Travis Audubon’s 2011 awards luncheon drew 280 supporters who paid tribute to Andrew Sansom. On Oct. 1, the honoree was presented with the Victor Emanuel Conservation Award for his life-long dedication to managing and conserving the state’s natural resources. Sansom has headed up both the Nature Conservancy in Texas and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. He’s now executive director of the Texas Rivers Institute at Texas State University.

Summing up Sansom’s unwavering perseverance and his many accomplishments as a conservationist, Victor Emanuel remarked: “It gives me hope for the future.”

The sold-out event at the Stephen F. Austin Hotel also featured a successful live auction and a Fund-a-Need benefiting Travis Audubon. Hammond and Joan Hendrix’s (Moontower Productions) films “Conservation hero Andy Sansom” and “Fund Our Future” energized and inspired the crowd. After expenses, the fundraiser generated nearly $20,000 to support our conservation and education programs, continue our Travis Audubon classes and field trips and maintain our three nature preserves. In addition, Fund-a-Need contributions raised $9,300, which will be earmarked for youth education programs.

“Our second annual awards luncheon drew a large, enthusiastic crowd,” said Valarie Bristol, president of Travis Audubon. “It was just wonderful to see the depth of support—not only for Andy Sansom but for this organization too. We are so grateful to all who attended.” Bristol added that the third annual Victor Emanuel Awards Luncheon will be held Oct. 27, 2012, at the Hyatt Regency. The honoree will be announced in the spring.

Special thanks go to the volunteers who helped with this year’s event: Joanne O’Neill, Lacy Behrens, Ilene Barr, Janis Snow, Janel Nye, Phyllis Gruver, Doris Coward, Rebekah McIntyre, Diana Gibson, Amy Tsay, Wendy Gordon, Sally Scott, Carol Ray, Noreen Damude, and Jean Warneke.

To view the films as well as Brenda Ladd’s photographs of the event, visit our website: www.travisaudubon.org/?page_id=2607.

Nancy Manning
new year inspires thoughts of positive goals. Very few of us will be sorry to see 2011 in the rear view mirror. The drought and heat took a dreadful toll on the natural and human world. Fires only compounded the damage – goodbye to 2011.

With more dry years predicted for our future, protecting water resources by conserving natural areas becomes so important for all life. Grasses and wooded areas absorb the precious rain and release it slowly. Hard surfaces cause fast runoff and erosion. Birds are especially prevalent along riparian areas and by protecting water resources we also protect important bird habitat.

Travis Audubon worked to inform voters about the land conservation that Travis County proposed on the November ballot. Much of the land to be conserved was along the Pedernales River and along creeks in eastern Travis County. The measure passed and all of us can be very pleased as the County expands parks and natural areas. Let’s keep building on this legacy by increasing Travis Audubon’s education and outreach efforts as well as adding to our sanctuaries.

Please make one of your goals to bring a friend, a neighbor or a family member to a meeting, a class or a field trip. By expanding our circle you will enrich their life and strengthen the voice for conservation. Happy 2012!

Valarie Bristol

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Valarie Bristol
With Appreciation...
We at Travis Audubon would like to thank those individuals and organizations that helped us make our Second Annual Victor Emanuel Conservation Award Luncheon honoring Andy Sansom a huge success! We couldn’t have done it without you.

**Auction Donors**
Victor Emanuel and Winnie Burkett
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$5000 Golden-Cheeked Warbler: Tim & Karen Hixon

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$1000 Black-Capped Vireo: Andy & Nona Sansom
Frances & Oskar Cerbins
Air masses collide over us like giant vaporous bumper cars during the first two months of the calendar year, bringing dramatic swings in our weather. Cold, dry Canadian air careens southward as a cold front, only to be pushed aside by warm, moist Gulf air a few days later. This year, with the Pacific Ocean’s La Niña in control, we will likely see less precipitation, but the drier air will probably also lead to greater fluctuations in temperature. We may witness 80 degrees one day, then snow falling the next.

Cold weather causes hardship for wildlife. Particularly vulnerable are the Nine-banded Armadillos that have expanded their range far into the frosty United States in the past century and a half. They are the only members of their tropical family to brave the northern winters, and they are poorly adapted to it, with little fur for insulation. They also have difficulty digging for grubs in frozen ground. They cannot hibernate, although they will burrow underground to wait out a cold snap. However, they can starve if temperatures stay below freezing for more than three days.

Armadillos are more visible now because these normally nocturnal animals forage more often during the day in cold weather, when the sun can warm them, and the ground may be easier to dig.

Many female armadillos are pregnant now… and have been since summer. The developing embryo undergoes a period of arrested development in which implantation is delayed for about 14 weeks. That’s a good thing, because otherwise the babies would be born in the summer. The developing embryo undergoes a period of arrested development in which implantation is delayed for about 14 weeks.

Prime cavity space is scarce, so cavity-nesting birds usually start house-hunting much earlier than those that build open cup nests. Eastern Bluebirds, Carolina Chickadees, and Black-crested Titmice can warm them, and the ground may be easier to dig.

Some early blooms include the daisy-like Windflower, or Ten-petal Anemone, in its varied hues from white to deep purple, and the European Elbowbush, for instance, bears tiny, inconspicuous yellow flowers on its sprawling, paired branches. But a frenzy of insects around this shrub – sometimes called Spring-Herald because it blooms by mid-February or earlier – tells you it is in flower. Mexican Plum also blooms early, but you won’t need to follow the insects to find it. The entire tree becomes a white cloud of blossoms, usually by the end of February, but sometimes early in the month.

The Eastern Screech-Owls, for their part, will begin their own mating rituals, though it is usually March before the females lay eggs. (And the pair may wait until the squirrels are done, if no substitute space is available, so they can move back into the cavity.)

The Eastern Screech-Owls are in a reproductive mood, as well. Their rhythmic creaking or peeping calls emanate from Hill Country streams that still have water, even on evenings that seem far too cold for any decent amphibian to be out and about. If you visit that same stream on a warm January afternoon, you may be surprised to see a dragonfly still patrolling. If it has a red abdomen, it is almost certainly a male Yellow-legged Meadowhawk. There are several other red-bodied dragonflies in Central Texas, but this species is the only one that seems to be able to tolerate the early winter cold snaps.

Armadillo on the go
Photo credit: Bill Reiner

The up-and-down temperatures can fool the growth-inhibitors that protect early-blooming plants. Unusually warm afternoons can coax them to open their buds a little too soon. Caught by a frost after the next cold front, or encased in ice from a spate of freezing rain, they may lose a reproductive season. However, if they can weather it, there is considerable advantage to being the “only game in town” for nectar-seeking insects.

