

**ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL**

POST OAK

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FEBRUARY 2025**

JOHNSON CREEK JUST SOUTHEAST OF UTA • GUY RANDOM PHOTO

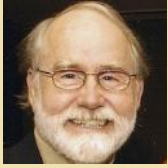
February Zoom Meeting



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**



Surviving the environment under Trump 2.0

How to survive Trump's second term is a topic I never wanted to address. We know that Trump cares little about the environment unless it impacts him personally or how other people perceive him. His actions are very predictable as long as you don't believe what he says but analyze what he does. His environmental message has been that he will immediately reverse President Biden's oil and gas policies with "Drill Baby Drill."

People use almost seven billion tons of coal every year and roughly 100 million barrels of oil and other liquid fuels every day.¹ While the Biden administration published many climate change messages that pleased environmentalists, the United States continued to be the world's largest producer of oil and natural gas for the last six years with Texas production at a record high. Despite spotty world efforts, staying below the 1.5 degrees Celsius to stop climate change seems unattainable.²

How can environmentalists not be depressed with people bickering rather than coming together to save our planet? One way is to understand that most of the rancor and rhetoric has limited impact on climate change. Climate change will continue to produce more extreme and costly events such as the California wildfires, super hurricanes, and worldwide sea level rise that cause costly cleanups and human suffering, especially by the poor and powerless.

Environmentalists' love of nature provides a major advantage in warding off depression from divisive political talk. Most ACC members spend many volunteer hours immersed in nature, which is scientifically proven one of the best ways to reduce or even prevent depression. Being surrounded by songbirds that environmentalists protect and butterflies our pollinator gardens nourish makes us proud of all we do to help our yards, neighborhoods, and natural areas be climate change solutions rather than the problem.

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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Deadline for submissions is the
15th of every preceding month.
Please send them to
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From the President continued from page 3

That pride comes regardless of the toxic and hate-filled political yammering constantly broadcast over television and social media. Environmentalists also educate the younger generations so they understand that the powerful principles of nature — biodiversity, adaptation, interdependence — are key to our lives and actions.

My message this month is to not let political infighting slow our work to overcome human actions that threaten the wonders and beauty provided humans over millions of years. Immerse yourself in the healing powers of the nature that surrounds, and you will be rewarded with a life more uplifting under Trump 2.0.

Future reading

1: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/04/18/climate/climate-change-future-kids.html?smid=nytcore-android-share>

2: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/01/09/climate/2024-heat-record-climate-goal.html?smid=nytcore-android-share>

Note: Again this month Dick asked Chat CPT to make a picture for his message, and here is the result. This is GPT's second try. After the first attempt, he requested ethnic diversity, so it came up with this image. This is not the experience in nature many of us think of, more like an over-populated garden imagined by someone who has never seen a garden. What do you think?



Our February Program

Prairie Seekers Training: Learning in Naure's Classroom **Wednesday, Feb. 5, 7 pm**

Join ACC as Texas Master Naturalist Kate Morgan details the evolution of the Prairie Seekers from a survey-driven exercise to immersive learning. She will describe the tools and methods the program leverages, plus offer a glimpse of the future.

Prairie Seekers is citizen science. It trains volunteers to assess prairie conditions and helps the Native Prairies Association of Texas (NPAT) identify conservation priorities. The program provides field training in the ecology, biology, heritage, and potential future of North Texas prairies. It explores prairie remnants, large preserves, ranch lands, and city parks learning to value and protect this irreplaceable landscape.

Kate Morgan is a retired experimental physicist, a sixth-generation Texan, and president of the NPAT Fort Worth Chapter. She volunteers primarily for NPAT and in the Fort Worth Nature Center greenhouse. She and her husband own a ranch in Wise County where they recently started a project to return 12 acres of Coastal Bermuda hayfield to native prairie.



Blackland Prairie Preserve, December, 2024. Guy Random photo.

It's Dues Time. Guilty? Look on the Back Page.



Bits & Pieces

The Terse Treehugger



Finally, a sign that somebody is recycling used tires. One of the biggest things around for which there is no good reuse.

It's gonna take a lot more than this.

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

Doomed? Part One



Why is recycling so hard? I'm starting to understand. The family with this chronically bad bin lives in a different world. That's really it. If the kids aren't bringing the notion home from school, it's just not a thing.



Eve's necklace.

Doomed? Part Two



Is this the answer? Last week this yellow tag said, "No Trash. This is a recycled bin." So, less contamination, but also more recyclables wasted in the trash. Maybe we need a big happy recycling label with simplified graphics to go with this sad label.

