

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 2019

Southwest Nature Preserve • Photo by Michael Smith

**Back to
Fielder**

February Meeting

Trash It or Recycle It: The Fort Worth Story

**Joao Pimentel,
Senior Planner, Solid Waste Services Division,
City of Fort Worth Code Compliance Department**

**Back to
Fielder**

Wednesday, February 6, 7 pm
Fielder Museum
1616 W. Abram Street (corner of Fielder and Abram)

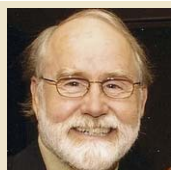


Joao Pimentel is a senior planner with the Solid Waste Services Division of Fort Worth's Code Compliance Department and was project manager for the city's 2017-2037 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan, now in effect. He will discuss the paradoxes and challenges of

recycling in the face of ever-dwindling landfill capacity, answer our questions about what can/should be recycled (hint: must be clean and dry), how it is processed, and what we can do to minimize waste wherever we are. Don't miss it!

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From the President

Dick Schoech

Attendees at the ACC annual meeting and those on the ACC members list were asked to rank four priorities for ACC to address in 2019 and to add their own priorities. Members were also asked to indicate their preference for meeting at the Fielder House or the new downtown Arlington Public Library. The results are below.

Preferred meeting location

Twenty-five members responded. Eleven preferred the Fielder House while seven preferred the library for ACC meetings. Four had no opinion. The reason for preferring the Fielder House were easier access and the ability to hold our raffle.

ACC priorities

Annual meeting attendees and those on the ACC members list also ranked the following four priorities for 2019 by putting a 1 by their highest priority, a 2 by their second highest, etc. The numbers were added, giving the following ranking where the lower the number, the higher the priority.

- 1st priority with a score of 48 was “Work to connect, enhance, and advocate for ‘friends of the parks’ and similar groups”
- 2nd priority with a score of 52 was “Work to reduce plastic pollution in our environment, e.g., bags, cups, and straws”
- 3rd priority with a score of 53 was “Work to develop an Arlington Actions on Climate Change”
- 4th priority with a score of 76 was “Work to prevent monarch butterfly extinction”

Additional priorities mentioned were:

- Address solid waste management
- Packaging issues
- Yard waste recycling
- Enable ACC action on issues by informing members about City Council actions, protests, etc.
- Support municipal government anti-corruption reform measures

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ACC POST OAK

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

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Deadline for submissions is the
15th of every preceding month.
Please send them to
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Bits & Pieces

The Terse Tree Hugger



Recycling's in trouble.
What do they really
want?
No contamination
No wet stuff
Office paper
Metal cans
Plastics 1 and 2
Okay?

In Praise of Henbit

So easy to overlook the little things — or even to get them all wrong. How about the lowly henbit as a valuable resource for the many tiny insects active in winter? Find this on page 20 of the [January NPSOT news-letter](#) of our local chapter. And at the chapter site, find the February issue for a wonderful piece on mistletoe.



Dallas + Climate Plan = Good

There's a lot more about the plan in [this Green Source DFW article](#). The gist: "Per the measure, the Office of Environmental Quality and Sustainability's top ask was that Council authorize a contract with an environmental consulting service to develop the detailed climate action plan.

Secondly, OEQS requested that Dallas join [C40 Cities](#), a network of almost 100 global cities pledged to "bold action" in support of the [Paris Climate Agreement](#).

And last, it asked the city to urge the U.S. Congress to take effective national action on climate — specifically, to enact a national carbon fee on fossil fuels and a dividend paid to the public of all the funds collected. A measure to do so, the [Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act](#), has been introduced in both House and Senate with bipartisan support."

Visit us on the Web
www.acctexas.org

BASIL

I love to watch the honeybees,
The butterflies and hummingbirds,
Visit basil blossoms,

Drinking nectar from the tiny cups
That line the lengthy stems
Nodding in the breeze.

I know the spicy scent
That clings to everything
Touched by basil leaves

And wonder if the honey
From these blossoms
Smells the same.

But though I planted
All the herbs
That flourish in our garden

I claim no credit
For the butterflies,
The birds, the bees, the honey,

Content to think
These would all have happened
If I'd never been.

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

Question Corner John Darling

Q: Hey, I just read [this article](#) that told me to stop feeding birds. I really, really don't want to stop. What do you think?

A: I hate this question because it's difficult, but there's one huge thing about the article that's not getting enough attention. That study of bird feeding in New Zealand mentions that their native backyard birds primarily eat fruit or insects while people are putting out seeds that attract mostly nonnative birds. So exotic species are encouraged as natives suffer the usual habitat injury (and therefore food loss) we expect in standard suburban landscaping. Those kiwis have the same solution most of us here ignore while landscaping: If they dumped birdseed and planted natives they'd stop hurting their native birds and start helping. Duh.

