ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COUNCIL

POST OAK

VOLUME 26 NUMBER 10

NOVEMBER 2926



RAIN LILIES • MOLLY HOLLAR WILDSCAPE • MARIAN HILER PHOTO

November Zoom Meeting



See more on page 6

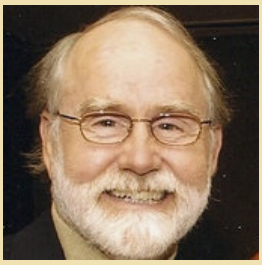
Did you miss this talk?

Watch it any time here.

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From the President Dick Schoech



An Easy Task

That Benefits Your Yard

Most everyone loves helping our environment but hates yard work. This list suggests free and simple, evidence-based ways to assist nature and improve our property.

The best thing to do is nothing: Leave your leaves where they fall.

Only mulch leaves if they accumulate in piles. Don't rake or bag your leaves, as this creates dust and aggravates allergies. Be sure to tell your neighbors how they can do nothing and nurture their yard at the same time.

Decaying leaves are just as — or more —attractive than dead lawn grass.

Mowed leaves protect your yard and especially your grass from freezing weather. If you must mow, leave an unmowed strip between mowed areas so critters can quickly and easily find shelter from the elements and predators.

Decaying leaves attract winter and spring birds that hunt for food in your yard. One of the joys of spring is seeing flocks of robins and cedar waxwings searching under yard leaves for insects and worms. Robins especially are fun to watch since their eyes are on the side of their head and they can easily see, hear, and jab food as they flip leaves and uncover their next meal. One eye faces the ground while the other eye scans for cats, hawks, and other predators.

Decaying leaves are a great fertilizer, too. They turn into mulch that holds nutrients and retains water, which is especially important as our area gets less rain. Hopefully, your trees provide enough leaves to cover the ground until spring. If not, before trash pickup day you can usually find bags of leaves from people unaware of the benefits of doing nothing.

continued on page 4



ACC POST OAK

Our mission: ACC works to protect Arlington's natural environment through education, community service, and advocacy for a sustainable future

Published 10 times a year by
Arlington Conservation Council
P.O. Box 216
Arlington, TX 76004 – 0216

John Darling, editor
1darling@sbcglobal.net

Contributors
Annabelle Corboy, J. Lewis Corner, Grace Darling, John Darling, John Dycus, Marian Hiler, Ann Knudsen Carol Marcotte, Guy Random, Dick Schoech, Michael Smith

Proofreaders
Marian Hiler, Grace Darling

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of every month. Please send them to *1darling@sbcglobal.net*.

From the President continued from page 3

Asking a neighbor for her bagged leaves provides a great opportunity to discuss the value in letting nature be natural.

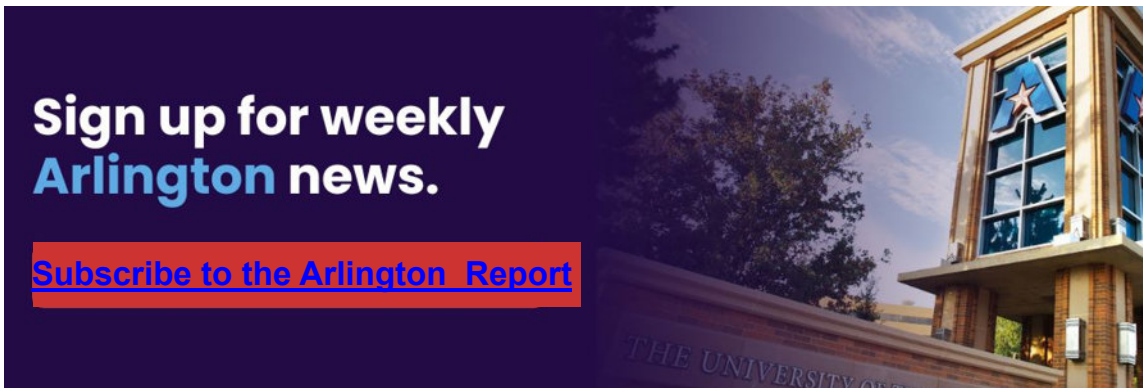
By doing nothing, you support biodiversity and build your yard's ecosystem. If you have a water feature like a pond, fallen vegetation provides places for amphibians to overwinter. When spring approaches, emerging pond insects feed on the decaying leaves, and then amphibians feed on the insects to build energy and fatten up for laying eggs and other essentials for the next generation. This is important since ponds and wetlands benefit amphibian species, which have declined 60% in the last 200 years.



This do-nothing awareness accumulated over many years of my own home ownership. The first year after buying the house I rented a tractor with a grader to smooth out the dirt, then planted grass and watered profusely. I discovered I had too many trees for the sun to cultivate a typical St. Augustine lawn.

Only after becoming a Master Naturalist did I discover my mistakes, and now the accumulated mulch fertilizes native trees and perennials that produce food and shelter for the appreciative birds, bugs, and animals like raccoons, possums, squirrels and foxes.

Do something for the planet — by doing nothing at all.



Lights Out, Texas! Lights Out, Arlington?

We've just about reached the end of this fall's peak migration period, so the topic of migrating birds being killed by nocturnal lighting is not quite timely. It is critical to the health of our falling bird population (about three billion birds lost in the last 50 years in North America), but still a little late for this season.

However, some migrating birds will continue their southern journey across our area through November. And this recent photo of the Skybeam at the National Medal of Honor Museum reminds us how we may adversely affect the natural world, even with the best intentions. This sort of light is a migration hazard. Although the museum says the light is turned off at 11 p.m., a check of the **Migration Dashboard** for Tarrant County shows that large numbers of nocturnal migrants have recently flown through before that time.

