



**VOLUME 20, NUMBER 6**

**JUNE 2008**

## MAY MEETING NOTES

*Submitted by Nicole Olson*

President **James Blankenship** called the meeting to order. There were thirteen volunteers and one staff member present. The April 2008 meeting minutes were approved as posted

**Superintendent Steve Killian** brought his Report, which is printed elsewhere in the newsletter.

**Ken Debenport** brought the Treasurer's Report for the month of April 2008 in the absence of Treasurer, Diane Carpenter. The budget report was projected on the screen and discussed. (See Financial Report in the lounge for complete information)

The following budget requests were approved:

- Payment to John Williamson for the BBSP logo. The artwork is found on the tote bag, bumper stickers, and the Frisbee, and will be used for future items.
- David Heinicke requested funds to buy a large alligator replica skull for Ask the Ranger programs and for traveling programs.

**Outreach – Chuck Duplant** reported that the turnout at the Ducks Unlimited Green Wings program on May 4 was good. One hundred sixty-two people came through the booth, which equaled the number of people who attended.

The prairie platform now has a bench but still no roof.

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>		
May Meeting Notes . . . . . 1	Outreach Report . . . . . 7	<i>Birthdays &amp; Anniversaries</i> . . . . . 11
Staff Reports	Volunteer News & Notes	<i>Congratulations</i> . . . . . 11
<i>Superintendent's Report</i> . . . . . 3	<i>Proposed Changes to SOP</i> . . . . . 7	Alligator Actions . . . . . 12
<i>Interpretive Staff Reports</i> . . . . . 4	<i>Paddling Trail</i> . . . . . 8	I Got Chiggers! . . . . . 13
Nature Center Report . . . . . 5	<i>National Trails Day</i> . . . . . 9	Source for Vol Uniforms . . . . . 14
Snake Identification Quiz . . . . . 5	<i>Emeritus Members</i> . . . . . 9	Photo News . . . . . 14
Maintenance Report . . . . . 6	<i>Meeting Night Suppers</i> . . . . . 10	Calendar of Events . . . . . 14

**Maintenance Report – Ken Debenport** brought the Maintenance report in the absence of Noel Duncan. See the report elsewhere in the newsletter. There is a huge pile of wood to be split. The chipper has been a very good investment.

**Gift Shop Report – Beth Debenport** reported that we now have bumper stickers and new armadillo pins. We have had to raise some prices.

**Training – Anna Dell Williamson** reported that the next new volunteer training session starts in September.

**Old Business –** The proposed changes to the SOPs, Appendix B, Required Hours was approved. Three volunteers will be able to sign up to work the Nature Center. This will help the Nature Center on busy days and allow more than two people to get quarterly credit. VIT information will be removed from Appendix B because VIT's participation is governed by current volunteer training policies.

**New Business –** The new building committee is planning what should be included in the new building. Anybody can join the building committee at any time. You can contact Chuck Duplant, Anna Dell Williamson, Tom Prentiss, Diane Carpenter, and other people on the building committee if interested. The next meeting is Sunday, May 18 at 3:00 p.m. Any ideas will be gladly received; now's the time. All Building Committee meetings and decisions are open. VITs are welcome at the meetings and when they reach full membership status, they can participate fully and vote.

Thanks to Beth Debenport for dinner on a short notice! The meeting was adjourned.

## **STAFF REPORTS**

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

**STEVE KILLIAN**



Welcome back, we had a good month with your help!

The kickoff for the Brazos River Corridor is scheduled for Thursday, May 15, 2008. Walt Dabney, Director of TPWD, will be here along with judges from both Brazoria County and Ft. Bend County, who will speak. The initiative came from the Houston Wilderness Society, who is modeling the trail after the good trail and park systems Chicago. We want to develop the Brazos River. The event starts at 8:30 a.m. If you can attend, please attend. The event has moved to the front of the Nature Center. Plans are to have a PR river trip in June when the river is low. After a catered breakfast, there will be speeches by some dignitaries and then interested parties will go back to Sawmill Road by bus and can visit the Brazos River by the sandbar. Please come out on May 15, at 8 AM. This is our chance to show people what we have. We can talk about what we do and how many people we serve. We need to have the Nature Center open at 8:00 AM and keep it open for visitation.

