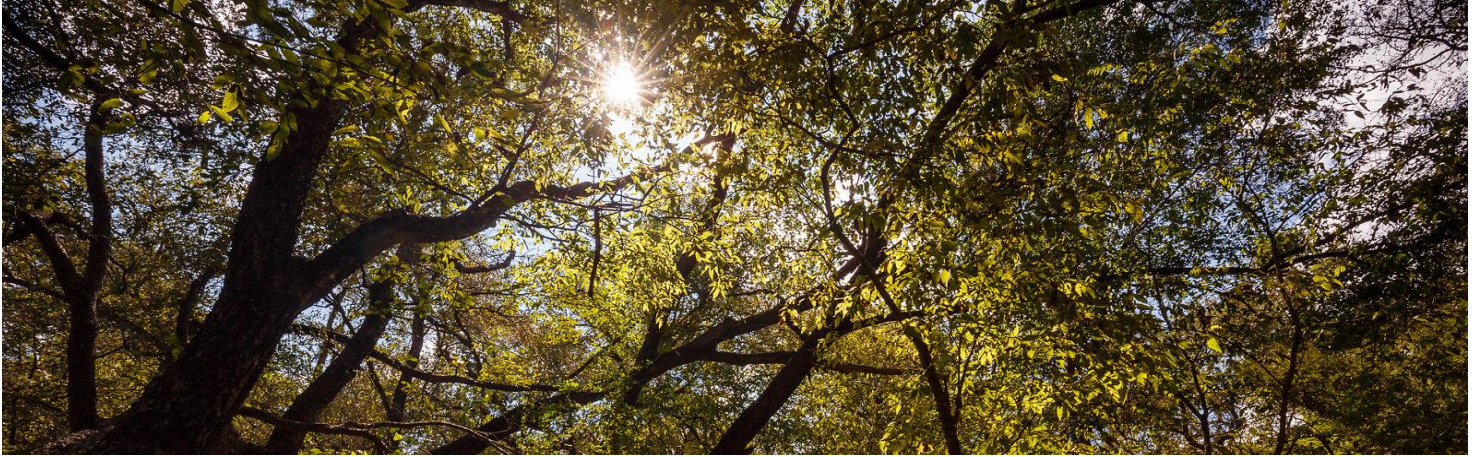
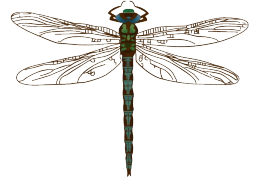


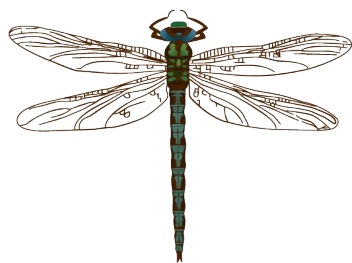
# NORTH TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST THE DRAGONFLY



## Fall Aboard!

Welcome back to *The Dragonfly*. This issue highlights our children's education programs at T.R. Hoover and Twelve Hills and insights from the Lights Out Symposium. Our North Central Texas autumn also comes into focus with a colorful exploration through a yellow lens. Autumn continues as a theme with a Final Thought on the Honorable Harvest.

To members who would like to contribute to future issues, we welcome all submissions but would like to begin to have written documents which highlight some of the topics that do not get as much love as, say, birds or plants. Topics include fish, amphibians, reptiles, bacteria, protists, or any other topic that you have been wanting to learn about.



### OCT 2025 - VOL. 94

Lights! Glass! Action!  
by Sam Behrent  
and Sierra Carter

Twelve Hills Nature  
Center: Nature Leaders  
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Knight and Amanda  
Pound

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by Shelby Smith

# LIGHTS! GLASS! ACTION!

BY: SAM BEHRENT  
AND SIERRA CARTER



Birds are a vital part of our ecosystem, economy, and health and wellness. Every year 96 million Americans watch birds, while 2.8 million hunt them; combined this produces a revenue of \$295 billion per year spent on birds. Eighty-five percent of Texas birds live in urban spaces, and as part of the Central North American Flyway, Texas also plays a huge role in bird migration. One out of three Spring bird migrants and one out of four Fall migrants pass through Texas.

That's why many organizations and Master Naturalists gathered in College Station for a two-day Lights Out Symposium August 7-8th this year, where we listened to many presentations, visited a Texas A&M art gallery with a Lights Out exhibit from students as well as some of the birds that were involved in fatal collisions.

