



GENERAL MEETINGS: 2ND THURSDAYS

7:30 p.m.

December 11, 2014

January 8, 2015

February 12, 2015

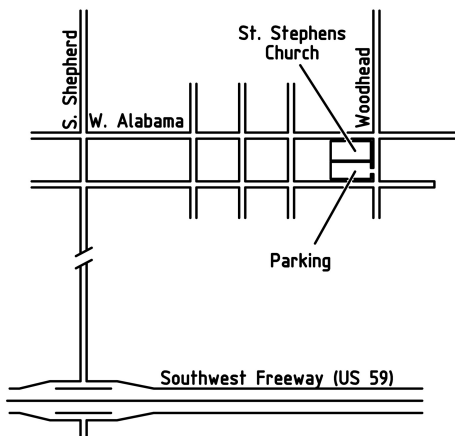
Doors open at 7:00 p.m.

St. Stephens Episcopal Church
1805 West Alabama

Enter one parking lot from Woodhead, the other from Sul Ross.

Before 7:00 PM, left turns to Woodhead are not allowed. If you are going west on W. Alabama, turn right at Dunlavy, then left to Marshall, then left to Woodhead.

Join us prior to the meeting for refreshments at the hospitality table and to visit the information tables for Forestry, Outings, and Inner City Outings. Find out how you can volunteer with us.



Map: Getting to the General Meeting

**GENERAL MEETING DECEMBER 11, 2014
ANNUAL AUCTION
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Our Annual Auction will take place this year at our December General Meeting on Thursday, December 11. This is one of the principal fundraising events for the Houston Group and features both a live and silent auction. All proceeds from the auction stay here in Houston to fund local conservation efforts and activities.

This is our annual auction. Please come and buy Christmas presents, art, camping gear, and other things.

We also need volunteers to help pick up donated items, or help promote and advertise the event. And we will need volunteers on the day of the event to help with a variety of setup tasks.

To donate, volunteer, or for more information about the auction, please contact one of the following: Frank Blake at frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896, Art Browning at art.browning@gmail.com, or Jen Powis at jenniferpowis@yahoo.com.

**GENERAL MEETING JANUARY 8, 2015
ELEPHANT AND RHINOCEROS
CONSERVATION
SPECIAL GUEST: RICK BARONGI**

In January, the Sierra Club takes an in-depth look at the conservation efforts for some of the world's most amazing creatures: elephants and rhinoceros.

Renown zoologist Rick Barongi, Executive Vice President of Conservation at the Houston Zoo, has spent countless hours in Africa studying these magnificent creatures, and is an expert in their conservation.

When he was the Director of the Houston Zoo and designer of



African Rhinoceros, By Andrew McMillan, via Wikimedia Commons.

Disney's Animal Kingdom, he was well known for his knowledge in zoological park management and exhibit design, but his passion is conservation of the world's great creatures. Come visit with us on January 8 at 7:30 PM and see that passion. From working in zoos from coast-to-coast, to extensive travels in Africa and South America, Rick has unique experience and insight to share. Best of all, he will share his insight in a special presentation free and open to the public.

Program starts at 7:30 p.m. Meet and greet at 7:00 p.m.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Executive Committee Election	Page 2
Trips and Local Outings	Page 4
Successful North Jetty Trip	Page 9
Big Thicket Outing	Page 10
Double Bayou Outing	Page 11
ANWR Outing	Page 11
Hudson Woods Outing	Page 13
Longleaf Pine Protections	Page 14
East Texas Wilderness	Page 15
Clear Lake and Galveston Bay	Page 16
Recycling Resources	Page 17
Sierra Club Calendars	Page 18
Bayou Banner Not Printed	Page 18
Volunteer Needs	Page 19
Regional Group Leaders	Page 20

