



# BRAZOS BEND BUNCH BUGLE

VOLUME 21, NUMBER 9

SEPTEMBER 2009

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Another school year has begun. I miss all the excitement of starting a new year with a new group of children. Then I remember the day to day getting up early and all the responsibilities, and I say a prayer that I am able to be retired. My favorite part of teaching I can do right here at the park. Our park visitors are so receptive to the bit of knowledge that we can pass on!



We are starting a new class of volunteers at the park and I am looking forward to that! Our last class of volunteers have fit in so well and have been so instrumental at the park this summer. Thank you to all our new volunteers and also a big thank you to all our experienced volunteers who help make this park a great place to be!

*Carrie Sample*

## AUGUST MEETING NOTES

*Contributed by Anna Dell Williamson*

President **Carrie Sample** called the meeting to order on August 8, 2009. There were 17 volunteers, 2 volunteers in training, 2 junior volunteers, 1 inactive member and 3 staff members present. The July minutes were approved as posted.

Nominating Committee: **Glen Kilgore** reported on the slate of officers for 2009-2010:

- President: **Carrie Sample**
- Vice-President: **Suzie Gann**
- Secretary: **Eddy Grizzaffi**
- Treasurer: **Dave Armstrong**

There were no nominations from the floor. The slate will be accepted at the September meeting. The new officers will take office October 1.

### *In This Issue:*

From the President's Desk . . . . .	1
August Meeting Notes . . . . .	1
Staff Reports . . . . .	3
<i>Steve Killian, David Heinicke, Sharon Hanzik, Richard Taylor</i>	
Sept. Maintenance Report . . . . .	6
Nature Center Report . . . . .	6
Halloween Event . . . . .	7
14 <sup>th</sup> Annual Butterfly Count . . . . .	7
Alligator Hatching and Gator Daze . . . . .	8
Hummingbirds . . . . .	8
Identification Quiz . . . . .	9
Volunteer News & Notes . . . . .	10
In Memoriam: Fletcher Morgan . . . . .	11
New Volunteer Training . . . . .	13
Message from Librarian . . . . .	13
Election of New Officers . . . . .	13
Programs Help Needed . . . . .	13
News on the Sundial . . . . .	13
Third Quarter Reminder . . . . .	14
Texas State Parks Guide . . . . .	14
Brazos River Pickers . . . . .	14
FirstAid/AED/CPR Classes . . . . .	14
Co. Fair Senior Day . . . . .	14
Calendar of Events . . . . .	15

**Steve Killian, David Heinicke,** and **Sharon Hanzik** brought their reports, which are published elsewhere in the newsletter. Treasurer **Diane Carpenter** brought her report, which is available in the lounge.

The following budget requests were made and accepted:

- **Ron Morrison** requested decomposed granite gravel to place under the bike rack by the Nature Center, to bring the soil up to sidewalk level. The current uneven area could cause a fall. Money will be from the El Paso/Morrison funds.
- **Carrie Sample** requested funds for two diaper changing stations in the Nature Center restrooms. Park staff will install them.
- **Carrie Sample** reported on Eco-Explorers. 235 children attended one or more times, 45 attended 5 or more times. It is a great outreach activity. The highest attendance was over 70, the lowest was 35-40. In addition, there was about one adult per two children, plus siblings. We had lots of people to help, including Master Naturalists, the Audubon Society, Houston Museum of Natural Science, **Mary Lockwood, Pam Tatge, Suzie Gann, Eddy Grizzaffi,** and many others. Thanks to everyone. We charged a \$2.00 donation for refreshments and crafts, and there was \$571 left for Education Funds for next year's programs. Next year we need to limit attendance and we are considering advance registration.

**Maintenance Report:** There was no special report. There has been a request for additional chemicals for tallow control in path of new trail.

**Beth Debenport** reported that new items in the Gift Shop include local honey from **Jeff McMullan,** handmade button rings and bracelets by **Patricia Marshall's** daughter, and water bottle carabiners donated by **John Bradford.** We will be replenishing our t-shirts. The Dover display is great for displaying all of the little books.

**Chuck Duplant** reported that the wood yard sales are down due to the heat. We are beginning to split and prepare wood for sale. By the end of September, sales will start up again.

**Judy Strauss** brought the Outreach report. We are planning for an event in September, a Cuboree, at Seaborne Creek, on the 19th. **Bruce and Anna Dell Williamson** did an outreach at the Pearland Public Library.

