



Volume XXVI, No. 9
January-February 2010

Bexar Tracks

Bexar Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Its primary goals are to promote species and habitat conservation and environmental education in the community.

For the latest news and updates, see www.bexaraudubon.org and www.sa-naturecenter.org.

The Farm & Range Forum:

Why Is This Important for Urban Conservationists?

In 1999 Audubon Texas took its concern about the decline of quail populations in the US to the National Audubon Society Board. This sparked several initiatives, key among them the first Farm & Range Forum, held in 2000 in San Antonio. That forum focused on quail in South Texas and their relation to other wildlife. Following a seminar attracting leading investigators in the field of quail ecology, the forum also looked at habitat management techniques that would beneficially affect not only quail, but also other species that share quail habitat.

Bexar Audubon joined forces with several other organizations to organize and host this forum, which also recognized the economic impacts of nurturing quail and their habitats, since making a living on the land was becoming harder and harder to do, and diversification of income sources was of increasing importance for landowners. Managed hunting and nature tourism were two ways landowners could diversify, and they were directly tied to healthy wildlife habitat. Further, there were many new landowners — often holding small acreage — who wanted to know how they could implement good management practices to improve or sustain the quality of their properties.

Why was Bexar Audubon interested in promoting these issues? The interest in quail as a keystone species was, perhaps, obvious. Further, the quail is Bexar Audubon's bird of choice for its logo. But more than that, for many people quail are emblematic of bird life in South Texas. Today quail continue to endure critical threats due to factors including habitat loss, competition, and disease.

There's a more important reason, though, for an urban Audubon chapter to engage in the protection of healthy habi-

tats in rural areas. Our statement of purpose in 2000 was this:

"Wildlife need habitat. Humans need ecosystem services. In Texas, about 97 percent of land is held privately. Therefore, if habitat and ecosystem services are to be preserved in Texas, the private landowner must be engaged in conservation.

"We believe the preservation of family farming and ranching is key to the development of sustainable agriculture in this state and to the ecosystem services and habitat preservation that are a part of our vision of a biologically and economically healthy Texas."

With 80 percent of Texas voters living in urban areas, public policy decisions that affect Texas open space are made by people who have little opportunity to dialog with landowners and little opportunity to witness the effects of urbanization, sprawl, fragmentation, and habitat degradation. The Farm & Range Forum aims to foster that dialog and mutual understanding, so informed urban conservationists are prepared to help conscientious landowners sustain their presence on the land and, therefore, sustain habitat for the wildlife to which we all are committed.

This year's forum focuses on the Texas Hill Country and examines the intense pressures that are changing the face and function of this beloved landscape at a breakneck pace.

I invite and urge you to attend this year's forum — reinvigorated with both old and new partners after a four-year hiatus. Our issues are as vital today as they were in 2000, and your involvement really can make a difference.

- Susan Hughes

Registration/more information, pages 5-6

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No meetings at Trinity during the winter months of January & February!

Join us
Saturday, January 16th
Bexar Audubon Annual Meeting/ Elections/Tour
at Mitchell Lake Audubon Center

1 PM Join us at this wonderful place for election of officers / board members and other annual meeting business. Following meeting, participate in a guided tour of Mitchell Lake. Bring binoculars! **Reservations required for tour** in order for staff to plan accordingly. Brown bag your lunch and arrive at 12:30 if you wish to eat lunch and visit before the meeting! *All are welcome.*

2-4 PM, Tour Mitchell Lake/Bird Outing

Tour Mitchell Lake and see some great birds following the BAS annual meeting. Reservations required, 210.837.057 or pasztor@ix.netcom.com. Let us know

Continued on page 4



Treasure Hunt!

A new program at 12 Texas state parks aims to use technology to draw visitors into the outdoors. The Texas Geocache Challenge which began Nov. 1, 2009 runs through Jan. 31, 2010, challenging state park visitors to use Global Positioning System technology to find a cache of hidden rewards in each park.