Sadly, it looks like Arlington is not part of Lights Out, Texas! You can learn more about the program **here**.

The problem is huge, but one of the answers is incredibly easy: Turn off unnecessary lights at night.



November Zoom Meeting: Wednesday, Nov. 4

Bird Migration

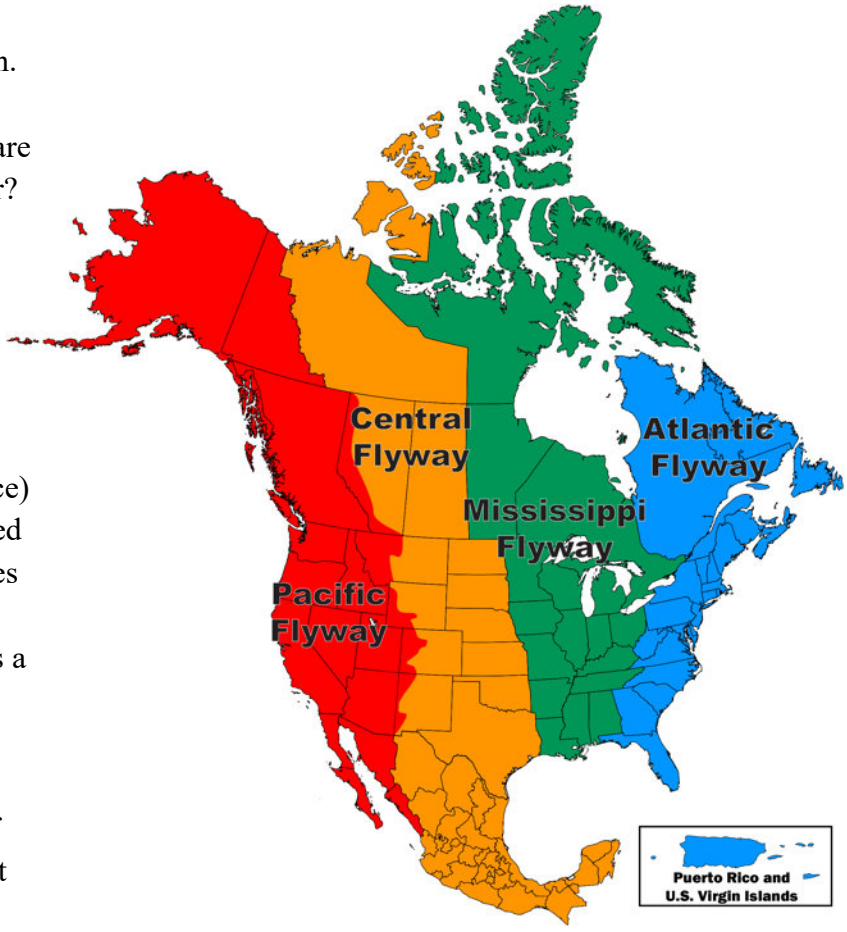
North Central Texas on the Flyway

Charley Amos

Seasoned Birder and Naturalist

Did you miss this? Watch it any time here.

Every spring and fall, millions of birds wing their way across North Texas in their ages old migration. This presentation will explore the basics of bird migration — think how, why, when, where. How are birds able to arrive at the same location every year? Why do they migrate in the first place? What hazards do they face on their journey? Seasoned birder Charley Amos will answer these questions and tell us even more interesting facts about migrating birds.



A Texas Master Naturalist and past president (twice) of the Fort Worth Audubon Society, Charley has led birding trips all over the state. His avian adventures have ranged far afield to Costa Rica, Ecuador, Europe, and Canada, but his favorite destination is a lot closer to home — Big Bend National Park.

Charley's love of nature calls him to volunteer at local parks leading nature walks for enthusiasts of all ages. He regularly helps out at area native plant endeavors, including the Fielder House garden, Knapp Heritage pollinator garden, the greenhouse for the Molly Hollar Wildscape, and the gardens at River Legacy Science Center. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees from UTA.

What Happened to Zero Waste?

On a recent weekend people were zooming around one of a local university's parking lots in tiny race cars.Maybe an appealing little adventure long ago, but now it's just another thing that triggers thoughts of "fiddling while Rome burns." Why? Let's see, noise pollution, air pollution from recreational burning of fossil fuel, tiny rubber particles shed from tires sliding on asphalt, and lots of trash, some of it recyclable. Is it reasonable to think that anyone using the university's property would be required to plan a zero-waste event? Based on the heap of trash left behind, apparently not. We're the most wasteful country in the world; many more zero-waste events would help us lose that sad title.











Positivity John Dycus and John Darling

Here is more positive environmental news, thanks again to John Dycus. Like me, he sees way too many negative developments, but he finds answers, as you see on this page. Try it! See something positive you like? Send **me** a link to something good. Just try to spot new things so we don't repeat ourselves.



Earth Hope is too good. No single story jumps out because they're all, well, hopeful. The September page is titled, "How to save our planet? Just add water." Go ahead and subscribe to this and be amazed by deserts coming back to life and so much more.



Here's a **greenhouse** dedicated to lettuce on the roof of a Berlin supermarket. Of course such things are perched on a scattering of restaurants and markets all over the world, but this is Germany's largest at almost 2,760 square meters. Check the link for of all its many benefits.



Dig Energy has completed its first commecial project for a geothermal heating and cooling system at a Boston business. Two things here: The idea that geothermal is the most efficient way to heat and cool buildings, and Dig's innovations in drilling that lower noise, water use and cost. It all sounds great.



