



Coordinators Corner

This summer has been as busy and fun as it's been hot and dry. Thank you to Ann and her family and to Layne and Jim for giving us the opportunity to cool off on the river and enjoy one another's company.

Lot's of tubing, hiking and music being enjoyed and Carrie organized a number of great weekend outings that I missed. Thank goodness I can live vicariously through my friends.

Our next meeting will be September 14th at 6:30 at the SMPD auditorium. We will do a pot luck and catch up all the great summer adventures. If you have any ideas for future programs/speakers bring them along.

Still looking for a new coordinator for SMTOWN.

Thank you all for all your contributions toward making this an awesome and fun group.

Kathy Rogers, Temp-Coordinator

Meetings in Review

Here is what we've been up to lately.

May meeting....Robert Nieto led us in a new experience at the Flying Armadillo Disk Golf Club. We played disc golf on their short course. Robert demonstrated several methods of throwing and scoring.

Summer meetings... No formal summer meetings. Regular tubing on Thursdays with music in the park afterwards.

Plan an Outing, Win \$50 Cash!!

Send the details of your outing to our new Yahoo Group to reach all TOWN members. It's simple! Include the Who, What, When, Where and you will be entered in the \$50 cash prize drawing at the end of the year. If you need assistance in getting into the group, come to the next meeting for help.

TOWN San Marcos Coordinators

Coordinator Kathy Rogers ...kathyanrogers@hotmail.com

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Upcoming Outings



Put on your shoes, roll up your sleeves and come out with us!! Here are the events planned for the next few months. Please RSVP the event email if attending. Be sure to visit our website and calendar www.townsanmarcos.org

Weekly hikes- Monday morning hikes led by Donna. Contact Donna at dbrowning@centurytel.net to be added to the list to receive weekly notices.

Weekly tubing - Thursday evening tubing on the San Marcos river followed by music in the park. Contact Judy at judya@grandecom.net to be added to the list to receive weekly notices

September 23-Oct 8 - TPW Pollinator Blitz Sign up to observe and identify pollinators and nectar producing plants, share photos, take daily challenges and join events. Register at <https://tpwd.texas.gov/education/bioblitz/registration>

Community Events:

Free birding hikes occur on the first Saturday of the month led by Stephen Ramirez. For details, go to <http://birdsiview.org/>

Local Trail Work Volunteers needed: see <http://www.smgreenbelt.org/NewsEvents.htm> for locations. For more information visit <http://www.smgreenbelt.org/SMNaturalAreas.htm>

San Marcos Farmers Market: From 8 to noon every Saturday in the town square



Birding at Meadows Center - April 22

Gabrielle Cole, a graduate student and ornithology assistant instructor at Texas State University led us on an informative hike through the Meadows Center. We spotted quite a few birds and bugs along the way.

A special treat was seeing the nest of a Red Tailed Hawk in the top of a Sycamore tree. Two hawks were attending the nest. Another perk was a late sighting of a summer tanager.

Cicadas are Singing Again

Judy A. spotted this cicada that just shed its skin.

Stop and listen when you are outdoors. You can hear them singing now as they emerge from the ground and begin their new life cycle. Some cicadas can be heard up to a mile away!

Cicadas spend one to 17 years underground depending on the species before emerging to complete their life cycle. The ancient Chinese considered these insects as powerful symbols of rebirth.



Texas Water Safari Race Watch - June 10

Thanks to all who helped make the outing so successful. Approximately 60 people came with noise makers and we raised \$214.00 for the San Marcos River Foundation.
 -Ann



Disc Golf - May 11

Four TOWN members reached out to learn how to play something new - Disc Golf. Robert was a great teacher as he showed us how to throw, roll and bank our disc shots. The short course was fun and eclectic with baskets in the trees, in the air (on top of a lighthouse) and in a hole in the ground. We all vowed we would do it again and bring friends!



Actual Quotes from Court Transcripts

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS: Unless the Circus was in town I'm going with male.