The Lights Out Symposium is an annual event for the The Lights Out, Texas campaign, which was started in 2020 with the mission of protecting birds from light pollution. Its goals have since expanded to include study of bird-building collisions and advocacy for bird-friendly lighting and building design. During the spring and fall migration seasons, volunteers walk routes through several Texas cities to record and collect birds that have struck buildings. Dead birds are sent to Texas A&M where they will have a future aiding in research and education. Any stunned birds are taken to rehab to be checked over and hopefully re-released.





# LIGHTS! GLASS! ACTION! (CONTINUED)

Each year glass collisions kill around one billion birds, most of which involve homes and low-rise buildings. As a result, Congress passed the Federal Building Safety Act (H.R. 3268), co-sponsored by U.S. Representative Morgan Griffith and Senator Mike Quigley, with current and past involvement by Senator Cory Booker. Birds are so vital to the environment and to people that since 2020, Congress has set aside funds for collision reduction measures and collision reduction language has been added to many federal agency budgets. Those measures, called P100 standards, only apply to federal buildings, however, and do not include state and local municipality buildings.



Collisions don't only happen at night, when birds are attracted to and disoriented by city and nighttime light pollution, they can also happen during the daytime hours. Daytime causes of collisions include the reflection of local habitat in glass and obstructions to flight paths such as a sky bridge. Birds share with humans a love of nature, including landscaped courtyards in the nooks and crannies of our homes and buildings, where fatal collisions often occur.



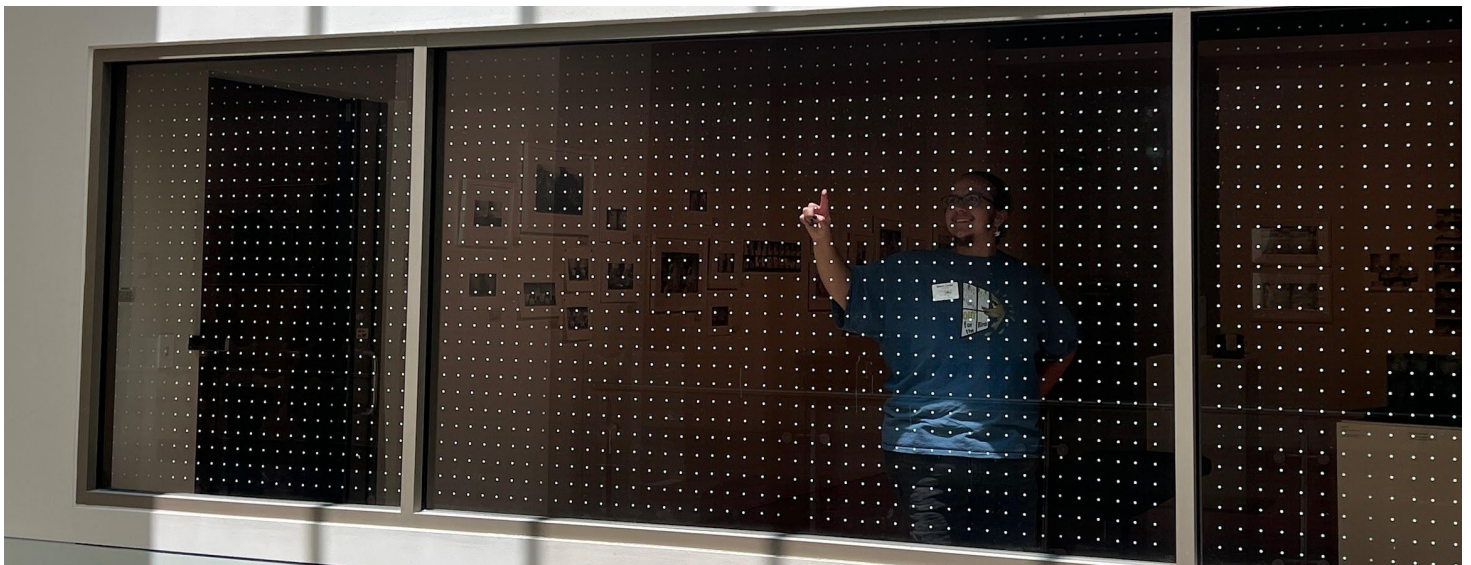
When we think of bird collisions, there's one ubiquitous object in the human-built environment that we usually don't consider: communication towers. An estimated 6.8 million birds are killed annually in the U.S. and Canada as the result of collisions with guyed wires supporting the tall towers, which also have steadily burning lights. Since 2015, an advisory council from the FAA created guidelines for all new communications towers which call for un-guyed, or self-supporting, shorter towers with flashing lights, and Canada has begun to adopt these same guidelines.