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



ACC Trees

Someone Else's Heritage Trees

From Grace Darling: The Post Oak editor seemed out of sorts . . . what was bothering him, I asked. Turns out he's irritated by the lack of entries for the Heritage Tree feature of the newsletter, which he's had to write himself the last couple of issues. "No problem," I said, and — being a researcher by trade and history buff by inclination but also a cold-weather-averse weenie — I came up with the following national champion Texas oak (*Quercus buckleyi*) from Tarrant County, courtesy of A&M's Texas Big Tree Registry site.

Phooey. Doesn't count, of course. Not Arlington, and you just looked it up. Next month I'll ask again, no one will contribute again, and I'll shut it down with a nice baobab. I stopped the Hall of Shame, and I'll do it again.



For details, go to <https://texasforestinfo.tamu.edu/BigTreeRegistry/Lists> and prepare to be amazed. But if you can do better, don't be shy and let's see it.

Question Corner John Darling

Q: Hey, look at this beauty! My kids are calling it uncooked pizza, and they want to eat it, but it's hard as a rock. What do you know about this thing?

A: Look, the whole editorial staff is sick as a pack of mangy dogs, and we almost don't care this month. That's why the photo is so big — less writing, see? But okay and just for old time's sake: Looks like *Ganoderma*, a wood-rotting fungus. Did we have this last month? I'm too sick to care. But here's ONE BIG THING: Quit making mulch volcanoes. And there's more simple stuff [right here](#).



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Passionflower vine after Gulf fritillary invasion.

GOOD WORK. ON TIME.

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On a
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The Page with No Name

Report from the field

Ivan Querido

Again? Our special field correspondent is haranguing the Post Oak day shift in the staff breakroom. And look, he's sick, too. All those colorful fluids dribbling, oozing, streaming from orifices I don't want to know about. Call Security! Roll him in an old carpet and stuff him in the dumpster. I've had it. I don't care whose nephew he is. Bruno, get yer big ugly mitts off me! All you fat cats can just shut up and listen to this Dream City stupidity: No more leaf dropoff. Republic couldn't keep up, and (gasp!) neighbors complained. But now we have ENHANCED curbside for leaves. Twelve bags max at one time and — wait for it — they won't be recycled! But there's hope: "Residents are encouraged to mow their leaves, which helps to fertilize lawns or mulch them for compost." Sure, so many Arlington eco-warriors are already all over that. Thanks, COA.



Young Sparrows at The Water Basins

By [John I. Blair](#)

On our rustic deck
Fronting a flowerpot phalanx
Two big plastic basins
Are kept abrim with clear water,
Freshened every night
So birds and squirrels
Will not go thirsty
These scorching summer days.

This morning
Looking from the kitchen window
I watched while four young sparrows
Just barely capable of flight
Danced along the rim of one,
Chirping cheekily to no one in particular
And, from time to time,
Dipping down to drink.

How easy it can be
To make the world a better place,
At least when acting one on one,
Or in this case one on four.
I don't seek praise;
It's not a race. But on a scale
Of one to ten, I think
This vision rated very high.

©2012 John I. Blair

Liveable Arlington

French energy giant TotalEnergies has applied to create a brand new drill site named Maverick, right next to their AC360 site in East Arlington with 10 new gas wells for starters. The site is close to an award-winning early childhood learning center and to Thornton, Johns and Adams Elementary schools.

The Arlington City Council voted unanimously to give initial approval for that new fracking site.

Two more hearings and votes will follow February 25. Join us and let them know there is strong community opposition.

Next Steps for February 25. Your help is urgently needed.

We are grateful to the hundreds who sent letters to the Council asking for this permit to be denied, and to those who showed up to lend their voices to the cause. The Council better plan on another fierce fight later this month when this permit comes up for two final votes **February 25**. Our campaigns have defeated permits to expand the adjacent AC360 site twice before. Please join us in taking these steps to continue the resistance.

Please sign [our petition](#) (if you haven't already done so) and share it with Arlington family and friends.

Send an email to Mayor Ross and the City Council to express your disappointment at their vote, and to renew our call for a NO vote at the next hearing. We have a how-to guide and talking points in our [Action Toolkit](#).



Watch Faces of Fracking and learn much more here:

<https://www.liveablearlington.org/>

We will host an **Open House on February 25** in the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation Board Room of the Hawkes Downtown Library (next door to council chambers) from 4:30-6:20 PM. Stop by to meet other concerned residents and draft your testimony. Light refreshments will be provided.

Please [confirm your attendance by clicking here](#).

Stay connected with our campaign via the [Take Action Page](#) on our website and our [Facebook Event Page](#).

Randol Mill Park Carol Marcotte

Randol Mill Park has acres of popular green space. At least once a year the area is mowed. This year, mowing maps have been drawn and given to the Parks Department for desired mowing heights and timing. Park staff took the time to visually inspect the area with Dick Schoech and Carol Marcotte. Mowing will begin the week of January 19.

