

ARLINGTON  
CONSERVATION  
COUNCIL

# POST OAK

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 10

NOVEMBER 2022

INDIANGRASS • BLACKLAND PRAIRIE PRESERVE • GUY RANDOM PHOTO



## November Zoom Meeting



**This recorded Zoom meeting is not available yet on our website.  
We'll let you know when it's ready.  
When we do, be sure to have a look.**

A background image of dense green foliage, likely a bush or tree, with many small green leaves and some yellowish-green seedlings or flowers.

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## From the President **Dick Schoech**



### Balancing Different Mindsets About Nature

The Oct. 13 Arlington Parks and Recreation Department board meeting reinforced my feeling that two very different mindsets exist about nature. Staff made reports on renovations at the Tierra Verde golf course, summer aquatics, pavilion rentals, program budgets, and the Aging Well Expo — all efforts to support citizens using parks to exercise, play games, and get healthy. Staff discussed attendance, staff shortages, volunteer recruitment, revenues, and program successes. The reports suggested a mindset that parks are designed to benefit people, not nature, i.e., nature is man's playground.

Another mindset exists in discussions about parks' natural areas. Not discussed were hiking, star gazing, bioblitzes, park beautification, wildflower appreciation, increasing threats to bees and butterflies, and other activities that encourage citizens to explore, enjoy, and protect nature. The reason these topics were not discussed was not that these popular activities are absent from Arlington parks (they're not) or that volunteers were not working to support these activities (they are). Arlington has many friends-of-the-parks groups that pick up trash, plant native plants, remove invasives, mulch trails, and organize socials for park neighbors. These activities involve very little money and energy from APRD. The mindset here is on benefiting nature, i.e., man is just a small part of nature and must work to preserve it.

APRD has to balance these two mindsets within the politics of city government. An example of the difficulty of balancing these two mindsets can be seen at the small Blackland Prairie Preserve, which is the only remaining blackland prairie remnant in Arlington. Supporters want to maintain its original condition so citizens can appreciate nature as it existed thousands of years before humans began shaping the land to benefit themselves. Everyone else sees the Blackland Prairie Preserve as a vacant lot. Only with the help of those who document the marvels of what is happening there does the park's true value come alive.

*continued on page 6*



### 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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## Bits & Pieces

### The Terse Treehugger



It's a bad look.

Texas fence lizards have been shedding a long time.

They should have this down.

But no.

visit us on the web  
[www.acctexas.org](http://www.acctexas.org)

### You Pansy!



An annual irritant. Dozens of pansies just waiting to look artificial. A local expert says they're okay for pollinators when there's nothing else. But is their limited nectar value worth the environmental costs of raising, transporting, planting, fertilizing, watering, and disposal?



*Lindheimer's senna*

### Catter Pillage



Gulf fritillaries have recently eaten every leaf of a first-year passionflower vine. What are they doing so close to cold weather? Internet says they will migrate to frost-free places. Adults live only two to four weeks. So are they breeding in South Texas? Do only new ones return? Too many questions.

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



# Question Corner John Darling

Q: I saw this tree where I work, and I really want to plant one in my yard. What is it, and is this a good choice?

A: I have to admire someone who asks tree advice from a guy who turns green things brown for a living. This raggedy thing looks like a catalpa that grew too close to the reactor. But then all the ones in town spend a lot of time looking that way. And it's too bad because somehow just saying catalpa is a low-level kind of fun. (I don't get out much.) The people who actually know say eastern third of Texas and wet soil. Even the eastern dab of Dallas County isn't quite there. Arlington just won't do unless you're one of those people who performs a complete soilectomy to accommodate azaleas, blueberry bushes, and dogwoods. Give it up and get a native tree. Next!



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*Skeleton-leaf goldeneye responded quickly to recent rain.*



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## From the President continued from page 3

Other examples of Arlington nature-focused park activities include River Legacy's Nature Center, which teaches children about nature; the well-mulched hiking trails at O.S. Gray Natural Area; the signs that highlight interesting geology and vistas at the Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve; and the Molly Hollar Wildscape in Veterans Park. At the wildscape, 5-10 volunteers meet once or twice weekly to create an environment where citizens can observe plants, reptiles, birds, insects, and fungi to learn how our native ecosystems interact. The wildscape relaxes visitors while they discover how to implement nature-friendly practices to beautify their homes and help save the planet. The wildscape's immersive experience improves visitors' mental health, according to research presented by the [Children in Nature Network](#). Natural areas are often vastly undervalued in Arlington because they don't contribute to APRD's budget and because their benefits are difficult to measure.