We are hiring this summer: A maintenance assistant and a clerk for the office. Aaron Anderade will be back on site on Monday. He will work Monday-Friday this summer. In the fall, he will be back at the academy.

Resource Management: We are still spraying lakes and prairies, and maintaining the general things...mowing grass, cleaning restrooms.

# NATURE CENTER REPORT

## MAY 2008

*by Anna Dell Williamson*

Here is a breakdown of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for May 1 -31, 2008. Numbers come from the calendar in the Nature Center and may not reflect all activities. Be sure to report Nature Center visitation on the calendar, and attendance for all programs and hikes on the form behind the front desk.

	PROGRAMS	TOTALS
<b>NATURE CENTER</b> <b>TOTAL:</b> MAY 2008, 7060 MAY 2007, 5633	<b>SATURDAYS (5)</b>	<b>2853</b> - High, 714, 5/17 average: 568
	<b>SUNDAYS (4)</b>	<b>1961</b> - High, 592, 5/25 average: 490
	<b>WEEKDAYS (22)</b>	<b>2246</b> - High, 603, 5/26 (Memorial Day); regular weekday high 181, 5/13; average: 102
	<b>CREEKFIELD HIKES (7 days)</b>	<b>228</b> - High, 93, 5/17
	<b>ASK THE RANGER (4 days)</b>	<b>87</b>
	<b>ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS/HIKES (5)</b>	<b>164</b>
	<b>OUTREACH (May 5 and 24)</b>	<b>182</b>
	<b>POND LIFE (3)</b>	<b>76</b>
	<b>CHILDREN'S STORY TIME (7)</b>	<b>115</b>
	<b>OTHER PROGRAMS (8)</b> includes videos (3), photo walk, bird (3), bats	<b>111 + 230 special school prog.</b>

## MAY MAINTENANCE REPORT

*submitted by Ron Morrison and Noel Duncan*

### **Wood Yard:**

Split and tied wood

Built five new wood racks in the wood yard (total of 8 new & 3 rebuilt since starting)

### **Mowing and Landscaping:**

Cut the grass at the entrance to the maintenance yard

### **Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:**

Moved a blown down tree off the Creekfield Forest trail

Collected wood from the Brazos Canoe Trail

Helped the rangers clear the Brazos Canoe Trail using the wood chipper

**Equipment Maintenance:**

Sharpened the tractor mower blades  
Picked up two CV guards and bolts for Kubotas K1 and K2  
Repaired hitch and safety chain on the volunteer trailer  
Bought gas and oil caps, serviced, replaced and sharpened chains on two chain saws

**General Maintenance:**

Used the wood chipper to clean up a blowdown at site #133  
Trimmed the 100 loop camping area road for overhanging limbs

**Pest Control:**

Treated Chinese Tallow trees in the Creekfield Forest area and the 200 loop camping area  
Treated Elm and 40 Acre Lake trails for fire ants



**Scissor-tailed Flycatcher**  
*Photo by Jerry Zona*

## NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

BBSP will celebrate **National Trails Day** on Saturday, June 7. A schedule of activities is on the web site. Many interesting hikes are planned. We will need volunteers in the Nature Center, Gift Shop and on the trails. If you are interested in helping with this activity, contact David Heinicke.

**Special Invitation:** Who says there is no such thing as a FREE LUNCH?! In addition to the National Trails Day activities, Jennifer and Curtis Parent have sent us the following invitation: (We have great "Parents" at BBSP.)

The Parents would like you to take a load off your feet and join us for a picnic lunch!

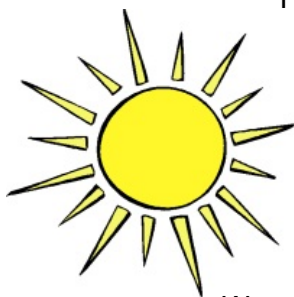
We will be grilling hotdogs and serving brownies and lemonade to all Volunteers on National Trails Day!