Participating central and southeast central parks are Bastrop, Buescher, Government Canyon, Guadalupe River, Huntsville, Lake Somerville-Birch Creek, Lake Somerville-Nails Creek, Lockhart, McKinney Falls, Monument Hill-Kreische Brewery, Palmetto and Washington-on-the-Brazos.

"It's a good, healthy way to get out on the trails of state parks," said Chris Holmes, outdoor education coordinator for Texas State Parks. "We think it will be appealing to families, a really fun thing to do in a state park."



Participants can download a Texas Geocache Passport, as well as the coordinates of each of the caches, at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/geocaching. In each of the 12 parks a hidden box will contain small prizes, information about the park, a logbook for cachers to record their visit, and a paper punch unique to the park. Geocachers can use their GPS units to find the containers and then use the punch to mark their passports to verify their visit.

When geocachers have found all 12 boxes, they can mail the passport to TPWD, and the first 100 people to send in their passports will receive a commemorative geocoin. Other participants who finish will qualify for other prizes, such as a map of all 12 parks, Texas Geocache Challenge stickers and a certificate of completion. This pilot program will be evaluated and possibly go statewide.

Updated Texas Wildscapes Guide to Native Plant Gardening

Whether you have an apartment balcony or a multi-acre ranch, the Texas Wildscapes™ program gives you the tools you need to make a home for all the animals that will thrive in the native habitat you create.

Texas Wildscapes™ is a habitat restoration and conservation plan for rural and urban areas that enables Texans to develop wildlife habitats where they live, work and play. For the thousands of people already familiar with the previous edition of the *Texas Wildscapes* book, the Texas A&M Nature Guides Edition and accompanying interactive DVD will be a welcome supplement, providing a wealth of plant and animal lists, tables, photos, video, and other detailed information in a fully searchable format.

If you are just learning how to enjoy wildlife in a backyard setting, *Texas Wildscapes: Gardening for Wildlife, the Texas A&M Nature Guides Edition* provides the essential ingredients for a variety of wildlife: food, water and shelter. It then coaches you in designing and planting your yard or garden to best provide these requirements for the many birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates you will attract.

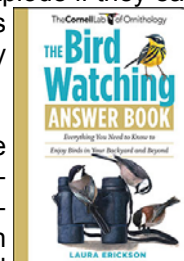
Author Kelly Conrad Bender is urban wildlife biologist for Central Texas with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The former coordinator of the Texas Wildscapes™ program, she is currently based in Bastrop, where she conducts research and workshops and manages public outreach projects. The book can be purchased online through the Texas A&M Press website, by phone at 800.826.8911, or at major booksellers across the state. For more information: www.tamupress.com or www.tpwd.state.tx.us/wildscapes

Bird Watching Answer Book

Author responds to real questions from real birders

Why is a cardinal attacking my windows? (p.87) Will birds explode if they eat rice thrown after a wedding? (p.17) How can I keep squirrels out of my bird feeders? (p.37) Do birds play? (p.268) Why don't birds fall off branches as they sleep? (p. 305)

For years, bird expert and Cornell Lab of Ornithology science editor Laura Erickson has heard questions like these and hundreds more. Now, drawing on questions that come to the Cornell Lab, she's compiled answers to more than 200 common and not-so-common bird questions in a handy pocket-sized book that reads like a conversation with your friendly neighborhood "bird lady."



The Bird Watching Answer Book is organized into three sections: watching and feeding birds, bird behavior, and bird biology. In addition to down-to-earth scientific answers, readers will find plenty of quirky stories and interesting asides like these:

- Turkey Vultures have been used to detect gas pipeline leaks because of their great sense of smell.
- American Crows can remember human faces.
- The Brown Thrasher holds the record for knowing the most songs: 2,000.
- The largest individual bird nest on record weighed nearly three tons.

More information at www.birds.cornell.edu.



Mid-Winter Nature Break with the Great Backyard Bird Count

February 12-15, 2010

Bird watchers coast to coast are invited to take part in the 13th annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), Friday through Monday, February 12-15, 2010. Participants in the free event will join tens of thousands of volunteers of all levels of birding experience to count birds in their own backyards, local parks or wildlife refuges.

