

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

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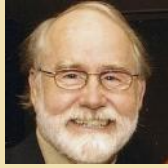
October Zoom Meeting



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



From the President **Dick Schoech**



Will The Phoenix Heat Wave Be the New Normal for Arlington?

Most citizens believe in climate change but few are planning for what it means for us. Unlike many of our neighboring cities, Arlington doesn't have a plan that details what climate change will mean here and what the city must do to adjust. With newcomers moving to the DFW area for its low costs and vibrant economy, Arlington continues to keep its head in the sand about climate change. But is this attitude wise? A brief analysis suggests not.

People know summers are continuously getting hotter, but many see higher air conditioning bills as the major problem. Phoenix, AZ, which this summer suffered from 100 straight days of over 100-degree temperatures, may predict what could happen in Arlington. In Phoenix, more than 150 people died in 2016, 2017, and 2018 from the effects of heat waves. Phoenix's sprawling 517-mile perimeter makes the heat island effect particularly prevalent. Heat and drought are also [disrupting the region's \\$23 billion agriculture industry](#), impacting crops such as wheat, corn, and cotton. By 2050, people in Phoenix are projected to experience an average 47 110-degree days. Maricopa County, home to [Phoenix, is one of six counties in Arizona at risk of becoming uninhabitable to humans in the next 20 to 40 years.](#)

Phoenix's 2021 award-winning climate plan's [2050 goals](#) are to reduce greenhouse gasses by 100%, be carbon-neutral, operate on 100% clean energy, and have all new buildings net positive in both energy and materials. The plan envisions a heat relief network of cooling stations, water use restrictions if needed, and 25% tree and engineered shade structure coverage by 2030. Some parks have trees with tags listing the combined dollar value of the species stormwater runoff reduction, air quality improvement, carbon sequestration, electricity savings and general aesthetic value to the park.

continued on page 4



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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P.O. Box 216
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John Darling, editor
ldarling@sbcglobal.net

Contributors

Annabelle Corboy, Grace Darling,
John Darling, Carrie Donovan,
John Dycus, Marian Hiler,
Ann Knudsen, Sylvia Kultur,
Carol Marcotte, Jan Miller,
Guy Random, Amy Richards,
Dick Schoech, Michael Smith

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

Scientists at [Climatecheck.com](https://climatecheck.com) developed a prediction methodology that rates five of the most important climate change risks: heat, fire, storms, drought, and floods. The analysis predicts “Heat risk in Arlington, TX is extreme. Drought and precipitation risk is high. About 68% of buildings in Arlington, TX are at risk of wildfire, and the risk level for these buildings is significant. About 11% of buildings in Arlington, TX are at risk of flooding, and the risk level for these buildings is significant.” Check the prediction for your home at <https://climatecheck.com/>.

Are DFW cities having success addressing climate change? An [analysis of climate action plans](#) by the Brookings Institution, a nonpartisan think tank, rated [Dallas](#) first [above cities above like Boston, Portland, and San Francisco](#). Fort Worth remains one of the few major cities without an official climate action plan, but in 2019 it developed its first [environmental master plan](#) that included strategies to minimize Fort Worth’s contribution to air pollution, reduce litter, and improve water quality. Denton adopted [Simply Sustainable - A Framework for Denton’s Future](#) that uses a systematic and comprehensive approach to implementing sustainability improvements throughout the community but it didn’t include goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In 2014, Grand Prairie adopted a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 20% below 2009 baseline levels that commits the city to be carbon neutral in its operations by 2035.

Globally, success stories usually mention Singapore, a country about the size of DFW. In 2020, it launched a movement to [plant 1 million trees in 10 years](#). By Sept. 2023, it had already planted 540,000 trees to bring the city’s total to 8 million. A lot is happening worldwide to mitigate climate change, but true to its slogan, Arlington is still the dream city when it comes to addressing climate change.

Further research

- The climate peril we overlook <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/14/opinion/climate-change-record-hot-summer.html?smid=nytcore-android-share>
- Arlington’s 2019 Tree Survey, don’t expect a plan! https://www.arlingtontx.gov/city_hall/departments/parks_recreation/parks_trails/forestry_and_beautification