Goats! Here's the latest from a [city web page](#): The City of Arlington has contracted with Open Space Development, a Lewisville, TX-based land and park development firm, to clear acres of thick underbrush using a professionally managed goat herd, beginning on Monday, January 6 in the area north of Randol Mill Park in Arlington. More than 400 goats will be released on a mission to clear invasive species, free waterways, and reduce fire danger through an environmentally friendly method without the use of heavy equipment, harsh chemicals, or costly crews.

The process will last about 10 days in the City of Arlington's Randol Mill Park located at 1901 W. Randol Mill Road in North Arlington. The goats will then move to Crystal Canyon Natural Area later this month. This is the second time the city will be utilizing goats to clear vegetation as a part of a grant-funded project. Parts of Crystal Canyon Natural Area will be closed to the public during the process.

"Bringing in goats is an unconventional method but that is what we liked about it," James Orloski, Director of Parks and Recreation of the City of Arlington. "The goats are an excellent solution to clearing land in a natural preserve within the city."

The goats are being used to eradicate the invasive privet that is taking over the area. They are uniquely suited to this because they eat the plant leaves, stressing the plants and rendering them unable to grow through photosynthesis. The goats will have to be used over several seasons to fully kill off the invasive plants.

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Above, goats at work in Crystal Canyon Natural Area. Dick Schoech photo. Below, unrelated goats in the shadow of I-30, eastern Fort Worth. Grace Darling photo.



Randol Mill Park continued from page 12

Based on Open Space Development's work, a typical herd of 100 goats can generally clear a moderately vegetated acre in three days. The herd clears by "mob grazing." Goats have voracious appetites, and when a herd is professionally managed, it can clear an immense amount of vegetation in a short time.

An onsite manager tends to the perimeter fencing and uses herding dogs to direct and protect the goats. These herds are professionally and humanely managed by a dedicated team.



Privet pull Sara Barnes and Ann Serrano, both Cross Timbers Chapter Master Naturalists cut privet during December.

Volunteer recap In 2024, an average of 13 volunteers reported 1,659 hours. Many more park visitors volunteer without reporting their hours. The work included:

- erosion control
- litter pick up in the park, pond & creek
- gardening maintenance, planting & mulching
- monitoring bluebird nest boxes
- removing privet & other invasives
- trail building, mulching, maintenance

Thank you to EVERYONE who gives back to the park.



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Joanne Stewart, RMP pioneer, reflects on ACC

We're thinking about Joanne, especially right now, because she's recovering from a broken leg. Here's a little of what Carol Marcotte says about one of her favorite people: Joanne, a former Realtor, is one of the original area homeowners, and she started Neighbors of Randol Mill Park (NORMP). Joanne was active in many groups, including ACC. Over the years she has delegated some park activities to other community members, but Joanne still publishes a weekly e-newsletter.

Don't forget, she loves cards, so send one for her to PureHealth Transitional Care, Room 20, 800 W. Randol Mill Rd, 6th Floor, Arlington, TX 76012

Recently, Joanne reminisced about her experiences with ACC. Listen [HERE](#).



Randol Mill Park continued from page 13

Bluebird nest boxes January is the month to start maintenance of the 14 bluebird nest boxes. Dick Schoech, Jamie Brunner, Amy and Charles Richards, and Carol Marcotte painted nest boxes. We have a nest with 3 eggs already!

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RMP Miscellany *Left*, Redbud Trail in December. *Right*, the last standing Cowpen daisy.



Randol Mill Park continued from page 14

Trail maintenance Sara Barnes, Ann Serrano and Carol Marcotte were on board to mulch and build trails in the Natural Area. Visitors continue to tell us how much the mulched and maintained trails improve their park experience.



Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marian Hiler

Year-end holidays and extra-wintry periods resulted in fewer workdays since November. In between the yucky weather were lovely, sunny days volunteers enjoyed working and planting in the ongoing prairie installation on the northside. Our renowned prairie consultant John Snowden has been rescuing prairie grasses and forbs from yet another prairie doomed to be “developed” in Mansfield. John gave us guidance on which prairie spots provided enough daily sun for the plants to thrive. So far, we have planted Big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), Eastern gamagrass (*Tripsacum dactyloides*) and Florida paspalum (*Paspalum floridanum*) grasses. In addition, we planted some of the biggest Liatris (*Liatris mucronata*) corms I’ve ever seen. He will be rescuing more as weather and availability allow. John recommended harvesting shade-tolerant Inland seaoats and Canada wild rye seeds from our woodland area to scatter underneath the Post oaks on the western edge of the prairie. While volunteers were at it, they spent some time cutting back Common cats-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*) basal rosettes that have started popping up. Though it has a sweet-sounding name, it is an extremely aggressive weed that can take over if unchecked.

