



BRAZOS BEND BUNCH BUGLE

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 11

NOVEMBER 2011

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



The food was great at our annual picnic and available in large quantities. I don't think anyone went home hungry. Our attendance was above 100 volunteers, staff, park host and families. We really missed Sharon Hanzik, but David Heinicke filled in for her. A special thanks is extended to the folks who helped with the setup and cleanup. Thanks also to Chuck Duplant for taking the group

picture of our volunteers.

On November 9th William McDonald and Gordon Bohmfalk of TPWD Austin will visit with us regarding our need for a new nature center. This will be at 1:00 pm in the nature center class room. This is a very preliminary meeting to investigate how the infrastructure group can assist us in developing our requirements while we are in a holding pattern awaiting approval from TPWD Austin to go public and proceed with this major project.

Please remember our monthly meeting on the Nov 12. We need you there to help direct our organization.

Offie Walker

SPECIAL NOTICE

The January 14 meeting will be a special meeting to discuss the plans for the Brazos Bend Environmental Education Center. It will be held in the Dining Hall at a time earlier than our normal meetings. It is important for every member to attend, so mark your calendar. Meeting time will be announced soon.

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OCTOBER PICNIC AWARDS

The annual Volunteer picnic is a time for recognition and presentation of service pins and special awards. The following award were presented on October 15:



5 year service pins:

Jerry Carpenter
Diane Carpenter
Jim Calvert
Noel Duncan
Suzie Gann

Eddye Grizzafi
Candice Kanak
Tom Kanak
Patricia Marshall
Jim North

Nancy Partlow
Frank Seay
Offie Walker
Jerry Zona

10 year service pins:

Rick Dashnau
Dennis Keptra

Jeff McMullan
Barb Tucker

15 year service pins:

Bill Godley

Glen Kilgore

Sid Jones

20 year service pins:

Joan Jackson

Laszlo Perlaky

Special Awards:

Education

Jerry Carpenter, for his work in the Nature Center, Eco-explorers, school and summer groups, outreach, and trail interpretation

Customer Service

Anne Shelton - for her extensive work on the website

Teamwork

Gift Shop Committee - Diane Carpenter, Beth Debenport, Kent and Debbie Fewell, Nancy Lynn Jones, Judy Strauss, Anna Dell Williamson, for keeping the GS stocked and keeping it open. Funding for organizational efforts stems mostly from it's revenue.

Leadership

Offie Walker - We are always grateful to the president, but every so often one is faced with an especially busy year. This past year has seen TPWD budget cuts, building committee work, and representing BBSPVO on the state level

Excellence

Jaci Elliott for her all around service - Nature Center, Gift Shop, Water Station, Creekfield hikes, Eco-explorers, trail maintenance, wood yard, trail interpretation, outreach. She does it and does it well.

Emeritus

Bruce Williamson - 21 years service
Laszlo Perlaky - 20 years service

CONGRATULATIONS



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Ray Anderson
Nelda Gay (Emeritus)
David Heinicke (Staff)
Steve Killian (Staff)
Patricia Marshall
Tori Matta
Curtis Parent

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Robert Aaron
Katy Childs
Beth Debenport
Melissa Moody (Staff)
Kathy Nevotti
Jeff Orsak (Staff)
Reyes Torres

NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Holly and Gene Haynes
Mike & Paige Manley



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Troy and Patty Henry
Dennis (Emeritus) and Dorothy Keprta

Congratulations to Lisa and Drake Hacker for completing their training and becoming full volunteers. Be sure to welcome these new volunteers as they join the organization.

Thank you!

Newsletter:

Jaci Elliott for article on Pushing Pedals
Carrie Sample for article and fun pictures
Paige O'Neal for article on Gator Fest
Woody Scott and Judy Strauss for information about the bobcat and the "wild life" at BBSP
Judy Strauss and Doris Dahse for the outreach reports

Meeting supper, October:

Everyone who helped with the picnic: setup, clean up, food, decorations, program
Chuck Duplant for taking the group picture at the picnic

Outreach:

Christine Kovack, Connie Waltrip, Sandy and Rich Jespersen, and Jerry Carpenter for help with the Houston Zoo outreach program October 8.
Jerry Carpenter, Doris Dahse, Ron Dearman, Nancy and Bear Dobbs, Jaci Elliott, Nelda Gay, Holly Haynes, Jim North, Paige O'Neal, Woody Scott, Rebecca Sykes, and Connie Waltrip for helping with Texian Market Days



SYMPATHY

The BBSPVO was saddened to learn of the death of one of our first volunteers, Rose Aden, on October 18, 2011. Rose was living in San Angelo, TX, in a nursing home near her daughter. Our sincere sympathy goes out to her family and friends.