# LIGHTS! GLASS! ACTION! (CONTINUED)

Collisions were not the only topic of conversation at the Symposium. The main reason was what can we do to prevent them. Presentations were given by Texas A&M faculty and staff, representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, environmental and conservation groups, and glass industry professionals, as well as students and student groups who spoke about their own research projects and efforts being made on their campuses.



Guidelines and testing for bird-safe glass was one of the principal topics. Besides reflections and transmission (such as seeing through a walkway or atrium), lighting and landscape design are crucial. Representatives from Guardian Glass, Viracon and Feather Friendly discussed the ratings scale and how testing of glass to reduce bird collisions is conducted. Most of these tests are not yet accurate for hummingbirds due to their size or insufficient population in the testing area. The current standard for bird-safe patterning on glass is a 2" x 2" grid of dots, though other patterns such as lines and even custom artwork can also be used. The key aspects of the effectiveness of any pattern in preventing collisions are (i) a design with small enough gaps that a bird recognizes it as something that it cannot fly through and (ii) contrast so the bird can see it from a distance (white works best for windows, black works best for transmission areas like a skybridge). UV glass helps prevent bird collisions without our eyes seeing the patterning on the glass since birds can see UV light, but currently tends to be cost prohibitive. There are options for homeowners as well, which include bird-friendly tape, films, and oil-based, white paint markers.





# LIGHTS! GLASS! ACTION! (CONTINUED)

The highlights of the second day of the Symposium were presentations from the Schubot Center for Aviary Health, Feather Friendly bird collision window tape, and the Houston Zoo's Bird Saving Committee students, tour of the Schubot Aviary, where specimens collected during Light Out Surveys have helped with the study of avian diseases such as bird flu and avian bornavirus, and tour of the Texas A&M Biodiversity Research and Training Collection with its avian collection, a specimen preparation demonstration, and a bird ID workshop.



So, how can we best prevent collisions? We can prevent or reduce collisions in many ways, including altering the way we design and build buildings and surrounding landscapes, retrofitting existing buildings, and turning out our lights at night, particularly at peak migration times in the Spring and Fall, which can be found on DarkSky's website and the Lights Out website. If lights must be used, it's important to use warmer, soft lights and angle them downwards and not out. We can use, and encourage use of, window films, bird-friendly tape, or oil-based, white paint markers. We can educate our neighbors and spark conversations and put out a Lights Out yard sign during migration as a reminder. We can ask for free screenings of the Lights Out film, which discusses the entire Lights Out Initiative and what we can do to help birds. And as Master Naturalists we can all get involved with the bird monitoring surveys that happen across Texas cities each Spring and Fall.



Since birds are so vital to both the environment, conservation, the economy, our health and well-being, and our enjoyment, it's vital to protect them. And one way we can do this is by starting with "Lights! Glass! Action!" On the following page you can find a list of resources and toolkits shared at the Symposium as well as a fun quiz where you can find out what kind of Texas native bird you are, created by the students at the Houston Zoo's Bird-Saving Committee.

- ❖ **US Fish and Wildlife Service Bird Friendly Campus Toolkit**  
<https://www.fws.gov/library/collections/bird-friendly-campus-toolkit>
- ❖ **Bird Collision Prevention Alliance**  
<https://www.stopbirdcollisions.org/>
- ❖ **Lights Out Texas**  
<https://tx.audubon.org/urbanconservation/lights-out-texas>
- ❖ **Lights Out Toolkit by Houston Zoo Bird-Saving Committee**  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WwBp02p2qhCvR4VrBnZuahf7PbF\\_HvmC/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WwBp02p2qhCvR4VrBnZuahf7PbF_HvmC/view)
- ❖ **Feather Friendly**  
<https://featherfriendly.com/>
- ❖ **Fun Quiz! “What Type of Texas Native Bird Are You?” By Houston Zoo Bird-Saving Committee**  
<https://www.buzzfeed.com/happylatte514/which-texas-native-bird-species-are-you-36t9lko3ng>
- ❖ **Texas Parks and Wildlife Find a Rehabber (by County)**  
<https://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/rehab/>
- ❖ **Texas Conservation Alliance’s Lights Out, DFW**  
<https://www.tcatexas.org/lights-out-dfw>
- ❖ **American Bird Conservancy**  
<https://abcbirds.org>
- ❖ **DarkSky**  
<https://darksky.org/what-we-do/advancing-responsible-outdoor-lighting/>

