

ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

POST OAK

VOLUME 21, NUMBER 5

MAY 2020



AN EXPENSIVE WAY TO KILL A POST OAK • SEE PAGE 23

May Meeting Cancelled

We'll see you again just as soon as it's safe.

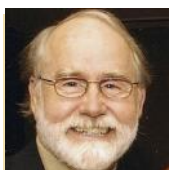
Meanwhile, please take very good care of yourselves.



Photo by Jim Domke

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From the President

Dick Schoech

Learning from the Coronavirus

What else is there to write about but the coronavirus and its disease called COVID-19. The virus has impacted every news program, every conversation, every trip out of the house, everything we want to do, every plan we had for the spring and summer, and even our use of toilet paper. In essence, we have lost our whole way of living. Predictions are that the virus may last through the fall and require a major change in how people live for years to come. Some people's lives have been changed more, for example, those who caught the virus and unfortunately passed away or survived with virus-related injuries to the lungs, heart, kidneys, etc. There are children orphaned, spouses widowed, family networks destroyed, etc. All indications are that everyone is experiencing major losses and will have to adjust to a changed world.

Humans are creatures of habit and fairly predictable social animals. The literature is very clear about the emotions we experience during a major loss. The emotions are described by the stages people go through as we experience a major loss. Our emotions may jump back and forth between stages as the change progresses. The typical stages and possible emotions are:

- **Confusion/shock/fear**, e.g., What the hell is happening?
- **Denial**, e.g., It won't affect me, it won't have to change what I do.
- **Anger**, e.g. This didn't have to happen, who is to blame, and why didn't they stop this?
- **Bargaining**, e.g., If I just do what they say for a while, this whole thing will go away and I can return to my normal life.
- **Depression**, e.g., I'm so tired of this and can't take it anymore.
- **Acceptance/retrospection**, e.g., I needed to make some changes and things could be better.

Writing this, I alternate primarily between the anger and depression stages. So much needs to be done to help our environment, but I have to sit at home watching TV, working on my computer, or pulling weeds in my yard. I'm mad at our governments for failing us and giving taxpayer money to the greedy rather than the needy. Luckily,

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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
ldarling@sbcglobal.net

Bits & Pieces

The terse tree hugger

Positive again this month.
White stuff on pine needles?
Actinomycetes beating up on lignin.
Compost really happens.



Visit us on the Web
www.acctexas.org



Bee on a committee



From a Nextdoor post:

In 2019, the City of Arlington became a Bee City USA affiliate. In order to fulfill our commitment to sustaining native pollinators through education and habitat creation, the City would like to ask interested residents to join our Bee City Committee. The committee is

looking for residents with a wide variety of talents and skills such as photography, writing, art, teaching and gardening. If you are interested in bees, butterflies, moths, bats and other pollinators, please complete an application online at arlingtontx.gov/beecityusa. (You'll find the application link in the blue sidebar on the left side of the page.)

Playing possum

The other night someone's wretched mutts frightened this young opossum apparently to death.

Although playing possum is widely known, there's a lot to this extreme behavior that many of us don't know. For a look at how this occurs in other animals, [read this](#). And for a particularly grownup analysis, [go to this site](#). (Note: This opossum was okay.)



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



Question Corner John Darling

Q: I'm still bored! I'm desperate for some nature ideas, even some distraction through my kitchen window. Rouse yourself for once and help, okay?

A: Have you been tested for toxic personality disorder? Don't bother with a mask; that won't help. But this might: There's a big two-part mystery just outside many windows, maybe even yours. So remove all that aluminum foil and start answering the mockingbird questions.

First, why do mockingbirds sing at night? [Here's](#) a very simple article that (like others) doesn't answer the question. And [another](#) along the same vein that also lacks any sort

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Thanks A.C.C. for working to conserve Arlington's natural resources.

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From the President continued from page 3

our literature points to remedies to help us get through the stages of loss. A proven remedy when anger and depression cycle into our emotions is to get out into nature. Remember the March ACC talk where Charley Amos walked us through the benefits of being outdoors? He explained how just 15-20 minutes outdoors can make a big difference in our mental health.* How did Charley know then that we would need his wise guidance as we navigated staying at home and social distancing? And, if he had this insight and understanding of what was coming with the coronavirus, why didn't he tell us to stop at a store on our way home from his talk and stock up on toilet paper?