FROM THE WEBMASTER

Anne Shelton

I got feedback at the picnic that you have had to login two time to get to the volunteer calendar. I think I have fixed this problem. Now you can select the Member option on the menu and then the volunteer calendar or event calendar. You should only be prompted to login 1 time.

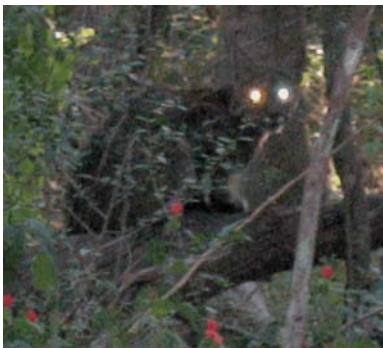
If you would like to create a bookmark directly to the volunteer calendar this is the link
<https://www.google.com/a/brazosbend.org/ServiceLogin?service=cl&passive=1209600&continue=http://www.google.com/calendar/hosted/brazosbend.org/render>

If you have bookmarked the Members Only area you will need to update your bookmark. This is the new link: <http://www.brazosbend.org/organization/membermenu.shtml>

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any problems or questions with the web site.
webmaster@brazosbend.org

BEST ATV TOUR EVER

by Woody Scott



As you probably know, one part of the volunteer training program is taking an ATV tour of the Park trails. I met volunteer Judy Strauss at the Nature Center, and she graciously volunteered to take me on the tour. I had a full schedule working in the Nature Center and Gift Shop the next day, so she suggested that we meet at 5 after our shifts. I must admit that I was not particularly excited about this part of the training since I had been walking the Park trails for over 20 years and had hiked almost all of them within the past 2 months. Someone suggested to Judy, that since I was quite familiar with the trails already, we start with an area called "Force Account".

For those not familiar with this term, Force Account is a wooded area accessed from the road on the left as you first enter the Park. The area is not open to the public and serves as a storage area for the many materials used in park construction and maintenance, such as concrete parking stops, pipe, etc. One advantage of an area like this is that it sees little human visitation, so it's likely to be home to animals that are particularly shy of humans. Sure enough, as we were driving through the wooded path, we spotted a large bobcat sitting atop a concrete culvert pipe. We got fairly close before he bounded off the pipe and into the woods. He moved about 40 feet and stopped behind a nearby tree. Judy

wanted to take a picture, so I slowly walked around in an attempt to drive him back toward her. While semi-successful, I did manage to drive the cat closer toward her and also flush out his mate.

We continued our tour along the more traveled trails of the Park and, in the growing dusk, did see numerous deer, rabbits and armadillo, but nothing that matched our excitement of seeing the bobcats.

(Ed. note: Judy dubbed this the "Best ATV Tour Ever." Can you top it? Share your park experiences with us and add to the interest of the newsletter.)

NATURE CENTER REPORT OCTOBER 2011

PROGRAMS	TOTALS
NATURE CENTER ATTENDANCE October 2011 - 7,564 October 2010 - 7,855 October 2009 - 6,258 October 2008 - 3,759 October 2007 - 4,809 October 2006 - 5,258 October 2005 - 4,878	Saturdays (5) - 4,307 High, 975 (10/8) Average: 861
	Sundays (5) – 1,914 High, 510 (10/30) Average: 362
	Weekdays (21) - 1,343 High, 222 (10/14) Average: 64
CREEKFIELD HIKES (11)	110
ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS (6)	168
SNAKE PROGRAMS (9)	360
CHILDREN'S STORYTIME (4)	72
OUTREACH (2)	253
WILDLIFE VIEWING (3)	111
SUNDIAL (2)	121
POND LIFE	130
HALLOWEEN MOVIE	104
OTHER PROGRAMS (8) include birds, photo hike, bats, Friday hike, geocaching, spiders, mammals, and Pickers	243
Total volunteer interpretive hours	657
TOTAL VISITORS SERVED IN HIKES AND PROGRAMS	1672

