



SIGNAL SMOKE

The Newsletter of Travis Audubon Society

VOLUME 52, NO. 1

JANUARY 2003

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Urban Habitat Development

So You Don't Have Good Dirt? Build a Raised Bed

Is It Necessary to Amend Soil for Native Plants?

This may be a bit of a controversial subject, but here goes. First, if you have the exactly right soil for exactly the right native plant and the right amount of sun and water, they should be compatible and your plants should grow well.

Realistically, most of our Austin-area soil is decomposing limestone, which is not ideal for most native plants, so to help them thrive in your yard, amend the soil and plan to water to match the plants' needs.

Problem Areas

The best thing to do with a problem area where nothing grows well is to develop a raised bed there. Plants don't grow well because the soil, sun, shade, and rocks in the soil are wrong for that plant. So make a good planting area by building a bed. You do not even have to work hard on the existing soil—just rake and scrape it clean and reasonably level.

Developing a Raised Bed Is Easy

The following are the steps for creating a raised bed:

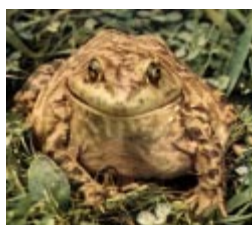
1. Border the bed area.
2. Clear away weeds, and level the area.
3. Put down layers of newspapers or cardboard to smother the weed roots and seeds.
4. Add amended soil.
5. Cover with mulch.
6. Plant the plants.
7. Install a watering system.

Some nice things about a raised bed are that you can make it small or large, and you can add plants as you want to. The bed can easily be expanded, and the mulch looks great and natural—just like a thicket should look.

Make the Frame or Border

First, mark out the area for the bed. Select the border material from landscape timbers, rocks, plastic, or green metal to make the frame, which will hold in 4 to 8 inches

(Continued on page 11)



TAS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Thursday, January 16, 7 p.m.

Program: Herps of Texas

Presenter: Andy Price,

Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Highland Park Baptist Church, 5206 Balcones Drive

(See page 7 for details and directions.)

Travis Audubon Society

Email addresses are at "About Us,"
<www.travisaudubon.org>.

Officers and Directors

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First Vice President	
Vacant	
Second Vice President	
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Austin TX 78725	
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Anne Donovan	
Al Green	512-357-1427
Shelia Hargis	291-1861
John Kelly	331-8693

Sanctuary Caretakers

TAS Wildlife Sanctuary	
John and Marcie Wilcox	219-8425
Blair Woods	
Stennie Meadours	443-8152

ACT Representatives

John Kelly (state president)	331-8693
Bryan Hale (state treasurer)	474-5599

Signal Smoke Editor

Rosemary Wetherold	892-1606
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TAS Hotline: 926-8751

The hotline has information on TAS events (press 6) and rare birds in our area (press 5). To report sightings, press 1. To ask about birds, environmental issues, or TAS, press 2. No touch-tone phone? Call 474-5599.

TAS Web Site

www.travisaudubon.org

TAS Email

info@travisaudubon.org

TAS Fax

892-2026

Mission Statement

The Travis Audubon Society promotes the enjoyment, understanding, and preservation of birds, wildlife, and their habitats in Central Texas.

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We are blessed with a wonderful place to live, teeming with thousands of species of plants and animals. Each bird, each flower, each tree, contributes to our quality of life.

At this time of year, we each have an opportunity to contribute to the protection of that quality of life. You may already have received our annual fundraising appeal in your mailbox. Please take a moment to read the letter and find a way to contribute to protecting the birds and wildlife around us.

This year we are increasing our efforts to care for birds and wildlife in Central Texas. We are partnering with Wildlife Rescue to create a wildlife rescue center at our Blair Woods sanctuary to help save thousands of orphaned and injured birds and animals each year. We are making costly improvements to our Baker Sanctuary in order to protect our breeding pairs of Golden-cheeked Warblers. We are building a center on Platt Lane at Hornsby Bend that will help us better monitor bird populations in the Austin area and bring the wonder of nature to visiting schoolchildren.

All of these efforts, and a dozen smaller projects, will take an increased financial commitment from each of us. We are proud of our past accomplishments, and even prouder of the contributions these new projects will make to our communities and quality of life. As we start a new year, please consider sending a donation of \$50 or more to help protect native birds, wildlife, and habitats for future generations.

—Rob Fergus

COMMITTEE AND SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRS

Email addresses are available at <www.travisaudubon.org> under "About Us."

TAS Rare Bird Alert	Shawn Ashbaugh	970-7170
	Alert number	926-8751
Bird Records	Bob Barth	327-1173
Conservation	John Kelly	331-8693
Cyberspace	Jenny Rasmussen	218-1580
Education	Shelia Hargis	291-1861
Field Trips	Georgia Harper	467-9700
Hornsby Bend	Tim Hissam	251-6067
Hospitality	Debby Glick	462-2797
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Publicity	Vacant	
Sales	Dan Smith	451-2632
Sanctuary	Bryan Hale	474-5599
Urban Habitat Development	Chuck Simms	331-9630

SIGNAL SMOKE INFORMATION

About the Newsletter

Signal Smoke, published monthly or bi-monthly by Travis Audubon Society, is a TAS membership benefit. To join Travis Audubon Society, see the back page of this newsletter. Notify National Audubon Society (800-274-4201) and Chris Doggett (Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 1132, Round Rock TX 78680-1132) of address changes.

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Newsletter Deadline


The deadline for submissions is the first day of the preceding month. Submit articles, announcements, and uncopyrighted art for the February issue by **January 1** to Rosemary Wetherold, 4507 Cliffstone Cove, Austin TX 78735-6610; 892-2026 (fax); or <rosemaryw@austin.rr.com>. Submissions by email or on a floppy are preferred but not required. Call Rosemary at 892-1606 if you have questions.


Signal Smoke is printed on recycled paper.

