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John Snowden gives guidance on planting native grasses. Marian Hiler photo.



John Snowden with another truckload of rescued native grasses. Jim Domke photo.



Joe Martinez plants a Big bluestem. Marian Hiler photo.

Wildscape Update continued from page 16, continued on page 18



Above left, Melanie Harris' son Ezra is an enthusiastic volunteer. Dana Austin photo. Right, Diane Taylor adds another liatris in the prairie. Ann Knudsen photo. Below, Jim Domke, Marylee Thomason, Cindy Underwood, Rick Vividor, Carol Marcotte, and Joe Martinez plant Florida Paspalum along the downhill culvert drainage. Ann Knudsen photo.



Wildscape Update

continued from page 17, continued on page 19



Above, Volunteers plant grasses all across the prairie site. Ann Knudsen photo. Below left, Cindy Underwood and Ann Knudsen cut the invasive Common cats-ears at its rosette crown. Marian Hiler photo. Right, Common cats-ears or flatweed looks similar to dandelion.



Wildscape Update continued from page 18

The first Saturday of **December** was a very cold and rainy day so no gathering at the wildscape. Instead, we all met at Pantego Café for a lesson on composting. UTA Campus Composter John Darling talked about “Compost Considerations” covering topics home composters would find useful.

- The ideal carbon to nitrogen ratio for composting is 30:1 by weight, not volume. This ratio is often misunderstood, as 30 pounds of dry leaves occupy much more space than 30 pounds of wet organic matter like watermelon or coffee grounds.
- Fungal compost versus bacterial compost. Both are important. A hot compost pile is dominated by bacteria. Bacteria come in first and fast, going for easy stuff like sugars and proteins. That's one reason high-in-protein materials such as coffee grounds and green grass are popular. Fungi come in later. Fungi work at cooler temperatures and take longer. Fungal compost is similar to a woodland floor, which is dominated by fungi.

- White stringy filaments in your hot compost pile are actinomycetes, a type of bacteria that are crucial for breaking down tough organic materials like pine needles and twigs.

At the **January 4** mini-class Master Naturalist Brent Franklin discussed "Bioblitzes and Why They are Important". Bioblitzes are intensive periods of biological surveying to record all living species within a designated area. Brent talked about several he has participated in, primarily in data-sparse areas of Texas. Not surprisingly, the data gathered is beneficial, sometimes even aiding in protecting the area surveyed. He took part in the 2017 bioblitz conducted in Rockwall that helped argue for the land's preservation as Pettinger Nature Preserve.

At the **February 1** mini-class, APRD arborist Montana Williams will tell us about Arlington Parks & Recreation Volunteer Program, what opportunities are available and what was accomplished by volunteers last year.

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John Darling shows the group what actinomycetes look like. Marian Hiler photo.



Brent Franklin gives several examples why bioblitzes are beneficial. Marian Hiler photo.

Wildscape Update continued from page 19, continued on page 21

Mini-classes are held in the compost area and begin about 11:30 as the workday volunteers put away the day's tools.

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Above and lower right, Dark blue berries of the Rusty blackhaw viburnum. Ann Knudsen photo.



Above, New Rusty blackhaw viburnum leaves sprouting. Ann Knudsen photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 20, continued on page 22



Left, How the Flameleaf Sumac got its name. Ann Knudsen photo.

Below, Bluebonnets begin to emerge for their spring show. 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 21, continued on page 23



Above and below, Coralberry loaded with its signature bright purplish pink berries. Dana Austin photo.