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Total Maintenance Hours for September and October, over 300

Wood Yard:

Split and bundled firewood
Built tying racks for woodyard

Mowing and Landscaping:

Cleared Pilant Slough viewing area
Cleared around Hale Lake gazebo
Cut blowdown pecan tree across from NC

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Watered Creekfield Forest trees
Trail patrol
Cleaned around Hunt's Hollow Live Oak trees
Treated Live Oak Trail bridges and benches
Cleared area to install Live Oak Trail platform
Trimmed tree limbs in Camping Loops
Cleared blowdown trees on Hale Lake trail, Horseshoe Lake, Brazos River, Big Creek



Enjoying the new benches

Photo by Ron Morrison, October 2011

Trail Building:

Built approach to bridges on Live Oak Trail
Laid trail material and installed bumper on approach to bridges

Equipment Maintenance:

Built padded seat for back of gators

Pest Control:

Treated Chinese Tallow trees

Special Projects:

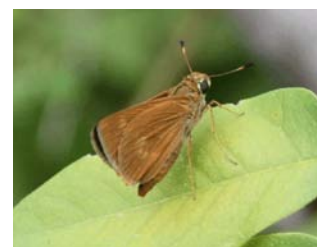
Sanded and painted NC Benches
Installed two new benches at the Nature Center

Trimmed trees under bridge for bats flyway



16TH ANNUAL BRAZOS BEND BUTTERFLY COUNT OCTOBER 9, 2011

by Rich and Sandy Jespersen, Compilers



This year's record heat and drought have resulted in fewer host and nectar plants than usual, and we have been seeing very few butterflies for the past several months. So we expected numbers for the 16th Annual Brazos Bend Butterfly Count to be small. Ironically, it rained on count day, making it difficult to find those butterflies that were present. There were about 1.5 hours of sunshine followed by scattered cloudbursts in the morning. Then the deluge began and 5.75 inches of much-needed rain washed out the afternoon counting.

Nevertheless, 23 dedicated observers braved the elements and managed to find a significant number of butterflies. As is frequently the case, Gulf Fritillary and Little Yellow topped the list. Surprisingly, the number of Common Buckeyes was above the median of previous counts and the Southern Broken-Dash was the third most abundant ever.

Conspicuous in their absence were Giant Swallowtail, Viceroy, Carolina Satyr, and Horace's Duskywing, which have been seen in all previous counts, and White-striped Longtail and Long-tailed Skipper, which have been plentiful in all fall counts until this year.

SWALLOWTAILS
 2 Black Swallowtail

1 Monarch
 3 Queen

WHITES & SULPHURS
 1 Cloudless Sulphur
 39 Little Yellow
 2 Sleepy Orange

SKIPPERS
 7 Common Checkered-skipper
 3 Tropical Checkered-skipper
 2 *Checkered-skipper species*
 1 Neamathla Skipper
 10 Clouded Skipper
 2 Least Skipper
 1 Fiery Skipper
 1 Whirlabout
 10 Southern Broken-Dash
 1 Sachem
 2 Broad-winged Skipper
 8 Dun Skipper

HAIRSTREAKS
 4 Gray Hairstreak

BRUSH-FOOTED
 51 Gulf Fritillary
 3 Variegated Fritillary
 1 Red Admiral
 8 Common Buckeye
 1 Hackberry Emperor
 1 Tawny Emperor
 1 *Emperor species*

Total 166 individuals / 24 species

Observers were Justin Bower, Chris Carey, Janet Clemenson, Susan Conaty, Chuck Duplant, Jerry Eppner, Bill Godley, Linda Heinicke, Rich Jespersen, Sandy Jespersen, Diane Milano, Gary Moore, Kathy Moore, Vicki Poorman, Wayne Poorman, Pauline Rick, Carrie Sample, Andy Smith, James L. Smith, Pam Tatge, Rodney Waltheer, Susan Walther and Hugh Wedgeworth.

Next year's count will be held on October 7, 2012.

Photo Credits: Southern Broken-Dash photo by Carrie Sample; Clouded Skipper photo by Sandy Jespersen.



JUST FOR THE FUN OF IT

Many people find pictures in clouds. I have found something in this vine covered tree in the distance, looking at Pilant Lake from the observation tower. What do you see? E-mail your responses to csample0@comcast.net, and we will publish the results in the next newsletter!