Our October Program

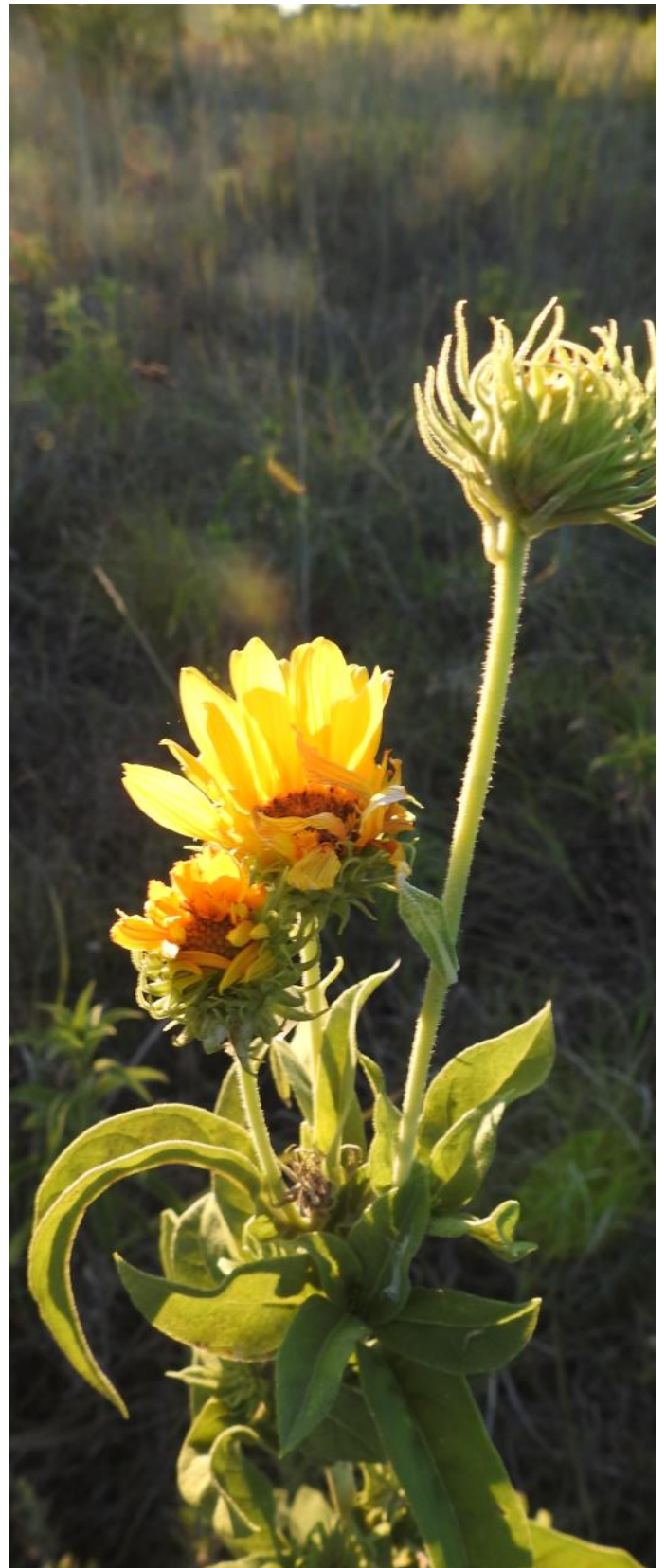
Though we haven't gotten through the upcoming election, there are interim hearings going on now at the Texas State Capitol that may foretell the topics of future legislation in 2025. There have also been interim hearings based on bills passed last session to see how public policy may or may not have changed due to legislation passed in 2023. Rita Beving of Public Citizen will talk about what may be coming up in 2025.

Rita Beving has a 25-year history of advocating for citizens on environmental issues, working both professionally and as a volunteer for the Sierra Club and Clean Water Fund. Since 2013, Rita has worked with the national nonprofit Public Citizen as a registered lobbyist on a variety of issues at the state capitol.

Locally, Rita was Vice Chair of the Environmental Task Force that worked to develop the Dallas Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan (CECAP) before establishment of the Dallas Environmental Commission, where she now serves as technical air advisor.

Rita has worked on a variety of environmental issues statewide over the years, including those addressing issues on the permitting of the Keystone XL and the TransPecos pipelines, landfills, cement kilns, concrete batch plants, and also worked with former Mayor Laura Miller and other nonprofits to defeat the permitting of more than a dozen coal plants.

She is a graduate of Iowa State University and lives in the Dallas area with her husband, attorney David Griggs.



Bits & Pieces

The Terse Treehugger



Can't recycle this plastic cup because it's #5.

And it's nursery habitat, probably for some Green lacewings.

Obstacles everywhere.

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

This is Big, Really



Reminder of a huge thing on Oak Street: this reenactment of the Great Oxidation Event, maybe with real cyanobacteria. You can almost see the oxygen bubbling away, happily displacing methane so we can breathe proper air.



Snow on the prairie.

