



VOLUME 19, NUMBER 2

FEBRUARY 2007

JANUARY MEETING NOTES

reported by Nicole Olson

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. **Judy Strauss** was asked to preside in the absence of President Bruce Williamson. There were fifteen volunteers and three staff members present. Special guest was **Kevin Goode** from Texas Parks and Wildlife, Austin. The minutes of the December meeting were approved as posted.

Staff reports are published elsewhere in the newsletter.

Outreach Report:

Fort Bend County Children's Festival is coming up. See Chuck Duplant if you are interested in helping.

Gift Shop Report:

All inventory items will be covered in the Treasurer's report.

Treasurer's Report

Beth Debenport requested a storage cabinet or open shelving for the gift shop. It will cost \$70 and can be bought at Loews. The purchase was approved.

Chuck Duplant brought the financial report for 2006.

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The proposed budget for 2007 was presented and passed.

Maintenance Report:

Bryan Leach reported that the wood racks will be covered with a gate and perhaps locked up. Motion detector lights will be added to deter theft of wood. The camp hosts will keep track of the wood racks. The wood racks would be opened at noon until 6 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, and noon to 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Signs will go up.

New Business:

The stairways now have lights. It helps during programs when the lights are turned off.

Announcements:

Warren Jackson's birthday was this month and he turned 85...all family members attended.

Kevin Goode presented information on the new non-profit partner rules for TPWD. The changes have no great impact on the way BBSPVO operates. A copy of the changes is available in the lounge.

The meeting was adjourned.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The past notes I have posted in this column have focused on what we have been doing, and doing well. Now I want to start some dialog about what else we can and should be doing. Our training program has been fruitful for the past couple of years, and we have recruited and trained a number of active and fun new volunteers.



I would like to set a goal of increasing the total number of volunteer hours delivered to BBSP by 10% over the course of my year as president. This can be accomplished by a combination of continuing to recruit and train new members and by asking all the existing volunteers to commit to small increases in their time commitments to the park. By all doing our part, we can increase the service to the park by the equivalent of three-quarters (or more) of a full time employee.

I am not suggesting a change in the mandatory hours requirement. I am proposing that we each engage in donating what is comfortable in our individual lives. I know that my family and I all enjoy very much the time we are able to spend at the park, and I think most volunteers agree with that enjoyment. Let's have fun!

Bruce Williamson



STAFF REPORTS

DAVID HEINICKE

David Heinicke reported that **Earth Day** is April 14, 2007. Invitations were sent out last week to vendors. Some requests to do programs will be sent out.

School Field Trip Training is January 25, 2007. Sharon is planning the **new volunteer training**.

The **map behind the Nature Center counter** has been updated.

On February 10 and 11, 2007, **Doris Mager from S.O.A.R.** (Save Our American Raptors) plans to do a program on live birds of prey (kestrel, barred owl, etc.)

January 22, 2007 is the Fly fishing class, **The Basics of Fly Fishing**. It's a 6 hours class and there's no charge.

The **Parish Power Plant** may help with funding by supplying some ash, to be used to raise trails approximately 4 inches.

Creekfield Lake is full! It looks good! A reroute of the trail is needed, though.

The **Leave No Trace National Program** promotes leaving no trace when camping, etc. There may be some classes for the public, scout groups, trainers. BBSP is a pilot site and there are more details to come.

January is a really busy month! The **Red Buckeye trail hike** is on Friday, January 19, 2007.



SHARON HANZIK

Sharon Hanzik reported that there are 12 trainees for the new volunteer training class.

Sharon related a happening during the owl program that she presented before the meeting. There was a big crowd and about 5 minutes into the program, it started to rain. The group all moved near the coke machine but had to keep the motion light on by moving...jumping up and down, waving arms – it was one of the top 10 programs that she's done!

Thanks for all that you do! The new volunteers have really picked up the slack. Sharon's days off will switch back to Thursdays and Fridays from March - May



CONGRATULATIONS

Suzie Gann has finished her training requirements and received her cap. Congratulations to our newest volunteer. Be sure to welcome her to the organization and get to know her if you don't already.