## iNat Species Feature

# Mississippi Kite

*Ictinia mississippiensis* Photo by: @xeric-sw on iNat

During their summer breeding season of April to August, Mississippi Kites (*Ictinia mississippiensis*) commonly nest near water in open woodlands, prairies with trees, and similar habitats in the southern US, including Texas.

Steve Wilson spotted this striking white-headed pearly-gray raptor last summer in a residential neighborhood near White Rock Creek; a pair carrying nesting materials has been seen this summer in the same neighborhood. After each breeding season, the well-traveled kites migrate to central South America. Known for their aerial acrobatics, they often snare grasshoppers, cicadas, beetles, dragonflies, and other large insects in mid-air. Beware in parks, greenbelts, and neighborhoods: they have been known to dive-bomb people and pets who intrude too close to their nest.

Have any weird, noteworthy and exciting observations, or see something incredible posted in the iNat community? Share it with *The Dragonflyer* at [dragonflyer@ntmn.org](mailto:dragonflyer@ntmn.org)!





# TWELVE HILLS NATURE CENTER: NATURE LEADERS PROGRAM

BY: SAMANTHA KNIGHT AND AMANDA POUND



Twelve Hills is celebrating our twentieth year in 2025! Dedicated North Texas Master Naturalist volunteers continue to nurture tall grasses and wildflowers, teach school children about their local habitat, and provide nature programs for the community. Over 1,470 species observations are logged in iNaturalist. Tall grasses sway in the breeze and abundant wildflowers provide habitat for countless insect species and other wildlife.



“Cultivating conservation ethics through our Blackland Prairie restoration and nature education,” the mission statement of Twelve Hills Nature Center, is brought to life by education programs at Twelve Hills Nature Center.

Twelve Hills Nature Center finished its 15th year of our premier children’s education program, the Nature Leaders Program in May. Each year, fifth graders from Rosemont Upper Campus come to Twelve Hills to learn all about the plants, insects, animals, watershed, and geology of our Blackland Prairie. They spend a full semester after school with Texas Master Naturalist volunteers, as well as a day with TPWD Urban Wildlife Biologist Sam Kieschnick, to learn each part of the curriculum.

Master Naturalists teach how each element of the prairie benefits each of us as well as the Blackland Prairie ecoregion and the broader ecosystem. Students learn scientific methods, including how to create charts and graphs and document observations about what they encounter. Students also learn the history of the land, from the shallow sea that created our limestone outcropping, to the river that cut through and flooded the plains, to the early inhabitants, and how settlers changed the landscape.

# TWELVE HILLS NATURE CENTER: NATURE LEADERS PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

The most important thing students learn is how to appreciate nature. They're encouraged to look up into the sky and down to the ground. They see how the smallest creatures can make a large impact on the energy web and plain beetles are actually quite beautiful when magnified. Several students have declared they want to be biologists, nature photographers for National Geographic, or advocates for conservation at home and in their neighborhoods.

Instilling confidence and leadership is also one of the key components of the Nature Leaders Program. We love watching the kids blossom from being unsure about public speaking to confidently sharing their knowledge with schoolmates. During the last week of school, every class from Rosemont Lower Campus ranging from pre-K to third grade (28 classes in 2025) comes to Twelve Hills for a guided hike led by the fifth graders. Our Nature Leaders use their new-found skills to lead interpretive walks and impart knowledge and nature appreciation to younger students, who might become a future generation of Nature Leaders.



This year, we were joined by former Nature Leader Daniel Galindo. After Nature Leaders, Daniel attended the NTMN Junior Master Naturalist program at the Perot Museum. Daniel will graduate in 2026 from W. H. Adamson High School in Oak Cliff while completing a dual credit program with El Centro College with an Associates Degree in Networking. He intends to major in Education in college and become a math teacher. Daniel is proof to us that the Nature Leaders Program changes lives!