Elbowbush, for instance, bears tiny, inconspicuous yellow flowers on its sprawling, paired branches. But a frenzy of insects around this shrub – sometimes called Spring-Herald because it blooms by mid-February or earlier – tells you it is in flower. Mexican Plum also blooms early, but you won’t need to follow the insects to find it. The entire tree becomes a white cloud of blossoms, usually by the end of February, but sometimes early in the month.

Among the first trees to bloom is the American Elm. Its flowers are not especially showy, being small and green, but they give the tree a surprisingly spring-like appearance as early as late January. We are fortunate that these distinctive trees, whose arching branches give them a graceful vase shape, have survived so well in central Texas. They are not very numerous, usually widely spaced in river bottom forests or in sheltered canyons. Yet the distance between trees may have protected them from the ravages of the Dutch Elm Disease that wiped out so many of the American Elms that once shaded much of the eastern United States.

Other early blooms include the daisy-like Windflower, or Ten-petal Anemone, in its varied hues from white to deep purple, and the Eastern Fox Squirrels do not seem to be bothered at all by winter weather. If anything they are often hyperactive. Their noisy mad scrambles around tree trunks, and chases through the branches, appear half-mad… and they are. It’s their primary mating season (they may mate again in late spring), and by late February many females will be giving birth. They will usually seek out a tree cavity or screech-owl nest box to raise their litter, sometimes displacing a roosting owl in the process.

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weed Henbit, with purplish-pink hooded flowers – both of which may crop up in lawns. Four-petaled white whitlow-grasses (actually in the mustard family) may also appear in lawns, but are more typical of thin-soiled early-successional spots. There are two common species in our area, both known also by their genus, Draba, and distinguished by the relative length and width of their seed pods. Though neither is the species Aldo Leopold memorialized in prose in *A Sand County Almanac*, his description fits them as well: “Sand too poor and sun too weak for bigger, better blooms are good enough for Draba. After all it is no spring flower, but only a postscript to a hope.”

Hope for spring can seem vain on a cold, cloudy January or February day. Winter is brown and gray and often silent, aside from hooting owls and peeping frogs and the thin chorus of lingering crickets. Few birds sing – though the *Zonotrichia* sparrows (White-crowned, White-throated, and Harris’) are notable exceptions. But a change happens some time in mid-January. It may be a Field Sparrow or a Bewick’s Wren in a scrubby meadow, a backyard Northern Cardinal or Carolina Wren, or a House Finch or a European Starling on an urban ledge, but you’ll notice that the song is different: stronger, lustier. And spring, we know, is now not far away.

References included *The Mammals of Texas*, by David J. Schmidly, and *Messages from the Wild: An Almanac of Suburban Natural and Unnatural History*, by Frederick R. Gehlbach.

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**Travis Audubon Expands its Blair Woods Explore and Restore Program**

For the last two years we have delivered the Explore and Restore Program to the Norman Elementary 4th and 5th graders in the spring. Because of a generous donation from Applied Materials we were able to begin a fall Explore and Restore program in October of 2011.

At Blair Woods, the botany group identified and recorded plants and surveyed different habitat types. The zoology group identified animal signs such as nests, dens, and scat. They also found and recorded aquatic invertebrates. The GPS group recorded images of the trail system and different habitat areas. The creek survey group monitored the creek bed for erosion and deposition. They also monitored the efficacy of vegetation for erosion control and measured cross sections of the creek banks to determine stability. The day ended with the children engaging in restoration activities.

Travis Audubon would like to thank:

**APPLIED MATERIALS FOUNDATION**

for their generous support of Explore and Restore.

*Nancy Manning*

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**ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY CONSULTING (ESC) & TRAVIS AUDUBON SOCIETY WIN 2nd PLACE – KEEP AUSTIN BEAUTIFUL AWARD FOR EDUCATION**

ESC and the Travis Audubon Society are honored to be runner up winners of Keep Austin Beautiful’s (KAB) Applied Materials Award for Education for our “Explore and Restore” program at Norman Elementary School. The award recognizes efforts to raise awareness about environmental stewardship through educational activities for youth and adults, schools, organizations and other groups. ESC and Travis Audubon accepted the award during the KAB Annual Awards Luncheon on Thursday, October 27, 2011.
Chris Murray, our Baker Sanctuary steward, designed a phenomenal curriculum for our fall Youth Nature Camp. Read his story below.

While the camp had its specific educational objectives, it is also important to recognize that the students experience the camp in their own unique way and they’ll take home memories and perceptions that, while unpredictable, are nonetheless powerful, perhaps sometimes more than the objectives themselves.

Jennifer Hasbrouck, mom of Campers Casey and Creed Hasbrouck reported that, “On the way home, the van was bustling with excitement as each child piped in, “Did you see ALL THOSE TREES? We had to find ONE TREE in all those trees using just our compasses...AND WE DID IT! Can you believe it!?...WE DID IT!!!”

Lesson One: Using and Reading Maps
For the first activity, students were handed a map of the Baker Cabin area which included only a general outline of the area and one spot designated with an ‘X’. When asked if students could find the location ‘X’ they eventually realized that they were missing information that would make it possible. They didn’t know the scale of the map, the cardinal directions, their location on the map, etc. Students then brainstormed what features to add to their map to make locating the ‘X’ possible. When they felt confident they had enough information, the groups raced to see who would discover the secret location first.

Lesson Two: Parts of a Compass
In their small groups of five students per teacher, the anatomy of the compass was explored. Afterwards, each teacher led their small group in an intensive session of compass practice around the Jackie Arnold Education Center (JAEC). Not only did students learn how to use a compass, teachers learned various ways to explain the concept in the process. Some groups had interesting discussions regarding circles and basic geometry as students made connections between mathematics and orienteering.

Lesson Three: Compass Challenge
To test their orienteering prowess, each small group of students ran the Compass Challenge course. Ten bags were hidden in the open area around JAEC. Inside each bag were directions to the next bag as well as a word that, when combined with words from the other bags, would form a question. Teachers accompanied each group as they ran the course, refining student’s compass skills and making certain they were finding the bags in the correct sequence. When they had found all ten bags and answered the question formed by the words in the bags, they drew for one of five cavity nesting birds to research for the next lesson. Test yourself with the question:

What bird is strong enough to pick up a giant? The answer can be found at the end of this article.

