**Join The Festivities At Our Upcoming Fall Award Luncheon**

**VICTOR EMANUEL CONSERVATION AWARD LUNCHEON**

**HONORING**

**J. David Bamberger**

Be sure to plan on attending Travis Audubon’s fourth annual Victor Emanuel Conservation Award Luncheon when we honor renowned conservationist and educator J. David Bamberger. The festivities will take place October 26th at the AT&T Conference Center on UT’s downtown campus. Those who have attended this lively event in the past know to expect an inspiring and entertaining program as we celebrate our conservation hero and raise money for Travis Audubon via our live auction and Fund-a-Need segments.

Here’s what just a few of his admirers have said about our honoree:

“David Bamberger has proven, in the world of business and the realm of stewardship, that he is a man ahead of his time. When he began his work at Selah-Bamberger Ranch Preserve, he was ridiculed. Today, he is the father of a movement in Texas which has transformed literally millions of acres, it is the finest model of land conservation.”

— Andrew Sansom, Executive Director of The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University-San Marcos.

“At a time when everyone was shouting about the environment and property rights, J. David Bamberger was quietly proving that our ranching heritage and protecting Mother Nature go hand-in-hand. I count him as a friend to all Texans and wish others would follow his example.”


“It brings a lift to my heart and quickens my spirit that there are like-minded people sharing the dream of living in harmony with the earth. [Mr. Bamberger has] created a masterpiece at Selah, giving others the elevating experience of seeing and learning how we can return health to the environment of our planet and secure its future for ongoing generations.”

— Lady Bird Johnson

To purchase tickets, go to travisaudubon.org/events/victor-emanuel-conservation-award or call the Travis Audubon office: 512-300-2473.

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Sustaining Membership Challenge

Did you know that you can support Travis Audubon through a sustaining membership? As a Sustaining Member, you will receive no renewal notices and will not need to remember when your yearly dues should be paid. The amount that you designate will automatically be drafted from your bank account each month, and you will be supporting Travis Audubon’s conservation and education programs year-round. This is a great option for those who would like to give to Travis Audubon, but can’t afford a large lump sum!

An anonymous donor has issued a $1,000 challenge grant for Travis Audubon members. They will donate $100 to Travis Audubon for each new Sustaining Membership, up to 10 and regardless of level. Even if you sign up to donate just $20 per month, Travis Audubon will still receive $100. http://travisaudubon.org/support-us/sustaining-membership

President’s Column

Honoring a True Conservation Hero

by Caroline C. Jones

October 26 marks the 4th Victor Emmanuel Conservation Award Hero luncheon, when we will honor J. David Bamberger. His commitment to restoring habitat and sharing his knowledge with others truly epitomizes the role of conservation hero. I hope you are making plans to attend the luncheon to celebrate David and his work, and to support Travis Audubon. I look forward to seeing you there!

Travis Audubon Committee Chairs

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About Signal Smoke

Subscription Information

Signal Smoke (ISSN 1931-9282) is published six times yearly. Subscription is a membership benefit. To join, use the form on the back page, or go to www.travisaudubon.org for an online form. For address or subscription changes, call 512.300.BIRD (2473) or e-mail info@travisaudubon.org. USPS does not forward Signal Smoke. No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission in writing from Travis Audubon. Copyright © 2013.

Newsletter Deadline

The submissions deadline is the first day of the month preceding the first month of publication (for example, August 1 for the September/October issue). Submit non-copyrighted articles, announcements, and art to Aaron Prager, care of Nancy Manning at nancy@travisaudubon.org. Submissions by email are preferred but not required. Call Nancy at 300-BIRD if you have questions.
This year’s live auction features several enticing adventures!

**Canyon Of The Eagles**

Enjoy spectacular sunsets over Lake Buchanan and watch wintering bald eagles soar at the beautiful Canyon of the Eagles Resort. Stay in a Hill Country-style room nestled in a scenic hilltop overlooking the lake, with your own private porch. Also included are breakfast for two at the Overlook Restaurant, two passes to a Vanishing Texas River Cruise, and a beautifully framed eagle print by acclaimed wildlife photographer Greg Lasley. Canyon of the Eagles is a full-service resort in a 940-acre nature park in the Hill Country, where you can explore 14 miles of designated trails; stargaze at the Eagle-Eye Observatory, bike, canoe, or kayak. (Use before January 26, 2014)

**Gourmet Escape For Two**

Head out to the Texas Hill Country for a culinary adventure at the renowned Onion Creek Kitchens at Juniper Hills Farm. Join owner Sibby Barrett in one of her famous lively cooking classes, geared for all levels of expertise, and then enjoy the wonderful food you’ve prepared. Includes a two-night stay in a cozy cabin, and you’re sure to unwind in the beautiful natural setting, where you can also schedule a massage and indulge in the sauna. As an extra treat, Master Naturalist and Master Gardener Shirley Winslow will take you on a guided nature walk. She has been leading tours of Blanco State Park for the past three years and was the coordinator of establishing the Wildlife Viewing Station (bird blind) for the Highland Lake Master Naturalists.

**Wrap-Around Views & Whoopers**

Treat yourself and up to five others to a 3-night stay in “View 2,” a large (3 bedroom) bay-front corner condo in Rockport. Freshly remodeled and re-decorated, with wrap-around views of Aransas Bay, and convenient to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, with shore bird viewing galore in and around Rockport. Enjoy watching the sunrise as you have your morning coffee, and check out the condo owner’s notebook for directions to favorite bird walks and drives. Your group will also enjoy a Whooping Crane and Coastal Birding Tour on Captain Tommy Moore’s “Skimmer,” a craft whose extremely quiet, environmentally friendly outboard motors make for an unusually peaceful experience. Capt. Tommy has been in the Aransas area for over 30 years. His knowledge of the abundant wildlife and rich history of Aransas Bay offer a unique perspective of this fascinating area. DATES: Feb. 27 – March 1, 2014

**Bird Bolivar With The Master**

Spend three nights at Victor Emanuel’s beach house and be treated to a guided birding tour by the conservation hero himself! Victor’s rustically comfortable, furnished beach house is on the southern Bolivar Peninsula, and is conveniently close to the ferry and High Island. It fronts a lovely saltwater marsh where you can watch a variety of shore birds in action. The house has two twin and two queen beds in one large living area, AC and an outdoor deck. (Not available during the month of April 2014). Victor Emanuel, our very first conservation award recipient, is the director of Victor Emanuel Nature Tours, and provides guided nature trips worldwide.

