

ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

POST OAK

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MAY 2025

MOLLY HOLLAR WILDSCAPE • ANN KNUDSEN PHOTO

April Zoom Meeting

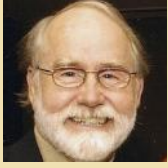


Read more about this program on page 5

**Did you miss this great talk?
Watch it by clicking on
[this link.](#)**

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From the President **Dick Schoech**



Environmentalists are Canaries in the Mine

Global efforts to reverse climate change are failing. Earth's climate continues to get hotter every year despite our prevention attempts and better understanding of wildfires, heat-related deaths, sand storms, and ravaging hurricanes. In 2024 Earth experienced 27 U.S. weather and climate disasters that caused at least one billion dollars in damages, and greed for power, wealth, and control paints a grim survival future. Plundering our land, water, and air for immediate benefits with no regard for impact is unsustainable.

Given this miserable failure, how should we proceed? The federal policy shift to remove documentation and limit climate change research — the “ignorance is bliss” approach — is terrifying. Many government scientists with extensive climate expertise have been fired, and even federal weather forecasting staff have been reduced by 50%. The Endangered Species Act is under threat. Large protected areas of our most productive oceans are being opened to exploitation, ignoring long-term consequences for short-term profit.

How should environmentalists focus their energies? First is to not stick our heads in the sand and pretend everything will be OK. When coal mines exploded due to the buildup of dangerous gases, canaries were brought in because they were more sensitive than people to explosive gases and provided proof that danger was near. Their early warning signs prompted remedial actions.

Environmentalists must become the canaries for climate change. Our observations and understanding of birds, butterflies, bees, plants, and the decline of other species need to be supported by irrefutable evidence — data, pictures, videos, stories, podcasts and other signs that are easy to comprehend and communicate, and consequently difficult to ignore. Then we must link with those in the media who have the capacity and credibility to persuade the public that our

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ACC POST OAK

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

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From the President continued from page 3

documentation is credible. This is especially important since federal departments have stopped funding research on the effects of climate change and are punishing employees who speak with journalists.

At least we now have more tools to help document the problem. Citizens can easily use crowd sourcing approaches like Merlin, Seek, and iNaturalist to support the remaining federal climate scientists. Bioblitzes can document how climate is changing plants, animals, and everything else in local parks around the world. Low-orbit satellites and drones can capture pictures and data that are easily understood by citizens and difficult for politicians to manipulate or ignore. Environmentalists are more important than ever since Mother Nature shows no sign of reducing environment warning signs.

Sadly, doing this work invites danger. We “have long faced harassment, imprisonment, and other forms of retribution in some parts of the world. The U.S. has largely been an exception, a place where people and organizations can freely and safely pursue efforts to protect human health and nature — sometimes working hand in hand with the government. But the treatment of people who fight pollution has palpably changed in recent months. Nonprofit environmental groups are facing attacks from the Trump administration, subpoenas from criminal investigations, online harassment and industry lawsuits they say are designed to intimidate them into silence. In recent weeks, fears have grown that the administration will seek to revoke the nonprofit status of at least some groups.”*

Only when environmentalists have the data and communication strategies to convince citizens that climate changes are real and preventable will humans possibly be motivated to unite and change our destructive behaviors, thus enabling Earth to continue to be the beautiful planet it has been.

Additional reading

[https://www.propublica.org/article/earthjustice-abigail-dillen-q-a?](https://www.propublica.org/article/earthjustice-abigail-dillen-q-a?utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=feature)

[utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=feature](https://www.propublica.org/article/earthjustice-abigail-dillen-q-a?utm_source=sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter&utm_content=feature)



Our May Zoom Program

Why we should care: Covering the environment at Fort Worth Report *Nicole Lopez and John Greer*

Two Fort Worth Report communication pros will share their North Central Texas experiences and offer tips on how to deliver stories, uplifting and otherwise, that engage readers. Bring your questions as these nonprofit news practitioners describe how the sausage is made — and successfully sold — in a hostile political climate to a largely indifferent audience.

Environment reporter Nicole Lopez emphasizes a variety of issues, from water, conservation and land use to air quality and Tarrant County open spaces. Nicole grew up in El Paso and studied multimedia journalism and creative writing at UT El Paso. She moved to the area in 2022 and reported for the Fort Worth Star-Telegram.

John Greer is a seasoned digital marketer with over 20 years at DFW ad agencies. Before becoming the Fort Worth Report's director of audience, he was with the FW agency PMG where he worked across industries with brands such as hotels.com and Consumer Reports, as well as smaller organizations like the Fort Worth Opera. He earned his undergraduate marketing degree at UT Austin and his graduate degree from Texas A&M.



Liveable Arlington www.liveablearlington.org/

Earth Month Keynote Lecture: Don't Miss the Recording

If you missed this program on May 4, you can still catch the recording.
Be sure to look for it around the end of May at [Liveable Arlington's website](http://www.liveablearlington.org/).



Earth Month 2025 Keynote Lecture

REVEALING POLLUTION THROUGH THE LIFECYCLE OF NATURAL GAS

See the invisible pollution released by the methane gas industry at every stage-- from extraction in Texas to export to other countries-- using Optical Gas Imaging (OGI) presented by:



Sharon Wilson,
Director, Oilfield Witness
Certified OGI Thermographer

Sunday, May 4, 2025
4:00 - 6:00 PM

George W. Hawkes Downtown
Arlington Library,
[re]Brary Room B

Free and open to the public.
Light refreshments will be served.



