



VOLUME 18, NUMBER 12

DECEMBER 2006

NOVEMBER MEETING NOTES

submitted by Nicole Olson

Vice-President Anna Dell Williamson called the meeting to order on November 11, 2006. There were 16 volunteers and three staff members present. The minutes of the September meeting were approved as posted. **David Heinicke** and **Dennis Jones** brought reports, which are published elsewhere in the newsletter.

Treasurer's Report: **Chuck Duplant** reported that there were two requests for funds.

1) **Ken Debenport** requested a supplemental budget for the Nature Center, to meet expenses for the rest of the year.

2) **Steve Killian** requested funding for a Mud Buddy boat motor for aquatic vegetation control.

After discussion, both requests were approved.

The budget report was also presented.

Gift Shop Report: **Beth Debenport** reported that inventory will begin on December 5 during the day and if needed finish on December 6. This is during the deer hunt, and the Nature Center will be closed.

Maintenance Report: **Bryan Leach** reported that no maintenance can be done on Tuesday and Thursday during the hunts. Maintenance is being done on Friday by the Tuesday/Thursday crew.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

November meeting notes, p. 1-2
President's Corner, p. 2
Staff Reports, p. 2-3
Congratulations, p. 3
Christmas Events, p. 4
Nature Center News, p. 5

School Field Trip Training, p. 6
Volunteer Interpretive Hikes, p. 6
Note of Sympathy, p. 6
November Maintenance, p. 7
Quarterly Requirements, p. 7
Prairie View, p. 8

Prairie Platform, p.9
Photo Walks, p. 9
News and Notes, p. 9
Thanks, p. 10
Mistletoe, p. 10-11
Good Animals vs Bad, p. 12
Calendar of Events, p. 12

Outreach Report: **Judy Strauss** reported on **Texian Market Days** at the George Ranch, October 28 and 29. Attendance was down with both visitors and vendors. Several VITs helped at the booth. Approximately 700-800 people visited the booth each day. The weather was great both days.

Old Business: We are still lacking an **Outreach Coordinator**.

New Business: The **Executive Committee** made the following appointments, which will become effective January 1, 2007: Gift Shop Coordinator– **Beth Debenport**, Maintenance Coordinator– **Bryan Leach**. Newsletter Editor– **Anna Dell Williamson**. The **Budget Committee** appointed **Ken Debenport** as Comptroller. Gift Shop and Maintenance Coordinators and Comptroller serve on the Budget Committee.

We are still looking for an Interpretation Coordinator to serve on the Budget Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER



This has been a very busy time at Brazos Bend State Park. The third quarter of the year usually is. Texian Market Days, the volunteer picnic, Thanksgiving week, Simple Christmas, end of year budget planning, decorating the windmill, and Gift Shop inventory, all are piled on top of the usual volunteer activities. The sudden increase of park visitors comes as the Fall weather makes camping and outdoor activities more attractive. Maintenance and wood yard needs never seem to let up. Trail, prairie, and Nature Center interpretation opportunities abound. Creekfield hike attendance, bird hikes, and the rush of September's V.I.T.s to complete their training are all exciting opportunities to share our training and experiences with others. And, best of all, is sharing the volunteer experience with you, the volunteer community and staff of BBSP!

Bruce Williamson

STAFF REPORTS

DAVID HEINICKE



David Heinicke mentioned that the lakes are topped off with water due to the rains. The lakes are looking good. **Simple Christmas** is December 2. Sign-up sheets are available. The water well at Creekfield is drilled. All that is needed is the plumbing. The first week of the deer hunt, 18 deer and 4 hogs were taken. The deer won! The Brazos Bend Christmas Bird Count is December 16.

David reported on a new school trip option. Teachers are having a hard time justifying the field trips to BBSP due to TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills). We now list school hikes on the web, that address the skills required in the TEKS. There will be a one day workshop in January 2007 for those who help lead school hikes on how to address the TEKS, which will hit all the items.