**Sleep With History**

Calling all history buffs! Enjoy a unique and interesting adventure as you stay for four days and three nights at the Patton House at Fort Clark (Brackenridge), Texas, courtesy of Bryan and Chris Hale. Built in 1888, this architectural and historical treasure is a National Register structure, and was the residence for U.S. Army officers until the end of World War II, including Col. George S. Patton. The 10,000+ square foot building sleeps up to ten, and is filled with original architectural fixtures and artifacts. There are seven bedrooms with five full bathrooms, plus porches and sitting rooms galore. This charming residence can be your home base for excellent birding, hiking and mountain bike trails. You will also be treated to a guided birding walk by expert birder Craig Rasmussen, who will be staying at the house as well. Ft. Clark is one of Craig’s favorite birding places.

**Bamberger Ranch Exclusive**

Experience a very special day and evening at “Selah,” the Bamberger Ranch Preserve, in Johnson City. This 5,500 acre ranch has been described as the largest habitat restoration project on private land. Up to eight guests will be treated to a two-hour tour of the ranch, including dinosaur tracks, Madrone Lake and arboretum, and a herd of African Antelope, the scimitar-horned oryx. Then our Honoree himself will prepare you a light dinner with wine, alfresco, at the “Chiroptorium.” Otherwise known as a bat cave, the term is a combination of the word for the scientific order of bats—chiroptera—a combination of the words “hand wing” and “auditorium.” You will watch thousands of bats emerge from the cave at dusk as you enjoy your dinner, a truly unique and fascinating display.

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*Travis Audubon Society | Signal Smoke | September/October 2013*
One of the most striking and appealing aspects of Chaetura Canyon is the topography – hills, trails and steps: lots and lots of steps. Originally it took 15 sizeable steps down from the road just to reach the residence. Once at the residence level, the decks were more like trails with additional steps and narrow passageways to reach the main deck where all of the events and swift watching take place. This created an extremely interesting and appealing venue, but not accessible to all whom would like to participate. Over the past three years we have been working hard to improve accessibility.

In 2011 we completed “Phase One” of our ADA ramp system: a 25’ ramp to bypass the 15 entry steps. This was accomplished with funds from the Chaetura Canyon Maintenance Fund and donated materials and labor from the two of us.

On August 5, 2012, “Phase Two” was completed. More than 200 hours of the skilled labor required was donated by the Chimney Swift Conservation Association. This eliminated the narrow passage ways and additional steps leading to the main deck. A generous grant of $2,000 from the Carl C. and Marie Jo Anderson Foundation and a store credit of $250 from the McCoy’s Corporation supplemented the maintenance funds to make this possible.

On July 21, 2013, “Phase Three” was completed, thanks to a generous matching grant of $2,000 from the Anderson Foundation and the Travis Audubon Spring Appeal. The appeal raised the additional $2,987 necessary to fund the project. The Chimney Swift Conservation Association provided the more than 125 hours of skilled labor required to build this 65’ long ramp with midway landing. It creates complete access to all visitors at the same gate regardless of their physical restrictions.

Two of the most consistent supporters of Chaetura Canyon over the years have been Pat and Carolyn Powers. They have attended numerous dinners, Second Saturday Swift Watches and workshops. In addition, they were major contributors to this year’s Spring Appeal that made Phase Three of the ADA ramps possible. They have also been strong advocates for Chimney Swift conservation for more than a decade. Pat and Carolyn have a swift tower in the back yard of their north Austin home, and Pat was on the BOD of the Texas Chimney Sweeping Guild where he pushed for protection of swifts in residential chimneys. On June 6th, at just 58, Pat passed away after a long battle with cancer. We miss our friend, and our hearts go out to Carolyn.

July was unusually wet with 7.27” of rain, and the vegetation responded accordingly. The Chimney Swifts had a good productive year as did all of the local breeding birds.

Thanks to all of our visitors, event participants and contributors to Chaetura Canyon over the summer.

Chaetura Canyon Donors – June / July

Tara Raabe Paula Trafe Ron Seamon Laurie Foss Shelia Hargis Sandy Behrman Ashley Spiro Lisa Spiro Carol Ray K. Diane Bell Frances Cerbins Martha Northington Anne Coats Andrea Walsh Flo Rice

Phyllis Scott Bobby Hughes Dixie Halm Audrey Horn Suzanne Napier Tom Napier Marilou Schmidt Dan Schmidt Lucy Flanagan Aimee Beveridge Geoff Hoese Cheryl McGrath Maggie Moody Val Mills Doug Mills

Fred Catrett Kim Kreig Ray Kreig Denise Dailey Julia Marsden Michael O’Reilly Meredith O’Reilly Keri Cooper Carolyn Sue Chap.m.an Charlie and Berf Kreitler Olaf and Peggy Alexander

Did you know that Travis Audubon’s “Ask A Birder” page is staffed by volunteers from our membership? Check it out here: travisaudubon.org/bird-questions/ask-a-birder. Each month, one of our designated bird experts takes a turn answering questions that come in to our site, and being the point person for any queries that come through our office. Thank you so much to those who have taken up the mantle over the past year!

If you’re fairly knowledgeable about local birds and have a few spare minutes per week, we’re currently looking for volunteers for November 2013 through October 2014. Contact Anna at webmaster@travisaudubon.org with any questions or to sign up!
Travis Audubon
Monthly Meetings

New Member Welcome

Please join us for the New Member Welcome to be held prior to the General Membership Meeting on September 19, 2013, from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.. This will be a meet-and-greet for all new members who have joined since January 1, 2013. Travis Audubon committees will be on hand to show you how much fun you can have with Travis Audubon. Pinwheel sandwiches from Jason’s Deli, fruit and beverages will be served.

If you are a long-time Travis Audubon member, please join us in welcoming our new members. If you are a new member, please take this opportunity to get acquainted and see how you can get involved!

Location: First Presbyterian Church
8001 Mesa Dr., Austin, TX 78731

Time: Doors open at 6:00 for social time
Program begins at 7:00 p.m.

Refreshments are provided.

Predators from the Sky

Thursday, September 19, 2013

Speaker: Rich Neupert

Photos: compliments of Erich Neupert

The Blackland Prairie Raptor Center, BPRC, is dedicated to environmental preservation through public education and the conservation of birds of prey and wildlife in their natural habitat. Join us at our September membership meeting for a presentation by Erich Neupert, BPRC’s Executive Director. Erich will display several species of live raptors to demonstrate how our aerial predators go about searching for food. Discover their unique adaptations to hunt in woodlands, wetlands and prairies and get to see these birds up close and personal.

