natural Resource Manager

Three years later, the canoe dock at Big River parking lot actually floats!
Photo by Suzanne Tuttle
I recently found myself spending a cold week in January in Delaware attending the Professional Leadership Institute hosted by the Delaware Nature Society (DNS). The Institute is co-sponsored by DNS and the Association of Nature Centers of America (ANCA). Suzanne Tuttle is a member of ANCA and graciously donated a full package registration to me. I did not know exactly what to expect from the experience, but after the first few presentations, I realized that the information and networking is valuable to me as well as the Nature Center and the Friends.

The agenda was diverse and covered topics such as leadership, non-profit accounting, fund development, education, advocacy, land trusts, strategic planning, personnel, marketing, citizen science, dynamic board of directors development, land management, and restoration techniques. I took pages of notes that will come in handy immediately and in the future.

Highlights of the Institute included meeting people in various roles of non-profit organizations such as nature center directors, volunteers, educators, interns, and organizational leaders of the American Bird Association, Delaware Nature Society, and the Boys and Girls Club of America. Although the temperatures never rose above freezing, we went on several guided field trips. We went birding at the Ashland Nature Center with Joe Sebastiani, the Nature Center manager. He educated us about the permanent hawk watch station at the Nature Center. I also had a meeting with Jim Wright, Associate Director of Land and Biodiversity of the DNS properties across the state. I took advantage of the meeting to ask him many questions about how they manage the sites, how they apply fire to encourage native grass species and control invasives, and how they incorporate citizen science into the mix. Jim is a renowned ecologist and author of *Amphibians and Reptiles of DelMarVa*. Jim also led a birding field trip to the Delaware River, where we saw several interesting birds such as bald eagles, fish crows, snow geese, and long-eared owls.

I spent a half day exploring the Atlantic Ocean and its tidal marshes on my own. I did not expect birding continued on page 7
Finding Myself in Delaware in January… continued from page 6

and wildlife viewing to be popular in Delaware in the winter, but I was pleasantly surprised. I talked to several birders and photographers who pointed out some unusual birds that are migrating or can be seen only in the Northeast in the winter, including long-tailed ducks and white-winged scoters. Although I would never have thought of Delaware as a destination, I now must say that its coast and marshes are a worth a trip if you find yourself in the Northeast.

I highly recommend the Leadership Institute to Friends board members, management staff at the Nature Center, the Fort Worth Parks & Community Services Department, and anyone interested in non-profit conservation organizations. The information, networking, and common issues addressed at the Institute are well worth the investment of time, travel, and money. For more information about the Institute and ANCA, visit their website at http://natctr.org/meetings/professional-leadership-institute.html.

Michelle Villafranca
Natural Resource Specialist

In Memorium

Dennis T. Allard

I am sad to report that our friend, Friend, and Buffalo Boogie committee member Marg French's husband, Dennis Allard, passed away after a short illness. Dennis was a wonderful person, funny and full of life. He and I also had a special connection that we discussed on several occasions...he was an indirect descendent of Pierre Allard, who was a crucial player in saving an important herd of Northern Plains bison in North Dakota and southern Canada in the late 1800s.

Marg has generously chosen the Nature Center as one of the recipients of memorial contributions in Dennis' memory. The Nature Center wishes to extend its condolences to Marg and Dennis’ family.

Suzanne Tuttle
Nature Center Manager

Dennis T. Allard
1938 – 2015
Photo courtesy of the Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Rain: No Deterrent to the Determined
Buffalo Boogie 2015

As someone who participated this year and in years past as both a volunteer and runner in the Nature Center's annual Buffalo Boogie race, to see the event transpire as it did on May 9 was a small miracle in the making.

It was an event planner's worst nightmare: a weather forecast for heavy, intense storms the day of this once-a-year outdoor event. However, thanks to the dedicated Buffalo Boogie committee planners, an alternative action plan was immediately put into place, and it turns out that plan – closing the festival portion of the race and monitoring the weather – was the right call. Kudos to Dale Roberts, Rick Shepherd, and Suzanne Tuttle for staying on top of a potentially volatile situation and overseeing an event that still proved to be fun, safe, and beneficial to the Nature Center.

While periodic race/walk weather updates were posted on the Nature Center’s websites and Facebook pages leading up to that ominous Saturday, participants still lined up at Fort Worth Running Company May 7 and May 8 to pick up their packets. As I stood at the registration table, I asked a few runners their thoughts about showing up despite the rain forecast. Their replies?