The **Great Bubble Barrier** sounds wonderful. The company pumps air through a perforated pipe on a riverbed to make a curtain of bubbles that lifts trash to the surface where natural flow guides it to a collection station. The claim is 86% of trash intercepted, and the bubbles increase oxygen, reducing harmful bacteria.

Our YouTube Videos Marian Hiler

Take a look at any of our programs since January 2024 on ACC's YouTube channel.



Nature's own fireworks, the enchanting firefly
Ben Pfeiffer
October 2026



Creative Regionalism, Plants, and Natural Systems
David Hopman, September 2026



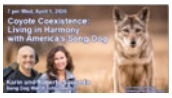
Exploring Water in All Its Wonder
Bill Gaze and Traci Peterson
August 2026



Endangered Beauty on the Wing
Carol Clark
June 2026



Seeing Wild Texas, One state park at a time
Suzanne Tuttle
May 2026



Coyote Coexistence: Living in Harmony with America's Song Dog
Karin and Roberto Saucedo, April 2026



Beyond Parks – Update on the redesigned department
Gary Packan, March 2026



Horned Lizards and Horny Toads
Michael Smith
February 2026



2025 Environmental Progress; Planning for 2026
January 2026



The Wonderful World of Bats
Hester Schwarzer and Ellen Ravkind
November 2025



Spiders in the Garden
Meghan Cassidy
October 2025



Soils for Wildlife
Sam Kieschnick
September 2025



Where Are Reptiles and Amphibians Going … and Who Is Helping?
Michael Smith, August 2025



EV Myths and FUDs (Fears, Uncertainties, Doubts)
Eric Pratt, June 2025



Why we should care: Covering the environment at FW Report
Nicole Lopez, John Geer, May 2025



Tarantulas: They're awesome. Ooh, tell us more
Erika Swyryn, April 2025



Symbiosis in Your Backyard: Insects, Trees and the Link Between Them
Kimberlee Peterson, March 2025



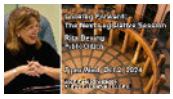
Prairie Seekers Training: Learning in Nature's Classroom
Kate Morgan, February 2025



2024 Environmental Progress; Planning for 2025
January 2025



What I learned in South Africa: climate adaptations for Texas plants
Laura Miller, November 2024



Looking Forward: The Next Legislative Session
Rita Beving, October 2024



Solar Hybrid Pumping Solution
Larry Bentley
September 2024



Native Plants Are for the Birds
Charley Amos
August 2024



Dallas-Fort Worth High-Speed Transportation
Ian Bryant, June 2024

In Case You Missed It Grace Darling

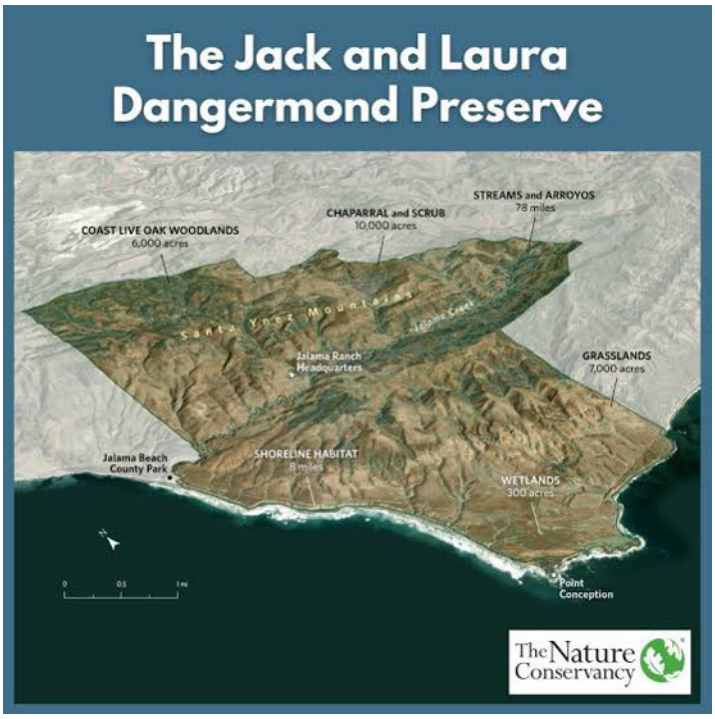


Ted Turner, the media mogul turned conservationist who died May 6, 2026, quietly assembled one of the most consequential **private land conservation efforts** in American history – restoring bison herds, replanting longleaf pine forests, and sheltering endangered species across approximately 2 million acres spanning multiple states. His restoration project in Montana, particularly at the Flying D Ranch, transformed overgrazed land into a thriving ecosystem by replacing cattle with bison and promoting wildlife conservation. This initiative has not only increased biodiversity but also set a benchmark for private conservation efforts across the United States. His land holdings, managed under the Turner Endangered Species Fund and Turner Enterprises, represent a model of market-driven, private conservation that has drawn both admiration and scrutiny from environmentalists, ranchers, and policymakers alike. As federal conservation budgets face increasing pressure and public land debates intensify, Turner's approach offers a rarely examined template for what large-scale ecological restoration can look like outside government control. [political.org/2026/05/07]

Turner's project has had significant ecological impacts.

- **Bison Population** — The Flying D Ranch now hosts around 4,500 bison, contributing to the restoration of grasslands.
- **Wildlife Diversity** — The ranch supports various species, including elk and wolves, enhancing the local ecosystem.
- **Land Area** — Turner's efforts [in Montana] span nearly 130,000 acres, focusing on habitat restoration and conservation.
- **Conservation Benchmark** — His ranching practices have become a model for private bison conservation, influencing public restoration programs.
- **Long-term Vision** — After Turner's passing, the ranch is expected to remain a conserved working landscape.