Thanksgiving week the Nature Center will be open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Thursday, the Franklins will operate the Nature Center. Friday is expected to be very busy and there will possibly be a big weekend turnout.

After about 14 months, our grant requests finally got their funding codes. Equipment was purchased by the Park with government funding.

A big thanks to everyone with helping on weekend programs. There were 810 people who came through the Nature Center today (11-11-06) – Great job!

A new screech owl was received two weeks ago. There was damage to the eyeballs but the owl still has depth perception. Volunteers interested in learning to work with the owl should let David know.

DENNIS JONES

Assistant Superintendent Dennis Jones mentioned the prairies are looking very good. There has been some spraying done on the prairies, as well as maintenance on wetlands – controlling of noxious plants such as cattails and Chinese tallow trees.

CONGRATULATIONS

Jim Calvert, Tom Kanak, and Eddy Grizaffi have finished their training requirements and received their caps. Congratulations to these new volunteers. Be sure to welcome them to the organization and get to know them if you don't already.



BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Kay Lewis
Frank Willett
Beth Debenport
Angie Gruber

JANUARY ANNIVERSARY

Fletcher Morgan

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Joe Carmichael
Sharon Hanzik
Jim Hielt
Warren Jackson
Jane Minard
Ron Morrison
Jim North (VIT)
Laszlo Perlaky
Marilyn Vossler
Bruce Williamson

SIMPLE CHRISTMAS SIMPLY A SUCCESS!

Thanks in part to volunteers who helped carry out the event, we had one of our best Simple Christmas programs ever! Hay rides, as usual, were always full. Piñatas were exciting, S'more making was s'more fun than ever! Dutch oven cooking is always popular, and the historical re-enactors from TPWD and the George Ranch were an added bonus.

I really got a kick out of the radio transmissions from the refreshment table to the kitchen - "hot chocolate to kitchen, kitchen to cider". It sounded like some covert operations were going on. The Brazos River Pickers always do a fine job, and it's such a treat to watch the young children dancing to the old-time beat. I hope you all got a taste of acorn pancakes. If not, we'll have them next year and will need acorn shuckers to make it possible. The list of thank you's is long and is published elsewhere.



Piñata breaking



Marshmallow roasting



Historic re-enactors

A CHRISTMAS WISH TO ALL

I hope that you enjoy a peaceful, simple Christmas and are able to relax and enjoy time with family and friends. You make all the difference in what Brazos Bend has to offer and I hope that great blessings are bestowed upon you all as you have been a great blessing to us.

Sharon Hanzik

YOU'RE INVITED

The **Park Christmas Party** will be Wednesday, December 13, at the Dining Hall. The Pot Luck supper will begin around 6:00 PM. All volunteers are invited and families are welcome. Hope you can join us.



NEW THE NATURE CENTER

David picked up a new SMALL Canebreak Rattlesnake from Lake Texana SP recently. Evidently they are not uncommon down there. He/she is about 12 inches long and seems very healthy. It is being kept in the office until it is eating well. Then the large Canebreak will be released in the park (the Force account area) and the new one will be displayed. We have had the current one for nearly 7 years.

NATURE CENTER REPORT - NOVEMBER

by Anna Dell Williamson

Here is a breakdown of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for November 1-30. This month included two weeks of hunt (NC closed) and Thanksgiving week. Numbers come from the calendar in the Nature Center and may not reflect all activities. Be sure to report program attendance for all programs and hikes and be sure it gets on the calendar behind the desk.