GATOR FEST

by Paige O'Neal

The weekend of September 16-18 is Gator Fest weekend in Anahuac, TX. This annual event coincides with the opening of the 20 day alligator hunting season in Texas. Held at the historic Fort Anahuac Park, the 3 day event features cook off competitions, food and merchandise vendors, live bands, carnival rides, pageants, and the Annual Alligator Roundup – basically fun for the whole family. In addition to the festival atmosphere is the facet of alligator education and wetland/waterways

conservation education. Even the county library system was there sporting their best gator gear and gator related books (shameless library plug)!



Fest goers had the opportunity to touch or hold a three year old gator. The snouts were all secured, but I have to admit that after receiving the training I have as a BBSP volunteer, I was a bit nervous to see the public handling an animal whose only restraint was a rubber band. Granted, the animal was only in the public's hands for a minute or so, but it did make me appreciate even more that we release the gators when they reached a year old. Three year old gators are squirmy!!

If you've ever seen Swamp People on the History Channel (caveat: sensationalized, I know), you know the hunters bring in their catches to be weighed and measured, and the hunters always want to bring the big one. At the Fest, every time the air horn sounded, it meant a big 'ole pickup truck was bringing in one or several gators. Watching people react to the air horn was quite fun, too (think a big dinner bell calling you to dinner). The public came *en masse* to watch the animals weighed and measured or to see an alligator up close. Even with the drought conditions, hunters brought in animals large and small. Not surprisingly, most of the larger animals were 10-11 foot, BUT over the course of the day, two animals measuring 12'1" and 12'6" were brought in. At stake is a chance at prize money up to \$4,000 and bragging rights.



The round up during Gator Fest sees about 10% of all tagged animals harvested during the hunting season. An alligator buyer is on site during the event; the harvested gators are processed for the meat and hides. Fest goers can purchase alligator meat on site. I was talking with one of the international Graduate Assistants at the library where I work the other day, telling him about the Fest and the Round Up, and explaining why there are hunting seasons for animals such as alligators or deer or dove – which is a targeted population control. He asked a very interesting question: Are there size limits when hunting alligators? Here is what I found out: there is no size limit – a hunter keeps what he captures. Want to know more about alligator hunting in Texas? Check out this helpful resource: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/huntwild/hunt/planning/alligator/>

HAPPENINGS

OCTOBER EVENTS

HAIRY, SCARY, SLIMY, SLITHERING SPECIES

During the weekend of October 22 & 23, 2011, park staff presented their version of Halloween-themed programs entitled "Freaky Fauna". The programs were aimed at educating park visitors about animals known to instill fear in many people. The purpose of the program was to alleviate these fears by clearing up misinformation and demonstrating that although some species may be dangerous, they are also beneficial to their ecosystems. Programs included topics such as owls, snakes, bats, alligators, pond life, toads and spiders and were presented in different formats including hikes, story time, slide shows and demonstrations.

GATOR RUN

On Sunday, October 23 Brazos Bend hosted the Gator Run. See - http://www.pilates-powerhouse.com/Brazos_Bend_Gator_Run.html for more details. This was a half marathon and half marathon relay. The race was organized and presented by Pilates Powerhouse in Pearland. The race started and ended at the Elm Lake Pavilion. This is the second race out here by Pilates Powerhouse. The first race had over 250 runners and almost that many more

observers and family members. Volunteers set up a tent near the Elm Lake Pavilion from 8:00 AM to noon, with park information, touch table items and live animals. Runners, their families and observers could visit the booth and learn about the park and the volunteer organization. There were also volunteers on the trail on foot, on bikes or on Gators (with radios) to assist runners, chase alligators back into the water, look for injuries, etc..

