



BRAZOS BEND BUNCH BUGLE

VOLUME 24, NUMBER 10

OCTOBER 2012

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The last two years have been a wonderful experience for me working as an officer of the best State Park Volunteer Organization in Texas. You have my thanks for that opportunity; it is something that I will never forget. The dedication and hard work of the officers and committee chairs who love BBSP made my job a pleasure.

We have some very big plans for additions in the Park which have been needed for years. These

plans have been made with very careful thought by a large number of our members. BBSP is benefitting from your action and the need is going to be met. Every Volunteer needs to be a part of the BBEEC Project.

Your new officers are:

President	Mary Lockwood
Vice-President	Glen Kilgore
Secretary	Belinda DiMarcello
Treasurer	Bob Kowalewski

Give them your support by being involved in setting the direction for our organization. We have term limits for our officers which is good. This keeps us from doing the same old – same old thing. Please be involved and perhaps think about serving as an officer in the future.

THANK YOU!

Offie Walker

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Happy Halloween! It is my pleasure to be following Offie in the office of President! I am looking forward to working with everyone over the next two years.

This month holds several events. One of my favorites will be the Halloween event. If the weather holds out (spooky that is) it should be lots of fun.



Also this month the George Observatory is hosting the Annual Astronomy Day event on Saturday, October 20. That usually means a crowded parking lot and across the street parking.

Counting butterflies...one, two, three...Hopefully there will be many participants and lots of cooperating butterflies.

See you around the park,

Mary Lockwood

SEPTEMBER MEETING NOTES

submitted by Anna Dell Williamson

President Offie Walker called the September 8, 2012, meeting to order at 5:30 PM. There were 16 volunteers, 5 VITs and 3 Staff members present. Offie thanked the volunteers who brought food: Nelda Gay, Sloppy Joes; Cindy Peterson, Beans and pasta salad; Carol Ramsayer, cake. The minutes of the August meeting were approved as posted.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Treasurer's Report, Bob Kowalewski

See a copy of the report in the notebook in the Lounge.

The following budget requests were presented to the membership and approved:

- 12x16 storage shed to allow removal of items stored in the sign shed, so the sign shed can be used for sign making. Ron Morrison had approved using funds from the Morrison El Paso fund. A request for tools will come later, and the equipment is to be available to park staff and volunteers.
- Repair of Grasshopper mower, funds to come from the Park Equipment Maintenance Fund.
- Two 16 GB I-pads, for more efficient park operations for Superintendent and Assistant. Monthly charges will be paid by staff. Purchase will come out of Supervisor's Fund. These will be used for Park Management Operations. There may be future requests for I-pads for Sharon and David for programs, etc. We need to check the quality of ATT out here - reception can be spotty.

Gift Shop Report, Beth Debenport:

This was the best August ever in the Gift Shop. Accepting charge cards is paying for itself. Offie commented on the improved appearance. Diane Carpenter has worked a great deal on getting the software up and running.

BBEEC, Offie Walker:

The TPWD architect has a better schematic diagrams on building and layout and will be sending back some more finished diagrams. We will meet with Regional P&W people soon and seek permission to start in earnest on this project.

Maintenance, Pete Hart:

The Maintenance Crew put in 200 hrs in August. They have been catching hogs, killing exotic trees, splitting wood, trimming trails, working on Pilant Slough trail, cleaning up new trails, and clearing several downed trees.

Volunteer Training, Anna Dell Williamson:

The new VIT class is great and 5 of them are present tonight: Dennis Akkola, Bob Schwartz, Ganene Steinhaus, Noriko Utsuzawa, and Diane Welty.

Election of new officers: The following slate was accepted by acclamation, effective October 1:

President	Mary Lockwood
Vice President	Glen Kilgore
Secretary	Belinda DiMarcello
Treasurer	Bob Kowalewski

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Offie reported that the afternoon meeting on August 11 in the Dining Hall was well-attended. We had a representative from Texans for State Parks, a 502(c)3 organization, that maintains contact with legislators and presents needs to legislators. The organization is a champion for the Texas Parks System. It is not a political organization. The Executive Committee voted to join this organization as an organization, subject to approval by the general membership. We will have one representative, and one vote in the organization. Meetings include representatives from TPWD Austin. This action will show Austin that we are interested in the whole park system, not just ourselves. There will be a brief business meeting before the picnic on October 13, and we will vote to decide to join Texans for State Parks. You can also join as an individual.