APRD's task of balancing these mindsets has many implications. Often in the past, the department's scant discretionary funding tended to benefit sports and entertainment events rather than clean water and air, tree cover and other things that promote a healthy environment. Consequently, APRD hires staff with people management or infrastructure skills rather than nature-oriented skills. A long-term problem is that, while nature is deteriorating due to the ravages of overuse and climate change, environmentalists find few available jobs.

An overemphasis on the parks-for-people mindset in the past explains why Arlington lags Fort Worth, Dallas, and other cities in establishing city environmental departments, climate action steps, historic tree cover plans, and other nature-building programs. Balancing both mindsets in the future can fully utilize citizen volunteers who will work tirelessly in parks to make the Dream City of Arlington a win-win dream for people and nature.



## We're Doing Something Big



**ACC has established an endowment with UTA  
to aid future environmentalists\***

**The first \$10,000 will be matched 3 to 1. Donate \$100,  
and like magic you have given \$400.**

**From UTA President Jennifer Cowley:**

**A warm and heartfelt thanks . . . Donors like you inspire us and I want you  
to know what a difference you are making in our students' lives every day.**

**Thank you again for your partnership and for believing in UTA and our  
students. Go Mavs! Here's an update on the programs you support:**

**<https://uta-reports.thankview.com/video/3509635990b22e077>**

**Learn more and donate [here](#)**

**\*ACC has created, with UTA, a funding source for student grants and  
scholarships in support of environmental integrity and climate resilience.**



## Clean Water Act Revisited Grace Darling

This year we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act (CWA), which was established by Congress in 1972 to regulate the discharge of toxins and pollutants into U.S. waters. But before we break out the cake and candles, remember this: The U.S. Supreme Court is considering narrowing the scope of the Clean Water Act, which could make it harder to reduce pollution.

[The legislative history of the CWA is surprisingly interesting: Although then-president Nixon actually vetoed it out of a stated concern for “spiraling prices and increasingly onerous taxes,” veto override debates were conducted by the Senate and the House on October 17 and 18, 1972, respectively. At the end, the Senate voted by 52-12 to override, with 36 senators not voting, while the House voted by a staggering 247-23 to override, with one representative answering “present” and 160 representatives not voting. [Read more here](#). [Can you conceive of any current political issues on which such bipartisan consensus might be found? I didn’t think so.]

The CWA gave the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) — also a Nixon creation through executive order in December 1970 — leverage to create pollution control programs and develop wastewater standards. In our state, that authority is delegated to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), the third largest state environmental agency after California and New York. While the regulation of oil and gas activities in Texas falls primarily under the jurisdiction of the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC), TCEQ “strives to protect our state’s public health and natural resources *consistent with sustainable economic development*.” [emphasis mine] [Our goal](#) is clean air, clean water, and the safe management of waste.”

So is TCEQ doing its job? According to Luke Metzger, director of *Environment Texas*, maybe, kinda-sorta, but “we still have a lot of work to do. At least 9,711 miles of Texas rivers (28% of those assessed) aren’t safe for basic uses like swimming or fishing. That’s also the case for 590,241 acres of lakes (38%) and 1,248 sq miles of our bays and estuaries (48%).

“Water pollution comes from a variety of sources, including runoff from factory farms and cities and direct discharges from industry. Texas ranks 1st in the U.S. for toxic dumping in our waterways.

“Half of our beaches had unsafe levels of fecal bacteria at least a quarter of the time in 2020. Toxic algae blooms, made worse by rising temperatures, have killed dogs around Texas, including this summer at ‘Barking Springs’ in Austin.

“We also have emerging threats to our waterways, including from PFAS ‘forever chemicals’ which have contaminated drinking water around the state and put people at risk for cancer, liver damage and infertility. Plastic pellets called ‘nurdles’ are polluting our beaches and threatening wildlife. The TCEQ had proposed regulating this pollution, but backed down from industry pressure.

“But there is good news! Thanks to the new infrastructure law, Texas is getting \$507,971,000 to upgrade water infrastructure, including to reduce sewage overflows and cut PFAS pollution. [And] cities like Austin are adopting [new green infrastructure standards](#) to reduce urban runoff.”