	2006	NOVEMBER
NATURE CENTER Total for September, 4286	SATURDAYS (4)	2600 High, 810, 11/11
	SUNDAYS (4)	1094 High, 340, 11/19
	WEEKDAYS (14)	1472 High, 477, 11/24 (day after Thanksgiving)
	CREEKFIELD HIKES (17) includes 2 Fridays and multiple hikes on 4 days	407 High, 113 in 4 groups, 11/18
	ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS (5)	95
	BIRD PROGRAMS, HIKES (9) includes turkey, owl and birds of prey programs	163
	SNAKE/REPTILE PROGRAMS (7)	206
	OTHER PROGRAMS (5) includes pond life and armadillo program	191

TWO-FOOT GATOR FOUND IN NATURE CENTER

Saturday, November 11, surprised volunteers found a two-foot gator in the volunteer lounge about meeting time. The gator was covered with scales and green vegetation. It was wearing a volunteer cap, and there was some concern about whether it had eaten a volunteer. However, the tables were quickly turned, and the volunteers devoured the gator. Thanks to **Carol Ramsayer** for the creative gator sandwich for the meeting night supper. Along with her split pea soup and **Candice Kenyon's** bread pudding, the volunteers had a great supper with lots of animal-ate-d conversation. **Judy Strauss** has taken over coordinating meeting night suppers. Please contact her if you can bring a supper.



SCHOOL FIELD TRIP TRAINING

Special training for leaders of school field trips is planned for **Thursday, January 25, 2007**, 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM. Current and potential leaders are invited to this training. Every year Brazos Bend State Park hosts thousands of local school children on educational field trips. Because of the large numbers of children and limited park staff, we rely heavily on volunteers to assist with these groups. In an effort to train volunteers to assist with school field trips at Brazos Bend State Park, this training is offered once per year. The training will cover educational techniques, grade level curriculums, tips for dealing with large groups of children, trail interpretation techniques and general park information and rules.

This year we will be implementing new "TEKS" based school field trips modeled on the Texas Education Agency's mandated Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for each grade level. This will make this year's training more in-depth than in years past. The training will be divided into classroom and outdoor sessions. Please dress appropriately for the weather and bring a sack lunch. This training is offered to Brazos Bend volunteers, park staff and members of local Texas Master Naturalist Chapters. After completing the training you will be asked to observe several school field trips at the park. When you are comfortable with the program you will be asked to lead a school group on your own.

This training is offered free of charge. Since space is limited, the class is open only to those who intend to assist with school field trips at Brazos Bend State Park. If you are going to attend this free training please contact David Heinicke or Sharon Hanzik.

VOLUNTEER INTERPRETIVE HIKES

by David Heinicke

Back by popular demand we will again do a few **volunteer interpretive hikes** on the weekdays for interested volunteers this winter. We did this several times last year, and it was very popular.

The next volunteer interpretive hike will be on **Friday, December 15**. We will meet at the nature center at 9:00 am. This time we will hike Bluestem trail to the Riverveiw trail to the Sawmill trail and back on the Bayou trail (next necessarily in that order). The total distance will be about 7 or 8 miles and we will eat lunch out on the trail so bring a sack lunch and plenty of drinking water and whatever else you might want.

We'll look at birds, talk about trees, look for wildlife and whatever else we find. This will also give us a chance to "scout" for the Christmas bird count, which is the following day. I hope to see you there.

NOTE OF SYMPATHY

John Barnes

We offer our sincere sympathy to Norma Barnes on the death of her husband John on November 14, 2006. Norma was a charter member of BBSPVO. John was a member for a while also. He was a key player in the construction of the offices and the bicycle barn. John was in the submarines in WW II, was active in the veterans' organizations, and worked at the submarine in Galveston until his health gave out. John was buried at the Houston VA cemetery.

NOVEMBER 2006 MAINTENANCE REPORT

by Bryan Leach

Wood Yard:

Split wood, tied wood, and delivered tied wood to the wood racks in both camping loops

Mowing and Landscaping:

Cleared tall weeds from around the windmill at the Nature Center
Removed a downed tree from the 200 Camping Loop
Cut up and cleared a large downed oak tree in the screen shelter area

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Blew Leaves and twigs off the Creekfield ADA Trail
Lopped limbs and removed a downed tree off the Creekfield Forest Trail
Removed downed limbs off the Red Buckeye Trail
Raised the level of the south east corner of the 40 Acre Lake Trail with trail topping
Removed an overhanging tree off the Red Buckeye Trail
Finished trail trimming the Creekfield Forest Trail

Equipment Maintenance:

Adjusted the brakes and the shift lever on the 01 Gator
Changed the engine oil and filter on the K1 Kubota
Repaired a flat tire on the tractor
Changed the engine oil and filter on the K2 Kubota
Changed the engine oil on both Gators and greased them

General Maintenance:

Assembled 15 Picnic Tables for the ADA picnic areas
Removed all the boards off the Prairie Platform supports, getting it ready to rebuild with new lumber
Worked on the cameras at both of the wood racks
Delivered 25 picnic tables to the ADA sites in the picnic areas and the camping loops
Started anchoring picnic tables to the pads at the ADA sites around the park

Pest Control:

Treated the following areas for fire ants
The 40 Acre Lake picnic grounds, Hale Lake picnic grounds, The 40 Acre Lake Trail, The Elm Lake picnic grounds, The Creekfield ADA Trail, around the Nature Center twice, and the 100 and 200 Camping Loops

QUARTERLY HOURS REMINDER

December is the last month of the last quarter for the year 2006. Remember that you must have a total of 48 hours by the end of the year, and that 6 of them each quarter must be in the "required" areas: Nature Center, Gift Shop, Creekfield Hike, Wood Yard or Water Station. Be sure to report all of your hours, including meetings and travel time, in the volunteer logbook in the lounge before the end of each month.



PRAIRIE VIEW

by Al Childs

Hello prairie enthusiasts and volunteers. When I began setting up Prairie Project '06 about this time last year, I had no concept of the beauty and splendor of prairie grass. As with many other people, I just considered it to be so many weeds. That view was drastically changed during my VIT training three years ago. Our prairie presentation was delivered by Dennis Jones and through his passion, I got a glimpse of what prairies really are and how important it is to restore and maintain them.

But even that did not prepare me for the adventure and sense of discovery I get every time I go into the prairie. Such an experience happened earlier this year, while working on Prairie #3. Up to that time, I had only seen Big Bluestem (*Andropogon Gerardii* Vitamin) in books or on the internet. It is truly a remarkable grass to see, especially when in bloom. No wonder it is considered to be one of the most important grasses of the tall grass prairie. To illustrate its importance, on August 31, 1989, Illinois Governor Thompson signed into law a bill designating it as Illinois official prairie grass.

Big bluestem grows to a height of up to 10 feet or more in stands so dense that it often prevents other grasses from growing around it by shading them out. It is easily recognized by its tall slender stems, which are green throughout much of the summer, then turn to a blue-purple as it matures. That is where it gets the name bluestem. The panicle or seed heads usually have three spike-like projections and resembles a turkey foot, hence the common name Turkey-Foot Grass.

The pictures I had seen of big blue are awesome but they never prepared me for seeing it for the first time while collecting transect data last August on Prairie #3. It was a cloudy day with rain in the forecast, and I just knew we were going to get wet. And we did. We had a light turnout of volunteers due to the weather, so I was working transect #2 by myself. As I walked from section to section, I felt very alone and wet as rain dripped from the brim of my hat. The wind added a cold and uncomfortable feeling. It was during those moments when I was more preoccupied with how I felt than getting the task done, that I suddenly found myself in a large stand of big blue in full bloom. Although it was raining and overcast, it was a most wonderful sight. I'm afraid my writing skills cannot adequately describe what I saw or how I felt at that moment. The gloomy atmosphere and poor lighting did not fade the deep blue of big blue's stem and the delicate yellow of its flowers dangling on their stems and blowing gently in wind. I have attached a picture of exactly how it looked to me on that rainy, miserable, wonderful day.

In writing about big blue, I hope I have effectively communicated how truly special our prairies are and maybe shown just one more reason why we need to restore and protect them. Although it is not in bloom right now, you can see a large stand of it just to the left of the tree where the old prairie platform stood.