October 13 is our potluck picnic at the Dining Hall. There will be a brief meeting at 5:30 PM, the group picture will be taken at 6:00 and the picnic will begin at 6:30. We have some donations from the last picnic for funding for briskets, and we will accept donations tonight. See Bob K. if you want to make donation.

Butterfly Count: Rich Jespersen announced that the Butterfly count will be Sunday, October 7, beginning at 40-Acre Lake at 9:00 AM. He encouraged people who are new to the count to join in the fun and the opportunity to learn about local butterflies.

The Williamsons thanked the volunteers for showing up for their anniversary party, and for the nice emails and cards.

Pete Hart thanked Offie for the good job he did as President the last two years. Offie replied that he had lots of fun, but he is glad for term limits.

The meeting was adjourned.

STAFF REPORTS



STEVE KILLIAN, PARK SUPERINTENDENT

Steve reported that we just had the best August ever. It also was the best Fiscal Year (September 1 to August 31) ever.

The new Headquarters Gift Shop manager, Sarah Garcia, from Dinosaur Valley, starts Monday. We have posted for two part-time clerks, 24-32 hrs per week, weekends.

Resource Management:

Lake spraying, trails spraying

TDCJ inmates come out weekly and spend 600-800 hours per month: weed-eating and removing dead trees.

Construction projects:

2 new host sites are being installed in the overflow unit in the woods to right of water lift station. Overflow sites will have electricity, 20 AMP, and 50 AMP in the center for overflow RV sites.

On hold:

Creekwood Lake Trails, because the archaeologist has to do random samples.

Prairie Trail surfacing because it's been too wet to surface. We have approved gravel for purchase soon.

August is traditionally our slowest month, but this was the best August ever. We are entering into our busy season. This weekend (after Labor Day) is usually the slowest of the year, and now visitation will pick up. Weather will affect attendance.

JACOB DEMENT, ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT AND PARK POLICE OFFICER

BBSP is an excellent park, law-enforcement wise. There are few problems, and we have a good clientele. Speed control is sometimes an issue, especially on busy weekends.



SHARON HANZIK, INTERPRETIVE RANGER AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Sharon welcomed everyone, especially the new VITs:

Headquarters is passing out information about the Kroger card, and Sharon passed around letters for volunteers to use.

Astronomy Day at the George Ranch will be October 20.

The Brazos Pickers are starting up in October.

Simple Christmas is always the first Saturday of December.

Fall school groups will be starting soon.

Remember to wear seat belts on all ATVs.

At the end of this fiscal year, Aug. 31, Sharon reported to TPWD Austin that 24,400 volunteer hours were recorded. That is 2,000 more than last year, and a new record.

The busiest month for volunteers last year was February, with 3000 hrs; March was second, with 2300 hrs. The slowest month was July, with 1703 hrs.

NEWEST PATROL VEHICLE

Here's the newest patrol vehicle at Brazos Bend State Park. It will provide many miles and hours of law enforcement patrol, visitor contacts and roving interpretation.

The bike was purchased by Brazos Bend SP / TPWD with the bike accessories funded by the Brazos Bend Volunteer Organization. Thanks to both parties for this much needed upgrade!

Ride on.....

David Heinicke



NEWS AROUND THE NATURE CENTER

Bad news - the milk snake, which was OLD (16 years?), passed away September 15. We have plans to replace it with a Louisiana Milk Snake whose range does spread into our area.

Good news - the tarantula at the front desk is healthy. It just shed.



