

ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

POST OAK

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MAY 2021



GREEN MILKWEED AT BLACKLAND PRAIRIE SITE • MAY 2, 2021 • PHOTO BY GRACE DARLING

May Zoom Meeting

The Sustainability Journey of DFW International Airport

Kris Russell,

Sustainability Program Manager, DFW International Airport

Wednesday, May 5, 6:30 p.m.

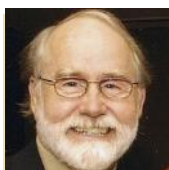
Did you miss this great talk? Watch it any time in the next few days by clicking on [this link](#).



Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport proves that sustainability is good for business, and it has an impressive record of reducing emissions, lowering operating costs, and driving economic value, all of which made DFW the first North American airport (and largest in the world) to achieve carbon neutral status. DFW recognizes its vital role in protecting natural resources for the community now and into the future. Climate action is a key pillar of its sustainability strategy intended to protect our air, land, and water.

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From the President

Dick Schoech

Our Unfortunate Battle to Control Nature

Humans have a need to mold nature to fit our ideals of what nature should be. This tendency likely dates to biblical times when humans believed they were the only creatures with immortal souls and had to “multiply” and “subdue the earth” to please their Creator.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. — [Genesis 1:28 KJV](#)

One problem with following this command is that human ideals about nature have changed as hunter-gatherer and farm cultures moved into cities during Europe’s industrial revolution. Cities gave dwellers less open space and more free time to install and maintain manicured lawns and flowery gardens. Being closely packed together, humans typically competed with their neighbors to have gardens that mimicked those of the aristocracy.

As their numbers increased and their tools improved, humans dammed rivers, channeled streams, built tall buildings, and used pesticides/weed killers/fertilizers to develop ideal lawns and gardens. Go into any hardware store this time of year and you’re overwhelmed with the biting smells of all the environmentally disastrous products. The underlying assumption of this approach is that nature exists to serve humans, not that humans are simply another part of nature.

The pandemic, climate change, sea level rise, out-of-control forest fires, and super hurricanes are forcing some humans to rethink this assumption and seek a lifestyle that emphasizes living with nature rather than fighting to control it. Finding this new normal is especially important for younger generations who will inherit these big environmental problems. Compounding the issue is that younger generations are little involved with nature because they’re spending much of their time in cyberspace.

One new-normal guiding principle might be that any attempt to control nature must be a win-win for both humans and nature. But

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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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15th of every preceding month.
Please send them to
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Bits & Pieces

The terse treehugger

This is too easy.
Native plants for so many reasons.
Now we have another.
Wake up!



visit us on the web
www.acctexas.org

Acrotaphus wiltii



No pressing reason to highlight this parasitoid ichneumonid wasp that stopped by the house recently, just a chronic weakness for flashy looks. So what's a parasitoid? That's an insect whose larvae live as parasites that eventually kill their hosts. In this case the wasp lays an egg on an arabesque orbweaver. The larva consumes the spider, then goes off to look good.



Mexican plum

Oh, no!

An appeal last month for any recent sightings of thirteen-lined ground squirrels in Arlington yielded nothing. Urban biologist Sam Kieschnick cited iNaturalist records along with widespread habitat loss and degradation in support of the idea that the nearest population is around Wichita Falls. Losses are everywhere, but this one feels shocking. They lived right in town only 50 years ago.



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



Question Corner John Darling

Q: I have a simple question that might not be so simple. On April 13, I found a Hagen's sphinx moth. Now it's almost 20 days later, and the only night-blooming flower around here (Jimsonweed) is still not flowering. So where is this thing getting nectar?

A: You're right. Like many simple-sounding questions, this one seems to be complicated. Or possibly not. Several sources say this moth flies at dusk, so maybe it's nectaring on diurnal flowers that stay open into early evening. However, sphinx moths generally have long tongues and specialize in tubular flowers, so that reduces the potential nectar plant species. Or can they feed on ordinary flowers while hovering at a distance? Or can they maybe feed with the tongue unrolled just a little bit? The internet claims that adults use a variety of flowers for nectar and lets it go at that.