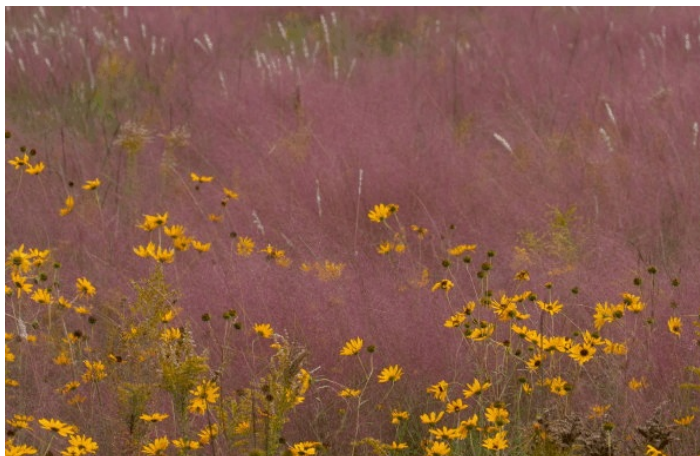
HALLOWEEN MOVIE NIGHT

Halloween weekend brought our annual "Halloween Classic Movie Night" on Saturday, October 29, 2011. This year's feature, *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*, was shown at the park's outdoor amphitheater, preceded by *It's the Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown*. Light refreshments were provided.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

PRAIRIE HERITAGE DAY

Prairie Heritage Day was held November 5, and was highlighted by special programs, activities and exhibits. Participating institutions included the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge, Brazos Bend State Park, Brazos Bend State Park Volunteer Organization, Coastal Prairie Partnership, Ducks Unlimited, Fort Bend Beekeepers Association, Fort Bend County Environmental Health Dept., Houston Audubon Society, Houston Chronicle, Katy Prairie Conservancy, Native Plant Society of Texas, Native Prairies Association of Texas, Texas A & M - Texas Agrilife Extension, Texas Master Naturalist - Coastal Prairie Chapter, Galveston Bay Chapter, Cradle of Texas Chapter, Gulf Coast Chapter, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, and Texas Wildlife Rehabilitation Commission.



THANKSGIVING WEEK

The Nature Center and Gift Shop will be open during Thanksgiving week, except Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, when the park will be open but the Center will be closed. Attendance is usually quite good during that week, when lots of campers enjoy the outdoors and the cooler weather. Volunteers are asked to sign up to take a shift in the Nature Center/Gift Shop or lead Creekfield. Trail interpreters would be very helpful, also.

DECEMBER EVENTS

SIMPLE CHRISTMAS

A Simple Christmas reminder to all....save the date: Saturday, December 3, 2011, 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM. There is a flier on the web page, and a list of activities will be placed on the events calendar for sign-up by mid November. If there is an activity that you can add and coordinate, let Sharon Hanzik know.

Expect the following areas where your help will be needed:

hayride ride-along duty approximately every 30 minutes	refreshment service
helping with set-up for Dutch-oven cookers	Victorian games
will need face painters if we can get them	rag doll making
marshmallow roasting/s'more duty	help with craft after story time

CHRISTMAS DAY

Nature Center closed.

OCTOBER OUTREACH

OUTREACH EVENT AT STEWART CREEK ELEMENTARY

by DorisDahse

I visited Stewart Creek Elementary's second grade students on October 7, taking with me a baby alligator and a corn snake. The students were mesmerized by both animals and listened very closely as I shared information about the animals. Out of the 160+ in attendance, there were no problems with inattention.



OUTREACH EVENT AT THE HOUSTON ZOO

by Judy Strauss, BBSPVO Events Coordinator

On Saturday, October 8th, BBSPVO had an Outreach at the Houston Zoo for the First Annual Houston Wilderness Weekend. We were not allowed to bring our alligators and/or snakes, so this was strictly promoting BBSP without any "critters". However, when we told our visitors that they could come to the Nature Center at BBSP and touch a baby alligator and possibly a snake, the results were almost as effective as it is when we have the "critters" there...I said "ALMOST"!



We had many visitors that had never heard of BBSP or had never been there. However, most of them had been out to BBSP at least once, and some several times. Many had camped, some only day use. A few even said that they had decided on going to the Zoo today as opposed to going to BBSP. Despite the heavy rainfall twice during the day, we had a count of 1031 visitors come by our table (without the "critters", I hesitate to call it a booth)!

Thanks to the help of Christine Kovack, Connie Waltrip, Sandy and Rich Jespersen, and Jerry Carpenter, we had a very eventful day. Thank you all so much for your help on such short notice. As always, it could not have been

accomplished without you all!