#### **Announcements:**

**Judy Strauss** invited us to meet with her and **Nancy Bailey,** widow of **Richard Board,** for dinner Monday evening at Applebee's at 5:30 PM. All are invited.

November 7 will be Heritage Prairie Day at the Nature Center. We may have a volunteer booth there to give out our pamphlets. Programs will be held upstairs, and there will be booths outside.

#### **New Business:**

**Sharon Hanzik** presented a cap and patch to new volunteer **Shanay Kapadia.** **Nelda and Marty Gay** are our newest Emeritus members.

The meeting was adjourned.



# STAFF REPORTS

## SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

*Contributed by Steve Killian*

It has been a good July, but attendance is a little down from last year. The weather has been very hot. During this time, park staff have been busy with maintenance issues.

The new orientation panels have been put up throughout park and are excellent. We are discussing ideas about additional signs.

We will be interviewing four candidates for Assistant Manager on Thursday. If none meet the criteria, we will re-advertise the position. We need a leader to take us to the next level.

We are waiting on resource management clearance to open the proposed new trail with natural surface, and then we will get funds to make it a superb trail. By mid-fall it should be open in some fashion.

BBSP is in the top ten state parks in park revenue. We don't have enough camping to be number one or two. All of the park won't be developed, but there are some parts available to develop. There are plans to add a third camping loop between the park maintenance road and Creekfield Lake.

There is funding for the equestrian area. It will have electricity soon. Phase 2 is water from Hale Lake area to the equestrian area. Then it will be a multi-use camping area. Equestrian users can reserve on line, and walk-ins will be allowed if the site is not full by Friday. Two groups, the Loping Ladies and the Galloping Gals, have collected funds, which we will hold for use on the Equestrian Camping Area. There is a proposal to put in non-potable horse watering troughs in September.

Ft. Bend County Drainage District donated the labor for the New Horseshoe levee repair project. BBSP provided a little money. We appreciate the drainage district for their help.

Lake management continues. We are killing wild rice and noxious invasives, but leaving lilies and lotus, which will die out in late fall. We will try to trim the channels and not use chemicals. We are past the phase of wholesale spraying, except Pilant Lake. We will aerially spray this month for alligator weed, and then attack tallows.

## INTERPRETIVE STAFF REPORTS

### DAVID HEINICKE

The Perseid Meteor Shower will be Tuesday night/Wednesday morning. It could be spectacular. The Observatory will be open until 4 AM, the park will be open all night, the Nature Center will be open until 7 PM, and then we will have an information booth on Creekfield from 7:00 to 9:00 PM.

We are incubating 12 rat snake eggs, and 33 alligator eggs. The rat snake eggs are from our resident couple in the Nature Center. We took the alligator eggs from a nest and left 12 in it. Check your email regularly for an announcement about hatching.

August 28-30, we will have "Gator Daze", which will be a weekend of alligator programs and stories, showing hatchling alligators, and conducting hikes.

We have requested a trail grant for materials for Live Oak Trail. The amount we will receive will be announced August 24. We know we will receive at least part of the money requested.

Attendance may slow during the summer, but we still need to keep everything open. Please sign up to help.

The new trailhead maps look nice, and visitors are looking at them. Thanks to **Ron and Margaret Morrison**, who committed funds to get the ball rolling.

Preliminary design work has started on the new crocodile/alligator exhibit, which is funded by the **Ken Debenport** memorial. Phase 1 will include a display of crocodilians of the world, with a world map and pictures of all species.

Thanks to **Carrie Sample** for Eco Explorers. **Bruce Williamson** commented on how much the program influences children.

**John Bradford** has provided an electronic 3-D version of the observation platform plans which may be used for fund-raising, etc.

Excavation for the sundial is tentatively set for September 21-22. The TPWD archaeology class will start the excavations, and volunteers will finish it. BBSP is an archeologically sensitive area.

**SHARON HANZIK**



Sharon introduced the VIT's attending the meeting: **Shanay Kapadia** and **Bob Kowalewski**. New training is scheduled for Sept 12, 19, and 26. We have 7 trainees, including an 11-year-old with her mother.

Hobby Airport Orientation Site has a link of things to do around Houston, and BBSP is one of the sites they link with.



## **LEAD RANGER REPORT**

*Contributed by Richard Taylor*

By now many have seen the new Park Map stations around the park. I have got to thank the Rangers and Park Hosts for a strong effort to get these in, and they look great. We have actually had visitors see the maps and start to ask where they were, and then say, "Never mind, I see it." Park Hosts Capt. Gene Schwantes and Bobby Moore put forth their skills and built all of the stands, with the Rangers assisting in the completion. Rangers Jeff Orsak and Gary Bishop did a good job on the painting and roof construction.