So let’s suit up, folks. There’s a lot of work to do and time to put things right is running out.



## Randol Mill Park Carol Marcotte

On Oct 23, Dick Schoech and I planted Inland sea oats near Joanne Stewart's bench. At the same time, we planted a wide variety of native flower and grass seeds in the Prairie Restoration Project area in anticipation of the much-needed rain, hoping to give the seeds a good start.

Several park visitors stopped to inquire about who we are and if they can help. The answer: We're APRD volunteers, and YES! anyone can help.

For more information call Carol Marcotte's cell (817) 793-3917 or email [carol@carolmarcotte.com](mailto:carol@carolmarcotte.com).

Our regular volunteer workday at Randol Mill Park is the fourth Thursday of each month. However, because of the upcoming holidays, Nov. 17 and Dec. 15 will be the workday dates.

*continued on page 10*

*An iNaturalist Note:*  
As of Oct. 22, 2022, in Randol Mill Park there have been  
889 observations of **235 species** by 36 observers.



*Bearded beggarticks*



*Carolina snailseed*



*Camphorweed*



## Randol Mill Park continued from page 9

Randol Mill Park monthly volunteer workday was Oct. 27, 9 a.m.-noon. Deandra Wheeler and Dick Schoech joined Carol Marcotte for fun in the park.

Volunteers worked in the Pond Triangle Garden trimming sunflowers, camphorweed and datura. We planted more coneflower and lyre leaf sage. Then we moved to the prairie area to spread more seed, hoping for that rain.

*continued on page 11*

**Our next RMP volunteer workday is  
Nov. 17, 9 am-noon.**

**Please join us.**

**We need your help!**

*Right.* Deandra Wheeler and Dick Schoech.  
*Below.* Deandra spreads seed at the prairie.





## Randol Mill Park continued from page 10

*Top.* An open drain discharges into the RMP creek. Water, pollutants, and litter from the street go directly into the creek. Notice the litter deposited after a recent rain.

*Center.* Dick Schoech pauses during seed sowing at the prairie restoration area.

*Bottom.* Fall is finally in the air.





## A Seedling's Progress Grace Darling

Soon ACC will begin soliciting nominations for Arlington's oldest and largest trees, which begs the question, where are Earth's **record holders**? Not surprisingly,\* California is home to the tallest, largest and oldest trees in the world. The tallest tree of all is [Hyperion](#), a coastal redwood in Humboldt County, exceeding the Statue of Liberty in height. [General Sherman](#) in Sequoia National Park is the biggest tree on the planet by volume. And [Methuselah](#), a bristlecone pine in east-central California, is generally considered the oldest living tree in the world at 4,853 years. The title has been recently challenged by a Patagonian cypress known as

the Alerce Milenario, aka Gran Abuelo, from Chile, which may be 500 years older according to novel calculations by Chilean environmental scientist Jonathan Barichivich.

Researchers typically calculate a **tree's age** through [dendrochronology](#), which involves counting the number of rings in a core sample of the live tree trunk obtained with an [increment borer](#) inserted at a height of 4.5 feet. They may also take a sample from the roots and use carbon-dating techniques to determine its age. But Chile's Alerce Milenario is too wide for a standard borer to reach its center, and the roots of the ancient tree

have become too fragile with its advanced age, so Barichivich had to take a different approach. "It's not the point to make a big hole in the tree just to know that it's the oldest. The scientific challenge is to estimate the age without being too invasive to the tree."

[\[Conservation.org/blog; June 6, 2022\]](#).