January 2003 Calendar of Travis Audubon Society Events

 Field Trip—See pages 4–6

 Meeting—See pages 6–7

 Birding Class—See pages 8–9

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Deadline for Febuary <i>Signal Smoke</i> (page 2)	2	3	4  Field trip, Balcones National Wildlife Refuge, 6 a.m.
5	6  Education Committee Meeting, 7 p.m.	7  Sanctuary Committee Meeting & Potluck, 6:30 p.m.	8  Urban Habitat Development Group Meet- ing, 7 p.m.	9  TAS Board of Directors Meeting, 6:45 p.m.	10	11  Monthly Bird Count, Hornsby Bend, 7 a.m.  Field trip, Barton Creek Habitat Pre- serve, 7:30 a.m.  HBBO Meeting & Pot- luck, 11:30 a.m.
12	13	14  Planning Group Meet- ing for Youth Birding Mini-Camp, 6:30 p.m.	15  Sparrow Identification Class begins, 7 p.m.	16 TAS Regular Monthly Meeting with program, 7 p.m. (see page 7)	17	18  Bird walk, Hornsby Bend, 7:30 a.m.  Field trip, Lake Bastrop South Shore Park, 8 a.m.  Backyard Birding Class, 9 a.m.
19  Bird walk, Meadow Lake, 4 p.m.	20	21  Water- fowl Identifi- cation Class begins, 7 p.m.	22	23  Bird Records Committee Meeting	24	25  Field trip, Shield Ranch, 7:30 a.m.  Field trip, Mitchell Lake Wetlands, 8 a.m. TAS Baker Sanctuary reopens
26  Field trip, Hornsby Bend, 7 a.m.	27	28	29	30	31	FEBRUARY 1 Deadline for March <i>Signal Smoke</i> (page 2)

TAS FIELD TRIPS AND EVENTS

All TAS field trips are open to members and nonmembers and to experienced and inexperienced birders. Wear appropriate clothing and walking shoes, and bring binoculars and water. Unless otherwise noted, field trips are free. Carpoolers should expect to pay a share of the gasoline expense. **Please check the TAS website** <www.travisaudubon.org> **or the TAS hotline (926-8751) for up-to-date information on field trips, including cancellations due to weather or other circumstances.** Because of the publication schedule of the newsletter, things can change!

Through January 24

TAS Baker Sanctuary Closure

The sanctuary is currently closed and will reopen Saturday, January 25.

Saturday, January 4, 6 am–2 pm

Field Trip to Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge

Led by Bill Reiner. A great opportunity to see wintering birds (especially sparrows) in places not often open to the public. Meet in the HEB parking lot on the northeast corner of Hwys. 183 and 1431. Bring water, lunch, and snacks. **Contact:** To reserve your place and for more information: 996-6906, <Kathy.McCormack@motorola.com>.

Saturday, January 11, 7 am

Monthly Bird Count at Hornsby Bend

Meet at the Center for Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend. The Hornsby Bend Bird Observatory meeting and potluck lunch will be held at **11:30 a.m.** after the morning survey. **Contact:** Russ Nelson, 431-1420, <russelln@concentric.net>.



Saturday, January 11, 7:30–11:30 am

Field Trip to Barton Creek Habitat Preserve

Led by Maggie Burnett. Bring water and snacks; facilities at entrance only. This is the first of a series of monthly bird surveys that TAS will conduct within the preserve. We will carpool from the

entrance to a site within the preserve, and hike moderate trails. The property, which is not generally open to the public, is very scenic and has many options for birding. Meet at the preserve headquarters, 11617 FM 2244 (Bee Caves Road). **Directions:** From Loop 360 and FM 2244, follow FM 2244 west for 6.2 miles. The entrance to the preserve will be on your left, just before the traffic light at the Lake Pointe business center. From Hwy. 71 and FM 2244, follow FM 2244 east for 1 mile. The entrance to the preserve will be on your right, after the Uplands residential subdivision, and just after the light at the Lake Pointe business center. The entrance to the Preserve is a dirt road with a sign posted on the fence next to the open gate. The dirt road is easier to see than the sign, however, because the

sign is below the grade of the road. Follow the dirt road down about ¼ mile to the parking area. **Contact:** If you have questions: <mburnett@austin.rr.com>, 899-0390.

Saturday, January 18, 7:30 am–noon

Bird Walk at Hornsby Bend

Led by Rob Fergus. Meet in the parking lot of the Center for Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend. **Contact:** 347-7572, <fergus@travisaudubon.org>.

Saturday, January 18, 8 am–noon

Field Trip to Lake Bastrop South Shore Park

Led by Kathy McCormack and George Kerr; no sign-up needed. After scoping the lake and scanning the trees in the campground, we will walk a level, 3-mile loop trail along the lake (hiking boots recommended; mosquitoes may be present; bring water/lunch). Hope to see waterfowl, Pine Warblers, and woodpeckers. Only pouring rain, icy roads, or a wind chill of less than 32°F will cancel the trip. **Carpoolers:** If you wish to carpool, meet at Hornsby Bend's parking lot by 6:50 a.m.; cars will leave at 7 a.m. (1-hour travel time to the park). **Directions to the park:** From Austin, take Hwy. 71 east to Bastrop, take a left onto Hwy. 95 N, go about 0.5 miles and turn right onto Hwy. 21 E, go 2 miles and turn left onto South Shore Road (County Road 352); the park entrance will be on the right. From Round Rock (80 minutes travel time to the park), take Hwy. 79 east to Taylor, go south on Hwy. 95 through Elgin to Bastrop, turn left onto Hwy. 21 E, go 2 miles and turn left onto South Shore Road (County Road 352); the park entrance will be on the right. At the park, ask for a park map at the entrance station; entrance \$3/person; rest rooms available. Meet at the nearby Observation Deck between campsites 12 and 14. **Contact:** 996-6906 (w), <kathy.mccormack@motorola.com>.

Sunday, January 19, 4–5:30 pm

Bird Walk at Meadow Lake

Led by Jenny Rasmussen and one or more coleaders. **Directions:** Going north on I-35, get off at the 3406 exit (Exit 254) in Round Rock (next exit past U.S. 79). At the light, turn right and go east on Old Settler's Blvd. Go straight through two 4-way stops, then turn left onto Settlement Drive. Go about a quarter mile, and park along the side of the road (the park and 65-acre lake will be on your right).

Saturday, January 25, 7:30–11:30 am

Field Trip to Shield Ranch

Led by Georgia Harper and Terri Siegenthaler. Shield Ranch is a privately held property offering varied habitats from savannah to riparian corridors. Participants will carpool from the entrance to a site within the preserve and hike moderate trails. Meet at the Ranch Steward's home, 16037 Hamilton Pool Road. **Directions:** From Hwy. 71 and FM 2244, follow Hwy. 71 north to the second light, at Hamilton Pool Road. Turn left on Hamilton Pool Road and proceed about 5 miles. Slow down as you approach the Alpenhof Steakhouse on the right; the driveway into the ranch is on the left, just past the restaurant, and very easy to

TAS TRIPS AND EVENTS (CONTINUED)

miss. A single mailbox marks the driveway. **Contact:** To reserve a place or for questions: <terrisiongenthaler@shieldranch.com>, 263-2237.



