

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COUNCIL

POSTOAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 5

MAY 2013

**Note New Meeting Date
First Wednesday**

www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org

May Meeting

An Overview of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas

**Keri Barfield,
Research Programs Manager
Botanical Research Institute of Texas**

**Wednesday, May 1, 7 pm
Fielder Museum, 1616 W. Abram St
(corner of Fielder and Abram)**



Keri will offer an overview of the trailblazing facility, the landscape, including the remarkable living roof, and current projects.

Keri is the Research Programs Manager for BRIT. She has worked in the past on various international research projects that included the Andes to Amazon Biodiversity Program and research in New Guinea.

Before joining the team at BRIT, she worked in California on primary succession of a conifer forest in Lassen Volcanic National Park. She is interested in botanical research and conservation.

Currently, she has been conducting a phylogeographic study of two pine species: *Pinus ponderosa* and *P. jeffreyi*.

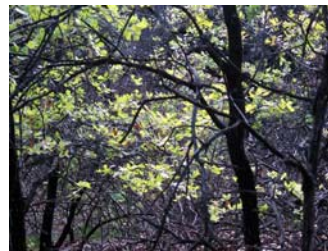
Bits & Pieces

Just Passing Through

Right outside the window last week, poking in dead leaves, an Ovenbird pausing on its spring migration. Maybe from Panama on its way to northern Canada, or maybe just to Arkansas. One odd thing: Chipmunks may dig into its domed nest on the ground to eat the young Ovenbirds. Chipmunks red in tooth and claw? Nasty brutes.



Today's Inspirational Moment



The economy is a wholly owned subsidiary of the environment, not the reverse.
Herman E. Daly

Thinking Green at UTA

A UTA design for solving campus stormwater runoff problems while defining an attractive campus edge earned an honorable mention at the EPA's first Campus RainWorks Challenge. Landscape architecture graduate students Kent Elliott and Blake Samper competed against 217 other student teams in the challenge, which encouraged teams to develop innovative green infrastructure systems that lessen the impacts of urban stormwater while supporting sustainable communities.



Trash to Treasure



Star-Telegram, April 26: Starting in 2016, large restaurants and other food businesses in Austin will have to compost food scraps, according to rules recently passed by the city council. This is part of meeting the city's zero-waste goals by 2040. Where's Arlington on this?

From the President: When I Know the Price of Gas is Too High Danny Kocurek



The subject of gasoline price comes up frequently in everyday conversations and in the media, and it always seems to be in the context of its high cost. The discussions or exhortations generally

rotate among themes of “Who is to blame?,” “Remember when?,” and “It is so high it is going to ruin the economy.” Based on my observations, I have never understood the idea that gasoline is too expensive. Let me explain.

I will agree that gasoline is too expensive when the following occur:

- People don't leave their cars idling when not in use. I am always amazed to see people sitting in a parked car with the engine running. Whether talking on the phone, leaving the car to run a quick errand, waiting for a cheeseburger, or talking to a driver in an adjacent vehicle which is also idling, the thought of turning off the engine seems to never come to mind. A study by the Environmental Defense Fund estimated the annual cost of idling at \$44 a year per vehicle. Modern vehicles suffer no ill

effects from stopping/starting the engine and, unlike older cars, very little gasoline is used by modern starters. You will save gasoline if you can turn your engine off for as little as 15 seconds.

- People maintain their vehicles [in good condition]. Keeping tires properly inflated and doing basic engine maintenance can save up to 25 cents a gallon, according to a study by the Department of Energy. The Department of Transportation estimates this waste at 5 million gallons of fuel per day.
- People stop driving gas-guzzling vehicles. Enough said?

We could expand this discussion to the associated costs in pollution, CO₂ emissions, cost of replacing tires prema-

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New York Avenue Blackland Prairie Park Jan Miller Photos by Wesley Miller



Despite a busy Earth Day weekend calendar, April's workday got the prairie looking especially good. Many thanks to Jack Thornton, Larry Lutz and Wes Miller for

clearing brush and trees near the highly visible southwest corner and under the big red elm. Some of the trimmings were added to the brush pile, which is a magnet for birds. With this winter's mowing by Arlington Parks & Rec, the prairie is looking good!

Because of the repeated cold snaps and infrequent rain this spring, wildflowers have been slow to bloom. After the workday, we looked for wildflowers and saw lots of prairie celestials, but still in tight buds due to the cool temperatures. Primrose, paintbrush and prairie verbena are currently in bloom, with more on the way.