For much more on Ted Turner's conservation efforts, search for his name in *montanaoutdoor.com, economictimes.indiatimes.com,* or *newsbreak.com.*



Continuing with the theme of very rich people doing some very good things, Jack and Laura Dangermond built a $4.1 billion fortune from a company they started with $1,100 in savings in 1969. The Dangermonds founded Esri, the geographic information systems software company behind much of the mapping technology used across modern conservation, government, and scientific research.

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In Case continued from page 10

Nearly five decades later, they made the largest single philanthropic donation in the history of The Nature Conservancy to protect land most Californians will never be allowed to set foot on.

Their gift enabled The Nature Conservancy to purchase the Cojo/Jalama Ranch at Point Conception in Santa Barbara County, securing **24,000 acres and 8 miles of California coastline** that had remained largely untouched for generations. The land is home to 39 different threatened and endangered wildlife species and has been described by conservationists as a site of extraordinary biological richness, one significant enough that its coastline is visible from space.

Point Conception carries deep historical and cultural weight beyond its ecology. The Nature Conservancy describes it as a confluence of ecological, historical, and cultural values spanning Native American, Spanish, and American history, a place where multiple layers of California's past converge on a single stretch of largely undeveloped coast.

"We want to inspire more people to give major contributions toward conservation," Jack Dangermond said at the time. "That's the only reason we've chosen to share our involvement. We want to set an example. Conservation isn't just being nice to animals or plants, it's investing in the continued life support systems of humans and all other species on the planet."
[Wonderae, Facebook, 9/27/26]

On Thursday, October 29, Arlington Mayor Jim Ross delivered his annual State of the City address. The event tied together Arlington's past, present, and future, highlighting our growth as we celebrate the city's 150th anniversary. A special highlight was a segment honoring the volunteer work and preservation efforts of our very own **Geraldine Mills,** after which Mayor Ross presented her with the Mayor's American Dream City Award. Our own Josephine Keeney said it best: You deserve it, Geraldine Mills, you are an amazing woman and we are very lucky to be your friends. P.S. And



thank you for your many years of shelter and support for ACC in its mission – the Editor and staff.
Toward the end of his address, Mayor Ross "circled back to the city's birthday. He specifically referred to the celebrations of the 150th year and the tree-planting initiative the city has undertaken. He said the trees were a symbol of the future. "You plant them knowing you may not be here when they reach their full height," Ross said. "You plant them because someone else will enjoy the shade, someone else's children will climb their branches, someone else's grandchildren will sit beneath them. Planting things for people we will never meet."
[fortworthreport, 2026/10/29]

From *bezos earthfund.org,* this introduction and three recent press releases: The **Bezos Earth Fund** began in 2020 and is guided by Jeff Bezos and Lauren Sánchez Bezos's belief that Earth is the best planet in this solar system. The initial $10 billion commitment will be dispersed to partners in countries and regions all around the globe to support the development of innovative solutions that help protect and restore the natural world so the planet remains a place we can—and want to—live on.

* In neighborhoods across eight American cities, underutilized and overlooked land is trading gray for

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In Case continued from page 11

green, with the Bezos Earth Fund announcing a $100 million investment as part of its **Greening America's Cities initiative** to fund community-designed parks, beautiful large scale green space, and immersive outdoor areas in Allentown, Pa.; Atlanta; Cleveland; Indianapolis; Little Rock, Ark.; Los Angeles; Salt Lake City; and Sioux Falls, S.D. Funding will spread across each of the eight cities and will incorporate native plants and trees, new parks, and urban wildlife habitat alongside recreational amenities, blending community values with ecological function. Designs vary by city and reflect what residents said they needed most – whether that be shaded play areas, walking paths, gathering spaces, or cultural programming. These spaces are expected to open gradually over the next several years, with long-term operations and maintenance plans in place.

This is the second round of funding, with a total of $150 million deployed across 11 cities so far, towards its goal to invest a total of $400 million to prioritize green spaces as essential infrastructure across the United States. Projects from the first round of the program, which started in 2023, have resulted in hubs that combine urban agriculture, fresh food access, and local entrepreneurship; community gardens on previously vacant land; restored outdoor trails that were previously full of debris and materials; and vibrant parks that promote nature and local landscapes.

* Phoenix Species Project launches global effort to bring 100 of the world's most threatened species back from the brink. Led by **Leonardo DiCaprio's Re:wild** and the Bezos Earth Fund [each contributing $100 million], the project is the largest single philanthropic initiative dedicated exclusively to recovering critically endangered species across continents. "One hundred species, thirty countries, and a real commitment to bringing them back. Not managing their decline. Recovering them. That's the whole difference. We know how to do this. We just have to stay committed long enough to see it through."

The Phoenix Species Project is partnering with the Reverse the Red Action Partnership on this to support governments to identify priority species and activate recovery actions for every species in need. Drawing on examples from across taxa, the authors of a 2021 peer-reviewed essay in Conservation Biology argued that even species reduced to tiny populations can recover with sufficient conservation funding, committed local partners, and action.

* The Bezos Earth Fund is granting more than $25 million for ocean conservation efforts in the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, and Vanuatu spanning more than 625,000 square miles of ocean, an area larger than Alaska. The grants will support major new conservation efforts across the region, including Papua New Guinea's first large offshore marine protected area, new protected areas in Tonga, advancement of the Cook Islands' Marae Moana vision, efforts to identify and protect important ocean habitats in Kiribati and Vanuatu, and development of some of the world's first marine protected area proposals on the high seas under the UN High Seas Treaty.