Erich Neupert is the Executive Director of the Blackland Prairie Raptor Center, north of Dallas, Texas. BPRC is a non-profit organization that reaches more than 30,000 people a year through educational outreach programs. With 12 non-releasable raptor ambassadors, BPRC introduces its visitors to the habitats of Texas, and teaches how people can play a role in respecting and protecting raptors in their natural environment. BPRC is currently building a hospital and appropriate caging to rehabilitate and release birds of prey in North Texas. Prior to joining BPRC, Erich was the manager and rehabilitator for a North Texas raptor center that received more than 500 patients a year. Erich is a Texas Master Naturalist and Audubon member who teaches classes on a variety of birding topics.

Willie’s story: Willie was found on the ground in the spring of 2002 in Dallas. The person who found her thought she needed help and took her home to raise her. Unfortunately, she was fed cat food as she developed which caused a lack of calcium in her diet, her bones became brittle and fractures occurred in her right wing. This made her only partially flighted. Additionally, she became ‘imprinted’ on humans and now relies on them for her care.

Learning More about Our Native Texan, the Golden-cheeked Warbler

Thursday, October 17, 2013

Speaker: Bill Reiner

Our presenter in October will be Travis Audubon’s own Bill Reiner! His presentation will summarize what biologists have discovered about the behavior and life history of the Golden-cheeked Warbler, one of our endangered songbirds. If you look at a distribution map for Golden-cheeked Warblers, you’ll quickly figure out why they are frequently referred to as native Texans. Bill’s presentation will examine some preliminary insights gleaned from the first three years of an intensive study involving the color-banding of Golden-cheeks on the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve, BCP. The BCP in western Travis County provides habitat for a number of rare and endangered plant and animal species found nowhere else on earth.

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Growing up in Michigan, I was a particular child. At a young age, I remember being overly distraught when the seam of my sock did not rest perfectly across my toes. Before retiring to bed, I had to make sure the shutters were latched, the closet doors closed, and my mattress firmly against the headboard—although that routine may have been driven purely by self-preservation, there’s no telling which route nocturnal monsters will travel. As I grew older, my nature morphed from finicky to something more akin to that of an archivist. During this period, when we visited relatives in Florida I would spend hours searching for fossilized sharks’ teeth and then gleefully spend even more time sorting, counting, attempting to identify the teeth to species level, making lists, and generally cataloging them to death. I was as persistent as a badger, a trait that would prove useful in the future.

That brings us, in a strange way, to a weed known as Common Mullein (Verbascum thapsus). Mullein is quite common (no pun intended) in the Hill Country wherever there is an open field, disturbed soil, and plenty of sunlight. Mullein begins life above ground as an inconspicuous, pale green rosette with soft, woolly leaves which, while initially small, can eventually reach lengths of up to a foot. Typically during its second year of growth, a single stem will shoot up from the basal rosette, sometimes towering six feet in height. By April and through October, the top portion of this stem will be covered in small, yellow flowers which will be fertilized and ripen into seeds that will become the next generation of mullein. I think everyone has most likely seen this plant. However, some people are surprised to learn that it is not native. Originating from Europe, mullein made its way to the United States by the 18th century and has since spread to every state, even to the dry upper elevations of Hawaii’s volcanoes. Unlike some non-native plants, mullein does have useful properties that are fairly well known, such as being a remedy for skin, throat, and breathing ailments, to name just a few. While it is a non-native, it could be debated whether it is an invasive species or not; I personally consider it so but in the Pantheon of Invasives it is certainly a lesser incarnation due to its preference for sunny, disturbed soils and an inability to spread easily or effectively compete with most native plants.

When I arrived at Baker Sanctuary, I noticed the mullein in the Baker Cabin/JAEC area but I had bigger fish to fry with the Allanthus grove and the Malta-star Thistle onslaught. However, the badger in my soul eventually asserted itself and I decided to remove the mullein. At the time I thought it would be a fairly quick and easy process, because the population seemed rather limited and the plant came out of the ground quite easily, usually accompanied by a satisfying ripping sensation as the tap root gave way. July 2nd, 2012 marked the first salvo in the War of the Mullein with 89 plants removed. While I do not want to admit it, I thought I had the problem licked after the first 89 were gone. I could not find more, and Baker did not seem to have many in the first place. Well, I was wrong. Baby mulleins sprouted and I found more hidden amongst the KR Bluestem. Over the following year I continued to haphazardly harvest them, pulling plants when I had a half hour to spare before a meeting or education activity. I continued to count their fuzzy little corpses and they quickly began to add up. As of this writing (in July), approximately a year after the harvest began, 2,056 mullein have been pulled. Perhaps a saner person would have stopped after the first thousand or so, but I could not; the badger had reared its head and would not be satisfied with anything less than total mullein annihilation. However, at the risk of sounding self-delusional, after a year of pulling mullein, I think I am finally getting the upper-hand and, with another decade or two given the seeds’ propensity to persist in the seed bank, the Baker Cabin/JAEC will be a mullein-free zone.

In the larger sense, invasive species are a problem, in the Hill Country and most everywhere else in the world. At the very least, they displace native species; reason enough, in my view, to remove them. While I have seen invasions that are staggering in their extent, the first step always begins with someone deciding to pull out that first weed. Luckily, most people do not have to worry about thousands of acres, but instead they can focus on a smaller scale, such as their own yard or local park. If you ever need inspiration on what can be accomplished at such a scale, check out Travis Audubon’s Blair Woods, where they are in the process of converting a ten acre Ligustrum wonderland into a varied, native habitat. It’s an ongoing project that has clocked hundreds, if not thousands, of work hours and will continue to do so in the future, but the change has been breathtaking. It all began with a handful of folks letting their inner badgers run free. Removal of invasive species is a project on which all can participate at some level; the first step is deciding to act and the second is refusing to quit. Find your patch, stake your claim, make a change, and inspire others to do the same; the invasive will not stand a chance.