Saturday, January 25, 8 am–noon(+?) Field Trip to Mitchell Lake Wetlands

Led by Kathy McCormack;
no sign-up needed.

Sheridan Coffey from San Antonio AS invites TAS members to join their regular monthly walk at this well-known San Antonio birding hot spot. Mitchell Lake has varied habitat, including scrub, grasslands, riparian, small ponds, and the lake itself. A large variety of birds can be found in winter, including Vermilion Flycatcher, Crested Caracara, Harris Hawk and other raptors, wintering shorebirds, and many species of ducks. This will be a half-day birding trip (hiking boots recommended; bring water/lunch), but for those who want to continue, some other birding spots in Bexar County can be investigated afterward. **Carpoolers:** If you wish to carpool, meet at Hornsby Bend's parking lot by 5:50 a.m.; cars will leave at 6 a.m. (2 hours travel time to the lake). **Directions:** Mitchell Lake is on the south side of San Antonio off of Loop 410. Take I-35 S to I-410 S (a left exit, one lane only) to Exit 46, Moursund Blvd. Take Moursund Blvd. south, away from the center of San Antonio, 0.7 miles to the gated entrance on the left. There is a local bar directly opposite the gate. **Contact:** For questions: 996-6906 (w) or <kathy.mccormack@motorola.com>.

Sunday, January 26, 7 am–noon Field Trip to Hornsby Bend

Led by Charles Stephens of Wild Birds Unlimited and cosponsored by TAS. We should see all our wintering shore/wetland and riparian habitat birds. Meet in the Center for Environmental Research parking lot. **Contact:** If interested and/or for directions: 600-1700, <charles_stephens@yahoo.com>.

Saturday, February 1, 7:30–11:30 am Field Trip to Wild Basin Wilderness Preserve

Led by Georgia Harper and Diana Seidel; no sign-up needed, just arrive on time. Wild Basin trails pass through woodland, grassland, and streamside habitats that are home to threatened and endangered species and to hundreds of native plants, animals, and birds. Participants will meet at the "back entrance," by special permit of the preserve, and hike (at times) moderately steep trails. Bring water and snacks; no facilities at this entrance. **Directions:** From Bee Caves Road, take Westlake Drive north past Red Bud Trail. Turn left on the High Road, then take the second left onto Wild Basin Ledge. Continue to the end of the road. **Contact:** For questions: <gharper@utsystem.edu> or call 499-4508 (Georgia Harper); 306-0931 (Diana Seidel).

Saturday, February 1, 7:30–11:30 am Field Trip to Barton Creek Habitat Preserve

For details, see January 11 calendar item.

Saturday, February 8, 8–11 am Field Trip to St. Edward's District Park

Led by Kathy McCormack and Stu Wilson; no sign-up needed. Hope to see Spotted Towhees, Eastern Phoebe, and Yellow-rumped Warblers. No bathrooms, relatively level trails north of Bull Creek, steeper trails south of Bull Creek. Hiking boots recommended; bring water. Only pouring rain, icy roads, or a wind chill of less than 32° F will cancel the field trip. **Directions:** The parking lot for St. Edward's District Park lies on the west side of westbound Spicewood Springs Road, 2.3 miles north of its intersection with Loop 360 (Capital of Texas Highway). **Contact:** For questions: <kathy.mccormack@motorola.com>, 996-6906 (w) (Kathy); or <stu@bga.com>, 459-1082 (h) (Stu).



Sunday, February 9, 6:45 am–noon Field Trip to Camp Tejas

Led by Charles Stephens of Wild Birds Unlimited and jointly sponsored by TAS. We should see lots of wintering field/meadow and riparian habitat birds (sparrows/thrushes galore). Meet at Wild Birds Unlimited–Lakeline parking lot. **Contact:** If interested or for directions: <charles_stephens@yahoo.com>, 600-1700.

Saturday, February 15, 7:30 am–noon Bird Walk at Hornsby Bend

For details, see January 18 calendar item.

Saturday, February 15, 8:30 am–1:30 pm Bird Walk at Canyon of the Eagles Nature Park

Led by Mark and Charlsa Bentley. Two-hour birding walk on trails in park <www.canyonoftheeagles.com>, followed by a 2½-hour trip up the river to the Bald Eagle habitat on the Vanishing Texas River Cruise (cost: \$16.50/person). Park has facilities; boat has facilities and snack bar.

Directions: From North Austin, take Hwy. 183 N to Hwy 29 (33 mi.); go west on Hwy. 29 to Burnet (23 mi.). From South Austin, take Hwy. 71 W to Hwy. 281 (44 mi.); go north on Hwy. 281 to Burnet (18 mi.). From Burnet, go west on Hwy. 29, then north (right) on FM 2341 to park. **Contact:** Please call early so that we may ensure adequate space on the boat. For information, call 301-2675 or 461-5375 (cell), or email <mebentley@austin.rr.com>.



TAS TRIPS AND EVENTS (CONTINUED)

Sunday, February 16, 4–5:30 pm

Bird Walk at Meadow Lake

For details, see January 19 calendar item.

Saturday, February 22

Ecological Literacy Day at Hornsby Bend

See page 7 for details.

Saturday, February 22, 7 am–2 pm

Field Trip to Moore Property on Pedernales River

Led by Anne Donovan. We will survey birds on 150 acres of private land bordering the Pedernales River, Dead Man's Creek, and Live Oak Creek. Meet in the parking lot of the Albertson's grocery store at the "Y" in Oak Hill at 7 a.m. Property is about one-hour drive from the "Y." The hiking can be fairly steep, but it is easy for some less-eager hikers to stay along the river or on the uplands looking for sparrows, while others walk down the trails into the canyons that hold the two creeks. Bring lunch, water, jacket, etc. Participants can stay as long into the after-

noon as we have birds that want to be watched. **Contact:** For more information and to sign up: 472-3030 (Anne).

Thursday–Sunday, July 3–13, 2003

The Galapagos Islands: A Family Adventure

TAS and Victor Emanuel Nature Tours (VENT) invite you to join Victor Emanuel and Greg Lasley in exploring the Galapagos Islands on the comfortable cruise ship *Eclipse*. The emphasis will



be on birds and general natural history, and we'll try to see all of the endemic birds possible. A family cruise director will organize daily activities and meals for children onboard. Enjoy the Darwin's finches, giant tortoises, and iguanas you've always dreamed of. For more information, contact VENT at <www.ventbird.com> or 328-5221. VENT will make a donation to TAS for each member on the trip, so mention TAS when making your reservation.