Another Nature Leader also blossomed in the program. Sara Oliveros, a 2025 high school graduate who followed in the footsteps of her two older sisters, credits her 5th grade experience in Nature Leaders as her first real connection with nature. She has since continued to expand her impact. In 2024, she joined Trinity River Crew, a joint Conservation Corp program of Greenspace, Dallas and Trinity Park Conservancy, where she served as an intern in 2025. Sara is now at Alcorn State University pursuing a degree in environmental science.

With guidance from her TRC mentor and THNC board member Jimena Vivanco, Sara entered the worldwide National Geographic Slingshot Challenge. She created a [powerful video](#) about pocket prairies and the restoration work at Twelve Hills which stood out among thousands from across the globe. We are thrilled that Sara was a top 15 award recipient!



# TWELVE HILLS NATURE CENTER: NATURE LEADERS PROGRAM (CONTINUED)

Members of the school and community actively participate in the Nature Leaders Program. For example, the fifth-grade teacher, Mr. Gilberto Rodriguez, was this year's liaison and was instrumental in scheduling with school and parents. Daniel Galindo's mother Nancy remains a beloved long-time volunteer with the Program.



Twelve Hills offers other education programs, including Lil' Bisons, for preschoolers in partnership with Rosemont Lower School, nature programs for students at St. Cecilia's Catholic Schools, and MathFinder walks. In addition, nature walks, bilingual walks, and Advanced Training are presented monthly. Workdays are every Sunday, and there are service opportunities throughout the week.

We at Twelve Hills look forward to another twenty years of caring for our Blackland Prairie and nurturing a conservation ethic in school children and the community.

## iNat Species Feature

### North American Wheel Bug

*Arilus cristatus* Photo by: [@nathanmayflower on iNat](#)

The North American Wheel Bug (*Arilus cristatus*), a member of the assassin bug family, is one of the largest bugs in North America (1.5 inches long when mature).



With brownish gray camouflage, preference for lurking in leafy areas, armored forewings and wheel-shaped armored crest, and lethal proboscis, it is a formidable predator of caterpillars and beetles. Stealth is a fortunate tactic since its hind wings only permit a noisy, clumsy flight. But humans too should beware; if disturbed it can wield stink bug-like scent glands and a painful proboscis puncture. Nathan May went undercover at Spring Creek Preserve to expose this assassin.

Have any weird, noteworthy and exciting observations, or see something incredible posted in the iNat community? Share it with *The Dragonflyer* at [dragonflyer@ntmn.org](mailto:dragonflyer@ntmn.org)!



# YELLOW

BY: CHARLIE MARSHALL



It's easy, in experiencing another North Central Texas autumn, to feel pangs of foliage envy.

The imagery of autumn has long been established by artists, authors, and poets from other climes. Autumn is after all, as Jane Austen declared, “the season which has drawn from every poet worthy of being read some attempt at description or some lines of feeling.” From Keats’ “The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,” to Longfellow’s “The gentle wind, a sweet and passionate wooer / Kisses the blushing leaf,” to Emily Bronte’s gushing “Every leaf speaks bliss to me / Fluttering from the autumn tree,” we know what autumn is supposed to look and feel like.

The trees of our Blackland Prairie once again fall short of such rhapsody. The leaves of our predominant native oak—named for its unglamorous frontier use as fence posts—turn a dull brown, a brown that no poet would describe as “tawny” or “bronze.” The leaves of our ubiquitous elms, hackberries, ash, pecans, and cottonwoods turn, well, yellow, the intensity of which is subject to the weather. Depending on the duration of summer’s furnace and the whims of droughts, gusting winds, and early northers, at best a mellow, even golden, yellow and at worst a crinkly brown on prematurely barren trees.



“It is harsh country for the most part,” Texas writer John Graves bluntly admits in his *Goodbye to a River*, which “accords ill with the Saxon nostalgia for cool, green, dew-wet landscapes.” Graves assessed our region from its more arid western edge in the Brazos River valley, but the truth of his observation still resonates.



