

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 4

MAY 2024



BLACKLAND PRAIRIE NATURAL AREA • GUY RANDOM PHOTO

May Zoom Meeting



Read more about this program on page 5

Did you miss this presentation?

Watch the recording on our [YouTube](#) channel.



Contents	
3	From the President
5	Our May Zoom Program
6	Bits & Pieces
7	Question Corner
9	ACC Heritage Trees
12	My Nature Notebook
13	Energy Corner
15	Watercoloring in the Park
17	Randol Mill Park
20	Molly Hollar Wildscape Update
27	In Case You Missed It
29	Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve
34	Blackland Prairie Natural Area

From the President **Dick Schoech**



ACC Annual Presidential Fitness Test

Choose the correct answer:

- ☐ Write a message for the newsletter
☐ Take a trip to Big Bend

(See your president's answer below.)

continued on page 4



Dick Schoech photo



ACC POST OAK

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

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

John Darling, editor
ldarling@sbcglobal.net

Contributors

Robin Agee, John Blair,
Annabelle Corboy, Grace Darling,
John Darling, Carrie Donovan,
John Dycus, Jim Frisinger,
Jennifer Hiler, Marian Hiler,
Ann Knudsen, Carol Marcotte,
Jan Miller, Guy Random,
Amy Richards, Dick Schoech

Proofreaders

Marian Hiler, Grace Darling

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

From the President continued from page 3

Fitness Test, cont. (Note: The test was made up by the editor, who is annoyed because he hasn't been to Big Bend in years.)

below, Boquillas Canyon, *left below*, We looked out for bears but saw none. Others did, though. *right below*, javelinas were easier to spot. Dick Schoech photos.



Our May Zoom Program

Wednesday, May 1, 7 pm

The Benefits of Native Plants

Can using native plants help you? Get your answer at ACC's May 1 meeting where Ann Knudsen will discuss the resource savings, health benefits, and ecological gains of using natives instead of exotics. Hear how natives benefit the environment, the community, and the homeowner or apartment dweller.

Native Texan Ann Knudsen's interest in native plants grew from playing in the wildflower fields of her youth and her mother's love of gardening. Ann is a Master Naturalist, Master Gardener, and active in the North Central chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas.

She has been involved with NPSOT's landscaping certification program and, with her mentor, Molly Hollar, took several UT-sponsored classes through the LBJ Wildflower Center and NPSOT. When Molly retired after nearly twenty-five years coordinating the Molly Hollar Wildscape in Veterans Park, she asked Ann to fill that position.

Since 2007, Ann's business, Native Gardener, has specialized in native landscape maintenance and design.

Watch the recording on our [YouTube](#) channel.



The Watchdog Needs You
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,
email a message to the watchdog.**

Bits & Pieces

The Terse Treehugger



A fair-sized post oak next door just fell over.

Happened before all the big rain. Just fell over.

No call for that.

**Visit ACC's
Facebook page
and
Arlington
Conservation
Council
Discussion Group**

Yard Art



It's Prof. David Hopman's first native plant bed at UTA, and it used to be, hands down, the school's most interesting bunch of plants. But now there are more Hopman beds nearby, brimming with Lanceleaf coreopsis. And other beds, too. The place keeps looking better, bit by bit.



Lanceleaf coreopsis

Terse, Again



Trail's being lengthened along Julia Burgen Linear Park.

But this doesn't look like progress.

No hiking here for a while.

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



Question Corner **John Darling**

Q: Now look, this is serious, at least to me, so I want a good answer, not the usual self-satisfied baloney. There are big sunflowers where I work, and I really like looking at them. Not only that, but they have to be good for lots of different kinds of bees, even bumble bees, and a bunch of crawly bugs, too. But now caterpillars of the Salt marsh moth are eating the leaves like crazy. What am I supposed to do? I could squash those caterpillars before they kill everything, but I think the moths are wonderful. Are you going to say I should stay out of it and just hope? That feels like a cop-out. This is too hard.

A: Those are some wimpy sunflowers if they can't bounce back from a little defoliation. You don't think they're built for that? Sounds like it's you with a case of Human Interference Syndrome, that thing where we know what's best for nature. Go sit down, suck it up, and watch what happens without you. Next!



The *Post Oak* will not knowingly accept sponsors who are deceptive, misleading, or expressly incompatible with its mission. The *Post Oak* does not endorse, advocate, or guarantee any offer, viewpoint or representation made by its sponsors.




Wild Birds Unlimited
1660 W. Randol Mill Rd.
Arlington, TX 76012
(817) 275-1000
www.wbu.com/arlingtontx
Hours 10 - 6 Mon - Sat,
Closed Sun



Green Arlington Foundation
Supporting local sustainability

P.O. Box 264
Arlington TX 76004-0264
GreenArlington.org
214-709-8791



Paul Krudsen's
ArlingtonNOW.com
Event Photography

Portfolio_Studio@yahoo.com
817.265.4441



Herb 'n Health
Natural Foods Market & Herb Shoppe
3759 E. Lancaster St. Ft. Worth Tx 76105
Karen Foley 817-535-1152



Dakota mock vervain

GOOD WORK. ON TIME.