Many thanks to Zara Environmental LLC for volunteering their considerable expertise and time to help systematically discover, map, and assess karst features present at Baker Sanctuary. In October of last year, Zara began the process by leading a group of 20 volunteers from a variety of organizations on the first formal karst survey of the southern section of the preserve and followed up in June, with the help of 15 volunteers, with a survey focused on the northern section of Baker. While Baker has not yet been completely surveyed, the approximately 200 hours of volunteer effort has yielded 35 karst features, some of which will most likely be formally surveyed in the future to determine if they harbor any endangered arthropods. Thanks again to Zara Environmental and all our hard-working volunteers who have made it possible.
Travis Audubon Creates Advisory Council

Article by Gail Buxton

We are pleased to announce the recent formation of Travis Audubon’s Advisory Council. The role of this group will be to provide leadership and expertise in guiding the course of our organization.

Advisory Council members are chosen for their expertise, experience, and respected reputations in the community. They will work in concert with the executive director and the board of directors by offering their insights, ideas, strategies, and vision.

While the council roster is not quite complete, our five inaugural members are:

- Carter Smith, Executive Director, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Andrew Sansom, Executive Director, The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University-San Marcos
- Victor Emanuel, Executive Director, Victor Emanuel Nature Tours
- J. David Bamberger, Executive Director, Bamberger Ranch Preserve
- The Honorable Karen Huber
- Sam Fason, DDS, Oral Surgeon, and former Travis Audubon board member

We look forward to welcoming these esteemed leaders to our Advisory Council, and feel fortunate to have them onboard in this capacity.

Originally from Ohio, Bill has lived in Austin for nearly 25 years. An avid birder since childhood, he is fascinated by all aspects of natural history and ecology, especially with how plants and animals fill niches in their environments and form communities. He explores these themes in the bi-monthly nature column that he writes for the Signal Smoke.

Travis Audubon thanks our September and October general member meeting sponsors:

**September Meeting Sponsor**

![Alamo Inn B&B Outdoor Store](image)

**October Meeting Sponsor**

![Green Collar Operations](image)
Fall Warbler Class

**Wednesdays, September 11, 18, 25; 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**
**Local field trip will be half-day on Saturday, Sept 14**
**Coastal Field Trip, September 28–29**

Join Doug Booher and Travis Audubon in refreshing your skills in identifying those difficult fall warblers! Doug will provide an introduction to the 46 species of warblers that regularly occur in Texas, including discussion of taxonomy, range of occurrence, breeding status, and habitats. Doug will help you focus on the identification of those warblers that are especially hard to identify in their non-breeding plumage.

The class is designed for intermediate birders with at least one year of birding experience. The class size is limited to 16 participants. There will be three evening class sessions, one Saturday local field trip, and also an out-of-town field trip to Corpus Christi.

Dates for the classroom sessions are **Wednesdays, September 11, 18, & 25; 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.** Local field trip will be half-day on **Saturday, September 14.** Out-of-town field trip to Corpus Christi will be the weekend of **September 28–29.**

The tuition for the class is $60 for members of Travis Audubon Society and $70 for non-members. Those going on the optional Corpus field trip will have an additional fee of $45 to cover the leader’s trip expenses. The class will be taught at a central Austin location, with more specific information provided at registration.

For more information, contact Jackie Davis at jackietexnat@gmail.com.

To register, go to: [http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/fall-warblers-class](http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/fall-warblers-class)

Trees and Shrubs for Birders

**Tuesdays, Sept. 24 and Oct 1; 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**
**Field Trips:** **Saturdays, Sept. 28 and Oct. 5; 8:00 a.m. – noon**

This class is for everyone who’s ever missed seeing a bird, or missed getting others on their bird, because they couldn’t identify the tree it was in. We will cover a couple dozen of the most common trees and shrubs in central Texas. Knowing these species will enable you to recognize at least 90% of what you’ll see in the area. The class will focus on identification in the field, and NOT on botany or any fine points of taxonomy.

The class will be held on two consecutive Tuesday evenings, September 24 and October 1, 2013, 6:30–8:30 p.m., at a NW Austin location, with field trips on the following Saturday mornings.

The class will be taught by Diane Sherrill, a local native plant landscaper and property restoration consultant. Diane is a member and former president (1999) of the Williamson Co. Native Plant Society of Texas. She is also a member of Travis Audubon and longtime volunteer and tour leader for Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge and Commons Ford Prairie.

Participants will need to bring paper and a pen to the classroom sessions. Binoculars, hats, sturdy closed-toed shoes, sunscreen, and water are needed for the field trips.

Tuition for the class is $50 for TA members and $65 for non-members.

Participants will be provided with additional information about the class and directions to the meeting place when they register.

The Power Point presentation will be available for printing by students. It is recommended that students purchase *Trees, Shrubs and Vines of the Texas Hill Country,* by Jan Wrede, prior to class start.

For questions or if class is full and you want to be on the waiting list, contact Judie Tasch atatasch@austin.rr.com.

Grasses Class

**Saturdays, Sept. 28 and Oct. 5**

Much of the landscape of Texas is dominated by grasses. Like animals and other plants, each species of grass has its own habitat niche. By learning to tell them apart, we can better “read” the land. Grasses can tell us about the underlying soil and geology, the locations of seeps and seasonally wet (or chronically droughty) areas, the intensity of grazing pressure, and the history of disturbance.

Some grasses are magnets for seed-eating birds and other wildlife. Many provide superb erosion control, or cover for ground-dwelling wildlife. Some are pioneer plants that help to build soil after it has been lost. Some offer superb forage; others not so much. Come learn what the grasses can tell us about our land at a two-day workshop held at the Flying X Ranch of Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge in eastern Burnet County.

This will be Bill Reiner’s fifth year to teach the class—after a two-year hiatus. He became familiar with most of the 90+ species of grasses in the area when he was a biological technician at the refuge. Bill is now a biologist with the Wildland Conservation Division of the City of Austin, a program that manages the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve.

The dates are Saturdays, September 28 and October 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tuition for the class is $50 for TAS members and $65 for non-members. To register, contact Paul Wheeler TASGrassClass@swbell.net or 512-338-1131. Participants will be provided with additional information about the class and directions to the meeting place when they register.

To register, go to: [http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/grasses-class](http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/grasses-class)
Bird Photography Workshop with Jeff Parker

Mondays, October 7 and 14; 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, October 19; 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Travis Audubon member and professional wildlife photographer, Jeff Parker, will teach a Bird Photography Workshop for TAS. Jeff’s an award-winning nature, bird and wildlife photographer who leads the naturally curious on photo tours throughout North and Central America. He also offers photography workshops designed to enhance technical know-how as well as knowledge of the natural world. His photographs have appeared in many publications and websites including: Audubon Magazine online, NANPA’s Expressions 2011, NANPA’s Expressions 2012, American Profile, Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine, American Airlines’ Celebrated Living, Texas Wildlife Magazine, and Cenizo. You can learn more about Jeff at his website: http://jeffparkerimages.com.

