



BRAZOS BEND BUNCH BUGLE

VOLUME 23, NUMBER 8

AUGUST 2011

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Our July 4th bicycle parade was loads of fun for the folks on bikes and everyone else who helped with the decorations and refreshments. There were 63 riders of all ages and one well dressed dog in a bike trailer. With the riders and their support crew we had around 175 present for this event. For one couple this was their 11th year to ride in the parade. Watermelon, lemonade, and snow cones were enjoyed by everyone.

On July 23rd we dedicated the Elm Lake Wildlife Viewing Platform to our park visitors with a ribbon cutting. Justin Rhodes our regional manager opened the program with comments about the history of BBSPVO, our structure, our accomplishments and our top position among Texas State Park volunteer groups. Bill McDonald with the Infrastructure Group in Austin expressed the pleasure he had in working on this project. Mrs. Jean Leach, Mrs. Katherine McGovern and Mr. & Mrs. Ron Morrison were recognized for their donations to the platform. A photo collage comprised of pictures of the platform was given to the donors, Justin Rhodes, Bill McDonald, and David Heinicke. Park Staff provided and served light refreshments.

We need you at our general meetings, second Saturday of the month. August 13 and September 10 are the upcoming meetings.

Offie Walker

BUDGET CUTS AFFECT BRAZOS BEND

The reduction in force at BBSP affected Dennis Jones, Resource Management. Dennis formed the Volunteer Organization in 1989 and has worked at BBSP as Interpretive Ranger, Assistant Superintendent and Resource Management. We wish Dennis well.

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JULY MEETING NOTES

President Offie Walker called the meeting to order on July 9. There were 14 volunteers and 3 staff present. The minutes were approved as posted. Thanks to Judy Strauss for dinner.

Staff reports are published elsewhere in the newsletter.

BUDGET:

Treasurer Dave Armstrong brought the financial report, which was accepted.

The following budget requests were approved:

- Mary Lockwood requested funds for patches and caps for volunteers. The funds will come out of the general fund.
- David Heinicke requested funds for refreshments for the Elm Lake Dedication ceremony, which will come from the Elm Lake fund.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

WOOD SALES: Chuck reported that wood sales are OK, considering the burn ban and heat. We can allow attended cookfires. Jim North, Jaci Elliott, and Jennifer and Curtis Parents have been bundling, but we still need help bundling. We also need to split some wood. The splitter needs a repair part which should come in the next week or so; after that, we will start splitting more wood. We plan to switch back to pre-bundled wood in September for the fall rush.

GIFT SHOP: Chair Beth Debenport thanked all for the help. We are doing inventory and trying to keep up with sales.

BUILDING COMMITTEE: Chair Chuck Duplant reported that there will be a meeting August 13, open to all interested volunteers.

OUTREACH: Chair Judy Strauss reported there will be an outreach at Missouri City on August 6.

MEETING MEAL: Chair Judy Strauss asked for input on the meeting night meals. It has been suggested that we have three volunteers sign up; one for the entrée, one for the side dish and one for dessert. If no one signs up, we will have no meal and volunteers will be notified to provide their own meals if they want to eat before the meeting. Cindy Peterson, Rachelle Watkins and Chris Bishop volunteered to bring the August meal, and Linda Heinicke, Mary Lockwood and Offie Walker volunteered to bring the September meal. The October meal will be the picnic.

NEWSLETTER: Editor Anna Dell Williamson reported that the July newsletter will be posted tomorrow. The deadline for the August newsletter will be July 25.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mary Lockwood reported the George Observatory will sponsor Astronomy Day on October 8, and that will be a very busy event. TXDOT fixed the road from Hale Lake road to the observatory; it has not been packed down, so be careful driving on it. The Perseid Meteor shower will be Aug. 12. The Park will be open all night.

President Offie Walker appointed Dave Armstrong and Diane Carpenter to the Nominating Committee. They will present a slate of candidates at the August meeting, and the election will be in September. New officers begin their term in October.