In Case You Missed It Grace Darling

Sound familiar? Colorado Springs Utilities has instituted water conservation rules that limit irrigation to 3 times per week and only before 10 am or after 6 pm. The utility estimates it will need 34,000 more acre-feet of water — about 11 billion gallons — annually to meet population growth for when the city fully develops inside its current boundaries, estimated to occur around 2070. Every annexation of land into the state's second-largest city adds to that future gap, and now a proposed 6,500-home annexation will increase pressure on its utilities to source more water from the Arkansas River, which farmers use to irrigate more than 220,000 acres of farmland, the economic backbone of the region. And they are not happy. [Denver Post, 4/6/25]

Nearly all [newly constructed homes](#) in the United Kingdom will be required to install [rooftop solar panels](#) under the Labour Government's new [net-zero plans](#). The solar panels will need to be fitted on most new homes within two years of the start of construction, reported The Guardian. The new policy would add roughly \$4,400 to \$5,300 to the [cost of building a new home](#), but result in a savings of over \$1,300 annually on homeowners' energy bills, The Times reported. The government has a goal of building a million-and-a-half homes before the end of the current session of Parliament. The party has pledged to reduce household energy bills by nearly \$400 a year while decarbonizing the electric grid by the end of the decade. Meanwhile, ministers are preparing to offer loans and grants funded by the government for solar panel installations on existing homes.



Above, Solar panels on new homes in the UK.

Below, A climate-resilient building



“Building climate resilience is notoriously difficult. Economic barriers limit investment in infrastructure and technology. Social inequities undermine the capacity of vulnerable populations to adapt. And inconsistent policies impede coordinated efforts across sectors and at scale,” Paul O’Hare writes [(2025) Not ‘just’ climate adaptation—towards progressive urban resilience. *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications*, 12 (260).] Progressive resilience is connected, comprehensive and inclusive. Solidarity is key, leveraging resources to address common challenges and fostering a sense of shared purpose and mutual support. O’Hare identified five ways cities can more effectively adapt and become more resilient to climate change, as follows:

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In Case continued from page 7

1. Not just “bounce back” following natural disasters like storms, floods and wildfires. While governments often make [rebuilding as quickly as possible](#) the priority, they should encourage “bouncing forward,” creating places that are at less risk in the first place.

2. Be informed by risk. Cities are complex, interconnected places, and good risk assessments will take note of demographics, age profiles and the socio-economic circumstances of neighborhoods, enabling targeted support for particularly vulnerable communities. Both climatic and non-climatic risk features must be considered, e.g., aging infrastructures and pressures to develop land to accommodate ever intensifying urban populations exacerbate urban flood risk.

3. Transformative action is called for. There is [no such thing as a natural disaster](#). The effects of floods and earthquakes are influenced by pre-existing, often chronic, social and economic conditions, like poverty or poor housing. Progressive climate resilience looks past immediate shocks to the underlying causes of inequality and vulnerability to ensure that society is not only better prepared to withstand adverse events in the future, but to thrive in the face of uncertainty.

4. Use collective approaches. Effective climate resilience demands a whole-society response, which entails collaboration and shared responsibility. The most successful initiatives consider longer-term risks while avoiding self-protection. For instance, developments not at significant risk should still incorporate adaptation measures including rainwater harvesting or enhanced greening to lower a city’s climate risk profile and benefit local communities.

5. The last and most effective strategy is to exploit co-benefits to reduce vulnerability while

addressing other environmental and social challenges. Examples: In northern Europe, [moorlands can be restored](#) to retain water, helping alleviate downstream flooding and also capturing carbon and providing habitats for biodiversity. In SE Asia, [solar panels installed on reservoirs](#) generate renewable energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while providing shade to reduce evaporation and conserve water resources during droughts.



Known officially as the [Thames Tideway Tunnel](#), London's £5b (\$6.61B) super sewer has been completed after 8 years in the making. The 16-mile long pipe is designed to reduce the amount of raw sewage that flows into the river, diverting 34 of the most polluting sewage outflows that have been discharging into the Thames. In the final step of construction, a huge 1,200-ton concrete lid was lifted onto a shaft in east London.

London's combined sewage system handles human waste and rain runoff together, but the capital's population has outgrown the infrastructure. Raw sewage under normal conditions goes to wastewater

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treatment plants, but currently even a small amount of drizzle in London can overwhelm the network, triggering overflows into the Thames. With the new super sewer, almost all sewage overflows in the center of London will be stored in the tunnel until it can be processed. The 7.2m (23ft) wide tunnel flows steadily downhill from west to east London and during periods of sustained rainfall it will fill up with a mix of raw sewage and storm water. It can hold 600 Olympic sized swimming pools of liquid which will then be pumped to Europe's largest sewage treatment works at Beckton in east London. Though the super sewer is one of the biggest upgrades to London's sewage network since it was built in the 1860s, it is unlikely to be a permanent solution. Scientists predict that climate change will bring more intense rainfall to the UK, meaning there will be times when even the huge super sewer fills up. [Ed.: We hope to be around to report it when it happens.]

Update on Marvin Nichols Reservoir: The dispute over the 66,000-acre manmade lake has been ongoing between the northeastern Texas region

(Region D), where it would be built, and the greater Dallas area (Region C), which would receive the water, for at least 20 years. In their respective 2026 Water Plan drafts submitted in March, Region C included the reservoir as a recommended strategy while Region D included language vehemently opposing it. Region D's stance is that the lake "would have substantial adverse effect" on the area, including economic, agricultural and natural resources, while Region C has stood firm that additional water sources, like the reservoir, need to be created for North Texas to meet water demands over the next 50 years.