Time: 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Where: Picnic tables located just north of the Nature Center

RSVP appreciated but not required: [jparenthouston@hotmail.com](mailto:jparenthouston@hotmail.com)

THANKS FOR ALL THAT YOU DO AT BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK



## **WANTED!** **WEEKDAY SUMMER PROGRAM PRESENTERS**

We want to schedule at least two programs per day for June and July. Programs will then be posted on the web and throughout the park. Creekfield Hikes are welcome any time during the day. If you plan to present an indoor program it must start no earlier than 11:00 and no later than 2:00. The weekly deadline is Tuesday of the prior week (we need at least a week's notice).

Carrie Sample will be conducting an Eco-Explorer's class/camp for kids (fee) on Thursday mornings starting June 12 - Aug 14 from 9:30 - 11:30. See the web page or fliers in the Nature Center for details.

# PADDLING TRAIL CEREMONY



On Thursday, May 15, at 10:00 AM, Brazos Bend hosted the announcement ceremony for the "ground breaking" of the Brazos River Paddling trail. This project is a joint venture with TPWD, Wilderness Houston, Brazoria and Fort Bend Counties and several towns along the way. This trail will eventually stretch from around Sealy to the Gulf of Mexico.

Elected officials, VIP's, corporate sponsors, and media attended. A breakfast in the NC parking lot was followed by speeches by Walt Dabney, TPWD, and county judges.

This picture of major dignitaries who attended was taken by Rick Dashnau.

## VOLUNTEER NEWS AND NOTES

### CHANGES TO DEFINITIONS OF REQUIRED HOURS

Appendix B of the Standard Operating Procedures for BBSPVO was changed at the May 10 meeting (see last month's newsletter for the proposal). The SOPs and Bylaws are on the web site, Members section.

#### Summary of changes:

##### Nature Center Information Desk:

Two required hours shall be available to only the first **three** active members signing up for any two hour shift. A **two or three** person crew shall consist of a volunteer behind the desk to count visitors and give general information, and **one or two** interpretive volunteers working the Nature Center and assisting the Gift Shop. Should only one person be on duty, the information desk slot has priority. If there are **three** volunteers signed up, additional volunteers will report their time as "Interpretation" under Membership hours, not as Nature Center hours.

In the sections regarding Gift Shop, Water Stations/Trail Patrol, Creekfield Hike/Trail Patrol, and Firewood Projects, the only change is the omission of the statement **VIT working the (area indicated) must be supervised by a signed up active member**. The provision for VIT's is now covered by the volunteer training Plan.

**Rationale:** There are two parts to the proposed change. The first part is to increase the number of volunteers who may obtain credit toward quarterly required hours for service in the Nature Center from two to three. The increasing popularity of the Nature Center with the Park visitors makes it necessary to provide additional volunteer staff.

The second part is to separate the VIT service and supervision requirements from Appendix B and recognize that those requirements are documented in the Training Plan (current version). Changes to the Training Plan are coordinated by the BBSPVO Vice-president and the Volunteer Coordinator. There are separate Training Plans for Junior Volunteer trainees and Volunteer trainees.

## GIFT SHOP INFORMATION

by Anna Dell Williamson

This is just a reminder to all volunteers that there are written instructions in the white notebook for working in the Gift Shop. Please take the time to refresh your memory on GS procedures if you have not worked it in a while.

A procedure sheet for volunteers who are working the Nature Center when there is no one in the Gift Shop (usually weekdays) has been added. Please read the weekday procedures for Nature Center workers. They are found in the Gift Shop book, on the Nature Center counter and in the NC procedures book.

## KUDOS TO VOLUNTEERS

### *Second Installment*

by Dennis Jones

A while back I jotted down some thoughts about volunteers I thought had made valuable contributions to the Volunteer Organization and asked that "someone" take up the cause. Since **THAT** didn't happen, I thought I would take another run at recognizing some of the volunteers I have come to know and respect through the years. I'll just begin in no particular order.