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jerry Carpenter
 Noel Duncan
 Peggy Farley
 Bill Godley
 Johnny Hite
 Mandy Hite (VIT)
 Sid Jones
 Judy Strauss

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Elmer Aden
 Willie Anderson
 Rita Cooper
 Joan Jackson
 Herb Mann
 Jennifer Parent

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Suzie and Rick Gann (VIT)
 Linda and Rod Hite (VIT)

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Glen and Maureen Kilgore

NATURE CENTER REPORT JANUARY, 2007

by Anna Dell Williamson

Here is a breakdown of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for January 1-31. This month included New Year's day, MLK weekend, and lots of rain. 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.

	2007	JANUARY
NATURE CENTER Total for January, 2247	SATURDAYS (4)	984 High, 449, 1/13
	SUNDAYS (4)	792 High, 254, 1/28
	WEEKDAYS (23)	471 High, 183, 1/1
	CREEKFIELD HIKES (6)	100 High, 32, 1/14
	ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS (3)	46
	BIRD PROGRAMS, HIKES (4) includes hikes, owl and birds of prey programs	63
	SNAKE/REPTILE PROGRAMS (4)	41
	CHILDREN'S STORY TIME (2)	15
	OTHER PROGRAMS (4) includes vol hike and Pond Life	57

Nature Center visitors for 2006 came from 47 states and 62 countries.

POLICY

WEEKDAY NATURE CENTER STAFFING

by Sharon Hanzik

The interpretive staff has been charged with keeping the Nature Center staffed Monday through Friday. In order to attain this, volunteer members as well as park hosts will be needed. Scheduling of hosts takes place at a meeting at the beginning of the month. At this time hosts are asked to commit to as many dates as possible (with the exception of certain days that volunteer members are regularly scheduled). These dates are immediately recorded on the volunteer website's calendar. It is our hope that volunteer members will fill in the rest of the dates as needed.

In instances where volunteer members sign up to work the Nature Center on days that hosts are already working, hosts are welcome to stay. There will be slow days when a staff of 2 will be more than necessary. However, hosts should never be told that they are not needed. (Keep in mind that hosts must work a predetermined number of hours for the park each month to "pay" for their site.) There are many ways to keep busy: study, cleaning, odd jobs, etc. The interpretive staff provides hosts a very basic introduction to the center. Some hosts are inexperienced and will need your guidance and/or training. Please keep in mind that there is no "boss" of the Nature Center. Volunteer members should use discretion when it comes to explaining procedures and policies that hosts may not be aware of.

Hosts are not permitted to staff the Gift Shop. If a volunteer must work on a day when hosts are already scheduled, he/she is encouraged to staff the gift shop instead.

Weekday gift shop operation:

- ▶ Computer operation is not required. In fact it is discouraged, due to the possibility of technical problems. Paper forms for recording sales are in the drawer.
- ▶ If at any time extra support is needed for Nature Center duties, Gift Shop staff may temporarily close the shop in order to assist.
- ▶ When large groups visit, *i.e.* school groups, the volunteer may choose to limit the number of customers/students allowed in the shop at one time or the volunteer may choose to close the shop completely during the duration of the visit.

BBSPVO WEB SITE VISITORS

The **BBSPVO web site** has been visited by people from all over the world. I have a listing of the domains/countries that have visited our web site since December 15, 1998. These numbers are very impressive. There are 74 named counties or areas on the list, and a lot of hits from .gov and .mil. I don't have space to publish all of the areas in one issue of the newsletter. Perhaps I can list a few countries at a time in future issues. For this newsletter, I have the following totals that you might find interesting. These are unique visitors by continents