Not for Us



Bad news for fans of things that have googly eyes AND solar panels. And, by the way, would have collected trash from the Trinity, while raising litter awareness. The wheel has been cancelled for lack of money. Money? This thing is priceless!

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



ACC Trees



From Sylvia Kultur: This miserable wretch began life as a magnolia, but something went terribly, terribly wrong, and now none of the other magnolias will talk to it. Confession: I didn't truly know how a magnolia should look until I was shown the DFW Regional Co-Champion, one of the outstanding specimens on the Fort Worth Botanic Garden [Champion Tree Trail](#). That gorgeous brute understands branches and doesn't hold back. Some right down to the ground and even resting on it. Take a short path to see the interior; you'll be so entirely gratified.

Another confession: Just driving by, I didn't recognize this poor baby as a magnolia until stopping to try for a flattering photo. (Not possible, alas.) Question: "Why plant a magnolia where you truly, deeply don't want one?" Or, for that matter, if you despise magnolias? People, really! A chainsaw would be such a kindness.



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 it 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 9

ACC-UTA Endowment

For good.

Forever.

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We're **Still** Doing Something Big continued from page 8

Architecture major Knowme Tasfia has accepted the ACC endowment's Summer 2024 research award.

Research Project:

Knowme is passionate about building resilient and environmentally conscious communities and studies sustainable urban planning. Her project is focused on creating child-friendly communities amid the busy landscapes of metropolitan places through the study of the complex, vital roles that nonprofits play in both influencing urban landscaping and advancing children's well-being in the City of Dallas. Such child-friendly communities will promote the preservation of urban ecosystems and biodiversity through the conservation of green spaces, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, and nature-centric design.

With the help of the ACC award, Knowme plans to diversify her interdisciplinary research in natural resource conservation and hopes to assist the City of Arlington in the larger conversation on sustainable urban planning and environmental preservation. She acknowledges the award as a catalyst for networking and collaboration, which will provide further opportunities to work with a larger variety of stakeholders, establish alliances, and promote collaborative effort toward the creation of a sustainable future. She hopes to make a real impact on Arlington's physical landscape by promoting a culture of environmental stewardship among its citizens through research projects that prioritize the preservation of natural resources, the advancement of sustainable practices, and the improvement of urban green spaces. She wants to create a connection between academics and practice by actively participating in local communities, advocating sustainable policies, and sharing research findings.

ACC-UTA Endowment

For good.

Forever.

[Donate here.](#)



Question Corner John Darling

Q: Look, I'm an actual treehugger, and I can't decide if you're one, too, or just a cheap cynic hoping to be witty. Anyway, I can't find hard information on Arlington's tree loss. I have the strongest feeling that we're losing trees with no hope of planting enough to make up the loss. With our lot sizes and development standards I don't even see places for big trees to grow. And all this loss is happening while people everywhere acknowledge the many values of trees in cities. What do you know about this?

A: What a perfect opportunity for cheap cynicism, if only this situation weren't so important. And now the city's celebration of 25 years as a Tree City USA community makes skepticism almost irresistible. Our latest forester has left, but I doubt if he had the power to turn this around. I haven't learned how to get the numbers to see if the loss is as real as it feels. Ugly business. Next!



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The Page with No Name

Report from the field

Ivan Querido

He's back and won't stop scratching at the window. Our special field correspondent just can't seem to go away: Look, about ten years ago they planted a bunch of these exotic maple kinda things and I said, "Hey, what's wrong with native trees, huh?" So they said, "Do be quiet. Don't you see we're landscape architects, and we certainly know what we're doing. And besides, this lovely species completes the site's aesthetic palette with simply gorgeous fall foliage." That's how they talk. So now they're pulling them out and sticking in live oaks even though they already have 10,000 of them.



Getting Soft The Editor

For days a pair of Mourning doves hung around a bird bath in the yard, then I saw only one, standing near the site of a violent end. Sad, but creatures have to eat. Hoped it wasn't a cat now sporting dove breath. Day after day that solitary dove lingered. Right there. After the first week I couldn't stop painting the situation with human attributes despite being a recovering museum goon. Many dozens of Deaths for Science perch on my conscience. Why worry, after all? Doves have brains like small marbles and they're just as smooth. None of those nasty wrinkles that make us think complicated thoughts, feel joy, and mourn.

About 60 years ago, professors assured us that birds and almost all mammals reacted to stimuli in simple, straightforward ways that worked to increase survival and raise reproductive rates. Period. That's not so clear anymore, but the old view did make it easier to live with the easy way we thought about animals. We couldn't know then about modern evidence of animal complexities. Still, I really wish that Mourning (?) dove would beat it.