# YELLOW (CONTINUED)



Autumn is not just a metaphor, it's a fascinating series of phenomena. Carotenoids and chlorophyll, light-absorbing chemicals critical to photosynthesis, are present in the chloroplasts of leaf cells. Chlorophyll absorbs light from wavelengths producing a green color and carotenoids from wavelengths producing yellow, and, depending on the plant, orange or brown. (The brightest red, orange, and crimson colors associated with autumn nostalgia are produced by excess sugars in oaks, maples, and certain other hardwoods.)

During the growing season, chlorophyll's green masks carotenoids' yellow. Beginning with the autumn equinox in late September, the Earth's tilt begins to angle the Northern Hemisphere away from the sun. Daylight grows shorter and nights longer, diminishing and ultimately stopping the production of chlorophyll. In addition, to protect the tree from approaching winter, cells begin to form at the base of each leaf to close off the flow of liquid. Yellow takes over the leaf, tree, and forest until the leaves fall.

While a signal of autumn, yellow leaves can also be a sign of a tree's distress. In Texas, they're often the same thing. But there's a quirky Wes Anderson-y charm to our yellow autumns. Like the idiosyncratic aesthetic of a Wes Anderson movie, our deadpan trees and monochromatic color palette possess an honest directness and lack of pretense. It's a straight-shooter, full day's work-kind of yellow.



In our less accessible bottomlands, where the preferred conditions of soil and moisture exist, the yellow takes on a more exalted dimension. The Great Trinity Forest, at over 6,000 acres the largest urban bottomland hardwood forest in the country, offers the biggest yellow swath. Ash, elm, and hackberry/sugarberry trees dominate this succession forest, which emerged after the old growth forest was logged for lumber, agriculture, sand and gravel mining, and utility corridors. In the rich flood-supplemented Trinity bottomland, this fast-growing Band of Yellow has created tall, crowded canopies as they compete for light.



# YELLOW (CONTINUED)

Ash trees, constituting over 40 percent of the forest, make the most brilliant yellow contribution. Pinnately compound, five or seven oval leaves are borne oppositely on each stem like a colorful feather. The slanting afternoon sun reflects off the leaves, lighter on the underside, creating the effect of illuminating the forest.



With trees forming slender pillars supporting a vaulted yellow dome of arched branches, the forest becomes a cathedral. On the Buckeye Trail within the forest, the soft trail forms the nave, its floor sprinkled with yellow leaves, leading to an apse on the eastern bank of the Trinity containing the Texas Buckeye grove. The delicate buckeyes sport five yellow palmately compound leaves radiating from each stem like a palm waving you closer. Their branches form a decorative tracery framing the blue sky over the Trinity just beyond.

Senses already heightened by mere presence in the forest, you feel the soft breeze generated by the wide Trinity channel, hear only the sound of bird chirps and trills, see the feathered sunlight and long shadows created by the tree trunks, and experience an openness and grandeur immersed in yellow. John Graves, our Brazos-canoeing poet, similarly remembers October evenings as “blue and yellow and soft of air.”

Harsh conditions can intrude on the bottomlands too, however. Last year brought heavy rains and winds uprooting trees and damaging the canopy. This summer, dry and hot, has hardened and cracked the “soft” trail and the buckeye leaves, yellow in August, are curled and crinkly brown. Green curtains of invasive privet persistently encircle and penetrate the buckeye grove (one day—one day!—they will be contained).





# YELLOW (CONTINUED)

With a looming extinction event from the invasive ash borer beetle, what will we do when our ash trees are gone?

We celebrate spring's flowers and conduct tours of the Texas Buckeye blooms, but feel insecure about autumn's leaves. It's time to embrace our yellow autumn.

Two insightful New England poets help put our autumn in context. "Nature rarer uses yellow," Emily Dickinson observed from her Massachusetts bedroom window, seeing as usual what others missed: "Yellow she affords / Only selectly / Like lover's words."

And Robert Frost reminds us that we've already possessed something of great value: "Nature's first green is gold / her hardest hue to hold." Whether the gold of spring or autumn, such fleeting treasures should be celebrated while we have them:

Then leaf subsides to leaf  
So Eden sank to grief  
So dawn goes down to day  
Nothing gold can stay.