But what about us? Do we stop here, too? After all, a large portion of our native suburban birds — especially in winter — eat seeds. Also house sparrows, grackles, and starlings, sadly for our feeders. So the answer is still not simple.

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1660 W. Randol Mill Rd.
Arlington, TX 76012
(817) 275-1000
www.wbu.com/arlingtontx
Hours 10 - 6 Mon - Fri,
9 - 6 Sat, 12 - 5 Sun



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conserve Arlington's
natural resources.

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From the President continued from page 3

Additional comments were:

- As a member of the Progressive Women of Arlington and assistant chair of the environment issues/Climate Reality committee, I wanted to assure you that we want to collaborate with ACC and like-minded groups on helping to make Arlington a Green Dream city. My ranking of issues is not set in stone, but I do suspect that many influential people in Arlington are great supporters of the parks and pollinator gardens (and love awards that help burnish the Dream City image) but skeptical regarding more aggressive action on climate change and connecting, enhancing, and advocating for “friends of the parks” Nonetheless, we will collaborate on any and all of those priorities. Sarah Stephens
- I'm motivated by the book *Story of Stuff* and effects of waste. I don't like seeing the landfill in North Arlington next to Trinity River, or mountain of trash rising on west side of town from Ft Worth landfill. How can Arlington become more like Austin? Need to be more active and focus on Entertainment District as Arlington strives to pull more people to events. Cause and effect! Jim Domke

Not Just Us John Darling

Something nagged at me while reading a [disturbing article](#) in the February 2 *Star-Telegram* (National parks work to undo damage done in shutdown). It was a story about how badly we act in the absence of supervision: In 400 National Parks and other places during the shutdown we cut trails in sensitive areas; we eliminated around locked restrooms; we ran over and spray-painted Joshua trees; we even cut locks and stole tools.

Why was this nagging? Except for the Joshua trees, it was all too familiar, especially in Arlington's natural areas. To that sad



list we can add bits of fire at SW Nature Preserve and the wild-
scape. And the always popular rock art at SW Nature Preserve.

Is it better somehow that we don't have a monopoly on environmental Neanderthals? Yes and no. If Arlington were unique we'd have all the damage and the rest of the country — and the world — would be spared. But we're not, so treasured environments everywhere suffer. We can only shrug and know that the lowest common denominator gets the last thoughtless laugh. Are BA and CR still hearting each other? I don't care and I never did.

Blackland Prairie Nature Preserve photos by Wes Miller



There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature – the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.

Rachel Carson



More Bits

Christmas Lizard

John Blair

When I opened up the door
To the water heater closet
And showed the pest control man
Where a rat had chewed through plaster
At the back

A startled lizard
Skittered down the wall,
Looking as surprised as me
That it was there
Seeking shelter from December.

I remembered then
I'd seen my patient cat
Crouching earlier that day
On the kitchen floor
Staring at the crack beneath the door.

"This will not end well" was my thought,
Considering the last two times
Lizards interacted with the cats
In my cozy house
And required a garden burial.

But who knows? Perhaps this one
Possesses lizard wisdom
Enough to realize that now
Is not the time
To come out of the closet.

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Thanks to Our Last Speaker

Another ACC year, another annual business meeting and potluck filled with food and lots of warm conversation despite the bitterly cold day. President Dick Schoech summarized our 2018 activities, invited leaders to comment on their respective efforts, and solicited members' priorities. So even though we all were speakers of a sort, we're indebted to Dick for presiding over a thoughtful, well-organized program.



Question Corner continued from page 5

The first complication is the commonly held idea that we feed birds for ourselves, not mainly for the birds. Would I feed birds that I could never look at? But putting that aside, you can find lots of opinions and a few facts on Internet sites. The [most appealing site](#) overall is from All About Birds via the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Among many other things, there's a study whose main finding is this: "We found that species that use bird feeders the most tended to be doing just as well as, or better than, species that use feeders more sporadically." Also, "The feeder species that showed declines seem to be faced with non-feeder-related pressures, such as habitat loss." And this: "The species most in trouble are seabirds, shorebirds, and tropical forest dwellers. This means that although feeding birds may not be harmful to the species that use feeders the most, it also isn't helpful to the species that most need our help."