In April Region D Water Planning Group chairman Jim Thompson officially asked the Texas Water Development Board to declare the inclusion of the reservoir [as a conflict and resolve it](#). The board has called for a public meeting at the North Central Texas Council of Governments building on May 19 at 1 pm to hear arguments from both sides and will schedule a session later to announce its next steps in resolution of the conflict. Stay tuned.



Bits & Pieces

The Terse Treehugger



It never changes.

Big rain one day, then sprinklers demonstrate the niceties of runoff.

How soon can we get that Marvin Nichols Reservoir?

Visit ACC's
Facebook page
and
Discussion Group

Not Your Average Moth



From Dick Schoech: An Eight-spotted forester nectaring on a Roughleaf dogwood at Village Creek Historical Area. It's one of the most beautiful day-flying moths. Larval host plants are grape vines and Virginia creeper.



Engelmann daisy.

Residential Real Estate



Someone didn't finish the job on a local tiny house. Now, in an instant, two birds zoom in and out to the almost ultrasonic squeals of excited nestlings. Amazing high-speed acrobatics as the dogged providers vanish almost without landing. Too bad they're starlings.

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



ACC Trees

ACC Heritage Trees

A classic Post oak from Carol Marcotte, who sees this fine tree at Randol Mill Park. It's one of those Post oaks that seems to defy all the stories about the fussiness of this species: flanked by an athletic field on one side and a parking lot on the other, it still looks great.



ACC Trees

ACC Heritage Trees

Here's a second Heritage Tree that couldn't differ more from our first example. Dick Schoech found this old tree in the Village Creek Historical Area, determined to bud out for at least one more spring. It's that twisted tree emerging from just behind its former trunk, now hollow and blackened.

This month's trees bring up the timely question posed by Carol, who wondered about our definition of heritage trees.

Heritage is one of those words whose meaning includes so many things, from customs to food to buildings. Fortunately, we can concentrate on natural heritage and consider this Australian definition: Natural heritage comprises components of the natural environment that have aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance or other special value. That's vague enough to work for us, especially if it's a tree that just happens to catch your interest. Send yours in any time.



Question Corner John Darling

Q: So I'm thinking about Mother's Day and that got me wondering about those birds like Black vultures that mate for life. Is that common? Why?

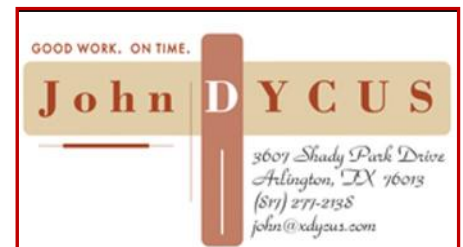
A. That's a big question coming from a mammal. They say only 3% to 5% of mammals are monogamous, so what are you thinking? They also say about 90% of birds are monogamous, but that's complicated. A few are monogamous for life, but many only for one season. And there's cheating: Male songbirds may help raise babies that aren't their own. Imagine! So why bother? There's an answer all about costs and benefits. How easy will it be to find a new mate as good as the current one? You might fail completely; the new one might be worse; it might take so long there's less time to raise a brood; maybe you get a better breeding territory if you arrive with your old mate; and you're out looking and you maybe get eaten. So settle down. Next!



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Variable false darkling beetle on Rusty dogwood. Dick Schoech photo.



The Page with No Name

Report from the field

Ivan Querido

You think the new meds are finally kicking in? Querido seems better. At least we haven't had to bail him out for a while. Better? How can anyone be better right now? They must not hear any public radio; it's all Musak up in the Executive Suites. But never mind, we'll just pretend global warming's a hoax while we focus on the little things. Like this: I was so wrong about last month's stumpy Eve's necklace! It's over six feet and going strong. Doomed, of course, but what a show of resilience, mindless determination, and terrible choice of growing location. And the nice people in that coffee shop give me a drink if I will just go away.



BACK TO THE ROOST

Yesterday

While I was driving home

A lazy flock of vultures

Lofted singly, calmly,

Above the rush-hour traffic,

All seeking evening haven

On a powerline tower

A mile or so away.

There was no unseemly push.

They were either full

From successful harvest

Of the daily roadkill

Or resigned to meet

A night of hunger

Secure among the rest

In the roost's unsanitary crush.