Stronger Together Carrie Donovan

September 7. Gorgeous day! With refreshing, cool temperatures, it was a relief from the scorching August heat. A dedicated group of UTA Super Service Saturday volunteers met at OS Gray Natural Area to tackle an important project: spreading much-needed mulch on the trails.

We were incredibly fortunate to have fifteen strong and energetic students from the Black Student Association. Their enthusiasm was infectious, and they kept the energy high with their own music as we worked. Together we shoveled and spread mulch, significantly improving the main trail and ensuring that park users can enjoy a pleasant stroll through nature.

A HUGE thank you to the BSA and all the UTA students for making this project a smashing success!

September 14. Hot, bright sun-drenched day! The weather took a turn, bringing back the heat with 90 degree temperatures. Despite the heat, nine dedicated Key Club students from Juan Seguin High School with their sponsors and four students from the local University Catholic Community rolled up their sleeves to tackle a different project: removing the non-native, invasive Chinese privet in Rosser's Meadow, clearing the area underneath the Eastern red cedar trees. Their effort was crucial for maintaining the health of the meadow and ensuring the trees receive the care they need.

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Members of the UTA Black Student Association at OS Gray on Super Service Saturday.

Stronger Together continued from page 14

Thanks to the Juan Seguin High School Key Club and the University Catholic Community for their hard work. Because of their dedication, this area is one step closer for the Tree Hugger Tree Service to do some tree work that our natural area badly needs.

Fun Fact: Eastern red cedar trees, a Texas Native, are also known as Pencil cedar.

Species: *Juniperus virginiana*

Large 30-50 ft. in height Eastern red cedar trees line the Rosser Meadow. These trees are notable because they can be seen from West Abram Street. Over 50 years, these cedars have provided habitat, shelter, and food for a diverse array of wildlife such as owls, hawks, songbirds, migrating mallard ducks, snakes, turtles, frogs, and a variety of insects, as well as shade for human explorers and volunteers.

Friends of O.S. Gray Natural Area goal: Open the areas beneath these huge Eastern red cedar trees so we can enhance the natural beauty of the meadow.

Fun Fact: Chinese Privet

Species: *Ligustrum sinense*

This plant is an invasive species known for its aggressive growth. It forms dense thickets that can



overtake city parks and natural areas. If not removed, this plant poses a significant threat to the health of our native flora such as our beloved Pecan trees, Cross Timber forests, and Little Bluestem grasses.

Friends of the OS Gray Natural Area goal: Remove privet in order to preserve the biodiversity of our natural areas.



This page: Members of the UTA Black Student Association load mulch for trails at OS Gray.

My Nature Notebook

What's for lunch?

The creepy old guy was out playing with his funny purple lights again so Stupid went to see if anything gross was happening. Mom said I had to go get him and the C.O.G. was saying hey look at this click beetle eating that moth!



They're only supposed to eat plants a little bit if they eat at all. Not like their babies, wireworms, that are big pests. Farmers hate them. I'm so bored even Stupid is starting to seem okay, but he won't leave the C.O.G. who just will not shut up about this. So he can't find anything about click beetles eating moths and I don't care. But it is kind of cool to watch. Was it already dead or did the beetle run up and pounce? So now we're going to go get click beetles and moths and put them in a jar and see if it gets gross. We're gonna be scientists!

Randol Mill Park Carol Marcotte

It feels like there isn't much going on in the park. Even so, good things are happening: We're pulling privet, and we worked in the Triangle Garden during our regular workday on Sept. 22.

Thanks to UTA, our biggest recent event was a great one. UTA Super Service Saturday on Sept. 7 was well attended. Engineering students volunteered their time for three hours. They mulched, built, and maintained trails. Arlington Parks & Rec supplied the mulch, wheelbarrows and tools, and the weather was perfect!!

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Below and right, UTA Engineering student volunteers at work on Super Service Saturday.



Randol Mill Park continued from page 15. Continued on page 17.

UTA Super Service Saturday volunteers made a difference on Sept. 7.



Recently noted park residents: Yellow-crowned night heron and Three-toed box turtle.



Randol Mill Park continued from page 16

It's not all trail mulching. The Arlington Police Department held K9 training here on Sept 12.



More park residents: Plain-bellied water snake and Yellow mud turtle.