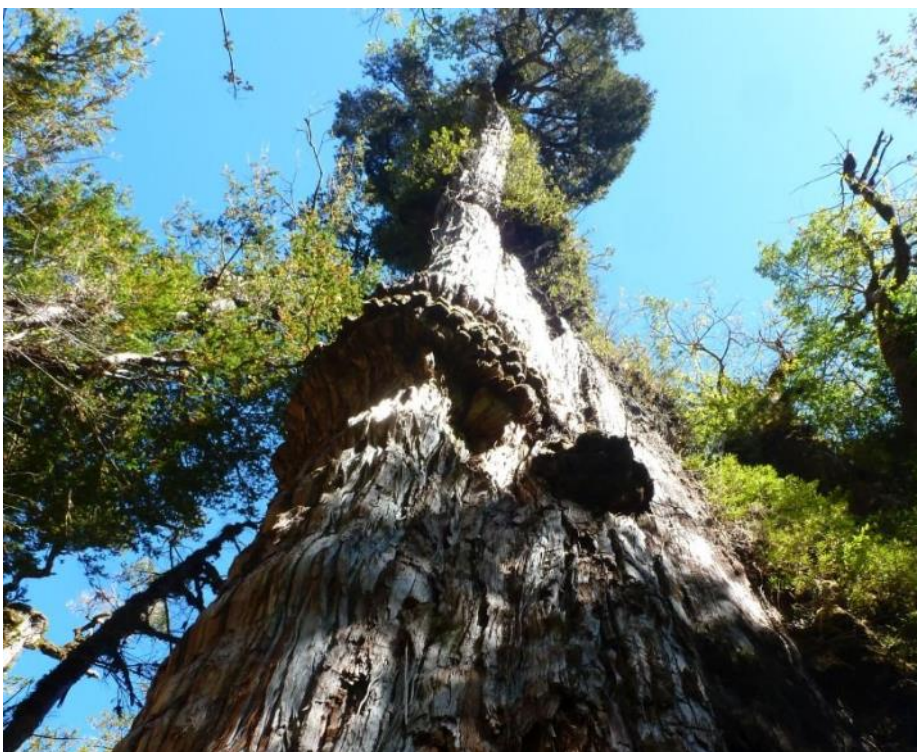
A non-invasive technique for calculating a tree's age involves just measuring tape and simple math:

1. Measure the circumference (in inches) of the tree's trunk at breast height (or 4.5 feet above the ground). This is called the CBH.
2. Take the CBH that you measured and divide it by pi (3.14159). This will give you the diameter at breast height (DBH) of the tree.
3. Multiply the DBH by the Growth Factor for the species of tree (found in the table below). That number is the approximate age of the tree.

Here's the complete equation and an example:

$$\text{CBH} / \pi = \text{DBH}$$

$$\text{DBH} \times \text{Growth Factor} = \text{Age}$$



*The Alerce Milenario in Chile. The world's oldest tree?*

*continued on page 13*



## A Seedling's Progress continued from page 12

So, if I have a Sugar Maple with a 12-inch circumference...

$$12 / 3.14159 = 3.8197$$

$$3.8197 \times 5.0 = 19$$

My sugar maple is approximately 19 years old. [[https://](https://treescharlotte.org/tree-education/tree-age-equation/)

[treescharlotte.org/tree-education/tree-age-equation/](https://treescharlotte.org/tree-education/tree-age-equation/)]

Experts are concerned with how **climate change** will affect the world's ancient trees, writes Craig Welch for *National Geographic*. In California, wildfires exacerbated by climate change have destroyed thousands of giant sequoias, which are in the same botanical family as the Alerce Milenario. In Chile, warmer weather is drying the forest where it is located — and that could threaten the tree's water uptake. Visitors to the Alerce Costero National Park are also allowed to walk around the tree, which is compacting the soil and potentially harming its roots. "My hope is that viewers think for a fraction of a second about what it means to live 5,000 years and see life in perspective," said Barichivich. "And that would make people understand the challenge nowadays is the ecologic and climate crisis that we're facing." [NYT Oct 21, 2022].

\*Sideline: The **Mediterranean ecosystem** occurs only in five relatively small areas around the