Sharp eyes doubtless saw me

Down below upon the street,

Neither fearful nor inviting,

Just another scavenger,

Also sated or still hungry,

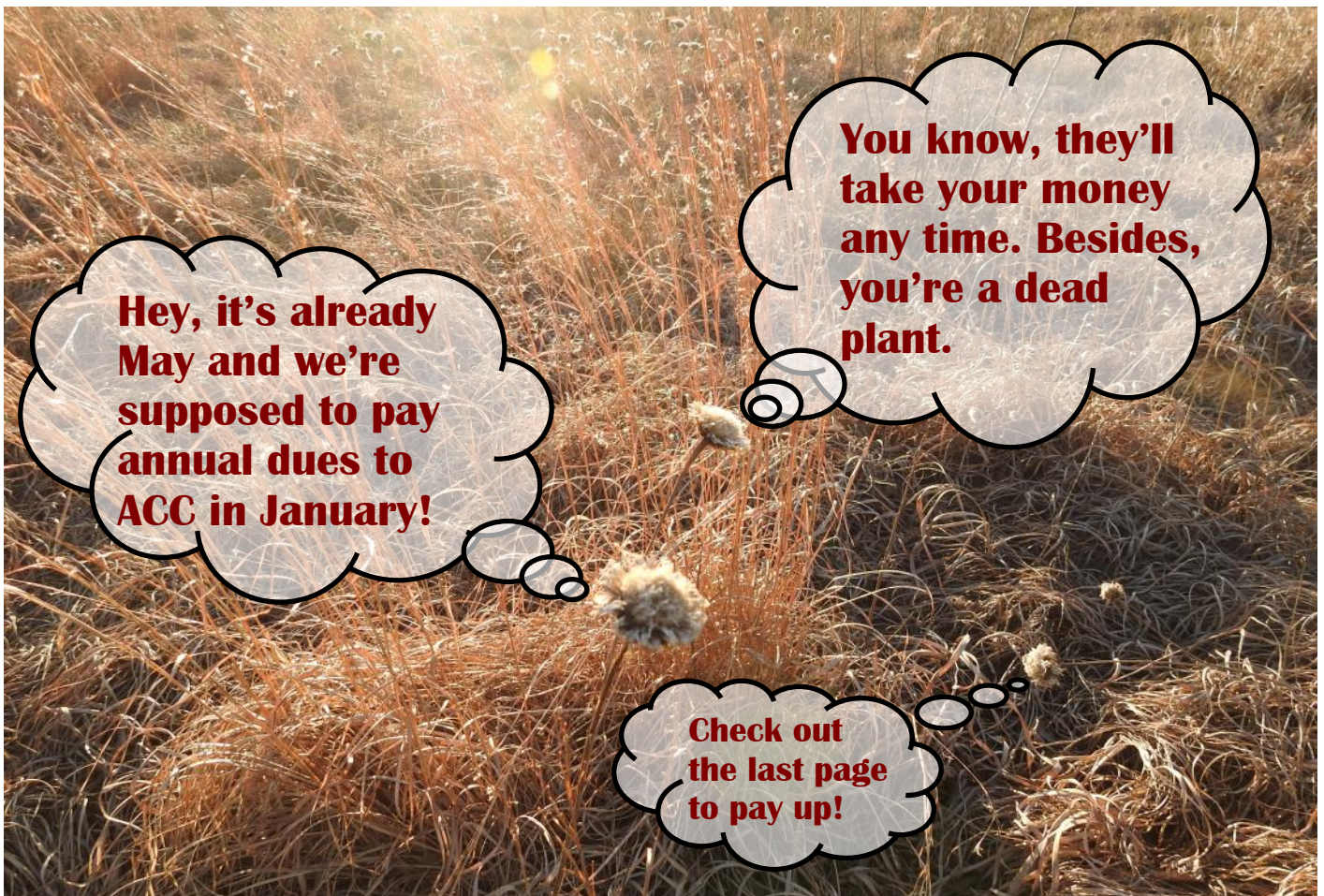
Taking up a slot in my own flock,

Drifting to my own untidy roost

In my own cozy tree.

©2004 John I. Blair

The Trolling for New Members Page with a filler shot



Tribute Lights — A Bird Migration Dilemma Donna Piercy



The National Medal of Honor Museum had its grand opening in the Arlington entertainment district on March 25th and honors those who have been awarded the highest military honor. The building is a unique design with five pillars signifying the five branches of the military supporting a large square top that symbolizes the nation and its people.

Included in the design is an array of lights that sends a large pillar of light into the sky. For those of us aware of what transpired when the 9/11 Memorial lights first powered up, this news is viewed with despair. It is estimated that 160,000 birds were adversely affected each night when the light was first utilized. They can fly in, become disoriented, and circle until exhaustion brings them to the ground or they fly into a nearby building. All nighttime lights add to the confusion, but pillar lights such as these are especially harmful. They multiply the risk of injury, starvation, and death to migrating birds

and should be of great concern to all of us. We are a central flyway or path for millions of migrating birds traveling to and from Central and South America, and many weary birds traverse over Arlington and the Metroplex. We are still reeling from the report several years ago that we had lost three billion birds, or about a 30% decline, since 1970.

At the 9/11 Memorial, the NYC Bird Alliance stepped in to educate the public and operators of the display, and volunteers now monitor the lights for high bird density. The lights are now turned off for 20 minutes at a time to allow the birds to adjust, reorient, and be on their way. We are hoping that we can convince MOHM staff to take measures as well. At this point we are getting conflicting reports from the museum as to when the lights are used. The city of Arlington has stated they are not involved in the museum's operation.

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Tribute Lights continued from page 16

Many of us are familiar with the Lights Out initiative and the progress that has been made in North Texas to curb light use and replace inefficient and poorly designed bulbs and fixtures. Downtown Fort Worth now has darker nighttime skies during migration and you may have recently read about Reunion Tower in Dallas turning off their display at night.

Tell everyone you know: **Lights Out by 11 pm** during migration.

Spring migration

March 1- June 15, the peak is April 22- May 12

Fall migration

Aug.15 - Nov. 30, the peak is Sept.5 - Oct. 29

A conservation coalition has come together including Texas Audubon, Texas Conservation Alliance, Lights Out, and the NYC Bird Alliance to address this issue. Cornell University is measuring bird density in the area and has brought in other experts. On a tentative basis, the Museum has agreed to a lights-out protocol

of 11 pm. We are formulating plans for further communication with the Museum and a face-to-face meeting.

What we need: We need to know when the light is on to coordinate with our bird density data. If you are aware of a home or business with a view of the museum, and they are open to a webcam being placed, please let me know. At this point, even drive-by info is helpful, if it is after 11 pm. You can contact me at depiercy@hotmail.com.

National Medal of Honor Museum

1861 AT&T Way, Arlington, TX 76011

Just south of I-30, exit AT&T Way, on the east side of the street

817-274-1861

A follow-up report will be provided. We hope to bring you news of a meaningful and permanent agreement in a later edition.