John DYCUS

3609 Shady Park Drive
Arlington, TX 76013
(817) 277-2138
john@cdycus.com



Law Office of
SHANE GOETZ

3705 N Shadycreek Dr
Arlington, TX 76013
shane@goetzlawtx.com
817-265-2902
Fax: 817-549-4438

LIVEABLE ARLINGTON

Working Toward a Healthy Community
On a
Liveable Planet



Connect with us at
<https://www.liveablearlington.org>
info@liveablearlington.org

**Join ACC
any time.
How about now?**

IVAN QUERIDO'S REAL HERITAGE TREE

Could special field correspondent Ivan Querido be running out of steam at last? We can only hope, now that he's reduced to prowling parking lots.

Hey, just shut up while I worry about this sycamore. It's looking worse every year. Now that it's leafed out I see lots of bare branches and there are big splits in the bark on the trunk. Don't just say, "It's a sycamore. Too bad." It deserves better.



4½ ACRES, AVAIL.

Here slept a streamside glade
Spring-lush with daisies, grasses;
Deer drifted down to drink
And doves sang in the sun.
Then in rolled Texians
With herds of red-faced cattle,
Horses, sheep, whose
Meat and hides and wool
Fed and shod and dressed
Stouthearted farmers
And their bashful broods
Who walked to school
Beneath the post oak grove
That grew along the brook,
Climbed, played, courted
On rusty slides and swing sets.
The trail close by
Became a track, a road,
A crowned street,
Thoroughfare.
Year followed year.
The school gone,
Shops popped up,
A bank, boutiques.
The creek cemented,
Deer a distant memory,
Marooned in asphalt
One by one the oaks decayed,
And all the rest grew old, musty.
Then came wrecking balls,
Backhoes, bulldozers,
Dump truck convoys;
And now it's empty once again,
Emptier than when it started:
Bare, torn, trampled soil
Waiting for a doubtful future,
Dreaming just a bit of doves
And meadowsweet.

©2009 John I. Blair

ACC Heritage Trees

ACC Heritage Trees

from Ivan Querido: Looks like I gotta do all the heavy lifting around here when the VIPs get distracted by the latest shiny object and forget about their fancy trees. So anyway, here's a particular catalpa at its best time of year. Why this one? It's outside the apartments where the actual Lou Diamond Phillips lived when he was a drama student at UTA. You want heritage? We got your heritage!



We're **Still** Doing Something Big

The ACC-UTA Endowment — established to support future environmentalists, promote environmental integrity, and strengthen climate resilience — is a success!

Thanks to you, it has awarded a scholarship each of the last two years. Watch one awardee's presentation of his research [here](#).

And the endowment is getting bigger.

This year it will award a \$1,000 scholarship and a \$3,000 research grant.

Please help the endowment make an even greater impact benefitting even more students. Keep it growing.

continued on page 11

ACC-UTA Endowment
For good.
Forever.
[Donate here.](#)



We're **Still** Doing Something Big continued from page 10

Here's the latest on our educational effort

The spring 2024 ACC Undergraduate Scholarship has been awarded to Mohammad Rahman, a sophomore computer science major who is continuing work on a project that will allow him to fully commit to his goal of preserving natural resources and making more significant strides toward sustainable management and conservation efforts.

Mohammad is currently working on development of an Object Detection Model aimed at monitoring and improving water quality by identifying and qualifying pollutants (such as harmful substances and plastic waste) in water bodies to proactively safeguard aquatic ecosystems.

He is the founder of the Students in Computing and Artificial Intelligence (SCAI) Club at UTA. One of SCAI's key initiatives is hosting workshops that give students the opportunity to collect and analyze environmental data on pressing issues such as water pollution, air quality, deforestation rates, and the impact of industrial emissions on climate change.

ACC-UTA Endowment
For good.
Forever.
[Donate here.](#)



My Nature Notebook

No fun anywhere today

Anyway Mom said both of you get out right now I can't take one more minute of this I swear I'm going to explode all over you! She seemed mad so I took Stupid next door to play in the



Creepy Old Guy's flowers. And that was fun because we pretended to take pictures like those people in the park yesterday who got all dressed up and then plopped down in the flowers and had to smile a lot. But then the C.O.G. saw us and he was yelling about his bluebonnets and saying we had to go home right now but it's kind of boring there so I said we were just liking his pretty flowers and he said now look over there at all those crushed bluebonnets! They're all bent and ugly and they haven't gotten old enough to make seeds for next year! All bent and ugly? He should know.