TAS MEETINGS

Monday, January 6, 7–9 pm

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

North Village Branch Library. For more information, contact Shelia Hargis: 291-1861; <shargis@austin.rr.com>.

Tuesday, January 7, 6:30 pm

SANCTUARY COMMITTEE MEETING & POTLUCK

Baker Cabin, TAS Baker Sanctuary, 112308 Lime Creek Road. Contact Marcie and John Wilcox: 219-8425; <jmwozo@earthlink.net>.

Wednesday, January 8, 7 pm

URBAN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT GROUP

1925 Rutland Dr., in Root Cause Project office. Contact Chuck Simms: 331-9630; <charlesvsi@aol.com>.

Thursday, January 9, 6:45 pm

TAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Highland Park Baptist Church, 5206 Balcones Drive. Contact Russ Nelson: 431-1420.

Saturday, January 11, 11:30 am

HORNSBY BEND BIRD OBSERVATORY MEETING & POTLUCK LUNCH

Following the monthly Hornsby Bend bird count (see page 4). Center for Environmental Research (building near entrance to Hornsby bend complex). Contact Rob Fergus: 347-7572; <fergus@travisaudubon.org>.

Tuesday, January 14, 6:30–7:30 p.m.

PLANNING GROUP MEETING FOR YOUTH BIRDING MINI-CAMP

At Threadgill's (the south location). Everyone is welcome to come and help plan for the next TAS Youth Camp. Contact Amy Sugeno: 512-396-3642 (San Marcos) or <amydave@thrifty.net>.

Thursday, January 16, 7 pm

TAS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

For details, see box on page 7.

Thursday, January 23, 7 pm

BIRD RECORDS COMMITTEE MEETING

Contact Ethel Kutac: 346-7659.

Monday, February 3, 7–9 pm

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

North Village Branch Library. For more information, contact Shelia Hargis: 291-1861; <shargis@austin.rr.com>.

Saturday, February 8, 11:30 am

HORNSBY BEND BIRD OBSERVATORY MEETING & POTLUCK LUNCH

For details, see January 11 calendar item.

TAS MEETINGS (CONTINUED)



Thursday, January 16, 7 pm TAS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Program: Herps of Texas

*Presenter: Andy Price,
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department*



Join us to hear herpetologist Andy Price of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department speak about Texas “herps” (snakes, lizards, turtles, and amphibians), especially those of Central Texas.

Location: Highland Park Baptist Church, 5206 Balcones Dr. (Exit MoPac at 2222, go west on 2222, turn left on Balcones Dr., stay to the left at the fork, turn right into church parking lot.) Bus routes: <www.capmetro.austin.tx.us>; 474-1200. Bicycle routes: <www.ci.austin.tx.us/bicycle/bikemap.htm>; 974-7240. **Refreshments provided.**

Wednesday, February 12, 7 pm URBAN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT GROUP

1925 Rutland Dr., in Root Cause Project office. Contact Chuck Simms: 331-9630; <charlesvsi@aol.com>

Thursday, February 13, 6:45 pm TAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Highland Park Baptist Church, 5206 Balcones Drive. Contact Russ Nelson: 431-1420.

Thursday, February 20, 7 pm TAS REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

Program (beginning at 7:30): “Freshwater for Wildlife.” Cindy Loeffler of Texas Parks & Wildlife and Myron Hess of the National Wildlife Federation (and possibly other speakers) will talk about water law and water planning and their impacts on wildlife in Texas. Cindy will discuss how the agencies are trying to balance water needs between people and wildlife, and Myron will discuss needs that are not addressed or problems in the way in which the needs for wildlife are actually implemented. See box above for location and directions.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



Ecological Literacy Days at Hornsby Bend

Starting in February 2003, volunteer workdays will be held at Hornsby Bend on the last Saturday of every month. You may remember these volunteer workdays as Ecological Literacy Days. Projects usually start at around 9 a.m. and last to around 1 p.m. and may include a natural history walk. Volunteers will also get to see parts of Hornsby Bend they might have never

seen before. Project plans include working on trails, kiosks, the birding shelter, and the proposed Travis Audubon House property on Platt Lane.

Many birders want to see owl nesting boxes and platforms installed at Hornsby Bend. There is an old barn there that could accommodate a nesting platform for Barn Owls. They like to have lots of space beneath their nests so that they have plenty of time to react to potential predators. We hope to work on building and installing nesting boxes and platforms for various

owl species next fall. For more information, visit <www.hornsbybend.org> or contact Tim Hissam at <tp_hissam1@yahoo.com> or 251-6067.

Fundraisers Needed for TAS Sanctuary!

The Sanctuary Committee must raise funds to build the Jackie Arnold Education Center here and to survey and fence the Baker Sanctuary, all of which is to be accomplished by 2005. The Sanctuary Committee urgently needs knowledgeable and interested people with grant-writing experience to assist us in our fundraising effort. If you are interested, you are invited to attend the next Sanctuary Committee meeting on January 7 (see page 14). For further information, contact Marcie or John Wilcox at <jmwoeso@earthlink.net> or 219-8425.

Volunteers Needed for Annual Baker Sanctuary Open House

At least 10 guides and 6 people to direct traffic will be needed for the annual TAS Baker Sanctuary Open House on Saturday, March 29, 9 a.m.–noon. If you would like to help, contact Marcie and John Wilcox at 219-8425 or <jmwoeso@earthlink.net>.



EDUCATION COMMITTEE CLASSES

Sparrow Identification Class

Starting on January 15

Last year, Kristina Ecton taught the intermediate-level Sparrow Identification Class. In August she left Austin to pursue a graduate degree. This sparrow season, Byron Stone will teach the class, and this year's class promises to be as great as those of previous years!

Byron has been an avid birder and lister since the early 1970s. He became enamored of sparrows when he found his first Fox Sparrow in a mixed-species flock in a small woodland near Luling 25 years ago. He spent most of the next two decades trying to figure out how to tell all those "Little Brown Birds" apart. He has traveled all parts of Texas to watch and listen to birds and has seen all of the sparrows that occur naturally in Texas. He has a special interest in birdsong and bird vocalizations. When he is not birding or at work in his private medical practice, he plays blues on one of his 12 harmonicas.