The GBBC is led by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and provides an opportunity for people of all ages to learn about birds and the environment we share. Each checklist submitted by "citizen scientists" helps researchers learn more about how the birds are doing—and how to protect them. Last year, participants turned in more than 93,600 checklists online, creating the continent's largest instantaneous snapshot of bird populations ever recorded.

"Taking part in the Great Backyard Bird Count is a great way to get outside with family and friends, have fun, and help birds—all at the same time. Anyone who can identify even a few species can provide important information that enables scientists to learn more about how the environment is changing and how that affects our conservation priorities," said Audubon Education Vice President, Judy Braus. Anyone can take part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, from novice bird watchers to experts. Participants count birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and report their sightings online at www.birdcount.org.



Black Capped Chickadee
Rodney Smith, WA

For more information about the GBBC: www.birdcount.org, or contact the Cornell Lab of Ornithology at 800.843.2473 or gbbc@cornell.edu, or Audubon at citizenscience@audubon.org or 215.355.9588, ext 16.

Quail Decline

Disease may be playing a role in the demise of Texas quail. Exactly what disease might be behind the drop in quail populations is currently unknown. Potential threats include West Nile virus, avian influenza, avian cholera, and aviantuberculosis. Sick quail don't last long before something eats them, so disease surveillance in wild quail is a tough proposition, according to Dr. Dale Rollins, Texas AgriLife Extension Service wildlife specialist at San Angelo. The birds offer a perfect biological fuse for disease spread among the population. They are social birds, and when a covey dwindles to less than about six birds, they go join another covey.

Rollins asks quail hunters to be on the lookout for sick quail. If disease is suspected, place the bird in a plastic zipper type bag, refrigerate it and

call him as soon as possible at 325.653.4576 or 325.776. 2615.

Rollins is also the director of the 4,700-acre Rolling Plains Quail Research Ranch at Roby, where they are currently live-trapping quail for leg-banding to support a radio telemetry project, as well as collecting samples for disease and parasite testing.

"At the research ranch, we're seeking to unravel just what's happened to bobwhites and blue quail across much of the Rolling Plains. So, we're investigating some heretofore overlooked agents, namely disease and parasites, to see if they possibly are playing a more than minor role in the demise of Texas quail."

Excerpted from agnews.tamu.edu; by Steve Byrns, 325.653.4576, s-byrns@tamu.edu.

Become a Master Naturalist

Join our 2010 Spring Class!

Learn from leading experts in Texas:
Bio-diversity • Hydrology/Edwards Aquifer
• Interpretive Hikes • Native Plants Urban Systems/Forestry • Reptiles/Amphibians • Aquatic Ecosystems • Soils Wildlife Management • Archaeology • Plant Taxonomy • Geology • Birds Ethnobotany • Schoolyard Habitat • Plant Ecology • Impact of Man • Mammals Insects Ecology • Threatened/Endangered Species • Laws/Ethics

Classes held Thursdays, Feb. 25–Apr. 29, 5–9 PM at the Texas AgriLife Building, 3355 Cherry Ridge Drive (Room 208), San Antonio. Plus four morning field trips, including graduation on May 1.

Applications and Information: www.alamomasternaturalist.org. E-mail applications to pball12@satx.rr.com. Application deadline Feb. 9th. Class tuition & books \$125.00. *Scholarships available.*



SEP-HCP Update

The Southern Edwards Plateau Habitat Conservation Plan (SEP-HCP) has a new website up and running! The website will be the primary portal for information about the status of the project, including project updates, meeting announcements and materials, draft documents, and other information. The website also includes contact information for the project team and a form to sign up for email notices of important SEP-HCP events. Visit www.sephcp.com and check back frequently for updates and new information.



Mitchell Lake Audubon Center

New Year's Resolution: Give back to the community and participate in conservation activities—become a Mitchell Lake Audubon Center Docent.