For generations, Pacific Island communities have cared for ocean areas that support countless species including whales, sharks, sea turtles, coral reefs, as well as fisheries. These grants will help keep those waters healthy and productive, while supporting new efforts to protect ocean life both within national waters and on the High Seas.

Bits & Pieces

The Terse Treehugger



Sometimes it's the simple things, like Horseherb crowding out Bermuda in a vacant lot.

Too simple?

That's all right.

Hard Winter Ahead?



Maybe this is old news, but it's still a mystery (maybe?) why Gulf fritillaries keep making babies so close to our average first freeze Nov. 22. No chance to grow up and migrate. Better start looking for some thick leaf litter.

Rectangular Color Riot



Many dozens of Post oaks are gone, thanks to our new recreation center and its huge parking lot, but here's a new bit of native life introduced by the remarkable wildscape greenhouse crew. So many pollinators!



Visit ACC's Facebook page and Discussion Group



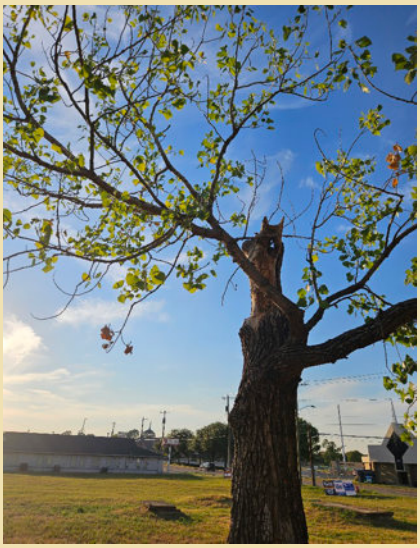
Red buckeye seed capsule.

Join us and act locally. Use the application form on the back page.



Question Corner Professor J. Lewis Corner

Q: Here's a question all the way from Pantego. Every day I go by a vacant lot where I see the saddest old tree *(Ann Knudsen photo)* barely clinging to life. Nothing else there but neatly mowed grass, so this is a real sore thumb that ought to be cut down and dumped. The owner doesn't want to fool with it and sort of told me to get lost. But I'm right, aren't I?



A: About getting lost? Yes, you should. However, this is an extreme case for the value of dead (or nearly dead) trees. In this barren space we can't think much in terms of habitat for woodland birds and mammals, so that leaves public safety and invertebrates, admittedly an odd combination. Safety: If it falls, nothing gets hurt but some scruffy Bermuda grass, and that's fine. So that leaves insects and other invertebrates, probably not a diverse group here, but they're not hurting you, just quietly decomposing the dead parts. So really, get lost. Next!

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Arlington, TX 76013
(817) 271-2138
john@rdycus.com

Paul Knudsen's ArlingtoNOW.com Event Photography
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817.265.4441

Law Office of
SHANE GOETZ
3705 N Shadycreek Dr
Arlington, TX 76013
shane@goetzlawtx.com
817-265-2902
Fax: 817-549-4438

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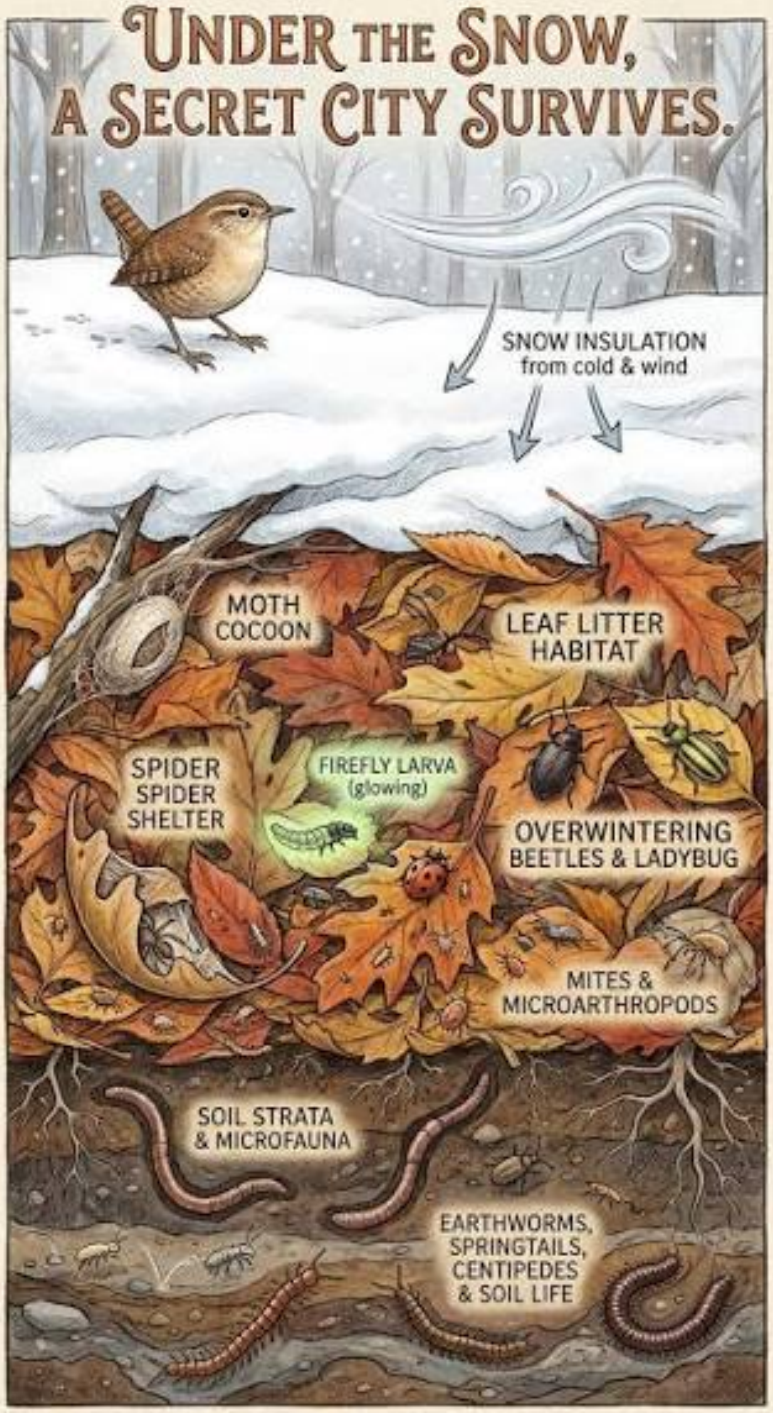
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Last *Datura* flower of the season.