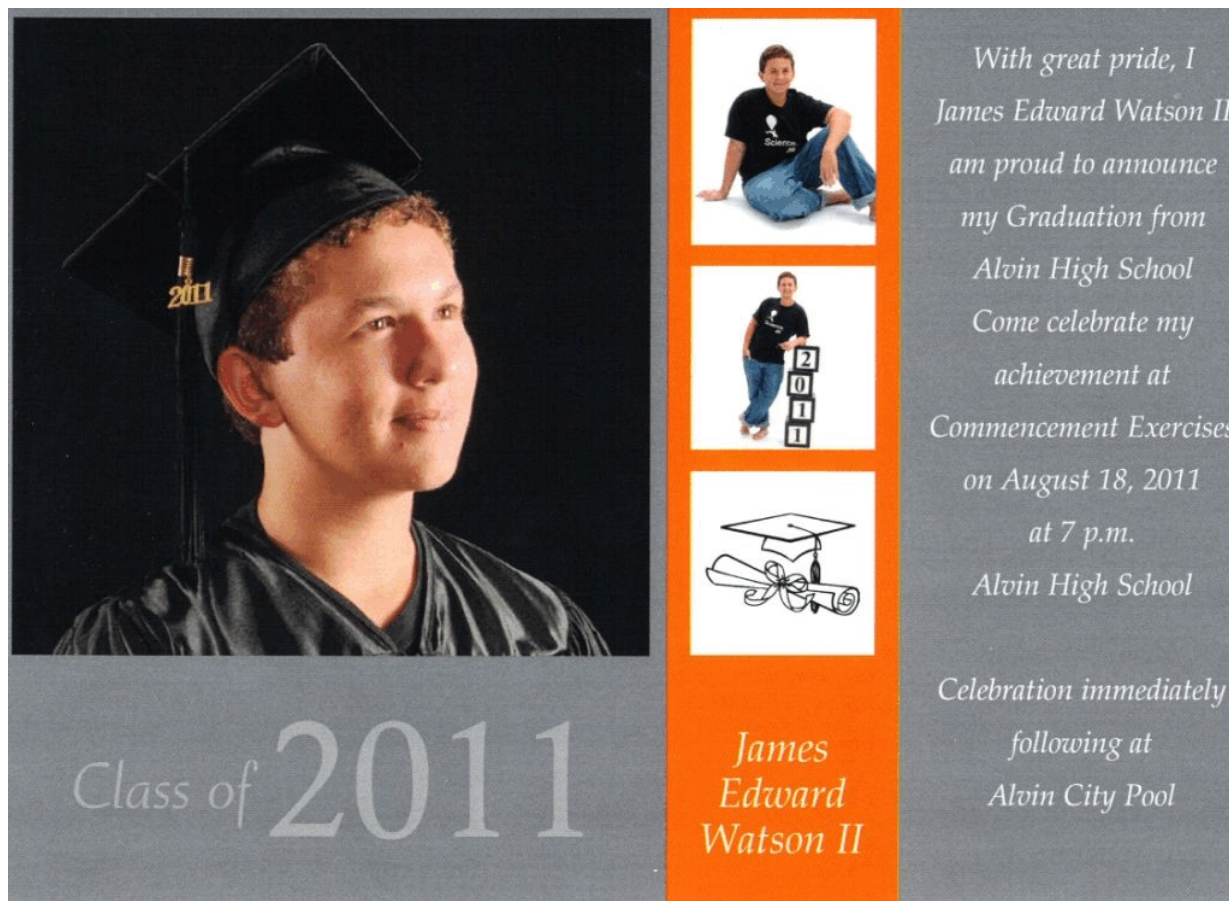
Offie announced that invitations to the Elm Lake Viewing Platform Dedication have been sent to the following elected officials: State Senator Joan Hoffman, State Representative Ron Reynolds, County Judge Robert Hebert, and County Commissioner Richard Morrison. Donors Kathrine McGovern, Jean Leach, and Ron and Margaret Morrison have been sent invitations also. This project was a joint venture between the Volunteer Organization and TPWD.

Offie and Dave will meet with Richard Morrison from precinct 1 to talk about BBSP and to keep him informed of our activities. This will be a good contact for future reference.

Next month Dave wants to discuss funds coming from Chevron employees.

James Watson will graduate from high school on August 18 at Alvin High School. Everyone is invited. See invitation in newsletter for details.

The meeting was adjourned.



*With great pride, I
James Edward Watson II
am proud to announce
my Graduation from
Alvin High School
Come celebrate my
achievement at
Commencement Exercises
on August 18, 2011
at 7 p.m.
Alvin High School
Celebration immediately
following at
Alvin City Pool*

*James
Edward
Watson II*

STAFF REPORTS



CHRIS BISHOP

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Chris reported that BBSP has been named among the best 10 campsites of the world by virtualtours.com!

The AmeriCorps crew is making good progress on water line to equestrian area. We have good quality workers who will be here until July 19.