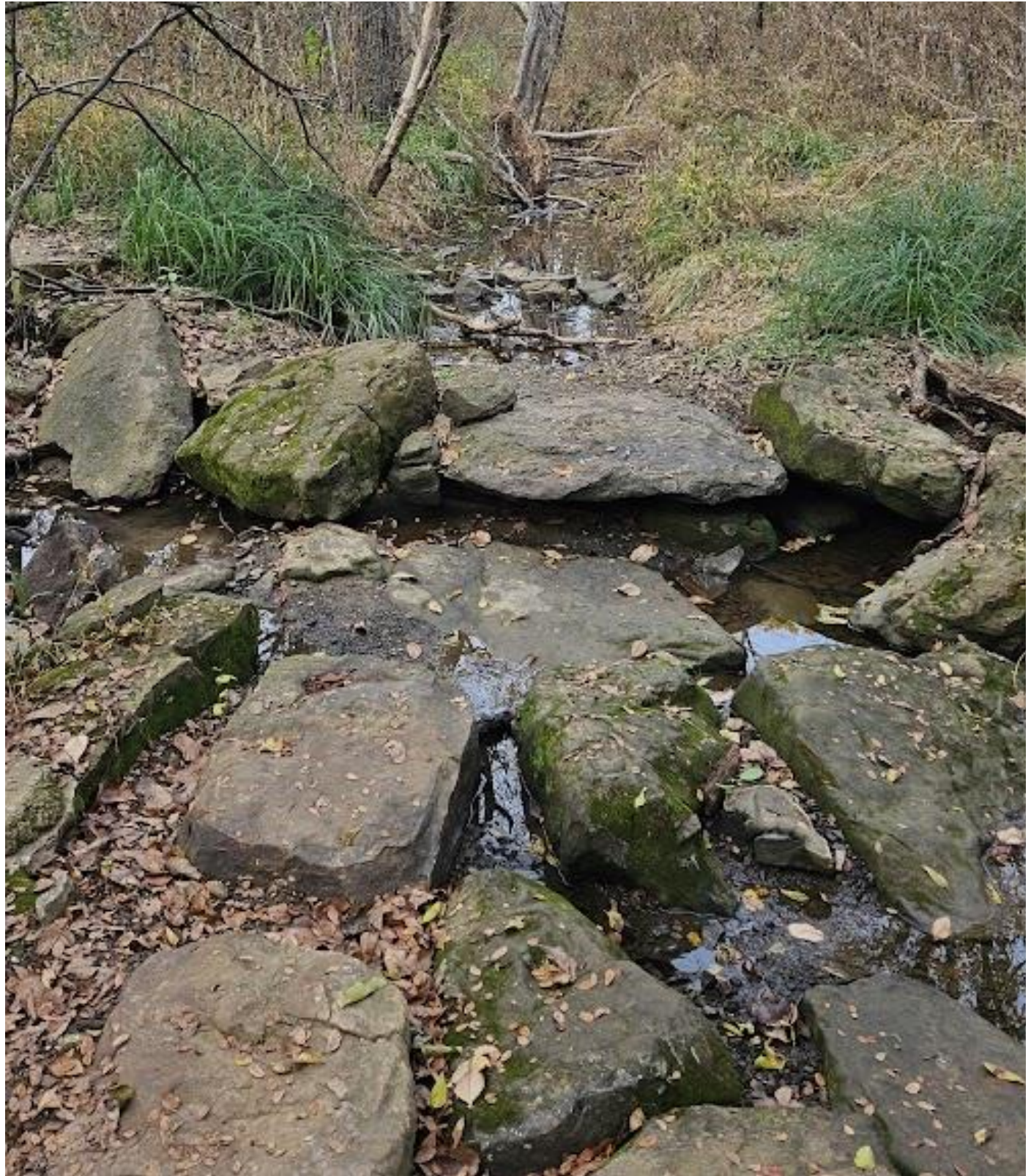
Wildscape Update continued from page 22, continued on page 24

One of several benches that recently replaced benches needing repair. Ann Knudsen photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 23

Northward view from the stone bridge. Ann Knudsen photo.



Social Media? Yup.

**Be sure to visit
ACC's Facebook page
(851 followers)
and
Arlington Conservation Council
Discussion Group
(141 members)**



What do you want to talk about today?

Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve Annabelle Corboy

Coming Up

Winter Tree ID Walk with Suzanne Tuttle

Sunday, Feb. 2

Want to learn to identify a tree or shrub in winter when there are no leaves to help? Join us for this walk as we get to know woody plants of the Eastern Cross Timbers by their growth habits, bark, twigs, buds and leaf scars.

This always-popular event is provided by Suzanne Tuttle, plant ecologist and retired manager of Fort Worth Nature Center & Refuge. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Fort Worth Chapter of the Native Prairies Association of Texas.

Free, but pre-registration is limited to 20. Please register by emailing events@friendsofscnp.org.



Coming Up

Great Backyard Bird Count

Saturday, Feb. 15, 8 am

The Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve is hosting its 18th Great Backyard Bird Count. Come join us as we gather at 8 am in the parking lot and fan out in small groups for the two-hour count. Bring binoculars, appropriate clothing, and be sure to download and use the Merlin birdsong identification app. It will help!

Checklists submitted help researchers at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the National Audubon Society and Birds Canada learn more about how birds are doing, and how to protect them and the environment we share. Last year over 642,000 citizen scientists worldwide submitted their bird observations online, recording 7,920 different species.

At the preserve last year, 176 birds across 34 species were identified on a cold windy day. But while it kept some birds on the ground, others were out in force. An osprey appeared! (*photo above*) The first ever for the count. The final tally was **176 birds counted**, representing **34 different species**. This is about average over the past 17 years of GBBC counts at SCNP.

All skill levels welcome. We all learn by birdwatching with others.



Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 26

Halberd-leaf rosemallow (*Hibiscus laevis*)

This iNaturalist map from 2024 shows the distribution of Halberd-leaf rosemallow plants at the preserve. The Middle Pond is at the top and the outlet trench winds until reaching the South Pond at the map's bottom. The spit of land created by the scour deposits is visible in the South Pond immediately opposite the end of the trench. Loss of the pond threatens the rosemallows, which require moist conditions to grow. Its seeds are eaten by waterfowl.



2024 Year-in-Review: Volunteers at Work!

Jim Frisinger and Rudy Arnold

Two of our Friends lead most of the volunteer efforts at SCNP. Jim Frisinger organizes the 3rd Saturday volunteer days and restoration activities, and Rudy Arnold manages the trails, working on them at least once a week and overseeing the trail-related projects, such as the Three Bridges Project.

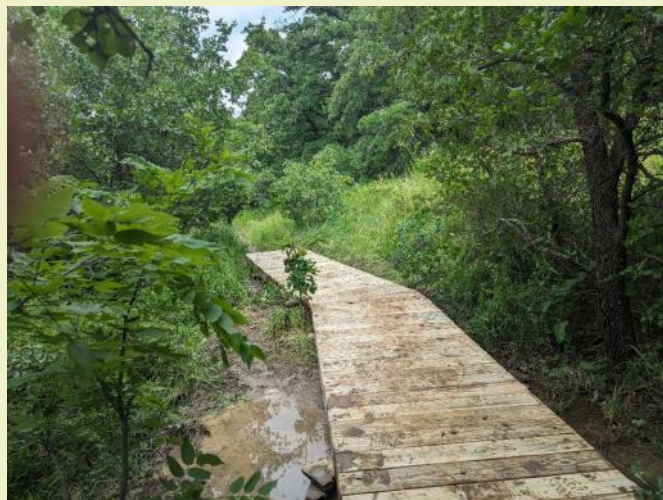
Three Bridges Project:

South-Point Constructors did a marvelous job building three trail bridges last spring. Their volunteers, working with the Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve, built them during a rainy day. Your donations to the Friends paid for the lumber and decomposed granite.

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Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 27

Three Bridges Project



Left, The wonderful bridge crew from South Point Constructors. Annabelle Corboy photo. *Right*, One of our wonderful new bridges. Jim Domke photo

The Pollinator Meadow

- The Pollinator Meadow near the parking lot is gradually improving, but in subtle ways:
- Repeated pulling of Eurasian/ African invasive species bastard cabbage (*Rapistrum rugosum*) through the years has virtually eliminated it from the meadow.
- Continuing efforts to remove non-native johnsongrass, which has been a constant problem since the meadow was created, are 90 percent complete. One more year should do it!
- A few days of laying mulch on the loop trail are making it look good.
- Three colonies of green antelopehorn milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*) bloomed again this past year, showing they have become well-established since planting.

An enormous quantity of gathered native seed has been planted this past year. John Snowden laid out a number of “Snowden Strips” – 3-foot-long mounds of rescued seed-infused soil from a Burleson prairie.



Volunteers seeding the meadow. Jim Domke photo.

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Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 28

Amphitheater and Trails

- The planter in the amphitheater, long neglected, got a restoration makeover in December thanks to Third Saturday volunteers. We'll watch for success this spring! They also cleared a nearby pocket meadow. Watch that space.
- Two social trails near the parking lot have successfully been blocked off and re-vegetated – including one that led down to the amphitheater and eroded badly.

Removal of invasive privet from the Blue Trail leading down Kennedale Mountain to the North Prairie continued and should be completed this winter and spring.

North Prairie

More than a dozen restoration test plots in the North Prairie, marked by stakes, did well. They were created to outcompete invasive King Ranch bluestem and test competing techniques. (Cardboard solarization was the champ!). Native grasses, Maximilian sunflower, Gayfeather and Cowpen daisy are among many species that are taking hold in the plots. More Snowden strips were set out here, too, and native seeds planted by volunteers in them. *Right*, a test plot in the North Prairie. Jim Frisinger photo.

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One of the restoration test plots in the North Prairie. Jom Frisinger photo.



Gathered native seeds are spread in the planter next to the South Pond by volunteers Dec. 21. By spring, we hope the seed infusion will bring the long-neglected planter back to life as a showpiece. Jim Frisinger photo.



Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 29

Mowing

A mowing map for the preserve — which never had one — is nearing completion. We are working with the city to implement guidelines for mowing contractors that enhance and don't damage the wildscape we are carefully nurturing.

and More

Innumerable projects are done by volunteers: Litter gets picked up by the faithful Gary Swan (and his equally faithful dog Jax). Occasional volunteer groups help tackle bigger tasks. Friends' volunteers lead and plan public walks and events, write newsletters and social media posts, prepare monthly reports or attend meetings to advocate for SCNP. We're grateful for the volunteers who appreciate SCNP and work to preserve its natural state. Thank you all!