Lesson Four: Cavity Nester Research
Depending which bird they drew at the end of the previous lesson, students researched one of five resident cavity nesters: Carolina Chickadee, Bewick’s Wren, Black-crested Titmouse, Ladder-backed Woodpecker, or Eastern Screech-owl. They learned the natural history of their species, including their preferred nesting habitat, foraging methods, prey items, and nesting information among other details. When research on their species was completed, students shared what they had learned with the other groups.

Lesson Five: Nest Box Construction
Each small group then assembled a nest box (courtesy of the Kyles) for the species they researched in the previous lesson. Working as a group, they had to interpret the building instructions and take turns sanding, nailing, and screwing in the components of their nest box. Some groups learned the valuable lesson of reading the instructions before hammering nails into place. Upon completion of their nest box, students dated and signed the back of their masterpiece.

Lesson Six: Nest Box Installation
When all the nest boxes were completed, each small group of students was provided with a map of Baker Sanctuary which had five locations designated to hang the boxes. Using their map and compass, students had to locate their nest box tree that was marked with pink flagging. Teachers had a GPS unit with the tree coordinates entered so they could provide bearings to the tree but nothing else. The nest box trees were all located 200-300 hundred yards off the main trails so students had to contend with thick Ashe Juniper and some underbrush as they navigated across the landscape. When the designated tree was finally located, students attached their nest box in preparation for the spring breeding season. Updates on their nest boxes will be made available as the season progresses.

Travis Audubon would like to thank H-E-B for their generous support of Youth Nature Camp.

Christopher Murray

Photo credits: Nancy Manning
Nancy Manning Receives Fellows Grant for Travis Audubon

Travis Audubon’s Nancy Manning was awarded a Fellows Grant by TogetherGreen, “a dynamic and innovative Audubon program funded by Toyota that aims to provide inspiration, leadership and opportunities that inspire people everywhere to take action at home, in their communities and beyond to improve the health of our environment.”

“The TogetherGreen Conservation Leadership Program invests in high-potential leaders, providing them with the tools, resources, visibility, and a peer network to help them lead the conservation actions necessary to shape a greener, healthier future.” (TogetherGreen.org)

Reprinted with permission from the TogetherGreen.org website:
Nancy Manning wants to help shape the future of conservation in Central Texas. Since taking the helm of Travis Audubon Society four years ago, Nancy has transformed the once all-volunteer organization into a highly organized conservation force. As a result of her efforts, Travis Audubon Society has received TogetherGreen grants every year since 2008, enabling her to launch a multi-year restoration and education project at Blair Woods, a 10-acre sanctuary in the under-served community of East Austin.

For her TogetherGreen fellowship, Nancy is setting out to translate conservation messages that often resonate only with a select few into messages that resonate with more of the local community. The Blair Woods community is home to a growing, and thriving, Hispanic population. Nancy sees a great potential in these neighbors, some of whom have come out to help remove invasive plants at the site. But she has yet to make a long-lasting connection to them so that they feel a sense of ownership and pride around protecting the Blair Woods habitat.

In the next 18 months, Nancy will collect neighborhood vegetation and drainage data, develop educational materials, make neighborhood contacts and organize on-site educational events. Through her project, Nancy hopes that Blair Woods can become a place for neighbors to engage in stewardship, raise awareness of how they can manage their own nearby properties for habitat and species protection, and prevent the spread of invasive species. If Nancy’s past success is any indication of the future, we feel she’s definitely up to the task.

CORRECTION

In the November/December issue of Signal Smoke, we misspelled the owners’ names of Wild Birds Unlimited. Their names are Rick and Kelle Stults.

Monthly Bird Walks at Laguna Gloria with Sam Fason, Jr.
(formerly known as “Little Sam Fason”)

Travis Audubon is pleased to announce this very special monthly bird walk at Laguna Gloria with the ever popular, Sam Fason, Jr. The inaugural Laguna Gloria bird walk will occur on January 7, 2012. The walk will begin at 8:30 am and continue until 10:30 or 11:00 am. Participants should meet Sam in the parking lot. The focus will be making sure that everyone gets on the bird before moving on. Sam would like to keep the group size to 8-12. Sam invites all level of birder, from beginner to advanced.

At Laguna Gloria November, December, January, February, and March are good for winter birds. April and May, during the height of migration, are wonderful for Warblers. Sam has had 16 warbler species on the first week in May at Laguna Gloria. June, July and August (despite the heat) will be good for resident breeding birds. September and October will be good for migrant birds.

From the Field Trip Committee...

The Field Trip Committee has developed a new feature on the Travis Audubon website called “Recent Bird Sightings and Field Trip Reports.” After field trips, trip leaders are encouraged to post field trip reports, including locations, number of participants, and species seen. Other birders are also welcome to post birding related comments and lists of species seen in the central Texas area. The page can be found at www.travisaudubon.org/?p=2761.

CORRECTION

In the November/December issue of Signal Smoke, we misspelled the owners’ names of Wild Birds Unlimited. Their names are Rick and Kelle Stults.
Our Donors

Many thanks to all our donors – your support is critical to the ongoing conservation and education efforts of Travis Audubon.

Warbler
Bill Edwards
Sarah Heather

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Joseph Acosta
Judith Bailey
Mary Blackstock
Judy Chavis O’Brien
Cheryl Hazeltine
Ed Jacoby
Barbara Kyse
Thomas Linker
Kelly Logan
Joan Pratt
Carol Ray
Painted Bunting
Doug Brinkley
Dennis Brown
Craig Damuth
Victor Emanuel
Beverly Hoffman
Ann Kilby

Second Annual Victor Emanuel Luncheon
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Judith Bailey
David Bamberger
Stephanie Barko
James Beckett
Jennifer Bristol & Tom Nilles
Valarie Bristol
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Jane Tillman

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GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SPONSORS
Thanks to our dynamic monthly meeting coordinators, Laurie Foss and Shelia Hargis, we have been fortunate to have our monthly meetings sponsored, which allow us to defray much of our costs. Travis Audubon thanks the sponsors of our September, October, and November general membership meetings for their generous support.

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November sponsor
NOTE: New permanent location for general membership meetings - Westminster Presbyterian Church at 3208 Exposition Blvd. Austin TX 78703 512-459-5497 Doors open at 6:30 for social time.

Directions: From Mopac, take the 35th street exit and go west on 35th to Exposition Blvd. Turn left on Exposition and go approximately two blocks to Carlton Lane. The church sits on the corner of Carlton and Exposition. Drive down Carlton past the church to the parking lot on your left. We will be meeting in rooms 9 and 10. Refreshments will be provided. No monthly meetings are held during June, July, August, or December.