I am writing this on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Many Earth Day activities are challenging us to rethink our relationship with the planet. In addition, the coronavirus is forcing us to look at what we are doing to the Earth. As people worldwide shelter in place, the air is visibly cleaner, there is less trash in our parks, the roads are safer, neighbors are chatting with each other, and birds are said to be singing more this spring. Some of us are even foraging for food in our backyards to avoid grocery shopping.

So, as we continue to cycle through the emotions due to what we are losing, let us take advantage of the final stage and rethink what environmental and sustainable changes are important for our planet's future. Then, we can translate those changes into local actions and commit ourselves to carrying them out as we battle every coronavirus attack and better prepare ourselves for the even bigger world crisis, climate change.

* Even a short nature experience can reduce stress for urban residents. The aim of a recent study was to identify how much time in nature is needed to reduce stress. Salivary biomarkers were used to measure stress levels. The study was conducted over a period of eight weeks and was based on salivary readings and nature engagement logs provided by 36 urban residents. Results showed that nature engagement was most effective when the experience lasted 20 – 30 minutes. Reference: Hunter, M.R., Gillespie, B.W., Chen, SY-P., (2019). Urban nature experiences reduce stress in the context of daily life based on salivary biomarkers. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10.

Lights Out DFW?



Near downtown in late April you couldn't help but notice an apparently empty bank building rising high and blazing away on a dark night. It was (and still is) migration season, so you have to wonder why. Someone's wasting money and killing birds for no reason at all. [This article](#) summarizes the terrible magnitude of the problem. But dimming one spot in Arlington won't help much. The top three deadliest cities are Chicago, Houston, and Dallas. [Audubon's Lights Out](#) program can help, but in Texas only Houston participates.

We need to start somewhere. Maybe one spot in Arlington could grow to become Lights Out DFW. We could save birds and energy, too.



More Bits

YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON ***John I. Blair***

Each morning on my way to work
This time of year I pass it
Posing patiently in the ditch
Beside the railroad track.

It's just canvassing for crawdads;
But this most elegant of birds,
Stretching its slender legs
And flaunting its yellow plumes,
Looks like a stolen fragment
Of Egyptian tomb painting.

It slowly stalks the muddy margin
Among the scattered gum wrappers
Beer cans, rusted scrap and broken glass,
Its concentration so great
That it stares past a million years
As if they never were, seeking simply
The slightest ripple in the bottom silt
To signal the morning's breakfast.

©2002 John I. Blair

One Tough Tree

We may know a thing or two about post oaks, but what about that other big native, the blackjack oak? Our city forester, Jeremy Priest, has a [good article](#) in the Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council newsletter. Have a look.



Yellow-crowned night heron at Randol Mill Park.

Photo by Carol Marcotte.

**Something new for you
From Arlington Conservation Council**

The Watchdog
watchdog@acctexas.org

We try hard, but we can't keep up with every environmental thing.
So if you see something we should know about,
send an email message to the watchdog.

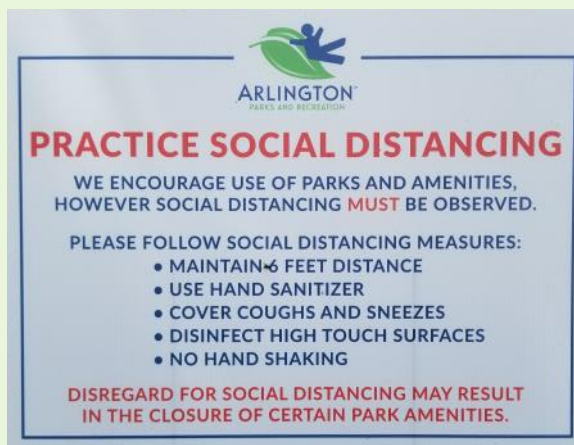
The Arlington Environmental Hall of Fame

We might not pay much attention to the landscape around Worthington Bank on Main Street next to City Hall, but it's largely composed of native plants, most of which have more or less thrived there for years. In places the planting beds are a little ragged, but now that City Hall has lost almost all of its natives, this looks like the native plant epicenter of downtown. Not only that, but around back there's a miserable skinny strip that is a real lesson in how to make the most of a miserable skinny strip.