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Right above, The base of these frostweeds (*Verbesina virginica*) burst into icy "blooms" on the North Prairie on Jan. 6. Just the right conditions, including a hard freeze, force moisture out of the base of the stalk into crystal formations. Jim Frisinger photo. *Below,* Volunteer Rudy Arnold uses a McLeod trail tool as he leads a crew rehabilitating the Blue Trail off Kennedale Mountain during the Third Saturday Volunteer Event on Dec. 21.



Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 30

Middle Pond dam fails Jim Frisinger

The Middle Pond dam failed sometime this fall, draining a valuable wetland in the Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve. The breach further scoured the drainage channel to the South Pond and deposited silt in a peninsula now several feet high.

Natural Resources Conservation Service engineer and dam expert Mikela Johnson joined soil conservationist Benjamin Harrison for a site visit Dec. 3 to assess the situation. The hydraulic function of the pond, a “plunge pool” for the adjacent spillway, remains effective to slow rushing water during storm events, lessening its erosive power. Second, the silt deposited as a peninsula has a benign ecological impact on the South Pond. The NRCS has adopted a “let nature be nature” philosophy of sustainability, to let water find its natural course.

Several options are on the table. Doing nothing threatens a wetland that is documented to host Great blue, Little blue and Green herons. iNaturalist posts show it is the only place Halberd-leaf rosemallow exists in the preserve. A black willow, a keystone species, has already died. A middle ground would restore the dam but leave the South Pond “peninsula” intact. A more robust alternative — fully restoring the South Pond — would require a more massive presence of heavy equipment, with damage to the environment. Arlington Parks & Recreation Department will make the final decision.

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A debris field in the South Pond, a result of drainage scour from the Middle Pond, has created a new peninsula. Jim Frisinger photo.



Jan Miller (*left*), of the Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve, discusses the dam failure's impact with NRCS engineer Mikela Johnson (*center*) and Benjamin Harrison. Jim Frisinger photo.



NRCS soil conservationist Benjamin Harrison stands at the barren bottom of the Middle Pond, normally about six feet deep there. Jim Frisinger photo.



Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 31

2024 Review of a Year of Nature at SCNP Annabelle Corboy

Using iNaturalist's "Year in Review 2024" (<https://www.inaturalist.org/stats/2024>) as inspiration, we've taken a look at what happened at SCNP during 2024, as seen through iNaturalist Observations. To see all the 2024 Observations at the preserve, click [here](#). We now have Observations for 2003 species at SCNP up from 1655 at the end of 2023, with 5 new species added in December.

continued on page 33

4,442
OBSERVATIONS

1,063
SPECIES



517
IDENTIFIERS



126
OBSERVERS



First observation of 2024 - made by charley on January 1.

[Eastern Redcedar](#)
([Juniperus virginiana](#))

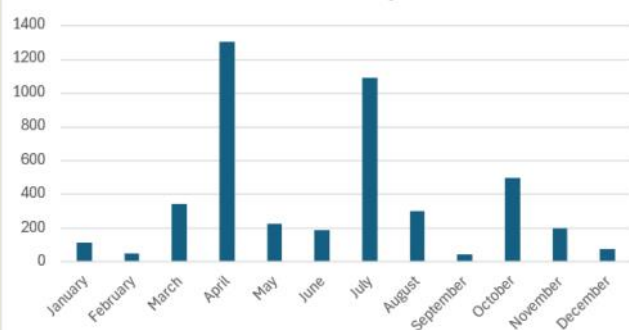


Last observation of 2024 - made by apcorboy on December 31.

[Mourning Dove](#)
([Zenaida macroura](#))