**Frank Gregg** is a tall, quiet fellow. He is largely responsible for our plant checklist and the pressed plants that we use for plant I.D. in the Nature Center. His love of plants and nature caused him to spend many, many days in the field identifying plants and collecting specimens for that exhibit. He is a walking botanical encyclopedia. His contribution endures.

**Chris Hofferber** is one of those ladies with limitless energy and dedication. She was instrumental in the development of the first park Earth Day and the Volunteer Organization itself in the early days. She organized volunteer trainings for many years, served as an officer in the organization and even donated the large green sofa for volunteers to fall asleep on.

**Herb Mann** is one of my heroes, a B-17 pilot, geologist, Alaska explorer, and a skillful poker player. He joined us early on and although he was reluctant to hold office or do much interpretation his contributions are many. He has a passion for killing fire ants, trail maintenance and was an original "Woodchuck". He coordinated woodchuck operations until he began to have joint problems. His wit, wisdom and humor are unmatched. He set the standard.

**Judy Strauss**. I first met Judy when she came to training and I have watched her grow from an eager apprentice to an experienced volunteer naturalist and organization officer. She's pretty much done it all and occasionally is the conscience of the park.

**Fletcher Morgan** is another one of my heroes. You will not find a more generous community leader. Like clockwork, he will be at the Nature Center to help out. Always ready to greet you with a smile and always ready to do his duty in spite of the obstacles in his way. I have seldom met a man with such strength, insight and character. I am proud to call him friend, and I am a better person for knowing him.



**Amber Killian** came to us early on and was a fire eating dynamo. She was into everything. I remember she helped me skin a bobcat once. She opened the Nature Center when no one else would and when she would have rather been out on the trails. She was always there to lend a hand especially when no one else would or could. She was a good interpreter and conducted scores of nature hikes. She moved on a while back and continues her public service at the George Ranch Historical Park from time to time.

**Peggy Farley** is another one of those folks that made the Volunteer Organization what it is today. Although I disagree with her politics, (no one's perfect, Peg) she is a hard worker and dedicated to what we are doing here. Through her leadership and presence, we avoided a few mistakes and weathered a few storms together.

**Jerry Rainbolt** was a past president of the Volunteer Organization and possibly one of the hardest workers I have ever met. Once he discovered the invasive Chinese Tallow Tree he was unstoppable. No tallow tree was safe when Jerry was around. Only his passion matched his enthusiasm and heart. He continued his volunteer service at San Jacinto State Historical Park.

**Don Windsor** won a prestigious award from Texas Parks & Wildlife for the small mammal studies he did here. He and Jerry Rainbolt worked to conquer the Tallow Tree infestation at the park and put a serious dent in them. He was a man of intellect and character.

**Laszlo Perlaky** has been a volunteer for quite a long time. He took to heart my suggestion that each volunteer find or create a niche for themselves. Laszlo's was photography. For years, he has unselfishly conducted photo walks in the park sharing his expertise in photography to all. He always has a smile and a firm handshake. We need more volunteers like Laszlo and his wonderful wife Lexi.

**Henry Gomez, Lillie, and the Kids** made the park sing with their enthusiasm and zeal. Kinder people you could never meet, and their dedication to our purpose propelled Henry to a leadership position as president of the organization. His primary interest was alligators and through the years he conducted some interesting research on them. As his family grew older and their interests began to diverge, the Gomez family had to leave us. From time to time they return to spread their smiles and cheer. I will always miss them.

I've run my course by coming to the end of my page for now. There are many, many are others who deserve to be recognized. These are some of the folks I remember for their service above self, for their dedication, and commitment. Be inspired by them.

## BITE FORCE

*by Jean Northington*



In research funded by the National Geographic Society, Vliet and Florida State University biologists studied the bite force of alligators. Bite force is the amount of energy unleashed when an animal's jaws snap shut. To do the study, the biologists devised a contraption that had sensors between two steel plates called a bite bar.