Randol Mill Park

Signs of the times.
Photos by Carol Marcotte.



Bits Again

SNEAKING A PEEK

John I. Blair

I'm sneaking a peek at you there
On the railing that borders my deck,
Twisting your neck, looking for lunch,

Black-hooked beak, golden eyes,
Fierce as a raptor can get
Who weighs only two pounds at most.

By summer I think you'll become
A full-sized hawk,
Competent capturing crows;

But right now even a rat
Could give you a fight;
So you're waiting for sparrows.

I'm going to be neutral in this,
OK with setting the bait
But hoping you'll find some place else

To practice your trade, some place
Where I won't know the names
Of the dinner guests.

©2013 John I. Blair

State of the Air

Recently our air has become healthier, as pandemic restrictions have drastically reduced our driving habits. A Dallas Morning News [article](#) reports a drop in one pollutant level, noting, "NASA satellite maps of nitrogen dioxide levels in Texas show lower levels from March 16 through April 10 across the state than the previous 26 days. Nitrogen dioxide is a pollutant that contributes to smog, according to the Environmental Protection Agency." However, the reasons are not necessarily simple. One authority said, "How much is emissions, and how much is weather? It's hard to say."

Meanwhile, [another DMN article](#) covers the American Lung Association's 2020 State of the Air report and the news is not good. Despite moving up one place from 2018, we're still 17th on the most-polluted cities list. And as the weather heats up, our ozone, as always, will increase.



Thinking about Earth Day

Yes, April has somehow passed and Earth Day felt lost in coronavirus constraints. But it was the day's 50th anniversary and that number makes it seem even more appropriate to think about how the environment has changed for the worse — and for the better — over the last five decades. For interesting perspective, look at [DFW Green Source's recent edition](#). And while you're there be sure to read Jim Domke's fine article on the first Earth Day in DFW. For more, see page 16 of this issue.

Question Corner continued from page 5

of satisfying answer. Less ambient noise at night seems a little weak. So it looks like the field is wide open.

Second, why do mockingbirds mimic other birds and assorted noises? Standard reasons (mate attraction, territorial defense) abound but don't address mimicry. It's suggested that mimicking other birds may discourage those species from settling in the mockingbird's territory, but that needs work. Even [climate variability](#) appears to play a role in song complexity.

Second question, part two: Do mockingbirds continue to add new sounds throughout their lives? It has been commonly assumed that they're open-ended learners, but [one researcher](#) has focused on this and thinks not.

This might be about it: Apparently it's unmated males that sing at night, and the repertoire differs in spring and fall. You figure out the rest. Put down the tin foil, write up a grant, and get busy. You won't be bored.



Western Ratsnake

Michael Smith has shared his love for the natural world, and snakes in particular, with us through walks and talks. He's also an accomplished photographer and nature writer. For a fine sample, [read this](#) and learn all about one of our most common snakes. *Photo by Michael Smith.*



More on Arlington, Bee City

From a [city press release](#):

Arlington is now the 100th city to be certified as a Bee City USA affiliate. Under the initiative, city leaders will take steps to improve the landscape for bees and other pollinators.

As a certified Bee City USA affiliate, The American Dream City will work to reverse the trend of declining pollinators through action plans and awareness.

Arlington is now committed to hosting at least one educational event or habitat restoration day every year. The City will also work to create and expand bee-friendly habitats on public and private lands.

Bee City USA is an initiative of the [Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation](#).

Blackland Prairie Preserve

Photos by Wes Miller



Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marylee Thomason. Edited by John Dycus

A story told live in the wildscape gardens by Josephine Keeney. She promises it's all true.

Frank and I met in 1982 when we were both members of Parents without Partners in Arlington. One time during conversation at one of the meetings he mentioned that he had a lot of blackberries ripening in his yard but no time to pick them and do something with them. I said that I loved blackberry jam and if he provided the fruit, I could make the jam and share it with him. He said I would have to come pick them, so I got two of my girlfriends together,



and the three of us went to his house in Bedford.