CONGRATULATIONS



OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Debbie Fewell
Buddy Franklin (Emeritus)
Mozelle Franklin (Emeritus)
Pete Hart
Tom Kanak
Nicole Olson

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ray Anderson
Nelda Gay (Emeritus)
David Heinicke (Staff)
Steve Killian (Staff)
Patricia Marshall
Tori Matta
Curtis Parent

OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

Diane and Jerry Carpenter
Justin and Kate Bower

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Mike & Paige Manley
Holly and Gene Haynes



	<p>Alejandro Davila and mom Helen Wright have completed their training! Give them a hearty congratulations and welcome!</p>	
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Thank you!

to the volunteers who brought food for the September meeting: Nelda Gay, Sloppy Joes; Cindy Peterson, Beans and pasta salad; Carol Ramsayer, cake.

to Carrie Sample for the article for the newsletter.

to Tommy Snow for the wood stork pictures, and to Justin Rhodes for sending them to us.

to the wonderful training leaders who took over for me for the last Saturday of training, when Bruce was in the hospital. I didn't worry about a thing at the Park.

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Wood Yard:

Split wood, fill kiosks

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Trim and mow Bayou Trail, Creekwood Trail, Creekfield Forest Trail,

Construction Projects

Work on Pilant Slough Bridge - remove old bridge; put up safety fence; mow area; pick up wood and concrete materials for bridge; mark post locations; set posts; mark and level spot to cut top of posts; cut posts; install joists, end pieces and planks; cut bumper on bridge; install approach to bridge; put stone and complete bridge.

Pest Control:

Check, set and close hog traps

Treat Chinese Tallow trees

Special Projects:

Collect seeds from prairie grasses

CARPENTER BEE EXHIBIT ON CREEKFIELD TRAIL HAS BEEN RESTORED

by Glen Kilgore

Several months ago, hike leaders for the Creekfield Lake Nature Trail were dismayed to learn that a key item in the hike had been removed. For over 10 years, the bench near the end of the trail had had a board that was infested with a carpenter bee tunnel. This tunnel, partially exposed to reveal the work that the female bee had done to provide her offspring with a secure place to mature, had traditionally been the last stop on the hike and had provided the hike leaders with one final demonstration of the wonders of nature. But early this summer, some well-meaning individuals had removed the board and replaced it with a new unblemished one, without realizing how this had affected the hike.

Then, recently, a work crew clearing away undergrowth near the Brazos River came across an old board with several abandoned carpenter bee tunnels in it. Realizing the potential of this find, they did not discard the board, but converted it into an exhibit on carpenter bees, and secured it to the original carpenter bee bench with a stout cable. Now hike leaders can once again end their hike by pointing out the amazing facts about carpenter bees.



LITTLE GREEN HERON

by Carrie Sample

I finally get to see the green on this Little Green Heron! This guy evidently got mad at me for taking pictures of him, because he puffed up the feathers on his head and walked away!



Before he got mad. . .



. . . After he got mad



WHO'S THE DADDY?

by Carrie Sample

Who's their daddy (or mother)? (Answer on page 11)

HAIRY, SCARY, SLIMY, SLITHERING SPECIES

by Sharon Hanzik



During the weekend of October 26, 27 & 28, 2012, park staff will present programs and hikes all pertaining to the creepy and mysterious side of wildlife. Programs are aimed at educating park visitors about animals known to instill fear and misunderstanding in many people. Park Ranger, Sharon Hanzik explains that "most of these fears are unfounded and based mostly on misinformation or the lack thereof. These programs are designed to help correct myth and misconception and demonstrate that although some species may be dangerous, they are also beneficial to their ecosystems."

Programs will include topics such as owls, snakes, bats, alligators, pond life, toads and spiders and will be presented in different formats including hikes, story time, slide shows and demonstrations. Also included in the weekend's programming is the park's annual Halloween Classic Movie Night on Saturday, October 27th. This year's feature, *The Ladykillers*, will start at 7:00 pm and will be held at the park's outdoor amphitheater. This 1955 comedy noir stars Alec Guinness, Peter Sellers and Herbert Lom. Five diverse oddball criminal types planning a bank robbery rent rooms on a cul-de-sac from an octogenarian widow under the pretext that they are classical musicians.



BRAZOS BEND GATOR RUN

The Pearland Pilates Powerhouse Race Series will sponsor the Second Brazos Bend Gator Run on Sunday, October 28, 2012. It will include a Half Marathon and a Half Marathon 2-Person Relay.