In Case You Missed It Grace Darling

OH NOOOO!!! Your favorite candy bars, desserts and dipped fruit could be in danger due to climate change. Why? Chocolate supplies are dwindling. Last year, equatorial countries that account for two-thirds of the global cocoa supply saw record rainfall. The extreme weather patterns caused infections in cocoa trees that rotted the cocoa fruit. This shortfall set the stage for companies like Marquart's Planet A Foods, whose scientists have been working on a chocolate substitute for the past three years, tweaking the recipe "between 700 and 800 times," before arriving at what they call ChoViva, a chocolate alternative that discards the cocoa bean. The goal for ChoViva isn't to replace chocolate entirely but only in applications where it's merely an ingredient in a larger product. He cites candies like M&M's and Snickers bars or even cereal or ice cream with chocolate chunks. The company can produce ChoViva for the same price as chocolate, but with significantly lower emissions of planet-warming carbon dioxide, because the ingredients that go into ChoViva — mainly oats and sunflower seeds — don't need to be shipped long distance from just a few locations. A bonus benefit is that drawing on locally sourced oats and seeds — which grow basically anywhere that is not too hot or too humid — also means using significantly less water than what's



Infected cacao tree.

required to sustain cacao trees, Marquart says. [NPR's Morning Edition, Sept 12, 2024]



Ratcliffe-on-Soar power plant.

At the turn of the 20th Century, coal was used to generate over 95% of energy consumed in the UK. By 2023, that had fallen to just 1%. Just as the coal mines have closed, now **the UK's last coal-fired power station will cease production.**

September 30: The plant at Ratcliffe-on Soar, Nottinghamshire, that began generating electricity 57 years ago with a capacity of 2,000 megawatts, enough to power two million homes, will close as part of government plans to end coal production in the UK.

Coal is a fossil fuel and has been generating electricity in Britain since the Industrial Revolution, but it is now known for its impact on the environment. When coal burns, it releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and over time the build-up of those gases has increased global temperatures = climate change. The UK has pledged to reduce its GHG emissions to net-zero by 2050. To reach that target, the UK government aims to achieve fully "clean" electricity by 2035, by rapidly increasing wind, solar, and nuclear power.

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In Case You Missed It continued from page 18

The owner of the power station - international energy company Uniper - already has its Technology Centre at Ratcliffe-on-Soar, where it carries out research and development on power generation, and says it hopes the site could become a zero-carbon technology and energy hub in the future. [BBC News, July 1, 2024]



Something from the SLAC-Stanford Battery Center that's important to the story below.

Researchers at the **SLAC-Stanford Battery Center** reported that giving battery cells their maiden charge at unusually high currents increased their average lifespan by 50% while decreasing the initial charging time from 10 hours to just 20 minutes. This represents a major coup for both consumers and manufacturers, particularly in the electric-vehicle and grid storage space. It's known that factory-charging a new lithium-ion cell with high currents significantly depletes its lithium supply. As a result, maiden charging is performed at very low currents to avoid energy-storage capacity loss. The discovery here is that NOT doing so prolongs the battery's life. "Every time the battery goes through a charge-discharge cycle, some of the lithium is deactivated, and minimizing those lithium losses prolongs the battery's working lifetime. It's like making a small investment that yields good returns down the road," says the lead researcher. [Electronicdesign.com, Sept 9, 2024]

In 2022, a large Bitcoin mining operation was established at Constellation Energy's Wolf Hollow



Wolf Hollow power plant.

power plant in Hood County, Texas. The mine runs day and night. Nearly 23,000 fan-cooled computers are trying to crack the right algorithm and solve complex math problems to get just one Bitcoin, the globe's most well-known cryptocurrency. Residents blame the ongoing noise pollution for health issues, such as continuous ringing in the ears, hearing loss, dizziness and vertigo, that have popped up since the plant opened. One neighbor was diagnosed with permanent conductive hearing loss while a mother and teenage son had to receive cochlear implants. When they run their own unofficial sound tests, neighbors report decibels from 70 up to 103. Texas law states that noise exceeding a decibel level of 85 is presumed unreasonable, and residents link their health problems to the Bitcoin mine's arrival. Marathon Digital Holdings (aka MARA) acquired and started operating the Granbury Bitcoin mine in January. Amid the controversy and backlash, MARA did not address health concerns but released their plan "to enhance operations at the site, including deactivating a total of 95 air-cooled containers and converting 20% of the site, or 4,780 machines, to liquid immersion cooling." Current and future noise mitigation plans consist of having a sound wall, planting trees, and enhancing landscaping to serve as buffers. [It's Miserable. YouTube, Star-Telegram, June 25, 2024]

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In Case You Missed It continued from page 19



Chrysonotomyia susbelli.

A newly identified wasp species, *Chrysonotomyia susbelli*, has been discovered in Houston, Texas, marking the 18th [new species identified](#) by Rice University's Scott Egan and his research team since 2014. The discovery, the fourth wasp species found on the university grounds in seven years, reveals the hidden world of parasitoid wasps and the intricate ecosystems that thrive outside our doors.