We recently acquired a new 14' x 24' portable building that will be used as the new Maintenance Wood Shop. This building will house carpentry tools and saws. We are running wiring for plugs and lights, insulating it, and putting plywood on the walls. Then we are going to build work stations and cabinets. This will enable us to be sawdust-free inside the mechanic's shop. Carpentry projects with sawdust flying around and torn-apart motors in the same area just don't mix well. The new wood shop will also allow us to set up sign making and other required projects. It now sits inside the Maintenance Area where the Volunteer Tool Shed was positioned. The Rangers have found a nice little area for the Volunteer Tool Shed next to the Volunteer Tractor Shed inside the Maintenance Area. The building was moved there and

now has a new covered porch in front of it and a new ramp leading up to the door. Again, Park Hosts aided in the construction of the ramp, porch, and an outside work bench. Ranger Blake Flessner assisted in the roof construction.

We have also been fortunate to receive cultural and natural resource clearances to allow us to clear out the area just outside of the Maintenance Area to the left of the gate. It now has a 14' x 65' mobile home set up for a future residence. Plans are to install 2 new Park Host sites there as well. There are still numerous things that have to be done before everything is ready, such as water, electric, and sewer hookups. But the Rangers really jumped on this project and finished the clearing, driveways, and pads ahead of schedule. There is also an area just across from the maintenance area parking lot to use for additional parking when the main parking lot is full. Big thanks to Rangers **JT Kalina**, **Jeff Orsak**, and **Gary Bialas** for all the early morning work. Rangers **Jim Gilliam**, **Blake Flessner**, and **Devin Elster** were also involved with the project.

As I write this to you we are getting some much needed rain. All the surrounding areas have been experiencing the drought. The lack of rainfall has kept most of the mowing down. However, Park Host **Randy Teague** has been spot mowing where we need it and **Capt. Gene** has been hitting the back areas with the shredder. But even with the little rain we have gotten, we must remain alert to potential wild fires. Everything is parched right now and the county is under a burn ban. Please assist us in letting visitors and campers know that we are only allowing small cooking fires.

Our former Assistant Manager, **Dennis Jones**, has retired and the front residence is vacant at this time. We are in the process of renovating it. Camp Hostess **Charen Teague** is heading up the inside touchups, and Ranger **Jim Gilliam** has taken on the task of upgrading some of the landscape. Plans are to have it ready for the new Assistant Manager/PPO by October 1.

Park Hostess **Debbie Moore** has been doing an excellent job of keeping the shelters clean and the dining hall appliances up to standards. Plus she has been cleaning out fire rings in the campgrounds. That is one of those back breaking jobs.

Hikers will notice that we have cleaned up the stockpile area just off of Bluestem Trail head. This area will be maintained to store sterile material such as topsoil, sand, gravel, etc. We recently were given formal approval to use this area for such purposes. Please direct any material needs to **Jeff Orsak** or myself. Any topsoil or other materials brought into the park will have to be strictly monitored for trash and other debris.

Our park vehicle fleet has just been graced with one more new truck, a diesel 2009 Chevy 2500HD four door pickup. And just like all State Park trucks now, it is white.

Thanks for doing your part in the park. It really helps. As you see above we aren't standing still. BBSP is growing, and believe me, there are more things to come. As stewards of the land and conservationists we are trying to do our best to serve those who put us in charge of it all. Thank you for allowing us to be who we are.

# SEPTEMBER MAINTENANCE REPORT

*Contributed by Ron Morrison*

**Wood Yard:** Split 1½ cord of firewood.

**Mowing and Landscaping:** Watered the trees on Creekfield Forest, 40 Acre Lake and Elm Lake trails. Watered small trees at the Nature Center. Built earth rings around small trees at the Nature Center so water would not run off. Spread decomposed granite gravel in the washouts by the front door at the Nature Center.



**Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:** Added bulkhead and trail topping to a washed out culvert on Pilant Slough Trail.

**Equipment Maintenance:** General Maintenance

**Construction Projects:** Installed a bench on Creekfield Forest Trail.

**Pest Control:** Treated Chinese Tallow trees on the new Live Oak trail.

## NATURE CENTER REPORT — AUGUST 2009

*Contributed by Anna Dell Williamson*

Here are the totals of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for August 1-31, 2009. Attendance continues to be high for summer, and Gator Daze, August 29-31, brought record numbers for the month.