The workshop will be composed of two classroom sessions and a morning in the field. The class sessions will be held on Mondays, October 7 and 14; 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. at a north Austin location and the field work will be on Saturday, October 19 from 8:00 a.m. to noon. The workshop will cover equipment, exposure, depth of field, light, composition, flight photography and set-ups, all at an introductory level.

Tuition will be $60 for TAS members and $75 for non-members. Class size will be limited to 10. For questions or for more information please contact Frances Cerbins at fcerbins@yahoo.com.

To register go to: http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/bird-photography-workshop-with-jeff-parker

Creating a Wildlife-Friendly Native Garden

Saturday, October 19; 9:00 a.m. – noon

Love watching wildlife and want to attract more to your backyard? Whether you are a novice or an experienced gardener, this three-hour wildscaping class is sure to inspire you to take your garden to the next level. Through a classroom presentation and outdoor habitat tour, Meredith O’Reilly will highlight some of the best native plants to attract birds, butterflies, and other beautiful fauna to your Central Texas garden throughout the seasons. Additionally, you will learn how to utilize color, height, design and planting strategies, and easy project ideas to maximize the wildlife you can attract, all while benefitting the ecosystem as a whole and keeping your garden neighbor-friendly. Of course, ecosystem gardening actually begins below ground—this class will take a closer look at the soil food web and important sustainable practices. The class is limited to 20 participants and will be held on Saturday, October 19, from 9:00 a.m. to noon, in a central Austin location. Tuition for the class is $15 for TAS members and $20 for non-members.

For questions or if the class is full and you want to be on the waiting list, contact Lynn Hill at pelican7227-tas@yahoo.com

Meredith O’Reilly is author of the popular wildlife gardening blog “Great Stems” and is co-host of Austin’s annual Habitat Steward training. She is also a Capital Area Master Naturalist and a member of the Travis Audubon Urban Habitat Committee. To date she has helped 14 schools in the Austin area create schoolyard habitats.

eBird Workshop

Tuesday, October 22; 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Laurie Foss of Travis Audubon’s Conservation Committee will be presenting a workshop 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 as well as to view and explore this vast database of records on bird distribution and abundance.

Join us on Tuesday, October 22, from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. 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. Computers will be provided. Please bring a list of birds that you observed either recently or in the past and you will create an eBird account and enter that checklist during the class. The tuition for the workshop is $30 for Travis Audubon members and $35 for non-members. Limit 12 participants.

For more information, contact Laurie Foss at lauriefoss@gmail.com or at 751-3677.

To register, go to: http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/ebird-workshop

Travis Audubon’s Introduction to Birds and Birding Class, Fall 2013

Wednesdays, Oct. 30, Nov. 6, 13, and 20; 6:15 – 8:45 p.m. 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 possibly the class for you. The class is for those who want to take an active role in seeking out birds and learning to identify them. (If you’re interested in learning to ID the birds in your backyard but not interested in traveling to different locations to find birds, consider taking the Beginning Backyard Birding class offered by Travis Audubon instead of this class.) This class promises to transform your relationship to birds and start you down the road toward a life-long love and enjoyment of birds. Instruction will be provided during four classroom sessions and four field trips to popular birding locations around Austin. Attendance at all the classroom sessions and all field trips is highly recommended.

The class will cover a variety of topics including: how to identify birds; field guides and binoculars; bird identification of many species of Central Texas birds; bird vocalizations; where to go birding in Central Texas; bird migration; and bird conservation. Tuition includes a copy of the sixth edition of the National Geographic Field Guide to the Birds of North America, our “textbook” for the class. No prior birding experience is necessary.

Sheila Hargis is the instructor for this class. She has been birding for 16 years and loves birds! She spends most of her free time birding or thinking about birds, and her passion and enthusiasm for birds and birding is infectious. Sheila has given presentations and classes on numerous bird topics, regularly leads birding field trips and is currently on the Travis Audubon Habitat Conservation Committee. Sheila will be assisted by Laurie Foss, who is as passionate and knowledgeable about birds as Sheila.

The classroom portion of this workshop is limited to 24 participants and will be held on Wednesday evenings, **October 30, November 6, 13, and 20** (6:15 – 8:45 p.m.) in the Hwy 183/Loop 360 area. The field trips will be held the following weekend. Half of the class will have their field trips on Saturday mornings, **November 2, 9, 16 and 23**, and the other half of the class will have their field trips on Sunday mornings. **November 3, 10, 17 and 24**. Field trips will typically start around 7:30 a.m. and end between 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

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 is $95 for TAS members and $110 for non-members. Registration is available online at www.travisaudubon.org. If you have questions, contact Sheila at intro2birds@gmail.com or at 512-294-0272.

Register online at: [http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/intro-to-birds-and-birding](http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/intro-to-birds-and-birding)

For more information or if the class is full and you want to be put on the waiting list, contact Sheila Hargis at intro2birds@gmail.com or at 512-294-0272.

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**Christmas Bird Count Training Session**

**Sunday, October 27, 2013; 7:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

Each year, thousands of birders from all over the world gather and count birds at their favorite Christmas Bird Count (CBC) locations. The Christmas Bird Count is the longest running wildlife census in the world and provides critical data on bird population trends and movements. The CBC season is December 14 through January 5 every year. Austin area birders are lucky to have quite a few CBCs nearby. Birders of all skill levels are needed to adequately survey the birds in these Christmas Bird Count locations.

Join Shelia Hargis and Laurie Foss for a CBC training session on October 27. This training session is for birders who are new to CBCs and for anyone else who would like to warm-up your CBC skills before the CBC season starts. The meet-up location is the La Madeleine restaurant in Sunset Valley, 5493 Brodie Lane. We’ll gather at 7:30 a.m., eat breakfast, discuss how the count works, split into two groups, survey our assigned areas, and then re-group for lunch and a countdown. We’ll also provide information on the numerous CBCs in the Austin area. By the time the training session is over, you will be confident and excited to participate in your first CBC of the 2013–2014 CBC season!

Register online at: [http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/christmas-bird-count-training-session](http://travisaudubon.org/education/adult-classes/christmas-bird-count-training-session)

There is no charge for this training class but you do need to register. Contact Shelia Hargis at Shelia.hargis@gmail.com with questions.