OUTREACH - TEXIAN MARKET DAYS

by Judy Strauss

Texian Market Days at the George Ranch was held on Friday and Saturday, October 21 and 22. Friday brought in a count of 1938, mostly school children, and we were busy almost constantly. Saturday brought a crowd of 1,464, and although a bit short-handed, we all had a good time and survived. After the event on Saturday, a bar-be-que dinner was offered to all volunteers, and Ron Dearman, Jim North, Woody Scott and I attended and had a royal feast, including cake, ice cream & cobbler!

I really want to thank Doris Dahse, Rebecca Sykes, Connie Waltrip, Jerry Carpenter, Holly Haynes, Nelda Gay, and Jaci Elliott for their help and support. Paige O'Neal wasn't scheduled, but showed up for a shift, and Nancy and Bear Dobbs helped for a short time, which



was really appreciated.

And also my thanks and appreciation to Jim North, Ron Dearman and Woody Scott for their help ALL DAY on Saturday. ALL DAY!!! We could not have done this event without the great help from everyone that was there. Thank you ALL!

We reached a lot of visitors in those two days, and were able to educate them, not only on the "critters" that we had brought, but also on our wonderful Park and nature. The speckled king snake was a huge hit, as it was getting ready to shed: eyes and belly milky, which gave us some added educational material to work with. The weather was wonderful...couldn't have been a better weekend. Thanks, again, to everyone!

WEEKDAY PARK HIKES

by David Heinicke

Back by popular demand we are going to start offering Friday Morning Nature Hikes at Brazos Bend again this year. They will start at 9:00 AM and tour through different areas of the park each month.

The first hike was on Friday, October 28, from the Hale Lake Restrooms, around the Red Buckeye Trail and back along the Brazos River.

All are welcome so feel free to pass this on to interested parties. Those of you that are active in Master Naturalist groups please pass this on to members of the chapter. Regular park admission will apply to folks that are NOT Brazos Bend volunteers.

JOURNEYS WITH JACI - PEDAL PUSHING

By Jaci M. Elliott

After several years of over-30 soccer playing and four knee surgeries for ACL and meniscus tears, my orthopedist (actually also a team member of mine in a co-ed league) told me it was time to give up the joint-disabling sport of European football. So I resorted to pedal pushing—cycling, if you're an enthusiast; bike riding, if you haven't spent over \$200 on your mode of transport.



I started riding my \$175 mountain bike farther and farther, the record distance culminating in my first MS 150 ride from Houston to Austin via LaGrange. This was the year 2001. At one point, not even 15 miles into the ordeal, a rather prodigious middle-aged man on a svelte titanium frame and encased rather like a neon sausage in his riding shirt and shorts called out oh-so-encouragingly to me, "You're never going to make it!" Not one to back down from certain challenges, I pedaled on in my tennis shoes and on my 30-pound bike to not only reach Austin in the required two days' time limit, but also before 4 PM on the second day and without a slipped chain, flat tire or fall, though I must confess that I surrendered to the inclines of Bastrop and Buescher State Parks by dismounting and walking my bike, and not just once, but three times. However, with both feet firmly on the ground then (and not making those annoying little tap-dancing sounds with the fancy click-in bike shoes... remember, I was shod in soft-soled Adidas) I was allowed to take both hands wrecklessly off the handlebars to applaud the amazing ascent of a young father towing his 7-year-old daughter on an adult/child tandem up a huge hill. Inspiring, yes, but I also had to marvel/wonder at the patience of the pulled-behind offsprings throughout this closer to 170-mile mission.

A year and half ago my youngest son and I rode the MS together, and while some things stayed consistent—the friendliness of the folks volunteering, the spring scenery along the route, and the long lines for the port-a-potties at the snack-fortified rest stops—one notable difference was the copious contingency of corporate sponsor tents on the county fairgrounds in LaGrange for the overnight. My 2010 ride with my son and his private school group included the following accommodations: a large tent with folding tables and chairs, trucked-in food, our own private port-a-potty, and –joy of joys—our own masseuse. There was even a three-piece string ensemble hired to entertain the pampered peddlers in the tent next door.

This was quite a departure from my 2001 sojourn which simply consisted of a sleeping bag strewn on the sawdust floor of a livestock pen. Self-serenaded by Supertramp's "Crime of the Century" via my little cassette player, I need not have worried about a wake-up call that second morning. It came with the pancake crew who started noisily setting up shop at 3:30 AM.