“Sure, I run in the rain. Why let a little water stop me?”

“Of course I’ll be there. Wouldn’t miss it.”

“Real runners don’t let rain prevent them from running.”

“Love this event.”

That’s when I discovered that those who participate in the annual Buffalo Boogie event are a steadfast, dedicated group of people. We are not just talking about the runners either. That Saturday morning brought out the walkers, the children, and the canine companions as well. Indeed, the overcast skies did not deter the determined. That included all of the enthusiastic staff, volunteers, police, and medical supporters.

The Run
Halfway through the 5K, a light rain began cooling those of us running. Someone passing by yelled, “Bring on more rain!” Others commented afterward that it was one of the best Buffalo Boogies ever because heat and sun had no chance of becoming overpowering.

A friend running beside me had never been before and remarked about nature’s “truly beautiful surroundings” while we ran. Certainly, the smell of wet leaves and honeysuckle combined with giant green canopies overhead made for a timed race unlike others. Halfway through the race, a volunteer – Dale Sherman – greeted us with sounds he was playing on a Chapman Stick (an electric musical instrument in the guitar family) near the water station. Near the end of the race, part of the majestic bison herd also greeted us from their pasture on our left. How many other runs can boast such distinctive wildlife scenery?

continued on page 9
Buffalo Boogie… continued from page 8

Finishing up at the refreshments tent, I noticed a grinning toddler, a contented German Shepherd, and a laughing group of runners lining up at the results canopy. At one point near the end, the rain had progressed from light to heavy, forcing the awards ceremony indoors.

That too failed to annoy those awaiting their much-deserved medals and prizes.

Perhaps this review is a bit biased, but it cannot be helped. I just love this place. Looking forward to many more successful Buffalo Boogies in the future. Hope to see you there.

Chris Smith
FONC Board Member

Overcast skies did not deter this year’s Buffalo Boogie participants, which included enthusiastic staff, volunteers, police, and medical supporters.

Photo by Jerry Kneupper

Nature Center Online News

Here’s a look at what’s new in the online world of the Nature Center...

In honor of the Nature Center’s 50th anniversary, we have a new and redesigned website. Check it out here: [http://www.naturecenterfriends.org/](http://www.naturecenterfriends.org/)


Buffalo Boogie 2015 Acknowledgements

The Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge and Friends of the Nature Center wish to extend our sincere thanks to the following sponsors, vendors, and volunteers for their donations of money, goods, time, and talent for this year’s Buffalo Boogie. Even with the storms, we had 50 runners, and this year’s run was a great success. We could not have done it without you!

Advocare, Jennifer Yates
Lani Aker
Alan Plummer Associates, Inc.
Amon Carter Museum of American Art
Tom Armstrong
Armstrong Foundation
Olivia Aviles
Phyl Baloga
Barthel Aphiemi Dog
Billy Bob’s Texas
Kathy Bond
Emilly Boom
Booap’s Bagels
Robert Briggs
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Cabela’s
Camp Gladiator
Candlelight Inn Arlington
Caple-Shaw Industries, Inc.
Louise Britt Carvey
Carla Cassanova
Lucia Castaneda
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Cross Timbers Connection
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First Baptist Church of Lakeside
Flying Oaks Airport
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Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club
Green Mountain Energy
Susan Hall
Handley Feed Store
Fred & Laura Harrison