My Nature Notebook

A bunch of guys were raking up all our leaves so Brainiac and me went to play in the Creepy Old Guy's leaves. We kind of made a mess but you really couldn't tell in his yard so that was OK. Of course he caught us but he was all happy for once and said just look here at my new Leave the Leaves signs. There's good stuff here like "Your leaf cleanup just killed 4000+ organisms" and "A bare yard in October is an empty one in June," and my favorite, "Your yard doesn't need to be clean. It needs to be alive." And I just heard one that ought to be on a native plant sign - "Don't make your yard compete with itself." Then Brainiac had to say that a thick leaf layer hurts lawns. That's why our leaves are going to the dump. And the C.O.G. said that's the worst thing. People should have less grass and more native plant beds with lots of leaf litter. Don't you kids like fireflies?



Leaf litter is critical winter habitat. Protect our hidden neighbors.

Heartfelt Recommendation. And as biased as can be.



Randol Mill Park Carol Marcotte

These are beautiful days in Randol Mill Park. Mornings are cooler, the leaves are changing, and fall flowers are in bloom. Recently, volunteers Faith Salfen, Ramona Gratton, Dick Schoech, and Carol Marcotte worked in the Pond Triangle Garden, getting it ready for the coming seasonal changes. Jose Aguilar, Parks Department North District Supervisor, stopped by with wildflower seed for the prairie area!



From left, Ramona Gratton, wildflower seeds, Jose Aguilar, Dick Schoech.



Right now yellow is a big favorite at the Pond Triangle Garden. *From left,* Bitterweed, Common sunflower, Esperanza, Gregg's mistflower, Skeletonleaf goldeneye, Texas lantana, Zexmenia. Carol Marcotte photos.

continued on page 18

Randol Mill Park continued from page 17

The last Randol Mill Park greenhouse is gone. The smaller of the two has been leveled. More details to follow as to what the Parks Department plans to do with the area.

Years of hard work — and some fun, too — at the old RMP greenhouses. The Wildscape greenhouse crew planted, propagated, and potted natives for the annual native plant sales and for use in city parks.

Left, Josephine Keeney *(foreground)*, Kay Sekio, Dana Austin, Joe Martinez, and college students hard at work in the old big greenhouse. *Right,* the 2019 native plant sale, where plants were displayed between the now-removed greenhouses. The one on the right was recently demolished *(below).* Carol Marcote photos.





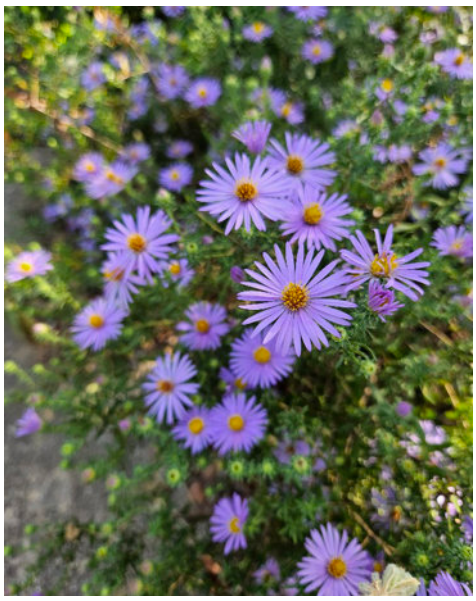




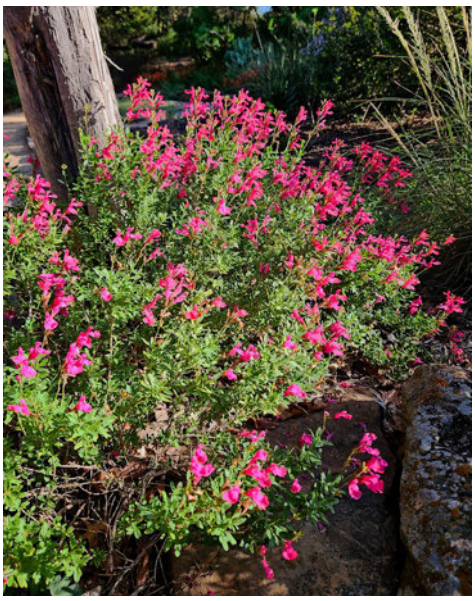
Wildscape Update Marian Hiler

Rain. Glorious rain. It finally arrived along with cooler temps this past month letting us say good-bye to the worst of this summer's oppressive heat. Seemingly overnight, the wildscape exploded in shades of white, pink, purple, red, and orange, looking more like a second spring than autumn. Even the spring-blooming Mexican buckeye returned for an encore. But of course, it's fall that's coming so we are taking advantage of this excellent time to plant.