I must say crossing the crowd-rimmed finish line within the concrete canyon walls of the capitol *and* alongside my son was, by far, the most satisfying completion out of the two rides. This even if my son's first words were "Well, that's the last time I ride this bike."

But it was not his last ride with me, and though we haven't ridden in any more charity events as a duo since then, we have been out to BBSP several times to traverse the nearly 35 miles of trails. From the straightaway of the mile stretch to the paved loop at the Hale Lake (which, on a quiet day can be cycled and re-cycled like a flat velodrome), road bikes—the skinny tire variety—are as welcome as the mountain or hybrid bikes, though the knobby tires offer better traction in the graveled or sandy places. And a larger rubber surface area tire is recommended if you plan to navigate the steps, either up or down, of the observation tower at 40-acre Lake. (Please see David Heinicke for further details about that "unmarked" trail.)

Sometimes, on either the Blue Stem or Red Buck-Eye trails—those stretches in the back acreage of the park—I envision myself on an equine mount instead of the gear grinding 20-speed on which I am actually riding, my own panting suffices for that of any winded horse I might imagine. So if you haven't done so lately at our park...I'd advise you to hit the trail, and *in* or *on* the saddle of your choice.

YOU KNOW YOU'RE A BBSP VOLUNTEER WHEN...

Ed. Note: Several years ago we ran a series of articles "You Know You're a BBSP Volunteer When...", with such items as "your cap, name tag, fanny pack, binoculars, boots, and walking stick reside permanently in your car", or "even a cold, rainy day at the park is better than a good day at the Mall", – you get the drift. Well, here's a new one for that, submitted by Judy Strauss.

This morning (Tuesday) before I left for work, I finally decided to clean out my cooler bag that I had taken to the Park on Sunday. I did not turn on the kitchen light, as there was enough light coming through the windows to see what I needed to see (so I thought).

When I opened the bag and reached in, I jumped ten feet! For just a second, I really thought that I was doomed! It took me a couple of seconds to realize what the items I found inside the bag really were: there were two "large insect" items that I had taken home from the gift shop to repair!

Hope ya'll get as much of a laugh out of this as I did!

TPWD NEWS

TEXAS STATE PARK GUIDE

The latest edition of the 112-page *Texas State Park Guide* is now available in a variety of formats just in time for outdoor lovers to find that perfect spot to enjoy greater solitude and cooler fall weather as the summer crowds and swelter fade. The Texas State Park Guide is once again a free publication, thanks to the sponsorship of Toyota, and can be picked up at any state park and several other sites throughout Texas.

Two new versions of the *Guide* are available this year for the first time. REI, a national outdoor retail co-op, has made it possible to offer a Spanish-language version of the park guide. TPWD also has created an online digital page-turner replica of the Texas State Park Guide. This will make it easier than ever to discover the amazing variety of state park destinations and special park interpretive programs that await today's adventurers. For information on the Net, go to:

<http://www.texasstateparks.org/>

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/publications/parkguide/download/>

BASTROP STATE PARK OPENING PUSHED BACK

The new target date for reopening Bastrop State Park after the destructive wild fires in early September has been pushed back to December 1. Cabins, campground, park roads and refectory, were badly damaged in a wild fire that destroyed 34,000 acres in early September. Campgrounds will be reopened by December 1 despite the ongoing demolition and replacement of two restrooms. Alternative restrooms and showers will be made available. Campers will find resealed or new roads, parking areas and RV pads being paved by the Texas Department of Transportation.

TPWD TELEVISION SERIES STARTS NEW SEASON

The new season of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department program will air on PBS and other cable stations throughout Texas. Programs will focus on topics such as Gulf issues where hosts take viewers through coral reefs of the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, visit sea turtles on the Padre Island National Seashore, and discuss impacts of the recent BP oil spill on economic and environmental interests. For a schedule of broadcasts in your area visit

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/newsmedia/tv/tvwhere.phtml>.

BIRD HIKES FOR 2011-2012

Volunteers Bill Godley and Justin Bower and Park Naturalist David Heinicke will be leading bird hikes September through May. Beginners and advanced birders are welcome. Hikes are normally 2 hours in duration. Friday and Sunday scheduled hikes begin at 8:00 AM from 40 Acre Lake restrooms. Saturday "Bird Blizzard at Sunset" meets at 5:00 PM at the Observation Tower. Additional Saturday "Intro to Bird Watching" hikes will be added during the year. Please check "Nature Programs and Hikes" on our website (www.brazosbend.org) for additions and all events.