[Another site](#) contains a word that might offend, but it covers a wide range of issues, like disease, yard habitat, and aspects of the birdseed used. A [Cool Green Science site](#) (ignore the name; this guy's serious) appears positive, wants more research, and includes actual references. And [yet another site](#) contains an extensive piece on pros and cons, and the author reaches a positive conclusion. I considered including a couple of thoughtful Audubon Society sites that are in favor of feeding until I saw an ad on one for Audubon wild bird seed. I changed my mind.

So what's the answer? Probably it's this: Feed the birds with choices that discourage nonnative species, and clean those feeders a lot. But also please plant natives for cover, nesting, and natural food. Unless you're reading this in New Zealand. Then just plant.

The Arlington Environmental Hall of Shame

We haven't forgotten Mount Viridian, which appears to continue having an effect on drainage in River Legacy Park, not to mention damaging numerous trees. Still no response of any kind from Arlington city council members.



Dotty Woodson Retires

From a [Green Source DFW article](#) posted on Feb. 1:
AgriLife specialist schooled North Texans on sustainability

A longtime gardening expert who had a knack for making even drip irrigation sound fun retired Wednesday.

Horticulturist Dotty Woodson recently ended her three-decade career, which included 24 years as an extension agent for Tarrant County, then water resource specialist with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension, where she served on AgriLife Research's Water University team. Previously she taught horticulture at Tarrant County College.

You may well be one of the many Dotty inspired with her expertise and enthusiasm, but even if you never had the pleasure you'll enjoy reading the full article.



Four Hawks

John Blair

Four hawks flung in a fleecy sky,
 Darting and wheeling,
 Flipping their flight,
 Seemingly there
 Just for the joy.

I don't ask why
 They're whirling in air,
 Dazzling my eye,
 Warming my heart;
 The sight is enough.

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 1/12/2019+



What Next?

Did everyone already know this? Nandina berries contain cyanide and other horrible chemicals that kill birds — those hungry winter birds that may rely on berries to get them through the coldest times. Nandina is already classified as a noxious, nonnative, invasive weed. These deadly berries are just too much.



Wildscape Update Marylee Thomason



Coming soon to the wildscape near you!

New signs, kiosks, two WOWs and invasive plant eradication sessions.

Interpretive trail signs paid for by a \$5,000 grant from the Arlington Tomorrow Fund are in their final proof. The money will rebuild three kiosks and two large information signs. The city has tested several materials for durability in all kinds of weather and will replace old wooden signs with the new material.

Jane Oosterhuis, Teresa Day-Fickel and Ann Knudsen have

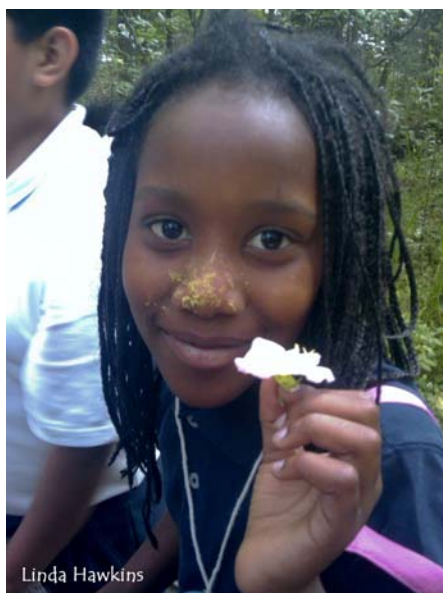


spent hundreds of hours working on pictures and wording with Sara Peacock, the city's graphic designer. The results will bring a fresh look and more inviting atmosphere to the wildscape.



The new signs hopefully will be installed in time for the two Walk on the Wildside adventures the wildscape will host this year. Anderson Elementary, Thornton Elementary and Merryhill School will bring students from either the third or fifth grade on one of two days in April.

The students are always excited and eager to learn. For many this



Linda Hawkins

will be their first experience with real, live nature. Plan to volunteer for this thrilling, sometimes breathtaking, event. It is guaranteed to make you feel young again.

Congratulations are due to everyone who has participated in privet pulls on Molly Hollar's birthday. You have done such a good job that the number of invasive plants that need to be removed is manageable in a few regular Wednesday workdays. As soon as the weather turns warmer, the call will go out.



Join the fun eradicating privet, Japanese honeysuckle and any other nonnative plant that tries to sneak a toe hold in our native turf. Eradicate from the Latin *eradicat*, meaning "torn up from the roots." What could be more satisfying?

Regular workdays are Wednesdays 9 a.m.-noon. The first Saturday of every month is the only weekend workday. Come 9-11 a.m. to work and stay for the always informative mini class from 11 to noon. We won't forget the snacks.

In Case You Missed It Grace Darling

The Impact of the Royal Navy on Deforestation, by Eric Pinzelli.