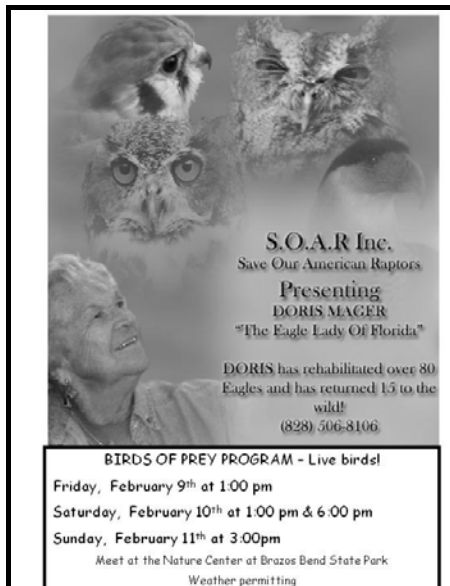
North-America	66823	Asia	159
Unknown	49862	South America	36
Europe	568	Africa	25
Oceania	307	Central America	5

FEBRUARY INTERPRETIVE HIKE

by David Heinicke

I had so much fun on January's Red Buckeye Hike that I want to plan a nature hike for February! This one will be called "**To the Blowout and Beyond**". We'll meet at Elm Lake restrooms at 8:30 AM on **Friday, February 16**, and hike the **Big Creek Loop trail**, or at least as much of it as we can get around without swimming (probably about 4 miles or so). All are welcome to join us, and this will be open to the public as well. Bring your binoculars, field guides, water and snacks. Please feel free to pass this on to the master naturalists. I hope to see you here.

BIRDS OF PREY PROGRAM



Our regular meeting time on **February 10** will be altered so that volunteers will be able to attend the 6:00 program. We will begin serving supper at 4:45 PM, and the meeting will start at 5:00 PM.

New Volunteer Training will include this program at 1:00 PM, and the park road tour will continue after the conclusion of the presentation.

SPRING BREAK IS COMING

by Sharon Hanzik

It seems as though all of Texas has agreed to take spring break during the week of March 12 - 16. We've scheduled the Nature Center (and Gift Shop if possible) to be open 9-5 all that week. Please sign up if you are able to help out during the week. We could also use volunteers roaming the trails. Please make sure the Nature Center is covered first. Of course the visitation is all dependant upon on the weather.

Creekfield Hikes and other programming will be scheduled during the week of March 12 - 16 ONLY if a volunteer agrees in advance to sign up for one. If you would like to lead a hike or present a program, please notify Sharon or David no later than the week before, as we will be creating the program schedule on Wednesday, March 7th so that it will be available to the public that weekend. It will NOT be posted on the web.

RICHARD BOARD MEMORIAL

Donations are being accepted for the Richard Board memorial. We plan to have an interactive exhibit in the Nature Center to compare the alligator skull and the crocodile skull. If you would like to make a donation to this project, contact **Chuck Duplant** or **Ken Debenport**.

ENTERING THE PARK

by David Heinicke

When you enter the park to work as a volunteer, please stop at headquarters and make sure that the staff up there recognizes that you are a volunteer and waves you through. Please don't assume that they recognize your vehicle or can see who you are through the tinted glass door with the glare on it. If they don't recognize you and you "zoom" on through, then they have to call me to chase you down, and nobody wants that. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated, thanks, David

JANUARY INTERPRETIVE HIKE REPORT

On January 19, fourteen fearless folks braved the cold, wet weather and hiked the Red Buckeye trail with **David Heinicke** leading the way. Volunteers **Diane** and **Jerry Carpenter**, **Jerry Zona**, **Jim North**, **Tom Prentiss**, **Carol Ramsayer**, and **Johnny Hite** went on the hike, along with former host **Kermit Schlaemus** and several Master Naturalists. Below are some comments about the hike that several of them have shared for the newsletter.

JERRY ZONA:

A dank, cold and wet morning. Why be outside in this when it's better to be in the house nice and warm. Why? The love of nature and the outdoors. The trail on Red Buckeye was muddy, then puddled and then standing water. We stopped when the Brazos River took over the trail. We went back and took a shortcut, observed plants, trees, and small wildlife hiding from the cold. We walked to the other end of Buckeye where the Brazos again took over, then came back and went on White Oak. A left turn onto Bluestem brought us again to standing water, but we went through for a while and then enjoyed the rest of the trail. Again, dank, cold, and wet. When's the next hike?

