

The Pine Warbler



October 2009
East Texas Nature

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For the Love of the Out of Doors by Diane Cabiness, Texas Master Naturalist

*"When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary;
When troubles come and my heart burdened be;
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence,
Until you come and sit awhile with me.*

*"You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up... To more than I can be..."*

"You Raise Me Up" sung by Josh Groban

I can walk out into my yard or be driving to a client's house and hear a bird sing, see a wildflower, or get a glimpse of a butterfly soaring past and it is then I am lifted up and filled with a zest for life, and wanting to share my love plants and animals to folks old and young alike.

I have always been drawn to the great outdoors but as soon as I learned to read in the first grade I became a bookworm. But the pull was there all those years. There were many folks and organizations that guided and rekindled my love of nature and the need to be out doors. The following are a few of the occasions that hit a longing within: on vacations to Ohio I would watch my mom's mom work in her flower and vegetable garden as a preschooler, reading books about animals in grade school, seeing the movie Brother Sun Sister Moon, a story about St. Francis of Assisi as a adult, becoming a member of Piney Woods Wildlife Society in my middle years and finally participating in the Texas Master Naturalist program in my late 50s. The impact PWWS and TMN had on me was and is tremendous.

Do you find your heart welling up with immense joy watching a hummingbird sipping nectar at one of your wildflowers? Do you find yourself longing to be outside when you are indoors doing chores? Do you feel your troubles slip away when you step into the natural world? Do you see a strange plant pop up in your yard and instead of yanking it up you wait till it flowers to see what it might become? If not than you are missing one of the biggest adventures of your life.

I won't lie; gardening is work if you have to do it yourself. But I guarantee after spending a couple of hours doing cleanup in your yard or planting some flower treasures that you have newly acquired, you will find your world a little sunnier and a little more enjoyable. Besides hard work is good for body and soul.

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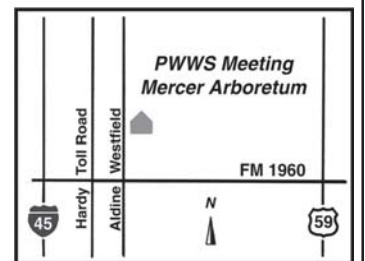


October Presentation Butterflies of Eastern Arizona Presented by Steve Abbey

PWWS member Steve Abbey will present a program on the butterflies of Eastern Arizona on Tuesday, October 20. Steve describes himself as a "nature enthusiast with a particular interest in butterfly observation." He is a member of the Butterfly Enthusiasts of Southeast Texas which is the local chapter of the North American Butterfly Association. Steve also volunteers at the Houston Museum of Nature Science. We are looking forward to Steve's colorful slide presentation in October.

Date: October 20
Time: Social 7:00 p.m.
Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Mercer
Arboretum
22307
Aldine-Westfield



Werewolf movie
at the commercial,
letting the dog out. - Owen





Heart Happenings

The nesting season of the endangered Kemp's ridley sea turtle is over for this year and considering

the terrible conditions of beaches on the upper Texas coast, finding just a few nests was better than many expected. And that's all Dr. Andre M Landry, Jr. of Texas A&M University at Galveston and his patrol group found after weeks of patrolling Galveston Island and Bolivar Peninsula. In case you missed the Houston Chronicle story about Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson's plan to rebuild the Texas coastline, here it is.

GALVESTON — The rapidly eroding Texas coastline will receive a \$135 million facelift, marking the state's largest effort to replace sand swept away by waves and tides after years of neglect. The state's commitment to rebuild beaches and natural defenses, such as dunes and wetlands, comes a year after Hurricane Ike made landfall at Galveston and hammered an already beleaguered coast.

"What's good for the Texas coast is good for all of Texas," state Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson said Monday in an announcement of the statewide effort.

The 26 projects will be spread from the McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge on the upper Texas coast to South Padre Island. Plans include \$46 million to rebuild a six-mile stretch of beach west of the Galveston Seawall with tons of imported sand. The project would add 200 feet to the vanishing beach. The state also plans to spend \$20 million to rebuild dunes and beaches on the Ike-ravaged Bolivar Peninsula and \$12 million to build seven miles of dunes on Galveston's West End. Patterson said work will begin immediately on the projects.

The state Legislature set aside \$25 million for coastal protection during the session that ended in June. The Texas General Land Office, which is responsible for the state's shoreline, then leveraged the funding for an additional \$110 million from federal and local sources.