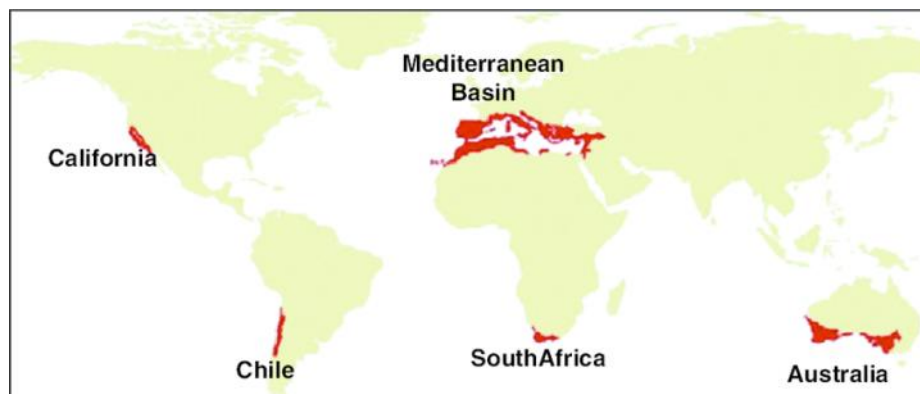
| Tree Species     | Growth Factor | Tree Species       | Growth Factor |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Red Maple        | 4.5           | White Oak          | 5.0           |
| Silver Maple     | 3.0           | Red Oak            | 4.0           |
| Sugar Maple      | 5.0           | Pin Oak            | 3.0           |
| River Birch      | 3.5           | Linden or Basswood | 3.0           |
| White Birch      | 5.0           | American Elm       | 4.0           |
| Shagbark Hickory | 7.5           | Ironwood           | 7.0           |
| Green Ash        | 4.0           | Cottonwood         | 2.0           |
| Black Walnut     | 4.5           | Dogwood            | 7.0           |
| Black Cherry     | 5.0           | Redbud             | 7.0           |

planet: the area bordering the Mediterranean Sea, central Chile, the Cape region of South Africa, southwestern and southern Australia, and, of course, southern California and northern Baja California. These areas are distributed between roughly 30 and 40 degrees latitude — north and south — and are located along the western edges of continents where the climate, characterized by mild, rainy winters and warm, dry summers, is moderated by cold ocean currents offshore. Their biome is dominated by evergreen or drought deciduous shrublands. Due to the limited extent and isolation (almost island-like) of each area of the Mediterranean ecosystem, there

is frequently a high degree of endemism in the flora and fauna.

The five Mediterranean ecosystem regions have been highly favored and impacted by humans for habitation, agriculture,

and recreation for millennia. As a result, this ecosystem type (which only occurs on about 2% of the earth's total land area) is one of the most highly altered on the planet. Nevertheless, the Mediterranean ecosystem of southern California has been identified as one of the world's "hot spots" for biodiversity. Additionally, the southern California bight, an ecologically unique area of near-shore Pacific Ocean coastal habitat extending from Point Conception south and encompassing the San Diego area, provides conditions that promote high species richness and diversity. [<https://www.nps.gov/samo/learn/nature/mediterraneanecosystem.htm>]





## Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marylee Thomason

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Wildscape Native Plant Sale, Sept. 24 at the Randol Mill Park greenhouse, was a tremendous success both for the money raised — a record \$5,358 net — and for the smooth people flow. Instead of appointments for shopping, people could come any time, but only a limited number were allowed in at once. Someone goes out, another comes in. It worked seamlessly with Joe Martinez at the gate.

The plant selection, organization, signs, and snacks were orchestrated by Josephine Keeney, whose knowledge, dedication, and experience power the sale every year. Eight hundred seventy plants were sold. Everyone involved should reward

Josephine with a deep bow. The operation requires setup, sales and takedown — many moving parts. Thank you, all who participated in any of that.

Setup: Josephine Keeney, Charley Amos, Ramona Gratton, Carol Marcotte, Joe Martinez, Larry Norris, Jane Oosterhuis, Hester Schwarzer, Kay Sekio

Cashiers: Hester Schwarzer, Christine Brinson

Ticket writers: Sue Cannizzaro, John Darling, Frank Keeney, Denise Pederson, Dick Schoech

Floating sales: Gailon Hardin, Carol Marcotte, Larry Norris,

Jane Oosterhuis, Kay Sekio, Marylee Thomason

Photographer: Jim Domke

The wildscape on Oct. 15 welcomed this year's Cross Timbers Master Naturalist interns for their annual urban field trip. They came not just to see the flowers but to decide if this would be a place to spend the service hours necessary to attain and maintain certification as a Master Naturalist.

After Ann Knudsen's overview of wildscape history and volunteering, the interns divided into groups led by Ann, Josephine Keeney, Joe Martinez, and Carol Marcotte to learn as much as they could in limited time. Right off the bat, those keen-eyed interns discovered two vastly different snakes — a rough green and a blotched water snake — plus a ton o' tiny toads.

When the blotched water snake was picked up, we all got a lesson in its defense mechanisms. Rachel Richter, Texas Parks and Wildlife urban biologist, explains that we experienced "musking," or releasing a foul smell to deter predators. It also flattened out its head to appear more triangular, like that of a venomous snake.