PROGRAMS	TOTALS
<b>NATURE CENTER ATTENDANCE</b> August 2009 - 4542 (high 493, 8/29) August 2008 -3985	<b>Saturdays (5) 1956</b> High, 493, 8/29 Average: 391
	<b>Sundays (5) – 1392</b> High, 372, 8/2, 8/30 Average: 278
	<b>Weekdays (21)– 1194</b> High, 136, 8/6 Average, 57
<b>CREEKFIELD HIKES (8)</b>	<b>87– High, 8/30 - 22</b>
<b>ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS (5)</b>	<b>143 - High, 8/15 - 67</b>
<b>BIRD PROGRAMS/HIKES (2)</b>	<b>24- High, 8/2 -17</b>
<b>SNAKE PROGRAMS (7)</b>	<b>187 – High,8/29 - 51</b>
<b>CHILDREN’S STORY TIME (6)</b>	<b>69– High, 8/8 - 21</b>
<b>OTHER PROGRAMS (4)</b> includes pond life, outreach, armadillos and Eco-explorers	<b>175</b>
<b>TOTAL VISITORS SERVED IN HIKES AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>655</b>
<b>TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS IN INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS</b>	<b>564</b>

# HALLOWEEN EVENT

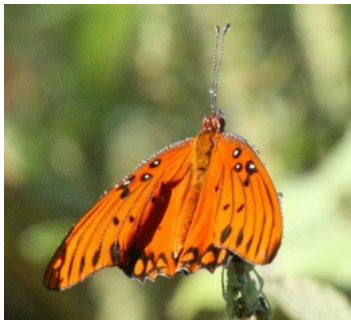
*Contributed by Sharon Hanzik*



We are planning our annual Halloween event for Saturday, October 31. We plan on having themed programs during the day and story telling in the evening. This will most likely be for campers and area residents. Current plans call for programs during the day on snakes, spiders, bats, and insects. In the evening, we will have storytelling at Elm Lake. (The Amphitheater is too busy with the Observatory crowd coming and going, and we need a quieter area.) The program will last from 6:00 to 8:00 PM depending on the number of storytellers and how long it takes.

WE NEED STORY TELLERS - "Ghosts Along the Brazos" is the theme. **David Heinicke** and I have a few books for you to browse through in our personal library. Now is the time to start practicing. Please let me know what you would be interested in doing. What we are able to do all depends on volunteer participation.

## 14TH ANNUAL BUTTERFLY COUNT



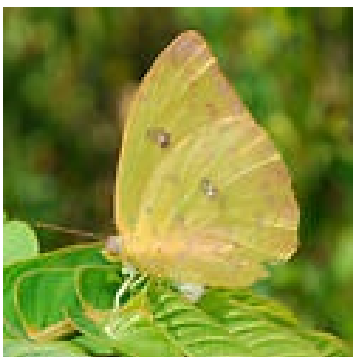
**Gulf Fritillary**  
*Photo by Jerry Zona*

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Butterfly Count at BBSP will be held on Saturday, September 20. The count will start at the Forty-Acre parking lot at 9:00 AM and meet at the Elm Lake Picnic Area at 12:30 PM to tally preliminary results and eat lunch.

Participants should bring a sack lunch, drinking water, mosquito repellent, sun protection, and (if you have them) butterfly field guides and close-focusing binoculars. All levels are welcome - especially beginners. There will be experienced leadership for all groups.

The count area is a 15-mile diameter circle. In the morning we focus primarily on several areas within the Park. Those who wish to continue in the afternoon can survey other areas within the circle .

The NABA fee is \$3.00 for each participant. Park entry fee is waived. Participants should stop as they enter the park and identify themselves as participants in the butterfly count, and they will be issued a "business pass".



**Orange-Barred Sulphur**

The first count was held in 1995 with 392 butterflies of 30 species reported. The record count was in 2001, with 5340 butterflies of 57 species sighted. Special Sightings last year included record numbers of nine species (Southern Dogface, Gray Hairstreak, Red-banded Hairstreak, Dusky-blue Groundstreak, American Snout, Gulf Fritillary, Painted Lady, Queen and Ocola Skipper). Also last year four new species were sighted (White Angled-Sulphur, Orange-barred Sulphur, Large Orange Sulphur and Yehl Skipper).

For more information, contact the compilers, Rich and Sandy Jespersen, at (979) 553-3575 or [richj@consolidated.net](mailto:richj@consolidated.net).



