



BRAZOS BEND BUNCH BUGLE

VOLUME 24, NUMBER 4

APRIL 2012

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



The BBEEC Steering Committee, the Building Task Force, the Program Development Task Force, and the Partnership Task Force have all held their first meetings. They have great enthusiasm for our dreams and are planning activities that can take place right now, and are also working on approaches to fund raising when we are given permission by TPWD Austin. If not

a member of one the groups, please consider joining one or more of the following:

- | | | |
|--|----------|-----------------|
| Building Design Task Force | Champion | Chuck Duplant |
| Program Development Task Force | Champion | Hannah Meddaugh |
| Visitor Experience Group | | |
| Education Group | | |
| Conservation Group | | |
| Partnership Task Force | Champion | Nelda Gay |
| Private Donors Group | | |
| Foundation, Government, Conservation Organizations Group | | |
| Marketing and Public Relations Group | | |

On August 11, 2012 we will hold our General Meeting at 2:30 PM in the dining hall with an assortment of desserts to enjoy. The Budget Meeting is set for 12:30 PM with the Executive Meeting following. All meetings are open to the membership; please attend and help us make the right decisions for our organization. But don't wait for August. Our monthly meetings are on the second Saturday of the month starting at 3:00 PM with the Budget and Executive Meetings, supper at 5:00 PM, and the General Meeting at 5:30 PM.

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Offie Walker

MARCH MEETING NOTES

Offie Walker called the March 10 BBSPVO meeting to order. There were 16 volunteers, 5 VITs and 4 staff members present. The February Minutes were approved as posted.

Offie thanked Linda Keltner, for bringing the main course, Cindy Peterson, for the side dish and Mary Lockwood, and Lindsey Kahn for dessert for the meeting supper.

He thanked Diane Carpenter, Beth Debenport, Anna Dell Williamson, Debbie and Kent Fewell, Judy Strauss, Nancy Lynn Jones, Leigh Allen, and Rosemary Kennedy for the remodeling in the Gift Shop. Robert Aaron donated the labor and wood for the cashier's desk, and the Tuesday/Thursday work crews removed old shelving, and installed new shelves in the workroom. There are 2 or 3 more smaller items to be purchased, and we expect to come in under budget.

Offie introduced Jacob Dement, our new Assistant Superintendent and Law Enforcement Officer. His wife Angie is expecting a baby girl next month, their second. They are excited to be here.

Steve Killian and Sharon Hanzik brought their reports, which are published elsewhere in this newsletter.

Committee reports:

Treasurer's Report: Bob Kowalewski presented the following Requests for Purchases which were approved:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| David Heinicke: | Repair for audio repeater on alligator diorama display. |
| Carrie Sample: | 3 cypress trees to conceal composting toilets from Elm Lake viewing platform |
| Steve Killian: | Chemicals and poisons: herbicides for tall grass prairie and lake management. |

Bob presented the February financial report, which is on file. There was a fairly good expenditure last month for keeping up the levels of the lakes, and they look much better.

Comptroller: Nancy Lynn Jones reminded us that there are regular allocations to the BBEEC, the equipment rental accumulation fund and the Gator replacement fund from the budget.

Gift Shop: Beth Debenport thanked Robert Aaron for donating cashier's counter. We will pay for the granite counter top, get a chair and a wall fan, and be complete with redoing the Gift Shop. We should come in under budget.

Wood Sales: Chuck Duplant reported that wood has been selling well. During the last 4 months we've received a 90% return on sales. There should be good sales next week.

BBEEC Building Committee: Chuck Duplant reported that we are waiting to hear from Gordon Baumfalk at TPWD to meet again on the building.

Maintenance: Pete Hart reported that the Tuesday/Thursday crew has put in 164 hours in March. A bench has been recovered from Hale Lake. Joe's bench was recovered several months ago, and the rededicated Purple Heart plaque has been placed on the Creekfield Forest Trail. The crew cleaned up

observation areas on Hale and Buckeye trail. They are trapping hogs with corn we bought and relocating them.

Offie expressed appreciation to Pete for attending the budget and general meetings as Maintenance Representative.

Sharon reminded us that if using an ATV in wet weather, don't drive down wet areas and tear up trail. If you leave tracks, don't drive off of the trail.

Newsletter: Anna Dell Williamson reported that she is looking for help with publication of the newsletter.