Speaking of platforms, as many of you already know, the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization recently rebuilt the wetland platform and added benches on two sides. That really makes it a great place to go and just enjoy the wetland. I mention the wetland platform because in the time it took us to do our transects recently, the BBSPVO took the old prairie platform down. I don't have the details but they are planning to rebuild it also. I want to extend a special thanks to them for their efforts and a job well done. I have really enjoyed the new wetland platform, especially since we have water in our wetland now, and I know I will enjoy the new prairie platform when it is completed. Take care my friends until next month.



PRAIRIE PLATFORM PROJECT

John Bradford, Judy Strauss and Chuck Duplant disassembled the raised platform on the Prairie Sunday November 26. The platform was in very bad shape and not safe to be used or repaired. Plans for rebuilding the platform are in the works. Below are before and after pictures.



2007 NATURALPERL BBSP PHOTO-WALK SCHEDULE

by Dr. Laszlo Perlaky

January	Winter Break, NO Photo-walk
Feb 3, 2007	5 PM Birds #1
March 3, 2007	5 PM Landscape #1
April 7, 2007	5 PM Plant #1
May 12, 2007	5 PM Birds #2
June 2, 2007	5 PM Close-up #1
July 7, 2007	5 PM Close-up #2
August	Summer break, NO Photo-walk
Sep 1, 2007	5 PM Amphibian and Reptile
Oct 6, 2007	5 PM Birds #3
Nov 3, 2007	3 PM Landscape #2
Dec 1, 2007	3 PM Landscape #3



NEWS AND NOTES

Sharon's days off will be Sunday and Monday starting December 3 through the month of February.

Reminder: When you need to cancel a weekend shift and are calling on Saturday or Sunday, please call the Nature Center front desk at 979-553-5122, as David and Sharon are not always at their desks, and your voice-mail message will most likely be received too late.



- ☺ to **Blake Flessner** for helping haul the old lumber away from the prairie platform site
- ☺ to **Chuck Duplant** for the article and pictures on the prairie platform
- ☺ to **John Bradford, Judy Strauss** and **Chuck Duplant** for disassembling the prairie platform
- ☺ to **Carol Ramsayer** and **Candice Kenyon** for supper and dessert at the November meeting
- ☺ to **everyone** who brings snacks and goodies to share in the volunteer lounge
- ☺ to **Judy Strauss** for organizing our booth at Texian Market Days
- ☺ to **Judy Strauss** for organizing and leading Richard Board's Memorial Service
- ☺ to **Judy Strauss** for organizing our annual picnic
- ☺ to **Sharon Hanzik** for organizing the awards at the picnic
- ☺ to all the members of the **Executive Committee** and **committee chairpersons** for committing their time and talents to the Volunteer Organization
- ☺ to those who helped with Simple Christmas: **David Heinicke, Chuck Duplant, James** and **Joyce Blankenship, Tom Prentiss, Tom Kanak, Candice Kenyon, Eddy Grizaffi, Mandy Hite, Bruce** and **Anna Dell Williamson, Walt Bailey, Dennis Jones, Kermit Schlaemus, Barry Eversole, Ronnie Primrose, Nick** and **Jeremy Castelberg, Lawrence Folse, Allen Bartram, Ken** and **Beth Debenport, Diane Kerr, Carol Ramsayer, Glen Kilgore, and Diane** and **Jerry Carpenter**.

MISTLETOE

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Kingdom:	Plantae	Division:	Magnoliophyta
Class:	Magnoliopsida	Order:	Santalales
Families:	Santalaceae (Viscaceae) Loranthaceae Misodendraceae		

Mistletoe is the common name for various parasitic plants in the order *Santalales*, belonging to the families *Santalaceae*, *Loranthaceae* and *Misodendraceae*. The name was originally applied to *Viscum album* (European Mistletoe, *Santalaceae*; the only species native in Great Britain and much of Europe), and subsequently to other related species, including *Phoradendron leucarpum* (the Eastern Mistletoe of eastern North America, also *Santalaceae*). In an example of convergent evolution, several less related but superficially very similar plants in the *Loranthaceae* are so similar that they have also been called mistletoes.