John Lee Harrison
Sue & John Harrison
Healthsource Chiropractic
Dagmar Higgins
HIP Pocket Theater
Hurst Aquatics, Hurst Parks and Recreation Department
J&B Erectors, Inc.
J Gilligan’s Bar Grill
Terry Jeffries
Jerry's Express Car Wash
Jim Stegall’s Nursery & Plant Farm, Inc.
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David Kist
Jerry Kneupper
Lakeside Church of God
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Lone Star Park
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Carlee Massey
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Jane Rector
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RecycleBank
James Reynolds
Nicholas Reynolds
Noah Reynolds
Dale Roberts
William Robertson
Jessica Rooks
ROXO – TCU
Russell Grain
Robyn L. Salaver
Sear Family Foundation
Search One Rescue Team
Jonathan Seastrunk
Richard & Karen Shepherd
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Spencer Custom Leather
SportTherapy Southwest
State Farm – Frankie Robbins
State Farm – Kathleen Alexander
Stockyards Championship Rodeo, Pawnee Bill’s Wild West Show
David & Margaret Sykes
Tail Waggin’ Biscuits & Bones
Texas Bison Association
Texas Custom Sportswear
Texas Motor Speedway
Texas Rangers Baseball Club
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Thank You!
Do your kids need to get out of the house and burn off some energy? Summer Natural History Adventures for children entering kindergarten through 6th grade will continue through the end of July. Each age group meets on a different day to explore the Nature Center with the help of a naturalist. We have had a great time during June getting hands on with plants, animals, and minerals that can be found at the Nature Center, but with 3,600 acres to explore, something new is always waiting to be discovered. For example, kindergarteners can learn how to talk like the animals or get up close and personal with some of the wildlife they might see right in their own backyards. First and second graders can go on a plant safari or discover the hidden history of the park when they explore structures built by the Civilian Conservation Corps. Third and fourth graders will get to know the symbols of Texas by finding them on the prairie and in the forest. Finally, fifth and sixth graders can join the Tarrant County Archaeological Society to search for artifacts or cool off while exploring the aquatic side of the Nature Center. Children who are entering first grade and up will also get the chance to participate in our most popular class and be animal caretakers for a day if they have participated in at least three other classes.

Kindergarten adventures are held from 8:30 to 11:30 am. Adventures for grades 1-6 are held from 8:30 to 3:00 pm, with aftercare available until 4:30 pm for an additional fee. Each participant will receive a T-shirt, and discounts are available for Friends of the Nature Center members (family level and above). For a complete list of all the July classes, pricing, and instructions on how to register, please visit www.fwnaturecenter.org and click on “Summer Camps.” Guests can also pick up a class brochure at the Hardwicke Interpretive Center. Each class must have a minimum of three campers, and some classes fill quickly, so participants are encouraged to sign up early! For questions, please call (817) 392-7410.

Elizabeth Bittner
Education Naturalist
Texas Has A New Resident

The adventure and hunt began April 14, 2012, at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge after I found something I had never seen before. It was obviously a gall…but something new. I have been interested in galls for several years, but none of my books or references even hinted at the identity of this new find. It resembled a large, almost colorless grape. It was not clear, but neither was it totally opaque.

After researching online, I found a New York State Museum bulletin titled “A Key to American Insect Galls” by Ephraim Porter Felt (the New York State Entomologist), Volume 200, August 1, 1917. This bulletin contains line drawings of a Translucent Oak Gall by E.L. Beutenmuller on page 91 and a description on page 92. Another post of the Translucent Oak Gall found in Oklahoma the year prior to my discovery was found on BugGuide.com.

ID success…I had identified my find. Here is my original post to BugGuide:

“Translucent Oak Gall Wasp on Texas Red Oak. Probable first Texas record. On p. 1082 of the Catalogue of Hymenoptera, the range for Amphibolips nubilipennis is given as Massachusetts to Virginia, west to Michigan, Illinois, and Iowa. There was a record from Seminole County, Oklahoma, in May last year. This would seem to be a further significant range extension. Needless to say, I was quite excited about this find at the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge.”

http://bugguide.net/node/view/631667

Since that first sighting, I found two other specimens on April 21, 2014, which can be seen at http://bugguide.net/node/view/1058200, and on April 19, 2015, which can be seen at http://bugguide.net/node/view/1058207. Positive identification was provided by Charlie Eiseman, Contributing Editor of BugGuide, at http://bugguide.net/user/view/15010. The range maps in BugGuide were amended to include my sighting. All the galls I found were at the height of maximum leaf growth rate for all three discovery years.

These sightings, along with the Oklahoma record, would seem to indicate a southwesterly expansion for this new resident of Texas. Is climate change a factor?

Following is a description of the Translucent Leaf Gall by Cook in 1910: "This is a beautiful, spherical, soft, succulent gall about 1/2 to 3/4 inch in diameter and has a very striking resemblance to a large white grape. There is a single larval chamber in the center." And the following is a synopsis describing galls (from Wikipedia):

“Insect galls are the highly distinctive plant structures formed by some herbivorous insects as their own microhabitats. They are plant tissue which is controlled by the insect. Galls act as both the habitat and food source for the maker of the gall. The interior of a gall can contain edible nutritious starch and other tissues. Some galls act as ‘physiologic sinks,’ concentrating resources in the gall from the surrounding plant parts. Galls may also provide the insect with physical protection from predators. Insect galls are usually induced by chemicals injected by the larvae or adults of the insects into the plants and possibly mechanical damage. After the galls are formed, the larvae develop inside until fully grown, and then they leave. In order to form galls, the insects must seize the time when plant cell division occurs quickly: the growing season, usually spring in temperate climates, but which is extended in the tropics. The meristems, where plant cell division occurs, are the usual sites of galls, though insect galls can be found on other parts of the plant, continued on page 13
Texas Has A New Resident... continued from page 12

such as the leaves, stalks, branches, buds, roots, and even flowers and fruits. Gall-inducing insects are usually species-specific and sometimes tissue-specific on the plants they gall."