More Native Plants at UTA Morgan Chivers

We will install these native plants at the first official “Wellness While Weeding” event on May 24 starting at 9 am in the UTA Land Acknowledgement Courtyard, located between Preston Hall and Carlisle Hall and north of the Central Library.

To learn more or to register as an official volunteer, email morgan@uta.edu with the subject “Wellness While Weeding.”



My Nature Notebook

I know what that really is
Mom said it's Mother's
Day so get out right now!
So I took Stupid to play in
the Creepy Old Guy's yard
but there he was all smiley
just looking at the mess
on his wheelbarrow. I said
we could help clean that up
but he was all strange and
said no, no, it just shows
me I'm giving some birds
a good place to sit and
watch for bugs to fly by.
It's habitat enrichment for
Eastern bluebirds and
Western kingbirds. Hey,
east meets west! How about
that? Well? Okay then,
just go home, I mean it.



Randol Mill Park Carol Marcotte

The UTA Big Event

On April 26, UTA students came to volunteer at Randol Mill Park as part of the university's annual day of community service. They spent the morning mulching and upgrading our woodland trails. With all their antics and laughter, the students placed heavy cross ties and moved big heaps of mulch. They worked hard all morning, fueled by snacks and water to keep their energy going. Thanks to Arlington Parks & Rec for the wheelbarrows, pitchforks, pickaxes, shovels, and mulch. And, of course, thanks to those wonderful student volunteers from UTA. There they are below, plus a marvelous day-flying moth, the Nessus sphinx, finding nectar at Prairie phlox.

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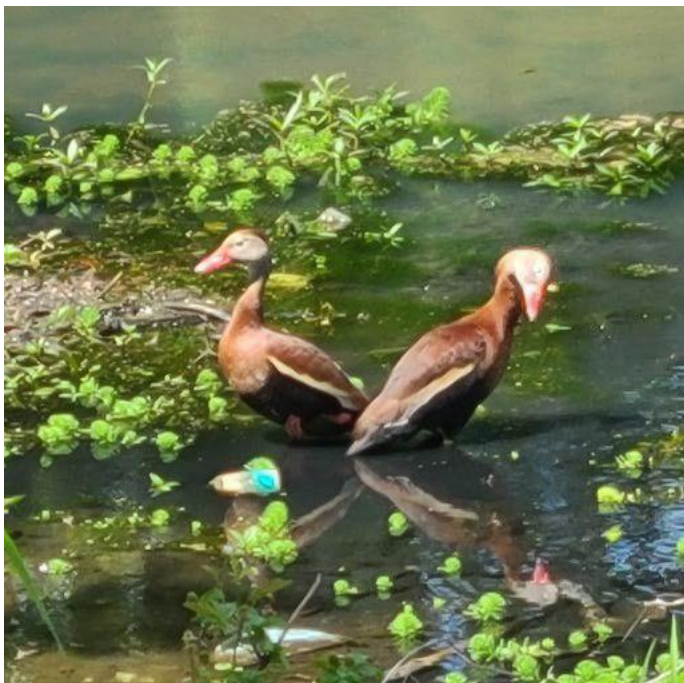
Randol Mill Park continued from page 18

Volunteer Day

The 4th Thursday of March was a bright, sunny day, perfect for volunteers working at the Pond Triangle Garden. *Below from left*, Laurie Jagielski, Josephine Keeney, and Dick Schoech on break from transplanting, consulting and planting. *Right*, Laurie Jagielski is busy pulling weeds in the garden. Carol Marcotte photos.



Below from left, a pair of Black-bellied whistling ducks, Eastern carpenter bee.



Bob Findlay Linear Park Vicki Dixon

We have finalized plans with the city for the May 17th planting of the flower bed at Bob Findlay Linear Park!

Early on May 17, the City will be delivering native plants to the garden for us. We will begin planting around 8:30 am and end around 1 pm. Participants will need to sign a waiver from the city. Waivers forms will be available on site.

We hope this event will generate interest in the Friends of the Bob Findlay Linear Park group and will be the beginning of more neighborhood gatherings and projects at the park.

Site of the future pollinator garden in Bob Findlay Linear Park.



*Below, a Molly Hollar Wildscape bonus: From left, Winecup in the butterfly garden. *Calylophus* sp. Mealy blue sage in the butterfly garden. Ann Knudsen photos.*



Any Time Is Dues Time! Guilty? Look on the Back Page.

**Why join ACC?
Their stuff is
free.**

**Sure, the educational
meetings and the news-
letters are free. But are
you missing a big point?
(See below.)**



Big Point (or two): If ACC is bigger, we carry more weight when we try to influence our city council in matters we care about. Also, you will just feel better as an environmentalist in hostile territory when you commit to a group of like-minded individuals (actual fact).

Molly Hollar Wildscape Update Marian Hiler

It's a treat to be outdoors, especially this time of year. Spring temperatures may have fluctuated between the 50s and 80s, but we'll take that range any day of the year. We took advantage of this pleasant weather for planting and weeding activities. More forbs and grasses once doomed by impending bulldozers found continued life in the new prairie and at the western edge of the Lonesome Oak. On the other hand, lots of odious, weedy plants were removed from the butterfly garden and from along the sidewalks and trails.

North Prairie installation

We installed additional wildflowers on the west side of the new prairie to bring in pollinators with a bonus of extra color. They included yellow-blooming Four-nerve daisy and *Calylophus*, pinks and purples of the Northwestern Paintbrush and the blue Texas bluestar. Especially for the monarchs, we planted white-flowered Whorled milkweed and Green milkweed. More yellow flowers came from Jan Miller's yard: Golden groundsel and Fringed puccoon. While these new additions are settling in, the rescues planted earlier this year are coming alive and looking quite healthy. Many of these wildflowers are already blooming.