The biologists coaxed 60 gators to bite down on the bar. Using the data from the instrument and size statistics about each gator, the scientists determined an accurate reading of bite force. One 12 foot alligator bit down with a whopping 2,125 pounds of force. "If you got caught in the jaws of one of these guys," said the biologist, "you would have to bench-press the weight of a small pickup truck to make its mouth open." They also said that the gator produced the greatest bite force ever recorded for a living animal. By comparison, a spotted hyena, the bone-crushing champion among mammals, once recorded a bite force of 1,011 pounds. Humans generate a maximum bite force of only 168 pounds.

Source: Neff, Noel. " JAWS!" Current Science, 10/11/2002, Vol. 88 Issue 4, p10.

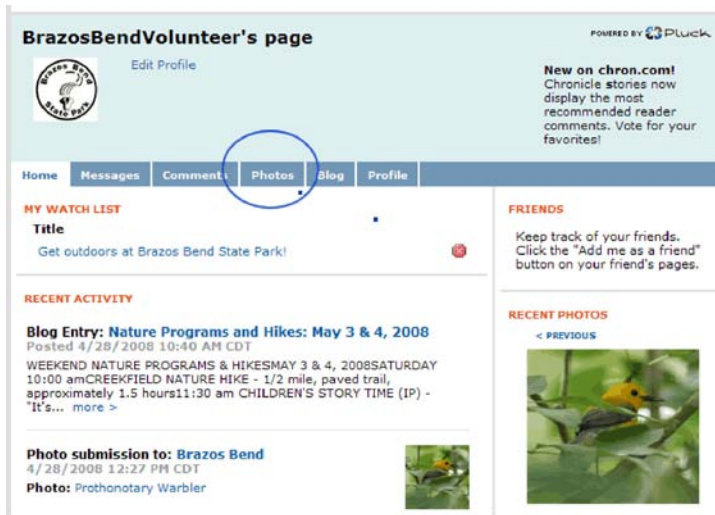
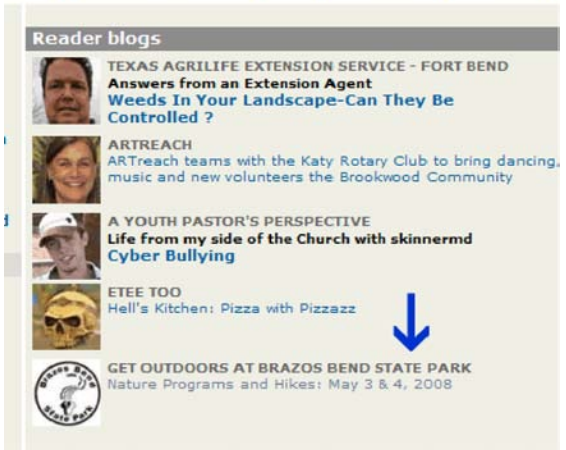
# BBSP BLOG

by Jean Northington

The BBSP Weekend Schedule of Nature Programs and Hikes is now featured on the Houston Chronicle website. Go to: <http://www.chron.com/neighborhoods/fortbend/> and scroll down to the section called "Reader Blogs". (Illustration, right). Look for our alligator logo and the title "Get Outdoors at Brazos Bend State Park".

We would like for you to read the blog every week and even better, post comments. All comments are welcome, but our readers might especially enjoy reading about what you've seen or done in the park lately. The staff at the Chronicle monitors the number of comments and visits a blog receives and we want to keep our numbers high so they will keep us as a featured blog on their website.

<http://www.chron.com/neighborhoods/fortbend/>



There is also a section in our blog called "photos" (Illustration, left), where we can upload photos taken at the park. I encourage all of you to submit some of your photos for our gallery (we especially need more alligator photos). Email them to [jean@mymeadow.net](mailto:jean@mymeadow.net).

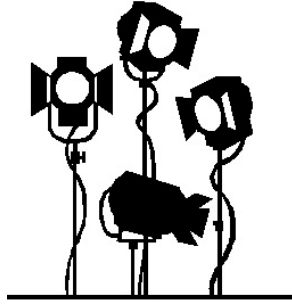
Send suggestions, comments or ideas about the blog to [jean@mymeadow.net](mailto:jean@mymeadow.net).

## CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE FLOWERS?

Below are pictures of different flowers found at BBSP. Can you identify them? Answers are on page . The photographer of all these pictures is Jerry Zona.







## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

*By Jenn Mantei*

***The Volunteer Organization at BBSP is comprised of individuals with a rich variety of backgrounds, abilities and interests. We don't always get the opportunity to visit with each other while working at the park, so this column will spotlight volunteers and help us get to know one another a little better.***

The first opportunity I had to meet with Jerry Zona was when I was still a greenhorn volunteer. He graciously agreed to accompany me for my ATV park tour. Jerry insisted that I drive the 'gator (how did he know about my need for the occasional off-road driving experience?) and he didn't talk much, preferring instead, I think, to commune with nature, brush spiderwebs out of our path, snap an occasional photo, and let me do most of the yapping.



**Jerry Zona**

Since then, I've learned that Jerry speaks volumes through his photography. Each week I look forward to receiving his e-mail containing a few photos taken at the Park as well as other locales near and far. Even better: His pictures are displayed on pbase (an internet photo gallery hosting service) as well, which means we can contemplate the larger body of his work at our leisure.

Jerry first started visiting BBSP shortly after it opened in the 1980s, becoming a regular hiker and bicyclist, riding and/or hiking a couple of hours each weekend. He joined the volunteer organization in 2006. The park inspired Jerry to start snapping pictures with his first camera, a Sony digital 35 mm, "a cheap one," he says. He's upgraded his equipment since then, and now boasts a Canon Rebel XT with a 400mm lens. "I'm saving up for an 800mm lens," Jerry says.

Despite Jerry's keen eye for composition and a great photo-op – and equipment most fledgling photographers would drool over – Jerry still considers himself "an amateur" and would like to get some formal training. When asked what his favorite subject is, he said he really doesn't have one. Browsing through his galleries on pbase, however, one can tell that Jerry has a soft spot for all things natural. From birds, butterflies and bugs to flowers and fungi, there isn't much that escapes Jerry's vigilant gaze. Even the occasional shipwreck.

This past spring, Jerry spent some time diving in Roatan, Honduras. During the week of his visit, Jerry made 17 dives. "One of the dives was 110 feet down to a boat wreck. I got a little nervous," Jerry says. Venturing into an underwater cave, his octopus (breathing apparatus) got stuck. While untangling himself, his diving companions pointed out the Moray eel directly underneath him. There's even a picture of it in the online gallery, along with lots of other great underwater shots and a gorgeous sunrise over Cozumel, another locale Jerry visited back in February.

Asked about his future travel plans, Jerry said he'll be going to the Galapagos Islands in November with girlfriend and fellow BBSP volunteer Maureen Goode. "Maureen and I enjoy exploring and trying different things. This trip will be the once-in-a-lifetime kind." They'll spend two weeks on a boat tour of the islands (talk about great photo-ops!). Then later this year, Jerry is planning a backpacking trip to a national forest in southern California, and another scuba diving trip in Little Cay, an island off the coast of Honduras. One might think that traveling, photography, and volunteering at the park make for a full schedule. Jerry, however, also enjoys skydiving and currently has 45 jumps under his belt. He'd like to try taking some pictures during a sky dive. Diving – both the underwater and airborne sort – aren't enough excitement for Jerry, however. He wants to learn kayaking and ice hockey, too!



**Black-crowned Heron**  
Photo by Jerry Zona, April 2008

And there's more. Jerry is a very proud father. "I raised my son, Daniel, by myself from three years old. He is now 24, a Marine, and has distinguished himself in battle while serving in Iraq. The kid has grown up into a fine young man."

You can browse Jerry's online photo galleries at: <http://www.pbase.com/jerryzona/root>. And if you don't bump into him at the park, you may have to look for him at the Aerodrome, lining up a snapshot.

## CONGRATULATIONS

. . . . to Tyler Teague, our newest Junior member. Judy Strauss is his proud grandma.