JIM NORTH:

The thing that impressed me most about the hike is how much I'm looking forward to the next one! David is very knowledgeable and obviously enjoys what he does. I have always enjoyed taking a hike. It is so much more of an adventure to be able to talk about what's out there with someone who knows what's out there.

JOHNNY HITE

It was cold, wet, and a lot of fun. Halfway through the Whiteoak trail, I wasn't sure if we were hiking or swimming. I am always impressed by David's knowledge of the plant life. I have yet to stump him with "What is that?"

RON MORRISON

The one thing that always impresses me is how David can always find something interesting (plant, animal or non-living) that he finds on the trail to stop and talk about. This time he found a frog that came up from Mexico and sings like a bird. Go figure.

TOM PRENTISS

This was the first volunteer hike that I have attended. I missed the January one (the death march), so I guess I made a good decision. This was a great experience; I learned a lot, and I enjoyed the company as well. We have great ecological diversity at Brazos Bend and when you get out on hikes like this you get to see it. The most interesting thing to me were the trees that we have down by the river, in particular the sycamore, cottonwood and box elder. The sycamore and cottonwoods get very tall down there, and although they are bare this time of year, you can recognize them by their bark, and also by the leaf litter beneath the trees. Some of the sycamore leaves are enormous (we have one on the wall of the Nature Center). The box elder is a tree I didn't recognize, but I think it's the only maple we have in the park. The weather was cool, and we had a little light rain. We also had to wade through part of the trail, but that made it more adventurous. When I arrived, I was concerned that no one would show up, but we had a great group of 14 people. Ron Morrison tied a garbage bag to his backpack so we could pick up litter; thank you Ron.

BRYAN LEACH

It was a cool and dreary morning when 14 enthusiastic individuals set out for the Red Buckeye trail from the Hale Lake restrooms at Brazos Bend State Park. Along the way we talked about plants, trees and the high water in Big Creek. David introduced us to a Rio Grande frog, that was minding his own business in a rotting tree. David said that this frog sounds like a bird when it vocalizes. It would also have been nice to have on a pair of rubber boots, as we were walking in water a few inches deep from time to time. The wood ducks were flying, and David tried to encourage a few more birds to show themselves but not many obliged. The water was high enough that we couldn't get to Joe's bench, and we had to turn around and go back along the Brazos River using the east side of the Red Buckeye. We continued on down the Whiteoak trail, then cut across to the parking lot on the Bluestem/Whiteoak trail to finish the hike. I think everyone had a fun time and I know I enjoyed the morning.



Thanks to the hikers for sharing their experiences with us. Maybe next time YOU will be one of those hardy souls. The next hike is scheduled for February 16, 8:30 AM, to the blowout and beyond.

Left to right, David Heinicke, Susan Severance, Diane Carpenter, Kermit Schlaemus, Jerry Zona, Tom North, Tom Prentiss, Johnny Hite, and Bryan Leach forge ahead on the hike. Carol Ramsayer's coat can be seen in the back right.

PRAIRIE VIEW, JANUARY 2007

by Al Childs

This will be a very interesting year for our project. Not only are we changing the name to Prairie Project '07, collecting additional data and changing some of the ways we collect data, but now we will be able to compare prairie conditions for more than one year. For instance, January of last year was very dry compared to what we experienced this year on Prairie #1. Last year we had a little rain the day before we collected our data, so soil moisture readings were somewhat skewed, and we didn't have standing water or soggy conditions.

This year however, we actually measured 2 ¼” of water on transect #2. In fact, all three transects were very soggy. Starting the year off with extremely wet conditions verses the drier start of last year is significant in the fact that it will have a pronounced affect on prairie conditions and the data we are collecting. It will be very interesting to see what changes in vegetation occur as a result. We will be collecting data on Prairie #2 the third Sunday in February (21th) at 9:00am. If you would like to be a part of this research project, contact me at beura.a.childs@nasa.gov or call my cell # 281-772-0755. Until next month, take care and I hope to see you in the prairie.

