

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 9

OCTOBER 2019

Southwest Nature Preserve • Photo by Bob Brennan

**Fielder
Museum**

October Meeting City Environmental Initiatives

**Fielder
Museum**



**Victoria Farrar-Myers
Arlington City Council Member-at-Large**

Wednesday, October 2, 7 pm

Fielder House Museum

1616 W. Abram Street (corner of Fielder and Abram)

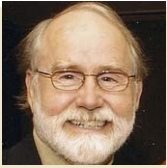


Victoria Farrar-Myers first moved to Arlington in 1998 and has been actively engaged in our city ever since. Dedicated to building communities, Victoria has held leadership positions in numerous volunteer organizations as well as served on the Planning & Zoning Commission and AISD's Financial Futures Committee. Known as "Doc F-M" to her students, Victoria served as a Professor of Political Science and Distinguished Teaching Professor at the University of Texas at Arlington for 16 years, and is a Senior Fellow in the Tower Center for Political Studies at SMU. She received a Ph.D. from SUNY at Albany, a master's degree from the University of Illinois, and a bachelor's degree from Russell Sage College in New York.

Victoria has been married to Jason since 1992, and they have one son. They are members of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church.

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From the President

Dick Schoech

Top Actions from the Plastic Reduction Group to Help ACC Accomplish Its Second 2019 Priority Which do you currently do?

The ACC Plastic Reduction Group is gearing up after a vacation filled summer where schedules required us to communicate via email. We have developed the following suggestions for you to help ACC achieve the effort you voted as ACC's number two 2019 priority. The actions below are not in any specific order.

Use Reusable Containers

This is probably the easiest way to reduce your use of plastic. Our suggestions are to first focus on reducing single use plastics by the following actions.

- Always carry filled reusable beverage containers in your car, e.g., water bottles for each member of your family.
- At venues where you cannot bring in your own water bottles, take any plastic bottle or container provided with you for recycling and encourage others to do the same, or take theirs home to recycle as well.
- Keep an assortment of reusable bags in your car including grocery bags containing previously used produce bags for reuse.
- Since recycling centers have difficulty recycling plastic bags, take worn out plastic bags to grocery and other stores that recycle them.
- Avoid stores that automatically put products in plastic bags and frequent grocery stores where fruit and vegetables are not wrapped in plastic.
- For restaurant use, carry recyclable or biodegradable carryout bags, glass or silicone straws, etc. Having plastic alternatives will allow you to refuse plastic straws, plastic cutlery, and plastic or Styrofoam containers for leftovers. Carry a reusable bamboo or metal knife-fork-spoon combination utensil so you can refuse plastic cutlery.
- Immediately when greeted or seated in a restaurant, request no straws before they have a chance to put straws in your drinks or throw them on the table. You can use this action to quickly educate anyone who will listen about our huge plastic problem.

Recycle

- Keep up to date on what items are acceptable for local recycling. This is difficult because many countries now refuse US recyclables, so each recycler has its own list based on the recycling machinery and its agreements with manufacturers that use recycled materials.

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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

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

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Deadline for submissions is the
15th of every preceding month.
Please send them to
ldarling@sbcglobal.net

Bits & Pieces

The Terse Tree Hugger



Stupid soft-leafed yuccas.

Still no seeds or moths.

Babies growing around cut flower stalks.

The opposite of dispersal?

This Is Serious

Looking for Hope in the Climate Crisis? Throw Out Neoliberal Economics!

A study from 2017 found that just 100 companies create 71% of the world's toxic greenhouse gas emissions, which are creating a climate crisis. Worse, while carbon dioxide reaches record levels, [a new study found that humans can't psychologically process the reality of climate change](#). Civic Action's Jessyn Farrell [writes about what we can do to find hope and take action on the impending climate crisis](#).

Beautiful Bee



Jim Domke spotted this American bumble bee at O.S. Gray Natural Area and posted it to [Bumble Bee Watch](#). Looks like another useful site for citizen science observations and education. Also has good species ID features and range maps. Have a look.

Visit us on the Web

www.acctexas.org

GOLDFINCHES AT 18°

How can I persist
In feeling sorry for myself
When I look out the window
And see goldfinches feeding,

Perched there in the bitter air
With nothing but their feathers
To shield against the cold,
Looking happy

Just to be alive and fed.
Sticking to the basics –
That's what I must remember
Out of all the ancient wisdom;

Living in the present moment
When food is in my beak,
No hawk swoops upon me
And cats are all asleep.