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Horseherb

From the President continued from page 3

where can humans find such win-win values? Given the large number of people on earth, one place to start is the places we live. Environmentalists often strive for living spaces that retain the original ecosystems on which they live. They seek the locally sourced native plants that attract birds, bees, and other pollinators to recreate their local ecosystem. They also may advocate re-establishing the surrounding area by restoring prairies, removing dams and bringing back endangered species. All of these actions are good, but probably not enough to fully demonstrate a lifestyle in tune with nature.

One place to look for principles that benefit nature is indigenous populations. Unfortunately, indigenous people are rarely seen as possessing any expertise to teach modern societies. Instead, their cultures are destroyed and their lands stolen, burned and deforested for raising cattle and crops to support our anti-nature ways. The destruction of the rain forests in the Amazon basin and Indonesia are large-scale apocalyptic catastrophes aimed at controlling nature.

This destruction of biodiversity also is happening in the U.S. Many reading the accounts of the Lewis and Clark expedition that explored the western United States are struck by the abundance of reported animals, birds and other species that have steadily declined as the list of endangered and extinct species continues to grow.

I find many ACC members struggling to live a lifestyle that benefits nature. It's not easy. Sometimes the less expensive alternatives in food, cars, lawns, clothing, entertainment and travel are very much more destructive to the planet. But it's crucial that the ACC community be part of the solution.

Environmentalists should feel good that they're leading this effort to model a win-win lifestyle. Many of our environmental organizations are also struggling as the quote below indicates.

From Children & Nature Network, April 2021.

Nature-based solutions are powerful responses to the threats of climate change. Not only can they be superior to technological solutions, but when intentionally integrated with human-nature connection, they can have a range of important co-benefits for people. In honor of Earth Month, we explore this emerging area of investigation. We hope that more research will be directed toward solutions and interventions that contribute to the well-being of both people and the planet. From Cathy Jordan, PhD Consulting Research Director. <https://mailchi.mp/acc9f51f95ca/january-2021-three-themed-research-digest-130452?e=9244c15964>

If you have win-win lifestyle ideas, send them to postoak@acctexas.org



Randol Mill Park Carol Marcotte

The city continues work on Phase 1 of the Matthews Court Drainage Improvements project. The picture (*below left*) was taken from the south side of Randol Mill Road looking south. The post office is in the background. For scale, notice the large truck in the creek bed. The structure under construction is called a water shot. This is larger than the former structure, so it will allow more water to flow under Randol Mill Road and continue north into the park via Randol Mill Park Creek.

Meanwhile, Dick Schoech, Wayne Halliburton, and Carol Marcotte continue their efforts to control erosion. The group has rescued inland sea oats and transplanted clumps along the creek to help stabilize the banks. Time will tell how upstream construction will affect the creek and pond. More water after big rains means increased erosion of creek banks in the park, so this story is not over.

Bluebirds are nesting in the park. The photo (*below right*) shows nestlings in one of the park's eight bluebird houses that were funded by a grant from Fort Worth Audubon Society. That grant has paid off with our first nestlings. Local bluebird advocate Donna Piercy said, "It's exciting to see the bluebirds nesting the first year." Park volunteer Dick Schoech did the construction and installation. The boxes are monitored twice a week by volunteers. Observations are recorded at [Nestwatch.org](https://www.nestwatch.org). By the way, if you have any birds nesting in your backyard, we encourage you to post your observations to that website.