Energy Corner May 2024 **Grace Darling**

Background: Bitcoin and some other cryptocurrencies depend on a lot of high-powered computers doing high level math, what is known as “crypto mining.” The equipment creates enormous amounts of heat and requires energy-intensive cooling (read: electricity and water), but crypto claims to aid the grid by creating demand for more generation facilities under normal conditions and then shutting down when demand spikes and wholesale electricity prices rise.



Bitcoin mines are essentially big data centers, which have become notorious for how much electricity and water* they use in their operations: A single bitcoin transaction uses as much power as the average U.S. household does in 37 days, according to the Bitcoin Energy Consumption Index — and it [consumes as much as 2% of all electricity in the U.S.](#), according to the Energy Information Administration. Every year, the industry requires as much electrical energy as Ukraine, a nation of 43 million people. The industry’s annual carbon footprint is comparable to Romania’s, while producing a digital token used by 4.2% of the global population in 2023.**

In February, the US Department of Energy (DOE) announced its intention to gather basic information about the energy consumed by bitcoin mining. But



the crypto industry isn’t thrilled about giving that information up, and Bitcoin miners responded with a suit that sought to block the DOE, filed in the Western District of Texas. Texas is a major site of bitcoin mining within the US, and the wind farms of the Texas Panhandle regularly experience periods of production that exceed demand, enabling cheap energy prices. District judge Alan Albright of Waco issued a restraining order on the DOE survey on the grounds that the industry had shown it would suffer “irreparable injury” if it was made to comply. This order is still in effect today, and the agency’s bid to collect more detailed information on how crypto miners use electricity will not be revived until after a public review. That means regulators, legislators, and even power providers don’t have detailed data about how an industry that has exploded in just a decade could affect the grid in the future.

It has since come to light that last year the Electric Reliability Council of Texas paid a bitcoin enterprise called Riot more than \$31 million in energy credits to voluntarily lower its electricity usage during a heatwave that caused a spike in power demand from the public. Here’s what happened.

continued on page 14

Energy continued from page 13



Riot Platforms facility at Rockdale, Texas

The Story: Since China outlawed crypto mining in 2021 because the government thinks it's economically destabilizing, crypto companies have relocated to Texas largely because of our low electricity prices and high proportion of renewable energy. Texas has made itself a welcome place for bitcoin miners, so much so that mining accounts for a large chunk of the state's consumption. For example, [in 2022, bitcoin projects accounted for 33GW of energy, compared to all Houston households combined using an estimated 6GW that year.](#)

Riot Platforms, the most power-intensive mine in the country, is located at an old aluminum smelter in Rockdale, northeast of Austin. Central to ERCOT's demand-response program, instituted since winter storm URI's long-lasting freeze in February 2021, the agency will call on large load carriers that have a contract with them to turn off at strategic times to help with generation. In fact, ERCOT will pay entities, or in this case, miners like Riot who use a lot of power, to cut back during periods of peak demand to hopefully ease stress on the grid. Under this arrangement, the crypto industry creates a problem and then is paid to solve it.

At times of extreme temperatures, the state-controlled ERCOT pays Riot to shut down, which sometimes pays better than mining bitcoin. For example, last August, during a record-breaking heat wave in Texas, Riot voluntarily curtailed its energy consumption to take advantage of credits available by limiting use, to the tune of \$31.7 million. As Texans were asked to turn up their A/C thermostats and forgo using the dryer and the oven to help prevent brownouts or worse, grid collapse, Riot's CEO called August "a landmark month: The Company's curtailment of operations meaningfully contributed to reducing overall power demand in ERCOT, helping to ensure that consumers did not experience interruptions in service," the release said.

In January, Texas had 8,500MW of crypto demand on the grid, with another 30,764MW planned by 2027, ERCOT data shows. Together, that's enough electricity for more than 7.8 million homes at peak demand. Some analysts say crypto raises electricity prices during normal periods, costing consumers \$1.8 billion.

Are you feeling grateful to the crypto industry yet?

[Excerpted from various sources including *Texas Monthly*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *ABC 13 Houston*, *CNBC*, *CBS News*, *The Guardian*, and Chris Tomlinson, *Houston Chronicle*, 3/5/24)

*Water is involved at many points in the process of producing electricity: Around 65% of US electricity comes from power generators that need cooling. These types of power plants, called thermoelectric or "thermal" plants, boil water to produce steam for generating electricity.

**Most serious economists consider unregulated cryptocurrencies as dangerous Ponzi schemes, and regulators have their sights set on the top names. But the miners keep moving to Texas.

Watercoloring in the Park Carrie Donovan

April 13, 2024

What an unexpected delight our O.S. Gray Natural Area (OSGNA) community day turned out to be! What began as a watercoloring session turned in to an adventure.

When Lori reached out about taking a tour for herself and her daughter, Fiona, we knew we had to create something memorable. So, I ditched our usual chores of removing privet, clearing under the ancient oak trees, weeding in the wildflower beds, and marking young oak tree saplings in Rosser's Woodlands. Thankfully we had plenty of volunteers to handle these usual chores, allowing me to entertain a spontaneous idea. Let's set up a "Watercoloring in the Park" station by the wildflower beds, inviting visitors to capture the beauty of nature around them!