EEC Steering Committee: Dave Armstrong reported that the three task forces have all started work. The Building, Partnership and Program Development Task Forces are organized and functioning. Chuck Duplant, Nelda Gay and Hannah Meddaugh have met with their groups and formalized the work to do. We need volunteers to serve on these groups. Much of the work can be done on computer, so there will not be lots of meetings. We are using a program to upload notes, documents, etc., for continuous information about what we are doing. The three groups work closely together.

Dave mentioned the need to promote the grocery store rebate programs from Kroger and Randalls with our visitors to maximize the number of people participating. There is a job for every volunteer, talent, and time. There is exciting work to be done, and all volunteers, working together, will be a part of this.

Beth Debenport reminded us that on the back of park maps that are given out to visitors, there are the Randalls and Krogers numbers.

Diane Carpenter pointed out that we need to renew the Krogers cards every June, and then start promoting the renewal to visitors. The program ends in April and starts again in June. We also need to get the Randalls number on the BBSP Facebook. It is good indefinitely and does not need to be renewed.

We discussed a listing of Task Forces and work groups in the Newsletter, sent out by email and on the web site, to encourage other volunteers to sign up.

Linda K. Hard to get on Krogers' program. May need some followup

Lindsey Kahn remarked that HEB has a strong community program and may donate goods or funds to the volunteer organization.

Offie has appointed Mary Lockwood to revise the BBSPVO Bylaws and SOPs. He invited members to read the documents, which are on the web site in the Members section, and to make suggestions to Mary or to volunteer to work with her.

The August general meeting will be held in the afternoon at 2:30 on the second Saturday, August 11, in the Dining Hall. Budget and Executive meetings will start at 12:30. Desserts will be served. We want to have more involvement with the whole organization. There will be a phone list and personal contacts to inform members of the meeting in order to have a good attendance and to get more people involved.

Cindy Peterson announced that this is the last night to order t-shirts.

The meeting was adjourned.

STAFF REPORTS

PARK SUPERINTENDENT STEVE KILLIAN



Steve reported that we had a good February, but, due to lots of rain, it was not a record February. However, from September through January (the first half of the fiscal year), BBSP is the #1 park in the state in terms of revenue.

Remodeling at Headquarters is completed. The new fee booth is fully operational, there are new countertops in the office, which have opened up the area and made work more efficient. There is a new break room with water, microwave, etc. Most of the work on the renovation was done by park hosts.

Park staff invested 31,000 hours last year toward BBSP, the BBSPVO gave 20,500 hours, and hosts worked 11,500 hours. 32,000 hours were worked by volunteers, and 31,000 by staff. It takes a big team to make it happen.

The Headquarters Gift Shop is headed by Melissa Moody, who does an outstanding job. The Gift Shop has added more inventory. They will have single-cup coffee service and will sell fishing worms.

The new kiosk is up at the terminus of Yellowstone Landing overlooking the Brazos River. The Scout Troop who is working on this should have the information panel up next week.

David, Ted, and Steve attended the annual luncheon of Houston Wilderness, and visited with the Mayor of Houston, who has been invited to the park. Carter Smith thanked us for what we do here and about planning for the BBEEC.

Fox 26 did a piece on the new entrance sign and the new TPW RV trailer donated by GEICO. The program should run next week. We are partnering with businesses to make our parks the best. GEICO has donated use of an RV for a year for TPWD to use to advertize state parks.

BBSP rangers attended a three-day ranger conference on safety, operations, etc.

Two major inspections are coming up, a Regional inspection for safety issues, then a State agency investigation on safety. If you are driving or riding in an ATV, be sure to be buckled in.

Resource management activity has included pumping water into 40-Acre Lake, leaving room for rain. We started pumping Elm Lake (2 feet) on Valentine's day, and are almost done.

The feral hog program doing well. JT and Jim are trapping, and several have been removed.

We are stocking fish into Creekfield Lake slowly. We are catching blue gill, sunfish and bass here at park and moving them to Creekfield. If you want to help with this project, be sure to let Steve know how many of what species you stock.

With rain, Old and New Horseshoe Lakes have filled up from Pilant Lake, by gravity flow along a ditch with a gate that can be opened.

We are working to develop an outstanding fishery in 40-Acre Lake. Inland Fisheries donated a chemical that kills submerged weeds that remove oxygen. The management of Elm Lake and others will change. We will remove southern wild rice, and let American lotus and some others grow for habitat. Chuck and others can help us with revegetation of shore lines.

We are using three methods to control Chinese tallow trees: hack and squirt, spray rigs into trees, and helicopters over Pilant Lake. Inland Fisheries donated chemicals. Need help with spraying, tallow control.