Last month Chris mentioned looking for easy ways to improve the park without a great deal of expense. TXDOT will handle the funding to expand parking for the premium primitive camping.. Parking will double where it is now and they will provide additional parking along the berm near the Dining Hall. It will be asphalt and striped.

The Elm Lake Viewing Platform dedication will be July 23. Regional Director Justin Rhodes will emcee the event, and it is possible that someone from infrastructure will attend. A press release went out this week.

Steve and Richard worked out a deal to have TDC (Texas Department of Corrections) workers come out to help with some of our labor intensive projects. Plans are not final but the possibility looks promising.

We are working on a new formal sign for the park entrance. We have funding and a local vendor is working on it. We want something easy to maintain, attractive, and distinctively BBSP.

Internet towers are here, and installation may be in September, after we get resource clearance work. We are not sure where the towers are going. Internet access will be for staff and volunteers.

Headquarter restrooms are making progress and should be finished by July 18, and inspected by July 20. We are still working on the punch list for the two restroom buildings in the camping loops.

TPWD has installed backup generators on the waste water plant in Maintenance and on the water plant in front.

Regional Specialist Jimmy Watson requested a list of needed items and vehicle repairs, and Richard Taylor sent him a list of equipment and repairs needed. Region approved funding for many items, including a new windshield for David's truck.



DAVID HEINICKE

INTERPRETIVE RANGER AND LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

We found a home for the small refrigerator that was in the Gift Shop. Jim Calvert took it away.

The Thirteenth Annual 4th of July parade went well. Thanks to all who helped.

New Plexiglass was installed on the alligator exhibit – Offie Walker and Rich Jesperson helped. They dusted the inside also. Take a look at how nice it is

Elm Lake Platform Dedication will be at 6:30 PM on July 23. We will have refreshments. We are working on developing signage for the viewing platform, which will be paid for with leftover money in Austin. Signs should arrive in August.

Work on replacing the front desk in the Nature Center is in progress and should be completed by the end of July or mid August. We will be without a desk for only one day. Bruce asked about electrical outlets. They will be installed in the new desk for phone and rechargeable flashlight.



SHARON HANZIK
INTERPRETIVE RANGER AND VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Sharon is still interviewing volunteer candidates. We will have 14-15 trainees. Anna Dell will be contacting members for help. Training days are Sept. 10, 17, and 24.

The garage is very clean. Thanks to David for cleaning it.

The Volunteer Picnic will be on October 15 and there is no meeting scheduled for October.

Eco-explorers is going well. If you want to help, come on out.

There have been very busy weekdays this summer with 50 – 100 visitors in 4 hours. One of the AmeriCorps members, Hannah, wants to learn and assist wherever she can.

Alligator Bellowing

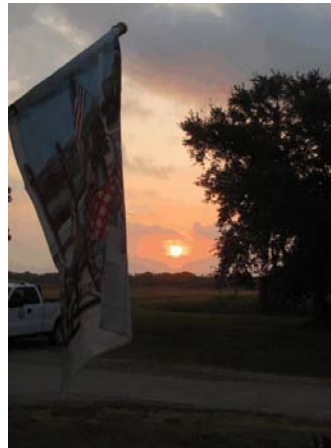
Haiku by Chris Bishop
photo by Ted Stevens



bull 'gator bellows
water ripples from his back
head and tail arched up

Prairie sunrise

Haiku by Chris Bishop
Photo by Sarah Bishop



pink sunrise skyline
light spills into the prairie
leaving me breathless

CONGRATULATIONS



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Sylvia Carrillo (Staff)
Jim Gilliam (Staff)
Eddy Grizzaffi
Lara Malone (VIT)
Frank Seay
Rob Thacker

AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

Ray and Dana Anderson
Jim and Lorena Calvert
Ron and Margaret Morrison
Laszlo and Lexi Perlaky
Frank and Stacey Seay
Bruce and Anna Dell Williamson

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Gary Bialas (Staff)
Jim Calvert
Ron Dearman
Allen Elster (Staff)
Barry Eversole (Staff)
Frank Gregg (Emeritus)
Christian Guzman (VIT)
Holly Haynes
Linda Oden Heinicke
Patty Henry
Tina Ibarra (Staff)
Mike Manley
Sammie Miller
Paige O'Neal

SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Dave and Gay Armstrong (1967)
Jaci Elliott
Kent and Debbie Fewell
Eddy and Sam Grizzaffi
Lisa Hacker VIT
Jim and Patricia Hiatt
Don and Marilyn Vossler (1966)

Rosemary Kennedy is our latest VIT to complete training.
Give her a big welcome to the organization.