TRAIL TRIMMING OPPORTUNITY

by Ron Morrison

A trail trimming group meets most Fridays to trim trails at BBSP. There are 35 miles of hiking, biking and horseback trails at the park and some desperately need your help. The group is led by Ron Morrison, and meets at 8:30 AM in the Nature Center parking lot. Bring your lunch, work gloves, long sleeve shirt and long pants, well broken in boots or sturdy shoes, insect repellent and plenty of water. If you have a good lopper, bring it, too. There are a few loppers available for your use.

On February 9, the group will meet before 8:30 at the Nature Center Parking lot. Those who arrive after 8:30 should go directly to the 40-Acre Lake parking lot. Trimming on the “Hoots Hollow” trail will begin after everyone who has let Ron know they are coming has arrived.

Contact Ron at <rcmorri@alltel.net> to be included in the trail trimming group and receive e-mails of when the trail trimming events occur. The group will attend David's hike on Friday, February 16, and will not trim trail that day.

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET

by Sharon Hanzik

A park host found a ruby-crowned kinglet in the road. It was alert but not afraid or in shock. It may have a slight injury to one eye but it is able to see. After we warmed it up inside, it decided to try to fly, each time with increasing distance. The host is keeping watch and letting it test its wings.

(Note: As you can see, the kinglet was not at all afraid. It perched on Sharon's shoulder for some time, and allowed her to handle it. When released to try to fly, it kept returning to Sharon.)



JANUARY 2007 MAINTENANCE REPORT

by Bryan Leach

Wood Yard:

Split and tied wood and delivered tied wood to the wood racks in both camping loops.
Cleaned up the wood yard
Reset car stops in the wood yard parking area
Hauled two Kubota loads of crushed black top to low spots in the wood yard

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Trimmed the trail from the wood yard to the Nature Center
Assisted the park staff in cleaning brush and small trees by the overflow camping area
Blew leaves and twigs, and trimmed overhanging limbs on the Creekfield ADA Trail
Filled in a hole on Pilant Slough trail and one in front of Pier #1 on Elm Lake

General Maintenance:

Cut overhanging trees and limbs around the Nature Center
Worked in the flowers around the Nature Center
Scooped out debris from Creekfield, 40 Acre, Elm and Horseshoe Lakes and around the pier at Hale Lake
Cleaned out and straightened up the garage at the Nature Center
Started building new gates for the wood racks in both camping areas

A stylized, purple, cursive word "Thanks" centered on the page.

- ☺ to **Diane** and **Jerry Carpenter** for the January meeting dinner.
- ☺ to **Ron Morrison** for making color copies of the "Twelve Trees of Brazos Bend State Park" and "Brazos Bend Outdoor Guide" for the current training class. They look beautiful and really are a fine addition to our training manuals.
- ☺ to **everybody** who helped run the January meeting in Bruce's absence
- ☺ to **all** who have signed up to help with volunteer training
- ☺ to **Carol Ramsayer** for preparing the new volunteer training manuals
- ☺ to **BBSP maintenance crew** for building the picket fence around the well
- ☺ to the new volunteers who have picked up the slack and found their place in the BBSP activities
- ☺ to **Fletcher Morgan** for counting the number of visitors who signed the Guest Register in the Nature Center and where they're from

BLACK WIDOW SPIDERS

reported by Sharon Hanzik

Information from www.desert.com

Genus: *Latrodectus*
Phylum: *Arthropoda*
Sub Phylum: *Chelicerata*
Class: *Arachnida*

Order: *Araneae*
Sub Order: *Labidognatha*
Family: *Therididae*
Species: 6

Related Species: Widow spiders (Genus *Latrodectus*) are the best known and largest of the Cobweb Weavers (Family *Therididae*). All widows are venomous, though not all can cause injury to humans. Black Widows comprise about six species and inhabit most of the warmer regions of the world to a latitude of about 45 degrees N and S. They occur throughout all four deserts of the American Southwest. The female black widow spider, though it is the most venomous spider in North America, seldom causes death, as it injects a very small amount of poison when it bites. Reports indicate human mortality at well less than 1% from black widow spider bites.