The class will focus on species that occur in Central Texas, and there will be four lectures and five field trips. The last field trip will be later in the season in hopes of finding Clay-colored Sparrows and singing Field Sparrows.

Lectures will take place on Wednesdays, January 15 and 22 and February 12 and 26, from 7 to 9 p.m. in a meeting room at First Presbyterian Church, 8001 Mesa Drive, in north-west Austin. The field trips will be on Saturdays, January 18 and 25, February 15, March 1, and April 12. Tuition is \$60. To sign up, contact Shelia at 291-1861 or <shargis@austin.rr.com>.



Backyard Birding Class

January 18

Kathy Reeves and Martha Renfroe return again to present our beginner-level Backyard Birding Class on January 18 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Center for Environmental Research auditorium at Hornsby Bend. The class is planned for persons who want to identify the birds in their yards and to learn ways to attract a greater variety of birds. The presentation will include slides and lecture on bird identification and landscaping with native plants. There will also be time to examine and compare feeders, birdhouses, and field guides. The registration fee is \$15 per person. For additional information or to register for the class, contact Martha at 418-8334 or <marthar@academicplanet.com>.



Waterfowl Identification Class

Starting on January 21

Our beginner-level Waterfowl Identification Class will once again be offered in January, and Amy Sugeno returns to teach the class. Amy works at Texas Parks & Wildlife in the Habitat Assessment Program for Threatened and Endangered Species, and she taught the class last year, with rave reviews.

Lectures will be on Tuesdays, January 21 and 28, 7 to 9 p.m., at the Center for Environmental Research auditorium. The field trips will be Saturday morning, January 25 (Hornsby), and Saturday and Sunday, February 1 and 2 (Port Aransas). The Port Aransas trip will include a boat ride to see the Whooping Cranes as well as coastal waterfowl that we wouldn't normally see around Austin. The boat ride will cost \$27-\$30 and is an optional part of the class. Tuition is \$55, part of which will cover Amy's expenses during the coast trip. Contact Shelia to sign up, at 291-1861 or <shargis@austin.rr.com>.

—Shelia Hargis



Beyond Binoculars: Observing Bird Behavior and Birding by Ear

Starting on February 17

Want to learn more about birds than their field marks and to expand your ability to make positive identifications in the field? This course will help you focus on the many aspects of bird behavior that you might be missing while you strain to see a bird that refuses to give you a good look through your binoculars. You'll learn to notice and accurately describe key aspects of the bird's behavior; its habitat; its size, shape, and posture; its song, call, or other sounds; as well as colors and field marks that jump out at you without the aid of binoculars. With this information, a reasonable idea of the possibilities in the locale, and your field guides, you will be able to positively identify many birds even when they don't grace you with a good look.

The class will be taught by Georgia Harper, a local birder with seven years' experience. Georgia realized several years ago that binoculars could actually get in the way in some circumstances where you really need more information than they can provide in order to make an identification. She spent six months one year without using binoculars and learned much about birdsong, behavior, and "jizz," information that she will share with you in this class.

The class meets in three lecture sessions, with individual field trips for practice on your own between sessions and a group field trip the last week of the course. Lectures will take place on Monday, February 17, from 6:45 p.m. to 9:15 p.m.; and on Monday, February 24, and Tuesday, March 4, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Center for Environmental Research auditorium. The group field trip will be March 8. Tuition is \$40. Contact Shelia to sign up, at 291-1861 or <shargis@austin.rr.com>.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE CLASSES (CONTINUED)

At Home with the Birds: Bluebird Class and Purple Martin Class

During the spring and summer, I was fortunate to share my yard with nesting Carolina Chickadees, Carolina Wrens, and Barn Swallows. The chickadee pair raised their family in a wooden nestbox that I had installed. The wrens used a plastic gourd, and the Barn Swallows built their own nest, using my front porch light as a base. It was fascinating to watch these birds as they raised their young, but the more I watched them, the more questions I had! Will they raise just one brood? How many eggs will they lay? Will I disturb the birds if I open the nestbox to check on the nest and babies? Will they migrate, and if so, when? And so many other questions.

So, along those lines, we are offering two classes—one focusing on bluebirds and the other focusing on Purple Martins. Each class will cover the following topics and answer questions such as the ones posed:

Life history: What do they eat and how much? What is the normal life expectancy? How many broods do they have per year? What is the clutch size? Do they migrate? If so, where and when?

Conservation issues: Is the population increasing, decreasing, or staying constant? If declining, what are the contributing factors? What can we do to help?

Attracting them to your yard: benefits, habitat requirements, nestbox specifications, predators.

Monitoring: Why? Procedure, Citizen Science projects.

Resources: Books, organizations, listservs.

BLUEBIRD CLASS

February 1

Bluebirds usually nest in cavities in a somewhat open area with short grass and a few trees nearby (this includes suburban residential areas). Even if you don't have this type of habitat, you and the birds can benefit from this class. The concepts are applicable to *all* cavity nesters such as chickadees, wrens, titmice, etc. The nestbox that "my" chickadees used was originally built as a bluebird box, but they didn't seem to mind.

The bluebird class will be taught by Pauline Tom, president of Texas Bluebird Society and new member of the North American Bluebird Society board of directors. The first portion of the class will consist of a lecture that covers the above-listed topics. Then participants will assemble a bluebird nestbox that they can take home with them to install in their yard or their neighborhood park. Or they can donate the nestbox to Hornsby, where it will be installed as part of the bluebird trail.



(For those who don't see themselves as mechanical, assembled nestboxes will be available.) The class will conclude with a walk along the bluebird trail.

The class will be held at the Center for Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend on Saturday, February 1, from 8 a.m. noon. The cost of the class is \$25, part of which goes to cover the nestbox materials. Contact Shelia to sign up, at 291-1861 or <shargis@austin.rr.com>.

PURPLE MARTIN CLASS

Starting February 19



Habitation of a martin house is more likely if the house is placed in an open area with a clearance of 16 feet in all directions, but there are other ways to entice martins to nest in less-than-ideal locations. Come learn what these methods are, in addition to the topics listed above.

Jenny Rasmussen will instruct the Purple Martin Class.

Jenny has been a martin landlord for two years, and she is very enthusiastic about martins and loves to share what she has learned at her home and the Hornsby Bend site. Jenny monitored the martins at Hornsby last year and her journal is available on her website at <www.TinyBirds.com/PurpleMartins/2002journal.html>.