He did have a lot of berries, which we all took home to make jam. To make it nice he had baked some sourdough bread from scratch to go with the jam. This bread was made from a recipe that he used when he lived in the woods in Alaska. He put the bread in a lovely basket lined with white and red checkered cloth, and we were all very impressed.

My friends told me, that guy likes you a lot.



Guess who? *Left to right*, Marylee Thomason, Ramona Gratton, and Jane Oosterhuis. Weeding, weeding, weeding the unwanted grasses, vetch, and velcro weed in the corner entrance to the wildscape.

Photo by Josephine Keeney.



It's the season when volunteers make the difference between a weedscape and a wildscape as they give our native plants a fighting chance to overcome the hoard of invasives.

Wildscape Update continued from page 12



Carol Marcotte and Jane Oosterhuis deeply immersed in foliage, dedicated to their weeding task. Photographer Josephine Keeney observed and sympathized, “Without mulch, this soil is horrible. When it’s dry, it’s like a rock and you can hardly get your tools into it. When it’s wet, it sticks like clay and you can hardly get it off your tools.” Off in the distance, Marylee Thomason and new volunteer Robin Agee plant black-eyed susans among mealy blue sage and evening primrose.



Ann Knudsen and Carol Marcotte (pictured) came an extra day to clear out invasive grasses and weeds among flame acanthus and other good plants being smothered. They were rewarded by the arrival of a bluebird at the top of a nearby nest box. Lots of twittering emanated from the bushes as the fledglings toddled through their first day out of the nest.



Prairie celestial in the wildscape’s pocket prairie. Its biggest fan is Carol Marcotte, who says, “The pocket prairie doesn’t know there is a pandemic. The prairie is in its own world.”



Wildscape Update continued from page 13



Jane Oosterhuis discovered this fur-lined nest while weeding just a few feet from the sidewalk. It is shallow so the mother rabbit can lie on the ground over the nest to allow her babies to nurse. Silence, leaf cover and vegetation kept these bunnies from being discovered. *Left to right*, Ann Knudsen, Carol Marcotte and Jane Oosterhuis shared the excitement of this unusual find.

Molly's sign, returning to nature. Right now it is surrounded by crossvine, blooming mealy blue sage and pink primrose, with berrying possumhaw on the left. Probably looks just about the way she would like it.



Wildscape Update continued from page 14



Ann Knudsen found these two critters while weeding. Both were released without harm.

The beautiful flea beetle, *Kuschelina gibbifarsa* feeds on leaves and has an enlarged femur for jumping, which it does when disturbed. Adult beetles chew small round or irregular holes in leaves, while larvae typically feed on plant roots, some also on foliage. Many related species are serious agricultural pests, but we could call this one beneficial since it feeds on plants normally considered weeds. It's found throughout most of the eastern and central United States. Host plants are members of the mint family, including American germander.

Rough green snakes are fairly long — around 30 inches — slender and bright green, with yellow or whitish bellies. This one was noticed climbing through the plants searching for insects.



When Ann Knudsen and Carol Marcotte returned to the wildscape for more weeding they discovered a Bewick's wren in an empty bluebird box. The mother wren had taken advantage of the recently vacated nest box to start her own brood.
Photos by Ann Knudsen.



Earth Day Grace Darling

Its Past and Present, Perhaps Its Future

The American people finally had a forum to express their concern about what was happening to the land, rivers, lakes and air—and they did so with spectacular exuberance.

Gaylord Nelson

From *History.com/topics/holidays/earth-day*, 2009:

The brainchild of Senator Gaylord Nelson and inspired by the protests of the 1960s, Earth Day began as a “national teach-in on the environment” and was held on April 22 to maximize the number of students that could be reached on university campuses. By raising public awareness of pollution, Nelson hoped to bring environmental causes into the national spotlight.