Arlington Environmental Hall of Shame

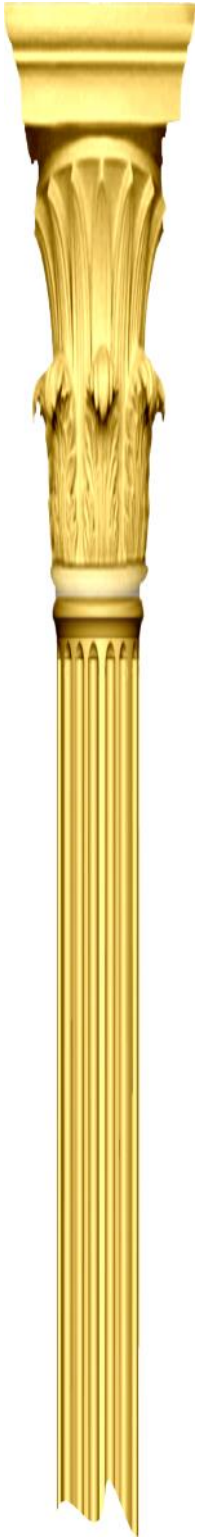
Yes, the Hall is back by overwhelming popular demand, and it's a bad episode. One question here is, "What price solar?" Here we see an answer, and it's confusing: years of clean power versus the mutilation of a good-sized live oak. More than mutilation really; if that poor tree manages to come back vigorously, sooner or later it will have to be cut down to keep those panels happy. It's hard to think that some houses just shouldn't go solar. Or should they? Which is worse, losing the ecological services (and aesthetics) of so many trees blocking solar panel installation or continuing down that fossil fuel road? Will more of us have to face this ugly choice as we stumble toward a carbon-neutral world?



The justifiably distressed neighbor who submitted these photos has another, equally important idea about this depressing situation:

Caveat emptor

It's a sad tale when you realize you have hired an unqualified tree service. It's especially regrettable after it has done the terrible deed. This once magnificent live oak was butchered by someone who apparently only knows how to use a chainsaw. This tree not only added beauty, it also provided wildlife shelter and much-needed shade for this west-facing home. If you find yourself in need of a tree trimmer, make sure you discuss exactly what they intend to do. See [Hiring Tree Services](#) for other smart guidelines before hiring anyone. You don't want your tree to end up like this one.



Bugged by This John Darling



The laudable arches moth sometimes comes to the ultraviolet light at the house. By accident recently I took a photo of one without the flash (*above*), then switched to flash and shot the same moth again (*below*). Later, as I went through the photos, I saw two bright spots reflecting the UV light. This moth has bits of white all over, but only two shine brightly under UV.

They look like eyespots, but these little blobs pose more questions than answers. That's partly because the function of eyespots in lepidopterans has not been demonstrated conclusively. Two major ideas include startling or intimidating predators, and deflecting attacks to non-vital areas. But these spots wouldn't startle a predator because they are always exposed, and they wouldn't deflect an attack away from a vital area because they are sitting right on a vital area.



However, there are spot patterns that don't fit the eyespot definition. One possible function is sexual selection. Maybe only females have these spots, and they're saying, "Hey, big boy, check out these arches. Are they laudable, or what?" This has some appeal because many lepidopterans see UV light, and a laudable arches male could be attracted specifically to that spot pattern on a female.

But can it be that simple? Natural ultraviolet light levels are very low at night, so unless moth eyes are extremely sensitive to UV, what good are spots that might not show up? Are males cruising for dates in the daytime? And there's a downside: Many birds see UV, so they could spot the spots on a sunny day, even though this species otherwise looks well camouflaged.

This is harder than it ought to be, but I do like those spots.

Unrelated to Anything

It's back



UTA's only known milkweed survived the freeze and has returned for another season. Good luck to you.

Why?



For about 120 years, we've had tea bags we could compost. Not any more.

Green bottle fly



Looks good, bodes ill unless you're a fan of rot. Thank you, Dick Schoech

Question Corner continued from page 5

If that Hagen's sphinx has come out of its pupal state at the wrong time, we might sadly point a finger at climate change for upsetting some ancient temporal relationship between bloom time and adult insect emergence from pupa. But this situation looks backwards: The standard global warming tragedy is that flowers have bloomed and died *before* the hungry insects appear. So if it's not timing gone wrong, is it more likely that I just haven't learned enough about Hagen's nectar sources? That's a distinct possibility. And relying on your observation of Jimsonweed blooming might also lead us astray. The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center site says the Carolina sphinx is its primary pollinator as well as one of its larval host plants.