In addition to the new sightings at the Nature Center, sightings have been reported at the following locations:

- A single report in North Carolina, Fort Bragg, Cumberland County, North Carolina, May 21, 2006
- A single report in New Jersey, Atco, Camden County, New Jersey, May 13, 2011
- A single report in Iowa, Cedar Rapids, Linn County, Iowa, June 5, 2010
- First reported in Oklahoma, Seminole, Seminole County, Oklahoma, May 10, 2011

Troy Mullens
Texas Master Naturalist

In Memorium

Weldon B. Hatch III

Dear fellow Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge as well as Cross Timbers Master Naturalist Chapter members,

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Weldon B. Hatch III. As his Master Naturalist Chapter timekeeper since 2009, I know how much time Weldon spent with the El Tesoro Camp folks, and it will be a while before tears will cease following the loss of this great Cross Timbers Master Naturalist.

Not only was Weldon a dedicated member of the Friends of the Nature Center, benefiting the Nature Center in so many ways, he was a true champion in following through with and living the Cross Timbers Master Naturalist mission statement: “to develop a group of well-trained volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within our own communities.”

It was natural for him to become such a good Friend of the Nature Center, whose mission statement dovetails with that of the Master Naturalist Chapter he epitomized. Weldon will long be remembered for his work at the El Tesoro Camp. The Friends of the Nature Center wishes to extend its condolences to Weldon’s family.

Rick Shepherd,
FONC Past President
You’re Invited

The Friends of the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge invite all members to the Annual Membership Meeting Saturday, July 11. This will be an opportunity for you to meet other members, learn more about the work of the organization, and listen to guest speaker, author, and Friends Board Member George Bristol talk about how to save our parks.

WHO: All members and their families
COST: Free – with free activities for children
WHEN: July 11, 2015 from 1:30 – 3:30pm
LOCATION: FWNC&R’s Hardwicke Interpretive Center, 9601 Fossil Ridge Road

Thank You

Purchased at the Friends’ November Broadview: A Spectrum of Nature Art Show for the purpose of surprise donation to the Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge, certified arborist & local artist Wes Culwell’s “Nature Center 50th Year” is presented to Nature Center Manager Suzanne Tuttle by Past President Rick Shepherd at the May 2015 Board meeting.

Photo by Chris Smith
Whooping Crane Trip

Join us for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to watch the endangered Whooping Crane.

January 22—24, 2016

FONC Members—$395.00
(per person/double occupancy)
Non-Members—$475.00
(per person/double occupancy)

Itinerary:

Friday 7:00 am: Leave. Breakfast stop at McDonald’s in north Waco. Lunch stop at Monument Hill State Park in La Grange. Stop at Goose Island State Park. Arrive at lodging in Rockport. Dinner in Rockport.

Saturday 7:00 am: Leave for boat in Rockport Harbor. Lunch in town at noon. Drive Shore Line Road, stopping at various birding spots. Stop in Port Aransas if time allows. Dinner in town.

Sunday 7:00 am: Leave for Aransas Wildlife Refuge. Drive to Victoria through Refugio. Lunch at noon. Leave for Fort Worth with one stop on the way.

Transportation will be provided by Cowtown Bus. The bus will leave from and return to the Fort Worth Botanic Garden parking lot. Arrangements have been made with the Botanic Garden for overnight parking.

For more information, contact: Bill Richerson at 817-235-6524 or wrrich@sbcglobal.net

Photo by http://www.lpzoosites.org/
October will soon be upon us, which means Halloween is right around the corner. Trails & Treats will be held Thursday, October 29, 2015. Trick-or-treating takes hard work walking up and down the road carrying all that candy. You will need preparation for the big day. Join us as we allow you time to practice your “tricks or treats,” enjoy fun games, make a craft, and encounter some cool animals. We encourage you to dress up in your favorite Halloween costume and join us for a fun night. If you are interested in volunteering and making this evening a memorable and fun night for children, we invite you as well. For more information about Trails & Treats and/or volunteering for this community-wide event, please contact the Hardwicke Interpretive Center at (817) 392-7410.