As the Land Commissioner goes forward with his sand replen-



ishment program, other committees are trying to push the Netherlands-like dike for the Galveston area. First known as the "Ike Dike," a multi-billion dollar project suggested first by Dr. William Merrell of Texas A&M University at Galveston is getting a lot of attention. Brandt Mannchen, a long time campaigner with the local Sierra Club, is keeping everyone informed about meetings that focus on the dike. He has carefully made a number of issues that should be considered if this giant project progresses:



1. The floodgate at Bolivar Roads would change salinity (the framework needs to be anchored to something, there will be flapper gates and guillotine gates, and probably fill islands which may narrow the 10,000 foot width of the Houston Ship Channel down to 1,000 feet or some other lesser width.
2. Blocking the ingress/egress of marine organisms which could turn Galveston Bay into Galveston lake.
3. Dredge material deposited on Galveston Bay means loss of bay bottom and other habitats.
4. The scouring at Bolivar Roads will lead to much erosion.
5. There has been a proposal to make the channel at the gates 65 or even 75 feet deep. This will be difficult since out to 20 miles into the Gulf of Mexico the water is shallower than this.
6. We will lose our open beaches and dunes to a seawall.
7. There will be the loss of sea turtle nesting habitat.
8. There will be the loss of Piping Plover feeding habitat.
9. There will be the loss of other organisms' feeding, nesting, and shelter habitat.
10. There is little sand to renourish beaches and most of that sand is economically prohibitive to dredge and use. (This was written before the Patterson announcement.)
11. The maintenance costs of the proposal, including nourishment, will be extremely high.
12. There will be a loss of wetlands because sand will no longer be pushed across the barriers to the backside to make wetlands.
13. There will be the encouragement of development due to the perceived protection of a seawall and therefore more wetlands and other habitats will be destroyed and more people and property put at risk.
14. The beneficial effects and functions of hurricanes will be

- reduced including the flushing of nutrients.
15. A seawall will encourage a ricochet effect of the internal storm surge (within Galveston Bay) that occurs when a hurricane passes over the bay.
 16. Taxpayer dollars will be used to benefit and subsidize private interests in a way that we cannot afford.
 17. We will lose all or a large part of the Houston Audubon Society's sanctuaries on Bolivar Peninsula.
 18. Those portions of the coast that do not have a seawall will have increased water, wave, and erosion effects (at the ends of the seawall) and will pay environmentally, socially, and economically to subsidize those that have a seawall.
 19. The loss of the most natural pass, San Luis Pass, on the Upper Texas Coast and the erosion and habitat losses this will bring.
 20. The use of condemnation to acquire vast amounts of property.

If you're interested in attending meetings about the dike proposal, just send me an e-mail: Carole@seaturtles.org and I'll keep you posted.



Education Chair Needed

PWWS needs a new education chairperson, someone with energy, enthusiasm, and resourcefulness. The challenge is how to "hook" more people into protecting our environment. Contact Al Barr, president.

Field Trip Coordinator

Thanks to Jennifer Backo for her great work as Field Trip Coordinator! She planned many enjoyable outings for PWWS members and on behalf of the entire membership, we want to say thanks to Jennifer!

Sheena Humbird who is a naturalist at Jesse Jones Park has volunteered to take over the position. To get things started in October, she announces the Fall Migration program at Jesse Jones Park which will take place on Saturday, October 17, at 7:30 a.m. There will be a guided bird walk to look for migrating and resident birds. Vence Salvato of the Harris County Mosquito Control department will demonstrate banding birds.

Reservations are required and can be made starting October 7 by calling Jones Park at 281-446-8588.

Fall Migration Program

The Fall Migration program will be on Saturday, October 17 at 7:30 a.m. and will feature a guided bird walk to try and catch a glimpse of migrating and resident birds. In addition Vence Salvato of HCPHES Mosquito Control will be out for a demonstration banding session.

Reservations are required and begin Wednesday, October 7 and can be made by calling Jones Park at 281-446-8588.

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If you are reading this and you are not a member of Piney Woods Wildlife Society please check us out. PWWS is an awesome place to get introduced to nature whether it is one of the lectures or field trips that calls to you. And those of you who are experts whether it be birding or hiking or some other outdoor interests you will find PWWS may very well fit your needs as it has for so many others. And if you want to delve deeper into the heart of nature consider becoming a Texas Master Naturalist. There are classes to take as an intern and yearly hours of service and learning that are required to meet your certification requirements. My love for this earth has made major leaps through PWWS and TMN. Each day I find myself on bended knee, occasionally at my place but usually in someone's yard planting or judiciously pruning/weeding so that my clients may experience once again the wonder and joy they felt as a child.

*"There's music in the sighing of a reed;
There's music in the gushing of a rill;
There's music in all things, if men had ears:
Their earth is but an echo of the spheres."*

By Lord Byron

This article is in memory of our beloved Karen Stockton who died this year. We will miss her so very much.

Please share your nature experiences with me at dianecabinessplants@consolidated.net



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**Piney Woods Wildlife Society Field Trips
 coming soon!**



Visit: <http://pineywoodswildlifesociety.org>

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Numbers of Interest

Heart Hotline.....281444-6204



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For membership information write to us at P.O. Box 189, Spring Texas 77383-0189. Annual Dues: \$15.00 per household.

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The deadline for submissions is the 25th of the previous month, earlier if possible. Always add "PWWS" in the subject line. All emails will be resonded to with in 3 days. If you do not recieve a response please call 832 717-3276. All articles are subject to approval by the PWWS Board.

Please send new address changes and corrections to Mike Drummond at drummond@thedrummonds.com and add PWWS to the subject line. Thank you.