It's great to have Jacob at BBSP. Having two police officers is also a great help.



SHARON HANZIK
INTERPRETIVE RANGER AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Sharon reported on the upcoming safety inspection. Cooperation of the volunteers has been tremendously helpful. The GS committee has been making MSDS (Materials Safety Data Sheets) in the Gift Shop, cleaning out areas, etc.

There are school groups and outreach events on the events calendar. If you have trouble, contact someone to help. Some of the groups are new.

Spring Break begins on Monday. This weekend has been slow, but now we are rested and ready for Monday. We will be open full hours every day, with several programs. Everything is covered.

Our next big day is Good Friday, and we will be open all day, all shifts. On Easter Sunday, come early and bring a lunch. You may not be able to get back in the park if you leave.

BBSP FEATURED IN TPW MAGAZINE

The April 2012 issue of the *Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine* has an article written by Regional Interpretive Specialist Walt Bailey about Brazos Bend State Park. He features some of the pre-park history of the site, the flora and fauna, activities like fishing, hiking and biking, and the Nature Center. There are also several good pictures of our favorite park.

ATV USE

from Sharon Hanzik

These are some reminders we need to be aware of when driving and parking an ATV, especially around the Nature Center or after a lot of rain. It appears that we are wearing tracks once again in the lawn. Please stay on sidewalk whenever possible. If the front walk is too busy, take the road around to the back and drive up that sidewalk. Please do not park all around the building. Park under the porch by the garage door or nearby without blocking the walk. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Thank you.

HELP NEEDED

SUMMER CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Carrie Sample will be leading the Summer Children's programs for the 5th year. We have had between 12 and 25 participants for each session. The program would not be possible without the volunteer's help! See the following information to decide how you can help.



Tadpole Explorers: Tuesday, 9:30-11:00, June 5 to July 31, for ages 3-7, no programs week of July 4

Eco-Explorers: Thursday, 9:30-11:30, June 14 to July 26, for ages 8 and up, no programs week of July 4

Various jobs include making name tags, helping serve refreshments, taking a small group for an assignment, helping with crafts, having the gift shop open, and clean-up. Junior Volunteers can be of assistance!

If you can help, please contact Carrie at csample0@comcast.net

Thanks!

NEWS RELEASE

ECO-EXPLORERS - 2012

Summer Program Series for Children

by Sharon Hanzik

Volunteers and staff announce this year's schedule for the 2012 summer youth program tailored to children ages 3-14. Eco-Explorers Tadpoles (ages 3-7) will meet most Tuesdays starting June 5 - July 31, from 9:30 - 11:00 am. Eco-Explorers for children ages 7 - 14 will meet each Thursday starting June 14 - July 26, from 9:30-11:30. Both programs will include explorations of a specific topic with indoor and outdoor activities including games, crafts, songs, and snacks.



Sessions for Tadpoles will consist of Working Together (ecosystems), Billions of Bugs, Seed Search, To Eat and Be Eaten, Wetland Wonders and Our Feathered Friends.

Eco-Explorers sessions will consist of High-Tech Scavenger Hunt (geocaching), Mysteries of Water, Micro-Monsters (pond life), Reptile Relatives, Flying Wild and Mammal Match.

Pre-registration is required with a limit of 25 participants for each session. Participants will be asked for a \$2 donation for each session or \$10 to reserve a spot for all 6 sessions. Donations benefit the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization. Program donation is in addition to normal park entrance fees: children ages 12 and under are free; anyone age 13 and up, \$7 per person. Ask about the Texas State Parks annual pass.

For detailed descriptions of each session, registration information and other park information visit www.brazosbend.org <<http://www.brazosbend.org/>>

CONGRATULATIONS



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Leah Malone (VIT)
Richard Taylor (Staff)

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Suzie Gann
Virginia Harrison
Ethan Hoover
Kathleen Hosek
JT Kalina (Staff)
Dennis Keprta (Emeritus)
Mikki Kilgore
Carrie Sample
Dawn Tejero



APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Virginia and Charlie Harrison
Jim and Jacqueline North

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

Jo Ann and Chuck Davis
Linda and David Heinicke
Patricia and Steve Marshall

Thank you!

to Linda Keltner, Cindy Peterson, Mary Lockwood and Lindsey Kahn for bringing the March meeting supper.

to Leigh Allen, Diane Carpenter, Beth Debenport, Debbie and Kent Fewell, Nancy Lynn Jones, Judy Strauss, Anna Dell Williamson, and Rosemary Kennedy for the remodeling in the Gift Shop.

to the Tuesday/Thursday work crews for removing old shelving and installing new shelves in the workroom.

to Diane Carpenter, Beth Debenport and Kent Fewell for preparing the required notebook of safety sheets for products in the Gift Shop.

to Judy Strauss, Woody Scott, Jerry Carpenter and Jim North for participating in the Outreach programs in March.