January 19, 2012
Entomological Influence on Avian Foraging (or in English: What Warblers Eat) Speaker: Mike Quinn

“Entomological influence on avian foraging” will explore one of the most important, yet least understood, areas of Golden-cheeked Warbler biology: the influence of insects and their allies on warbler life history including migration, foraging height and tree preferences through the breeding season. Mike’s intensive research into the Golden-cheeked Warbler’s diet in Travis County was one of the most thorough studies ever conducted into a songbird’s diet. It was patterned after research first conducted by Carol Beardmore into the warbler’s foraging preferences at Travis Audubon’s Baker Sanctuary.

Mike Quinn started birding under the tutelage of his parents and as a member of Junior Audubon in New Orleans where he grew up. After moving to Austin in 1978, Mike took birding classes with expert Austin birders Ed Kutac and Fred and Marie Webster. Between semesters studying wildlife at Texas A&M, Mike assisted with field research on the Kirtland’s Warbler in Michigan and the Black-capped Vireo in Texas and Oklahoma. Mike served briefly on the Travis Audubon Board of Directors in the 1980s. While assisting Dr. Bob Barth with his Painted Bunting research at McKinney Falls State Park, Mike saw a Giant Swallowtail which hooked him on entomology. Mike followed up his bachelor’s degree with a master’s degree in entomology at Texas A&M studying the diet of the Golden-cheeked Warbler in Travis County.

February 16, 2012
Feathers Speaker: Dave Scott

Explore the science of feather identification with Dave Scott, co-author of the recently released field guide Bird Feathers: A Guide to North American Species. Learn to use feather shape and morphology, as well as color, to identify individual flight feathers found in the field. Whether you are an ornithologist, master birder, or you just enjoy spending time outdoors, this lecture will draw you in to a new and exciting facet of the natural world. Autographed field guides will be available for purchase at the event. And, attendees will have an opportunity to sign up early for a more in-depth class taught by Dave through Travis Audubon!

Dave Scott is a skilled wildlife tracker and naturalist who has been involved in environmental education since 2003. Dave’s focus as an educator is to help his students reconnect with the natural world through wildlife tracking, increased sensory awareness, wilderness survival skills, and the development of a strong sense of place. Dave is the founder of Earth Native Wilderness School in Austin where he currently teaches courses on bird feather identification, wildlife tracking, wilderness survival, and ecology. For more information on courses offered by Dave Scott, visit www.EarthNativeSchool.com.

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The elephant in the room for 2011 was the extreme drought. We took time off on a Sunday morning in November to visit the “Sometimes Islands” at nearby Lake Travis. The “islands” were actually connected to the area of the boat ramp forming a long peninsula extending from the park at Mansfield Dam. The vegetation on the exposed land was extensive, head-high in some areas and mainly seed-bearing plants including amaranth. There were dozens of sparrows including Savannah and Lark foraging. A Cooper’s Hawk and American Kestrel patrolled the area. Ospreys were also common overhead. The biggest surprise was a Canyon Wren way out in the middle of the usual lake skulking in the exposed limestone ledges on the north side of the exposure.

In spite of the state-wide devastation, things at Chaetura Canyon were pretty upbeat. The upper seep spring dried up early in the season, but those in the bottom of the canyon continued to flow clear and clean throughout the summer and were recharged by the November rains of more than two inches. It remains to be seen how much overall damage was sustained by the heavily-stressed trees.

Avian productivity was normal or above average with the exception of Chimney Swift nestling mortality in some of the smaller towers. Apparently the supplemental feeding and constant water source made the sanctuary an oasis for all residents. A complete accounting will be available in the Annual Report which will be available on the Travis Audubon website along with all previous years, but a snap shot as of December 1st is as follows:

Number of avian species recorded: 84
Number of nesting species recorded (based on fledglings observed): 25
New species recorded for the Sanctuary: Porcupine, Barred Owl (#162), and Merlin (#163)

We will have another full schedule of events in 2012 starting with our Annual Stewardship Day on Sunday, February 12th. We hope to see you at Chaetura Canyon this year!

Keep in touch by signing up for the Travis Audubon e-blasts, check the Travis Audubon website or contact us directly (kyle@ChimneySwifts.org)

Georgean and Paul Kyle,

Having trouble keeping that New Year’s resolution to be more active and work off a few pounds? Join us at Chaetura Canyon for our third annual Stewardship Day for some hill climbing, brush removal, food and fellowship. The event will start with breakfast followed by a walk of the Sanctuary stopping at the various sites where work is needed. After a few hours of work we will adjourn to the deck for lunch.

Date: Sunday, February 12
Time: 8:00 Meet, greet, and eat
8:30 Trail walk and survey of work to be done
9:00 ‘till 12:00 Brush removal
12:00 Lunch on the deck overlooking the Canyon

This will be a physical outdoor work event on sloping terrain, so dress appropriately with sturdy shoes or boots. Consider dressing in layers; bring work gloves, sunscreen and a hat. This event is limited to ten volunteers, so reserve your spot today! Contact Stewards Georgean and Paul Kyle: kyle@ChimneySwifts.org
One of my duties as the sanctuary steward is to compile a yearly report of Baker Sanctuary activities and send it to the good folks at Travis County. They compile many such reports from all the Balcones Canyonland Preserve partners and submit a final report to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). While I am personally a bit averse to office work, I am thankful for the opportunity to reflect on what was accomplished during the year. Beginning with this issue, I would like to share that reflection with a yearly Baker Review, a summary of events for the sanctuary.

Let’s start with the birds. This past year saw two surveys for Golden-cheeked Warblers, the traditional 100-acre survey which I mentioned last issue as well as a less rigorous presence/absence survey centered on the open areas found along Lime Creek Road. Data from the 100-acre survey suggests that 65 territories of breeding adults may be found throughout the entire sanctuary while data from the Open Area survey will be used when considering how best to manage our few forest openings. Continuing the tradition they had begun in 2010, Laurie Foss and Shelia Hargis, along with a dedicated cadre of birders, performed three more eBird Trail Surveys, raising the number of avian species recorded at Baker from 99 to a respectable 133. With their diligence I expect that number to go even higher – watch out Chaetura Canyon! In addition to the eBird surveys, a formal point count survey was initiated in May to gather baseline data on species composition, distribution, and abundance throughout the sanctuary, especially in areas that are not accessible by trails.