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Right, Doug Land, Ann Knudsen, Christine Brinson and Rick Vividor plant Golden groundsel in the new prairie. Marian Hiler photo. *Below left*, Rick and Doug add compost to prairie plants. Marian Hiler photo. *Below right*, Little bluestem planted in early March emerged this month. Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 23, continued on page 25



Above, Dana Austin, Lynn Chen and Melanie Harris plant Switchgrass on the west side of the Lonesome Oak. Ann Knudsen photo. Below, Volunteers weed along the west sidewalk. Ann Knudsen photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 24, continued on page 26

Below, Josephine Keeney clears the weeds from the butterfly garden path. Ann Knudsen photo.

Right above, Joe Martinez spreads compost in the west garden. Marian Hiler photo.

Right below, Christine Brinson pulled a whole lotta sticky weed from the woodland path. Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 25

UTA's Big Event

We couldn't have asked for a better crew of student volunteers for UTA's annual Big Event on April 26. Members of the Freshmen Leaders on Campus — or FLOCers as they call themselves — enthusiastically stepped up for the heavy-duty loading of wood chips into wobbly wheelbarrows and the hauling and spreading of the chips onto the bare paths they had just weeded. Thanks to these fine young leaders for all their hard work improving our trails. In addition, much appreciation goes to dedicated wildscape volunteer Doug Land who engagingly kept their spirits high as he gave them the minimal direction they needed for not only working the trails but navigating life's pathway in general.

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Left, UTA students scrape the weeds off the woodland path. Right, Students spread chips over the butterfly garden pathways. Marian Hiler photos.



Wildscape Update continued from page 26 continued on page 28



Above, UTA students fill wheelbarrows with chips. Ann Knudsen photo. Below, A tired flock of FLOCers after a busy day. Marian Hiler photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 27, continued on page 29



Above left, Mealy blue sage planted in early March now blooming in late April. Marian Hiler photo.

Right, Six-spotted tiger beetle. Ann Knudsen photo. *Below*, Butterfly garden Mealy blue sage and Zexmenia. Ann Knudsen photo.



Wildscape Update continued from page 28, continued on page 30



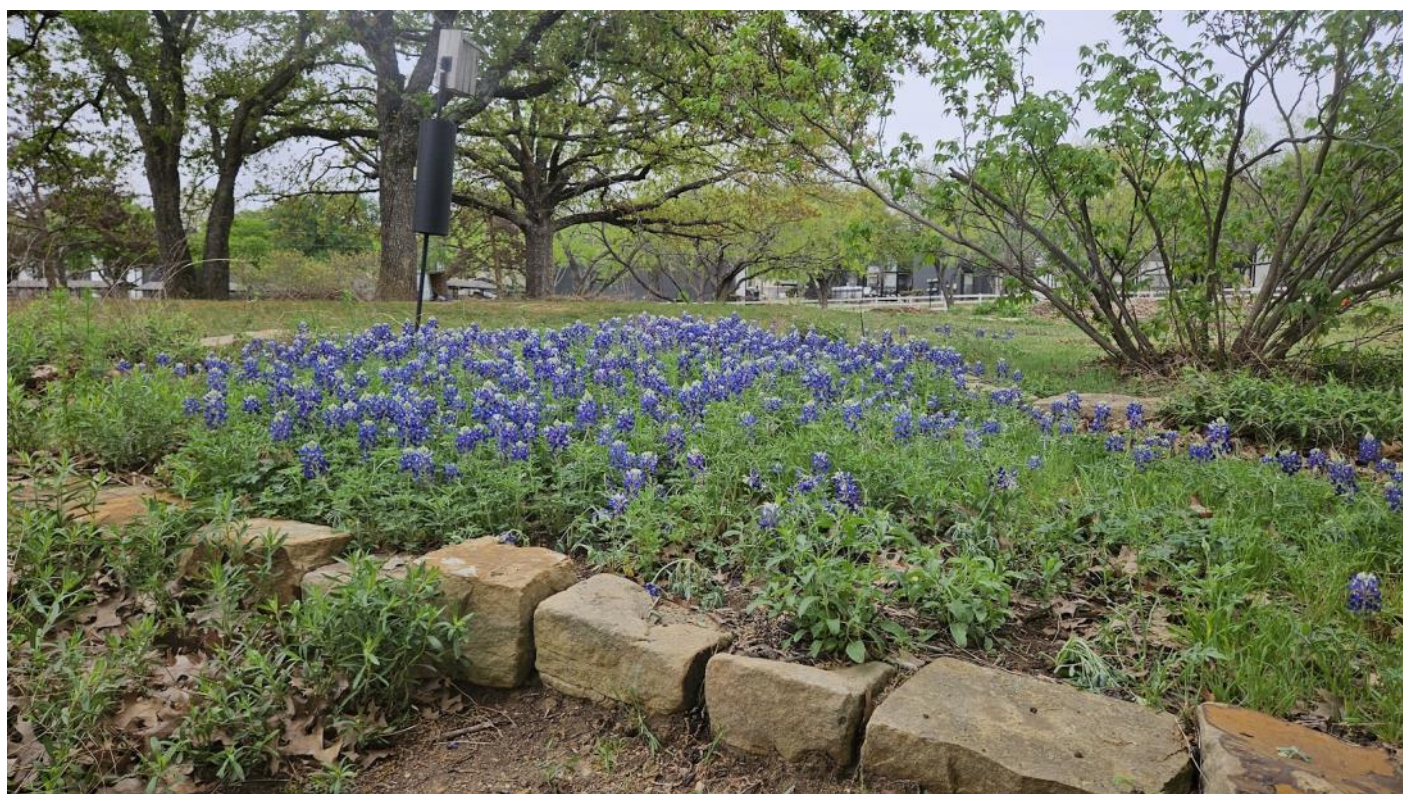
Above, Rusty blackhaw viburnum. Below left, Red buckeye. Below right, Snowberry clearwing nectaring on Mexican buckeye. Ann Knudsen photos.