LAWYER: When he went, had you gone and had she, if she wanted to and were able, for the time being excluding all the restraints on her not to go, gone also, would he have brought you, meaning you and she, with him to the station?

OTHER LAWYER: Objection. That question should be taken out and shot.

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

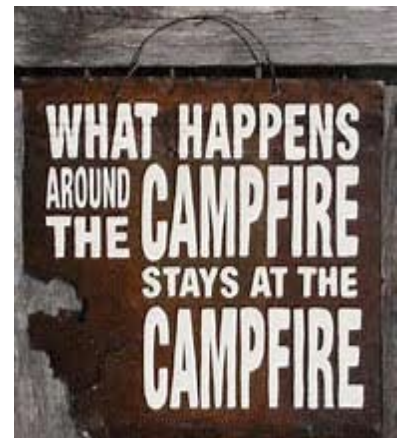
Matagorda Bay Nature Park - April 27-30

Six TOWN women and one very nice husband enjoyed a weekend on the Texas coast!

On the way, Nancy, Judie, and Jane toured the museum in Danevang with history about Danish immigrants, while Carrie ate a home cooked buffet lunch at the historic hotel in Blessing, and explored Palacios. Coincidentally, they ran into each other at a gas station in Matagorda. After getting situated, the Thursday arrivers began with a delicious seafood dinner! The next morning, the day started with a walk on the beach - picking up shells and identifying shore birds! The weather was good. That afternoon, the other three travelers must have been on the same "wave link" as all seven of us coincidentally arrived in Bay City within minutes of each other. Several toured the historical museum with artifacts from the French ship La Belle, and we all got to walk the trails of the Matagorda Bay Birding and Nature Center, which had beautiful grounds. Some took the opportunity to bird a little in the marshes on the way back to Matagorda. That Friday evening we, of course, ate more seafood at a popular restaurant! By the time we got back, the wind was blowing so hard that it pulled up the stakes on half of Lee Ann's and Gordon's tent. Luckily it was prevented from blowing down the river and into the bay after weighting it down with an ice chest and tool box and tying it to metal park posts! Later, three of us managed to do a little fishing from the park pier. The tenters survived the night, but thanks to generous TOWN ladies (Nancy, Judie, Jane, and Janet), they opted to stay in the wonderful beach house that fronted the ocean the next night.

When we all walked over the dunes to the beach Saturday morning, it looked like a tsunami had come in overnight! The beach we walked on the day before was not even there! The nesting area Janet and Carrie had walked to the day before was under water, as was everything else. Water was right up to the road from Matagorda leading to the LCRA park and the beach. The park staff said this only happens about twice a year when very strong winds blow from the South while a very high tide is also coming in. So, it was "special" that we got to experience this. The winds, tides, and river currents prevented us from kayaking over to the secluded and pristine white sands beach covered with numerous gigantic shells, which was all under water - but there's always "next time". While Gordon fished (and almost caught one), the birders went in several directions birding locally around the marshlands. A long bird list was compiled. Carrie and Lee Ann walked out the jetty, along the water's edge, and along the pier, having to do some wading to get back. Along this walk, a Speckled Kingsnake was seen, and a Blue-footed Booby was sited sitting alone, probably wind and wave blown from afar!

That afternoon, after waiting for the winds to die down a little, the kayakers set out to find St. Mary's Bayou - but maybe "next time". They ended up on another cut, but had fun exploring the channels through the grassy marsh. Janet and Carrie looked for birds, while Lee Ann and Gordon tried fishing from their kayaks. Gordon hooked a trout, but only an Osprey caught fish and carried them to his perch to eat. Meanwhile, Nancy, Judie, and Jane were at the harbor getting fresh shrimp for a shrimp boil dinner. We had our very best dinner of gulf shrimp, scalloped potatoes, corn on the cob, and chocolate pie! The company and conversation was also the best, as we visited and ate and listened to stories of Nancy's childhood years spent in Matagorda and Port Lavaca, and other tales of the group's exciting travels!