Just to distract from that dull thud of an answer — and speaking of larval hosts — your Hagen's sphinx is also called the Osage orange sphinx moth because the bois d'arc is its only known host plant. And more distraction (do you see a pattern here?): The tree's small original range included the Red River drainage, blackland prairies and post oak savannas. It is now widely naturalized in the U.S and a bit of Canada. But wait, there's more. The seeds are not spread by modern livestock but are believed to have been dispersed by Pleistocene megafauna that ate the huge fruits. Another reason to bemoan the disappearance of mastodons and giant ground sloths. Next!



Left, the imaginary questioner's Jimsonweed (*Datura wrightii*) still stubbornly not quite blooming on April 29. *Right*, Jimsonweed flowers, probably early in the morning before the delicate blossoms have succumbed to the sun and turned into wet facial tissue. Despite this plant's poisonous tissues, we ought to plant lots more night-blooming flowers for our nocturnal pollinators.



Well-fed Monarchs Josephine Keeney

I had five small tropical milkweeds that survived the winter under tarps. They were very small and loaded with monarch caterpillars.

I knew that I could not take care of feeding so many larvae on the tropical milkweeds, so I gathered them, and I am raising them with leaves from milkweed vine. It's working, and they are growing very fast.

Here they are, about 40 of them. I am so excited!



Blackland Prairie Site Guy Random



More large green stretches merge as May begins, obscuring last year's faded brown. New grasses are still low, but that works for the isolated flowers that stand above the bright new green.



Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marylee Thomason

A tsunami of volunteers hit the wildscape in April. We ran for high ground only because the parking lot is the highest point in our five acres, and that is where we met the enthusiastic, unflagging, good-natured workers.

First to arrive were the go-getters from the UTA Big Event. Their leader, Devon, persuaded close friends to come out to the park to do unknown work for four hours on a Saturday morning. “There’s lots to do, but not everyone is aware of it,” he told them, and that was all the motivation they needed.

Devon feels rewarded helping in places he has enjoyed for years. “I like giving back to the community,” he said. Let us know when you run for city council, Devon.

He, Ashley, Malisa, Michelle, and John didn’t know the mechanics of a wheelbarrow when they started, but Ann Knudsen showed them how to load, carry and dump with a shimmy to spread the mulch across a section of trail. The team started loading, dumping and raking, and soon the entire Woodland Trail was covered, leaving an hour for weeding. That wasn’t nearly as much fun as running wheelbarrows back and forth, but good attitudes prevailed.

As they left, Malisa said she would have stayed another two hours, she enjoyed being in the park so much.

The next Saturday morning brought another flood of volunteers. First, three tall, fit, disciplined firemen, complete with fire truck, arrived from the Dalworthington Gardens station.

David Oliver, Travis Surprenant, and Colton Dickey worked so fast it was hard to find enough for them to do.

They already knew the wheelbarrow shimmy and how to rake the trail smooth. In their three hours they mulched Molly’s

continued on page 13



Firefighters from the Dalworthington Gardens station pitched in wholeheartedly. A fellow fireman with the Baptist church group complimented them on their effort.



Ann Knudsen, right, watches volunteers practice the wheelbarrow shimmy for distributing mulch.



Enthusiastic UTA students willingly weeding at end of their four-hour shift for UTA’s Big Event.



Firefighters’ mission accomplished.

Wildscape Update continued from page 12



Volunteers from First Baptist Church. Left, Tina Jones with son Andrew, Lonette and Ed Bebensee with weed/trash bag, and Jim Walker pitched in to help beautify the trails. Center, Jeremy Graves put his heart into spreading mulch. Toward the end of the day he was scraping the ground to try to get one more wheelbarrow load. Right, Buddy Jernigan grabbed the loppers to trim dead limbs.