The species *L. hesperus* is common in the western US and is the Black Widow found in the North American deserts. *L. mactans* is the Black Widow common in the eastern and central US. The Brown Widow Spider, *L. geometricus*, is also found in the US.

Comparisons: The Brown Widow Spider (*Latrodectus geometricus*) is not as dangerous as some other widow spiders because the Brown Widow Spider is less likely to bite someone and injects less poison. Still, it is a venomous creature, and must be treated with respect. It is found throughout the world's tropical regions, and has been introduced into southern Texas and central and southern Florida.

Description: The female Black Widow is shiny black, usually with a reddish hourglass shape on the underside of her spherical abdomen. Her body is about .5 inches long, 1.5 inches when the legs are spread. The Black Widow is also called the "hourglass" or "shoe-button" spider. Adult males are harmless to humans, about half the female's size, with smaller bodies, and longer legs and usually have yellow and red bands and spots over the back, as do the immature stages.

Newly hatched spiderlings are predominately white or yellowish-white, gradually acquiring more black and varying amounts of red and white with each molt. Juveniles of both sexes resemble the male and are harmless to humans.

Vital Stats:	Weight: 1 gram.	Incubation: 14-30 days
	Length: 1-1.5"	No. of Eggs: 250-700/sac
	Span: 1-3"	Birth Interval: 4 to 9 egg sacs/summer
	Sexual Maturity: 70-90 days.	Lifespan: up to 3 years
	Mating Season: Spring	Typical diet: insects

Behavior: Both Western and Eastern Black Widows spin webs that lack shape and form. Their webs are erratic in appearance, and the silk is stronger than almost all other arachnids. The black widow spider is shy and nocturnal in habit, usually staying hidden in her web, hanging belly upward. Although not aggressive, she may rush out and bite when her web is disturbed or when accidentally trapped in clothing or shoes.

Habitat: On the underside of ledges, rocks, plants and debris, wherever a web can be strung. Cold weather and drought may drive these spiders into buildings.

Food & Hunting: Like most arachnids, the Black Widow preys on insects. Prey caught in the web include a variety of insects (cockroaches and beetles) and other arthropods. After ensnaring its prey in the web, the Black Widow makes small punctures in the victim's body and sucks out the liquid contents. The Black Widow is preyed upon by Mud-Dauber wasps.

Breeding: Adult male Black Widows wander in search of females but do not feed or bite. Females may occasionally kill and eat a male after mating, but this is more the exception than the rule. The female then lays several batches, containing up to 750 eggs each, in one summer. The egg case, about 1/2 inch in diameter, is suspended in the web. It is white to tan in color and has a paper-like texture. There may be 4 to 9 egg sacs produced during a summer. Normally, only 1 to 12 young survive after the egg incubation period of 14 to 30 days due to cannibalism.

The young Black Widows are colored orange and white when they emerge 1 to 4 weeks later. The female Black Widow may live for more than a year and a half. Growth requires 2 to 4 months, depending on availability of prey during which the females molt 6 to 8 times and the males 3 to 6 times. Females mature about 90 days after egg sac emergence and live another 6 months to a year. Males mature about 70 days after emergence and live only another month or two.

Caution - Venomous!: The venom of the female black widow spider is 15 times as toxic as the venom of the Prairie Rattlesnake. Only a minute amount of the toxin is injected in a single bite by the spider however, so they are rarely fatal. By comparison, the relatively large amount of injected rattlesnake venom results in about 15 to 25 percent mortality among those bitten.

The bite itself is often not painful and may go unnoticed. But the poison injected by the the Black Widow bite can cause abdominal pain similar to appendicitis as well as pain to muscles or the soles of the feet. Other symptoms include alternating salivation and dry-mouth, paralysis of the diaphragm, profuse sweating and swollen eyelids.

Persons with heart conditions or other health problems may require a hospital stay. (Heart and lung failure may result in death.) A physician can evaluate the severity of the bite, and give specific antivenin or calcium gluconate to relieve pain if necessary. Healthy people recover rapidly in two to five days.