Race Course: The Race start will be at Elm Lake Pavillion. You will run to Horseshoe Lake and out some of Big Creek loop then back to Elm Lake. Next, the course heads to Spillway Trail, around 40-Acre Lake, then back to Elm Lake Pavillion. The 2-Person Relay will handoff here and the Half Marathoners will pass for a second loop.

Start Time: Half Marathon - 7:00AM 2-Person Relay - 7:15 AM

Relay Waiting Area: Elm Lake Pavillion.

Parking: Please arrive early to allow for plenty of time to park and get to the starting line. There will be parking at Elm Lake for Half Marathoners. See map of facilities for parking.

Post Race Party: There will be food and drink available at Elm Lake Pavilion.

Awards: Overall Male and Female and Masters Male and Female. Age Group awards go three deep.

2-Person Relay awards: 1st place only Female Relay, Male Relay and Co-ed Relay

Medals: Finishing Medals for ALL Half Marathoners that FINISH.

BBSP Volunteers needed: We need a few EARLY morning volunteers to in the following areas:

1. Two volunteers in front of Nature Center parking lot to direct cars on to Elm Lake from 6:00 AM - 7:30 AM.
2. Two volunteers at Elm Lake Picnic area to direct cars into parking places from 6:00 AM - 7:30 AM.
3. Two volunteers on a 'Gator stationed along the Spillway Trail in case of emergency from 7:30 AM - 10:00 AM.
4. A few volunteers on foot or bicycle to direct runners, look for alligators on trail and watch for emergencies around Elm, 4-Acre and Spillway Trails from 7:30 - 10:00 AM.

GEORGE OBSERVATORY SCHEDULE

The George Observatory will be opened to the public on Sundays from 12:00 noon to 5:00 PM. This will start October 7 through the end of November.



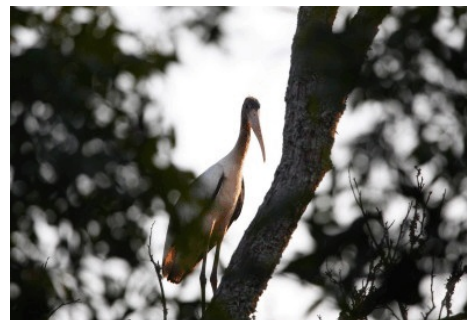
MORE ON WOOD STORKS

In the August edition, Paige O'Neal wrote an article on wood storks. Immediately after, Justin Rhodes, State Parks Region 4 Director, sent me some photos of wood ducks taken by Tommy Snow, Lead Ranger/PPO at Birch Creek State Park on Lake Somerville, late in the evening in mid-July. Flag Pond is a man made pond on the wildlife management area that the park manages as part of the Lake Somerville State Park Complex (you also have Nails Creek). Tommy wrote that about 50-60 Wood Storks have taken up residence at Flag Pond. You can see the photos on the side of the Nature Center Report, page 10.

NATURE CENTER REPORT SEPTEMBER 2012

Below are the totals of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for September 1-30, 2012. Heat and rain slowed down visitation, but we still broke records from last year in the NC and GS.

PROGRAMS	TOTALS SEPTEMBER
NATURE CENTER ATTENDANCE Sept. 2012- 4,675 Sept. 2011- 4,676 Sept. 2010- 4,112 Sept. 2009- 4,535 Sept. 2008- 1,386 Sept. 2007- 5,142 Sept. 2006 - 4,286	Saturdays (5) -1870 High, 624 (9/22) Average: 374
	Sundays (5) – 1646 High, (9/9) - 516 Average: 330
	Weekdays (20) - 1159 High,589 (9/3) Labor Day Average: 58
CREEKFIELD HIKES (9)	181
CHILDREN'S STORY TIME (6)	92
SPOTTING SCOPE (3)	115
SNAKE(4)	74
ALLIGATOR (3)	40
HUMMINGBIRD BANDING (4)	96
OUTREACH (1)	47
OWLS (2)	67
OTHER PROGRAMS (8): Bird, armadillos, photo walk, Geocaching 101, prairie hikes, pond life, mammals and creatures of the night	84
TOTAL VISITORS SERVED IN HIKES AND PROGRAMS	767
VOLUNTEER HOURS	INTERPRETATION = 1189 MAINTENANCE = 272 OTHER = 391 TOTAL HOURS = 1852 Fiscal Year 2012 = 24,400
PARK ATTENDANCE	Total 12,994 Day use 10,321 (79%) Overnight 2,673 (21%) NC Visitors 4,675 (36%)