# ALLIGATOR HATCHING AND GATOR DAZE



Gator Daze was held August 28-30. The focus was on alligators, and even the babies cooperated. Thirty-one eggs were hatched on Friday, August 28, much to the delight of 42 park volunteers, hosts, and visitors. Saturday and Sunday seemed to be light days for picnicking and camping, but the Nature Center was full of visitors wanting to see the new additions and attend programs highlighting alligators. We had the highest weekend attendance for the month of August.

The babies are now located in the aquarium, and the year-old former residents have been released into the wild.

Actually, visitation never dropped all summer. We've been holding steady at anywhere from 250 to 400 visitors, Saturday and Sunday. As we gear up for a busy fall season, we need volunteers in the Nature Center and Gift Shop every weekend.



## HUMMINGBIRDS

*Contributed by Rick Dashnau*

Here are some clips I shot Sunday (August 16) at BBSP by the Nature Center. Hummingbirds are appearing at the garden, and I was able to catch some video (shot at high frame rate) of the bird at work. There is a Hummingbird Plant near the Nature Center. This plant has tubular flowers filled with nectar that Hummingbirds like to eat. I was able to catch some clips of this Hummingbird as it hovered around the flowers. Hummingbirds can fly in any direction, while facing any way. They have a long, pointed tongue that can extend far beyond the tip of the beak. The tip is grooved and uses capillary action to pull liquid into the bird's mouth (instead of the bird "sucking" the nectar out). The tongue can be seen briefly near the end of the 420 fps part of this clip. Although not shown here, Hummingbirds also eat insects.



I've got two links--one to my rented server, and one to YouTube:

[http://rickubis.20m.com/hummingbird\\_081609.wmv](http://rickubis.20m.com/hummingbird_081609.wmv)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0PTSgysvQU>



**Ruby-throated Hummingbird**  
*Photo by Jerry Zona*

As usual, the newer stuff appears on either the RICKUBISCAM page: <http://67.15.110.101/mycam.html> or my Slow Motion Video page: [http://67.15.110.101/slowmo\\_01.html](http://67.15.110.101/slowmo_01.html)



# BANDING HUMMINGBIRDS

**David Heinicke** is banding hummingbirds for the public on Saturday and Sunday mornings in September near the Nature Center. Check the web site to confirm the date and time. He bands, determines species, age and sex, measures, weighs, and feeds the bird while explaining facts about hummers. For example, on their return flight from the Yucatan Peninsula every spring, they fly 600 miles non-stop to the Texas coast in about 24 hours. Join him this month for an interesting presentation on these fascinating little birds.



Photo by Jerry Zona

# IDENTIFICATION QUIZ

*Contributed by Jenn Mantei  
Photos by Jerry Zona*

How well do you know your..... **Wild Plants?**

*Answers on page 15.*



A



B



C



D



E



F

# VOLUNTEER NEWS & NOTES



. . . to **Mary Lockwood** and **Maureen Goode** for helping **Glen Kilgore** with the Pond Life Program Saturday. The three of them spent five hours or more putting it

together!

. . . to **Joan Hebert** and **Dawn Tejero** for the meeting supper.

. . . to **Anna Dell Williamson** for taking meeting minutes in the absence of the Secretary.

. . . to **Dave Armstrong** for accepting the nomination as Treasurer for 2009-2010.

. . . to **David Heinicke** for organizing the kayak/canoe paddling trips over the summer.

. . . to **Carrie Sample** for the Eco-Explorers program this summer.

. . . to the **Maintenance Crew** for all of their work in so many areas.



**Connie Waltrip, Belinda DiMarcello and Shanay Kapadia** have finished training. Give them a big welcome to membership in the Volunteer Organization!



## SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Gary Bialas (Staff)  
Jim Calvert  
Ron Dearman  
Barry Eversole (Staff)  
Frank Gregg (Emeritus)  
Linda Oden Heinicke  
Tina Ibarra (Staff)

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

James Blankenship  
Buddy Franklin (Emeritus)  
Mozelle Franklin (Emeritus)  
Tom Kanak  
Diane Kerr  
Nicole Olson



## SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Dave and Gay Armstrong  
Jaci Elliott  
Eddy and Sam Grizzaffi  
Jim and Patricia Hiatt  
Don and Marilyn Vossler

## OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Diane and Jerry Carpenter



## IN MEMORIAM

*Fletcher Morgan, volunteer since 1990, passed away on September 3, 2009. Our sincere sympathy goes out to his family. The article below was printed in the October 2008 newsletter. Fletcher was a great asset to BBSPVO and will be missed.*

### **Volunteer Spotlight: Fletcher Morgan**

*Contributed by Jenn Mantei*

I sat down with Fletcher Morgan on a hot Saturday afternoon in August. Despite the heat, Fletcher was cool as a cucumber in his Volunteer uniform and signature jacket, a large manila envelope under one arm. To my surprise and astonishment, inside the envelope were copies of his latest resume (dated November, 2001), biography, and service record and honorable discharge papers from the U.S. Army. Also enclosed were several newspaper clippings from the Associated Negro Press and the Houston Informer from 1944 and 1945. One article is entitled "NEGRO ARTILLERY UNIT ROUTS GERMANS: Uncanny Accuracy Breaks Spirit of Nazis at St. Malo." The Battle of the Bulge.

We started out talking about Fletcher's days in the military. It all began at Texas A & M Prairie View, where he joined the ROTC while pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Vocational Agriculture. From there, he went to induction at Fort Sam Houston, then on to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for basic training. After basic, he taught school on base. "You'd be surprised how many fellas (soldiers) couldn't read and write," he said.

After leaving Fort Sill, Fletcher went on to Fort Gruber, Oklahoma and then was shipped overseas to Europe. That was April of 1944. On landing in England, his heavy artillery unit was held back by a rough English Channel, and had to wait an extra day to cross. "D-Day Plus Six," says Fletcher. They went from France into Germany, supporting the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne in the Breakthrough. General C. H. Hodges was the commander. After Hodges came General Eisenhower, but owing to some "disorganization", Fletcher and the rest of his unit were following General Patton when the war ended.

"...Battery B fired on an enemy battery of three guns. Three direct hits destroyed the guns. Eight rounds were fired on an enemy emplacement located on an island. Direct hits destroyed the guns. Computer for this battery at the time of firing was Pfc. Fletcher Morgan, Bay City, Tex."

- **Assoc. Negro Press**

"...Cpl. Morgan makes and keeps up-to-date graphic charts of our ammunition expenditure and keeps a detailed record of missions fired. Cpl. Morgan was formerly a student at Prairie View College and a ROTC officer."

- **Houston Informer**

At the end of the war, Fletcher was asked to work as a Service Officer. "I took charge of recreation, ordered equipment and supplies, picked up VIP visitors like the president of the Heinz food company." He returned home in November of 1945. "I remember we had two Thanksgivings that year. The first Thursday we were in New York, bivouacked there at West Point. Then we traveled to Tyler, Texas, and had another Thanksgiving there. The day after that I was discharged, and headed to Houston."

After the service, Fletcher went back to Prairie View and earned his Masters degree in Agriculture Economics in 1946. He began teaching Veterans how to farm, build homes, and raise farm animals, eventually landing a job with the USDA Farmers Home Administration as a supervisor. He had about 20 students in his first class. "I remember back then, we didn't have sprayers like they have now. We had a cultivator, and I'd hook a pump sprayer on each side. We'd pump it up, spray, stop and pump it up again."

Married in 1946, he and his wife, Alice, moved to Fort Bend County, where he farmed and did custom work like building fences. He then

went back to work as a “roaming supervisor” with the FHA. He retired in January of 1986. He and Alice have been married 63 years.

Fletcher recalls his introduction to Brazos Bend State Park at the first Earth Day Celebration in 1990, where he helped staff a tent for the Water Conservation Board, where he was chairperson of the Audit Committee. “A couple of the other people went off to eat, and came back, and I asked them where to go get food.” When he got to the food tent, Fletcher asked where to pay. The people informed him the meal was free, provided by the park volunteers. He said, “Where do I sign up? They had a desk out there under a big pecan tree, and that was when I signed up. That was 18 years ago next month.”

Back then, Fletcher helped out with anything and everything that needed to be done – trimming trees, fixing fences, picked up trash. “Dennis was a technician back then, a park ranger. He was teaching our classes. I told him, ‘Dennis, I’ll listen, but I’m not gonna look at any snakes!’”

It’s well known among the Volunteers that Fletcher is afraid of snakes, and when he’s working the desk in the Nature Center we keep them at a respectable distance. I asked him where his fear came from, if he’d had a traumatic experience with a snake. “I don’t know, nothing that I know of. I’m afraid of snakes and mice. I just can’t stand to look at snakes. When I see them on television or magazines, I have to look off. I used to garden – every year I had a nice garden, up until 2004 when I had a pacemaker put in (he can no longer stoop or bend over). My wife and I would be out in the garden, and she’d find a snake, and she’d go look for a hoe and then go back looking for the snake!”