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Above from left, Fall aster, Drummond's aster, Autumn sage. Ann Knudsen photos. *Below from left,* Black dalea, Gregg's mistflower. Ann Knudsen photos.





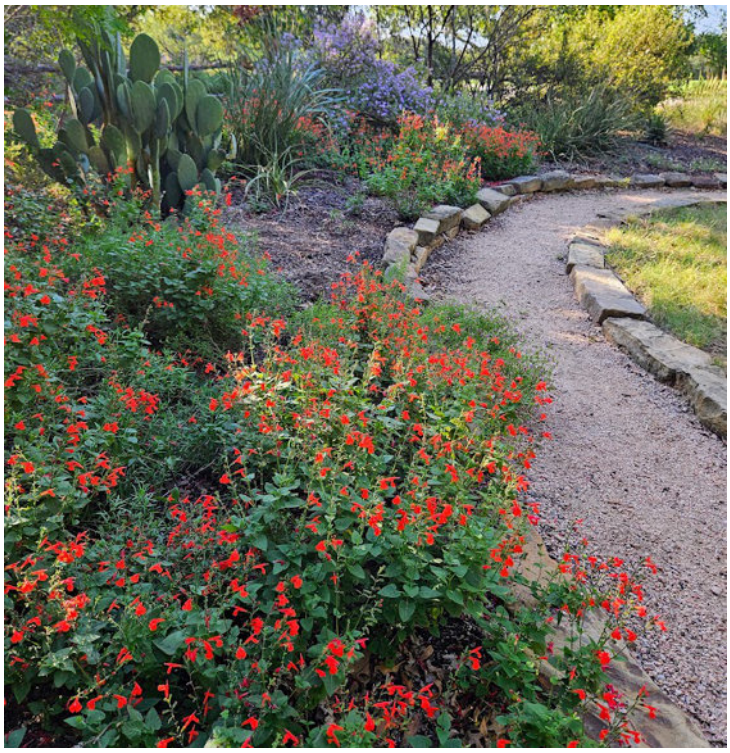
Wildscape Update continued from page 19, continued on page 21







Clockwise from below, Scarlet sage and Texas sage shine on the berm; Autumn sage; Mexican buckeye blooms return for fall engagement; Scarlet sage; Texas lantana. Ann Knudsen photos.





Wildscape Update continued from page 20, continued on page 22

Fall planting

A sidewalk defines the western border of the wildscape from the southern parking lot all the way to the amphitheater at the northern end. Going beyond that is a bare, upward rising hill, which, of course, is wearing away. Every time heavy rain falls, it carries soil down into the wildscape, leaving ruts behind. To defend against any more lost soil, volunteers recently planted a small patch of frogfruit. It is an exceptional ground cover since it spreads vigorously, perfect for this expansively naked, sloping spot.

Nearby, in the new prairie along the sidewalk, volunteers prepared a location destined to be a demo garden filled with prairie plants that homeowners can successfully plant in their own yards. A border of little bluestem already defines it. Workers removed most of the deep layer of mulch that had been restricting growth of the existing plants like mealy blue sage and gay feather. Plans are in work for what other kinds of prairie flowers will be added here this fall.



Above, Holes are drilled. Frogfruit laid out. Let's plant! Ann Knudsen photo. *Left below,* Burlap added to protect the new plants from washing away. Ann Knudsen photo. *Right,* Ann Knudsen waters the Frogfruit in. Christine Brinson photo.





Wildscape Update continued from page 21, continued on page 23

Starting the new prairie plant demo garden

Volunteers begin to remove excess mulch. Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 22, continued on page 24

Eagle Scout Project

Eagle Scout candidate Luccas Torres and his Troop 222 team have begun a rehab project of two bridges that cross the creek running through the wildscape. The shorter bridge is at the north end, and the other, commonly referred to as the zigzag bridge, is farther south. Both, built as part of Northrop Grumman's Project Good Turn back in 2000, have, unsurprisingly, gotten a lot of wear so are in need of some new treads. In addition, Luccas will be installing 3 tree identification signs. He will coordinate with Ann Knudsen to properly identify the tree species. Luccas' project is expected to be finished in November. The short bridge is essentially completed and looks great. Thanks, once again, to Troop 222 for choosing the wildscape as a location for their Eagle Scout projects. We appreciate the fine work they put in each time.







Right, Eagle Scout candidate Luccas Torres in black pullover oversees his team adding the new treads. Marian Hiler photo.

Left above, Luccas Torres and his Scoutmaster, Glenn Ratliff. Ann Knudsen photo.

Center, Scouts have removed the treads from the short bridge. Marian Hiler photo.

Below, The bridge is ready for many wildscape visitors to come. Marian Hiler photo.



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Right, Project team has started to remove treads from the zigzag bridge. Marian Hiler photo.

Below, The zigzag is ready for its new top. Marian Hiler photos.







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CTMN class tour

The Molly Hollar Wildscape was, once again, one of the sites selected for the Urban Systems field trip for the 2026 Cross Timbers Master Naturalists class. Volunteers Ann Knudsen, Christine Brinson, and I were the tour guides. My group was fortunate to have instructor Brent Franklin included. He identified a beautiful Common Green Darner that was discovered to be slightly torpid on this cool morning. The tour was a perfect opportunity to introduce trained volunteers to the wildscape and let it entice them to complete their required volunteer hours here. If you are interested in taking the Master Naturalist training in 2027, go here. Some say the program was life-changing for them.



Above, Ann Knudsen welcomes this year's Master Naturalist class. Marian Hiler photo.

Right, Instructor Brent Franklin discusses the dragonfly the class came upon. Marian Hiler photo.

Common green darner. Marian Hiler photo.





