



Coordinators Corner

Happy Summer All!

Just a reminder that our next meeting is not until September 13th, 6:30, at SMPD. Lee Ann Linam has agreed to share the story of Aransas Wildlife Refuge and her family's work with whooping cranes.

Leah Murray will be our October speaker and will tell us about the San Marcos Aquatic Resource Center. In November Diane Phalen will bring us up to date on what's happening with the San Marcos Greenbelt Alliance and also share some pointers on foot care for outdoor women. We will wrap up 2018 at Ann Allen's home on Thursday, 12/6/18, at 6:00, with our annual Christmas Party.

Thank you to all of you that have arranged the great programs we have had this year. Also to those who are working on a new group communication system.

This is such an amazing group of women with everyone pitching in to keep things together and fun I know things will keep on rolling along better than ever.

Kathy Rogers

Meetings in Review

Here is what we've been up to lately.

January meeting... Kelly Eby, an urban forester now for San Marcos spoke about trees in an urban environment, how to plant, how to care for them and pitfalls to avoid.

February meeting... Katy Boyer from Monarch Outreach shared the fascinating lives and transcontinental flights of Monarch butterflies.

March meeting... Jon Cradit shared his love of caving with stories and photos that made us feel we were there.

April meeting... potluck and planning meeting

May meeting... Helen Laughlin, president of "All Things Wild Rehabilitation", spoke about her organization and brought some baby possums and a baby skunk she is currently rehabilitating to go back in the wild.

<http://www.allthingswildrehab.org/>

TOWN San Marcos Coordinators

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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. Contact Susan at susanm-geeusa@yahoo.com to be added to the list to receive weekly notices.



Tube Thursdays - tube the San Marcos river and stay for music in the park. Watch the Yahoo Group page for updates.



Members check the Yahoo Group page for outings as they are planned.

TOWN Support

TOWN members voted at the April meeting to send donations to the San Marcos River Foundation and the Greenbelt Alliance in support of our backyard playgrounds.

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, and 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.

Kudos to Susan for winning in 2017!

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

Hiking Group Outings

Weekly hikers have been exploring all around San Marcos and Central Texas this year. So far, hikes have been to ...

- Reimers Ranch
- Upper Pergatory - SM Greenspace
- Lower Pergatory - SM Greenspace
- Spring Lake - SM Greenspace
- McKinney Roughts Nature Park

Here are some of the beauties they found while hiking.



Cycling in Utah

TOWN member Susan M. getting some cycling time in Utah this spring.



Blue Hole Hiking and Music - April 27

It was a comfortable temperature for several TOWN members who met at Blue Hole for a fun evening.

Debbie B. led us on a hike around the park including some off trail views of Cypress creek. After exploring the park, we settled into our chairs on the lawn area bordering the creek for some music by songwriter AJ LeGrande and his wife.



Our entertainment was enhanced watching the little ones who were also enjoying the music. Halftime found a walk about by a pet pig on the opposite creekside.

A trip to the food truck or picnic basket rounded out the evening for a quintessential central Texas experience.

Denver Outdoor Womens Group

Never too old ...



McKinney Roughs Hike - February 19

On Feb 19 six TOWN members enjoyed a 5 mile hike along natural wooded trails at McKinney Roughs, an LCRA park located in Cedar Creek (near Bastrop). McKinney Roughs has over 1000 acres of varied landscape with nice overlooks, tall pines, river views and more.

The weather was perfect and the lunch at nearby Maxine's was delicious. Coordinated by Judy A and attended by Susan M, Carol G, Mary G, Barbara J, and Bonnie F. The Mon-



day hike group hikes at 9am on one of the many green spaces in San Marcos and occasionally plans hikes out of town.



Watch for the TOWN Yahoo User Group emails announcing the hike dates and locations. You must be a paid member of TOWN to be added to the TOWN Yahoo User Group.



Wildlife Rescue with Helen - May 10

Helen Laughlin with All Things Wild Rehabilitation brought some rescue animals with her for our May meeting. Helen has been working at rescuing hurt wild animals or abandoned babies for over 10 years. She shared her passion for rehabilitating these wild animals back into their natural habitat. We got to hold and observe a baby skunk and 3 baby possums.



Her work is all based on donations. If you would like to learn more, visit her website at <http://www.allthingswildrehab.org/>

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 blue crab)

I am small but mighty and you may see me in green or blue around central Texas. Since my diet includes fish, insects and ants, I love waterways. You may see me up and down the San Marcos river. I am swift so look quickly!

I raise my babies in a burrow in a dirt bank at the end of a 2-3 foot entrance. I may raise as many as 5 babies. They usually don't leave the burrow for 25 days. Mom and Dad raise them bringing fish and insects to eat. The floor of the burrow ends up covered in scales and bones and insect parts.

I may fly south in a very cold winter but like to live in central Texas year round like you.

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

Galveston Trip - May 3-6

Six TOWN women and friends took to the island of Galveston for a grand adventure. We rented a beach house on the bay side of the west end of Galveston. The house was on the bay with a boat deck and elevated deck. The top deck faced a bird island where we spent mornings and evenings watching a variety of birds including pelicans, terns, gulls and more. Being on the west end of the island, we could walk each morning from the house on the bay to the beach front. The beach offered long walks, shell collecting and sight seeing.