Below is the schedule for the 8:00 AM hikes beginning at 40-Acre Lake restrooms. There is no fee for the hikes, and standard park entrance fees apply. Hike dates and times are subject to change. Contact Bill at fribbish@msn.com for details.

Saturday, November 5, 2011
 Friday, November 11, 2011
 Friday, December 2, 2011
 Sunday, December 11, 2011
 Friday, January 6, 2012
 Sunday, January 8, 2012
 Friday, February 3, 2012
 Sunday, February 5, 2012
 Friday, March 2, 2012
 Sunday, March 4, 2012
 Friday, March 30, 2012
 Friday April 6, 2012 *
 Friday April 13, 2012 *
 Sunday, April 15, 2012
 Friday April 20, 2012 *
 Friday April 27, 2012 *
 Friday, May 4, 2012
 Sunday, May 13, 2012



* Friday - "Migration Madness" - BBSP and Quintana
 April 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2012, hikes include both BBSP and Quintana
 (optional) to follow.

Hikes will begin at 8 AM at BBSP and then move to Quintana to finish after lunch.

"Bird Blizzard at Sunset" - Observation Tower, 5:00 PM

Observe thousands of incoming birds roosting in the park at dusk on the following evenings:
 Saturday December 3, 2011, Friday December 30, 2011, Saturday January 14, 2012

The 27th Christmas Bird Count will be held on Saturday, December 17, 2011, from 6:30 AM to dusk.
 Bring your binoculars and cameras!

VISIT FROM A HALE

by Jo Ann Davis



Here is the picture I took of Amy Corley, great granddaughter of Herman Hale and grand-daughter of Dorenda Hale Doughtie. Amy visited the park for the first time and was very impressed of the beauty and care. She was happy it became a park and was not divided. She remembers as a child playing in this building and being with her great grandparents and grandparents. Pictured with her is Nancy and Bear Dobbs and Doug DeVries. Amy now lives in Seattle, Washington.

SIGNS OF “WILD” LIFE

by Judy Strauss

Well, didn't find the Bobcats today, but look what we DID find! These old bottles, cans & tin “pots”/containers (some possibly very old, more possible not), and the balloon, were found in the area of Pilant Lake, behind Force Account, where the banks had receded. Doesn't take much to entertain me, does it!



UPCOMING EVENTS NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER

November 15-17	Park closed for Hunt
November 21-25	Thanksgiving Week, very busy. NC closed Thanksgiving Day
December 2	Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building
December 3 - 4	Texas Outdoor Family Camping Event, 9:30 AM Landscape photography Photo-walk #3, 3 PM. Brazos River Pickers, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM
December 10	“Bird Blizzard at Sunset”, 5:00 p.m. at the Observation Tower BBEEC (New Building) Committee, 1:00 PM, open to all interested Budget and Executive Meetings, 3:00 PM Regular Business Meeting, 5:30 PM (Supper, 5:00 PM)
December 11	Bird hike, 8:00 AM, 40-Acre Lake restroom building
December 13-15	Park closed for Hunt
December 19-31	Christmas break, lots of campers. NC closed Christmas Day
December 30	“Bird Blizzard at Sunset”, 5:00 p.m. at the Observation Tower
2012	
January 14	Important Business Meeting, Time TBA, desserts, Dining Hall

AHH..., water.

*Photo by Jerry Zona,
October 2011*



Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville, TX 77461

NEXT MEETING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2011

FIRST CLASS MAIL



REGULAR VOLUNTEER EVENTS

Creekfield Hikes	Every Saturday and Sunday at 10:00 AM, led by volunteers
Photo Hikes	First Saturday of each month
Volunteer meeting	Second Saturday of each month at 5:30 PM, supper at 5:00 PM
Bird Hikes	See schedule in calendar

BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION

VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OFFICERS

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

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

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

**IN THE END, WE WILL CONSERVE ONLY WHAT WE LOVE,
WE WILL LOVE ONLY WHAT WE UNDERSTAND,
WE WILL UNDERSTAND ONLY WHAT WE ARE TAUGHT.**

**BABA DIOUM, SENEGAL
AFRICAN CONSERVATIONIST**