Another successful plant sale. Photo Guy Random.

*continued on page 15*



## Wildscape Update continued from page 14



*From left, Cecily Rodgers, Jane Oosterhuis, Marylee Thomason, Ann Knudsen, Rebecca Hill, and Marian Hiler with rattlebush (foreground). Photo Carol Marcotte.*



*Yellow-striped armyworm larva found on rattlebush. Photo Marian Hiler.*

As an added benefit Hester suggested having a display of edible native plants. That was a hit with the interns, prompted discussions, and intrigued passersby. Carol and Josephine gathered samples for the display from a list Hester provided. Hester also brought a handout sheet of resources. Things like this and the snake adventure make the program most inviting.

The holiday season always starts early with the pizza party hosted by Joe and Norma Martinez on their patio. Norma is a fabulous cook, and this year's to-do, Oct. 12, featured appetizers of chips and dips and crackers with little veggie nubs on top, followed by chicken salad sandwiches



*From left, seated at the pizza party: Cecily Rodgers, Frank Keeney, Rebecca Hill, Ann Knudsen, Christine Brinson, Marian Hiler, Madison Grover. Standing: Marylee Thomason, Dana Austin, Josephine Keeney, Jane Oosterhuis, Norma Martinez, Joe Martinez. Photo Carol Marcotte.*

*continued on page 16*



## Wildscape Update continued from page 15

garnished with almonds and cranberries, and your choice of spinach or chicken pizza. Asked if she made the pizzas, Norma said, “Oh, yes. I just used Costco boxes.” This reporter believed her and had to be corrected by Ann Knudsen: “Pizza homemade by Costco.” The tabbouleh and wilted lettuce salad also were homemade, as was the pumpkin pie, each slice adorned with a perfect dollop of whipped cream.

Norma has a green thumb as well as a chef’s hat. Those in the know come in the side gate and stroll through her lush garden fortified with Joe’s compost. The party is a tradition that precedes the winter holidays, and wildscapers eagerly anticipate it.

Great job, Norma and Joe! And to all a good night!



*Ryan Wiggins admires a rough green snake found during the Master Naturalists’ tour.*

Last week we said a sad goodbye to Candy and Wayne Halliburton who, after 25 years of civic activism in Arlington, will now be spending their time and energy on behalf of Pueblo, Colorado. Their many friends in ACC, the library, and a host of other committees, boards, and organizations will feel their loss acutely but wish them the very best in more fertile ground.





## In Case You Missed It Grace Darling

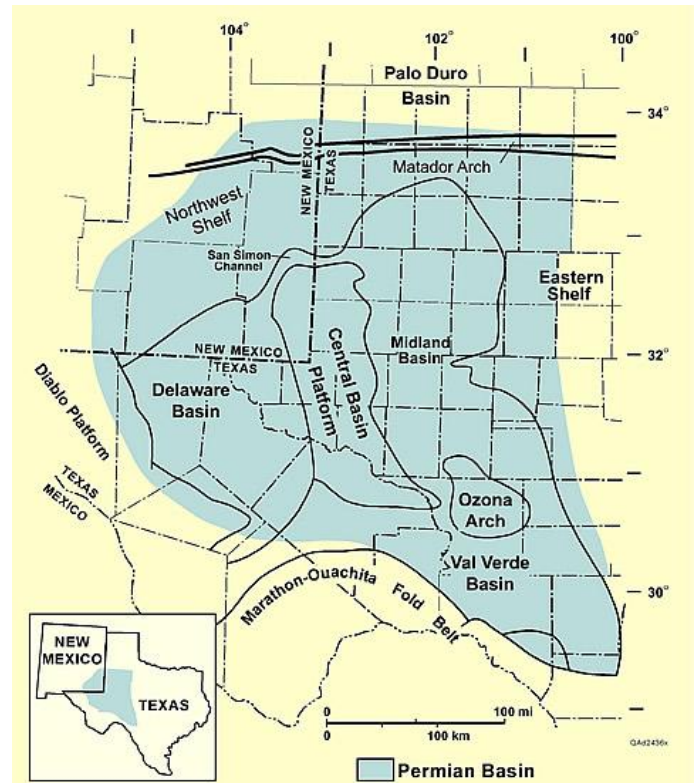
**ALERT:** The acctexas.org site is currently undergoing repairs and cannot be accessed. Our extremely talented and hard-working webmaster — you know I’m talking about Frank Keeney, who needs no introduction — is feverishly toiling to bring the site back bigger, better, and easier to navigate. Please be patient and stay tuned for the new launch.