Friday morning, we took our kayaks out to the state park paddle trails. We chose the middle trail. Cate and Helen were novices and managed quite well. The trail was about 4 miles (we wandered through the wetlands some so that is as close as we could call it). A nice breeze pushed us along in the beginning and about the time we turned back, the water was like glass. One stop was to an observation deck built among the wetlands. We could see the entire area where all the paddle trails are set up. We finished the day with some excellent seafood dinners in the historic area of Galveston.



Saturday began with a superb breakfast with farm fresh eggs, garden fresh peppers and pico, fresh fruit and homemade bread. We really out-did ourselves!

Next on the agenda was a harbor tour on a boat off Pier 21. We followed some dolphins out and circled the harbor, went around the concrete ship (WWI relic) and back to the pier. It was great to get a water front view of the working wharfs of Galveston.

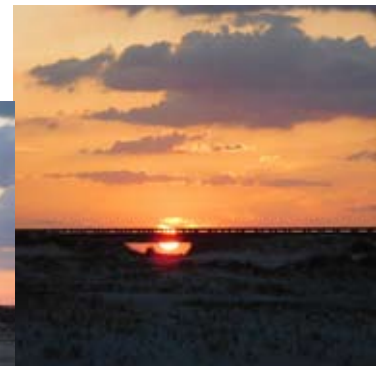


Then off to the Strand for some shopping and taking in the oldest continuous shopping district perhaps in Texas.

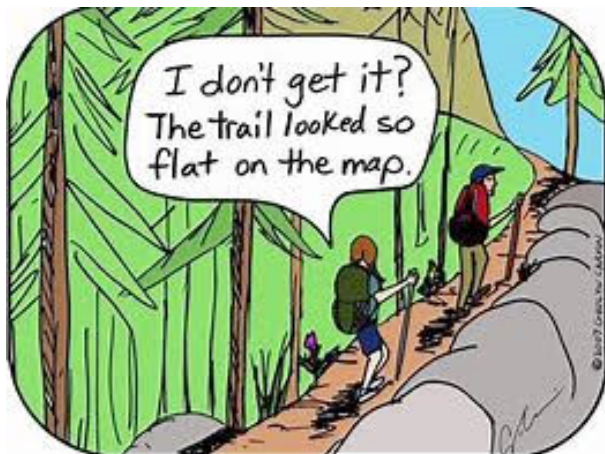
The last event was a walk on ride of the ferry over to Boliver and back. On the way back to the house, we stopped for some good two-handed burgers off Stewart Road.

Sunset found us at the San Luis bridge - the end of the island.

Sunday was our day to leave so we packed up and headed back into Galveston for another outstanding breakfast (not at our hands this time) at the Sunflower Bakery and Cafe. From there we said goodbye to Galveston but vowed we should definitely do it again!



Wimberley - A Dark Sky City



The International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) has designated the Wimberley Valley of Texas as an International Dark Sky Community, only the 3rd designation in Texas. One aspect of earning this designation is appropriate outdoor lighting. If any part of the light bulb is visible below the shield, it is not a 100% dark sky friendly fixture.





Butterflies Abound

The Gray Hairstreak, *Strymon melinus*, is a small gray butterfly found in all 48 contiguous states.

Like several hairstreak butterfly species, the Gray Hairstreak butterfly have orange dots on the outside of their wings. Their wings are about 1 to 1.25 inches from tip to tip. It has bright red eyespots near the tips of its wings next to the small tails that are used to deter possible predators.

When resting, the Hairstreak bask in the sun with its wings stretched open. When in flight, they are fast, using an array of flight maneuvers that make it difficult to visually track. This is probably helpful in avoiding an airborne attack.



photo by Judy A.

Hairstreaks often move their hindwings together in a rubbing motion while at rest to help draw the attention of potential predators to the false eyes and false antennae simulated by the thread-like hindwing extension and dark spots on the ventral hindwing.

Host plants are blooms and fruit of mallow, pea, cotton, clover, beans, and other plants. Caterpillars range in color from gray to pink.

Ants tend to and protect the caterpillars. Caterpillars have glands that 'call' ants and the glands secrete a sweet liquid. Ants drink this liquid and in return, protect the caterpillars.

Ultimate Guide to Camping and Backpacking

The link below by tripbuzz can help your plan your trip, what to pack, apps and more with 40 hand-picked resources. Check it out!

<http://www.tripbuzz.com/camping-backpacking-guide/>

Protecting Shamrock Island

The Nature Conservancy is working to bolster the declining sands of Shamrock Island Preserve and maintain one of the most important bird rookeries in the Gulf of Mexico. Shamrock is one of the few nesting rookeries along the Texas coast, especially for brown pelicans.

"Birds can't just nest on any island," said Julie Sullivan, coastal restoration coordinator for The Nature Conservancy in Texas. "It has to meet certain criteria—there has to be a good food source and it has to be free from predators, among other things."

Shamrock Island lacks the underwater sand bar that protects the island from land loss during storms. To prevent this, the Conservancy has placed its biggest bets on breakwaters, which protect from erosion.



A total of 27 breakwaters have been built around Shamrock since 2005, and the results are encouraging—so much so that Sullivan hopes to install three more, which should reduce erosion by nearly 80 percent.