News regarding other resident fauna is equally exciting. While Golden-cheeked Warblers are currently our only resident endangered species, USFWS is currently considering the listing of four species of salamanders, one of which, the Jollyville Plateau Salamander, is found in the relatively pristine Baker Springs and may also be present in some of the three new springs discovered in the Hatfield tract. With any luck, USFWS will issue a finding sometime later this year.

In addition to bird surveys, efforts have been undertaken to better understand and improve vegetation communities found on Baker. After much debate and protocol fine-tuning by the esteemed Baker Core Team, volunteers installed 33 long-term vegetation monitoring plots throughout the sanctuary. These plots will be used to gather baseline data on representative vegetation communities, an effort that will help guide and assess the effectiveness of land management decisions. The battle against invasive plants was a fierce one for 2011. Over the course of several weeks, volunteers pulled literally thousands of Malta Star-thistle in the Baker Cabin area, hopefully eradicating it once and for all. The Tree-of-heaven grove discovered by Bill Reiner on the northern end of the sanctuary has yielded to date 706 hand-pulled, 87 stump-cut, and 30 girdled individuals. In the same drainage, two large Chinaberrys were also girdled. This area will continue to be monitored and treated for the foreseeable future. Other invasive plants were removed when encountered throughout the sanctuary, including many Common Mullein, three Ligustrum species, one Heavenly Bamboo, 18 Jujube, and two Chaste Trees. It is certain that as the sanctuary is more thoroughly explored, more invasive species will be discovered…and destroyed.

One of the more exciting developments at Baker was the launch of two annual Youth Nature Camps, one in March and the other in October, concentrating on migration and cavity nesters respectively. Both camps were filled to capacity with 25 elementary students from Leander ISD spending the day learning about and exploring the wilderness. Not content to sit on our laurels, the Youth Nature Camps are only the first steps in a growing education and outreach program for Baker. Excluding the Youth Nature Camps and volunteer workdays, Baker Sanctuary experienced a total of 181 visitations. Of those visitations, 104 were by members and 77 were by non-members.

A total of 356.5 volunteer hours were logged at Baker on a variety of activities including: weeding and mulching the JAEC garden, scouting and flagging new trails, installing and collecting data on vegetation plots, eBird surveys, scouting archeological sites, participating in the Goddard School’s EnviroFair, teaching nature camps, guiding hikes at the annual Open House and Breakfast. With the Birds and volunteer events, removing invasive species, conducting point counts, and trimming vegetation. Guided hikes were led for the Hill Country Conservancy, Hill Country Outdoors, Sierra Club (big thanks to Paul Breaux), the Deer Creek Elementary Cub Scout troop, Leander ISD elementary science core team, and for the BCP Hike and Lecture Series.

It was a productive year and it would not have been possible without a dedicated core of volunteers, the lifeblood of Travis Audubon. A simple ‘thanks’ does not do justice to the time and effort freely given to the pursuit of making our sanctuaries and organization stronger with every passing year. Please know that you are appreciated and I’m eagerly looking forward to another busy year.

Christopher Murray, Baker Sanctuary Steward
512-219-8425 or christophermurra@hotmail.com

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Photo credits: Christopher Murray

At the sanctuary...Praying Mantis and angry clouds
Due to the large number of events and limited space in *Signal Smoke*, readers are asked to visit the Field Trips page at www.travisaudubon.org for complete trip details and possible updates. Although emails to the registrar are preferred, those who do not have email access can register for any field trip by contacting Jeff Patterson at jepbird@att.net or 512-487-2755.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location/Description</th>
<th>Registration</th>
<th>Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/7/12</td>
<td>8:00-10:00am</td>
<td>Beginner’s Bird Walk at Berry Springs (Georgetown)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Virginia Rose and Judith Bailey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7/12</td>
<td>8:45-10:45am</td>
<td>Laguna Gloria Art Museum</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Sam Fason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8/12</td>
<td>7:00-11:00am</td>
<td>Balcones Canyonlands NWR</td>
<td><a href="http://www.friendsofbalcones.org">www.friendsofbalcones.org</a></td>
<td>Diane Sherrill <a href="mailto:nativeearthscapes@gmail.com">nativeearthscapes@gmail.com</a> 512-259-0270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/10/12</td>
<td>8:00-10:00am</td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at Meadow Lake</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Ken Zaslow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/14/12</td>
<td>7:00am and 4:00pm</td>
<td>Monthly Bird Count at Hornsby Bend</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Eric Carpenter at <a href="mailto:ecarpe@gmail.com">ecarpe@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/15/12</td>
<td>3:30-5:45pm</td>
<td>Winter Bird Walk at Meadow Lake (Round Rock)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Kathy McCormack <a href="mailto:VEFL21@gmail.com">VEFL21@gmail.com</a> 512 698-9880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/17/12</td>
<td>7:00am-noon</td>
<td>Super Tuesday! at Doeskin Ranch</td>
<td>Deb Wallace <a href="mailto:apeld@austin.rr.com">apeld@austin.rr.com</a></td>
<td>Deb Wallace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/21/12</td>
<td>7:30am-dusk</td>
<td>Fort Hood Birding</td>
<td>Jeff Patterson <a href="mailto:jepbird@att.net">jepbird@att.net</a></td>
<td>Gil Eckrich and Rich Kostecke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/24/12</td>
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<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at Champion Park</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Dan Callaway</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/31/12</td>
<td>6:00am-noon</td>
<td>Super Tuesday! at Pedernales State Park</td>
<td>Terry Banks at <a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
<td>Terry Banks</td>
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<td>Beginner’s Bird Walk at Brushy Creek</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Virginia Rose and Judith Bailey</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/4/12</td>
<td>8:45-10:45am</td>
<td>Laguna Gloria Art Museum</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Sam Fason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4/12</td>
<td>6:30am-5:30pm</td>
<td>Attwater Prairie Chicken NWR and Eagle Lake Area</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jeannmartin@austin.rr.com">jeannmartin@austin.rr.com</a> 512-343-7053</td>
<td>Jean Martin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/7/12</td>
<td>7:30-10:30am</td>
<td>Super Tuesday! at South Travis County Ponds</td>
<td>Ken Zaslow <a href="mailto:khz@att.net">khz@att.net</a></td>
<td>Ken Zaslow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/11/12</td>
<td>7:00am and 4:00pm</td>
<td>Monthly Bird Count at Hornsby Bend</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Eric Carpenter at <a href="mailto:ecarpe@gmail.com">ecarpe@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/12/12</td>
<td>7:00-11:00am</td>
<td>Balcones Canyonlands NWR</td>
<td><a href="http://www.friendsofbalcones.org">www.friendsofbalcones.org</a></td>
<td>Deb Wallace <a href="mailto:apeld@austin.rr.com">apeld@austin.rr.com</a> 512-312-0797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/14/12</td>
<td>7:30-9:30am</td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at Big Webberville Park</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>by Ken Zaslow</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/18-20/12</td>
<td>7:30am-noon</td>
<td>Monthly Bird Walk at Hornsby Bend</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Craig Rasmussen and Glen Coleman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/19/12</td>
<td>7:00am-1:00pm (or 5:00pm)</td>
<td>Granger Lake Area</td>
<td>Jeff Patterson at <a href="mailto:jepbird@att.net">jepbird@att.net</a></td>
<td>Tim Fennell (Byron Stone a possible co-leader)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/21/12</td>
<td>6:00am-noon</td>
<td>Super Tuesday at Reimer Ranch</td>
<td>Terry Banks at <a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
<td>Terry Banks</td>
</tr>
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<td>2/25/12</td>
<td>7:00-11:00am</td>
<td>Commons Ford for First-Timers</td>
<td>Ed Fair <a href="mailto:ezflaw@sbcglobal.net">ezflaw@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
<td>Ed Fair</td>
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<td>2/26/12</td>
<td>7:00-11:00am</td>
<td>Commons Ford for First-Timers</td>
<td>Ed Fair <a href="mailto:ezflaw@sbcglobal.net">ezflaw@sbcglobal.net</a></td>
<td>Ed Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/28/12</td>
<td>8:00-11:00am</td>
<td>Tuesday, Feb. 28 Super Tuesday! at Northeast Metropolitan Park, led by Dan Callaway</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Dan Callaway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Birding Davis Mountains & Big Bend National Park
Mountain Trails Outdoor Learning Center welcomes Travis Audubon Society for a special tour