Sunday, the weather was great. Leaving, we each went our ways and did a little more exploring before heading home. Janet stopped by the Matagorda Bay Birding and Nature Center again, and spotted two Nutria with a baby. Nancy, Judie, and Jane drove around some areas of Matagorda Co. Carrie walked to the end of the pier, and also the trail to the marshland viewing pagoda. Coincidentally, Carrie ran into Nancy, Judie, and Jane at a gas station in Bay City, and they caravanned to lunch in El Campo. J

I feel that we will return someday to do this Matagorda trip again! - Carrie



Austin and San Marcos TOWN members turned out for this annual campout/kayaking weekend at the South Llano River State Park. Activities included birding, hiking, kayaking, tubing, eating together and visiting/playing games.

We started the weekend with some bird watching and a hike. The park has three birding sites and a great variety of birds visiting them. It was not hard to see some birds not found in our area including a cross between a painted bunting and varied bunting.

Two days were spent on the river. Kayaking on the S. Llano river is always a treat. The clear, cool water provides some small rapids and a lot of beautiful scenery. Most kayakers took a dip in the river, sometimes unplanned!

There is a fairly long stretch of the river inside the park for tubing. We put in at the bridge where you enter the park and took out at the path back to the campgrounds. The days were hot enough that the river offered a cool relief from the heat.

Several programs were offered by the park rangers. One evening program taught all about snakes and other herbivores with live examples. Another program involved fish prints - an old Japanese practice whereby fishermen documented their catch to be properly paid for their work.



We had a bountiful feast one night followed by a challenging game of bean bag toss and a campfire. It was hard to say goodbye after a great weekend and adventure with friends.



South Llano Campout, Con't.



Tick Warning!

Please let all your friends know!

If someone comes to your front door saying they are checking for ticks due to the warm weather and asks you to take your clothes off... and dance around with your arms up,

Do not do it!!! - - this is a scam!!

I wish I'd seen this yesterday...



When I was your age we had to swim to school.

A "Natural" Puzzle

Here is a nature puzzle for you. If you think you know the answer, email it to me layne1120@gmail.com (Last puzzle answer: a badger)

Balance is the name of the game. I love jumping from one rocky outcropping to another, living on the edge. My current home is all the mountain ranges in west Texas. In the early 1800's, I roamed with the antelope in fairly large herds. Then disappeared by the early 50's.

My current ancestors moved from Arizona to Texas and now I am back in force. My keen eyesight helps protect me from predators. I mainly eat grasses but in dry times I will also eat cacti.

I can live 10-20 years and have adapted to areas with varying temperatures and rainfall. In fact, I can go for weeks to months only getting moisture from what I eat and temporary puddles in rocks after a rainfall.

Now that I've told you all about me, can you guess who I am?

River Party - July 15

TOWN San Marcos members and friends gathered on the banks of the San Marcos river to cookout, float the river and play.

Under the shade from the pecan trees, everyone brought food to put onto the grill and shared a plentiful table of extra goodies. Then a relaxing dip into the river (and a few more) kept us cool and comfortable.



Two frogs were sitting on a lily pad, when all of a sudden, a fly came along. One frog put out his tongue, ate the fly, and started laughing hysterically. Soon the other frog joined in the laughter.



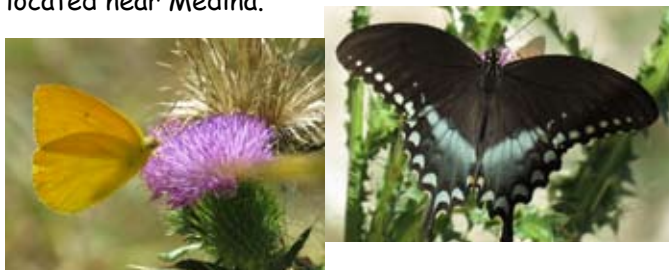
Later in the day, the other frog ate a fly and the two frogs burst out in laughter. As time went on, the frogs enjoyed the flies

so much that the sight of a fly would cause them to double up with pleasure (if it's possible for frogs to double up!). But of course, the most pleasure came when the fly was actually eaten.