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION

GEORGE BATTEN

My goals as a member of the Executive Committee have not changed in the fourteen years that I have served on that committee. They are to promote environmental education and environmental justice. The youth and adult outings programs offer one avenue to the former. We must continue to inform the public at large of environmental problems and solutions, and to work to have the solutions applied. I want to continue to contribute to management of the Sierra Club and to mitigating the multitude of environmental problems facing the Houston area, the nation, and the world so that our descendents will inherit a comfortable living space. The changes occurring in our state and national governments make this work important because of the potential for damage by the forces in control. For me, the work does not stop at the Executive committee. Although I no longer edit the Bayou Banner, I plan to contribute articles to it occasionally. I have served on the ICO, Outings, and Political committees. My outings activities have been limited for the last few years — I hope that changes soon — but in the past they included leading ICO weekend outings every year, and coordinating the nine Houston Sierra Club bus or air trips to locations in west Texas and New Mexico. I have made environment-related presentations to governmental bodies. Involvement in these activities has given me a broad view of the purposes, resources, and operation of the Sierra Club.

ART BROWNING

I am a retired professional geologist and have been a member of the Sierra Club for the past twelve years. I have always enjoyed the outdoors. I grew up in eastern Tennessee, where I hiked, canoed and camped often, both as a Boy Scout and on family trips there and elsewhere. For eight years during the 1990s, I worked with the Boy Scouts of America as a Den Leader, Cubmaster, and later as an Assistant Scoutmaster and Unit Commissioner in Rising Star District of Sam Houston Council. Where I live now in northwest Harris County, our house backs onto Cypress Creek; partly because of this physical connection, I am keenly interested in preserving and enhancing the natural state of that watershed in particular.

I am an active member of the Green Party (GP), and have served both on the Steering Committee of Harris County Green Party (HCGP) and on the State Executive Committee of the Green Party of Texas (GPTX). My name was on the ballot as the GP candidate for Texas Railroad Commissioner in 2010, when I garnered more than 72,000 votes statewide; In both 2012 and 2014, I put my name on the ballot as the GP candidate for state representative in District 130; otherwise only the incumbent's name would be on the ballot for that office, so I provide an option for progressive

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION
Continued on Page 3

SIERRA CLUB BALLOT

Statements by candidates for the next two-year term on the Executive Committee of the Houston Group of the Sierra Club appear on this page. Please read them, then vote by checking the boxes by their names.

Write your membership number on the ballot.

Clip and mail the whole ballot by December 31 to:

The Election Committee Sierra Club
— Houston Group
P. O. Box 3021
Houston, TX 77253-3021

or bring this ballot to the General Meeting on December 11 and drop it in the ballot box.

Vote for up to 4 candidates.

Joint memberships are allowed double votes.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | George Batten |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Art Browning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Patsy Gillham |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Melanie Oldham |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Stephanie Thomas |

Membership Number:

Membership Number 2 (if double votes):

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION

Continued from Page 2

voters. Finally on the GP front, I am in my second decade as co-producer of Greenwatch, a fortnightly public access TV program sponsored by HCGP; we frequently host guests to speak about environmental issues.

I have served on the Houston Regional Group Executive Committee for the past four years, and became chair this past January; I am finishing my second year as group representative on the Lone Star Chapter Executive Committee. My goals as a member of the Executive Committee are to (1) do more outreach, such as public speaking and attending community meetings for the club, (2) monitor and encourage governmental agencies charged with protecting our environment and natural resources, (3) preserve a part of the great outdoors by working with organizations and people interested in creating and maintaining greenbelts along the creeks and bayous of the Houston area, (4) work to save our wetlands and waterways and clean air for Houston and the surrounding areas.

PATSY GILLHAM

I have been working for Texans for Clean Water since 2010.

I am interested in expanding my working knowledge and activities towards Zero Waste and water quality issues. I am most informed about plastic bags, polystyrene, and refundable deposits on beverage containers. I would consider myself an environmental entrepreneur and believe that merging corporate need for profit and environmental issue solutions, will show that there is money to be made in conservation, preservation, and education of sustainable and profitable partnerships in managing energy, water, and waste. Serving in this position will give me the opportunity to learn how Sierra does what it does.

MELANIE OLDHAM

I'm interested in being on the board of the Sierra Club in Houston because of several reasons:

I live in Freeport, Texas which has DOW Chemical's world's largest complex, which is expanding with 4 new plants, as well as having BASF, Shintech, the notorious Gulf Chemical and Metallurgical Co and many other smaller chemical plants. In addition, Freeport is home to the Freeport LNG plant that is trying to expand and is close to construction. Southern Brazoria Co has so many public health/environmental problems/issues that I would like to be involved more with the Sierra Club for us to work on common issues/share information.