It is estimated that, in the 18th century, it took about 4,000 oak trees to build a 110-gun ship — the equivalent of 30–40 hectares of woodland. In 1926, Robert G. Albion hypothesized that the huge demand for ship timber for the Royal Navy literally stripped the landscape of wooded resources. Based on his work, many historians treated 18th- and 19th-century English shipbuilding as a major source of deforestation in the British Isles. For example, the HMS Victory needed something on the order of 6,000 mature oak trees for her hull, not to mention the pine and other softwoods used for masts and decks and fit-



HMS Victory replica

tings. The problem with deforestation wasn't one that could be solved by waiting 10 or so years; the very large oaks needed for the structural members of the hull would not regrow for 100 years or more. In 1790 the Royal Navy had about 300 ships in its ranks,

which would have necessitated cutting down at least 1,200,000 good oaks. For the next 50 years, with an average 12 years of service per ship, 24,000 full acres would have been cleared, the equivalent of 37.5 square miles.

Some argue that cutting for ship timber did not cause deforestation, claiming that shipbuilding had little or no effect on the landscape whatsoever. In reality, there was neither a sudden wood shortage brought on by shipbuilding demand, nor was the regenerative nature of trees able to cope entirely with the demands. Great quantity of wood resources used in the construction of the Royal Navy came from outside of the British Isles; Britain had to build ships in its colonies, particularly in the Caribbean and the Americas but also in India. The



Deforestation in the UK

continued on page 13

In Case You Missed It continued from page 12

scale of the Royal Navy's ecological impact was immense, and it spread throughout Europe, North America, and the Indian subcontinent.

Given their large colonial possessions, the Spanish also built numerous warships overseas. For instance, the heaviest-armed ship in the world, the Santissima Trinidad, was built in Havana. Indeed, about 35% of Spain's naval shipbuilding took place in Cuba. Moral of the story: There is no such thing as benign occupation.

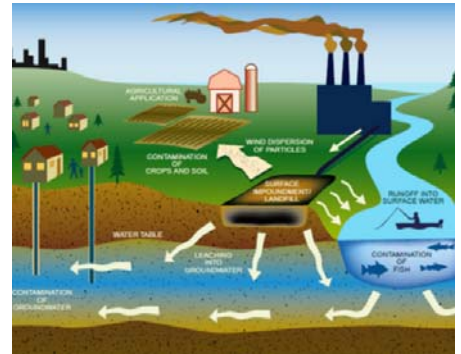
The Science Behind the Polar Vortex, by NOAA.

https://www.noaa.gov/image_download/3913?itok=5yZosn1E

Funny that NOAA does not mention the role of climate change in destabilizing the polar vortex. From The Guardian, "There's some evidence that the jet stream, a meandering air current that flows over North America and Europe, is slowing and becoming wavier as the planet warms. The jet stream interacts with the polar vortex, helping to bring numbing temperatures farther south.

Scientists also point to a complex sequence of events involving sea ice, which is rapidly diminishing in the Arctic. As the ice retreats, summertime heat is absorbed by the dark ocean that lies underneath. This heat is released into the atmosphere during winter, spurring winds that can disrupt

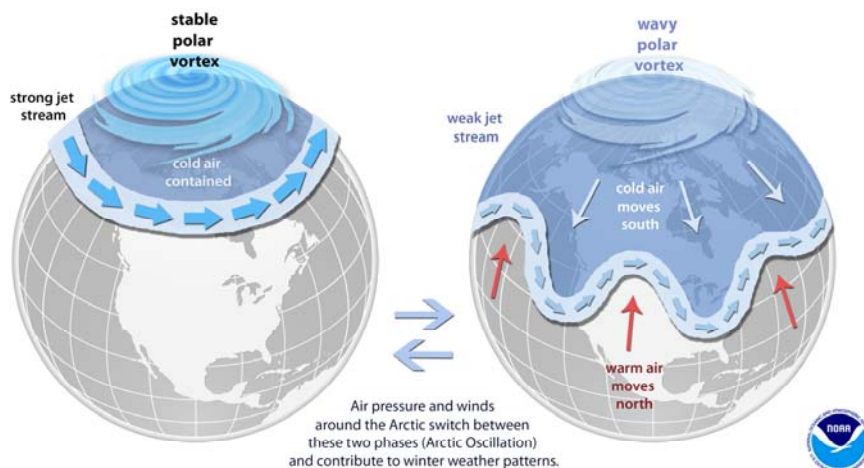
the polar vortex. The horrendous Australian heat wave and the extreme cold in the American Midwest are but two consequences of the split vortex this year.