Wildscape Update continued from page 29



Above left, Phaon crescent on Zexmenia. Ann Knudsen photo. *Above right*, A Yellow-crowned night heron stopped for a rest. Marian Hiler photo. *Below*, Bluebonnets in the photo op spot. Ann Knudsen photo.



Social Media? Yup.

**Be sure to visit
ACC's Facebook page
(847 followers)
and
Discussion Group
(144 members)**



What do you want to talk about today?

Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve

Third Saturday Volunteer Day at SCNP Annabelle Corboy

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.

Next Date – May 17th, 9 am - noon. Bring gloves, appropriate apparel and suntan lotion/bug repellent as needed. Meet in the parking lot.

Third Saturday Discoveries Jim Frisinger

Usually there are discoveries when Third Saturday volunteers dig deep into the brush to clear more sections for prairie. In March, in the northeast corner of the North Prairie, we discovered a grove of eight 20-year-old honey locusts – all dead. Some kind of borer had ravaged them just below the bark, leaving behind telltale “galleries” showing their munching paths.

Discovery #1 I’ve been told these galleries are one way to identify the species. An iNaturalist posting was inconclusive. The search indicated emerald ash borer (*Agrilus planipennis*), but that larva seems to prey on ash trees, not honey locusts. An Internet search did reveal a honey locust borer (*Agrilus difficilis*) that attacks honey locusts, according to Colorado State University College of Agricultural Sciences. Then, two weeks after I posted the gallery photo, I got an iNat confirmation ID from levicor of a Honeylocust agrilus! Bless his soul!

Discovery #2 Master Naturalist volunteers play an important role in supporting Arlington natural areas. The latest ranking of top projects supported by the Cross Timbers Chapter shows four natural areas in Arlington ranking in the top 11 for hours spent last year. No. 1, the Molly Hollar Wildscape (1,731 volunteer hours). Randol Mill checked in at No. 9 with 429 hours, River Legacy at No. 10 with 391 hours and Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve No. 11 at 371 hours. Master Naturalist volunteers are a great asset!



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SCNP continued from page 32**Third Saturday Discoveries****Discovery #3**

Robbie Crawford and Gerald Butler pose before a good-sized Chinaberry shortly before it was cut down during a Third Saturday Volunteer Event at Sheri Capehart. A few more still need to come down on the North Prairie as abandoned ranchland gets restored as prairie and savanna.

Discovery #4

A new species ID'd at SCNP.

Cloth-of-Gold (*Physaria gracilis*) has been identified by iNaturalist on the North Prairie — a first for Sheri Capehart. The Biota of North America Plant Atlas shows distribution is limited largely to Texas and Oklahoma, particularly along the I-35 corridor.



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SCNP continued from page 33**Trail Maintenance** Jim Frisinger

Trail maintenance is a responsibility of Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve volunteers. Erosion is a constant concern. The Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge was generous in sharing Nick Martinez, their trail maintenance boss, for a two-part consult in April. Martinez conducted a walk-through at Sheri Capehart, pointing out techniques to move water off the trails. One suggestion: using timber from dead Eastern red cedars at the preserve to create water barriers to diminish erosion by pushing it off the trails.

Martinez later conducted a tour for the Friends at the Fort Worth Nature Center, pointing out some of the ways they rework trails to reduce erosion. One way: using "bumps" - elevated sections of clay across the trail that forces water to flow off to the side. He emphasized being sure to purchase environmentally friendly timbers - no creosote! - for steps and barriers, anchored with rebar.



Jan Miller and Rudy Arnold, with Friends of Sheri Capehart, listen to Nick Martinez discuss ways to reduce erosion on the trailhead steps. He suggested laying two logs, scavenged from dead Eastern red cedars, shaped and anchored to divert water flowing down the trail before reaching the steps.

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SCNP continued from page 34**Trail Maintenance** Jim Frisinger

Nick Martinez walks along a trail at the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge. Erosion was halted there when Girl Scout volunteers created periodic "bumps" - rises in the trail - that divert water off to the side.

Nick shows how an L-shaped bridge, erected using a welded steel undercarriage, was used to cross a steep gully at the Fort Worth Nature Center and Refuge.

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SCNP continued from page 35**Prairie Seekers Survey at SCNP** Jim Frisinger

How to restore a North Texas Prairie? At Sheri Capehart, the answers are particularly complex. The 60-acre natural area has been reworked and abused over nearly two centuries of European agricultural practices. Bringing the preserve back to its natural glory has been an education. For the volunteers at Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve, we called upon the wizened pros of the Prairie Seekers of the Fort Worth Chapter of the Native Prairies Association of Texas for help. The task: Assess the progress and give guidance for the future for three tracts: the 2-acre Pollinator Meadow, now in restoration since 2017; the 2.5-acre North Prairie, in restoration since 2021; and a Pocket Prairie nearby, whose restoration will not begin until 2026.