Earth Day History

By the early 1960s, Americans were becoming aware of the effects of pollution on the environment. Rachel Carson’s 1962 bestseller *Silent Spring* raised the specter of the dangerous effects of pesticides on the American countryside. Later in the decade, a 1969 [fire on Cleveland’s Cuyahoga River](#) shed light on the problem of chemical waste disposal. Until that time, protecting the planet’s natural resources was not part of the national political



agenda, and the number of activists devoted to large-scale issues such as industrial pollution was minimal. Factories pumped pollutants into the air, lakes and rivers with few legal consequences. Big, gas-guzzling cars were considered a sign of prosperity. Only a small portion of the American population was familiar with — let alone practiced — recycling.

Elected to the U.S. Senate in 1962, Senator Gaylord Nelson, a Democrat from Wisconsin, was determined to convince the federal government that the planet was at risk. In 1969, Nelson, considered one of the leaders of the modern environmental movement, developed the idea for Earth Day after being inspired by the anti-Vietnam War “teach-ins” that were taking place on college campuses around the United

States. According to Nelson, he envisioned a large-scale, grassroots environmental demonstration “to shake up the political establishment and force this issue onto the national agenda.”

Nelson announced the Earth Day concept at a conference in Seattle in the fall of 1969 and invited the entire nation to get involved. Denis Hayes, a 25-year-old graduate student at Harvard, was selected as Earth Day’s national coordinator, and he worked with an army of student volunteers and several staff members from Nelson’s Senate office to organize the project. According to Nelson, “Earth Day worked because of the spontaneous response at the grassroots level. We had neither the time nor resources to organize 20 mil-

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Earth Day continued from page 16



lion demonstrators and the thousands of schools and local communities that participated. That was the remarkable thing about Earth Day. It organized itself.”



The First Earth Day: April 22, 1970

On the **first Earth Day** on April 22, 1970, rallies were held in Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Ange-

les and most other American cities, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. In New York City, Mayor John Lindsay closed off a portion of Fifth Avenue to traffic for several hours and spoke at a rally in Union Square with actors Paul Newman and Ali McGraw. In Washington, D.C., thousands of people listened to speeches and performances by singer Pete Seeger and others, and Congress went into recess so its members could speak to their constituents at Earth Day events.

The first Earth Day was effective at raising awareness about environmental issues and transforming public attitudes. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, “Public opinion polls indicate that a permanent change in national priorities followed Earth Day 1970. When polled in May 1971, 25% of the U.S. public declared protecting

the environment to be an important goal, a 2500% increase over 1969.” Earth Day kicked off the “environmental decade with a bang,” as Senator Nelson later put it. During the 1970s, a number of important pieces of environmental legislation were passed, among them the Clean Air Act, the Water Quality Improvement Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Toxic Substances Control Act and the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act. Another key development was the establishment in December 1970 of the Environmental Protection Agency, which was tasked with protecting human health and safeguarding the natural environment—air, water, and land.

Since 1970, Earth Day celebrations have grown. In 1990, Earth Day went global, with 200 million people in over 140 nations participating, according to the Earth Day Network (EDN), a nonprofit organization that coordinates Earth Day activities. In 2000, Earth Day focused on clean energy and involved hundreds of millions of people in 184 countries and 5,000 environmental groups, according to EDN. Activities ranged from a traveling, talking drum chain in Gabon, Africa, to a gathering of hundreds of thousands of people at the National Mall in Washington,

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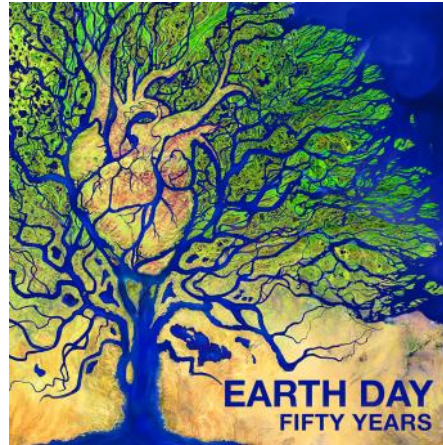
Earth Day continued from page 17

D.C. Today, the Earth Day Network collaborates with more than 17,000 partners and organizations in 174 countries. According to EDN, more than 1 billion people are involved in Earth Day activities, making it “the largest secular civic event in the world.”