She also has many photographs of purple martins that she would love to share (a few of



which are shown here), including photos of parents feeding babies inside the nest cavity. One of her photos was on the cover of the *Purple Martin Update* magazine this year, published by the Purple Martin Conservation Association. There is a lot of information about martins at the organization's website at <www.purplemartin.org>.

The lecture portion of the class will take place on Wednesday, February 19, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Center for Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend. Then, on Saturday, March 8, from 4:30 p.m. until about 5:30 p.m., participants will observe the Purple Martins as they return to their martin houses at Hornsby. Interested participants will also be able to accompany Jenny as she monitors the martins throughout their breeding season. Cost of the class is \$15. Contact Shelia to sign up, at 291-1861 or <shargis@austin.rr.com>.



OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

The following events are not Travis Audubon Society events but may be of interest.

**Mondays–Thursdays, 1:58 pm;
Fridays, 12:58 pm**

"Passport to Texas"

90-second radio program on KUT (90.5-FM) from Texas Parks & Wildlife.

Thursdays, 6:04 pm

Howie Richey's Eco-Calendar

Spot during *All Things Considered* on KUT, 90.5-FM.

Saturday–Sunday, January 25–26

Winter Bird Count, Bamberger Ranch, Johnson City



The count is on Sunday, but you are welcome to arrive on Saturday evening after 6 p.m. and spend the night at the center (bring your own linens and towels). A potluck dinner is scheduled for 7 p.m. that night (bring food that is ready to eat or takes little preparation). We may take a walk to search for night birds that evening. Sunday morning we will be getting up bright and early for the bird count. Coffee will be available, but bring your own "no cook" breakfast and lunch in your own cooler. The count will be from 7 a.m. till noon, when we'll meet for the tally. The terrain is rugged, so wear sturdy shoes and field clothes. Email me <Marsha.Reimer@tpwd.state.tx.us> to let me know if you are going and if you will be arriving Saturday evening (after 6 p.m.) or Sunday morning (at or before 6:30 a.m.), or if you would like to be placed on an email list for information on future bird counts. A map to the ranch is at <www.bambergerranch.org/map.htm>.



Saturday–Sunday, February 8–9
8th Annual Eagle Fest, Emory, Texas

Educational exhibitions and lectures; nature tours; Native American art and performances; gospel singing; live music; presentations by On the Wing Again, Last Chance Forever, and Animal Adventures America; children's entertainment; food; arts and crafts; vendors. Contact: 800-561-1182; <www.eaglefest.org>, <info@eaglefest.org>.

**Thursday–Thursday,
February 20–
March 6, 2003**

Birds of the Mayan Heartland

A birding, natural history, and archaeological adventure through southern Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize, led by Paul Wood, a bird researcher and conservationist for 40 years who has led 30 birding tours to the Mayan area and other countries around the world. Susan Allen Lynch, a member of Texas Ornithological Society, San Antonio AS, and Hill Country Birders, is organizing the trip. More than 300 species are expected. Limited to 18 participants. Contact Susan: P.O. Box 40, Rio Frio TX 78879; 830-232-6666; <sallen@hctc.net>.



Friday–Sunday, February 21–23

**Celebration of Whooping Cranes and Other Birds,
Port Aransas, Texas**

Organized birding tours, guided nature and birding boat trips, workshops, seminars, demonstrations, trade show, concessions. Contact: 800-452-6278, <portaransas@centurytel.net>, <www.portaransas.org/cranes.asp>.

Important Audubon Election Under Way in the Southwestern Election Region

Nominations are now open for the chapter-selected candidate from the Southwestern Election Region to the National Audubon Society Board of Directors. Any chapter in the Southwestern Region may nominate one candidate for the board this fall and winter. The election to choose the candidate will be held in the spring.

Nominees should be willing and able to:

- Help set overall national policies
- Articulate the issues and concerns of our region

- Participate in fundraising and maintain the fiscal integrity of National Audubon Society
- Attend four board meetings per year, each three days long
- Fill the position for the next three years, beginning December 2003

To suggest a nominee, contact Rob Fergus at 926-0999 or <fergus@travisaudubon.org>. Any nomination from our chapter must be sent to the Chapter Services Office by January 31, 2003.

URBAN HABITAT DEVELOPMENT (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

of soil and will keep surrounding grass and weeds out of the bed. If the land slopes, build up the border and the bed soil so that the top is level. That will make it easier and cheaper to water.

Scrape the Weeds Away

Use a hoe or shovel to clear away weeds and to level the area. Remove the weeds and soil and put them in your compost pile, or use the soil to raise the level of low spots in the yard.

Smother the Weeds

Stop growth of the existing grass roots and weed seeds by covering the area in the bed with thick layers (more than 1/4 inch thick) of overlapping newspaper or cardboard. You cannot have too many sheets of newspaper down to smother the roots and seeds. Just cut holes in the paper to install the plants. The rest of the paper will decompose in a few years. This is recycling at its best.



Good Soil Means Great Plants

Most of our area's native plants need lightly drained soil. If you have heavy clay soil, buy masonry sand or green sand (which has iron in it) to mix in with the clay soil and loosen it up. Never buy sandy loam—it is fine clay and sand, which we already have too much of. Buy something with organic matter in it, the more organic compost or Dillo dirt the better. The mix is typically called a garden mix. You might want to order 4 or 5 yards, and split the trucking cost with a neighbor.

Do not buy peat moss—our alkaline water will dissolve it in months, leaving air pockets in the soil that will kill roots.

How Much Soil and Mulch Is Needed?

The formula is as follows:

$$\text{Length (in feet)} \times \text{width (in feet)} \times \text{depth (in inches)} \\ \div 324 = \text{amount needed (in cubic yards)}$$

Calculate the amounts for soil and mulch separately, and purchase them. After having covered the existing dirt with newspaper or cardboard, fill the bed with 3 to 4 inches of soil and rake it level to an inch below the edges of the frame.

Add Mulch

Cover the entire bed with 3 to 4 inches of organic mulch. Cypress mulch lasts a long time, but any shredded bark or tree mulch interlocks well and stays in place during hard rains or sprinkling.

You can stop now and add plants later. Whenever the urge and money coincide, take your plant list and buy what you need. No rush—our bed looks good and will wait for you to plant.

Plant the Plants

To assure successful growth in a bed, select plants that all have the same requirements of soil type, sun, and water. To confirm their growing requirements, consult the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center website at <www.wildflower.org> (choose "The Plants," then "Hill Country Horticulture").