SYMPATHY

Our sincere sympathy to Jeff McMullan on the death of his father on July 2.

Thank you!

to Judy Strauss for July meeting night dinner and for coordinating the dinners each month.

to Diane Carpenter for covering for Treasurer Dave Armstrong when he was in Colorado.

to Bill Godley for helping with the selection of the new spotting scope.

to the organization from Rachelle Watson for the cards and thoughts on the death of her father.

to those who work in the Gift Shop.

to Jo Ann Davis, Offie Walker, Sarah Bishop and Chuck Duplant for the pictures for the newsletter.

to Chris Bishop for sharing his poetry with us.

to Tom Prentiss who stepped up to present at Eco-Explorers when our presenter from Katy Prairie Conservancy backed out with short notice!

to Barry Eversol for the map of alligator nesting sites.

MEETING NIGHT DINNERS

by Judy Strauss

In an attempt to make it easier for volunteers to bring dinner for the Saturday night meeting dinners, we made some changes at last month's meeting. We now have 3 categories to sign up for on the regular calendar: the entree or main dish, salad or side dish, and dessert. You can sign up for one, two, or all three, whichever you prefer. Just remember to keep your receipts so that we are able to reimburse you for your food expenses.

We furnish the paper plates, napkins, eating utensils, glasses, ice and tea. We have two crock pots, and a heating plate that you can use if needed.

The dinners for August and September have been taken care of, and the volunteer picnic is in October, so it will be November, December, and so on that will need to be addressed.

In advance, thank you all so much for your contributions. This is a time for the volunteers to relax with one another and share their experiences of the day....or to just sit quietly and eat!

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions.

NATURE CENTER REPORT

JULY 2011

Below are the totals of the various activities and attendance recorded for the Nature Center, hikes, and programs for July 1-31, 2011. July brought lots of hot, dry weather and large weekday visitation.

PROGRAMS	TOTALS
NATURE CENTER ATTENDANCE JULY 2011 - 5,469 JULY 2010 - 4,683 JULY 2009 - 4,298 JULY 2008 - 4,484 JULY 2007 - 2,825 JULY 2006 - 3,339 JULY 2005 - 3,339	Saturdays (5) - 1893 High, 511 (7/23) Average: 379
	Sundays (5) - 1362 High, 323 (7/3) Average: 272
	Weekdays (21) - 2214 High, 284 (7/4) Average: 105
CREEKFIELD HIKES (11)	132
ALLIGATOR PROGRAMS (5)	68
SNAKE PROGRAMS (6)	181
CHILDREN'S STORYTIME (6)	66
OUTREACH (1)	54
WILDLIFE OBSERVATION (7)	199
ELM LAKE WILDLIFE PLATFORM DEDICATION	34
4 TH OF JULY BIKE PARADE	68
ECO-EXPLORERS & TADPOLES	
OTHER PROGRAMS (8) include birds, pond life, and Healthy Parks/Healthy People activities, new volunteer Open House, spotting scope, and mammals.	223
TOTAL VISITORS SERVED IN HIKES AND PROGRAMS	849
JULY PARK ATTENDANCE	13,283 day-use visitors 3,115 overnight visitors Total: 16,398 park visitors

ELM LAKE WILDLIFE VIEWING PLATFORM DEDICATION JULY 23, 2011



Steve Killian, Brazos Bend Park Superintendent



Ribbon Cutting. From l-r: David Heinicke, Offie Walker, Ron and Margaret Morrison, Bill McDonald, Justin Rhodes, Carrie Sample, Steve Killian, and Sharon Hanzik



Bill McDonald, Infrastructure Group in Austin



Justin Rhodes, Regional Park Manager



Crowd at Dedication



BBSP volunteers Carrie Sample and Offie Walker

INDEPENDENCE DAY BIKE PARADE

by David Heinicke

On Sunday, July 3, BBSPVO hosted the 13th Annual Independence Day Bike Parade at the park. Volunteers helped kids decorate bikes, rode in the parade, and served refreshments of lemonade, frozen pops and watermelon after the parade. The parade was about 2 miles long.