### June Birthdays

Glen Kilgore  
Jacob Ramirez  
Anna Dell Williamson

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### July Birthdays

Debra Baker  
Diane Carpenter  
Jaci Elliott  
Martin Gay  
Joan Hebert (VIT)

Susie Taylor  
Carlos Torres  
Barb Tucker  
Ronn Washington

### June Anniversaries

Joe and Sue Carmichael (1953)  
Nelda and Martin Gay  
Joyce (VIT) and Darrell Giese  
Joan and Warren Jackson

### July Anniversaries

James and Joyce  
Blankenship



**We Get Letters..**



## **A Letter from “Tex Critter” Hofferber**

Hello BBSP Volunteers,

Last time I wrote, I said my mom, Chris Hofferber, would write, but she’s been bombarded by all sorts of house guests. She’s sitting in the corner, staring at the wall, and every time the doorbell or the phone rings, she tells Daddy Jim, “Don’t answer it!” She looks really pooped. So I’m taking another turn at writing to you all.

I have something to get off my little chest, and since no one else listens to me, I’ll tell you about it. I’ve been thinking a lot about feeding wildlife. It’s spring, and little critters that are so cute (but not as cute as me!), will soon be everywhere. I don’t know what it is about people, but if they see something little, they want to nurture it and give it something to eat. Never mind that it’s most likely not a natural food for them and may be downright bad for them. People want to see them up close, and baiting them with food always comes to mind.

Mom told me that before she became a BBSP Volunteer, they were camping at the park in their camper. Early evening, a whole passel of baby raccoons came out of the trees, down onto the camper, and then down on the ground. They were as cute as could be and went right up to Mom for a snack. She was eating grapes, so threw a few to the adorable group. They loved them and begged for more.

Mom did not have any more, so to get away from the little critters, she went inside the camper. Before she could close the door, she had two of the young bandits in the trailer. To make matters worse, Mama Raccoon had joined the band, and she was starting to get miffed that some of her babies were in the camper with a human.

It could have turned into a disaster, but my big brother Brian, who was a Park Volunteer at the time, happened to come to the campsite at that time. He scared Mama Raccoon away and yelled loud enough to get the babies out of the camper. Then he proceeded to yell at my mom about causing her own problems by reinforcing bad behavior by feeding wild animals. It was just a few grapes, but when my mom thinks back at what would have happened if Mama Raccoon would have gotten mad enough to go into the camper to teach her a lesson – Well, I get scared just thinking about it! Soon, Mom became a Volunteer, and it wasn’t long before she was teaching others not to feed wildlife.

Feeding corn to deer, giving various animals food from our coolers, and feeding alligators anything and everything is making them a potential nuisance by instilling bad behavior. These animals are normally afraid of humans, but by making them unafraid by feeding them, they may become dangerous. It seems innocent, but it’s not.

We have the same problem here. This area is covered with Canadian geese. They used to stop off at our lakes and many spent their winters here. But at some point, people started taking their kids and their stale bread and making an outing of going to feed the geese. The result is that they stopped migrating and most live here, now. Why should they go elsewhere when they are fed here, all year round? They nest and have their babies here, too. The results are thousands of Canadian geese which have become so thick that their droppings cause a potential health risk. The droppings completely cover sidewalks in some areas, and a couple of lakes have to be closely monitored because of the high *e. coli* levels. They chase

people who don't have a snack for them and they've even knocked down little kids. The result is that hundreds of them are being euthanized by the State Wildlife Department to get their numbers down. Constant reminders are published in the newspapers and signs are posted everywhere, NOT to feed the geese, but many don't heed the warnings.

I'm just a cat, and I'm a domesticated animal, so I need to be fed. In fact, if I had to live on my own, I'd starve to death, because I was never taught to survive by my birth mother. But wildlife are. Let them survive on their own, so they can live without problems. Don't feed the animals and by doing so, sign their death certificate. And tell all the park visitors that feeding wild animals is a big "No-no"!

It's nap time for me.

From my world to yours,  
Tex

## PEOPLE AND TREES

by Dennis Jones

People and trees have a very special relationship. I'm not sure the trees are aware of it, but it exists nevertheless. Generally speaking, we love trees; our ancient ancestors likely spent a good deal of time in them and almost everywhere people have lived there have been trees. Ancient Druids worshiped trees and primeval forests partly because they recognized their special role in the survival of mankind.