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**Sparrow Identification with Byron Stone**

**Wednesdays, Nov. 13 and 20; Dec. 4 and 11; 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. Field Trips Saturdays, Nov. 16 and 23; Sunday, Dec 8 and Saturday, Dec 14**

Byron Stone will teach this popular class again this fall. Learn why Byron refers to central Texas as "Sparrow Heaven" as we review the two dozen species of native sparrows that occur regularly in the Austin area each year. The class is designed for Intermediate Birders. The class will be taught on four separate Wednesday evenings, 7:00–9:00 p.m., Nov. 13, 20; Dec. 4 and 11 at a north Austin location. Field trips will be on the Saturdays, Nov. 16, 23; Dec. 14 and Sunday Dec. 8. The Dec. 14 field trip will be a part of the Austin Christmas Bird Count. Class fee is $75 for TAS members and $90 for non-members. To learn more about the class or to register, please contact Byron Stone at dbirdie@aol.com AFTER OCTOBER 1.

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**Mission Statement**

Travis Audubon promotes the enjoyment, understanding, and conservation of native birds and their habitats.
Behind The Scenes at Travis Audubon

You attend our field trips and classes, see us at monthly membership meetings, and see us in your e-mail inbox every week, but there’s much more going on at Travis Audubon than meets the eye. Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes at our organization? Executive Director Nancy Manning shares some details about where your donations, and the tireless efforts of our staff and volunteers, are being put to work to make Travis Audubon the best at what we do.

Conservation:

What does it mean to own sanctuaries? It’s a lot more than just owning land. To meet our mission of “promoting the enjoyment, understanding and conservation of native birds and their habitats,” we strive to manage our sanctuaries at an optimal level to protect and preserve native habitat and the wildlife that depends on it. Each of our three Austin-area sanctuaries is unique in its habitat, wildlife, location, and audience; and it is important to us to reach out to the friends and neighbors of these sanctuaries in a way that engages them to enjoy, learn, and conserve. To that end, we are diligently developing management plans for all three of our sanctuaries.

Each sanctuary has a core team operating under the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation, which allows us to ask questions like: Are our actions effective in achieving conservation goals? Are we having an impact? Are we making a difference in protecting habitat and wildlife?

The Open Standards process is as follows:

1. Identify conservation targets. For example, at Blair Woods our conservation targets are the riparian corridor, the savannah, and the woodlands.

2. Evaluate status of target. You need to know the health of your target when you begin—otherwise, you won’t know if you’ve successfully improved its health. Up to two years ago, the savanna at Blair Woods was 80-90% woody vegetation and less than 10% grassland. It was also 50% nonnative.

3. Identify direct and indirect threats to targets. One of the several identified direct threats to our conservation targets at Blair Woods includes nonnative and native invasive plants. An indirect threat related to this direct threat is homeowners in the drainage basin growing the invasive plants in their yards.

4. Set a goal for each target. This is a formal statement of the ultimate impact you hope to achieve. For our savannah at Blair Woods, our goal is that vegetation should be 98% native, with 70-90% grassland and 10-30% woody plants.

5. Decide upon strategies for lessening or eliminating the threats. At Blair Woods, we will remove the direct threat by removing the invasive plants (with procedures outlined). We will lessen the indirect threat through outreach and education, such as the Open House we held last September for the 39 homeowners in the drainage basin.

6. Decide how you will monitor for impact. Monitoring allows us to determine if our efforts working. Monitoring, in the example provided, will include population census (plant surveys), photo documentation, and measuring the amounts of material removed. See the Blair Woods progress page for some of our progress and results, including pictures: http://travisaudubon.org/conservation/sanctuaries/blair-woods

Each management plan also contains information about the sanctuary’s history, a description of flora and fauna, land use history, infrastructure, education and outreach programs, and funding needs.

These plans then guide the stewards, Board of Directors, and committees in the best practices for managing these sanctuaries. Anyone who is tasked with maintaining our sanctuaries in the future should be able to pick up these plans and know where we came from and where to go next to best conserve this habitat. The idea here is not just that we own sanctuaries. We want to be leaders in the conservation field – models for how to effectively and efficiently manage our lands to have the most impact toward protecting and preserving habitat and wildlife.

Another major component of our conservation efforts is land acquisition. Travis Audubon often receives offers of land, either as a gift or for purchase. However, we know from years of experience that to manage land effectively is costly and time consuming. Therefore, our board is diligently working on developing criteria for land acquisition.

Stay tuned for “Behind the Scenes in Education.”
Don’t let the sultry weather of early September fool you. August has not been held over through Labor Day. Autumn migration is well under way, and the months of September and October will bring a dramatic turnover to the birdlife here in central Texas.

The parade starts in July (or even late June) with a few southbound sandpipers and plovers, but even these early migrants do not reach peak numbers and diversity until August or early September. By then, other migrants will also be winging through.

Mississippi Kites are often the first of the raptors to pass in the fall, usually reaching peak numbers about Labor Day. If you are lucky, you may find yourself near a nighttime roost a couple of hours after dawn, and an entire flock of these graceful aerialists will circle up at once, lifted by the first thermal air currents of the day.

Hawks are diurnal migrants, but most other birds, especially smaller species, migrate after dark. On nights with winds from the right direction, these nocturnal migrants may sail on through central Texas unseen. But if the winds are wrong (and especially if winds shift or storms block the route shortly after dusk), central Texas birders can be treated to a busy assortment of birds the next day. In the fall, that usually means the best birding occurs on the muggy days of southerly winds between cold fronts.

Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, Yellow Warblers, and Orchard Orioles are among the most numerous of the early songbird migrants. All are quite common by early September, as are the frustratingly unidentifiable Empidonax flycatchers. As in the spring, the “whit-will-do” flight calls of Upland Sandpipers and the grunts of Dickcissels tell of their passing overhead early or late in the day. Hummingbird numbers swell with a pulse of migrant Ruby-throats in September. You may also see, perched at the very tip of a dead snag, an Olive-sided Flycatcher... or one of the first American Kestrels to return for the winter. Blue-winged Teal lead off the autumn duck migration; their numbers will have already peaked by mid-September, when the first of the other ducks begin to arrive. (However, you may not recognize many of the drakes, who still look like the females in their cryptic summer eclipse plumage.)