The number of plants to use is determined by the look you want and the amount you want to spend now. You can always plant more later. Buy from a reputable nursery that knows native plants and does not try to switch you to what just came in from

Florida. Plant mostly perennial native plants that may go dormant in the winter but will continue to grow each spring.

Put evergreen wildlife food plants in the middle or the back for year-round shape and for color, like cherry laurel, yaupon holly, Texas mountain laurel, agarita, agave, artemesia, Barbados cherry, basket grass, evergreen sumac, rosemary, southern wax myrtle, damianita, Gregg dalea, hymenoxys, Mexican honeysuckle, Gregg salvia, prairie verbena, yarrow, zexmenia, big blue-stem grass, Carolina jessamine, coral honeysuckle, crossvine.

Add some deciduous plants for color, variety, and wildlife food, such as Carolina buckthorn, desert willow, flameleaf sumac, Mexican buckeye, Mexican plum, possumhaw holly, roughleaf dogwood, American beautyberry, woolly butterfly bush, flame acanthus, fragrant sumac, pink and Texas lantana, white mistflower, purple coneflowers, and many more.

To plant, just move aside the mulch, scoop the soil out of a hole the size of the plant pot, and cut a hole in the paper below. Dig a shallow hole, add some soil around the root ball, set the plants at the same soil level as they were growing in the pot.

Build up a large doughnut of soil around the plant to make a water well. Water once to fill the holes, then move away for a while and refill with water to force out all the air and saturate the soil with water. The water will go down through the new soil into the existing soil, encouraging root growth down and out.

Install a Watering System

Watering is easy with soaker hoses and drip irrigation. Home Depot and similar businesses have bulk 100-foot rolls of soaker hose and clamp-on connectors so you can lay it out as needed, circled around the plants in the water wells.

Cover water wells and hoses with mulch. Remember that plants in a full-sun area use much more water and bloom more brightly than those in a full-shade area.

With drip irrigation or soaker hoses, turn the faucet on only a quarter turn so as not to blow out the hoses. It may take 4 to 6 hours to fill all the water wells and saturate the root ball and lower soil. The goal is to slowly soak down in and through all of the soil and force the air out. The mulch will keep the water from evaporating. As the topsoil dries out, the roots will go out and down in search of moisture, developing a strong root system that will be more drought tolerant.

Continue to water. Newly planted plants may need water every day for a week, every two or three days for a month, and twice a month during spring through fall if there is no rainfall or we have hot dry winds. Continue to water weekly or as needed for the first two full years, and the plants will be well established and can survive all but our worst droughts. Wilting plants need water, so look at them often and be guided by their water needs.

Happy wildscape planting!



—Chuck Simms

SANCTUARY NEWS

Colder weather arrived at the sanctuary during the early morning hours on November 26. Thunderstorms began at 1 a.m., and pea-size hail fell for about 10 minutes at 4:30 a.m. Some hail was still on the ground at 7 a.m., and the temperature was 35°. Our rain gauge collected 1.4 inches of rain, and this was the first rain that we received since November 6. The rain we received on the 26th brought our monthly rainfall total to 3.15 inches.

On November 18, I met Sterling Baker, the nephew of Lena Baker, and gave him a tour of the Baker Family Cemetery and Baker Cabin. Sterling's grandmother was Amanda, who was Lena's mother and A. J. Baker's wife after he divorced Josephine (Chell's mother). Sterling remembered visiting Lena Baker several times years ago, and he was last here when he attended her funeral in 1982. From our visit, I was able to piece together a little more of the Baker family history, and in turn, I shared with him some of the information that I found during the cleanup of the cabin area. I also gave Sterling a scanned copy that I made of a photograph that I found of his grandfather, A. J. Baker. Quite likely, Sterling is one of the last, if not the last, surviving direct links to the Bakers.

Some of our wintering birds have passed through and/or arrived. On November 5, I saw several groups of Sandhill Cranes fly over, and on that same day, I saw a large kettle of American White Pelicans heading south. We observed a Gray Catbird at our birdbath on November 23, and I saw a Spotted

Towhee in our backyard on November 25. The Northern Bobwhite Quail and Wild Turkeys are also still occasional visitors to our area and the kinglets, titmice, and chickadees fuss at us from a distance when we fill the seed feeders for our "regular customers."



We want to thank Sue Wiseman for donating a copy of *Birding in the American West*, by Kevin J. Zimmer to the sanctuary.

The Sanctuary Is Closed

The sanctuary will reopen on January 25.

Annual Open House Date Set

Mark your calendars for the annual TAS Baker Sanctuary Open House scheduled for Saturday, March 29, from 9 a.m. until noon. Last year we had a great turnout, but we ran short of guides. We need volunteers to help guide tours and direct traffic. This year the guides will park their vehicles at the Baker Cabin so that there will be more room in the parking lot for our visitors. We will need at least 10 guides and 6 people to direct traffic. Please let us know if you are willing to help with this event by contacting us at 219-8425 or by emailing us at <jmwoeso@earthlink.net>.

—John and Marcie Wilcox, TAS Baker Sanctuary Stewards

BACKYARD GARDENING



A Recommendation for Wafer-ash

Reminder: January is one of the best times for planting shrubs and trees (see the December 2002 issue of *Signal Smoke*, pages 12–13). Cooler weather and rains give plants a chance to get established before they have to face next summer's heat.

If you're looking for a shrub to plant, I'd like to suggest wafer-ash, *Ptelea trifoliata* (also known as hoptree or skunk-bush). A Texas native, wafer-ash isn't an ash. It's a member of the citrus family, but it's a citrus with twist. As one of its common names suggests, brushing against its foliage—especially fresh spring foliage—releases the distinctive odor of skunk. That's a botanical oddity guaranteed to delight the kids. Wafer-ash can grow to a height of 12' or more, though 6–8' is more typical. It does well in part sun and can tolerate shady conditions. During dry spells, it appreciates supplemental watering.

Wafer-ash provides one of the favorite foods for the caterpillars of the Giant Swallowtail. Those caterpillars start life looking much like bird droppings (another oddity guaranteed to fascinate kids) and grow to a length of about 2 inches before pupating. Their bird-drop camouflage must be pretty effective,

since these big black-and-yellow butterflies are common throughout Central Texas.

For years it has been almost impossible to find wafer-ash in nurseries, but now it's available in a few places. At last check it was in stock at Barton Springs Nursery (3601 Bee Caves Road: 328-6655). You can also find it in the Native Texas Butterfly Gardens, a nursery that has one of the best selections of native plants in our area (located in the A to Z Rental complex, just east of the ball fields in Bee Cave on Highway 71; 263-1804).