A parade participant in shades



Charles and Edith Carruth

TWPD NEWS

GEOCACHERS FIND THEIR WAY TO TEXAS STATE PARKS

The last weekend in June 24, eighty-eight state parks took part in the kickoff of the Texas State Park Geocache Challenge. Over 1000 participants logged their caches from the first weekend with estimates of over 50,000 for total participation over the course of the year. Parks from the Franklins to Caddo and Eisenhower down to Resaca welcomed visitors for the event. The challenge runs from the summer of 2011 through the summer of 2012. Participants may complete regional passports by visiting several parks within a given area. The completed passports may then be mailed to the challenge office for a special phone

number they can call to purchase a commemorative challenge coin. The first 25 participants to complete each regional passport receive a free coin. For more information and geocache coordinates, visit the challenge site at: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/geocaching/.

BBSP is one of the Challenge parks. Ted Bishop has been offering Geocaching 101 classes and will continue to provide instruction with the help of volunteers upon his return to BBSP in September. The classes are also intended to educate perspective geocachers that would be interested in using their new geocache skills to participate in the state wide geocache challenge.

Walt Bailey, Regional Interpretive Specialist conducted the Geocaching 101 class at BBSP at 9:00 am on Saturday, August 6 and 13.

QUICK THINKING FROM AIRPORT EMPLOYEE SAVES SUGARLAND TURTLES

Drying ponds at the Sugarland Regional Airport prompted dozens of turtles to cross a busy road in search of water. The TPWD Kills and Spills Team took 30 turtles saved by an airport employee and released them to nearby Oyster Creek. The airport pond, only a few inches deep, also contained several fish including gar, carp and bass. Water levels are being monitored.

ECO-EXPLORERS

by Carrie Sample
Photos by Jo Ann Davis

Eco-Explorers had its 4th year of success. Registration was once again closed in May. Many thanks to the volunteers who made it possible - Suzie Gann, Mary Lockwood, Jane Minard, Jerry Carpenter, Pat Marshall, Barb Tucker, Marilyn Vossler, Ethan Hoover, Jaci Elliot, Connie Waltrip, Jo Ann Davis, and Kylie Kramer. (I am sure I am leaving out someone, so my apologies and you were very appreciated!)

An extra big thank you to Sharon Hanzik and David Heinike who both did 2 sessions for Eco-Explorers, Suzie Gann who led one on first aid, and Mary Lockwood for doing one on water. Mary Ann Weber from the Houston Audubon Society did a presentation on owls. The Master Gardeners once again presented their insect program, and Jaime Gonzales from the Katy Prairie Conservancy did an amphibian program.

Last year we added Tuesday sessions for the younger children called Eco-Explorer Tadpoles. All of their programs were 'in house'. Sharon even brought in her mom's chicken that played the chicken dance for the kiddos!

This program takes a tremendous amount of time to put together, but the parents' and participants' appreciation makes it worth every minute!



Tadpole Program—Ethan Hoover



Tadpole Program—Carrie Sample



Tadpole Program—Jaci Elliot

JULY MAINTENANCE REPORT

Wood Yard:

Split and tied firewood

Mowing and Landscaping:

Watered Creekfield Forest Trees
Removed 4 burned, dead trees from prairie
Cleared downed tree at Headquarters

Trail Trimming and Trail Maintenance:

Pushed debris pile with tractor, cleared blowdown trees from Creekfield Forest Trail, cleaned area
Drilled post holes for Live Oak Trail bridge
Mixed cement, set posts on Live Oak Trail bridge
Trail trimming Creekfield Forest Trail

Equipment Maintenance:

Repaired broken handle on Stihl Chain Saw
Repaired air compressor at wood yard
Installed tie-downs in bed of 06 gator
Picked up sharpened chain saw blades

Construction Projects:

Drilled Post holes, install bulkhead for Creekfield platform approach
Filled approach to platform with trail material
Finished Creekfield platform

Pest Control:

Treated Chinese Tallow trees

Total maintenance hours reported 81.5.
The Maintenance Crew clocked 164 volunteer hours in June on various projects.

The Building of the Creekfield Platform



Creekfield Platform crew

Approach to the completed platform

ALLIGATOR EGGS

by Sharon Hanzik

Alligator eggs were collected from a nest on the south side of Creekfield Lake. That end of the lake has been dry for some time, and the mother has been seen traveling to the water hole at the north end. To save her the trouble and keep pigs from sneaking in, all eggs were collected (approximately 50).

We do not know when they will hatch. If you would like to be on the notification list, let me know. Once they appear to be ready, we can only hold off for a few hours. Let me know how to contact you.

On weekdays if there is no staff present, please check on them. You may chirp to them or just give the tub a gentle shake. If you don't hear a chirp in the morning, try again in the afternoon. If you hear a chirp, give us a call. I'll post our cell numbers on the wall above the nest. It is not an emergency, as they'll hatch on their own with or without us, but we'd like to give volunteers to opportunity to witness or participate.