I'm a physical therapist and an unpaid public

health/environmental advocate who started a local group Citizens for Clean Air/Clean Water in Brazoria Co in 2006 and we meet quarterly even though attendance varies. However, our group did assist citizens who spoke out against Gulf Chemical and Metallurgical Co and last year was fined \$7.5 M by the Texas AG. I'm presently helping citizens in Freeport and on Quintana island who have been opposing the expansion of Freeport LNG who plans to export a lot of our natural gas and will increase fracking in Texas shale areas.

Since 2004 I have gone to Austin many times and testified in front of the Environmental Regulation Committee at the capitol about bills that will affect Brazoria Co and other areas in Texas and while at the capitol have met advocates with the Sierra Club and many other environmental groups.

I would like to be a part of a board that could brainstorm together and continue to organize and educate and support the public re: public health/environmental issues.

STEPHANIE THOMAS

Stephanie Thomas first got into nature at the age of 5, walking about the hills in eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, then the rolling prairie landscape of Nebraska with her older brothers and her father, an avid hiker. Her love of nature has carried on throughout her adult life, expressed through her training as a geologist, her many outdoors adventures at home and abroad (including camping in Antarctica with a field expedition!) and through her environmental advocacy through membership in Sierra Club and involvement with Houstonians Against Tar Sands, among other national and local, grassroots environmental organizations.

Stephanie's goals as a member of the Board of Directors will be to: (1) continue to provide space for Houstonians to reconnect and engage with nature in meaningful ways through hiking, camping, and community; (2) raise awareness and promote action on the dangers of fossil fuel extraction and consumption and its impact on community health and the health of the land, water, and atmosphere; (3) work for the reduction of plastic waste and access to recycling throughout the greater Houston area; (4) create opportunities to develop a renewable and sustainable future for Houston and (5) have fun! Stephanie firmly believes that joy is one of the keys to creating a healthy future for ourselves and for the planet.



TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

OUTINGS UPDATES

See the outings calendar on our Meetup site:
www.meetup.com/Houston-Sierra-Club-Outings
for possible additions to schedule.

Also, outings information is available at our website
<http://houston.sierraclub.org>

HEADS UP 2015!

Look for updates on the following local activities at our website, *Bayou Banner* online, and Outings Meetup website:

- Annual Yard Sale, usually scheduled during May
- Big Bend National Park Service outing, probably in March or April
- Local State Park service outings: Davis Hill State Park and Sheldon Lake State Park
- Backpacking & camping classes; Outings Leader Trainings
- ICO (Inspiring Connections Outdoors) Outings for kids
- Regional and local environmental issues

BACKPACKING BASICS COURSE

Dates: Early 2015, date coordinated with participants

Have you ever wanted to really experience the less traveled sections of a national park or a wilderness area, miles from civilization? Or have you ever been interested in backpacking, but didn't know where to start? You can take the first step by enrolling in the Houston Sierra Club's backpacking course. We plan to schedule a new class early in 2015. The class will be posted to the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site when a date is confirmed. This class will focus on backpacking equipment (with samples), clothing, water, and food preparation with handouts. The material covered in the class is also useful for those primarily interested in car camping.

The cost of the class is \$30. It is recommended that you do NOT purchase equipment before the class — you may find that you paid good money for something that you don't need. For more information, or to sign up, contact Frank Blake at frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896.

NOTICES

Sierra Club is a California non profit corporation, with "California Seller of Travel" registration number: CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the liability waiver before you choose to participate on an outing, please go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms>, or contact the Outings Department at the national Sierra Club office at (415)-977-5528 for a printed version.

OUTINGS CALENDAR

Dec 6 - Canoe/Kayak - Cypress Wonderland
Dec 6 - Hike - Little Lake Creek Wilderness Area
Dec 6 - Work Day - Marysee Prairie
Jan 10 - Hike - Brazoria County National Wildlife Refuges
Feb 7 - Work Day - Marysee Prairie
Feb 7 - Service - Katy Prairie
March 7 - Work Day - Marysee Prairie
March 14 - Hike - Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge
April 4 - Hike - Roy E. Larson Sandylands Preserve

ADDITIONAL OUTINGS

We will likely schedule additional day outings. Please check the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup website and/or the group website for new listings and updates. If you sign up at our Meetup site you will receive an email notice when we post new outings.