**April 21-25, 2012**
Price is all-inclusive and starts at $700.00

**Tour Overview**
Dramatic scenery and cool mountain air draw you to this spectacular natural setting.

Two distinct “sky islands” in the Chihuahuan Desert—the Davis Mountains and the Chisos Mountains in Big Bend National Park—are home to a variety of bird species endemic to the Mexican border region.

Springtime in the region is the ideal time to see both resident & migratory birds – over 450 species have been recorded in the Big Bend region. In mid-to-late summer the desert rainy season and the nesting seasons of endemic and summer species combine to set the stage for unique bird sightings.

In the Davis Mountains, you might spot Montezuma quail, vermilion flycatcher, summer tanager and buff-breasted flycatcher.

In low desert regions and along the Rio Grande, watch for burrowing owls, crissal thrasher, Bell’s vireo and black-chinned hummingbird, along with a variety of hawks, harriers & falcons.

In the Chisos Mountains, we will search for the Colima warbler, zone-tailed hawk and varied bunting.

Besides the exceptional birding opportunities, take a dip in the 77,000 square-foot spring-fed swimming pool at Balmorhea State Park and enjoy West Texas hospitality and home cooked regional cuisine.

**Adventure Highlights**

**Davis Mountains**
- Texas Nature Conservancy’s Davis Mountains Preserve
- Davis Mountains State Park
- Balmorhea Lake
- Balmorhea State Park
- Lodging and meals at Mountain Trails Lodge in Fort Davis

**Near Marathon, TX**
- Burrowing owl habitat
- The Post Pavilion wetlands and Gage Gardens
- Lunch in the shade at a working cattle ranch enroute to Big Bend

**Big Bend National Park**
- Rio Grande corridor: Rio Grande Village and Cottonwood
- Chisos Basin & Mountains (strenuous hike to view Colima Warbler on Pinnacles Trail)
- Lodging and meals at the Chisos Mountains Lodge or Lajitas Resort
- Dinner at the Starlight Theater in the Terlingua Ghost Town

**Program notes:** Price for double occupancy is $700 per person. Single room upgrade is $120 per person. A portion of the fee is a donation to the Travis Audubon Society. Minimum enrollment is 8 people. A credit card (hold) or $100 check deposit is due when you register. Sign-up/cancellation deadline is Friday, April 6, 2012.
Travis Audubon Classes

Travis Audubon’s Waterfowl Identification Class

Saturdays, January 7, 14, 21
Begin the new year by learning how to identify those ducks! If you’ve been walking around Town Lake and wondering what kind of ducks you see, this class will provide you with answers. Travis Audubon is pleased to announce that Jean Martin will again teach the Waterfowl Identification Class. Jean taught the Beginning Birding Class for over 10 years, and has over 20 years’ birding experience. This course will focus on ducks, grebes, geese and other waterfowl found in Texas, especially during the winter months. It is well suited for birders who have completed the Beginning Birding Class or for those who have ignored ducks because “all those females look alike.”

The class will consist of two lecture/photo presentations and three field trips. The lectures will be on Saturdays, Jan. 7 and 14, from 8 to 10 am, each followed by a field trip, which will last until about 2 pm. Locations will be announced at class time. A third field trip will be conducted on Saturday, Jan. 21 outside the Austin area and lasting most of the day. Tuition is $55 for Travis Audubon members and $65 for nonmembers. The class will be limited to 14 participants. To register, e-mail waterfowlclass@austin.rr.com, or call Jean Martin at 343-7053.

Purple Martins Workshop Feb 4

Saturday, February 4, 2012, 9-12
Do you want to know more about Purple Martins, how to set up a colony, and be a Purple Martin landlord? Are you an existing landlord, wanting to meet other Martin aficionados and learn tips? Have you always wanted to be a citizen scientist, gathering useful data that can help Martin conservation efforts? If so, this class is for you. The first Purple Martins typically arrive in Austin at the end of January, so this class will give you information you can put to use right away, either at your own colony, or observing Martins at Hornsby Bend or any other existing colony.

This class will focus on the life cycle of Purple Martins and how you can participate as a Purple Martin landlord or helper. You will learn the maintenance routine recommended by the Purple Martin Conservation Association. You will also learn how to record and send in nesting data that is compiled nationally. We will also include hands-on nest preparation and discussion at the Hornsby Bend colony.

Class participants are invited to participate through mid-June as helpers and observers as the class teachers maintain and record the 2012 Purple Martin season at Hornsby Bend. Later in the summer, we will invite class members to join us in educating others at the giant Purple Martin roost at Highland Mall.