Paula Harbor, a talented artist and member of the Friends, joined in, capturing the essence of OSGNA's beauty on paper. Fiona couldn't resist joining in the creative fun, painting alongside her mom and newfound friends. When it was time for the tour, we set aside our paintings to dry and later to take home.



Paula Harbor at work by the wildflower garden



Lori with daughter Fiona and her O.S. Gray artwork

Fiona's enthusiasm for nature was infectious as she shared her knowledge from school, connecting classroom lessons to real-life discoveries in the park. Her excitement was palpable as she spotted a young oak sapling along the trail and insisted on protecting it. Together, we cleared the surrounding weeds, and marked it for safety, ensuring its future growth.

As we ended our tour, we came upon the OSGNA Little Library. Here Amanda Dickson, who is another dedicated member of the Friends, greeted us with a delightful surprise — a box of colorful goodies to celebrate the Little Library's one-year anniversary! Lori and Fiona explored the selection of books, gathered their goodies and with watercolor paintings in hand left with smiles on their faces.

continued on page 16

Watercoloring continued from page 15

It's moments like these that make our community bonds even stronger. Here's to embracing surprises and spreading joy through art, literature, and nature!

A Special Note

I'd like to recognize Friends member Paula Harbor for her incredible talent and unwavering dedication to OSGNA. She has created a series of beautiful hand-painted cards of OSGNA wildflowers that capture the essence of the park. Through the sale of these cards, she also contributes to the Friends efforts at OSGNA. These cards are available for purchase, with all proceeds going directly to support OSGNA.

To place your order, or inquire further, don't hesitate to reach out to us via email at friends@friendsofosgray.org, or find us on Facebook and [Instagram @thefriendsofosgray](https://www.instagram.com/thefriendsofosgray)

Additionally, you can find Paula's series of cards for sale at our community days, held every second



Fiona's oak sapling

Saturday of the month. Let's show our appreciation for Paula's generosity and artistic contributions to our community!



Randol Mill Park Carol Marcotte



As of April 19, there are 14 bluebird nest boxes in the park. Seventeen bluebirds and four sparrows have fledged this season. Amy Richards photo.



A Boy Scout working on earning the Eagle Scout rank has started the installation of five fishing line receptacles. On April 6, he dug holes and concreted the poles. Stay tuned for updates.

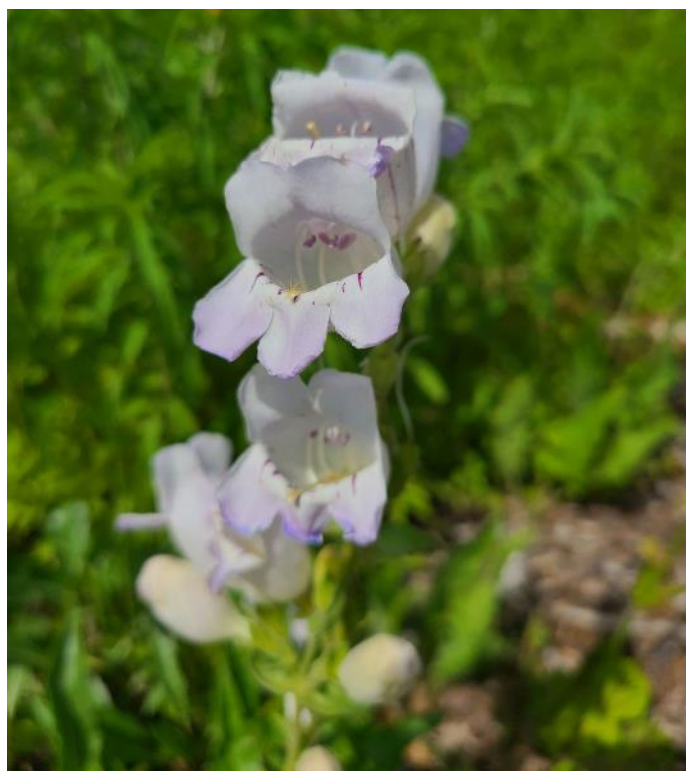


This trash barrel shows the power of erosion in our sandy soil.



Texas river cooter basking at the pond.

continued on page 18

Randol Mill Park continued from page 17

clockwise from upper left, Cobaea beardtongue, Eastern cottontail, Star of Bethlehem, Cloth-of-gold



Social Media

Be sure to visit
ACC's Facebook page
and
Arlington Conservation Council
Discussion Group



**Our ACC board members love to
talk whenever they're not busy**

ACC on YouTube

Arlington Conservation Council recently set up its own [YouTube](#) channel to upload presentations given at its monthly meetings. Speakers address a range of environmental topics including local issues, wildlife, native plants, and natural areas. Be sure to check the channel soon after each monthly meeting for the latest program upload. From time to time, videos of related interest will be uploaded as well.

Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marian Hiler

Molly Hollar Memorial Seed Ball Toss

It was a perfect day for a perfect way to celebrate the life and legacy of our beloved Molly Hollar in her most favorite place. On Sunday, April 14, several of her friends, admirers, and family members met at the wildscape to toss seed balls containing locally harvested native plant seeds. As she led the group to various locations destined to receive seed balls, Ann Knudsen provided a loving history of her mentor's dedication to and her influence on the wildscape.

The seed balls had been assembled with Ann's guidance by Molly's daughters Cindy Underwood and Susan Hollar with help from Jennifer and Marian Hiler. The week before, Ann had divided up the collected seeds for the appropriate location. For example, the pocket prairie would get basket flower, prairie foxglove, and two-leaf senna while little bluestem and eryngo were better suited for the western border along the disc golf fairway. Seed balls were also made for the northern boundary, along the woodland pathway, the west garden by the bioswale, and the overlook.

Cindy and Susan greatly appreciated the celebration. During the tour, Susan mentioned level 5 leadership as described in Jim Collins' book, *Good to Great*, about business principles. One characteristic of a level 5 leader is that they replace themselves before they leave. Susan said, "Ann is a phenomenal replacement, which makes me so very proud of both my mother, and Ann. She has so gracefully and competently stepped up to continue the Wildscape legacy." Amen to that.

Additional event photos can be found at Paul Knudsen's website, ArlintoNOW.com.



above, Ann Knudsen stops to tell the group how passersby love to touch the silky-white tufts of the Texas bluegrass. Jennifer Hiler photo. below, Texas Bluegrass ([*Poa arachnifera*](#))



Wildscape Update continued from page 20, continued on page 22



above, Kay Sekio helps to hand out seed balls for the woodland area toss. Jennifer Hiler photo.

below, Molly's fans toss seed balls into the west garden. Jennifer Hiler photo.



above, Pausing to look at one of the rain gardens in the woodland area. Jennifer Hiler photo. *below*, Cindy Underwood, Kent Underwood, Susan Hollar, Gary Easter, and Ann Knudsen. Paul Knudsen photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 21, continued on page 23



left, Bonnie Garcia and Jane Oosterhuis working under the twin oaks. Robin Agee photo. *right*, Diane Taylor and first timer Robin Harris weeding in the west garden near the bioswale. Robin Agee photo. *below*, The Molly Hollar Wildscape.



Wildscape Update continued from page 22

Weeding and Planting

Just like taxes this time of year, weeds are a certainty. Throughout the wildscape, volunteers spent most of their time on their hands, knees, and bottoms removing as many weeds and seed heads as time and energy allowed. The pleasant company and friendly conversation each workday are reward enough but add to that the unfailing encouraging words and gratitude from park visitors keep us going even on the hottest and muggiest of days.

Much of the planting this period was devoted to mitigating the ever-looming erosion. With each heavy rain, its sizeable runoff from the south parking lot and the uphill side of the disc golf fairway carves into the sides of the bioswale. Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), whose roots can grow to a ten-foot depth, is a good option to hold the edges of the bioswale in place. Several one-gallon containers of rescued switchgrass were planted along the western edge of the bioswale. Switchgrass was also planted just north of the wildscape to slow down the runoff and silt coming out of the culvert opening by the amphitheater uphill from the wildscape. The water and silt continue on down into the wildscape washing away pathways and covering the native plants in the woodland area.

continued on page 24



above, In the woodland area, Bonnie Garcia happily loads up the dreaded aptly named sticky weed (*Galium aparine*) to haul away. It seemed to have an especially glorious spring. Ann Knudsen photo.



left, Joe Martinez and Carol Marcotte are removing seed heads from the annual ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*) leaving the roots to help hold the soil in the northern boundary where erosion is an issue. Robin Agee photo.

Wildscape Update continued from page 24, continued on page 26



above, Carol Marcotte and Christine Brinson clear out the interloping annual ryegrass in search of the Little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*) that was planted here last year. Marian Hiler photo. above right, Marian Hiler and Christine Brinson weeding along the well traveled western sidewalk along side the disc golf fairway. Ann Knudsen photo. below, Bonnie Garcia, Jane Oosterhuis and in back Katy Walsh remove unwelcome growth from the berm. Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 24, continued on page 26



above, Christine Brinson planting switchgrass along the bioswale. Marian Hiler photo. *Above right*, Looking uphill at the bioswale and the newly planted switchgrass. The stone edging on the right is to keep the mowers at bay. Marian Hiler photo. *below*, Looking north toward the culvert by the amphitheater. Ann Knudsen photo. *Below right*, From left, Robin Agee is excited about installing the switchgrass with Marylee Thomason and Dana Austin. Ann Knudsen photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 25

First Saturday mini-class

At the April 6 mini-class Master Naturalist and longtime Wildscape volunteer Joe Martinez shared helpful information on "*Toxicodendron radicans*, Dreaded Poison Ivy". Joe recommended when you're likely to encounter poison ivy, wear long sleeves and pants to minimize skin exposure. If you do get it on your clothing, be sure to wash it in detergent to remove the urushiol oil as it can remain potent for up to 5 years. There are over-the-counter treatments that can be applied to relieve skin affected by the oil. Molly's favorite go-to was Tecnu. Yet another negative from climate change, rising temperatures and carbon dioxide levels appear to make poison ivy grow faster, bigger, and more potent.