Some outings we are considering are:

Lake Houston Wilderness Park
Sheldon Lake State Park
Memorial Park – forest trails
Buffalo Bayou – new trails, new bridges
METRORAIL tour – sights along the Red Line

OUTINGS LEADER TRAINING

Dates: Early 2015, Arranged with participants; no cost

We are always looking to maintain and expand our pool of outings leaders.

Our leader training (OLT 101) provides participants with the background requirements for leading a Sierra Club outing in the field. This class is a qualification to become an asst. leader or leader on our air/bus trips, or to sponsor local day or weekend outings. Besides gaining rewarding personal experience, our leaders and trip organizers make an important contribution by creating opportunities for others to experience and enjoy the natural world.

And some trips generate donations for the Houston Group, helping to support local conservation activities.

If you have an interest in becoming an outings leader, contact Frank Blake, frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896.

Each class is approximately 2 hours long, and dates are coordinated with participants.

TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

Service

MARYSEE PRAIRIE WORK DAYS

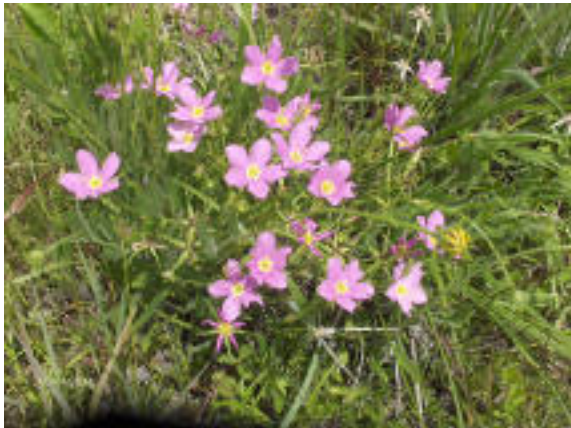
First Saturday most months fall through spring.

Saturday, December 6, 2014

Saturday, February 7, 2015

Saturday, March 7, 2015

(no January work day)



Meadow Pink on the Marysee Prairie, By Frank Blake



Controlled Burn on the Marysee Prairie, By Frank Blake

The Marysee Prairie is one of the last remnants of tallgrass prairie in the Big Thicket region. Come assist the Texas Land Conservancy in this ongoing effort to revive and maintain the native grasses and wildflowers on this site near Batson, Texas. Work tasks vary by month, but usually involve controlling the regrowth of woody species and keeping the prairie clear for mowing. Tools provided. Check the Meetup site for updates. For more information and to confirm work dates, contact Tom Maddux at 936-697-3425, or Frank Blake at frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896.

Canoe/Kayak

CYPRESS WONDERLAND CANOE/KAYAK

Saturday, December 6, 2014

Experience the maze of lakes and shaded, winding bayous deep within the heart of the largest cypress forest on the Texas coast. This is one of the most scenic paddling destinations in this part of our state, and it is located only 30 miles east of Houston.

Depending on the water and weather conditions, we will focus on one or more of the area's many features: wildlife, river processes, Texas history, and the impact of human interventions.

Participants must provide their own canoe or kayak, life jackets (required to be worn), and paddles. The trip leader can help you with advice regarding gear rentals from Houston area outfitters, if needed.

Paddling time: 4-5 hours, plus breaks for sightseeing and lunch.

Difficulty: moderate to strenuous.

Recommended donation to the Houston Sierra Club: \$10.

Trip size is limited. To register, contact Tom Douglas at baymail@sbcglobal.net or (713) 869-6026. A detailed trip information sheet will be sent by email to registered participants.



Cypress Wonderland, Wes Cove, By Richard Cunningham

TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

Hike

LITTLE LAKE CREEK WILDERNESS AREA CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF WILDERNESS

Saturday, December 6, 9 a.m.