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



Question Corner Grace Darling

This month's Question Corner query is not merely an editorial tool but rather arose from a real-life situation. This is what happened:

The cooling unit for a UTA building broke down recently. The next day, as a maintenance crew worked to repair it, the temperature in the room during Environmental Economics class climbed to the low-mid 90s. Everyone sweated, complained, and speculated about our seemingly warmer and longer summers. The discussion boiled down to this:

Q: Is our local climate really getting hotter?

A: The charts on the right are the result of a search of



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Wild Birds Unlimited
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

Remodeling

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SCHWETTMANN CONSTRUCTION CO.

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817-460-3856

Mailing Address
1813 W. Tucker
Arlington, TX 76013

Fax 817-583-6266 E-mail: schwettmammarvin@sbcglobal.net



From the President continued from page 3

- Recycle aluminum cans, plastic bottles, and other recyclables when picking up trash on your walks. If you find plastic plant pots, the Randol Mill Park greenhouse will accept them for use in their plant sales. Contact Josephine Keeney or email no-plastic@acctexas.org if you have plastic plant pots to recycle.
- Use DFW Craigslist, Nextdoor, or freecycle.org-Arlington <https://groups.freecycle.org/group/ArlingtonTX/posts/all> to give away or find secondhand products.

Reward Others' Actions

- If you see someone picking up trash, thank them with a “thumbs up” sign, a kind word. Better yet, follow their example.
- Patronize establishments with good plastic reduction practices and avoid those contributing to the problem, e.g., those providing single-use plastics, Styrofoam, etc. If possible, speak to the management or staff about your concerns.
- Compliment restaurant owners and staff who are concerned with plastic reduction and brag on their efforts on sites like Facebook, Nextdoor and Yelp. Tell them you will encourage friends to come to their restaurant.

Educate Others

- Explain the harm single use plastics have on our environment to family, friends, neighbors and anyone who will listen. Better yet, model the plastic reduction behaviors you want others to follow.
- Post pictures, interesting articles, ideas related to plastic waste, and innovative alternatives to plastic on social media sites you use.
- Be a good recycling role model to your relatives, grandkids, nieces/nephews, cousins, neighbors, friends, etc. For example, make plastic reduction a challenge game with those who enjoy playing games.
- We have seen recently how youth are taking actions to protect our planet from climate change. We can support their work and use their strategies to educate all generations on the necessity of protecting our planet from plastic.

Educate Yourself

- Learn from others on plastic issues, such as how best to store food in the refrigerator or freezer without using plastic containers or plastic bags.
- Become a citizen scientist by trying new products not made of plastic, for example, for storing or wrapping food. Tell others about your experience with these new products.
- Sign up on websites to receive tips on ways you can use less plastic, e.g., The Story of Stuff Project at <http://action.storyofstuff.org/signup/stop-plastic-pollution/>

The ACC Plastic Reduction Group welcomes your feedback and suggestions. Email us at no-plastic@acctexas.org
Candy Halliburton, Dick Schoech, Jane Oosterhuis, Joanne Stewart, Sarah Stephens, Corey Troiani.

Blackland Prairie Nature Preserve photos by Wes Miller



More Bits



SOLIDAGO

The goldenrod that flashes in the autumn sun
Beside a stream or massed along a field edge
Signals the season's change like nothing else.

Almost overnight the weedy clumps
That went unnoticed all the summer long
Slip on royal raiment, shining sprays

That dip and droop and sway
Like kingly banners in the wind,
Showing to all around the regal presence.

And courtiers come calling, butterflies,
Bees and other feasters on the gilded gift,
Swarming happy in October air,

Oblivious to their frosty fate on some tomorrow,
Only aware today has brought munificence
Of nectar, pollen, sweet perfume to everyone.

©2012 John I. Blair



Thanks to Our Last Speaker



*Jeremy Priest with ACC board member
Grace Darling*

At last month's ACC meeting the topic was urban forestry in Arlington, and City Forester Jeremy Priest gave us a remarkably broad mix of tree topics, backed up by his welcome blend of enthusiasm and expertise.