CALENDAR

May 18: NYABP workday, 9:00 – noon (see at right)

May 18: BRIT Prairie Day (ACC is hosting a table)

May 18: Texas Nature Conservancy's Clymer Meadow open house, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

For more information, see: <http://www.nature.org/ourinitiatives/regions/northamerica/unitedstates/texas/events/clymer-meadow-wildflower-tour.xml>

May 19: Prairie Walk at NYABP with Jim Varnum, 2:00 pm (See at right)

May 25: Michael Warriner program on Native Texas Bumblebees at River Legacy Texas Bumblebee Watch

Most people are aware of the decline of the non-native European honeybee, but few are aware of the decline of

native Texas bumblebees. During this adult workshop at River Legacy Living Science Center, Texas Parks and Wildlife invertebrate biologist Michael D. Warriner will teach participants the importance of these native insects and how to identify them and report their locations. Best suited for ages 10 and up. Space is limited, please RSVP to 817.860.6752.

June 22: Southwest Nature Preserve Dedication with plant walk led by Jim Varnum, Time TBD.

3rd Saturday Prairie Stewards Workday

Saturday, May 18, 2013

9:00 am – noon

We'll remove brush and trees, pick up litter, and enjoy the spring wildflowers. Bring your handsaws or loppers and gloves and wear thick-soled boots/shoes and long pants. Highly recommended: sun protection, bug spray and water. Please bring your own container; refills will be available.

Let's meet for lunch after: It's a great opportunity to refuel — and to brainstorm on prairie restoration. Location will be determined by group vote.

Spring Prairie Walk with Jim Varnum

Sunday, May 19, 2013

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Texas Master Naturalist Jim Varnum leads a leisurely walk around New York Avenue Blackland Prairie to point out spring wildflowers, explore gilgai and see what makes this prairie special.

Please wear long pants and shoes or boots with sturdy soles. Also, you might consider bringing water (refills provided), sun protection, a camera or binoculars. Insect repellent is recommended: Chiggers will probably have arrived by mid-May.

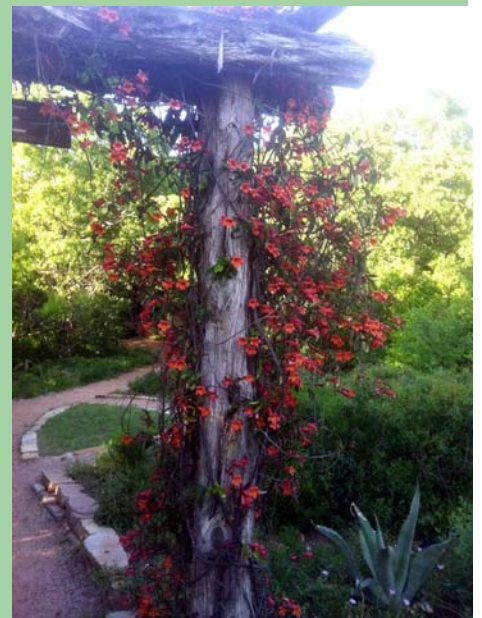
Location – New York Avenue Blackland Prairie, about 1 mile south of IH-20 in Arlington. From IH-20 take Collins exit and drive east on service road to NY Ave. Drive past the preserve, make a U-turn and park on the south side by the fence.

RSVP is greatly appreciated (in case of weather changes, etc.) but not required. Or for more information, please reply to: prairie@arlingtonconservationcouncil.org



Wildscape Update Photos by Molly Hollar

Spring has arrived at the wildscape with a vengeance. Here's a little reminder to get out there and see once again just what native plants can do when they set their minds to it.



Bacteria in the Trinity? Your Opinion, Please Danny Kocurek

You know you are in trouble when you have to pause to rest in the middle of the name of your committee. For two years I have served on the North Central Texas Council of Governments Trinity River Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Plan Committee. The purpose of the committee is to find ways to correct our problem with excessive bacterial contamination in sections of the Trinity in our region.

This has been a huge process, and it has resulted in an equally huge document

that you can read at your leisure at www.nctcog.org/envir/SEEClean/wq/tmdl/index.asp.

I am representing ACC on this committee, and we are nearing the stage of requesting approval. I am, therefore, requesting input from our members.

While I believe this is a step in the right direction, I do not believe it is adequate to address the problems we are facing. The phrase “kicking the can down the road” seems to sum it up. The reason essentially boils down to the fact that,

like everything in Texas, this committee is dominated by the Texas Association of Business and our local Chambers of Commerce. As you know, their motto is “What Future?” and this is another example of putting off hard decisions so that future generations will be stuck paying the price. Regardless, I would still appreciate everyone’s opinion on how ACC should proceed.

Work at SW Nature Preserve Nearing Completion Photos by Grace Darling



If you go out now, you will see lots of concrete, big boulders, and many, many yards of water line around the southwestern end of the preserve, not to mention a fair amount of construction to be finished up before the dedication in June.

A more tranquil choice would be to avoid this area and wander around to the north, where you will see farkleberries in bloom and lots of adder’s tongue — many dry and wilted, alas.



Thanks to Our Last Speaker

At our April meeting Matt Young and De’Onna Garner from Arlington Parks & Recreation gave us the latest information on the Parks & Rec open space plan. Matt’s comprehensive presentation reminded us of the importance of this latest update of the parks master plan and inspired us to press for natural areas at every opportunity in the coming months. We’re lucky to have you both; thanks very much.