Our next docent training class begins Jan. 16th

Docent training is an 8-week course held Saturdays at 9 AM. Each session lasts 3 hours and includes the history of Mitchell Lake, bird & plant identification, wildlife management, nature center procedures, and educational nature interpretation. Class \$35; includes training & materials. More information at 210.628.1639.



Mitchell Lake Audubon Center

10750 Pleasanton Rd.
San Antonio TX 78221
210.628.1639

About Mitchell Lake

mitchelllakeaudubon.org
Just south of downtown San Antonio, the Mitchell Lake Audubon Center is located on a 1,200-acre natural area. This unique and beautiful bird haven consists of the 600-acre Mitchell Lake, 215 acres of wetlands and ponds and 385 acres of upland habitat. Audubon Texas has partnered with the San Antonio Water System (SAWS) to showcase this wonderful natural area and welcomes nature enthusiasts, schoolchildren and families.

BAS Elections

Elections will be held for the Bexar Audubon Board at the annual meeting at Mitchell Lake Audubon Center on Jan. 16, 2010. A nominating committee was appointed by Anita Anderson; they identified the following and obtained acceptance from each of the nominees, and the following slate of officers has been approved:

Tony Wood, *President*
Anita Anderson, *Vice-Pres.*
Caryl Swann, *Treasurer*
Susan Hughes, *Secretary*
At-Large Board Members:
Bill Hurley, Greg Pazstor,
Harry Noyes

If any member wishes to submit an additional nomination or nominations, please contact Susan Hughes with the nominating committee for information on the procedure to follow, 210.532.2032.

White-nose Syndrome Update

Your calls and letters made a difference for bats!

Thanks to all of you who contacted your Senators and Representatives requesting funding for White-nose Syndrome. We did it! Congress approved \$1.9 million for WNS research and prevention. The bill awaits only President Obama's signature to become law. Originally, the House bill contained zero funding and the Senate bill had only \$500,000—and that was for monitoring, not research. Your calls and letters helped obtain four times the amount planned. Senator Lautenberg of New Jersey was instrumental in making this happen. "Everyone who wrote and called helped pave the way for this," the Senator's office said.

Great job everyone!
Thanks for your help!

From Bat Conservation International
www.batcon.org

Environmental Crimes Prosecutor Appointed

From the Austin American-Statesman:

Travis County District Attorney Rosemary Lehmborg announced the appointment of the agency's first full-time environmental crimes prosecutor, a position made possible through a grant from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. Lehmborg has named Patty Robertson, an experienced white-collar crime prosecutor, to the position. Robertson will be based in Travis County but will prosecute cases throughout the state. The Travis County District Attorney's Office has statewide venue on most environmental crimes under Texas law, officials said. "We are all responsible for the safekeeping of our natural resources," Lehmborg said. "Each of us is a victim when individual and corporate polluters disregard that responsibility."

Bexar Audubon January & February gatherings...

(Continued from page 1)
if you would like to carpool down there.

Directions to Mitchell Lake Audubon Center: Mitchell Lake is located at 10750 Pleasanton Road on the south side of San Antonio. Take 281 south to Loop 410. Take a right on Loop 410 heading west. Exit 46, Moursund Blvd. Take a left there or south on Moursund Blvd.

for .7 miles to the entrance gate on left.

NO FEBRUARY CHAPTER MEETING

But join us for a South Texas ranch field trip, a bird walk at the Botanical Gardens, and the Farm & Range Forum in Fredericksburg!

Saturday, February 6
Field trip to a South Texas Ranch near Batesville. Call 210.824.1235 for details and reservations.

We'll look for birds and other wildlife. There's a chance we'll see geese and Sandhill Cranes on the stock tanks. Meet early to carpool. Bring water and a lunch for an all-day trip.

Saturday, February 20
Birding Tour at the San Antonio Botanical Gardens, 9 AM. Call for details at 210.837.0577. Entrance fee to the gardens. Maybe a sneak peak at the new bird watch area!