**From Near:** Today we say goodbye to Environmental Services Coordinator **Misty Adams**, who has left city employment to work for the private sector. Misty talked to us via Zoom about Arlington’s recycling program in September. We thank her for her efforts on behalf of our residents and wish her success on the new job.

Catching up with departures, we also wave a remote farewell to Misty’s former boss, Environmental Services Administrator **Sunanda Katragadda**, who left us in July for an opportunity to use her solid waste engineering skills in Monterey, California. Both ladies will be missed, not only personally but also for the vacuum their absence has created in the city.

**Mid-range:** Our local Sierra Club chapter reminds us that we are in the final stages of the **Sunset Review process** for two important state agencies, **the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the Public Utility Commission**. “Many of these decisions get made, perhaps strategically, during the busy holiday season, so stay tuned and stay engaged. And, if you haven’t already, be sure to cast your ballot by next Tuesday, Nov. 8, and vote for a cleaner, more equitable future.” [Lindsay Mader, Sierra Club Lone Star Communications]

**Methane emissions** from natural gas gathering pipelines in the U.S. Permian Basin are at least



14X greater than EPA national inventory estimates, according to new peer-reviewed research from EDF, Stanford University and the University of Arizona [[permianmap.org](https://permianmap.org)]. Gathering lines transport unprocessed gas from well sites to processing facilities and vary widely in size and pressure, with diameters ranging from 2 inches to as large as 30 inches. The Permian Basin gathering line emissions are at least 213,000 metric tons of methane per year, have the same annual climate impact as 3.7 million passenger vehicles, and represent enough wasted gas to meet the needs of 2.1 million homes. [<https://blogs.edf.org/energyexchange/2022/10/04/>]

**And Far:** It’s been dubbed New York’s first climate adaptation battle: In a well-meaning but controversial Destroy-It-to-Save-It Plan, the city began to remove more than 1,000 trees from **East River Park** a year ago. City officials say the tree removal is just a necessary first step to creating a

*continued on page 18*



## In Case You Missed It continued from page 17

bigger and better park. Planning for the massive project began in 2013 after Superstorm Sandy hit the Lower East Side 10 years ago. Altogether nearly 90,000 buildings were flooded, 44 people died, and more than 2 million New Yorkers lost power, many living without it for weeks. Total damages were estimated at a whopping \$19 billion. The goal of the remade East River Park is to better withstand storm surge even as the waters surrounding lower Manhattan rise in the coming years. Once all the work is finished — projected in about 4 years — the new park will be raised 8 to 10 feet higher, with new recreational facilities and 1,800 replacement trees representing more than 50 species better suited to survive occasional saltwater floods. The budget for the [Coastal Resiliency Project](#) is \$1.9 billion.

In 1922, conservationist Aldo Leopold paddled a canoe through the great delta at the mouth of the **Colorado River**. He wrote about a “wealth of fowl and fish” and “still waters...of a deep emerald hue.” In Leopold’s time, the delta stretched over nearly 3,000 square miles; today, it covers fewer than 250, and the only water flowing through it, except after heavy rains, is the runoff from alfalfa, lettuce and melon fields, and pecan orchards. In fact, the Colorado no longer regularly reaches the sea.

“What happened? In a word: agriculture. A steady march of population growth and climate change has exacerbated conditions, but it all began with farming, much of it supported by taxpayers in a feverish desire to “settle the West.” After irrigation ditches and canals were hewed into the arid ground, farmers planted wheat, then hay. Those crops, along with cotton, citrus fruits, 90% of the nation’s winter vegetables, and almost any other plant imaginable, now consume about 70% of the Colorado River Basin’s water. Our green lawns, golf courses, swimming pools, and generally thirsty cities also take



*Colorado River delta*

a share of the dwindling water, as do reservoirs, where 15% of the basin’s water evaporates into thin air each year.