Andy and Julia Balinsky have been the stewards of the Hornsby Bend Purple Martin colony since 2003. They have watched over 1,000 Purple Martin babies fledge during that time. They have also spent many evenings watching the martin pre-migration staging roost in the late summer.

Class participants should bring paper and pen for taking notes. We will provide data gathering forms and an electronic Excel version for those interested. Tuition for the class is $15 for Travis Audubon members and $20 for non-members. To register, contact Anne Wheeler via email at TASPurpleMartin@swbell.net. Registration cut-off date will be February 1, 2012.

Bluebird Workshop

Saturday, January 28
Three species of bluebird occur annually in Texas, and Eastern Bluebirds will nest in suitable habitats in central Texas if appropriate cavities or nest-boxes are available. Travis Audubon will sponsor a bluebird workshop conducted by nationally-known bluebird expert Pauline Tom on Saturday morning January 28, 2012.

Pauline is President of the Texas Bluebird Society (TBS) and has conducted popular workshops on bluebird husbandry in many different parts of the state. She lives in Central Texas and is widely regarded as one of the foremost experts on and advocates for bluebirds in the state of Texas. Her workshop on January 28 will cover the following:

- best practices for nest-box installation to attract Eastern Bluebirds
- how to recognize and improve appropriate habitat for Eastern Bluebirds
- how to interpret bluebird activity outside of the nest-box
- how to deter predators and alien competitors
- the process of egg-laying and incubation
- how to “age” nestlings
- recordkeeping / record-sharing with NestWatch

During a workshop break, Pauline will take participants outdoors to view bluebird habitat and manmade nest-boxes. Workshop fee is $15 for Travis Audubon members and $20 for non-members. All participants may pay an additional $15 to receive a one-year TBS membership and a TBS-approved bluebird nestbox. Please contact Lynn Hill at pelican7227-warbler@yahoo.com for additional details and to register for the workshop.

Beginning Backyard Birding

February 7 and 11
How many different species of birds can I attract to my yard? What woodpeckers can I expect to see here? What is that song I am hearing? Are there any plants that are bird magnets? If you want to get acquainted with common backyard birds that are here year round, and common winter visitors that are in the neighborhood, this class is for you.

This class includes two sessions. The classroom session will be held on Tuesday evening, Feb. 7 from 6:45-8:45 pm at a NW Austin location near Loop 360/Hwy 183. The following Saturday morning, Feb. 11, from 7:30-11 am the second class session will be held at a Best of Texas Backyard Wildlife Habitat in the same area, where we will do some armchair birding and investigate bird-friendly plants. You will have fun learning Austin’s backyard birds and what it takes to keep them happy. If time allows, we will visit a local preserve to practice identification skills.

The class will be taught by Jane Tillman who is the chair of the Travis Audubon Urban Habitat Committee. Tuition will be $20 for Travis Audubon members and $25 for non-members. Class limit is 12 participants. If demand warrants, class limit will be 20, and a Sunday morning, Feb. 12 session will be added. Participants would choose to attend either the Saturday or Sunday morning session. Please contact Jane at mljt@mail.utexas.edu for more information or to register.

eBird Workshop

February 13
Laurie Foss of Travis Audubon’s Conservation Committee will be presenting a class on how to use eBird, a growing online database that is revolutionizing the way the birding community reports and accesses information about birds. Now is your chance to learn how to submit your own observations and to view and explore this vast database of records on bird distribution and abundance.

Join us on February 13th from 5:30 - 7:30 pm at the Austin Computer Learning Center in the AGE building (3710 Cedar St) for a workshop and discover all about eBird! The workshop is open to both new and veteran eBird users. Please feel free to bring all those questions you’ve been waiting to ask.
how to identify birds; bird identification of many species of Central Texas locations around Austin. The class will cover a variety of topics including: during four classroom sessions and four field trips to popular birding and contribute to bird conservation efforts. Instruction will be provided of birds. You will also learn how you can make a difference for the birds Class is the class for you. This class promises to transform your relationship with birds; and winter Texans that regularly vocalize in the Central Texas area. While learning birdsongs, flight calls, contact calls, scolds and other vocalizations for field identification is the primary goal of the class, it will also include lectures on such topics as: why birds sing; the vocal anatomy of birds; use of spectrograms; dialects; diagnostic birdsongs; resources; and other subjects related to bird vocalization.

The species that vocalize and the types of vocalizations change throughout the year, therefore the class and subsequent field trips will be held once per month from February to May 2012. Classroom sessions will be held at a local venue on the Wednesday evenings of February 15, March 21, April 25 and May 2 from 6:30-8:30 pm. Local field trips will follow on the Saturday mornings of February 18, March 24, April 28 and May 5. Jeff is a lifelong birder who developed a curiosity for birdsong during the 1980s. With the current availability and variety of birdsong resources, he has been able to improve his birdsong knowledge over the past few years and is eager to interact with interested students. Jeff is employed as a technical specialist at the state environmental commission where he often teaches work-related technical classes.

The class tuition is $75 for Travis Audubon members and $25 for non-members. To register for the class, please contact Frances Cerbins at tcclasses@yahoo.com or by phone at 512-372-9039. Registration is limited to 15 participants.

**Bird Song and Vocalization**

February 15, March 21, April 25 and May 2

With field trips on the following Saturdays

Learning birdsong is a difficult, but rewarding undertaking. Highly skilled birders rely on bird vocalizations for many of their field identifications. Some closely related species are only distinguishable in the field by their songs or calls. However, with over 380 species listed on the Austin region checklist, even learning local birdsong can be an intimidating proposition. Therefore, you are invited to join Jeff Patterson for this class intended to improve your skills with, and understanding of, bird vocalizations.

This class is designed for intermediate birders who want to begin to develop, or to sharpen their skills. It will focus on the breeding birds and winter Texans that regularly vocalize in the Central Texas area. While learning birdsongs, flight calls, contact calls, scolds and other vocalizations for field identification is the primary goal of the class, it will also include lectures on such topics as: why birds sing; the vocal anatomy of birds; use of spectrograms; dialects; diagnostic birdsongs; resources; and other subjects related to bird vocalization.

The species that vocalize and the types of vocalizations change throughout the year, therefore the class and subsequent field trips will be held once per month from February to May 2012. Classroom sessions will be held at a local venue on the Wednesday evenings of February 15, March 21, April 25 and May 2 from 6:30-8:30 pm. Local field trips will follow on the Saturday mornings of February 18, March 24, April 28 and May 5. Jeff is a lifelong birder who developed a curiosity for birdsong during the 1980s. With the current availability and variety of birdsong resources, he has been able to improve his birdsong knowledge over the past few years and is eager to interact with interested students. Jeff is employed as a technical specialist at the state environmental commission where he often teaches work-related technical classes.