Special Insert

FARM AND RANGE FORUM**“Sustaining the Hill Country — Now and for Future Generations”**

Friday, February 26, 2010 — Tour at 4:30 p.m. — Reception at 5:30 p.m. — Becker Vineyard, Stonewall

Reception honoring David K. Langford & Presentation of the Inaugural Keystone Award

Join us for wine and hors d'oeuvres as we honor David K. Langford of Comfort, Texas, for his years of dedication to the conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat and his championship of the Hill Country.

†††

Saturday, February 27, 2010 — 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. — Fredericksburg Inn & Suites, Fredericksburg

What Do We Love about the Hill Country? — Robert Potts, Dixon Water Foundation**Hill Country Natural History: Myths, Legends, and the Record — Eric Lautzenheiser, San Antonio Parks & Recreation Nature Areas****State of the Hill Country Today:** a panel

- Land Trends and Fragmentation — **Neal Wilkins**, Texas A&M University Institute of Renewable Natural Resources
- Water Resources for the Future — **Robert Mace**, Texas Water Development Board, retired
- Wildlife and Habitat — **Bill Armstrong**, Texas Parks & Wildlife, retired
- Riparian Systems — **Steve Nelle**, USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service

Land Stewardship and Public Policy: a panel

- Valuing Open Space: Public Benefits of Private Lands — **David K. Langford**, Texas Wildlife Association
- Incentives for Good Stewardship: Department of Agriculture and NRCS Programs — **Phillip Wright**, USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Food Systems and the Role of Private Landowners — Richard de los Santos, Texas Department of Agriculture (invited)

Luncheon Keynote

The Changing Face of Texas: 95 Percent Privately Owned and 80 Percent Urban — Carter Smith, Texas Parks & Wildlife**It's Your Home! Stewardship for Living:** a panel

- Landscaping for Wildlife — Rufus Stephens, Texas Parks & Wildlife (invited)
- Wildlife Pests?: White Tail Deer, Feral Hogs, Fire Ants, and Exotics — Kory Perlichek, Texas Parks & Wildlife (invited)
- Brush Management Practices and Benefits — **Mark Moseley**, USDA—Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Habitat Conservation Plans — **Robert Gully**, Edwards Aquifer Recovery Implementation Program

Broadening Options and Securing Goals: a panel

- Wildlife Valuation and Management Responsibilities — **Ken Thigpen**, Plateau Management
- Conservation Easements — **Thomas Hall**, Braun & Associates
- Nature Tourism, Agri-Tourism, and Hunting — Stan Meador, X Bar Ranch (invited)

Wrap-up and Q&A — Dean Bibles, Green Spaces Alliance, moderator



FARM AND RANGE FORUM REGISTRATION FORM

2010 Farm & Range Forum
Stonewall & Fredericksburg, Texas • February 26-27

Please print — NAME: _____

ADDRESS/CITY/ST/ZIP: _____

E-MAIL: _____

AREA CODE/PHONE: _____ FAX: _____

FARM/RANCH NAME and/or ORGANIZATION (if applicable): _____

FRIDAY ONLY: ___ \$50 (Will you attend the winery tour? ___yes ___no)

SATURDAY FORUM ONLY: ___ \$40 BOTH DAYS: ___ \$75

TOTAL AMOUNT for Friday Reception and/or Saturday Forum \$_____

Form of payment: ___ Check ___ Credit Card

Name on credit card: _____ Credit card number: _____

Exp Date: ____/____/20____ Security Code: _____

Make checks or money orders payable to: "Texas Wildlife Assoc."

By mail to: **TWA, ATTN: FRF, 2800 NE Loop 410, Ste 105, San Antonio TX 78218**

Send credit card charges by fax to: **210. 826.4933** Or by phone to: **210.826.2904 or 800.839.9453**

How did you learn about this year's Farm & Range Forum? _____

What are your reasons for attending this forum? What are your expectations? _____

Check areas of business or interest: ___ farming ___ ranching ___ organic production
___ nature tourism ___ wildlife management ___ hunting ___ wildlife viewing ___ education
___ ag-related industry ___ conservancy ___ sustainable living ___ government ___ water
___ land development ___ open space ___ food security other _____

Please briefly describe your farming/ranching operation: _____

Would you want to receive CEUs for Pesticide Applicator's License? YES NO
CEUs for Certified Professional in Rangeland Management? YES NO

For more information contact Helen Holdsworth at 210. 826.2904 or 800. 839.9453.