C. susbelli is about 1 millimeter long and lives in galls (tumorlike growths) created by the gall wasp *Neuroterus bussae* found on southern live oak leaves. The galls serve as microhabitats within which larvae feed, develop and pupate.

Egan emphasized the importance of studying local biodiversity: "You don't have to travel to a distant rainforest to find new and beautiful things — you just have to step outside and look. Generations of *Chrysonotomyia susbelli* have likely lived unnoticed on the oaks of Rice University since its founding," he said.



Three Mile Island nuclear power plant.

Data centers drive the power economy, again. Nuclear energy operator Constellation Energy will reopen the Three Mile Island facility in Pennsylvania, the site of a 1979 partial nuclear meltdown, as part of a deal with Microsoft to power data centers. The 1979 partial meltdown was the worst in the history of U.S. commercial nuclear generation, and although it did not cause any deaths, it exacerbated public concerns around the safety of nuclear power, along with the much costlier and deadlier Chernobyl disaster in the Soviet Union seven years later. The agreement involves the plant's second reactor, which was unaffected by the 1979 accident and continued to operate for decades after until it was shuttered due to declining revenues in 2019. "Powering industries critical to our nation's global economic and technological competitiveness, including data centers, requires an abundance of energy that is carbon-free and reliable every hour of every day, and nuclear plants are the only energy sources that can consistently deliver on that promise," Constellation CEO Joe Dominguez said in a statement.

Social Media? Yup.

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



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

Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marian Hiler

A Prairie in the making

A change is a comin'. We've got more than a concept of a plan to overcome one of our main nemeses. Erosion.

Erosion has been a chronic issue on both the northern and southern borders of the wildscape. Rain washes down the sloped landscape to a creek that roughly bisects the wildscape. Tactics to slow the runoff problem in the northern woodland area proved to be mostly a Band-Aid at best. The culprit is the steep and essentially bare 4,000-square-foot-area just north of the wildscape up to the back of the amphitheater. With every rain, more silt than rain runs into the woodland area. Therefore, it made perfect sense for volunteer lead Ann Knudsen to focus on this area while seeking a better solution.

Ann, with the go-ahead from Arlington Parks & Rec (APRD) Park Operations Manager, Devin Steward, began research on establishing a grassy prairie in the offending spot. She contacted John Hart Asher, senior environmental designer, to discuss his methodology after watching his video [Transition to Urban Native Plant Pocket Prairie](#). In addition, she brought as key designer of the project local prairie expert John Snowden, who is very excited to participate.

The first phase is to spread eight inches of mulch over the prairie-to-be, leaving it there for a full year. That's a whole lotta chips! That kicked off on the convergence of volunteer events on Sept. 7: our First Saturday, UTA's Super Service Saturday, and Starbucks Community Event. With mulch provided

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The culvert and amphitheater rooftop runoff alone produce a large amount of fast moving water that is eroding the hillside into the wildscape. Ann Knudsen photo.

Wildscape Update continued from page 22

by APRD and ChipDrop, these hardworking souls made a dent in the large piles. Thanks also go to Juan Gonzales, APRD, who not only made wheelbarrows and rakes available to us, but also hauled mulch and Joe Martinez back and forth in his Gator.

Next year, after the heavy mulch has helped deter both warm and cool season weeds, we will begin preparing the soil for seeding and planting mainly forbs as the prairie morphs towards grass dominance and perennials.

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Above, Busy volunteers work on converting the large piles of mulch into an 8-inch carpet. Ann Knudsen photo. *Below*, UTA nursing students load wheelbarrows. Ann Knudsen photo. *Right*, John Snowden and Ann Knudsen discuss how to deal with the impact of rainwater rushing off the amphitheater roof. Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 23, continued on page 25



Above left, Other UTA students spread the mulch. Ann Knudsen photo. Right, Representing Starbucks, employees Nathan Bender and Jennifer Hiler pitch in to fill some wheelbarrows. Marian Hiler photo. Below, Members of UTA's student-led organization, Nursing Mentor Program. From left, front row, Ashton Robicheaux, Callilope Bradford, Christine Park. Back row, Ryan Clark, Matilda Nwanna, Chelsea Anoka, Kenny Ngyuen, Alvin Flores. Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 24, continued on page 26