Consider all we owe to trees: Log houses, lumber, paper, firewood, fruit, furniture, boats, to name just a few. The things we have learned to do with trees is staggering when looked at over the course of human time. Today we have a variety of substitutes for trees' former uses, but I can hardly imagine what civilization would be like if we had never had trees. I am not sure there would be a human civilization without them.

I think we like trees because oftentimes they seem greater than ourselves. Stately oaks, massive redwoods – they are indeed impressive. When we consider how many trips they have made around the sun compared to our own, we are also impressed. Old trees are venerated. Great trees almost shout "look at me!"

When I talk to children I like to talk to them about trees. What is your house made of? Wood? You live in a tree! You just changed the way the tree looks. I tell them that we have a lot of things in common with trees. Trees have limbs, so do they. Trees have trunks, so do they. Trees have crowns, so do they. Trees have blood (sap), so do they. Trees breathe (through their leaves), so do they. Some trees have knees (bald cypress), so do they. Trees have skin (bark), so do they. They suddenly realize that they have more in common with trees than they thought and they give us so much. The point is to get the kids to understand their relationship with trees. And who doesn't like peaches, oranges, avocados, plums, pears, pecans, and bananas? *(Continued on page 13)*



Answers to **Flower Identification quiz**, from page 8:

(A) Meadow Pinks; (B) Mexican Cap; (C) Green Milkweed; (D) Passion Flower

**Ed. Note:** Volunteers with special interests: How about sending me some pictures of your favorite flora or fauna - types of birds, turtles, insects, butterflies, spiders, flowers, grasses, etc? Be sure to identify them, because I'm relying on you for the correct answer. - **adw**

If you get a chance to read the story “The Giving Tree” by Shel Silverstein to a group of kids, please do so. Rose Aden, one of our long time volunteers, once read “The Giving Tree” at a monthly volunteer meeting and it touched everyone there. It’s the story of a boy and a tree. The boy spent his childhood playing in the tree and sleeping in her shade, and they were both happy. Then the boy grew up and went away. He came back and wanted money, so the tree offered him her apples to sell. Later he returned wanting to have a family, and would need to build a house, and the tree offered him her branches. The next time he returned, he was sad and wanted a boat to take him away, and the tree offered her trunk. The last time he returned, there was nothing left but a stump, and the boy was old and tired and just wanted a place to rest. The tree offered him her trunk to sit against.

Be a “giving tree”. Give the folks, and especially children, an appreciation for nature and our friends the trees. See you later, alligator.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### 2008

June 6	Bird Hike, 40-Acre Restroom, 8:00 AM
June 7	National Trails Day, see schedule on web site
June 14	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
July 4	Independence Day Bicycle Parade
July 12	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
August 9	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
September 6	New Volunteer Orientation, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
September 13	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM (election of new officers)
	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
September 20	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
October 11	Volunteer Annual Picnic, 5:30 PM
October 25	Texian Market Day, George Ranch
November 8	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
November 27	Thanksgiving (open Friday after, 9-5)
December 6	Simple Christmas, 3:00 - 7:00 PM
December 13	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM

### 2009

January 10	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
January 19	Martin Luther King Day Holiday
February 14	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
February 16	President’s Day Holiday
March 14	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
March 16-20	Major Spring Break
March 23-27	Additional Spring Break
April 11	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
April 12	Easter
May 9	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
May 25	Memorial Day Holiday





**Brazos Bend State Park**

Texas Parks and Wildlife  
21901 FM 762  
Needville TX 77461

FIRST CLASS MAIL

→ **NEXT MEETING DAY AND TIME** ←  
**SATURDAY, June 14, 2008, 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
Bird Hikes	See schedule in calendar

**BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION**

**VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS**

President:	James Blankenship
Vice-President:	Anna Dell Williamson
Secretary:	Nicole Olson
Treasurer:	Diane Carpenter

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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](mailto:awilliamson4@comcast.net)). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.