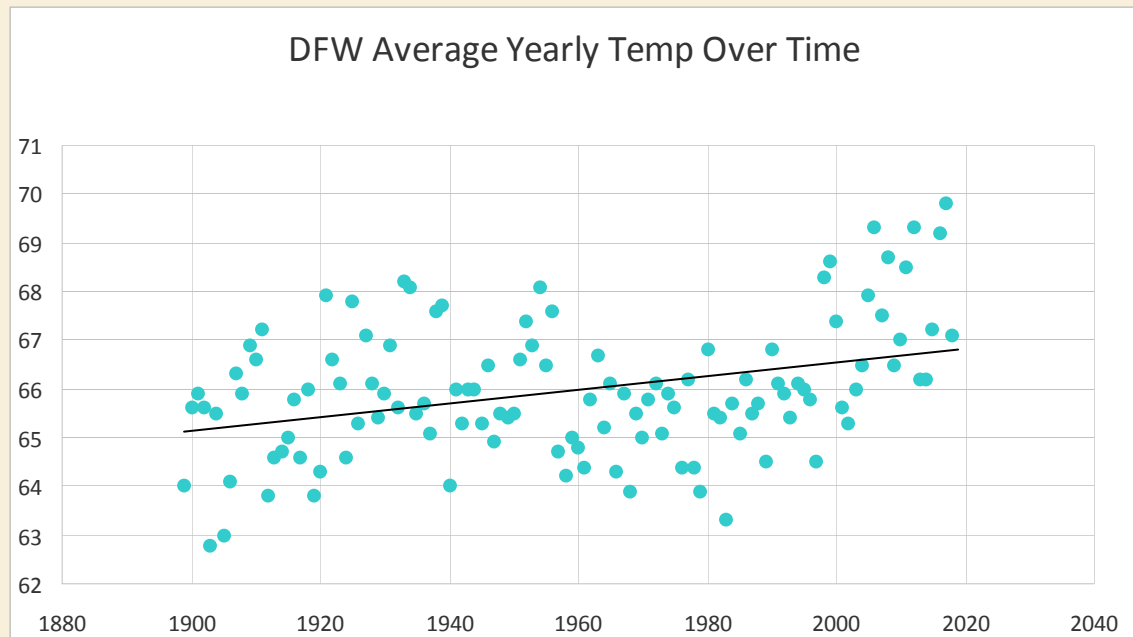
You might think that a speaker talking to a bunch of tree-huggers about trees would be tempted to coast, but that didn't happen. Even with time out for lots of questions, Jeremy covered forested acres of arboreal subjects. A few examples:

- We have recently updated forestry specs in the Arlington Design Criteria Manual to give us a better urban forest.
- We heard some preliminary results from his tree sampling in city parks — 44 parks and 400 sample plots have yielded about 300,000 park trees. Dominant species are post oak, sugar berry, and cedar elm.
- At Southwest Nature Preserve, he found more than 1,885 post oaks and 242 blackjacks (DBH > 8").
- Jeremy's division has planted 44 trees near Tarrant County College and 99 trees on South Green Oaks.

You can learn more at <https://naturallyfun.org/forestry/> and <http://ctufo.org/>.

Question Corner continued from page 5

National Weather Service temperature data for DFW from 1900 to 2018, subjected to regression analysis and compiled/vetted by Tim Wunder, Ph.D. in Economics. The answer is a clear and unequivocal yes.



The Arlington Environmental Hall of Shame

From Carol Marcotte, a single-use plastic bag fluttering in a post oak. Common enough with 100 billion bags used in the US annually, but it's much more than an esthetic problem. The negative effects cover a wide range, from their disintegration into microplastic pollutants all the way to human mental health. There's a lot to read: Visit [this site](#) and [this one](#) for more information.



Wildscape Update Marylee Thomason and Carol Marcotte

The Sharon Schoech Classroom is impressively open for business at the Molly Hollar Wildscape. Michael Debrecht, Arlington parks operations manager, worked with Ann Knudsen on September 18 to place the limestone benches, which are an absolute must-see. Find them on the north side of the wildscape, along the walking trail in the forest area.



Crashing through the underbrush to deliver the first stone.