“There are many solutions for the Colorado. Conservation—large-scale xeriscaping (switching to landscaping plants that don’t need much water), irrigation reform, a more watchful eye on the consumptive water-energy nexus, and discretionary crop planting—can send a lot of water back to the rivers where it belongs. Minute 319 is a unique collaboration between the Mexican and U.S. governments and a coalition of conservation organizations, each of which is responsible for delivering a third of the water committed to the delta under the agreement. In addition to helping set restoration goals, conservation groups are raising funds to buy water rights from current users. “In time, if we follow this example of budding restoration, we’ll have the opportunity to revive dozens of other western rivers. Or we can begin bidding them goodbye.” [<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/americanile/>]

# Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve Annabelle Corboy

## November Program

Tuesday, Nov. 15, 7 pm

### The Wintering Sparrows of North Texas

Jake Poinsett, Program Manager at Trinity River Audubon Center

Arlington Police West Service Station, 2060 W. Green Oaks Blvd., Arlington, TX 76013

Join Jake to learn all about the wintering sparrows of North Texas! He will cover some of the different migratory sparrows that use various North Texas habitats, how to identify them, and where to find them.

Jake Poinsett is the program manager at the Trinity River Audubon Center for the National Audubon Society. As program manager, he leads environmental education programs for all ages and habitat management practices at the center. Before working for Audubon, he was a park ranger for Texas Parks and Wildlife, South Carolina Park Service, and the National Park Service. In his spare time, he loves to go birding, look for reptiles and amphibians, and hang out in his backyard with his girlfriend and pups.

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# Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 19

## 9th Anniversary Celebration

We kicked off a day of activities with some birding fun, led by Lynn Healy. We used Merlin Bird ID to see what bird songs and calls the app could pick up, then we tried to spot them. We started in the Audubon birding area, then moved to the fishing pier at the south pond. *Right above, the Merlin app at work. Below, Annabelle Corboy (left) and Lynn Healy. Photos Jim Domke.*

We started the afternoon activities with Michael Smith leading a walk titled **Mindfulness at Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve**. We were honored to have the preserve's namesake join us. For many of us, usually focused on identifying plants and insects, this was an introduction to another way of appreciating nature. Practicing mindfulness in nature lets us experience trees, ponds, birds, and everything else with freshness and wonder. We started with practicing focusing on our own breathing, then at each of several stops in the preserve, we spent quiet time, letting the day-to-day thoughts float away, and learning (it may take some practice) to find a different way to enjoy being in nature.

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*Left, The group gathers for the mindfulness walk. From left, Annabelle Corboy, Laura Capik, Michael Smith, Lynn Healy, Sheri Capehart, Rudy Arnold, Jan Miller. Seated, Madison Grover. Right, Answering questions and handing out seed packets and brochures. Photos Montana Williams.*



## Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 20

Jim Frisinger led us on our last walk, with another take on how to enjoy being in nature. Jim guided us back through time as we walked through the preserve, starting with some thoughts about what the preserve was like when it was under water, some 80? million years ago. Each area of the preserve has its own story to tell about the native Americans who lived here before the European settlers, and the families raising cattle during the drought of the 1950s, through the decisions made by APRD about what to keep and what to remove to make this area into a preserve. And last, what volunteers are doing to restore the land back to its natural glory. *From left, Jim Frisinger, Annabelle Corboy, Jan Miller. Photo Michael Smith*

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## Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 21

### iNaturalist Highlights for the First Half of October



White-lined Sphinx (*Hyles lineata*) – charley, Question Mark (*Polygonia interrogationis*) – charley, Salt Marsh Moth (*Estigmene acrea*) - sam\_moore\_



Hackberry Emperor (*Asterocampa celtis*) – drawntoscales, Gray Hairstreak (*Strymon melinus*) – Outdoorcrazy, Common Checkered-Skipper (*Burnsius communis*) -jaytee60





## Blackland Prairie Preserve Guy Random



*September's harsh mix continues: late-season flowers, many stunted, push up from vibrant grasses and lean on dry seedheads. Now we see all those invading hackberries made skeletal by ravenous caterpillars.*





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|               |                           |                                          |
|---------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------------|
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| Address _____ | Individual \$15           | New Member <input type="checkbox"/>      |
| _____         | Family \$25               |                                          |
| Phone _____   | Supporting \$40           | Renewing member <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Email _____   | Sponsor \$100             |                                          |
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**November Zoom Meeting**

**This recorded Zoom meeting is not available yet on our website.  
 We'll let you know when it's ready.  
 When we do, be sure to have a look.**