There will not be a first Saturday work-day/mini-class on **May 4** due to the [Native Plant Society's plant sale](#) at River Legacy Park.



Volunteer Opportunities

9:00 – noon Wednesdays and first Saturdays
All are welcome, no experience necessary.
Members of ecology and garden groups can receive credit hours.

For more information contact
info@thewildscape.org.



above, Joe Martinez warns about the perils of poison ivy. Robin Agee photo. below, Five-leafed Virginia creeper, upper left, is often confused with the three-leafed poison ivy, lower right.



In Case You Missed It Grace Darling



Pollution reduction is on the move! The **Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality Improvement Plan** application (155 pages) is now online: <https://www.publicinput.com/Customer/File/Full/8cc3529c-65fd-4697-ad73-8cfd382ce0ce>.

Background: (Arlington, TEXAS) – Air quality is an ongoing issue in North Texas, where 10 counties are currently in nonattainment for ground-level ozone. The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) manages several programs that empower the public and private sectors, along with individuals, to play an active role in improving ozone levels and overall air quality in the region.

To continue efforts to improve air quality and reduce greenhouse gases and other harmful air pollutants, including ozone precursors and particulate matter, NCTCOG was awarded a grant through the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) program.

The CPRG program has two phases. The first phase, the CPRG planning grants, provides funding to develop regional plans to improve air quality (see below). The Dallas-Fort Worth area received \$1 million from the CPRG planning grants, and with help from local partners, NCTCOG has led the development of the Dallas-Fort Worth Air Quality

Improvement Plan (DFW AQIP). The DFW AQIP is a comprehensive plan that aims to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other harmful pollutants to improve air quality, enhance sustainability, prevent and mitigate effects from climate change, and promote equity.

Successful applicants will be funded through the EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) Planning Grants Program, with \$5 billion made available to the states as part of the bipartisan Inflation Reduction Act of 2022. The IRA has been called "the most significant climate legislation in U.S. history, offering funding, programs, and incentives to accelerate the transition to a clean energy economy and will likely drive significant deployment of new clean electricity resources."



The scope of the DFW plan includes particulars on a variety of measures across several GHG emissions sectors, namely: transportation; energy; solid waste materials management; water, wastewater, and watershed management; agriculture, forestry, and land use; and a mixture of two or more of the above. From this magnificent document, a sample proposal:

continued on page 28

In Case continued from page 27

Update Landscaping Ordinances/ Requirements

Many local development codes and ordinances contain outdated requirements around turf-based residential landscaping. Additionally, there are minimal requirements to protect and conserve trees and other native vegetation. This project is basically one of updating codes and ordinances, to allow greater use of the NCTCOG-promoted Smart-scape™ principles. Updating zoning and landscaping requirements to remove barriers to installing xeriscaping and other low-maintenance landscapes (e.g., relax height restrictions on turf grasses) can help to encourage the use of more drought-tolerant plants and pollinator-friendly plants.

The methodology and specifics of the development process and expected GHG reduction effects are also detailed in the plan, which we fervently hope will be accepted as written and fully funded. Next step: Develop the Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, due summer of 2025.



This just in: The Texas Solar for All Coalition, a coalition of Texas municipalities (including Tarrant County) serving the 11-million-plus low-income and disadvantaged community population in Texas, has been awarded nearly \$250 million from the EPA to transform access to distributed solar in Texas, creating new community wealth and savings through energy cost reductions,

equity opportunities, and access to good-paying clean energy jobs. The Texas SFA program will leverage federal funds, tax credits, and other sources to provide financial assistance and access to private capital to support residential multifamily and single family solar, battery storage, and energy efficiency deployments to improve community well-being and resilience to power system failures. The Texas program will support workforce training to serve low-income and disadvantaged residents, support minority- and women-owned businesses, and collaborate with community-based organizations. The Coalition's SFA programs are designed to be extended within the member jurisdictions and expanded to other parts of Texas during and beyond the SFA grant period.

A separate \$156.1 million award to the Texas-based Clean Energy Fund, a multistate nonprofit, in partnership with the Bullard Center for Environmental and Climate Justice at Texas Southern University (BCECJ), will jointly deploy technical assistance, private capital, and grants to minority-serving institutions. These organizations will facilitate the development of residential-serving community solar projects in low-income and disadvantaged communities on the frontlines of energy policy and grid vulnerability challenges throughout 19 states in the South and Southeast. Their projects will deploy solar and energy storage and are expected to drive GHG-emissions reductions, household utility bill savings, generate direct shared revenues through community ownership, and mobilize private capital. What's not to like?