The delivery, observed by Michael Debrecht, Joe Martinez and Ann Knudsen.



Placement complete.

Paul Knudsen — husband of Ann and lifelong taker of photos — enlivened the First Saturday Mini

Class in September by showing eager amateurs how to get better pictures with their smartphones. Basics like how to focus successfully, getting more interesting angles, and improving lighting were very helpful. Professionals know everything, even where to find the free photo apps on our phones. Thanks, Paul.

Note: The October First Saturday Mini Class has been canceled due to conflicting events. Plan to attend November's first Saturday at 11:30 after the workday.

The wildscape's 20th anniversary native plant sale, September 21 at the greenhouse in Randol Mill Park, moved 674 plants and collected (drum roll!) over \$4,000. To memorialize the occasion Kay Sekio created four large prize-drawing pots — one with shade plants, one with sun-loving plants, one with butterfly host plants and one with nectaring plants.

Every buyer drew from a pouch of marbles after making a purchase. Draw a white marble, win a pot. All other draws won customers a small Texas sedum. Anyone spending \$40 or more took home a bag of greenhouse compost. It all made for a very exciting check-out.

“We did it again! We put together another wonderful plant sale! The message of conservation of Texas native plants has been

passed along to many people in the hopes that they will go on and tell others about the benefits of using native plants,” wildscape plant laureate Josephine Keeney wrote in a thank-you to all who worked the sale.

“We thank those who helped to set up on Friday. It was hot and steamy, but we got it done. Saturday was almost a blur with all the activity. The awarding of prizes, organized by Kay Sekio, was a lot of fun. The 50% off on trees helped us reduce our inventory and make some people very happy. Everyone did a great job and we thank you for your help and dedication.”

Many customers commented on how friendly, knowledgeable and helpful the volunteers were. Customers also appreciated the printed labels in each pot indicating sun exposure, soil requirements, bloom time and color. Details like that keep people coming back every year.



The hustle, the bustle, the eagerness of customers looking for the right native plants to enhance their gardens. The excitement was palpable.

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Wildscape Update continued from page 10



Plant Sale Crew bottom to top, left to right: Carol Marcotte, Marian Hiler, Hester Schwarzer, Joe Martinez, Kay Sekio, Gailon Hardin, Josephine Keeney, Morgan Chivers, Denise Carter, John Darling, Jane Oosterhuis, Glenn Troutman, Frank Keeney, Shelly Campbell, Dick Schoech. Not pictured, Charlie Amos, Danny Kocurek, Robert Faires, Ann Knudsen, Larry Norris, Jo Poppelreiter and Marylee Thomason.



Families welcome. Laura, Mark, and their daughter Rose grabbed a cart and started shopping. Rose curled up for a nap moments after this picture was snapped.



There to the sweet, successful end. Left to right, Kay Sekio, Josephine Keeney, Glenn Troutman, Ann Knudsen, Marylee Thomason, Joe Martinez and Carol Marcotte.

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Wildscape Update continued from page 11



Left and above, winners of Kay Sekio's beautiful (and educational) potted arrangements



The parks department really does love the wildscape. We know the city had a choice of places to use pieces of the big cedar tree that had to be removed at another park, and the wildscape got them.

Out of the tree, parks guys crafted four distinctive benches, which have been placed next to memorial plaques. See them in the overlook and on the lower trail near the stone bridge.



Wildscape bonus

Observations by Carol Marcotte:
Common garden spider and
robber fly



Go Wild in Idlewild Debuts Marian Hiler



The brand-new *Go Wild in Idlewild* series of workshops for kids had a successful kickoff on Saturday, September 28. Local professional photographer (and unofficial ACC photojournalist) Paul Knudsen conducted a class on nature



photography using your smartphone. First, he reviewed the basic tips for pleasing picture composition. But the real fun started when the class began taking their own photos with Paul giving individual helpful and encouraging photo critiques to each young photographer. The monthly workshops are designed to encourage school



children to engage with the environment around them. They are organized by ACC and cohosted by partner and benefactor Idlewild Botanical. Each workshop is free, open to the public, and held at Idlewild Botanical, 5111 W. Arkansas Lane.