The class tuition is $75 for Travis Audubon members and $90 for non-members. To register for the class, please contact Frances Cerbins at tcclasses@yahoo.com or by phone at 512-372-9039. Registration is limited to 15 participants.

**Travis Audubon’s Introduction to Birds and Birding Winter/Spring**

February 21, 28, March 13, 20 - 6:15 – 8:45

plus field trips on following weekends

Are you starting to notice birds and would like to know more about them? Have you been watching birds casually and would now like to take a more structured approach to learning more about them? Are you looking for a good excuse to get outside and connect with nature? If you answered yes to one or more of these questions, then the Introduction to Birds and Birding Class is the class for you. This class promises to transform your relationship to birds and start you down the road toward a life-long love and enjoyment of birds. You will also learn how you can make a difference for the birds and contribute to bird conservation efforts. Instruction will be provided during four classroom sessions and four field trips to popular birding locations around Austin. The class will cover a variety of topics including: how to identify birds; bird identification of many species of Central Texas birds; bird migration; bird and habitat conservation; field guides and binoculars; and where to go birding in Central Texas and farther afield. No prior birding experience is necessary.

Shelia Hargis is the instructor for this class. She has been birding for 15 years and loves birds! She spends most of her free time birding or thinking about birds and enjoys sharing her love of birds with others. Shelia has given presentations and classes on numerous bird topics including bird identification, bird migration, birding by ear, and wildscaping your yard. Shelia regularly leads birding field trips and is currently on the Travis Audubon Board of Directors and the Travis Audubon Habitat Conservation Committee. She is also a past President of Travis Audubon.

The classroom portion of this workshop is limited to 24 participants and will be held on Tuesday evenings, February 21, February 28, March 13 and March 20 (6:15 - 8:45 pm) in a central Austin location. The field trips will be held the following weekend. If more than 12 participants register for the class, half of the class will have their field trips on Saturday mornings, February 25, March 3, March 17 and March 24, and the other half of the class will have their field trips on Sunday mornings, February 26, March 4, March 18 and March 25. Field trips will typically start around 7:00 am and will end between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm.

Participants will need to bring paper and a pen to the classroom sessions. Binoculars, hats, sturdy closed-toe shoes, sunscreen and water are requirements for the field trips. There are a limited number of binoculars available for loan to students who don’t already have a pair. This class usually fills up quickly, so register early. Tuition will be $75 for Travis Audubon members and $90 for non-members. For more information or to register for the class, contact Shelia Hargis at intro2birds@gmail.com or at 294-0272. Include your name, phone, email address, field trip day of week preference, and whether you are a Travis Audubon member or not.

**Chimney Swift Tower Workshop at Chaetura Canyon**

March 11, 1-4

Chimney Swifts are now listed as an endangered species in Nova Scotia, and the future for these aerial insectivores is also uncertain in the remainder of their breeding range. Georgean and Paul Kyle will conduct a workshop on building and maintaining new habitat for this declining species on Sunday, March 11th, from 1-4 pm. The workshop will begin with an introduction to Chimney Swifts that includes a slide presentation and video highlights from a typical nesting season.

Participants will then construct an actual Chimney Swift Tower. After the project is completed, participants will take a one-mile walking tour of the Chaetura Canyon Bird Sanctuary. There are currently 16 Chimney Swift towers on the property that demonstrate a variety of designs and materials. One of the towers will be opened, and the class will be shown how to evaluate the nesting productivity of last year’s season. Refreshments will be served on the deck overlooking the canyon following the tour.

Chaetura Canyon has been the epicenter for Chimney Swift conservation and research world-wide for more than 20 years. Master Naturalists and property owners with wildlife exemptions may find this workshop useful in their conservation efforts. Chimney Swift towers also make great Eagle Scout projects, so Scout Masters, Eagle candidates and their parents should consider taking advantage of this unique opportunity.

Registration is limited to ten builders (16 years of age and older). The cost of this workshop is $35 for Travis Audubon members and $50 for non-members. The fee includes a copy of the Kyle’s book, Chimney Swift Towers: New Habitat for America’s Mysterious Birds. For more information or to sign up for the workshop, please contact Anne Donovan at 472-3030 or email her at ajdonovan@att.net. For a preview of the walking tour, visit www.ChimneySwifts.org and click on the “Chaetura Canyon Bird Sanctuary” link.
Join your local Audubon chapter, Travis Audubon, by using the form at the right. Your dues will be put to use supporting local conservation, education, research projects, field trips, and other Travis Audubon activities right here in Central Texas. We seek your support through your membership in our local chapter.

To become a member of National Audubon, please go to their website at www.audubon.org. Don’t forget to include the National Audubon Source Code of 79M7 and the Travis Audubon Chapter code of W03, so Travis Audubon receives credit.

**Join Travis Audubon now and support local birds, wildlife, and their habitats**

Travis Audubon chapter members receive six issues of the *Signal Smoke* newsletter, priority sign-ups on local field trips, discounts on our educational classes, the opportunity to participate in our e-mail group, attend our wonderful monthly lectures, access to our three sanctuaries, and more!

**To join Travis Audubon**

Make your check payable to Travis Audubon and send it with this form to Travis Audubon, 3710 Cedar St., Box 5, Austin, TX 78705, or join on-line using any major credit card by going to www.travisaudubon.org and clicking on Membership.

YES! I want to enjoy the benefits of Travis Audubon chapter membership. Enroll me as a member of Travis Audubon. Enclosed is my check for:

- $10 Youth Membership (up to age 18)
- $25 Individual Membership
- $35 Family Membership
- $75 Painted Bunting Membership (embroidered patch of Painted Bunting)
- $100 Vireo Membership (Embroidered patch of Vireo, bumper sticker)
- $250 Warbler Membership (Embroidered patch of Warbler, one free class, VIP field trip)
- $1,000 Lifetime Membership (Special Lifetime Member embroidered patch, T-shirt, Invitation to special events, VIP field trip)

T-shirt size (for Lifetime memberships) ________________

This is a gift membership from ________________

Name __________________________ Phone ________________
Address ___________________________________________________________________
City __________________________ State ____ Zip __________
Email ________________________________________________________

Visit the Travis Audubon Web site:
www.travisaudubon.org