"Old" Gift Shop desk

to Robert Aaron for donating the labor and all materials for the cashier's desk in the Gift Shop. It looks great and is a lot more comfortable to sit behind.



"New" Gift Shop Desk

TPWD NEWS

TEXANS ASKED TO VISIT STATE PARKS

Media Contact: Mike Cox or Rob McCorkle

Some \$1.4 million in donations have been raised since the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department launched a statewide appeal to help close a \$4.6 million budget gap brought on by devastating wildfires, record drought and a corresponding drop in visitation.

“Visit your state parks—it’s a simple and enjoyable way to help,” said Carter Smith, TPWD Executive Director, noting that visitor fees pay for about half the cost to operate the state park system. “If enough people go enjoy their state parks, we’re hopeful we can reverse the losses we experienced in the first six months of our fiscal year. The good news is that while levels of many lakes are still down and the drought is by no means over, recent rains in much of Texas have created a green spring prime time for getting outdoors.”

Park visitation is picking up after lagging considerably last year due to record drought across the state and wildfires at three popular state parks. Compared with 2011, revenue from park visitors was down about 9 percent for the year in January. Visitation has increased some over the past few months but is still about 4 percent lower than last year.

Since early December, donations big and small have come in from people and organizations across the state. These include donations made online and by mail directly to TPWD, gifts through the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and contributions from a new program allowing Texans to donate to state parks when registering motor vehicles. People can also donate \$5 when renewing boat registrations.

Alongside supportive Texans, foundations, nonprofit organizations and private businesses are now coming to the aid of the state park system. Whole Earth Provision Company, La Quinta Inns & Suites, Toyota dealers in Houston and Dallas and others are readying plans for promotions and other efforts this spring and summer to help raise donations for state parks. Already REI has raised more than \$12,000 in its Texas stores, and Crestview RV and Geico teamed up to donate an RV vehicle to help encourage park visitation. In addition, local park friends groups and associations, such as the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Park Association, are mounting their own fund raising efforts.

MARCH OUTREACH PROGRAMS

by Woody Scott



March was a busy month for the BBSP Volunteer Outreach Program. We started the month by sponsoring a booth at the Brazoria Heritage Day celebration on March 3, and ended it with a booth at the Children’s Festival, held at the Fort Bend Children’s Museum on March 24. We had 578 visitors at the Heritage Day Celebration and 461 visitors at the Children’s Festival. Thanks to volunteers Judy Strauss, Jim North, Jerry Carpenter and Woody Scott, for making this possible.

NATURE CENTER REPORT

MARCH 2012

Below are the totals of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for March 1-31, 2012. March saw pretty weather and a very busy Spring Break (SB), although the first weekend of SB had rain.

PROGRAMS	TOTALS
NATURE CENTER ATTENDANCE	Saturdays (5) - 3,913 High, 1092 (3/17) SB 2 nd Sat. Average: 783
March 2012 - 11,252 March 2011 - 12,427 March 2010 - 11,816 March 2009 - 9,669 March 2008 - 10,684 March 2007 - 6,835	Sundays (4) - 1,744 High, 563 (3/4) Not SB Average: 436
	Weekdays (22) - 5,595 High, 918 (3/16) SB Fri. Average: 254
CREEKFIELD HIKES (12)	242
CHILDREN'S STORY TIME (10)	199
WILDLIFE VIEWING (3)	363
SNAKE	447
ALLIGATOR	214
OWLS	142
OUTREACH (5)	2,292
OTHER PROGRAMS (9): bird hikes and programs (6), photo walk, creatures of the night, skulls (2), reptiles (2), pond life, and mammals (2)	349
TOTAL VISITORS SERVED IN HIKES AND PROGRAMS	4,248
VOLUNTEER HOURS	INTERPRETATION = 1672.5 MAINTENANCE = 643 TOTAL HOURS = 2315.5
PARK ATTENDANCE MARCH 2012	Total 51,895 Day use 40,733 (78.5%) Overnight 11,162 (21.5%) NC Visitors 11,252 (22%)

SPRING BREAK REPORT:

Saturday	3/10	254	Thursday	3/15	834
Sunday	3/11	128	Friday	3/16	918
Monday	3/12	482	Saturday	3/17	1092
Tuesday	3/13	329	Sunday	3/18	492
Wednesday	3/14	856			

MAINTENANCE REPORT

The Tuesday/Thursday maintenance crew and Friday trail trimming crew reported 194 hours for March.