**Next Workshop
Saturday, October 19
10:00. Just show up and
have fun.**

At the next *Go Wild in Idlewild* workshop, naturalist Michael Smith will talk about the often unappreciated but nonetheless valuable reptiles and amphibians. He will let you know what to do if you find one and how you can observe them. He will also let you know what to do if you don't find one. How and where to go about looking for herps (not just snakes). He will include some examples of "backyard" herps as well as other native species in north Texas.

If you are ready right now for information on herps and other creatures check out Michael's newsletter *The Tree frog Times* at <https://jsdragons.com/the-treefrog-times/>. Each one provides stories, photos, and short articles about wildlife and wild places. You won't be disappointed.



More Unwise Johnson Creek Development John Darling



Townhomes are proposed to be built on Mayfield Road just west of Matlock. The development has gotten through Planning & Zoning (What doesn't?) and is headed for probable city council approval.

Sounds like business as usual, so why should we care? I can think of at least three reasons:

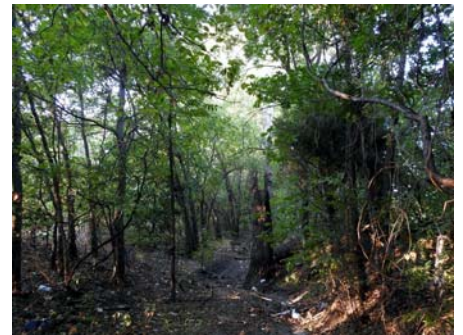
1. We stand to lose about 250 trees. Granted, many are species we don't care much about — hackberries, elms, and cottonwoods — but some are quite large and there are a few very big post oaks and numerous baby post oaks. And even the lesser tree species have value.
2. It's a generally disturbed lot, but it looks like a valuable corridor for migrating birds as well as habitat for a variety of declining animal species.
3. From a practical standpoint, the apparently doomed wooded area lies along Johnson Creek, whose flooding problems are well known. So we will probably choose to replace whatever natural



floodwater-holding capacity this stretch of creek possesses with impervious roads and roofs. We don't yet know the details, but the creek will be channeled somehow, maybe buried in underground pipes.

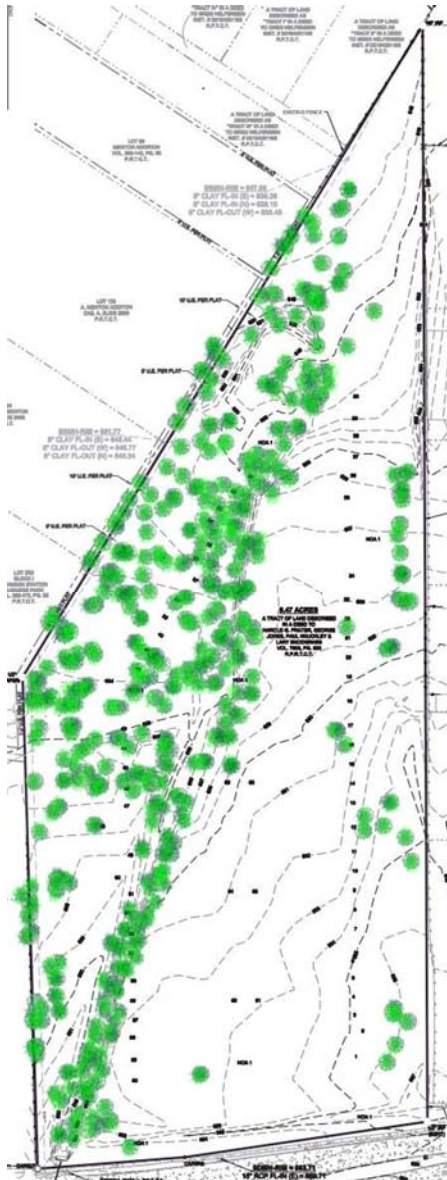
The site is not pretty and it has been seriously disturbed. However, it has value even in its current state and we should oppose this bad plan.

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Johnson Creek continued from page 14

Going, going, gone!



Easy steps to make Arlington worse:

Cut down a lot of trees (every one of those green dots).

Develop a stretch of creek that already floods.

Speed up the flow of floodwater with channeling and impervious surfaces.

For no good reason, increase global warming (but only a little bit) with a lot of nearly black roofs.