Our heartfelt thanks to all individuals and organizations, private and public, DFW mayors and Tarrant Co. commissioners for signing on to the Coalition and affording this wonderful opportunity to all their current and future residents.

Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve Annabelle Corboy

Coming Up:

Looking for Yucca moths

Friday, May 10, 7 p.m.

Grace and John Darling will lead us on a walk through SCNP with emphasis on finding blooming Glen Rose yuccas and active Yucca moths, but we will look for any creature that happens by and hope we can name a few.

Male and female moths 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.



Know Your Nature Neighbors – Mini-Bioblitz

Saturday, May 11, 10 a.m.

Michael Smith will lead us as we take a walk, meet some cool plant and animal species, and contribute to citizen science. You don't have to be an expert. Maybe you're interested in finding cacti, flowers, lizards, or birds and uploading photos of them to the nature app "iNaturalist" or other citizen science app like eBird. You would also be welcome if you just want to come along with us, enjoy nature, and learn a little.

We will have folks who know the preserve well and know iNaturalist and can help you use it. There may be one or more

Texas Master Naturalists with us who can give you pointers on discovering nature at the preserve.

We'll meet at the picnic tables off the parking lot at the preserve, introduce ourselves, and we might talk a little about a kind of plant or animal we are focusing on. Then we'll go explore for a while, finding and documenting that species or any plant or animal that catches our interest. You can walk with the group leader(s) or explore on your own. We will meet back at the picnic tables at 11:30am to review what we found and be done by 12:00.



Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 29

Volunteers Are Making a Difference at SCNP Jim Frisinger text and photos

First up, the Third Saturday Volunteer Day on March 16. "Social trails" — short cuts — are an unfortunate impact of public (ab)use at the preserve. They inevitably cause erosion, which sends dirt into the ponds and creates deep ruts in the earth. Not good!

Our Third Saturday volunteers ended one social trail last month, located between the parking lot and the amphitheater. The trail was a legacy of heavy equipment access for the original preserve construction a decade ago. Placement of Woodbine sandstone boulders did not fully restore this degraded hill and it became a regular shortcut over the years. It was blocked six months ago with honey locust timbers and signage so that vegetation had already begun to return. Volunteers placed anti-erosion diversions and barriers and prepared the soil in the old path for planting buffalograss and wildflowers. A few more trees or bushes will be transplanted soon. Judging from the drainage impact from recent rains, it's already a success!

continued on page 31



left, Annabelle Corboy and Denise Pederson sow the seeds.
right, Glenn Aanstoots lays an anti-erosion barrier in the social trail to slow natural water flow.



Jim Domke, Denise Pederson, and Samus Quayle prepare the soil for planting.



Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 30

Volunteers

And next, when high schoolers, Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve, and the Arlington Parks & Recreation Department join forces, mighty things can be done!

Several dozen Dubiski Career High School students and their sponsors restored the Pollinator Loop trail last month. Mulch was trucked uphill and raked in nicely. The kids were an amazing crew, meshing naturally together to complete the task at hand. And yes, the color palette of Texas paintbrushes and bluebonnets made the morning all that more glorious.

continued on page 32



above from left, Former playground mulch along Pennsylvania Avenue provided by Parks & Rec is loaded into wheelbarrows. It's all uphill from there to the trail. Dubiski Career High School students rake the mulch into the trail. Jim Frisinger photos.



above from left, Arlington Parks & Rec's new tool trailer provided all the necessities. Jim Frisinger photo. Dubiski Career High School students pose with sponsors, volunteers and APRD's representative. Jan Miller photo.

Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 31

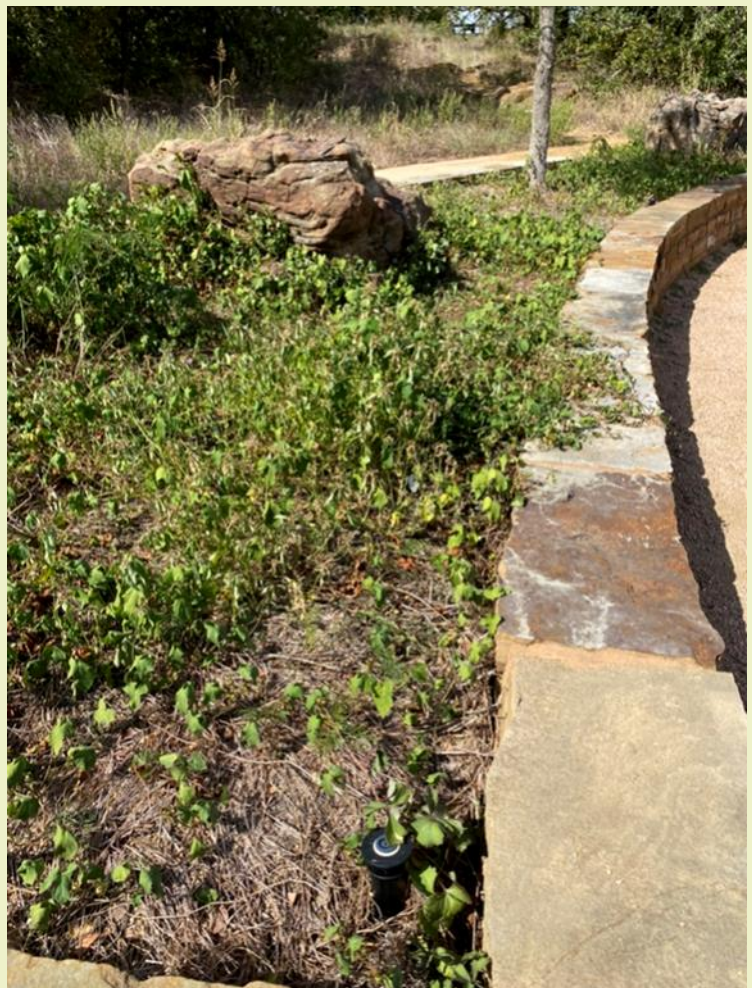
NRCS Visit Jim Frisinger

Benjamin Harrison, district conservationist, and Matthew Purner, a wildlife biologist, both with the National Resource Conservation Service, joined us in April for their annual visit. The walkabout allows them to update their recommendation for meeting our conservation and restoration goals. They identified several new species to their running list of plants at the preserve. They made two recommendations to the Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve. One, to consider a June mowing of the North Prairie Restoration Site, which was cleared of brush and small trees using a skid steer three years ago. Two, to consider placing a heavy mulch layer on ALL dirt trails to reduce erosion. Both recommendations are under review.

Volunteer Opportunity

Jan Miller text and photo

There's a prime spot at Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve just waiting for someone's inspiration and some native plants. Could it be you? This high-visibility spot is a raised planter overlooking SCNP's feature pond near the amphitheater. It currently has one cedar elm, handsome sandstone boulders, some blanket flowers, etc. As you can see, it also has tie vine and other less-desirables that need to be managed. But it could be a great opportunity for a demonstration pollinator garden with native plants. Can you see it buzzing with native bees, wasps and butterflies? There's plenty of sun until early afternoon, with shade from late afternoon heat. Access is easy using the concrete sidewalk from the parking lot. All it needs is a native gardener's knowledge of plants, an inspired design and planting. Friends of SCNP can even assist with funding for seed and plants.



Early spring is great for planting. Would you think about it? If you'd like more information or to sign on, please contact us at info@scnpfriends.org and thanks for considering!

continued on page 33

Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 32

SCNP iNaturalist Observations and Species – March 2024

Annabelle Corboy

WOW! March totals: 345 Observations, 179 Species, and 17 Observers. Not the highest month. That was October 2023 with 420 observations. Still a great number, due in large part to the first mini-biolitz led by Michael Smith. Total species count at SCNP is now 1256!



above, Texas Paintbrush (*Castilleja indivisa*) - kennedynd, Dot-winged Baskettail (*Eptheca petechialis*) - aerisc, Roadside Blue-eyed Grass (*Sisyrinchium pruinatum*) - joshmols
below, Western Spiderwort (*Tradescantia occidentalis*) - tabbybrobston, Narrow-headed Marsh Fly (*Helophilus fasciatus*) - drawntoscales, Texas Toadflax (*Nuttallanthus texanus*) - drawntoscales



Blackland Prairie Natural Area Guy Random



*All dry gilgai now
And their new tiny froglets?
Safe and sound, we hope.
The flowers don't care.
They're focused on making seeds
As fast as they can.*



ARLINGTON CONSERVATION COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

Membership Information

Name _____	First-year member \$10	
Address _____	Individual \$15	New Member ☐
_____	Family \$25	
Phone _____	Supporting \$40	Renewing member ☐
Email _____	Sponsor \$100	
	Lifetime Individual \$250	
	Other \$ _____	

How did you hear about us? _____

Make checks payable to Arlington Conservation Council. Mail to ACC, Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216. Or pay via PayPal or credit card [HERE](#). Contributions and dues are tax-deductible. ACC is a nonprofit, tax-deductible 501(c)(3) organization. If you cannot pay, let any board member know. The newsletter is available via email and the ACC website.

President Dick Schoech
Vice President vacant
Treasurer Marian Hiler

Secretary Jamie Brunner
Webmaster Frank Keeney
Editor John Darling

Board Members
 Grace Darling
 John Dycus
 Hester Schwarzer

POST OAK

Arlington Conservation Council
P.O. Box 216 Arlington, TX 76004-0216

May Zoom Meeting



See pages 2 and 5 for more on this presentation.