The European Mistletoe is readily recognized by its smooth-edged oval leaves in pairs along the woody stem and waxy white berries in dense clusters of 2-6 together. American Mistletoe is similar, but has shorter, broader leaves and longer clusters of ten or more berries together.

The species grow on a wide range of trees, and can eventually prove fatal to them where infestation is heavy, though damage more commonly only results in growth reduction. Most mistletoes are only partial parasites, bearing evergreen leaves that carry out some photosynthesis of their own, relying on the host mainly for mineral nutrients from the ground. The genus *Arceuthobium* (dwarf mistletoe, *Santalaceae*) has dispensed with even this, becoming a total parasite relying on its host plant for photosynthesis as well as nutrients.

Most mistletoes are spread by birds (e.g. the Mistle Thrush in Europe, and the Phainopepla in southwestern North America) which eat the berries. The seeds are excreted in their droppings and stick to twigs, or more commonly the

bird grips the fruit in its bill, squeezing the sticky coated seed out to the side, and then wiping its bill clean on a suitable branch. The seeds are coated with a sticky gum, viscin, which hardens and attaches the seed firmly to its future host.

The word 'mistletoe' is of uncertain etymology; it may be related to German Mist, another word for dung, but Old English mistel was also used for basil. While historically often considered a pest that kills trees and devalues natural habitats, mistletoe has recently become recognized as an ecological keystone, an organism that has a disproportionately pervasive influence over its community. A broad array of animals depend on mistletoe for food, consuming the leaves and young shoots as well as transferring pollen between plants and dispersing the sticky fruits. The dense evergreen clumps also make excellent locations for roosting and nesting of several bird species. These interactions lead to dramatic influences on diversity, as areas with greater mistletoe densities support higher diversities of animals. Thus, rather than being a pest, mistletoe can have a positive effect on biodiversity, providing high quality food and habitat for a broad range of animals in forests and woodlands worldwide.

Uses and mythology

The leaves and young twigs are the parts used by herbalists, and it is popular in Europe, especially in Germany, for treating circulatory and respiratory system problems as well as for tumors, even malignant ones.

Mistletoe figured prominently in Norse mythology (whence the modern Western custom of kissing under bunches of it hung as holiday decorations). The god Baldur was killed with a weapon made of mistletoe. In Celtic mythology and in Druid rituals, it was considered an antidote to poison, but contact with its berries produces a rash similar to the poison ivy rash in people who are sensitive to it (as many are), so the whole plant came to be thought of as poisonous.

In Romanian traditions, mistletoe (vâsc in Romanian) is considered as a source of good fortune. The medical and the supposed magical properties of the plant are still used, especially in rural areas.

Mistletoe has sometimes been nicknamed the "vampire plant" because it can probe beneath the tree bark to drain water and minerals, enabling it to survive during a drought. William Shakespeare gives it an unflattering reference in Titus Andronicus, Act II, Scene I:

Overcome with moss and baleful mistletoe;

Nowadays, mistletoe is commonly used as a Christmas decoration. According to a custom of Christmas cheer, any two people who meet under a hanging of mistletoe are obliged to kiss. The origin of this custom may be related to the story of Baldur coming back to life because of his mother Frigga (or Frigg), the goddess of love, who removed the mistletoe's poison with her tears. When Baldur came back to life she kissed everyone who passed underneath the mistletoe out of happiness and gratitude and thus started the custom. Roman sources also mention mistletoe was used by the Celts in some sort of fertility rite or charm, making the practice of kissing under it even more intriguing. That is why mistletoe is used at Christmas, a time of love and joy.

Mistletoe was the official flower for the State of Oklahoma until 2004 when it was replaced by the Oklahoma Rose. Mistletoe, however, still serves as the state's official floral emblem.



PHOTO: European mistletoe attached to a poplar

GOOD ANIMALS VERSUS BAD ANIMALS

(What's the difference?)

by Dennis Jones

Sometimes when I talk to little people about nature I like to ask them to name for me some good animals. Dogs, cats, horses, rabbits, squirrels, otters and others of a similar sort are usually the answer. Then I ask them to name some animals they don't like so much. The responses are generally along the lines of wasps, snakes, sharks, crocodiles, lions and so on. Why some bad and some good? Think about how you would classify animals into good and bad categories. What do the groups generally have in common? What are the differences?