Cutoff, the Creek Trail, and the Wetland Trail all the way to the pavilion. For reference, that's about a mile. They only stopped because it was time to return the fire truck.

Midway into the fire brigade work, seven members from First Baptist Church led by Lonette and Ed Bebensee arrived and announced with a flourish that they were here to help beautify our park in any way required. Weeding was not a popular option, but mulching trails, demolishing privet, and cutting dead limbs to toss up the slope and discourage runners met with more enthusiasm.

One latecomer took on a section choked with grasses and cleaned

it out as if it was his own garden. The baptists graciously agreed to leave only after there was no more mulch to move. It could have been that everyone was getting hungry.

Thank you all for choosing the wildscape for your Work Day in the Park this year. Not only does the regular crew appreciate your accomplishments, but the random walkers like them, too.

The wildscape's popularity is spreading like mulch on skids. The Arlington Great Southwest Rotary Club, in which John Dycus is a member, is installing a butterfly garden next to the Photo Op corner. Jim Runzheimer heads the project with guidance about plant

selection from Josephine Keeney and Ann Knudsen. The Rotary members so admire this outreach that they have applied to the city to expand it.

continued on page 14



Jim Runzheimer consults with Josephine Keeney about plants for the new butterfly garden in the wildscape that has been installed by the Great Southwest Rotary Club.

Molly Hollar Wildscape Update continued from page 13

Across from the Rotary spread, the Texas Sage interns from Tarrant County Master Gardeners are clearing a section for another large butterfly heliport. They uprooted four large dwarf yaupon holly plants and a small oak tree to clear the space. A huge pile of remains was dumped on the lawn.

Joe Martinez tackled removal and distribution on the high trail slope by himself one day. It's arduous going up and down the trails, bumping over stone steps with a pile of unmanageable brush that threatens to fall out of the wheelbarrow at every turn. The second day Marylee Thomason came to help, armed with an old rope to harness the brush. With

two wheelbarrows and two sets of hands working, the job is almost done.

Wednesday, April 28, was a date to remember. It was the first work break in over a year. CDC guidelines now permit people who are vaccinated and outside to gather without masks. On the benches in Molly's Hollar we talked, conducted a little business, and enjoyed the snacks that Hester Schwarzer always, always provides. You are appreciated, Hester. We had warm thoughts for you as we sat and munched for 20 minutes.

Spring in the wildscape garden is a beautiful thing. To experience it in person is to fall in love with native plants. See you there!



Joe Martinez hands the remains of a dispatched yaupon holly to Marylee Thomason as they use brush to slow erosion on the slope above the high trail.



The first work break since COVID struck. From left, Ramona Gratton, Carol Marcotte, Jane Oosterhuis, Ann Knudsen, Marylee Thomason.

In Case You Missed It Grace Darling

“You can’t mitigate climate change unless you measure it, and that’s NASA’s expertise,” said recently confirmed NASA administrator Bill Nelson. “Understanding our planet gives us the means to better protect it.” Besides tackling climate change, the 78-year-old former longtime senator from Florida also wants to diversify the space agency’s workforce and made it a condition of his accepting the post: Selected as his deputy is Pam Melroy, former space shuttle commander. [*The Associated Press via DMN*, May 8, 2021.] [Read more here.](#)

HEB is ahead of the game and looking out for Texans once again. Cedar Ridge Egg Farm lost hundreds of chickens after a pipe in one of the barns burst during the freeze, and they had to sell the rest of their birds (~10,500) after they stopped laying eggs following the storm. The stress-free, free-range hen operation in Pickton, Texas, is now getting back on track thanks to bank loans, donations, and a partnership with Central Market, which bought 1,000 cartons of eggs. The [pasture-raised poultry farm](#) sells fresh brown eggs and farming supplies like nesting boxes and watering systems, and will soon market its own feed. [*DMN*, May 8, 2021]

From our friend Kim Conrow, with thanks: [How to protect yourself from tick bites](#) and what to do if you find one crawling on or attached to you. The skinny: Most effective repellents include DEET, IR3535, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. Concentrations of the active ingredient you choose should not be less than 20% nor higher than 30%, and each product is effective for different lengths of time.