And by the way, when you propose planting six species of new trees, make half of them nonnative (Chinese pistache, pine, and bald cypress).



Randol Mill Park Pond Update Carol Marcotte

Michael Debrecht, Parks Operations Manager, recently gave me an update on the Randol Mill Park pond dredging project. He said pond dredging there is to start sometime around Oct 1.

And, if you'd like to see how the dredging process will be done at Randol Mill Park, go visit Vandergriff Park at 2800 Matlock Road, where the pond is currently being dredged.

I have attached several pictures of the Vandergriff Park pond dredging project for your review. The pond doesn't appear to be as big as Randol Mill Park pond. There are no fountains or an overflow drain, like there are at Randol Mill Park pond.

The water is being siphoned off into Johnson Creek, and the silt is sucked into large drying tubes. The tubes are laying out to dry, and they'll be hauled off later. There is a strong fishy smell on this hot day!



Latest Tree Outrage Prompts ACC Letter

Note: The ACC board recently voted to send the following letter to our elected city leaders. We have condemned the senseless loss of the city's trees for years, but it was the proposed Kee Branch erosion plan that prompted our letter. Consider communicating with our city leaders if you are also concerned.

Dear Mayor Williams and Council Members:

When you are in a hole, stop digging. Arlington is in a hole today with respect to our trees, yet it keeps digging. Since the UFORE tree survey of 2009, the city has fallen behind in its mission:

With concern over the heat island and air quality in the DFW region, the city has made a commitment to **maintaining and enhancing its urban forest**. The Division maintains more than 10,000 trees throughout the city and implements the reforestation program aimed at **ensuring a sustainable and healthy tree canopy** for residents and visitors alike.

Forestry and Beautification Division - 2010 Business Plan

In the last 18 months alone, several instances of imprudent tree removal have come to light, for example:

- 250+ mature trees, mostly native and irreplaceable post oaks, were chopped down during redesign of the former Ditto Golf Course;
- more recently, some 60+ very large street trees were felled to resurface the roadway and provide largely unneeded sidewalks along three blocks on East First, Second, and Third streets;
- the current plan for erosion control of some 80 properties bordering Kee Branch Tributary 4 calls for the removal of some 250 large trees with a DBH >6 inches. The smaller, younger or understory trees that will also be cut down as part of this project are not even being counted;
- redevelopment projects at Cooper and 303 and SW Green Oaks Blvd. near the branch library sought/seek to remove most or all standing trees;
- the old and hugely valuable blackjack oak at Main and Cooper streets, along with many other large trees at the site, was felled by the new owner;
- the tall conifers and street trees at the former central library lot, the mature trees that stood where city hall now sits, and myriad trees downtown were cut down to make room for new buildings.

You are no doubt aware of the enormous aesthetic, environmental, health, and financial benefits of trees. "Beyond cooling a city's temperature down, which on its own can improve health, trees have been linked in prior studies to myriad positive health outcomes: longer life spans, lower levels of stress, better air quality, and lower rates of cardiac disease," said an NPR report.* And while we relish Arlington's prosperity, our neighborhood trees are disappearing at an alarming rate, victims of inadequate legal protection and a mistaken notion that economic development trumps all other considerations. As our native cast-iron forest is replaced by impervious surfaces, the extremely valuable ecologic function of our oaks and other mature tree species is lost forever.

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ACC Letter continued from page 17

Wherever in Arlington a tree is cut, its loss diminishes every one of us. That's why we must act now. We ask for (a) an immediate moratorium on tree removal within Arlington city limits by all public and private entities; (b) an updated survey of the city's urban canopy to document the deforestation that has occurred in the past 10 years; (c) appointment of a task force to review city ordinances designed to protect and preserve our trees, whether cultivated or wild, public or private (Sec. 5.2 of the city's Unified Development Code); and (d) convening a community-led panel to analyze the results of (b) and (c) and draft guidelines to safeguard these precious natural assets and steer future growth in an environmentally sustainable direction.

As always, Arlington Conservation Council stands ready to assist city staff in any capacity.