The consult is two steps — the April 21 visit to be followed by an October visit. The advice was wide-ranging. Introduce nitrogen-fixing species prescribed for a tract whose soil sample indicated very poor nitrogen content. Encourage a prescribed burn to remove a buildup of thatch in mowed areas. If a monoculture of species arises, mow strips through to enable other seeds to reach the ground.

And lots of answers to lots of questions:

- How close should mowers come to aging, iconic post oaks? (Keep them outside of the drip line.)
- How much canopy cover can there be to create a true savanna, with plenty of sunshine for prairie plants? (50 percent tree cover or less).
- What to do with enormous white mulberries already showing fruit? (Remove this invasive species.)
- What to do with a Chickasaw plum grove, which wants to take over the prairie? (Mark a set tree line limit for the mowers to respect so this native species can continue to provide excellent support for the ecosystem but stay in check.)

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Left, Jim Frisinger briefs the Prairie Seekers on the North Prairie, a nitrogen-poor tract whose topsoil was stripped away by poor agricultural practices. *Right*, A pocket prairie in the northeast of the preserve. The Prairie Seekers suggested this abandoned ranchland, whose yuccas are now overrun by vines, would be an ideal candidate for restoration beginning in 2026.

SCNP continued from page 36, continued on page 38**Prairie Seekers Survey at SCNP** Jim Frisinger

Above, The Prairie Seekers group with their hosts, the Friends of Sheri Capehart Nature Preserve.

Right, An enormous white mulberry fills the frame of this picture on the North Prairie. It is an invasive species from Asia, and the Prairie Seekers suggested it be removed.



SCNP continued from page 37**SCNP iNaturalist Observations and Species March 2025**

Totals for March: 247 Observations, 156 Species, 19 Observers.

Totals for SCNP — Observations: 22,526 and Species: 2,028.

And (at least) 2 species never before recorded at SCNP:



Louisiana waterthrush (*Parkesia motacilla*) - sam_dragon-moore, Cloth-of-Gold (*Physaria gracilis*)

More samples of nature at SCNP:

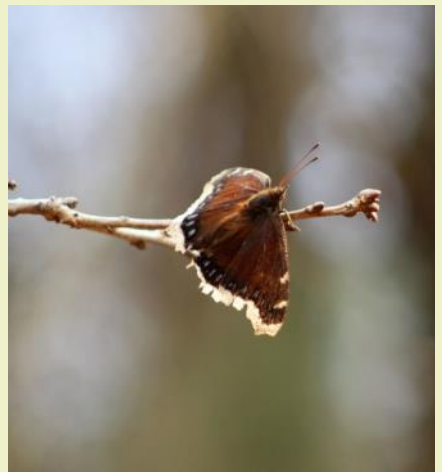


Goatweed leafwing (*Anaea andria*) - sam_dragon-more, Grapevine epimenis (*Psychomorpha epimenis*) - ben_b41

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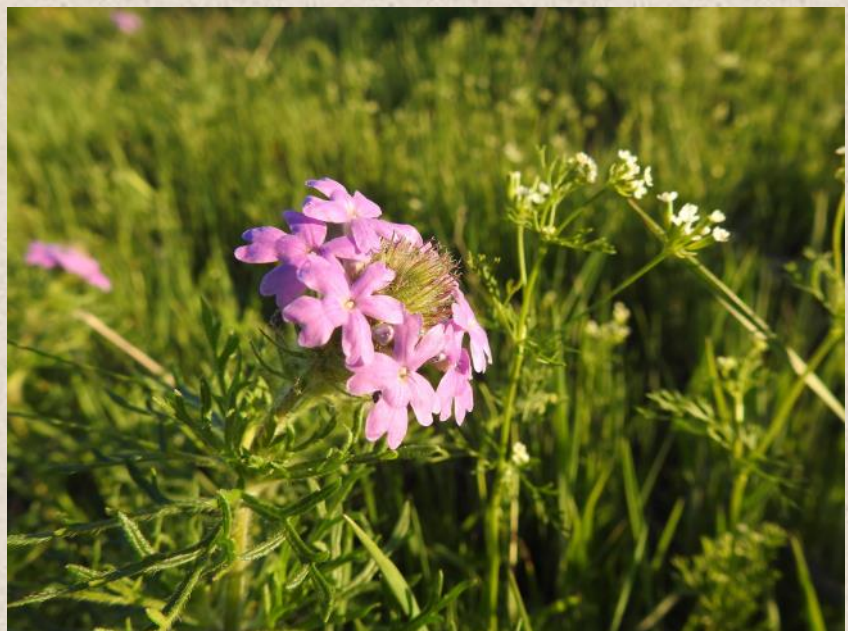
SCNP continued from page 38**SCNP iNaturalist Observations and Species February 2025**

Above, Sandyland bluebonnet (*Lupinus subcarnosus*) - joshmols, *Attalus scincetus* - benb41, Texas bluebonnet (*Lupinus texensis*) - joshmols, Below, Double-crested cormorant (*Nannopterum auritum*) - drawntoscales, American beaver (*Castor canadensis*) - nathanmayflower, Mourning cloak (*Nymphalis antiopa*) - drawntoscales



Blackland Prairie Preserve Guy Random

*Flower power now,
Or our version anyway.
A beauty right here,
One more over there.
But every shade of green?
You're in the right spot.*



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Our May Zoom Meeting

Why we should care:
Covering the environment at FW Report

7 pm Wed, May 7, 2025
 Zoom meeting hosted by
 Arlington Conservation Council

John Greer
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FWR
 FORT WORTH REPORT
Free. Fair. Local.

Nicole Lopez
 Environment Reporter

See page 5 for more on this meeting.