Fletcher and Alice have three daughters and a son, as well as seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. “I worry about them being able to get an education now. It’s going to be much more expensive. When I went to school at Prairie View, it was \$18 a month for room and board. I went into the service, and when I came out and went for my Masters degree, it was \$22. And now, they don’t have dormitories, they have apartments that are \$600, \$700 a month.” Times have indeed changed.

Fletcher had his pacemaker put in four years ago, and has also been on dialysis for as many years. This hasn’t stopped him though – he still drives himself 40 miles to Wharton for dialysis three days a week, and works at the park at least one Sunday a month. He still has his farm, where he’s worked hard his entire life, farming his family’s land raising cotton, corn, watermelon, and running a hay-baling operation. In the past several years, Fletcher has sold off his equipment and cattle and has been cleaning and making repairs to the buildings. “I told my wife, if I leave her, she won’t have anything to worry about.”

Reading through the biography Fletcher gave me, I realize there is much more to this fascinating man than I have room to print. He’s studied real estate and financial management, has received numerous awards and recognitions for his outstanding achievements, and is an active leader in the community. Fletcher was recently named the first recipient of the Sen. Walter M. Burton Award presented by the Supporting America’s Best organization, which recognizes men and women who have followed in a tradition of service through politics and community affairs. He’s a life member of the NAACP. In a word, he’s made history.

The next time you see Fletcher Morgan manning the desk at the Nature Center, stop for a chat. You’re sure to be awed and inspired by the stories he has to tell.

Just don’t mention the “Ssss” word.

# NEW VOLUNTEER TRAINING

*Contributed by Anna Dell Williamson*

Just a reminder that new volunteer training starts Saturday, September 12 and continues September 19 and 26. Be sure to attend the orientation luncheon on the 12<sup>th</sup> (bring sandwich makings and sides), and remember that you may attend any other training sessions you are interested in. The training schedule is posted on the bulletin in the hallway to the lounge.

You will be called on to assist the VIT's in the Nature Center and Gift Shop, on water station runs, in the wood yard and the ATV tour as they work on Phase 1, and then in Phase 2 you will be needed for trail interpretation, and for encouragement as they attend programs and hikes and then lead their own.

## A MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARIAN

**Marilyn Vossler**, BBSP Librarian, is currently cataloguing the library books. If you have a book out, please return it so it can be entered in the catalogue. Thanks for your help.

## ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS

The following slate of officers will be presented at the September meeting to be accepted by the membership:

**President, Carrie Sample**  
**Vice-President, Suzie Gann**

**Secretary, Eddy Grizzaffi**  
**Treasurer, Dave Armstrong**

## HELP NEEDED FOR PROGRAMS DURING TRAINING

*Contributed by Sharon Hanzik*

As I will be conducting portions of the volunteer training and David will be off on Saturday, September 26, I need help with programs that day. I will do a 9:30 alligator video in the classroom and then there is the Creekfield Hike. I need one program in the afternoon in the classroom around 2:00 - whatever you prefer. The next training session inside starts at 3:45. If you would rather lead a hike in the afternoon, you may do it at any time. I definitely need to hear from you by the 20<sup>th</sup>.

## NEWS ON THE SUNDIAL

*Contributed by David Heinicke*

We will be excavating the area for the sundial at the Nature Center on Thursday and Friday, September 24 and 25, starting at about 9:00am. Because of it's location, we will have to follow procedures for excavating an archeological sight. Our TPWD archeologist will be supervising most of the dig. We will be removing soil four inches deep over an area of about 250 square feet, sifting it and recording anything we find and hauling it off. We would like to have 6 - 8 people each day. If you would like to help out please come on out. Thanks.

## THIRD QUARTER REMINDER

September is the last month in the third quarter. Remember to get your quarterly required hours completed and reported by the end of the month. You need 6 hours per quarter in any combination of the following areas: Nature Center, Gift Shop, Creekfield Hike, Water Station and Wood preparation. Also remember that your other hours (24 of the 48 annual required) are due by the end of December. These can be in any area of park support. Don't wait until the last minute. We need your help year round.

## TEXAS STATE PARK GUIDE

Brazos Bend State Park is featured with two pictures in the new Texas State Park Guide booklet. A photo of a green heron graces the front, and a two-page spread of Hale Lake and gazebo is the backdrop for the table of contents pages.