Respectfully,

Dick Schoech
President
Arlington Conservation Council

* <https://www.npr.org/2019/09/04/755349748/trees-are-key-to-fighting-urban-heat-but-cities-keep-losing-them>

Magical Mantis Candy Halliburton



I have been keeping an eye on the frostweed I bought at the Molly Hollar Wildscape sale last fall at Randol Mill Park. It's over 3 feet tall and has 4 solid stems, but I have eagerly been waiting for it to flower. Today I went outside to check on it and for the very first time at any of the houses where we have lived in our 22 years in Texas, I saw a praying mantis. It blended in so well with the leaves of the plant that I almost missed it. I'm looking forward to seeing the "frost" on the stems of the plant this winter.

In Case You Missed It Grace Darling



Animal Testing - *PETA.org, September 2019.* You may have assumed that most major cosmetics companies were on board with alternatives to cruelty to animals, but there are some that still pay to poison and kill. It isn't always easy to know which brands are completely cruelty-free. For instance, L'Oréal, which doesn't test on animals in the United States, pays for deadly testing in China, where archaic and painful experiments on animals are required for cosmetics. PETA has compiled this list of companies that pay for testing on animals in China:



Climate Action - *Grist.org, September 2019.* United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres had expressed high hopes for Monday's U.N. Climate Action Summit in New York City. Guterres personally reached out to many countries' leaders ahead



of time and told them, “[D]on’t come to the Summit with beautiful speeches. Come with concrete plans.”

But in the chambers of the General Assembly, the world’s top polluters — China, India, and the United States — made no major commitments to slash investments in fossil fuels and reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Instead, the most aggressive and ambitious commitments came from small countries, especially coastal and island states most vulnerable to the climate crisis. And those small countries are not happy to be doing the heavy lifting while the countries most

responsible for climate change twiddle their thumbs. Underdeveloped coastal countries — which are on the front lines of climate change due to rising sea levels — have a deeper understanding of what the world is up against on account of their first-hand experience with havoc-wreaking tropical storms like Hurricane Dorian, Typhoon Haiyan, and Cyclone Idai in recent years. Among the commitments made by smaller, less developed countries were promises to invest in more renewable energy and

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In Case You Missed It continued from page 19

withdraw investments from fossil fuels. The Marshall Islands, for instance, [unveiled a plan](#) to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, an ambitious goal for an island country that relies on fossil fuel imports. A group of 15 other countries, including Belize, Costa Rica, Fiji, Grenada, Saint Lucia, and Vanuatu, pledged to do the same.

Bigger nations did make some meaningful promises. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledged that India will increase its renewable energy production capacity from 175 gigawatts to 450 gigawatts by 2022. Germany, one of the world's biggest users of coal, committed to ending its reliance on the dirtiest fossil fuel. And Germany, South Korea and the U.K. announced they'd double their investments in the [Green Climate Fund](#), a U.N. program that helps developing countries invest in renewables.

Still, outside observers noted the relative lack of urgency from developed countries at the summit. "Most of the major economies fell woefully short," said Andrew Steer, President and CEO of the World Resources Institute, a think tank, in a statement on Monday. "Their lack of ambition stands in sharp contrast with the growing demand for action around the world."

The Case of the Disappearing Trees in the UK - *The Guardian*, September 27, 2019.

More than half of Europe's endemic trees are threatened with extinction as invasive diseases, pests, pollution and urban development take a growing toll on the landscape, according to a study by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Ash, elm, and rowan trees are among those in decline, which could complicate efforts to tackle the climate crisis through reforestation. Countries such as the UK are keen to import more saplings to draw carbon out of the atmosphere, but young trees need to be carefully screened to avoid diseases and pests entering the country and depleting existing forests. "We are encouraged to plant more trees, quite rightly, but we have to be very careful to ensure

they don't come with pest species. We need to be very careful about biosecurity," said one of the authors.

The study of trees is part of a wider European red list that examines the status of overlooked species in order to determine priorities for conservation. It found 20-50% of terrestrial molluscs, shrubs and bryophytes, such as moss and liverworts, are threatened with extinction due to a loss of wild areas, expanded agriculture and climate change. Although these species are unglamorous and rarely attract attention, they play a vital role in food production and other natural life support systems through oxygen production, nutrient recycling and soil regeneration.