Ever wonder about the links between climate change and extreme weather events? This is some of what we know:

Heat waves: Warming in the atmosphere leads to heat waves lasting days to weeks. In recent years, the frequency of heat waves has been increasing, and the risk associated with extreme heat increases with further warming.

Storms and flooding: Warming leads to higher sea levels, which in turn increases the risk of storm surge, contributing to the damage brought by hurricanes. Climate change also warms oceans, adding energy that can fuel coastal storms. Compounding this, a warmer atmosphere can hold more moisture, so there can

be more moisture for storm systems, resulting in heavier rainfall.

The [U.S. National Climate Assessment](#) finds that there has been a substantial increase — in intensity, frequency, and duration as well as the number of strongest (Category 4 and 5) storms — in Atlantic Ocean hurricanes since the early 1980s, linked in part to higher sea surface temperatures. By late this century, models project a slight decrease in the number of tropical cyclones each year, but an increase in the number of the strongest (Category 4 and 5) hurricanes and greater rainfall rates in hurricanes.

Fires: Higher temperatures lead to increased rates of evaporation, leading to rapid drying of soils, which can not only contribute to drought conditions but can stoke forest fires. In the western forests, large and intense fires are projected to occur more frequently given higher temperatures and earlier spring snowmelt.

These trends in extreme weather events are accompanied by longer-term changes as well, including surface and ocean temperature increase over recent decades, snow and ice cover decrease, and sea level rise. [Read the article here.](#)

Dogs and Cats

DAMAGED DOGWOOD

Many years ago
Tenderly I planted you
In sandy loam
Beside my drive.

Time passed,
Season after season,
As time does
When the world is real.

You grew and grew,
Sheltered by the loom
Of a nearby ash tree,
Watered by the rains.

With age came beauty:
White spring blooms,
Green summer leaves,
Red winter berries.



“Prettiest dogwood on the block”
I’d joke, for truth to say
You also were, as anyone could see,
The only dogwood on the block.
Then catastrophe.
Wind felled the ash
That heretofore
Had blessed you.

Crashing limbs
Broke half your branches
To the earth,
Damaged all the rest.

So now’s when I must trust,
Trust those parts I never see,
The roots and rootlets underground
That tie you to the soil, your home,
That feed, that heal.
And hope the same for me.

©2020 John I. Blair, 11/8/2020



Wayne Halliburton photographed this beautiful bobcat recently at River Legacy Parks.

Refuse to Use Single-use Plastics Marylee Thomason

Toothpaste tubes

When did tube toothpaste come into fashion? In the beginning, toothpaste was tooth powder. You wet your toothbrush, dipped it in the powder and brushed. It was awful! I know because we lived with my grandfather when I was young, and he wanted us to use what he used.

Archeologists have traced the first tooth cleaning powders to the Egyptians around 5000 BC. There is evidence of Chinese, Greek, and Roman concoctions, too, with a focus on scraping the teeth clean. Ingredients included ground ox hoof, charcoal, burnt eggshells, pumice, salt, and tree bark.

I don't know what was in my grandfather's gray tooth powder, but you can understand why my sister and I had an aversion to brushing our teeth.

Fast forward to modern times. Colgate-Palmolive added soap to make the powder a paste. In 1873 the company pioneered mass-produced toothpaste in jars. C-P made the leap to metal tubes in 1896. Metal-plastic tubes appeared during World War II, and all-plastic tubes in the 1990s.

And what is so wrong with toothpaste tubes? They're pretty small, easily compressed. Pretty soon someone will figure out how to recycle them. Right?