On Saturday, December 6, 2014, join the Houston Sierra Club as we walk on the Lone Star Hiking Trail in the Little Lake Creek Wilderness Area in Sam Houston National Forest (SHNF). This hike celebrates the 50th anniversary of the passage of The Wilderness Act in 1964. We will enjoy beautiful early winter weather so blow the cobwebs off and come on out.

Bring your daypack, hat, water, lunch, binoculars, hiking shoes, camera, field guides, and clothes to fit the weather. Long pants are strongly encouraged. We should be back in Houston about 4 p.m.

We will meet to carpool/caravan at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot just west of Starbucks (look for Becks Prime) in Meyerland Plaza. Starbucks fronts the 4700 block of Beechnut (south side of Beechnut, near the West Loop South). Look for a Silver Honda Civic with lots of bumper stickers.

For those who want to meet us north of Houston, be at the SHNF District Ranger Office (394 FM 1375 West, New Waverly, Texas 77358) front parking lot by 9 a.m.

If you would like to come, you can sign up at the Houston Sierra Club Meetup site, call 713-664-5962, or email brandtshnfbt@juno.com. In case of trip cancellation you will be contacted.

For more information about wilderness areas, see "East Texas Wilderness Celebrates Wilderness Act's 50th Anniversary" on page 15 of this issue.



Trail to the Little Lake Creek Wilderness, By Carol Woronow

Hike

TRIP TO BRAZORIA COUNTY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

Saturday, January 10, 2015, 9 a.m.

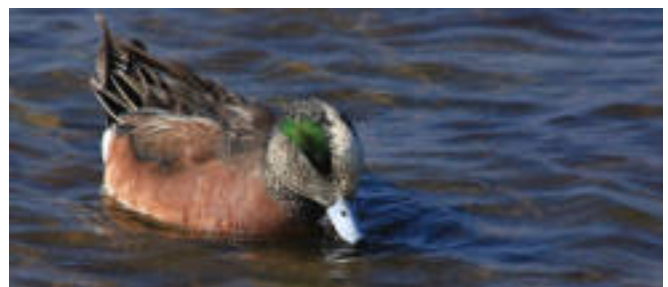
On Saturday, January 10, 2015, the Houston Sierra Club will visit Brazoria and San Bernard National Wildlife Refuges. The winter weather will make this visit very pleasant. We will look for wildlife of all kinds but particularly birds like shorebirds, songbirds, wading birds, ducks, and raptors.

Bring your daypack, water, lunch, hiking shoes, cameras, bug repellent, sunscreen, field guides, binoculars, spotting scopes, and clothes to fit the weather. Long pants are highly recommended. We will get back to Houston between 5 and 6 p.m.

We will meet to carpool/caravan at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot just west of Starbucks (next to Becks Prime) in Meyerland Plaza fronting the 4700 block of Beechnut near the West Loop South. Look for a silver-gray Honda Civic with lots of bumper stickers.

For those who want to meet us at about 9 a.m. at the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge's visitor center the directions are as follows: Go south from Houston on State Highway (SH) 288. Exit from SH 288 to SH 288 Business in Angleton. Turn left onto SH 288 Business and go south toward Downtown Angleton. At the intersection of SH 288 and FM 523 turn left onto FM 523. At the intersection of FM 523 and County Road (CR) 227 (Hoskins Mound Road) turn left onto CR 227 and go 1.7 miles to the refuge entrance.

If you would like to come, you can sign up at the Houston Sierra Club Meetup site, call 713-664-5962, or email brandtshnfbt@juno.com. In case of trip cancellation you will be contacted.



American Widgeon at the National Wildlife Refuge, by Marvin DeJong.
Courtesy of the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge.

Service



Snow Geese, By Linda MacPhee-Cobb [CC-BY-SA-2.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons.

KATY PRAIRIE SERVICE OUTING IN FEBRUARY

Saturday, February 7, 2015, 7:30 a.m.

On Saturday, February 7, 2015, join the Houston Sierra Club on a visit to the beautiful Katy Prairie. We will help the Katy Prairie Conservancy (KPC) on this service trip by either getting our hands “dirty” doing some nursery work with native grasses and wildflowers or some other fun activity at the Indian Grass Preserve and Field Office. The morning should be cool with a harbinger of spring in the air.