President continued from page 2

turely from driving while under-inflated, and many others, but we’ll save that discussion for another day. It seems to all boil down to a common problem in current culture. People would much rather complain than do something to fix a problem. Envision a driver sitting in an idling SUV, with the AC on, the window open, the tires under-inflated, and complaining about the high cost of gasoline. Pathetic.

Our First Photo Contest — for Kids



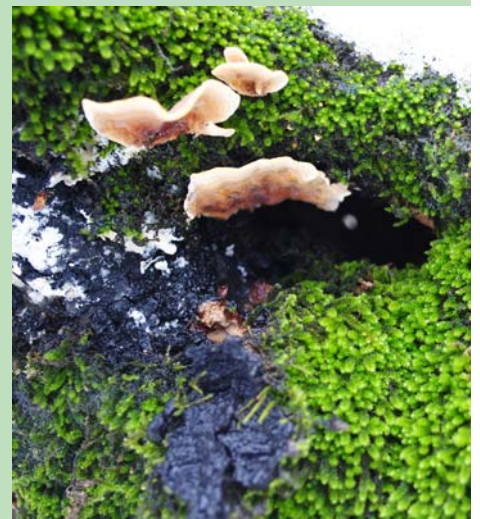
Focus

A Nature Photo Contest for Young People

- Pictures to be taken April 15 - Sept. 1, 2013
- Cash prizes
- Winners announced at Ecofest in September
- Details on the Internet: www.acctexas.org/focus
- Questions? Contact: focus@acctexas.org

ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COUNCIL 

Naturally Fun 
Arlington Parks & Recreation



Our First Photo Contest — for Kids

ACC - Photo Contest Form 



Focus

A NATURE PHOTO
CONTEST FOR
YOUNG PEOPLE



[Home](#)

[Photo Application Form](#)



GOALS:

- Get students at a most formative stage in their lives outdoors and involved in nature.
- Promote photography as a way to experience the area's natural beauty.
- Encourage area residents to be more environmentally aware.



WHO MAY ENTER?

- Young people who live in or who attend public, private or home school in Arlington/Pantego/Dalworthington Gardens and who will be in the 3rd through 6th grade in the 2013 fall semester.



WHEN MAY THE PHOTOS BE TAKEN? WHERE? HOW MANY PHOTOS MAY AN INDIVIDUAL ENTER?

- Photos must be taken between April 15 and September 1, 2013
- A student may enter two photos - one taken in his or her backyard and one taken in a greater Arlington park.
- Upload one or two of your photos to [Flicker](#) (a free photo sharing site). The links to your photos are posted on your application. Photos must not be locked, so that we can download them.



ARE THE PHOTOS RESTRICTED TO A PARTICULAR NATURE THEME?

- The theme should come from a school class. Each entry should identify where it was taken and state in a few words its nature theme and how the photo reflects it.
- Examples of themes provided by AISD teachers are: life cycles, structure/function, animal behaviors, adaptations, energy flow, interactions, ecosystems change, inherited traits, learned behaviors, metamorphosis, classification, interactions and organization. (These are only examples).



WHAT ARE THE JUDGING CRITERIA? MAY ANY TYPE OF CAMERA BE USED?

- Judges will be local experts in photography and the natural sciences. They will look for originality, ingenuity, detail and how well the picture depicts the theme. Any camera that produces a quality image, from sophisticated to smartphone, is fine.
- Cropping is allowed, but photos that have been electronically manipulated or that contain recognizable people, domestic animals or pets will be disqualified. Photos submitted may not currently be entered in another contest, have won another contest or have been published.

HOW MANY WINNERS WILL BE NAMED? WHEN? DO THEY RECEIVE ANYTHING?

- No limit exists on the number of entrants the judges may recognize. Winners will be announced in September at Ecofest in downtown Arlington.
- Cash prizes of \$50, \$35, \$25 and \$15 will reward the top four photos in each school grade. A student can win only one time.
- The best may be displayed at venues such as River Legacy Living Science Center, City Hall and the Arlington Museum of Art.

Questions or Support email: focus@acctexas.org

Arlington Conservation Council Membership Application

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

Membership Information

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

First-year member \$10.00

Individual \$15.00

Family \$25.00

Supporting \$40.00

Sponsor \$100.00

Lifetime individual \$250.00

Other \$ _____

New member ☐

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How did you hear about us? _____

Make checks payable to Arlington Conservation Council. Mail to ACC, Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216. Contributions and dues are not tax-deductible. Note: If you cannot pay, please let any board member know. The only available newsletter format is electronic, and it can be obtained via email and the Web site.

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THE POST OAK

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Don't Forget!

Wednesday, May 1

7:00 pm

Keri Barfield

An Overview of the Botanical Research Institute of Texas