Cartoon by Katharine Thomason

Evidence suggests that 1.5 billion tubes arrive in landfills across the country every day. They are difficult and expensive to recycle because of residual material left inside and their multiple-plastic composition (created by different formulas) plus aluminum, steel, and nylon. Separation and cleaning must precede processing for reuse.

The innovative company TerraCycle has developed a method of shredding, cleaning and pelletizing the raw materials for application in other products. Instructions for getting toothpaste tubes and other oral care products recycled are at [TerraCycle](#). For me this is not yet simple or convenient.

Now Colgate has developed a recyclable tube: "We are transitioning our entire toothpaste portfolio across the world to recyclable tubes. This effort began in 2019 and will be

completed by 2025, so not all tubes will immediately be recyclable. It's important that if your tube does not have this flag on it that you don't put it into your recycling bin."

I have not seen the new tubes so I cannot comment on them. But other clever options reject tubes entirely and bypass the recycler. Consider [Bite](#), which comes in a glass bottle (glass being infinitely recyclable). The packaging is an envelope padded with post-consumer recycled newspaper.

The tooth cleaner itself is a tiny disc that delivers a brisk flavor and just the right amount of foam. Crush it with your teeth to release a blast of mint, wet your toothbrush and scrub. It tastes so good, I have to remind myself not to swallow it like a candy. My teeth feel clean, and my breath is refreshed. It might be my imagination, but I also think the natural whitening is working. Best of all, there's no waste.

Post Oak keen consumer John Dycus likes [Change toothpaste](#) for the same attributes but keeps an old half-squeezed tube of Aquafresh by the sink for state dinners and other close-order work. "The Change tablet lacks that squishy slathery flavor-burst toothpaste sensation," he says. "Otherwise, it works well."

So what will you choose, zero waste or recyclable? I'm going for zero waste.

The Tiny Photo Page



The high point of the plant sale at Fielder House Museum on April 17 was native plants offered by NPSOT members. Stalwarts were, from left, Josephine Keeney, Carol Marcotte, Kay Sekio, Hester Schwarzer, and Frank Keeney; Jane Oosterhuis displayed monarchs.



In a recent talk, Professor David Hopman mentioned in passing the UTA bed above that was going strong on April 30. On this date it was dominated by a spiderwort, coralberry and inland sea oats. Quite a contrast between that and the normal campus landscape.



Volunteers from UTA's Big Event signed up for a dirty job in the Heart of Arlington neighborhood along Julia Burgen Park.



Several years ago, our Parks Department transformed a very old dump site at Pecan and Park Row with wildflower seeds. It's suffering now from invasives, but Engelmann's daisy likes it, and so does at least one pollinator, the fiery skipper.

Southwest Nature Preserve Annabelle Corboy, Jim Frisinger, Jan Miller

Friends of SWNP Events & Programs

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 email info@swnp.org.

Friends meetings, programs and activities continue to be on hold due to the COVID-19 pandemic. You will enjoy much more about the preserve when you take a look at the [December newsletter](#).

Upcoming Programs hosted by Friends of SWNP

Friday, May 14, 7pm at SWNP - a Yucca Moth Evening Walk

Grace and John Darling will lead us on a walk through SWNP with emphasis on finding some active yucca moths, but we will look for any creature that happens by and hope we can name a few.

The yucca moth is a non-descript, small, whitish moth that blends well with the color of the yucca blossoms where it spends most of its brief adult life. Males and females emerge from their cocoons in the spring, timed with the blossoming of the yucca plant. There is an extraordinary partnership between the yucca moth and the yucca plant. They are so interdependent that one cannot live without the other.



Wear sturdy shoes or boots, maybe bring bug spray and water, and especially a good flashlight or headlamp with fresh batteries. The walk back will be in the dark, so a good light will be essential.