Wood Yard:

Split, bundled and delivered wood to kiosks.

Mowing and Landscaping:

Planted three Bald Cypress trees between Elm Lake platform and restrooms

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Removed blowdown limbs from Headquarters, Creekfield Forest Trail, Pilant Slough Trail

Trimmed 40-Acre Lake Trail (forest part)

Cleaned around a large oak tree on the Creekfield Forest Trail

Trimmed Red Buckeye Trail and viewing area

Helped the rangers remove a tree that was dangerous

Cleared vines and trimmed limbs from Creekfield Forest Trail

Trimmed overflow camping area

Chipped limbs left by power company at 200 loop restrooms

Equipment Maintenance:

Replaced broken bumper on 044 chain saw

General Maintenance:

Rescued fire ring from Hale Lake Picnic area

Installed cup holders and doggie water bowls at Water Stations

Pest Control:

Baited and checked six hog traps

Sprayed weeds in wood yard

Treated fire ant mounds at Nature Center and Elm Lake

Special Projects:

Polished Joe's Bench brass plaque so people can read it

Cleaned and organized two sheds for inspection

Installed fan and mounted magnetic board in Gift Shop



STRESS RELIEVING TIPS 2

by Mike Sanderson

(Ed. note: This is the second article in a series of three giving advice to VITs, which will probably be helpful to all volunteers. Topics are "How to Tackle the Creekfield Hike" (March newsletter), "Gotta' Have Gators", and "Other Musings for Procrastinators and Type A's". Thanks, Mike, for taking the time to try to ease the anxiety of hike leaders and program presenters.)

Gotta Have Gators Or, How Long Is This Presentation Supposed to Last?

"As long as you want it to last." This one got me a little more stressed out than the Creekfield Hike. I give presentations and talks to project sponsors and hospital executives on a weekly basis. What's so scary about this one? It really boiled down to me not having a grasp of how long to make the presentation...and the kids. They all seem to know everything about alligators these days.

There is an interpretive outline for the Gotta Have Gators presentation in the VIT Training Manual. A couple of practice runs through the outline and a basic familiarity with the props should get you up to speed pretty quickly. If you are OK with handling a baby alligator, you really have it made.

The props and the gator can really lead you through the presentation. Lay them out on the table in the order of your presentation points to help as a guide to keep you on track. I also made about 6-8 small index cards with the main interpretive points one to a card and set those on the prop table in front of me. Don't try to put the entire presentation on cards, or one or both of two things will happen. One, you won't be able to read it all from the cards and you'll get lost or off topic. Two, you won't engage the folks very much if you are reading directly from your cards.

Remember to breathe and speak at an even pace. Like with the Creekfield Hike, if you can ask the audience questions based on the outline material and interpret along with their answers, you will have a lot more fun than just reading the material and your audience will enjoy it more too.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|----------|---|
| April 6 | Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building, "Migration Madness" - BBSP and Quintana (optional, after lunch) |
| | Good Friday, NC open 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM |
| April 7 | Brazos River Pickers, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM |
| April 8 | Easter Sunday, busiest day of year. Lots of help needed. |
| April 13 | Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building, "Migration Madness" - BBSP and Quintana (optional, after lunch) |
| April 14 | Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM |
| | Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM) |
| April 15 | Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building |
| April 20 | Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building, "Migration Madness" - BBSP and Quintana (optional, after lunch) |
| April 27 | Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building, "Migration Madness" - BBSP and Quintana (optional, after lunch) |
| May 4 | Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building |
| May 12 | Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM |
| | Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM) |
| May 13 | Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building |
| May 19 | BBEEC Steering Committee Meeting, 1:00 PM (Dave Armstrong) |

Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville, TX 77461

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NEXT MEETING
SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 2012
5:30 PM, NATURE CENTER

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:	Offie Walker
Vice-President:	Mary Lockwood
Secretary	Belinda DiMarcello
Treasurer:	Bob Kowalewski
Past-President:	Carrie Sample
Comptroller:	Rachelle Watson

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editor	Anna Dell Williamson
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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**