*The Buckeye Trail crew invites you to stay with us for a few hours on the first annual Fall Yellow Hike on the Buckeye Trail, November 8, 2-4 PM.*



# FROM SNAKES TO SONGS: SIX WEEKS THAT SPARK A LIFETIME OF WONDER

BY: SHELBY SMITH



In 2022, the Ideal/Bonton Nature Community Project grew out of the Ned and Genie Fritz Texas Buckeye Trail Project as we sought to engage this South Dallas community in exploring the Great Trinity Forest and Buckeye Trail nearby. The heart of the project is the T.R. Hoover Community Development Center, which hosts an annual summer camp for children in the Ideal/Bonton neighborhood.



For six weeks each summer, the Center offers a safe, welcoming place filled with activities for elementary-age children (5-13 years old) of all ability levels, about 40 campers each year. North Texas Master Naturalist volunteers lead nature education for the campers in age-specific classes for two hours each week: one hour indoors and one hour outdoors. Field trips bring the whole crew together — even the youngest campers — for shared adventures. In addition to the Buckeye Trail, we've taken children to Rogers Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, McCommas Landfill, the Bath House Cultural Center, John Bunker Sands Wetland Center, Trinity River Audubon Center, and Cedar Hill State Park. Dedicated NTMN volunteers contribute more than 600 hours each summer to the camp. This summer we had twenty-four NTMN volunteers.



# FROM SNAKES TO SONGS: SIX WEEKS THAT SPARK A LIFETIME OF WONDER (CONTINUED)

This summer marked our fourth year with the program. We have truly become part of this Southern Dallas community. Our bright green shirts and cheerful smiles are recognized everywhere we go in the community.

This year's activities included a deeper look into decomposers as we studied night crawlers, pill bugs, and mushrooms and even held pill bug races. Laura Haynes brought a wealth of information, as well as live snakes, toads, and lizards for the children to hold and explore (and yes, everyone touched a snake). Jessamine Jenson brought clay for each child and led an art-in-nature session where each camper created a clay nature sculpture. Tim Brys brought his taxidermy mammals to assist in building understanding and empathy for our native wildlife while Judy Meagher shared her insect collection and her dried grasshoppers. Almost all the kids dared to taste them!



We were especially lucky to host Chaplain Coy Poitier, a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Buffalo Soldier and NTMN, for a special visit. Karen Carpenter introduced the children to bird songs; some of the birds sang back as we learned outdoors. Birds made another appearance as Susey Woodruff taught the campers to set bird names to music and create their own original songs.

# FROM SNAKES TO SONGS: SIX WEEKS THAT SPARK A LIFETIME OF WONDER (CONTINUED)

The T.R. Hoover Summer Nature Classes leave a lasting impression on everyone involved with these kids. There's nothing more satisfying than seeing a child's bright smile when they realize they can catch a beetle, touch a snake, or hold a toad. From dissecting owl pellets to building bee hotels, the campers eagerly dove into each activity, their knowledge and confidence in nature growing week by week. In just six weeks, we saw curiosity bloom, fears fade, and nature become a friend. Maybe next time they see a spider, they'll carry it outside instead of squashing it!



## iNat Species Feature

### Red Shiner

*Cyprinella lutrensis* Photo by: [@ashleyrsteel on iNat](#)

Shiner (the beverage) and minnows go together like rod and reel. Unfortunately, the Red Shiner (*Cyprinella lutrensis*), a common bait fish in the same family as minnows, is wreaking havoc in our Texas streams. Ashley Steel spotted this fellow in Ten Mile Creek.



For most of the year, the Red Shiner has a traditional silver hue, but during the breeding season (April through September) the male sports pink to purple sides and red crown and fins. Considered invasive, they are habitat generalists, prolific breeders, and omnivorous, known to eat the eggs and larvae of native fish. So properly discard bait bucket contents: Don't mess with Texas streams.

Have any weird, noteworthy and exciting observations, or see something incredible posted in the iNat community? Share it with *The Dragonflyer* at [dragonflyer@ntmn.org](mailto:dragonflyer@ntmn.org)!



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



## Sarah Hutchings

A long-time educator, Sarah Hutchings taught biology at Mountain View College, Life Science at the middle school level, and Anatomy and Physiology as well as AP Biology at the high school level. On the recommendation of Master Naturalist friends, she joined the Chapter in 2018. Sarah currently volunteers at the young naturalist program at Nathaniel Hawthorne Elementary School and the Benny Simpson native plant garden at the Texas Discovery Gardens. The most fulfilling aspect of her Master Naturalist life continues to be sharing her love of nature with others.