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In Case You Missed It continued from page 20



If Road Verges Were Cut Later and Less Often - *The Guardian*, September 27, 2019. With 97% of wildflower meadows in Britain having been destroyed in less than a century, roadside grassland has become a crucial wildlife habitat for more than 700 species of wildflowers. But there has been a 20% decrease in floral diversity on road verges since 1990, in part because of overzealous cutting. **The national guidance for managing roadside verges for wildflowers** calls for just two cuts a year – instead of four or more – and only after flowers have set seed, to restore floral diversity and save councils money. The guidelines recommend different numbers of cuts depending on the type of grassland but with several key principles – no cutting before the end of July, and the removal of all grass cuttings to lower soil fertility and allow a more diverse range of wildflowers to flourish. The authors concede that some residents view wildflower-rich verges as untidy and neglected, so they suggest that managers can cut narrow strips around the wilder verges to frame them – “a

simple but effective way to give the perception of tidiness and help offset potential negative feedback”.

Roadside verges would not only provide grassland habitat the size of London, Birmingham, Manchester, Cardiff, and Edinburgh combined, but are also increasingly important wildlife corridors, assisting the movement of plants, flowers and invertebrates



across an increasingly fragmented countryside. A senior environment and sustainability manager said: “For too long our roadside verges have been neglected and underutilized, with their potential as wildlife havens and corridors unrealized. These new guidelines demonstrate just how easily this can be changed with some simple tweaks to management regimes helping to achieve biodiversity net gain and save a little money in the process.” Clare Warburton, the principal



green infrastructure adviser for Natural England, welcomed the cost-effective, practical solutions in the new guidelines. “Road verges can be designed and managed to support an array of wildlife, as well as helping us tune into nature on our daily walk, cycle or drive,” she said. “A great multitasker, nature on the road verge does a number of jobs like cleaning the air, storing carbon, pollinating crops, and providing sustainable drainage.” “We can and must change the way we create and manage road verges, to encourage wildflowers, butterflies, moths and other insects. The guidance also shows it can cost us less to do exactly that,” said another contributor. [Lady Bird Johnson is popping champagne in heaven, I suspect.]



Chalk the Walk and Talk

with special guest, council member Victoria Farrar-Myers



SIDEWALK CHALK ART CONTEST

This fun event is themed “*Friends In Nature*” and is for amateur artists of all ages and skill levels!

Not an artist? Come enjoy the art in the park, vote for the People’s Choice Award, and visit with council member Victoria Farrar-Myers.

Ongoing tours of the park and food for sale at the Danielita’s Restaurant table also available.

Saturday, October 19, 2019 (rain date Oct. 26)
at the O.S. Gray Natural Area, 2021 W. Abram St.

Entry Fees

(includes one box of chalk)

Ages 9 - 12	\$5
Ages 13-17	\$10
Ages 18+	\$10
Family with kids up to 8 years	...\$15
Team, any age, 2-5 people	\$15

Children 12 and under must be accompanied by adult.

Cash prizes awarded in each category.

Event Schedule

9 - 10 a.m.	Artist check-in
9 a.m. - 12 p.m.	Artists at Work, Special guest council member Victoria Farrar-Myers, Recycling crafts and activities
12 - 1 p.m.	Judging and Peoples Choice voting
1 p.m.	Awards

Registration deadline: 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 17. Space is limited, register early!
Email friends@friendsofosgray.org to reserve a spot and get complete rules & info.

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 _____	First-year member \$10.00	
Address _____	Individual \$15.00	New Member ☐
_____	Family \$25.00	
Phone _____	Supporting \$40.00	Renewing member ☐
E-mail _____	Sponsor \$100.00	
	Lifetime Individual \$250.00	
	Other \$ _____	

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 tax-deductible. ACC is a nonprofit, tax-deductible 501(c)(3) organization. If you cannot pay, let any board member know. The only available newsletter format is electronic, and it can be obtained via e-mail and the ACC Web site.

President Dick Schoech
Vice President Wayne Halliburton
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Treasurer Marian Hiler
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Editor John Darling
Board Members Danny Kocurek
 Mike Kolanko
Student Member Nicholas Kocurek

POST OAK

Arlington Conservation Council
 PO Box 216
 Arlington, TX 76004-0216

October Meeting

Wednesday, October 2, 7 pm

Fielder House Museum
1616 W. Abram Street

**City Environmental Initiatives**

Victoria Farrar-Myers,
Arlington City Council Member-at-Large