You can almost mark the calendar in September and October by which warblers are most common. Early September is dominated by the Yellow Warblers, who started arriving in August. By mid-September, their numbers begin to drop off, and Wilson’s Warblers are just about as likely to pop up. By late in September, the Nashville Warblers supplant both of these as the most common species.

Early October brings a surge of Common Yellowthroats, especially in their preferred marshy or streamside habitats, as well as Orange-crowned Warblers. Both of these species may stay through the winter, though most of the yellowthroats apparently continue southward. By mid-October, Orange-crowns have replaced the Nashvilles as the most common warbler species, but toward the end of the month, even they are outnumbered by the first-arriving Yellow-rumped Warblers, who will be the most common warblers in Austin through the winter months.

These are not the only warbler species to migrate through Austin during September and October. Smaller numbers of American Redstarts; Yellow-breasted Chats; Northern Waterthrushes; and Mourning, Black-and-White, and Black-throated Green Warblers also appear regularly. Mid-September seems to be the best time to see the widest assortment, though...
some stragglers may still be seen into November and even as late as the Christmas Bird Counts.

Other species supplement the warbler calendar. Orchard Orioles soon disperse in mid-September, but by then Baltimore Orioles are migrating, and, sometimes, a few Bullock’s Orioles. Female and juvenile Painted Buntings are still numerous in early September (though the gaudy males have long since departed), but by mid-September Indigo Buntings also appear. Both species can be found feeding on favored Switchgrass and other seeds along streams.

The most dramatic shift in the bird population usually comes with a late September cold front — often one that pulls along in its wake the first big kettles of high-soaring Broad-winged and Swainson’s Hawks. That front will sweep out most of the lingering Summer Tanagers, Great Crested Flycatchers, Yellow-billed Cuckoos, and White-eyed Vireos, and usher in the first Northern Flickers, Brown Thrashers, House Wrens, and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, as well as a host of wintering sparrows.

The abundant Blue-gray Gnatcatchers of early September also dwindle by October, when Ruby-crowned Kinglets start to replace them. By then, only the brown female Indigo Buntings and a smattering of patchy-blue males are still around. They may be joined by Clay-colored Sparrows among the first flocks of wintering Chipping Sparrows. By late October, the buntings and Clay-colored Sparrows are generally gone, leaving the streambank grasses to the yellowthroats — and the House Wrens and Lincoln’s Sparrows, as well as a host of wintering sparrows.

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Migration is an exciting time, bringing birds that we see only briefly as they pass through. But autumn migration also brings special challenges, in the form of birds that rarely sing, wearing strange and confusing plumages.

Those early-migrating sandpipers are a good example. The first to appear are usually adult birds. They are still clothed in the same plumage in which they migrated northward in spring, and it’s now worn and dingy. Trailing them, but becoming more prevalent through August and often dominant by September, are the juveniles. They are decked out in fresh plumage with delicate feather edgings still intact. Differences between juveniles and adults of the same species are often more pronounced than those between different species. (In fact, many autumn reports of Eurasian sandpiper species in North America turn out to be mis-identified juveniles.)

Even some usually easy identifications can become complicated now. Adult Eastern Phoebes, for instance, lack wingbars — a feature that helps distinguish them at a glance from the other small brown flycatchers. But juvenile phoebes do have wingbars. White-eyed Vireos can be a problem, too. Juveniles are dark-eyed and sometimes lack prominent wingbars and eyering — making them look a lot like Bell’s Vireos, which are migrating now.

It isn’t just that there are a few juveniles among the more easily recognized adults, either. In most cases the juveniles outnumber the adults — and far outnumber the adult males. This makes sense if you think about it: Most songbird pairs will raise three to four young per brood (and sometimes raise multiple broods). So, in a successful year, the young birds should far outnumber the adults. This is cause for celebration — the breeding season was a success! — but also a challenge for birders.

Unlike the sandpipers, most juvenile birds are not as brightly-plumaged as their parents. Dull juvenile Yellow Warblers (and stray juvenile Tennessee Warblers) can look amazingly similar to Orange-crowns. Juvenile Mourning Warblers are difficult to distinguish from the rare juvenile MacGillivray’s. Male Baltimore and Bullock’s Orioles are easy to tell apart, but not so the females, especially the juvenile females. Keep your field guide handy.

After the intriguing, if confusing, migrants of September pass through, October can seem quiet. This is especially true on a clear day after a cold front, when high-circling swallows and congregating Scissor-tailed Flycatchers seem to be the only birds around. However, this is the best time to see flocks of stunning American White Pelicans sailing overhead. The first Sandhill Cranes also trumpet their arrival, and a Whooping Crane is always possible. Other rarities occur, too. The only Red-naped Sapsucker this writer has yet seen in central Texas was a solitary bird on an otherwise unremarkable October day at the Capitol grounds. The first White-tailed Kite sighted at the Balcones Canyonlands refuge was fortuitously present during a late October Texas Ornithological Society field trip. So if you go out to enjoy the cooler October weather, bring your binoculars along.