First aid measures: Apply an ice pack over the bite location and keep the affected limb elevated to about heart level. Try to collect the spider specimen in a small jar or plastic bag for examination by a spider expert, even if you have crushed it. Treatment in a medical facility may be necessary. Call the Poison Center for additional information. Poison Centers across the country now have a new national emergency phone number - 1-800-222-1222

Be very careful when working around areas where black widow spiders may be established. Take proper precautions - wear gloves and pay attention to where you are working. The reaction to a Black Widow bite can be painful. The victim should go to the doctor immediately for treatment.

To control the black widow, carefully remove all materials where they might hide. They can be cleaned out of an area simply by knocking down the webs, spiders, and round, tan egg sacs with a stick and crushing them underfoot. Removal or destruction of the egg sacks may help control the population. This spider is resistant to many insecticides.



INTERPRETATION

(A personal commentary by Dennis Jones)

Not too long ago I was tasked in an exercise to develop a definition of interpretation with a group of park managers. Fifteen minutes later we had a well-crafted progression of words in the finest “governmentese” I had seen in a long time. I suppose it made sense but was very difficult to grasp the idea behind it. Bureaucrats tend to do that; we make things more complicated than they really are or need to be. I am not sure why. It must be the environment. In fact, Interpretation can be reduced to four words. Storytelling with a purpose.

Another way to say it might be storytelling with a “mission”, but I think purpose is more understandable. What is that purpose you may ask? An old fellow with the National Parks Service said it best, “through interpretation, [storytelling] comes understanding, through understanding comes appreciation, and through appreciation comes conservation.” And that’s our purpose. Everything has a story to tell. The armadillo, the oak tree, the wildflower, the artifact, your car, your shoes, everything has a story if you care to discover it, and every story is unique. The catch is that only you can speak for them. That’s why it is called Interpretation. So if you are in the public eye, you are an Interpreter, and your purpose is to create understanding. The rest will take care of itself.

You are the font of all knowledge regarding the who, what, where, when, how and whys of your site because of the patch on your shoulder. Obviously you cannot know all the stories, but you do have stories to tell. Tell the ones do you know, discover the ones that are hidden, and teach people how to see (another word for understand) in a new way. But don’t tell everything you know, that’s too easy. Frame your stories in such a manner as to encourage people to want to “see” more for themselves.

As far as nature interpretation is concerned try to focus on the wonder of things, not the names of things. I remember a guide taking some children on a nature walk that encountered an Inca dove. “What’s that bird?” they asked. Rather than tell them the name, the storyteller had them look at its scale-like feathers, delicate head, what it was doing, (on the ground looking for seeds), etc. “What do you think its name should be?” the guide asked. The children thought for almost a millisecond and shouted roughly in unison as the dove flew away, “armadillo bird! armadillo bird!” “O.K., armadillo bird it is.”, and to those children, now grown with children of their own, it may still be an armadillo bird. It’s the story; it’s the wonder, not just the name. The children are the future. Seeds of wonder never die.

There is so much more to say about “Interpretation”. But I would like to you to mainly remember who you are, and what YOUR purpose is. “They don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” Your stories and interpretation can do that and much more. Let’s talk about Interpretation again sometime. dj

*Desire Larson

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 6	Weekday work crew, NC, 8:15 AM
February 8	Weekday work crew, NC, 8:15 AM
February 9	Trail trimming crew, NC, 8:30 AM (after 8:30, 40-Acre)
February 10	New Volunteer Orientation and lunch, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM Regular meeting, 5:00 PM
February 13	Weekday work crew, NC, 8:15 AM
February 15	Weekday work crew, NC, 8:15 AM
February 17	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
February 20	Weekday work crew, NC, 8:15 AM
February 22	Weekday work crew, NC, 8:15 AM
February 24	New Volunteer Training, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
February 27	Weekday work crew, NC, 8:15 AM



Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville TX 77461

FIRST CLASS MAIL

→**NEXT MEETING DAY AND TIME**←
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY, 2007, 5:00 PM

Note earlier time for this meeting only.

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REGULAR VOLUNTEER EVENTS

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

**BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK
VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION**

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

President:	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.