Keep the screen cover on top so that anything hatching during the night stays in the tub.

Please do not bring visitors to see the eggs. You can show them an egg at the front desk.

ALLIGATOR NEST LOCATIONS

Barry Eversole (Game Warden - Fort Bend) has completed the annual alligator nest survey for Brazos Bend State Park. Sharon has sent out a map that Barry compiled of the nest sites from the last three years (2009 thru 2011). The table below shows the number of nests each year in the four areas included in the map.

LAKE AREA	2009	2010	2011
40-Acre Lake and Pilant Slough Trail	6	5	5
Elm Lake	10	13	17
Horseshoes	2	4	
Creekfield	3	1	2



JOURNEYS WITH JACI

Take Your Pick—Just Not in the Park

By Jaci M. Elliott

Not the table grapes we get from South America nor the European grape derivatives used in most wine-making, the Mustang grape of Texas is on my June fruit menu, second to those wonderful Hill Country peaches, if I can get hold of them. No, while the Mustang grape is not what you'd serve fresh with sliced cheese and crackers, it can be fashioned into some good jelly: a 3:1 ratio of grapes to sugar, which boils down to (literally) about a colander full of rinsed grapes to six cups of granulated sugar, a teaspoon of butter and a package of fruit pectin; first running the grapes through a blender and removing skins, seeds and anything else not resembling juice through a sieve, then bringing everything to a rolling boil, along with a few cups of water, and finally pouring the maroon mess into about five pint-sized canning jars.



Yes, these are those grapes we find splattered like spent fireworks on the sidewalk from the parking lot to the BBSP Nature Center. If you happen to find a fresh one—one that has eluded being previously crushed—you do get a satisfying explosion underfoot. Children visitors to the park been have been known to stomp on the grapes, not in the hopes of making wine, but rather to elicit a sort of bubble wrap pop. I, on the other hand, am reminded of the time, some thirty years ago, when my youngest sister (who now lives in Katy, TX) was going barefoot around our home pool in central Illinois and exclaimed, after extinguishing a wayward toad: “Oh, let it be a grape...please, let it be a grape!”

Picking Mustang grapes, as with other types of harvesting, is not permitted within any Texas State Park; however, these grapes are prolific in our area to the point of annoyance from my husband—he annually clears the vines from our fence line in Schulenburg, TX, to my repeated yet feeble protests, as I can always find grapes around the community parks in Missouri City.

This year's collection happened to combine my love of kayaking with grape-gathering for making jelly. Lake Olympia is a large-sized neighborhood body of water with one-third of its shoreline as yet undeveloped. I always take a trash bag with me to pick up the innumerable plastic bags and bottles and whatever else constitutes as trash that I can reach in the shallows. This particular outing in early June, I spied three beached beach balls, more than likely blown out of a residents' backyard or from the neighborhood pool. There they were, like colorful, giant bobbers under the low-lying willow branches, and all I could think of was some anthropomorphic alligators had cleverly lured me into their lair with the shining orbs.

But back to the grapes...as I paddled into one of the two quieter coves on the lake, I discovered hanging from the trees over the water several dangling vines laden with purple, marbled-sized grapes. They just called out to me. I carefully positioned my kayak under the first vine and stuck my paddle down until it stopped in the oozy silt, thereby anchoring my craft, and I slowly stood to reach the fruit, grasping small clusters and dropping them into my boat. *Plink, plink, plink*, I was reminded of the main character (handling a similar small, dark fruit) from the children's book, “Blueberries for Sal.”

What a sight I would have made standing there, for the two fishermen in their motorized johnboat, if they had only turned into my solitary cove. But they didn't, and I did make it to the boat launch with my three beach balls and bunches of Mustang grapes.

WHAT COUNTS?

There seems to be some slight confusion as to what counts for hours in the volunteer organization. Here are some guidelines to help you know what to turn in.

First, EVERYTHING counts and should be recorded and turned in to Sharon every month. Please make reporting your hours a priority. It is a very important part of your participation in the organization.

Second, you have to get 6 hours in the five quarterly requirements every three months: January to March, April to June, July to September, October to December, a total of 24 hours a year. These required hours may be fulfilled by working in the following areas in any combination: Gift Shop, Nature Center, Water Station, Wood yard, and Creekfield Hike.

Third, you have to get a total of 24 additional hours, in any area you wish, to fulfill your annual requirement of 48 hours. It is fine to turn in more than 48 hours a year. There is no limit as to how many hours you can work.