A third frog hopped up to the first two and asked what was so funny. The first frog answered "Time." "Huh?" asked the third frog. The second frog explained:

Love Creek Butterfly Count - July 20

Jim and I had the pleasure of participating in the annual butterfly count at Love Creek. This property is a flagship property of the Texas Nature Conservancy and located near Medina.



Since the count date was pushed into July due to weather (normally it's in June), a lot of blooming plants had already gone past their prime. We were still able to spot over 60 species of butterflies as a grand total from all teams.

I especially enjoyed adding another butterfly to my personal list - the California Skipper.

Traveling Safe

Here are some trip tips to keep you safe from www.boldbetties.com



Before You Go

Selecting a weapon option that works for you. If you're comfortable with a gun and licensed to carry one, it can be a great way to protect yourself from predators of all varieties. Pepper spray or even a good knife can also be fantastic self-defense options. (Check with Park rules regarding weapons)

Checking your shoes. You should pay as much or more attention to the shoes you hike and camp in as you do to the ones you wear with your favorite outfit. Make sure that they fit comfortably and aren't showing signs of excessive wear.

Packing your kit. Any time you're going to be outside, away from your car and away from people, you want to make sure you have a few basic supplies. These include:

- Knife
- Flashlight
- Granola bars, protein bars, or high protein food easy to carry
- Water
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray



On Your Way

Let someone know where you're going. It takes a few seconds to send a text message and a few minutes to make a phone call. You don't plan on letting anything happen after all, you're a savvy, competent woman! but you don't want to run the risk that no one will be able to find you if it does. Include information about where you're going, what you're wearing, and when you expect to be back.

Drink regularly. Not drinking regularly can lead to dehydration and that's going to put a damper on your trip.

Pay attention. Always pay strict attention to your surroundings. You never know when a predator of either the two-footed or four-footed variety might be lurking. If you have a bad feeling, don't take chances. Act on it!

Know the symptoms of a problem. Become familiar with the symptoms of heat exhaustion and overexposure to sun both in yourself and in someone else. Avoid pushing yourself too hard. You don't have anything to prove.

Travel with someone. Sure, one of the best things about the great outdoors is the sense of solitude. Traveling in a pack, however, is sensible for a number of reasons. Always have your cell phone or a GPS locator on you.

Don't always take the same route. You don't want to be predictable, especially if you're out hiking or running alone. Change it up periodically to make yourself harder to follow.

If Something Goes Wrong

Call for help. Make a lot of noise. Many women are reluctant to draw attention to themselves, but if you're in trouble, you want to draw attention!

React quickly to a problem. That may mean taking some time to sit and rest or even potentially calling for help or sending one member of your party to get help instead of pushing on. If you or one of your friends is injured or becoming ill due to dehydration or heat exhaustion, make sure you react quickly to get them out of the sun and give them water or treat the injury.

Know your limits. Both physically and mentally. Don't go on an outing without conditioning your body and preparing your mind for the trip.

After Your Trip

Check your gear. Make sure that everything is still in good condition before you put it away for next time. Replace items like protein bars or items from your first aid kit that may have been consumed.

Report any problems. Find out who the local authority is and make sure you report any problems you had along the way.

Consider the problems you, personally, had. If you had an issue while you were on this trip with health or gear, take the time to solve it before you go out again.

Solar Eclipse - August 21

Get ready for the first solar eclipse in 38 years! The path of the eclipse starts on the Oregon Coast, passes through Idaho, Wyoming and Nebraska, then the NW corner of Kansas, into Missouri, Tennessee and S Carolina then following the path southward as the earth orbits.

If you are in zip code 78666 (San Marcos, TX), you will see a partial eclipse that peaks at 1:10 when the moon obscures 63% of the sun.



Protect your eyes!

View the eclipse only through special glasses. They should be designated with ISO 12312-2 certification and have the manufacturer's name and address printed on the product. These manufacturers are approved by the



American Astronomical Society - American Paper Optics, Baader Planetarium (AstroSolar Silver/Gold film only), Rainbow Symphony, Thousand Oaks Optical and TSE 17.