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 6	Brazos River Pickers, 5:00 PM Landscape Photography Photo Walk, 5:00 PM, meet at Nature Center
October 7	17th Annual Brazos Bend Butterfly Count
October 13	Geocaching 101, 10:30 AM, meet at Nature Center Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Annual Volunteer Picnic, Dining Hall Group picture at 5:30 PM. Food and Fellowship right after the picture. Short General Meeting, BBSP Staff Time
October 19	Guided Bird Watching Hikes, 8:00 AM, meet at 40-Acre Lake restrooms
October 20	Astronomy Day, George Observatory
October 27	Geocaching 101, 10:30 AM, meet at Nature Center
October 28	Brazos Bend Gator Run, 7:00 AM
November 3	Brazos River Pickers, 5:00 PM Bird Photography Photo Walk, 5:00 PM, meet at Nature Center
November 9	Guided Bird Watching Hikes, 8:00 AM, meet at 40-Acre Lake restrooms
November 10	Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM)
November 23	Guided Bird Watching Hikes, 8:00 AM, meet at 40-Acre Lake restrooms
December 1	A Simple Christmas, Nature Center lawn, 3:00 - 7:00 PM Brazos River Pickers, 5:00 PM Landscape Photography Photo Walk, 5:00 PM, meet at Nature Center

WHAT'S A PENNY TO YOU?

by Diane Carpenter

A penny saved is a penny earned, the old saying goes. But many of us consider pennies rather annoying. While some of us old-timers might remember penny candy, even the Now & Later candy we sell in the Volunteer gift shop is now 15 cents. The pennies in the pockets and wallets at our house end up in a jar in the laundry room. But what really is the point of a saved penny sitting in a jar?

I had noticed that pennies kept showing up in our donation box. Every couple of weeks there would be enough to roll into one or two 50-cent penny wrappers so that the organization's treasurer could deposit them at the bank. And one day I spotted the volunteer who was tossing his pennies in the donation box. Very clever, I thought. He gets rid of them, we roll them and the organization benefits.

I thought about that jar of pennies in our laundry room. I had no idea how much money was sitting there, saved but not benefitting anyone. So, I ventured to a CoinStar machine at the local grocery store. I knew the machine would charge a percentage for taking my coins, but I figured it was worth it. Then I discovered a better deal; I could take a gift card from the machine and get the full value of my coins on it.

It turned out that we had over 1580 pennies, 8 dimes and one Buc-ees' vacuum token in that jar. So I walked out with a Starbucks card to buy our coffee, and the money I would have spent on coffee can go into the BBSP Volunteer donation box. What can the organization get with \$16? A lot of mice to feed the snakes and alligators we use to educate the public in the Nature Center and at outreach programs. So, maybe a penny saved can be a penny earned--if we just get it out of the jar.

Answer to "Who's the Daddy?": The one with the red beak!

Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville, TX 77461



NEXT MEETING
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2012
NATURE CENTER, 5:30 PM
LIGHT SUPPER AT 5:00

FIRST CLASS MAIL

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:	Mary Lockwood
Vice-President:	Glen Kilgore
Secretary	Belinda DiMarcello
Treasurer:	Bob Kowalewski
Past-President:	Offie Walker
Comptroller:	Nancy Lynn Jones

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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> or <newsletter@brazosbend.org>). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.

**IN THE END, WE WILL CONSERVE ONLY WHAT WE LOVE,
WE WILL LOVE ONLY WHAT WE UNDERSTAND,
WE WILL UNDERSTAND ONLY WHAT WE ARE TAUGHT.**

**BABA DIOUM, SENEGAL
AFRICAN CONSERVATIONIST**