Community Events

All listings are on Saturdays unless otherwise indicated

CIBOLO NATURE CENTER

CNC: 140 City Park Dr., Boerne. For more information visit www.cibolo.org/calendar. Pre-registration for workshops, 830.249.4616 or nature@cibolo.org.

Except where noted, workshops/seminars on Saturdays, varying fees.

January

Wildlife Tax Valuation Seminar

Saturdays, January 9, 16, 23

Session 1: Overview & Property Inventory

Jan 9, 9 AM—1 PM

Session 2: Management Practices & Habitat Assessment

Jan 16, 9 AM—2:30 PM

Session 3: WTV History and Update on the Law, Application Procedures, & Putting It All Together

Jan 23, 9 AM—1 PM

Limit 35. Do you have an agriculture tax valuation on your land? Interested in managing for wildlife? Especially for owners of less than 500 acres, emphasis on wildlife management for songbirds. Gain land management knowledge, understand the history of this Texas law and fulfill requirements to qualify for a wildlife management tax valuation.

Boerne Birders / Boerne Lake

January 16, 8-10 AM

Donations welcome. For free entry with the Boerne Birder group, meet at entrance gate 7:45—8 AM. Census of Boerne Lake. Prime time for ducks, grebe, osprey, kingfisher and maybe a bald eagle! Also wintering songbirds. Information: Jerry 210.710.3981 or Delmar 830.230.5551.

Tree Selection/Planting/Watering

February 6, 9 AM—Noon

Presenter: Mark Peterson, tree & water conservation expert. Features SAWS presentation of Texas Hill Country trees and their care. Special focus on most efficient and effective ways to water trees from planting to old age. Includes tree planting demonstration.

February

WTV General Update Seminar

Friday, February 12, 9AM—12:30 PM

Limited to land owners with an existing wildlife tax valuation, this seminar will help you keep your management plan current. Rufus Stephens, TPWD biologist, will go over updat-

ing and evaluating your wildlife management plan and make specific suggestions on land owner resources and record keeping.

Rainwater Harvest Workshop

February 13, 9 AM—Noon

CNC auditorium and Kight installation Limit 30. John Kight, engineer and rainwater catchment owner, gives the latest technological information and the most practical advice. Learn about design and materials from someone who has done it himself!

Cedar Biology and Management

February 20, 8:30 AM—12:30 PM

Carpool from CNC promptly at 8:30. Limit 30. Presenters: Ranch owner Darwin Ressel, TPWD wildlife biologist Rufus Stephens, Hoyt Seidensticker with KC Conservation District. Workshop presents methods, equipment and choices for cedar clearing recommended by Forest Service, Parks & Wildlife, & Cooperative Ext. Service. 3 demonstration areas on western Comal County ranch show range improvement, forest ecology & wildlife conservation. See cedar management in action.

Boerne Birders/CNC

Great Backyard Bird Count

February 20, 8-10 AM

Donations welcome. Meet at CNC pavilion. Bird the 100-acre Nature Center property that includes marsh, prairie, woodland and Cibolo Creek. Bring binoculars, bird book. Info: Jerry 210.710.3981 or Delmar 830.230.5551.

Attracting Birds Workshop Part 1 Bird Boxes, Seed, Feeders, Water and Habitat Enhancement

February 27, 9 AM—Noon

Old Daley Ranch; carpool from CNC parking lot promptly at 9 AM. Limited 30. Dick Park, local birder and land owner, will show us how he attracts nesting, migrant and wintering birds to his land. Learn the techniques that have resulted in over 180 species of birds recorded there. Nest boxes on Parks' property produced over 140 young birds in 2009!

MEDINA RIVER NATURAL AREA (MRNA)

15890 Highway 16 South
San Antonio TX 78264

MRNA located approx. 4½ miles south of Loop 410 on SH 16 South

Reservations requested for all MRNA events. Information or RSVP for any event in the MRNA call 210.624.2575.

SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAMS

Peregrine Falcons and the Art of Falconry

January 9, 2010, 9—11 AM

Matt Reidy, Wildlife Biologist for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, will provide information on the peregrine falcon and their adaptations for survival, the natural history of the peregrine falcon, the endangered species act and why the peregrine falcon was in trouble, and information on the sport of falconry.

Star Party

February 6, 2010, 6—8 PM

*With the San Antonio Astronomical Association; **FIRST SATURDAY***

Join the San Antonio Astronomical Association to view the early evening stars with high tech telescopes and see what is up in the winter sky. Bring a folding chair and a flashlight covered with red cellophane.

Solar Cooking for Spring

March 13, 2010, 9—11 AM

With Monika Salyer, Solar Cooking International. Solar cooking is the simplest, safest, most convenient way to cook food without consuming fuels or heating up the kitchen. Many people choose to solar cook for these reasons. For some in the world it is a life saving skill to have safe drinking water. Learn different methods and types of solar cookers. Make a mini solar cooker to take home.

www.sanaturalareas.org

Suggested donation for each program is \$3/person or \$5/family

Second Saturday Beginners' Walks

Join San Antonio Audubon Society on the second Saturday of the month; start at 8 AM, meet at the Judson Nature Trails next to the Alamo Heights swimming pool, on Viesca street. More information, call 210.342.2073. *Newbies Welcome!*



SAN ANTONIO NATURAL AREAS

For more information on listings below, visit www.sanaturalareas.org or www.bexaraudubon.org.

FIRST SATURDAY WALKS & SECOND SATURDAY PROGRAMS

Reservations recommended for 1st Saturday Walks & 2nd Saturday Programs; call 210.564.6202 or 210.372.9124 for details, directions, reservations. Email peggy.spring@sanantonio.gov. Suggested donation \$3/individual, \$5/family for programs, \$2/person for hikes. Unless otherwise listed, **Second Saturday** programs are held at Eisenhower Park.

First Saturday Walks

Interpretive Nature Walks

Participants limited to 15 per hike. Meet near restrooms. Suggested donation \$2/hike. Not for groups; please call to schedule a separate hike.

JANUARY

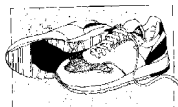
Crownridge Canyon Natural Area

7222 Luskey Blvd.
January 2, 9–11 AM

Join us for a natural history interpretive walk at Crownridge Canyon. Get some exercise after the holiday feasts and learn about this great Natural Area at the same time! Nature is not sleeping in the winter—come see what's going on! *Reservations suggested, 210.564.6400; hikes occasionally change.*

Log on to find out what's coming up in February and March as we transition toward Spring!

Sponsored by **San Antonio Natural Areas**, sanaturalareas.org



Second Saturday Program

Co-sponsored by Bexar Audubon Society and City of San Antonio

JANUARY

Bare Branches!

Eisenhower Park

January 9, 10 AM–12 Noon

Come join us for a walk with city forester, Michael Nentwich, to explore our trees in winter. Learn how they can be used in urban situations and begin to think about trees you may want to plant in your yard this year.

Free tree to the first 20 families!



Eisenhower Park, 19399 NW Military. Take FM 1535/Military Hwy/Shavano Park exit off Loop 1604 on the city's northwest side. Go north 2 miles. Park entrance on left, just before Camp Bullis. Program is in large gated pavilion. Gates open 9:30 AM.

www.sanaturalareas.org
www.bexaraudubon.org

Friends of Friedrich Nature Discovery Series

2010 Nature Discovery Series

Wednesday, Jan. 27,
6:30—7:30 PM

Terry Doyle will present 'Spring Butterflies in Bexar County'



Wednesday, Feb. 24, 6:30—7:30 PM

Patty Leslie Pasztor will discuss the "Ethnobotany of Texas Native Plants"

Tuesday, March 23, 6:30—7:30 PM

Molly Keck presents "Ants in Your Plants"

Presentations will be in the Friedrich Wilderness Park Indoor Classroom. Free to Friends of Friedrich membership; small donation requested for non-members. Limited space; call 210.372.9124.