Right, While others moved mulch, Josh Parkerson went for the heavy stuff, moving a lot of landscaping stones up and down hills to help with demarcating areas in the prairie. Ann Knudsen photo. *Center left*, Maintenance continues throughout the wildscape. Joe Martinez loads compost provided by the Veteran Parks Composters to spread on the berm in older sections. Marian Hiler photo. *Center right*, Patsy Miller trims vegetation that is pouring onto the sidewalk. Marian Hiler photo. *Bottom left*, Marylee Thomason and Cindy Underwood came back another workday for more mulching fun. Marian Hiler photo. *Bottom right*, At the end of the mulch festival, we consider it a success! Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 25

First Saturday mini-classes

At the Sept. 7 mini-class, Destiny Bundy brought her rescued opossum, Jupiter, along with her knowledge and experiences to tell us much about these interesting creatures. She works with a local veterinarian rescuing and rehabilitating opossums. Fun fact: Opossums are resistant to snake venom and may hold the key to developing antivenom for us lowly humans.

At the October 5 mini-class, Master Naturalist Carol Marcotte will report on the success of Eastern bluebird (*Sialia sialis*) nesting boxes she has been monitoring all year in the wildscape and other Arlington city parks.

Mini-classes are held in the compost area, and they begin about 11:30.

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Above Right, Destiny Bundy relates many interesting facts about opossums. Note, This opossum, Jupiter, has health issues that prevent his release back into the wild. Marian Hiler photo. *Below*, Destiny lets the very interested class get a closer look at Jupiter. Ann Knudsen photo.



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

Wildscape Update continued from page 26

Right, Pavonia, Mealy blue sage, and Frogfruit at the triple kiosk. Marian Hiler photo. Below, After a long wait, here is one of the signs that was recently replaced. Marian Hiler photo.



Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve Annabelle Corboy

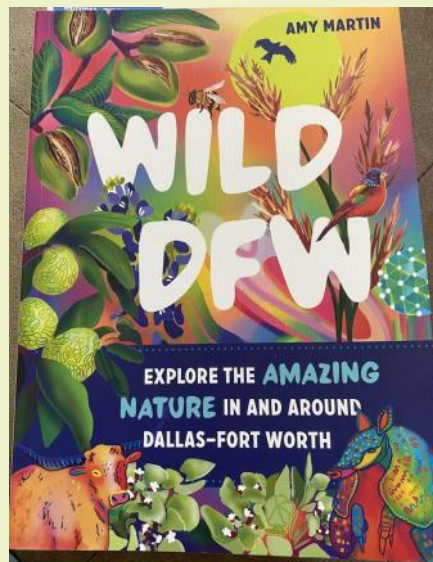
Coming Up

A Wild DFW Hike with Amy Martin

Saturday, October 5, 10 am

We'll re-create the adventure chapter on Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve from [*Wild DFW: Explore the Amazing Nature Around Dallas-Fort Worth*](#) with members of Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve. You've read about Eastern Cross Timbers in *Wild DFW*, now experience the finest remnant of it in North Texas. The geology chapter of *Wild DFW* talks extensively about how our tilted layers of bedrock shape the landscape. Now walk that as you explore a cuesta formed by erosion-resistant sandstone.

A journalist and writer for over 40 years, Amy Martin is the author of *Wild DFW* and *Itchy Business: How to Treat the Poison Ivy and Poison Oak Rash, Prevent Exposure and Eradicate the Plant* ([Itchy.biz](https://itchy.biz)). She is currently senior features writer for Green Source DFW (GreenSourceDFW.org). Her current project is Ned Fritz Legacy (NedFritz.com), a biographical website devoted to Ned Fritz, one of our area's most influential environmentalists. For twelve years, she managed wildlife habitat rehabilitation on a private nature preserve in Northeast Texas, including converting fifteen acres of pasture into tallgrass prairie. Find her writings at <https://moonlady.com/>.



We might post some observations to iNaturalist as Amy points out some of the places and species that she encountered during the walk that she wrote about for the book.

Coming Up

3rd Saturday Volunteer Day

Saturday Oct. 19, 9 am – noon

The Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve schedule a once-a-month volunteer day on the **third Saturday of the month**. We tackle a wide variety of needs for the preserve. These include brush clearing, seeding, trail maintenance, transplanting and trash pickup. Volunteers get to learn in depth about the preserve and its goals while contributing to sustaining and improving this treasured ecosystem.

Bring gloves, appropriate apparel and suntan lotion/bug repellent as needed. Meet in the parking lot.

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Review: A Muggy, Mindful Morning, August 24

Michael Smith

Mindfulness walks can be good, even on a muggy morning like we had on August 24th. I got to the preserve at 7:40am and the Weather Underground said it was a warm 80 degrees and a very muggy 78% relative humidity. And so I was grateful for anyone who arrived for the walk, focused on mindfulness and nature journaling. A little after 8:00, Sam, Annabelle, and I headed up to the boulder trail, noticing where the heat and drought were evident.