Thursday, October 29, 2015
Hardwicke Interpretive Center
For more information:(817) 392-7410

Plan to join us on Thursday, October 29 at the Hardwicke Interpretive Center for the 2015 Trails & Treats Halloween extravaganza.

Photo by Daryl Marling

The Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge is a

2015 Certificate of Excellence Winner from Trip Advisor.

Click on the link and find out more!

http://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g55857-d140803-Reviews-Fort_Worth_Nature_Center_and_Refuge-Fort_Worth_Texas.html
One of the features of the Nature Center’s bird feeding courtyard is a small pond with a waterfall. This water feature is designed to represent the different types of water habitats found at the Nature Center, including lakes, streams, and marshes. The waterfall portion can represent our replenished underground aquifer that seeps up to the surface in several places at the park. Beyond its symbolism, the pond is also a habitat itself, allowing freshwater shrimp and small fish to call it home. These tiny travelers are carried from place to place on the backs of frogs and turtles or the legs of birds. In April, a small female bullfrog appeared and has made itself at home, so we can assume the insect population is robust. She even had another small bullfrog join her in May. Birds can be seen bathing in the shallow riffles of the “stream” part of the water feature, and they use the rocks to sip from the edges of the waterfall. Before the marsh plants grew back in, a very distinct trail leading from the birdfeeders to the edge of the water appeared. We assume this trail is the work of an armadillo that makes nightly grub digging forays into the courtyard then takes a drink to wash them down. Adding a feature like this to your backyard habitat, even if it is on a smaller scale, can provide resources for a host of different plants and animals.

Elizabeth Bittner
Education Naturalist

Call for Committee Members

Love the Nature Center?
Do you have a particular talent or just an enthusiasm to pitch in?

Why not consider volunteering on a Friends of the Nature Center Board committee?

We need all walks of life to help make the Nature Center an ongoing success:
- Photographers
- Event planners
- Writers
- Graphic Designers
- Public Relations/Marketing Experts
- Fundraisers

If you or someone you know would like to serve on a Friends of the Nature Center committee, please contact FONC President Marty Leonard at martyleo@flash.net or Nature Center Manager Suzanne Tuttle (suzanne.tuttle@fortworthtexas.gov or 817.392.7421).

A small female bullfrog calls the courtyard pond home.

Photo by Elizabeth Bittner
Thank You To Our Generous Donors

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Each species of male cicada has a particular courtship song. Cicadas are able to communicate by vibrating drumskin-like membranes located in the abdomen. To decipher the name of this membrane, cross off each letter that is repeated four times on the wings. Use the leftover letters (from left wing to right wing) and write them below to find out the name of the membrane.

**SUMMERTIME SONGSTERS**

Summer would not be summer without hearing the loud mating songs from male cicadas as they fly from tree to tree. The cicada’s exoskeleton is often encountered attached to tree bark, fences, or any solid structure, revealing the recent transformation from nymph to adult. The cicada’s call seems to harken the end of summer and remind us of this insect’s unique completion of its life cycle.

These stout-bodied insects spend most of their life cycle unseen. At the end of summer, the female cicada deposits her eggs in slits along the bark of a tree. Weeks later, the wingless nymphs drop from the tree and burrow into the ground. The nymphs feed on the juices from tree roots while growing and molting periodically until they are ready to dig out of the soil. This process can take up to 17 years. The full-grown nymphs then emerge at night, climb tree trunks and fences, and shed their last nymph exoskeletons to emerge as winged adults. The process is often unseen, but we are left with small reminders of the previous night’s happenings.

The length of life cycle depends on the species of cicada. The 17-year cicadas live in the eastern half of the United States. Here in our area, the species we hear and see is the annual cicada, also known as the “Dog-day Cicadas,” whose life cycle is completed in one or two years. Adults live several weeks and feed on the juices of plants. Cicada nymphs and adults are harmless, and a summer without cicadas just would not be summer in Texas.

**ABUZZ**

Each species of male cicada has a particular courtship song. Cicadas are able to communicate by vibrating drumskin-like membranes located in the abdomen. To decipher the name of this membrane, cross off each letter that is repeated four times on the wings. Use the leftover letters (from left wing to right wing) and write them below to find out the name of the membrane.
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