Earth Day Today
The theme of Earth Day 2020 was “climate action.” It was to be celebrated with The Great Global Cleanup, a day dedicated to removing trash from green spaces and urban centers alike. EarthDay.org hoped it would be the largest volunteer event in history — and it might have been were it not for the coronavirus pandemic that is keeping us all physically distant.

While recognizing the most urgent challenges of global warming, deforestation, and species extinction, today [EarthDay.org](https://www.earthday.org) urges you to join their current campaigns to Act On Climate Change; Earth Challenge 2020; Foodprints for the Future; Artists for the Earth; The Great Global Cleanup; and The Canopy Project.

And in a virtual celebration of Earth Day every day, I offer the following suggestions for individual and family activities that can be done while maintaining a safe space between you and those around you:



- From the *National Wildlife Federation's Blog*, *The Nature Conservancy*, and *HuffPost*, ways you can minimize your landfill-bound waste at home.
- For a primer on solar and wind power in our community, the North Texas Renewable Energy Group ([NTREG.org](https://www.ntreg.org)) and its members' chatroom are the best.
- And if you are looking for more tips on reducing your carbon footprint, from a plant-based diet and smart land use, through conservation strategies, green building, and native landscapes, to eco-friendly purchasing and socially-responsible investing, visit these sources: <https://www.sustainablelivingguide.com.au/>, [https:// HYPER-LINK "https://www.sustain.ucla.edu/housing/tips-for-living-green/"](https://www.hyperlink.com.au/), <https://www.unicefusa.org/stories/guide-sustainable->

[living/35821](https://www.living/35821), and <https://www.ucsusa.org/about/sustainability/>.

Earth Day Future
The chairman emeritus of Earth Day 2020, Denis Hayes, notes the shifting focus on another threat to the planet since that first celebration. Fifty years ago, Hayes said, “climate change was not part of the national discussion.” In recent days, Hayes has drawn a connection between the coronavirus and climate change, and the failure of the federal government to effectively deal with either one. In an essay in the *Seattle Times*, he wrote that “Covid-19 robbed us of Earth Day this year. So let’s make Election Day Earth Day.” He urged his readers to get involved in politics and set aside national division. “This November 3,” he wrote, “vote for the Earth.”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/20/climate/denis-hayes-earth-day-organizer.html>



Southwest Nature Preserve Annabelle Corboy, Jan Miller

Friends of Southwest Nature Preserve

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

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

The City Nature Challenge Update



Coral honeysuckle, *Lonicera sempervirens*. Photo by Clarence Holmes.

I'm writing this at the end of the first day of the City Nature Challenge (CNC) (April 24). Due to COVID-19, the 2020 challenge has been converted from a competition to a collaborative global effort, focused on celebrating our natural world and documenting the nature all around us. Whatever source we use to check on the world outside our homes, we are seeing the positive effects of the quarantine on our natural world.

If the above is all Greek, here's a little background: iNaturalist (iNat) is a very popular nature app, with a global community of citizen scientists. iNaturalist lets you record the plants, animals, and any other kind of wildlife you come across, plus iNaturalist helps you identify what you found and posted. The **City Nature Challenge** is an annual event that sets up a friendly competition between metropolitan areas across the world, with a challenge to see who can post the most Observations during the event.



Northern fungus-farming ant, *Trachymyrmex septentrionalis*. Photo by Clarence Holmes.



Golden ear, *Tremella aurantia*. Photo by Clarence Holmes.

A snapshot of the Texas CNC on Friday evening has the DFW area in a close second place behind Houston-Galveston, with around 5500 Observations. The numbers are changing by the minute, but if you'd like to see what they look like at the end of the Observation period (April 24-27), use this link www.inaturalist.org/projects/texas-city-nature-challenge-2020-cities

A couple of trivia pieces for Friday evening: The most observed species in DFW is the cedar elm

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Southwest Nature Preserve continued from page 19



Nuttall's wild indigo, *Baptisia nuttalliana*. Photo by Jan Miller.

(*Ulmus crassifolia*). For Texas as a whole, it's pink ladies (*Oenothera speciosa*); northern cardinals (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) lead the birds. Other leaders: green anole, fox squirrel, red admiral, western honey bee, and common slider lead their class or order. There have been over 2,900 different species observed in Texas on this first day of the CNC.