Bad News, Good News. The Environmental Integrity Project reports 16 of 16 coal plants in Texas are contaminating groundwater. Coal ash is basically the leftover ash from burning coal. It is nasty and contains toxins ranging from arsenic to boron and a lot of other substances harmful to humans and aquatic life. Now for the good news: The Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) has approved a request to permanently mothball the Gibbons Creek power plant, a 470-MW coal plant located just a few miles east of Bryan/College Station. The plant is jointly owned by Denton, Garland, and Bryan — all of which have sought large-scale solar power to meet their energy demands.

The Science Behind the Polar Vortex

The polar vortex is a large area of low pressure and cold air surrounding the Earth's North and South poles. The term vortex refers to the counterclockwise flow of air that helps keep the colder air close to the poles (left globe). Often during winter in the Northern Hemisphere, the polar vortex will become less stable and expand, sending cold Arctic air southward over the United States with the jet stream (right globe). The polar vortex is nothing new — in fact, it's thought that the term first appeared in an 1853 issue of E. Littell's *Living Age*.



Southwest Nature Preserve Jan Miller

Friends of SWNP Special Monthly Meeting

Free and open to the public

Saturday, February 16, 8:00 - 10:00 am

Great Backyard Bird Count

Southwest Nature Preserve

5201 Bowman Springs Road, Arlington TX 76017



Help us count birds for two hours as part of the nationwide bird census.

Meet in the preserve parking lot.

For more information about Southwest Nature Preserve and to sign up for email updates, see www.swnp.org or e-mail info@swnp.org.

Friends of SWNP events and programs are free and open to the public.

Coming Up

Tuesday, February 19, 6:30 pm

**Bird population trends at SW
Nature Preserve**

**Lake Arlington Branch
Arlington Public Library
4000 W Green Oaks Blvd
Arlington TX 76016**

Birder Jim Frisinger shares bird tally trends at the Southwest Nature Preserve since 2007. This program will be a good followup to the Great Backyard Bird Count - See above.

Tuesday, March 19, 7:00 pm

**Here be dragons! Odonates at SWNP
Community Room
Arlington Police Dept
West Service Center
2060 SW Green Oaks Blvd
Arlington TX 76017**

Brent Franklin has spent many hours studying Odonates and has identified a couple of uncommon species at SWNP. He'll share his insights and slides with us.

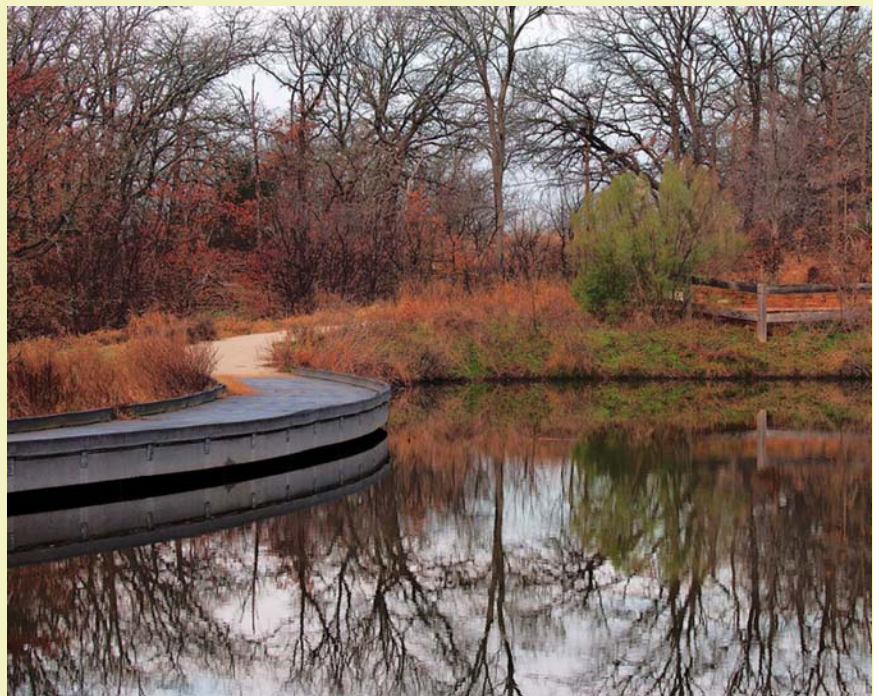


Photo by Bob Brennan

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

Membership Information

Name	_____	First-year member	\$10.00	
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	_____	Family	\$25.00	
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1616 W. Abram Street



Trash It or Recycle It: The Fort Worth Story
Joao Pimentel