Now, what is "everything"? If you do anything at the park for the public or the organization, report your hours. That includes leading hikes, trail interpretation, spotting scope, presenting programs of any sort (which are also recorded on the clipboard behind the NC desk,) maintenance, headquarters assistance, committee meetings, monthly meetings, work in the five required areas, and probably a dozen things I've forgotten.

But what about reporting time if you're not at the park? Report it! This includes doing research at home to prepare a program or study up for other interpretive activities, helping on the newsletter (writing articles, helping with production, etc.), planning organization activities, participating in outreach activities, shopping for items for the gift shop or other areas, doing committee work, and any other activity that assists the park and/or the volunteer organization.

Travel time? Yes. Report your travel time to the park or to outreach activities or to anything else that relates to the park. Although travel time does not count toward your annual 48 hours requirement, it is reported to Austin and counts for the organization's total volunteer hours.

All hours are reported to Austin, whether they are the required quarterly and annual hours, or additional hours. BBSPVO is the premium volunteer organization in the TPWD system. and it is important to report everything you do so we can stay that way.

HUMMINGBIRDS

from www.hummingbirds.net

Ruby-throats begin moving north as early as January, and by the end of February they are at the northern coast of Yucatan, gorging on insects and spiders to add a thick layer of fat in preparation for flying to the U.S. Some will skirt the Gulf of Mexico and follow the Texas coast north, while most apparently cross the Gulf, typically leaving at dusk for a nonstop flight of up to 500 miles, which takes 18-22 hours depending on the weather. Although hummingbirds may fly over water in company of mixed flocks of other bird species,

they do not "hitchhike" on other birds. Some hummingbirds land on offshore oil rigs or fishing boats to rest. Individual birds may make landfall anywhere between southern Texas and central Florida. Before departing, each bird will have nearly doubled its weight, from about 3.25 grams to over 6 grams; when it reaches the U.S. Gulf coast, it may weigh only 2.5 grams. It's also possible that a few Ruby-throats island-hop across the Caribbean and enter the U.S. through the Florida Keys.

We still have many more questions than answers about hummingbird migration. Until technology provides radio transmitters small enough for a 3-gram hummingbird to carry safely, banding is the best tool to collect data on individual birds. But since only a few dozen people in North America - almost all of them amateurs - are licensed to handle hummingbirds, progress is slow and the odds of recapturing a banded bird are very low.

Q: How fast do hummingbirds flap their wings?

A: For small hummers like Ruby-throated, about 55 times per second. Normal flight speed is about 25 MPH.

Q: How long do hummingbirds live?

A: About 4 years on average. The record is 12.

Q: How fast do hummingbird wings beat? How do they move?

A: It depends on the size of the bird. The largest, the Giant Hummingbird, has a wingbeat rate of 10-15 per second. The fastest recorded rate was about 80 per second, on a tiny Amethyst Woodstar, and the slightly smaller Bee Hummingbird - the world's smallest bird - may have an even faster rate. Common small North American hummers like the Ruby-throated and Rufous average around 53 per second in normal flight.

How fast do hummingbird hearts beat? A rate of 1260 beats per minute was measured in a Blue-throated Hummingbird. In torpid hummingbirds, the heart rate can drop to 50-180 per minute.

Hummers are fully capable of traveling astounding distances on their own wings; it is generally accepted by scientists that most Ruby-throats fly non-stop across the Gulf of Mexico in the spring, and probably in both directions.

Ed. Note: Here at BBSP David Heinicke bands hummingbirds for the public to watch on weekends in September and October. Check the web site for the schedule.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 6	Geocaching 101, 9:00 AM
August 12	Perseid Meteor Shower, park open all night
August 13	Geocaching 101, 9:00 AM 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)
September 3	Amphibian and reptile photography Photo-walk, 5 PM.
September 5	Labor Day - busy day in the park
September 10	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)
October 1	Bird photography Photo-walk #3, 5 PM.
October 2	16 th Annual Butterfly Count
October 8	No regular meeting - see October 15
October 15	Annual Volunteer Picnic, 5:30 PM
October 21-22	Texian Market Days Outreach at George Ranch

IT'S HOT OUT THERE



August is still a very hot time of summer. Be sure to keep an eye on visitors and pets, staff, fellow volunteers and yourself for heat-related problems. Be very careful to drink plenty of water when out on the trails and working in the park. Take time to cool off periodically. Remember to keep the water station coolers full, carry extra water when you patrol the trails, and contact staff by phone or radio if you have a heat emergency.