As for Southwest Nature Preserve, the first posted observations were from Clarence Holmes. His observations include fungi, ants, and flowers.

By the time you are reading this, there might still be a chance to participate in this year's City Nature Challenge. [No, the editor was too slow.] Part 2 of the event is the Identification phase. This is

where the experts and experts-to-be have a major role to play. Part 2 runs from April 28 to May 3. Even if you don't participate in this year's CNC, this is an activity that you will enjoy throughout the year. Making Identifications in iNaturalist is a perfect quarantine activity — it relies heavily on what you already know and improves your ability to differentiate the similar species from each other.

To learn to become an Identifier, you need to rely on two different tools: the browser version of iNaturalist ([inaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org)) and



Southern dewberry, *Rubus trivialis*. Photo by Jan Miller.

your knowledge of (or interest in learning about) a species. You can contribute a lot to the iNat community without becoming an expert on iNat. Your knowledge of nature is much more important in becoming an Identifier! Pick a species to Identify and follow these simple steps: 1. Look over the Observations of your species in iNat:

- Use your browser to login to [inaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org). From the very top of the page on the left side, choose Explore.
- In the Observations line at the top of the Explore page, enter your species in the Species box and add a location filter such as Tarrant County TX, USA in the Location box.
- The result should be a list of all the Observations of your species in the location you've chosen.
- Browse through several of these, focusing on **Research Grade** Observations. To see the details about the Observation, click on the Photo for



Farkleberry or sparkleberry, *Vaccinium arboreum*. Flowers just opening, so they're all white. Later they are shaded with pink. Photo by Jan Miller.

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Southwest Nature Preserve continued from page 20

the Observation. This will take you to the Observation's Page. If there are several photos, you'll be able to see them here.

2. Now you're ready to try your hand at Identifications!

- a. Repeat Steps a and b above (Use Explore page to find your Species in a Location you're familiar with).
- b. Select an Observation (Step d above). If you Agree with the current Identification, you can just click on the Agree box. If you are the first Identifier to Agree with the Observer's ID at the species level, the Observation will become "Research Grade". You can add your Identification to Observations that already have confirming IDs; it just adds more certainty to the quality of the Observation.
- c. What if you do not agree with the current Identification? It is fairly straightforward to disagree by selecting the "Suggest an Identification" tab in the box at the end of the list of Identifiers and entering your ID. It's helpful to add a note about why you disagree.

3. This basic set of instructions will get you started, but once you've done a few of these you



Mosses at Southwest Nature Preserve.

Photo by Jan Miller.

will have more questions. Here is the starting point for many helpful guides from the iNaturalist.org website:

www.inaturalist.org/pages/getting+started Look through the tab headings and select "Identifying Observations."

You'll find information about the logic used in bringing an Observation to Research Grade status plus tips on getting better at Identifying and a shortcut tool that saves steps in Identifying a group of Observations.

We Haven't Forgotten Mount Viridian John Darling

In November, 2018, I wrote an [article](#) about the massive earth-moving project that encroached on the eastern edge of River Legacy Park along north FM 157.

It's now about 18 months later, and I took another look. There's still lots of water flooding parts of the park's forest; how much there would have been without the embankment is something I'm not qualified to say. A huge number of largely young cedar elms still seem to be healthy despite their classification as intermediate in terms of flood tolerance.

The few post oaks present are classified as intolerant to flooding. The boss of the Viridian development behind the earthen monster and others say that the area floods naturally and that's why it's park land. Maybe not entirely true: Would mature post oaks have survived in spots prone to flooding? If you're not using a chain saw, it can take years to kill big trees so it's probably too soon to assess the real damage.

One little thought about the process: A year ago the Star-Telegram [reported](#) that Viridian didn't get a permit before making this mess. Was incompetence to blame? It's more likely that it was a classic instance of the old business axiom, "It's easier to beg forgiveness than to ask permission."

more photos on next page



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**It's easier
to beg forgiveness
than to ask permission.**



Arlington Conservation Council Membership Application

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

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POST OAK

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

May Meeting Cancelled

**We'll see you again
just as soon as it's safe.**

**Meanwhile, please
take very good care
of yourselves.**



Photo by Jim Domke