Sources for this article included A Field Guide to Advanced Birding: Birding Challenges and How to Approach Them, by Ken Kaufman; Birds of the Austin, Texas, Region: A Seasonal Distribution Checklist, by Travis Audubon Society; and The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior.
# September–October 2013 Field Trips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Location/Description</th>
<th>Registration Required</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Registration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Friday, August 9</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Chimney Swift Roosts Across Austin</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 to 8:30 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, August 10</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Chimney Swift Roosts Across Austin</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
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<td>7:30 to 8:30 p.m.</td>
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<td><strong>Sunday, August 11</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Chimney Swift Roosts Across Austin</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, August 17</strong></td>
<td>Roosts at Murphy Park in Taylor, Tx</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>6:00 to 8:30 p.m.</td>
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<td><strong>Friday, September 6</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Chimney Swift Roosts Across Austin</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
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<td>7:00 to 8:00 p.m.</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday, September 7</strong></td>
<td>Lake Bastrop by Kayak</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
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<td>7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>512-294-0272</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday, September 7</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Chimney Swift Roosts Across Austin</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td><strong>Saturday, September 7</strong></td>
<td>Swift Fest in Jonestown</td>
<td>No</td>
<td><a href="mailto:VEFL21@yahoo.com">VEFL21@yahoo.com</a>, 512-698-9880</td>
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<td>7:00 to 8:15 p.m.</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday, September 7</strong></td>
<td>Laguna Gloria with Sam Fason</td>
<td>Yes (16)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scfason@gmail.com">scfason@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
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<td>Beginner’s Bird Walk – Richard Moya Park</td>
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<td><strong>Sunday, September 8</strong></td>
<td>Multiple Chimney Swift Roosts Across Austin</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
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<td>7:00 to 8:00 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, September 10</strong></td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at Champion Park</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Dan Callaway</td>
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<td>7:30 to 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at Champion Park led by Dan Callaway</td>
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<td><strong>Saturday, September 14</strong></td>
<td>Monthly Bird Count at Hornsby Bend</td>
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<td>Eric Carpenter</td>
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<td>7:00 a.m. &amp; 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Monthly Bird Count at Hornsby Bend led by Ken Zaslow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, September 17</strong></td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at St. Edwards Park, led by Ken Zaslow</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ken Zaslow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 to 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at St. Edwards Park, led by Ken Zaslow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, September 21</strong></td>
<td>Hornsby Bend Monthly Bird Walk</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Eric Stager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 to 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Hornsby Bend Monthly Bird Walk led by Ken Zaslow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, September 24</strong></td>
<td>Super Tuesday at Colorado Bend State Park, led by Terry Banks</td>
<td>Yes (12)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 a.m. to late afternoon</td>
<td>Super Tuesday at Colorado Bend State Park, led by Terry Banks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, October 1</strong></td>
<td>Super-Tuesday! at Reimer’s Ranch Park, led by Terry Banks</td>
<td>Yes (12)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30 to 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Super-Tuesday! at Reimer’s Ranch Park, led by Terry Banks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, October 5</strong></td>
<td>Berry Springs</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Virginia Rose and Judith Bailey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 to 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Berry Springs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, October 5</strong></td>
<td>Laguna Gloria with Sam Fason</td>
<td>Yes (16)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:scfason@gmail.com">scfason@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:45 to 10:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Laguna Gloria with Sam Fason</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, October 8</strong></td>
<td>Super-Tuesday! at Commons Ford Ranch Park, led by Deb and Lee Wallace</td>
<td>Yes (12)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:apeltd@austin.rr.com">apeltd@austin.rr.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 to 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Super-Tuesday! at Commons Ford Ranch Park, led by Deb and Lee Wallace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, October 12</strong></td>
<td>Monthly Bird Count at Hornsby Bend</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Eric Carpenter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 a.m. &amp; 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Monthly Bird Count at Hornsby Bend led by Ken Zaslow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, October 13</strong></td>
<td>The Big Sit! at Balcones Canyons National Wildlife Refuge</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sheila.hargis@gmail.com">Sheila.hargis@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all day (come out at any time)</td>
<td>The Big Sit! at Balcones Canyons National Wildlife Refuge</td>
<td></td>
<td>512-294-0272</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, October 15</strong></td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday at Roy Guerrero Park</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ken Zaslow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 to 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday at Roy Guerrero Park led by Ken Zaslow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturday, October 19</strong></td>
<td>Hornsby Bend Monthly Bird Walk</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Eric Stager</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 to 11:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Hornsby Bend Monthly Bird Walk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, October 20</strong></td>
<td>Tejas Camp</td>
<td>Yes (15)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jepbird@att.net">jepbird@att.net</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 to 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Tejas Camp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sunday, October 20</strong></td>
<td>Commons Ford Monthly Walk</td>
<td>Yes (15)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:apeld@austin.rr.com">apeld@austin.rr.com</a></td>
<td>See TAS Website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00 to 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Commons Ford Monthly Walk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, October 22</strong></td>
<td>Super-Tuesday at Blanco State Park, led by Terry Banks</td>
<td>Yes (12)</td>
<td><a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:55bluebirds@att.net">55bluebirds@att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:45 a.m. to mid-afternoon</td>
<td>Super-Tuesday at Blanco State Park, led by Terry Banks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tuesday, October 29</strong></td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at Devine Lake</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Ray and Ginny Steelman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:30 to 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Two-hour Tuesday! at Devine Lake led by Ray and Ginny Steelman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
Spotlight on a Very Special Volunteer

Article written by Gail Buxton. Photo by Carl Pingry.

Congratulations to Lynn Hill, who received the 2013 AGE (Austin Groups for the Elderly) Community Service award on April 25th! Lynn was honored for her leadership in planning and installing the beautiful wildscapes that now grace the yards of the AGE building.

The AGE Service Awards program recognized Lynn for “her volunteerism, leadership, and accomplishments that have had a significant impact on the quality of life for older adults in our community.” Her efforts were described as “the perfect example of what true volunteerism can achieve. Older adults and their families will be able to enjoy the garden for many years to come.”

Lynn is the co-chair of Travis Audubon’s Urban Habitat Committee, which headed up partnerships with NWF Habitat Stewards and an impressive list of other community groups to greatly enhance the beauty of the yards (see “Wildscaping the AGE Building” in the July/Aug. 2012 issue of Signal Smoke).

From the beginning, Lynn was dedicated to the idea of providing the folks who attend AGE’s Adult Day Health Center with not only prettier surroundings, but also with the opportunity to observe wildlife, by including a birdbath, butterfly puddling station and garden, and a hummingbird garden. Numerous businesses, individuals, and local groups donated funds, plants, supplies and labor. Of great importance to Lynn was choosing native “bird-friendly” plants and including design features that would qualify for National Wildlife Habitat certification.

Lynn said, “The south yard is an important gathering place for 40-plus clients each day. The garden is enriching the daily lives of these clients, who also help maintain it. What I really like about the garden is the people and their reaction to it – it means so much to them. Now there are clouds of butterflies and people get so excited when the birds come into the yard, and it makes a difference to their lives. Also, the space is so open and so public, I was trying to pick plants that would be good for the wildlife, as well as plants that people would be drawn to and realize that they could do this same sort of thing at their own home or where they work.”

The project has been over a year in the making—planning began in early 2012—and Lynn continues to organize the tasks, recruit volunteers, and monitor the habitats. A group of dedicated volunteers water on a regular basis, and members of the Urban Habitat Committee provide ongoing maintenance. Sue Anderson, whom Lynn considers to be her right hand, has been deeply involved in the project from the beginning. Lynn is making plans to expand the habitat in the Day Center yard this fall so that it can be certified as a Monarch Waystation.

Hats off to this stellar volunteer, who, through her determination, vision, and hard work, has enriched the lives of so many!
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 a year 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 online using any major credit card by going to www.travisaudubon.org and clicking on “Join.”