Tuesday, May 18, 7pm at SWNP – Bats of the Area and How to Find Them

Local bat enthusiasts Ellen Ravkind and Anne Alderfer along with bat expert Kate Rugroden from the Bat World Sanctuary will provide the program. Kate will talk about the bats in this area and the role the sanctuary plays in education and rehabilitation. Then Ellen will educate us on the echo location devices from Wildlife Acoustics (Echo Meter Touch 2) as a prologue to Ellen and Anne leading a hike looking for bats.



Wear sturdy shoes or boots, maybe bring bug spray and water, and especially a good flashlight or headlamp with fresh batteries. The walk back will be in the dark, so a good light will be essential.

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SWNP iNaturalist Observations and Species Annabelle Corboy

Spring has brought the naturalists to SWNP! During April, we have had 440 Observations, 226 Species, and 22 Observers. And this report is written before all the City Nature Challenge observations for April 30 have been entered. One of the new features of the smartphone iNat App is the ability to post an Observation identified by sound with a photo optional. The new feature is particularly nice for capturing bird songs. We have a cardinal and a vireo captured.

This has been a great year for enjoying the signs of spring; maybe some of the freshness is due to all the rain we've received in the last couple of weeks. Whatever the reason, there are lots of blooms, butterflies, and dragonflies to enjoy. Enjoy a few of the selections below.

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Texas Toadflax
(*Nuttallanthus texanus*)
Observed by charley



Green Antelopehorns
(*Asclepias asperula*)
Observed by sambiology



Coral Honeysuckle
(*Lonicera sempervirens*)
Observed by alyssatrickey



Engelmann Daisy
(*Engelmannia peristenia*)
Observed by drawntoscales

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SWNP iNaturalist Observations and Species



Variegated Fritillary (*Euptoieta claudia*)
Observed by brentano



Dot-winged Baskettail (*Epiheca petechialis*)
Observed by brentano



Eastern Amberwing (*Perithemis tenera*)
Observed by sambiology



Orange Sulphur (*Colias eurytheme*)
Observed by jaytee60

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The Latest Restoration Project Begins **Jim Frisinger**

Two acres of grassland across the north edge of the Southwest Nature Preserve were grubbed in April to remove native and non-native woody plants that have been encroaching for decades. This narrow strip, which includes a colony of rare Glen Rose yuccas, suffered the long-term effects not only of fire suppression but an end to grazing on the former cattle ranch. Working in partnership with Arlington Parks & Recreation Department, a loader with a Forester attachment was used to remove invasive sumac, Chinaberry, honey locust, mesquite and Chickasaw plums that were crowding out the grasslands.

Soil samples are now being collected by Friends of Southwest Nature Preserve. Consultants with the Natural Resources Conservation Service have visited the site to evaluate the brush removal operation and make recommendations about next steps. They are now developing a conservation plan for the two-acre tract. Depending on the soils analysis, this may also include a nutrient management strategy. The conservation plan will include re-seeding the grassland to bring it back to a vibrant prairie habitat common to the Eastern Cross Timbers.

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Above left, Looking east along the northern boundary of the preserve after grubbing.

Above right, the loader with Forester attachment.

Left, Ben Harrison from National Resources Conservation Service (second from left) met with Friends of SWNP to discuss next steps after grubbing work was completed.

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Birding by Ear Jim Frisinger

Arlington birder Charley Amos holds court on Boulder Hill during a tour of the Southwest Nature Preserve on April 10. Charley gave a short course on identifying birds by ear. One kernel of advice: Be thankful you can ID a white-eyed vireo by sound — they are nesting now — but you can probably forget about seeing them since they hide so deeply in the trees.



Would you like to learn more about the very elusive white-eyed vireo? Cornell Lab's All About Birds is a great place to start. Click [here](#) for an overview and choose Sounds to hear the calls.

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Why?
We're all counting on
YOU.
And lots of us are cute.



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May Zoom Meeting**The Sustainability Journey of DFW International Airport**

Kris Russell,
Sustainability Programs Manager, DFW International Airport
Wednesday, May 5, 6:30 pm

Did you miss this great talk?
Watch it any time in the next few days by clicking on
[this link.](#)