Of course there are always exceptions to the rule, and answers vary from person to person depending to a large extent on their understanding of nature. Generally speaking humans tend to classify animals as good or bad based on their ability to hurt us. If we can control or dominate a creature it is good and if not it's, well, not so good. I have seen folks at Yellowstone National Park try and approach a herd of buffalo with no "fear" of being hurt whatsoever. They don't perceive buffalo as dangerous, but they are. Their experience with these animals is non-existent and as a result, they don't consider them dangerous. After all, aren't they just big hairy cows? Cows don't hurt people, right? I have seen children and adults panic in the presence of a carpenter bee because it's a bee and bees sting. (Male carpenter bees don't even have a stinger). The fact is bees don't sting unless they are protecting their hive or you hurt them. As a rule people are uncomfortable around alligators because of their killer reputation, but in truth dogs kill more people every year than alligators have in 50 years. It's all a matter of perception. And understanding.

I think there is another reason for good and bad animal classifications. Almost all the "bad" animals seem to be predators of some form. By nature we are predators as well, so the bad animals are our competitors. Oftentimes we kill them even when they pose no threat to us at all (even when we use that can of wasp spray). Killing dangerous animal predators has long been looked upon as a noble purpose and a way for a manly man to gain the respect of others. Killing harmless animals does not hold the same prestige as killing dangerous ones does. That's part of the difference between the local butcher and a huntsman. Don't misunderstand. There is nothing wrong with hunting wild game. Furthermore, I would say that if one chooses to kill predators as sport, there is nothing necessarily wrong with that either. I am just explaining why I think we do it on a fundamental level.

Times are changing, and with it the perception of what is a good or bad animal. I hear in the answers of more and more children that all animals are good; their way of saying that animals are neither good nor bad. It comes down to the fact that we are all just fellow travelers on a big round ball that circles a star; just trying to survive the only way our instincts know how. See you later alligator. dj

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 13, 2007	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
February 3	Photo-walk, Birds #1, 5:00 PM
February 10	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
March 3	Photo-walk, Landscape #1, 5:00 PM
March 10	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
April 7	Earth Day Celebration Photo-walk, Plant #1, 5:00 PM
April 8	Easter
April 14	Regular meeting, 5:30 PM
May 12	Photo-walk, Birds #2, 5:00 PM Regular meeting, 5:30 PM



Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville TX 77461

FIRST CLASS MAIL

→ **NEXT MEETING DAY AND TIME** ←
SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2007, 5:30 PM

☆☆☆☆☆☆



REGULAR VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Creekfield Hikes	Every Saturday and Sunday at 11:00 AM, led by volunteers
Photo Hikes	See schedule in calendar
Volunteer meeting	Second Saturday of each month at 5:30 PM
Bird Hikes	See schedule in calendar

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

President:	Bruce Williamson
Vice-President:	Anna Dell Williamson
Secretary:	Nicole Olson
Treasurer:	Chuck DuPlant

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editor	Anna Dell Williamson
Production Assistants	Bruce Williamson Terry Williamson

The **Brazos Bend Bunch Bugle** is the newsletter of the Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization, A.K.A. The Brazos Bend Bunch. It is distributed monthly to volunteers through the BBSPVO web site. For further information on this newsletter or the volunteer program, contact David Heinicke or Sharon Hanzik at Brazos Bend State Park, phone 979-553-5101.

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are the opinions of the author of the article and do not necessarily reflect the official position of Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization nor of BBSP administration. The deadline for Newsletter contributions is the Saturday following the monthly meeting, if mailed to Anna Dell Williamson, or at the meeting if delivered to the park. (E-mail address: awilliamson4@houston.rr.com). Notify Anna Dell (281-485-2843) well in advance of any events you want announced in the newsletter.