## THE BRAZOS RIVER PICKERS RETURN

The Brazos River Pickers will begin their performances in the amphitheater on October 3, and continue performances on the first Saturday of each month, through April 2010. Glen Kilgore usually tells stories at intermission.

## FIRST AID, AED AND CPR CLASSES

On Sunday, September 13 and again on Thursday, September 17 we will be offering American Red Cross First Aid/AED/CPR certification classes at Brazos Bend (each class is 8 hours) . The classes will be available to volunteers, staff and their families. Each class is limited to 20 participants and will cost \$10.00 per person for all three certifications. The classes will be held in the Nature Center classroom and will start at 8:30 and finish about 5:00 with a 30-minute break for lunch.

If you are interested, please email or call **David Heinicke** so he can put your name on the list. Class sizes are limited to 20 students in each class. Registration must be done before September 8 so we can pick up materials ahead of time. If you sign up for a class but have to cancel after September 8 you will still be responsible for the \$10.00 cost. The class will be taught by BBSP volunteer **Susie Gann** and another Red Cross certified instructor. Remember to contact David to register.

## SENIOR CITIZEN'S DAY - FT. BEND COUNTY FAIR

*Contributed by Diane Carpenter*

Monday, September 21, is Senior Citizen's Day at the Ft. Bend County Fair. I contacted the coordinator, who indicated they would love to have us there with our baby alligators, snakes and info on the park and organization.

Set-up is at 7:00 AM. The event is from 9 AM - 1 PM. It will be inside. They will furnish an 8-ft table. Jerry and I will coordinate this outreach, but we will need some additional volunteers.

If you are interested, please contact Diane Carpenter at [dcarpen25@yahoo.com](mailto:dcarpen25@yahoo.com).



# 2009-2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS



September 17	American Red Cross First Aid/AED/CPR certification classes, 8:30 - 5:00
September 19	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
September 20	14 <sup>th</sup> Annual Butterfly Count, 9:00 AM, Elm Lake Parking Lot
September 25	Bird Hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building
September 26	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
October 3	Photo-walk: Bird photography #3, 5:00 PM Brazos River Pickers, 5:00 - 7:00 PM, Amphitheater
October 10	Annual Volunteer Picnic, 5:30 PM
October 12	Columbus Day Holiday
October 23	Bird Hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building
October 31	Halloween
November 7	Heritage Prairie Day, Nature Center Photo-walk: Landscape photography #2, 3:00 PM Brazos River Pickers, 5:00 - 7:00 PM, Amphitheater
November 13	Bird Hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building
November 14	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
November 17-19	Deer Hunt, park closed
November 26	Thanksgiving



## Identification Quiz Answers (from page 9):

- A: Large-bracted tick trefoils
- B: Smart weed
- C: Wapato (duck potato)
- D: Silver-leaf Nightshade
- E: Goldenrod
- F: Freeze plant

**Brazos Bend State Park**

Texas Parks and Wildlife  
21901 FM 762  
Needville, TX 77461



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

→NEXT MEETING DAY AND TIME←

**SATURDAY, October 10, 2009, 5:30 PM**



**REGULAR VOLUNTEER EVENTS**

- Creekfield Hikes            Every Saturday and Sunday at 10:00 AM, led by volunteers
- Photo Hikes                First Saturday of each month
- Volunteer meeting        Second Saturday of each month at 5:30 PM, supper at 5:00 PM
- Bird Hikes                 See schedule in calendar

**BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION**

**VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS**

- President:                 Carrie Sample
- Vice-President:         Suzie Gann
- Secretary:               Eddy Grizzaffi
- Treasurer:              Diane Carpenter

**NEWSLETTER TEAM**

- Editor:                    Anna Dell Williamson
- Layout:                   Jenn Mantei
- Production Assistants: Bruce Williamson  
Terry Williamson

The **Brazos Bend Bunch Bugle** is the newsletter of the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization, A.K.A. The Brazos Bend Bunch. It is distributed monthly to volunteers through the BBSPVO web site. For further information on this newsletter or the volunteer program, contact David Heinicke or Sharon Hanzik at Brazos Bend State Park, phone 979-553-5101.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the author of the article and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization nor of BBSP administration. The deadline for Newsletter contributions is the Saturday following the monthly meeting, if mailed to Anna Dell Williamson, or at the meeting if delivered to the park. (E-mail address: awilliamson4@comcast.net). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.