2024 Observations by Month



2024 Observations by Month

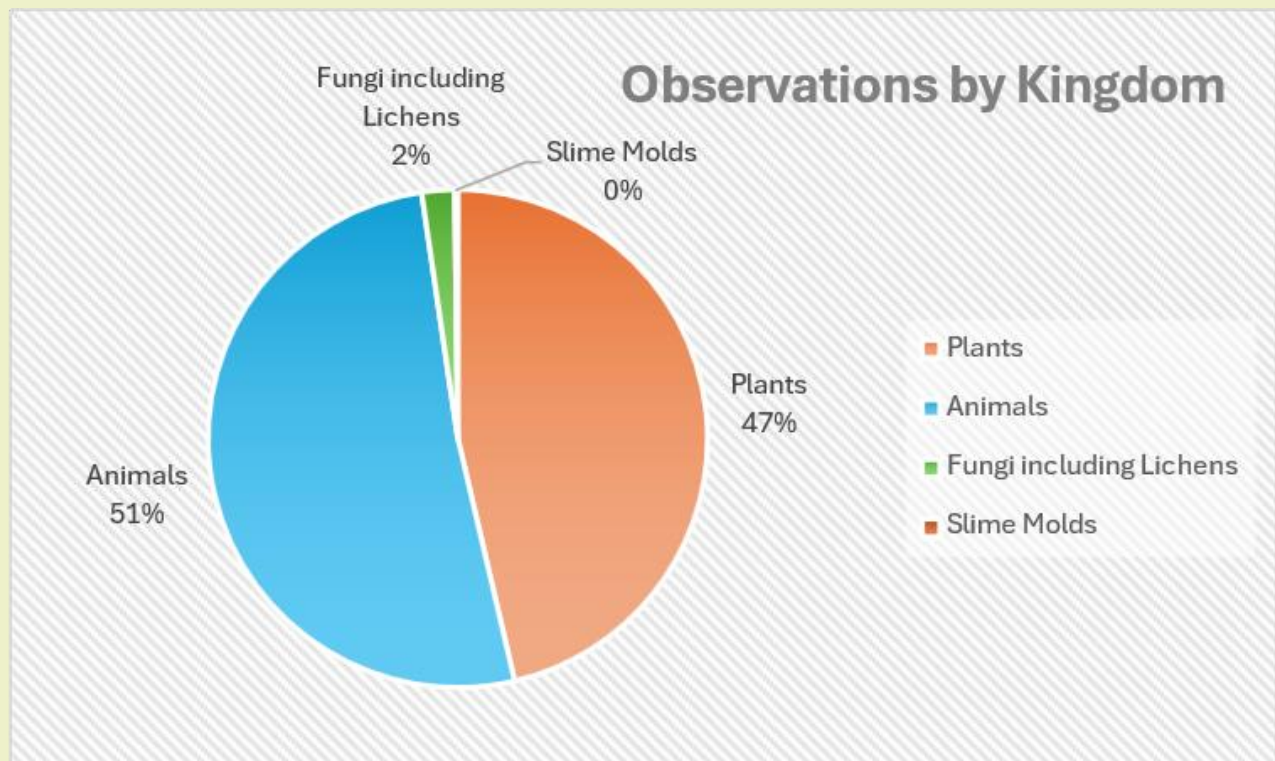
April is the City Nature Challenge, and in support of that the Friends of SCNP held a "mini-Bioblitz" on April 27 that accounted for almost half of April's total of 1306 Observations. And on July 24, SCNP was the site of Arlington's 3rd annual celebration of National Moth Week, accounting for 964 of July's 1089 observations.

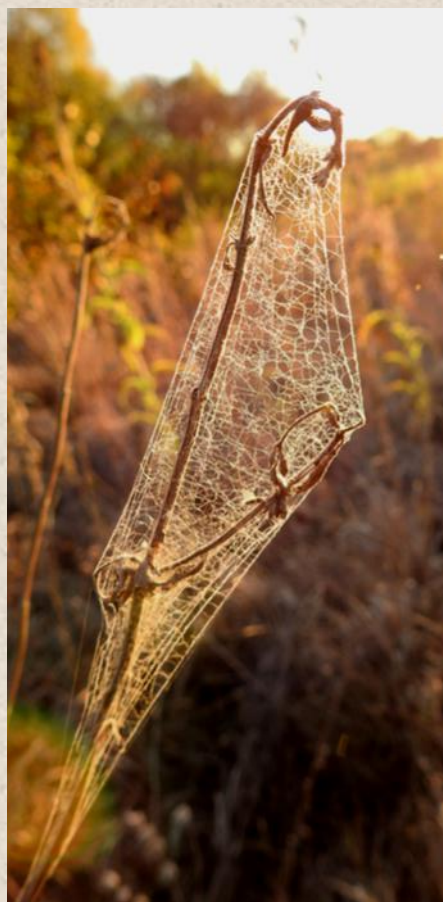
Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve continued from page 32

2024 Review of a Year of Nature at SCNP Annabelle Corboy

Our top observers in 2024

Rank	iNaturalist ID	Name	# Observations	# Species
1	sam_dragon-moore	Sam Dragon-Moore	472	298
2	brentano	Brent Franklin	461	247
3	sambiology	Sam Keschnick	390	314
4	charley	Charley Amos	353	177
5	postoak	Jan Miller	239	135
6	drawntoscales	Michael Smith	167	102
7	algraff	algraff	162	107
8	apcorboy	Annabelle Corboy	162	123
9	joshmols	Jim Frisinger	109	90
10	tmn-alc	tmn-alc	109	83



Blackland Prairie Preserve Guy Random

*Dried plants at sunset?
You'd better get out here then
if you enjoy gold.
But still green down low.
It just lacks all that drama
deep in the shadows.*



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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 \$ _____

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POST OAK

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

Our February Zoom Meeting



See page 5 for more on this meeting.