The following information is compiled from three internet sources: www.MayoClinic.com, www.KidsHealth.org, and www.osha.gov.

Heat-related problems occur when the body is unable to cool itself by sweating. Heat-induced illnesses are heat stress or heat exhaustion and the more severe heat stroke, which can result in death.

Factors that lead to heat related problems include:

High temperature and humidity	Direct sun or heat
Limited air movement	Physical exertion
Poor physical condition	Some medicines

Signs and Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion:

Severe thirst	Fast, shallow breathing
Weakness and cool, clammy skin	Upset stomach or vomiting
Increased sweating	Ashen appearance
Mood changes such as irritability or confusion	Rapid, weak heartbeat
Headaches, dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting	

Symptoms of Heat Stroke:

Flushed, dry, hot skin with no sweating	Seizures or fits
Severe, throbbing headache	Weakness, dizziness
Difficulty breathing	Rapid heartbeat
Rapid and shallow breathing	Decreased responsiveness, mental confusion or losing consciousness

Preventing heat stress:

- Know signs of heat-related illnesses; monitor yourself, visitors and other volunteers
- Block out direct sun or other heat sources
- Use cooling fans/air conditioning; rest regularly
- Drink lots of water; about 1 cup every 15 minutes
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes
- Avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks, or heavy meals

What to do for heat-related illness:

CONTACT PARK STAFF IMMEDIATELY

- Move the person to a cool, shaded area
- Loosen or remove heavy clothing
- Provide cool drinking water or a sports drink containing electrolytes
- Fan and cool the person with water
- Lay the person down and elevate the legs and feet slightly

Be prepared:

- Always carry water for yourself and an extra for emergencies if possible.
- Carry a park map for visitors and use it as a fan
- Carry a cloth you can moisten to cool down the person.

Take care of yourself:

Drink water frequently

Stop and rest in the shade

Pay attention to your body and don't push the limits

OVER-HEATED PETS

We have recently received a communication from TPWD reminding us that pets, especially dogs, are very susceptible to dehydration and heat problems. We need to remind people that their dog may develop heat problems way before they do, and they should carry water for the dog, as well as for themselves. Volunteers provide water bowls for pets at the water stations.

Every year a frightening number of dogs suffer and some die from dehydration while hiking in Texas State Parks. Dogs do not tolerate high temperatures as well as humans do. They depend upon panting to exchange warm air for cool air. But with high summer air temperatures, cooling by panting is not an efficient process. It can be more than 10 degrees hotter on the ground. Your dog is down there feeling that extra heat, attempting to cool off by panting, but struggling to do so.

While you can wear a T-shirt and shorts in summer your dog wears a coat year-round, which is very hot. He does not have shoes on his feet, and he feels every bit of the heat coming off the ground. Avoid walking your dog on hot surfaces.

In addition to heat, inadequate conditioning can cause big problems. A physically unfit dog can be injured or even die on the trail. Dogs not accustomed to being outside or walking long distances will suffer while hiking with you in the Texas heat.

Dog owners must be extra sensitive to the needs of their four-legged friends because of the loyalty factor. A dog will follow you to the ends of the earth - even if it kills him. Remember to allow for frequent rest and water breaks, preferably in the shade, no matter how well-conditioned your dog is. Check his physical condition frequently.

Dehydration

Did you know that your dog can die from dehydration? It is much harder for a dog to recover from dehydration than for a human. Heat exposure and/or lack of water intake will create a situation that must be taken care of immediately. If the dehydration lasts for too long, your dog's organs can start to fail and he will die. Dogs dehydrate much more rapidly than people and need more frequent water breaks. Even electrolyte drinks like Gatorade help.

Warning Signs

1. Lethargy is an early warning sign - It tells you that there is something wrong
2. The skin loses elasticity as it loses moisture.
3. The eyes appear sunken and lack moisture.
4. The mouth appears dry. ... gums and nose are dry.

Dehydration is an emergency. If you think that your dog is dehydrated call your veterinarian right away. Dog dehydration treatment is directed at replacing fluids and preventing loss of fluids. Do not give the dog too much water. A severely dehydrated dog will start vomiting after a large amount of water intake. This will cause more fluid loss and make the situation even worse.

Brazos Bend State Park

Texas Parks and Wildlife
21901 FM 762
Needville, TX 77461

NEXT MEETING
SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 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

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Vice-President:	Mary Lockwood
Secretary	Linda Heinicke
Treasurer:	Dave Armstrong
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**