## Kaila Rose

Kaila Rose joined our Chapter in 2024 after becoming frustrated with the disrespect of natural spaces and hearing about our collective work in the community. While she works at a garden shop, she is also a freelance floral designer and illustrator and an enthusiastic gardener, and loves being in her garden and sharing what she has learned about flora and fauna with the world. Kaila enjoys camping and hiking, particularly in Big Bend and New Mexico. She volunteers in cleanup efforts at White Rock Lake, archival digitization at the BRIT Herbarium, and rescuing native plants for use at the Twelve Hills Nature Center. Kaila continues to be inspired by the curiosity and open hearts of the NTMN community.



# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (CONTINUED)

## Sandra Horton

A hobby gardener slowly converting her suburban landscape to a native plant habitat, Sandra Horton joined the Chapter in 2023 after a nudge from Master Naturalist friend Heather Mishra during a backyard tour. Sandra is an engineer with Texas Instruments, specializing in the collection and tracking of data to understand patterns and making complex data sets more understandable (ask her to tell you about the parallels between thermal management and nature).



Her professional training naturally makes her an avid iNaturalist user where she is intent on collecting as many unique species from as many locations as possible, as evidenced by some impressive stats below. She is one of the project leads on the Windmill Pollinator Garden at Brookhaven College where, among other things, she regularly battles Bermuda grass. Sandra loves BioBlitzes and learning from the fascinatingly different perspectives of her new friends in nature.

**INAT:** @sandrahorton | **JOINED:** Apr 2017 | **OBS:** 13268 | **SPECIES:** 3783 | **IDS:** 4932

## Lorry Parker

Lorry (that's Lorry, not Larry) Parker certified with the Blackland Prairie Chapter in 2009 before moving to Dallas and joining our Chapter in 2019. Now retired after working in marketing and sales and acquisitions in the tech world, she is actively involved in Chapter administration, including serving on the VH approval team. These roles have permitted her insights into both the fascinating projects of our Chapter and the tremendous State Master Naturalist organization. She looks forward to another thrilling year working on the Bat Acoustic Monitoring project. Lorry enjoys hiking, kayaking and birding all over the globe, including the Scottish Highlands, Galapagos Islands, and even the Antarctic! Next up: touring Portugal with kayak and wine goblet.







# Final Thoughts

Autumn is traditionally associated with seasonal harvesting and the Harvest Moon. In her book, *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*, Robin Kimmerer shares the ancient guidelines from Indigenous cultures for the Honorable Harvest.

Know the ways of the ones who take care of you, so that you can take care of them.

Introduce yourself. Be accountable as the one who comes asking for a life.

Ask permission before taking. Abide by the answer.

Never take the first one. Never take the last.

Take only what you need.

Take only that which is given.

Never take more than half. Leave some for others.

Harvest in a way that minimizes harm.

Use it respectfully. Never waste what you have taken.

Share.

Give thanks for what you have been given.

Give a gift in reciprocity for what you have taken.

Sustain the ones who sustain you and the Earth will last forever.

# DRAGONFLYERS

**Julia Bacak**

**Sam Behrent**

**Caleb Hinojos**

**Charlie Marshall**



## CONTRIBUTORS

**Sierra Carter**

**Samantha Knight**

**Nathan May**

**Amanda Pound**

**Shelby Smith**

**Ashley Steel**

**Steve Wilson**

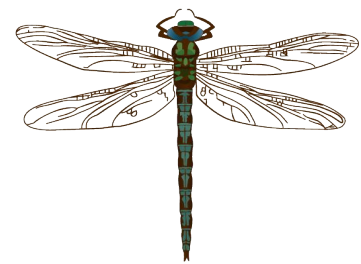
## SPECIAL THANKS

**Tim Gibson**

**Rebecca Posten**

**We encourage and welcome your submissions and questions.**

**Please contact [dragonflyer@ntmn.org](mailto:dragonflyer@ntmn.org)**



*The Dragonflyer* is a quarterly publication providing educational and informational content for NTMN members, engaging with the organizations and groups with whom we volunteer, and fostering connections and conversations. In furthering our mission, think of it as the home for serious and substantive (even if frequently light-hearted) project reports and ecological exploration, analysis, insights, and deep-dives. Please reserve more routine Chapter business, administrative news, and recognitions for other media (website, email, and Chapter meeting announcements).