State-Fish Art Expo Coming to Texas

The Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center (TFFC) in Athens, Texas will host the 2010 national State-Fish Art expo next July. For the past three years TFFC has managed the Texas division of the national conservation art contest, and during that time Texas has led the country in the number of entries. Last year 624 Texas students in grades 4–12 submitted entries, a fourth of all the entries nationwide.

The State-Fish Art contest is open to all students in public, private or home schools and requires submission of a one-page essay and a drawing of an officially recognized state fish. Entry deadline is March 31 each year.

Contest rules, guidelines and entry information can be found at www.tpwd.state.tx.us/fishart. More information from the coordinator of the Texas division, Zoe Ann Stinchcomb, at 903.670.2239 or zoeann.stinchcomb@tpwd.state.tx.us.

Support for the Texas division of the contest and the expo are provided by the Toyota Texas Bass Classic, which makes it possible for the top three Texas entries in each grade level to win cash prizes. First place in grades 10–12 wins \$1,000; second place \$750; third place \$500. Prizes in the 4–6 and 7–9 grade levels are \$100 for first; \$75 for second; \$50 for third.



Grade 10-12 winning entry, Margaret Sone
© Wildlife Forever



"BirdsEye" Guides You to the Birds

Application helps bird watchers see more birds

BirdsEye is the best invention for birding since binoculars," says Kenn Kaufman, renowned birder, author of the *Kaufman Field Guide to Birds of North America* and team member of a partnership that has created BirdsEye, a new birding app for the iPhone® and iPod touch®. "It's like having thousands of local birding experts in your pocket," Kaufman says.

If you are in search of a particular bird, BirdsEye will show you where it has been ob-

served, and even give you directions. If you are new to birding or an experienced birder who is on the road, BirdsEye will give you a list of birds seen nearby and a map of birding hotspots for any location in North America (the contiguous 48 states, Canada, and Alaska). The application includes images and audio for the 470 species most frequently observed in North America. Additional content is available for more elusive birds—for a total of 847 species. Bird sounds come from the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's archive, the largest collection of bird and

animal sounds in the world. Images are from the Academy of Natural Sciences. Acclaimed birder and author Kenn Kaufman wrote text for each species account—with a specific goal in mind.

"Even when you're in the right location, it helps to know something about the bird's behavior and habitat in order to find it," says Kaufman. "Will you find this bird in flocks up in the treetops, or solitary individuals lurking in the thickets? Are you likely to hear it before you see it? I wrote each of these short accounts as if I were giving advice to a friend who was hoping to see this bird for the first time."



Portions of BirdsEye sales go back to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology to help support its research, education, and citizen science projects focused on birds, and to the Academy of Natural Sciences to support VIREO, the world's largest collection of bird photographs.

More information: BirdsEye: www.getbirdseye.com; iTunes App Store: itunes.com/app/birdseye; Cornell Lab of Ornithology: www.birds.cornell.edu; eBird: www.ebird.org

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Earth Share of Texas raises money for environmental and conservation organizations through workplace giving. If your employer participates in such programs, please ask them to add Earth Share to your giving options. By designating the Audubon Foundation of Texas (AFT), Bexar Audubon Society can benefit. BAS receives credit for our support and receives funding annually from AFT. For more information, call, email or log on: 800.GREENTX, ESTX@earthshare-texas.org, or www.earthshare-texas.org.



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Bexar Tracks

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Bexar Tracks is the official newsletter of the Bexar Audubon Society, a Chapter of the National Audubon Society. The Chapter's primary goals are to promote species and habitat conservation and environmental education in the community. Your membership includes National Audubon and Bexar Audubon and subscriptions to both Audubon and Bexar Tracks.



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For the latest information on environmental events and happenings throughout the San Antonio community and surrounding areas, check out www.bexaraudubon.org and www.sa-naturecenter.org.

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