The NOAA [Texas drought map](#) shows that we are currently in moderate drought, even after a wet spring. This morning there were big cracks in the soil and many smaller plants were looking wilted. The oaks looked fine, with roots digging down into the sandstone where there is still some moisture.

One of the defining features of mindfulness is non-judgmental awareness. I read a short passage from Mark Coleman's book, [Awake in the Wild](#), regarding a reason for remaining non-judgmental when there is noise in a natural location where we don't want human-generated noise. He talks about how our attention and reactivity to something we don't like can keep us focused on the very thing we do not want to focus on. "I wish there were no traffic noise" can make us pay attention to it that much more. When we accept all of

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Looking up the Boulder Trail. Michael Smith photo.

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A Muggy, Mindful Morning

our experience without trying to push any of it away, we are freer to notice the good things around us.

In [*Mindfulness in Texas Nature*](#), I wrote about how, in a visit to Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve, the nearby traffic noise was a little challenging for me. But if you can let it go, it really fades into the background.

There was some beautiful bird song (Annabelle later identified one of the species as white-eyed vireo) and some morning shade to sit in, and we spent some time sitting or walking around the boulder trail. Then there was some time for journaling.

Writing or drawing in a nature journal is not quite the same as mindfulness in nature. When journaling, our attention is directed toward coming up with words or creating images on the page that reflect what we have experienced, and that can be a very valuable practice. I mentioned that in addition to creating a record of what is around us, a nature journal might include the part we play - how we perceive and react to our surroundings. Our reactions may involve recollections, grief over losses of species or worries about climate change, and other thoughts or emotions including joy and thankfulness.

It was a good time to recall the [*Thanksgiving Address*](#), an invocation spoken by people of the Iroquois Confederacy. Many of us first discovered it in Robin Wall Kimmerer's book, [*Braiding Sweetgrass*](#). I read the first two parts of the address that point out that "we have been given the duty and responsibility to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things" and "we are all thankful to our Mother, the Earth, for she gives us all that we need for life." The address includes gratitude for the waters, the plants and animals, the four winds, the sun, grandmother moon, and other things.

And so, placed in that frame of reference toward everything around us, we spent the remaining few minutes writing in journals or considering what we might write, given more time. We had run a little past the allotted time, though the time seemed short.

This is a regularly scheduled activity at the preserve, so if you would like to join us next month, we would love to have you!



Last season's golden asters, embraced by a climbing tendril. Michael Smith photo.

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Super Service Saturday with UTA Volunteers on Sept. 7

Laying down mulch in the Pollinator Meadow was the order of the day (morning). Arlington Parks and Recreation Department (APRD) delivered mulch to the preserve the day before, and Jan Miller and Jim Frisinger welcomed the UTA volunteers, explaining what was needed plus giving them an overview of the preserve and its features. Brent Allison/APRD was there early with a trailer of equipment, including wheelbarrows, shovels, gloves, and encouragement. Brent even joined the UTA volunteers with mulch duty. It was tough, hard work, but the crew of 6 did a terrific job. We got ~60% of the Pollinator Meadow trail well mulched. The rest of the mulch awaits another group of volunteers, maybe on a cooler morning.

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Above, Lots of mulch to work with. Below, Our hard-working crew from UTA at the end of the morning. Jan Miller photos.



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SCNP iNaturalist Observations and Species August 2024

All counts were amazing for a hot, dry August, and there were even more observers than in July! Thanks to everyone for contributing to increase understanding of biodiversity at SCNP:

Total August Observations: 299, Species, 153, Observers, 29.

Total July Observations: 1034, Species, 403, Observers, 24.

Total June Observations: 183, Species, 128, Observers, 10.

Total Observations: 21,235; Species count at SCNP is now 1972!



Above, Western Soapberry (*Sapindus drummondii*) - charley, Anglepod (*Gonolobus suberosus*) - llongorio, Rusty Blackhaw (*Viburnum rufidulum*) - llongorio

Below, Little Blue Heron (*Egretta caerulea*) - asaavedra, Blue Dasher (*Pachydiplax longipennis*) - sam_dragon-moore, Spotted Sandpiper (*Actitis macularius*) - charley



Blackland Prairie Preserve Guy Random

*Early September.
You could fry fresh Liatris
On the sidewalk now.
Dry, baked, parched, broiled.
But don't tell the late bloomers.
They're all gladly green.*



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

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Our October Zoom Meeting



See page 5 for more on this presentation.