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Wildscape's Quarterly ACTIV Center educational classes

Seasoned birder and naturalist Charley Amos gave a presentation about winter bird feeding on October 27. His talk covered local bird species, feeding strategies, and habitat tips. Charley noted a good source for identifying bird-friendly native plants in your area is the Audubon's native plants database.

Joe Martinez will give the next class on February 9 at 1:00 pm. His topic will be composting.

Presentations are open to all ACTIV Center members.

Membership is available for residents and non-residents 50 and older. To become a member, visit the official Arlington Parks and Recreation Membership Portal.



Right, Charley Amos tells us how a woodpecker's extendable tongue works. Ann Knudsen photo.

Meanwhile, back at the wildscape

First Saturday mini-classes

Due to rainy weather, there was no first Saturday activity in October. At the mini-class scheduled for **November 7**, Kate Rugroden, Director of the Bat World MidCities rescue center for Bat World Sanctuary, will talk about the wildlife rescue and rehabilitation services they provide not only for bats but local wildlife as well.

Mini-classes are held in the compost area and begin about 11:30 as the workday volunteers put away the day's tools. All are welcome, even if you don't participate in the workday activities.

Volunteer Opportunities

We have returned to our cool season hours.
9:00 – noon Wednesdays and first Saturdays
All are welcome, no experience necessary.
Members of ecology and garden groups can receive credit hours.

For more information contact info@thewildscape.org

Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve

Planning Programs for Nature Kids Michael Smith

I was a nature kid, and mostly I still am although I supposedly graduated out of the "kid" part. Most of us at Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve ("Friends") spent some of their childhood in the woods or prairies. We learned about wildlife and plants, what it's like to wade in clear streams, and we experienced the peace that nature can bring. And, as "nature elders," I guess you'd say, we want to make sure that in 2026 kids still get to explore and fall in love with nature.



I've written about nature kids, why we need them, and how time spent in nature can help them. There's a lot out there about the benefits of nature for health, both physical and mental. And for some kids – nature kids – wildlife and wild places just feel like home. They want to know more about animals and plants and they're eager to explore the wetlands and the woods.

The Friends have been talking about how we might offer programs for such kids, and we have particularly focused on those aged 9 to 14 or so. We have talked with advisors and we are working out the details of what we might do on these walks, when to offer them, and so forth. I want to share the outline of our program in hopes that you will think about whether someone in your family, or in your circle of friends, may want to participate.

Fun and Learning

We hope to see joy and wonder in kids' faces. In the process of having a great day in the woods, we want to include knowledge of how animals live, how the plants survive, and more. So we are planning activities that we think will be fun and at the same time teach kids about nature. The focus will be on being outdoors and noticing lots of things.

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Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 27



Small Groups, Parents Invited

We hope lots of kids and their families are interested, but we want to take them on walks only a few at a time. It's important to us to involve everyone and to listen to each child and talk about the preserve in a way that's geared to individual kids. Everyone gets a chance to participate, to see what we find and sometimes to touch or hold it. We think that around 4 to 8 kids may be best for a group.

And that requires that we have a way to sign up for walks in advance and know the child's name, age, and if a responsible adult will come along (or if not, leave us a phone number). We are working on the details of this. We will always have adult co-leaders present, but we're inviting parent involvement, too.



Respect and Gratitude for the Woods

The preserve has been around a long time and has survived the city growing up around it. Once, before all the roads and houses, everything around it would have been oak trees, patches of prairie, and creeks, wild and beautiful. You can find small bits of it in several of Arlington's parks. At the preserve there are 59 acres that are as close as you'll find to how it was when the only people living here were Caddo and Comanche.

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Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 28

A place like that deserves our respect and care. It also deserves to be known by everyone and shared with kids. That is the goal of the Friends: to offer respect, help take care of it, and share it with you.

If there is a child in your life who is interested in nature, a child around 9 to 14 years old, we would love to welcome them to the preserve and nurture the nature kid within them. Check back with the **Events** page of our website, sign up for our **newsletter**, and/or follow us on **Facebook**.



Volunteers at Sheri Caperhart Nature Preserve

The Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve schedule a once-a-month volunteer day on the **third Saturday of the month**. We tackle a wide variety of needs for the preserve. These include brush clearing, seeding, trail maintenance, transplanting, and trash pickup. Volunteers get to learn in depth about the preserve and its goals while contributing to sustaining and improving this treasured ecosystem. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please contact Jim Frisinger at **jimfrisinger@yahoo.com**.
Our next volunteer date is Saturday, November 21.

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Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve Annabelle Corboy

iNaturalist Observations – September 2026

For September: 150 Observations; 100 Species; 10 Observers.

First time observed at Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve - split-necked Neoclytus

Totals at SCNP at the end of September:

27,799 Observations / 2,263 Species / 2,229 Identifiers / 367 Observers







Above from left, Andricus murtfeldtae – themoth. Curved Pebble Bee (*Dianthidium curvatum)* – sambiology. Late Boneset *(Eupatorium serotinum)* – joshmols. *Below from left,* Split-necked Neoclytus *(Neoclytus scutellaris)* – drawntoscales. Maximilian Sunflower *(Helianthus maximiliani)* – sambiology. Texas Bow-legged Bug *(Hyalymenus tarsatus)* – Postoak.







Blackland Prairie Preserve Guy Random







Very wrong last month
thinking fall was in control.
Too much gray and brown.
But we're not done yet.
Not at all! We'll bloom right now.
Color still. Yes, you bet.



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Memberships are good for one year, renewable each January. Your dues go directly to our public education efforts.

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Supporting $40

Sponsor $100

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Watch this talk any time here.



See page 6 for more on the November meeting.