Austin Butterfly Count Results

July is hardly the best time to look for butterflies in Central Texas. It's usually too dry and it's almost always too hot for enthusiastic blooming of flowers. And without lots of flowers, you're not likely to find a whole lot of butterflies.

But just as the Christmas Bird Counts always take place in early winter—despite dismal conditions, especially in the North—July is the traditional month for butterfly counts across North America. So on the morning of July 6, teams of butterfly fliers gathered at Mount Bonnell to begin the 2002 Austin Butterfly Count.

It was warm and overcast, and things got off to a slow start with only four butterflies spotted at Mount Bonnell. But as the

(Continued on page 13)

NATURALIST'S CALENDAR

At times, January seems the most desolate time of year. It is our coldest, driest, foggiest, and cloudiest month. Hackberries and elms, pecans and walnuts, red oaks and ashes, willows and sycamores stand bare-limbed against cold, gray skies. Clumps of pale green mistletoe leaves only accentuate the trees' nakedness. (Bluebirds and waxwings, gorging on the white mistletoe berries, may have greater appreciation for this situation.)



The tall grasses are losing their autumn glory. They look a bit ragged, sagging under the onslaught of wind and rain. As they droop, any seeds still clinging to the tops of the stalks become accessible to ground-foraging sparrows, which are also busy scratching up seeds that have fallen to the ground. If you've wondered why there are so many sparrows here in winter—more than 20 species are regular winter residents—look no further than the prairie grasses. Their seeds sustain the hordes: Field and Chip-ping, Song and Lincoln's, Savannah and Vesper, Dark-eyed Juncos and Spotted Towhees. These, in turn, must be alert for the lightning strikes of Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks.

Even now there may be warm, sunny days. A typical January brings at least one day when the temperature approaches 80°. On such a day, you could be surprised by a few butterflies flying. Red Admirals, Buckeyes, Question Marks, Variegated Fritillaries, Dainty Sulphurs, and Painted Ladies may hibernate, then emerge to bask in the sun. Some will seek the few flowers that continue blooming through the winter—such as prairie verbena—but most obtain nourishment from animal dung or tree sap.

Then there's that rhythmic round of insect-like trills coming from the



creek in the evening. Although our coldest season hardly seems the time for amphibians, those sounds come from frogs. You might first guess they are spring peepers, but that well-known species ranges only as far west as Milam and Burleson Counties, east of Austin. Besides, the sound is more of a "creak" than a "peep." Those "winter creakers" are Strecker's chorus frogs, and this is their breeding season.

Chorus frogs are small (one to two inches long), gray to olive-brown, and marked with dark spots and blotches. Their skin is somewhat warty—more like a toad's skin than a typical frog's. Three species live in the Central Texas area: Strecker's, spotted, and upland. All three are marked with a long, dark blotch that runs from the snout through the eye to the shoulder, but only Strecker's has a smaller spot on the upper lip, just below the eye.

When it comes to frogs, identification by ear is usually easier than by eye. Strecker's chorus frogs call with a series of regularly spaced creaks or squeaks, kind of like a hamster wheel that needs oiling. The effect is especially noticeable when two or more males are calling together, which is the usual case. Male frogs near each other alternate their calls, possibly to distinguish themselves from their neighbors so that females can find them more easily.

Spotted and upland chorus frogs may also sing now, though they are less common than Strecker's. Both have calls like the noise produced by a hard plastic comb when you run your thumb along the teeth. Spotted Chorus Frogs (which usually sing only during or after rain) call with a rapid, rhythmic series of short trills, sounding like rapid sawing when two males alternate. Upland chorus frogs extend each call into a two-second-long trill.

A good place to learn more about these and other amphibians is the Herps of Texas website, at <www.lifesci.utexas.edu/research/txherps>. Also, see page 7 for information about the January 16 TAS meeting program on the herps of Texas, presented by Andy Price of Texas Parks & Wildlife, and look for information in the April Naturalist's Calendar about this spring's Texas Amphibian Watch seminar. —Bill Reiner



BACKYARD GARDENING (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 12)

sun came out, things started to pick up. And by the end of the day, the teams had found a record 40 species (out of the roughly 180 butterflies and skippers native of Central Texas). A few of these species—like the Sickle-winged Skipper—had never before been found here during a July count. But the commonest butterflies were the usual four: Clouded Skipper, Dun Skipper, Texas Crescent, and Fiery Skipper. As a bonus this year, the teams also kept track of dragonflies, recording 9 species.

If you'd like to view the entire list, visit the Austin Butterfly Forum's website at <www.main.org/abf>. Or for a hard copy, send me a stamped, self-addressed legal-sized envelope (John Kelly, 7442 Dallas Drive, Austin TX 78729-7770). —John Kelly



Earth Share
OF TEXAS

Earth Share of Texas represents the Audubon Foundation of Texas and the National Audubon Society in payroll deduction plans for charitable giving. For information, call 1-800-GREENTX or email <estx@earthshare-texas.org>.

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Join the Travis Audubon Society using the form at the right, and all of your dues will be put to use supporting local conservation, education, and research projects. You may also join both Travis Audubon and the National Audubon Society through the Travis Audubon website <www.travisaudubon.org>. As a member of National Audubon, you will enjoy Travis Audubon chapter membership and receive the quarterly *Audubon* magazine, and a portion of your dues will support national programs.

**Join Travis Audubon now and support
local birds, wildlife, and their habitats.**

Travis Audubon Society members receive 11 issues of the *Signal Smoke* newsletter, priority sign-up on local field trips, and educational classes. All of their annual dues support local projects and programs.

To join Travis Audubon Society:

Make your check payable to Travis Audubon Society and send with this form to TAS Membership Secretary, P.O. Box 1132, Round Rock, TX 78680-1132.

Travis Audubon Society

YES! I want to enjoy the benefits of Travis Audubon Society membership. Enroll me as a member of Travis Audubon Society. Enclosed is my check for:

- \$10 Youth Membership (up to age 18)
- \$20 Individual Membership
- \$30 Family Membership
- \$60 Wren Membership
- \$100 Titmouse Membership (bonus Travis Audubon T-shirt)
- \$250 Painted Bunting Membership (bonus T-shirt and book)
- \$500 Vireo Membership (T-shirt, book, and free workshop)
- \$1,000 Golden-cheeked Warbler Membership (T-shirt, book, workshop, special conservation briefings and outings)

This is a gift membership from _____

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