After our project we will enjoy birding, strolling, and just relaxing on the Katy Prairie. Bring your daypack, water (at least two quarts), lunch, hiking shoes, cameras, bug repellent, sunscreen, field guides, binoculars, and clothes to fit the weather. We should be back about 5 pm.

We will meet at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot just west of Starbucks (look for Becks Prime) in Meyerland Plaza. Starbucks fronts the 4700 block of Beechnut (south side of Beechnut, near the West Loop South). Look for a silver-gray Honda Civic with bumper-stickers on the back.

Contact Brandt Mannchen at the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site, 713-664-5962, or brandtshnfbt@juno.com. If there is any change in plans, Brandt will contact you.

For those who want to meet us at the KPC Indian Grass Preserve and Field Office at about 9 am, the directions are:

1. Go on Interstate 10 West past Katy, exit and turn right (north) onto Pederson Road, and then go about one-half mile to U.S. Highway 90.
2. Turn left (west) onto U.S. Highway 90, go about one-half mile, and then turn right onto FM 2855.
3. Go about 6 miles on FM 2855 and stop at FM 529. After you cross FM 529, FM 2855 is called Morrison Road. Go 1 mile and turn left. You will still be on Morrison Road.
4. Go 1 mile on Morrison Road and at the stop sign turn right (north) onto Pattison Road. Go 3 miles on Pattison Road and stop at Hebert Road. Turn left (west) onto Hebert Road.
5. Go 1 mile on Hebert Road to the KPC Indian Grass Preserve and Field Office entrance road. Turn left (south) onto the entrance road, drive 0.3 miles, and park in front of the Field Office.

TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

Hike

SIERRA CLUB VISITS TRINITY RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Saturday, March 14, 2015, 7:30 a.m.

On Saturday, March 14, the Houston Sierra Club will hike and see some of the best bottomland hardwood forests in East Texas at the Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge (TRNWR). Spring will be here and we may get a glimpse of some early wildflowers. Birds will be nesting, having families, and thinking of migration.

Bring your daypack, hat, water, snacks, lunch, binoculars, hiking shoes, camera, field guides, and clothes to fit the weather. Long pants are highly recommended. We will meet to carpool/caravan at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot just west of Starbucks (look for Becks Prime) in Meyerland Plaza. Starbucks fronts the 4700 block of Beechnut (south side of Beechnut, near the West Loop South). Look for a Silver Honda Civic with lots of bumper stickers. We will be back in Houston about 4 pm. If you would like to come you can sign up at the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site, call 713-664-5962, or email brandtshnfbt@juno.com. In case of trip cancellation you will be notified.

For those who want to meet us in Liberty, Texas at about 9 am the directions are:

- 1) Go west on I-610 South and then north on I-610 East across the Houston Ship Channel to I-10 East.
- 2) As you take the exit to enter I-10 East, instead veer to the left and take U.S. Highway 90 (Crosby Freeway) and go northeast.
- 3) You will cross the San Jacinto River, pass Crosby, and SH 146 in Dayton, Texas.
- 4) You will go east through Dayton, Texas (State Highway (SH) 146 will join U.S. Highway 90 at Dayton) and cross the Trinity River Floodplain on elevated U.S. Highway 90.
- 5) You will cross the Trinity River and then come into Liberty, Texas. Continue on U.S. Highway 90 through Liberty until you come to the McDonald's at Spur 227. Turn into the McDonald's and we will meet at this location about 9 am.

Hike

FOREST WALK IN ROY E. LARSON SANDYLANDS PRESERVE

Saturday, April 4, 2015, 7:30 a.m.

On Saturday, April 4, the Houston Sierra Club will hike at The Nature Conservancy's Roy E. Larson Sandylands Preserve near Silsbee, Texas. This unique part of the Big Thicket is found along Village Creek and has deep, sandy Longleaf Pine forests, desert-like yuccas and prickly pear, and many grasses and wildflowers. The beauty of the white, sandy, bluffs, overlooking the tannin-stained waters of Village Creek, is breath-taking. Photographers should have a great time.

Bring your daypack, hat, water, snacks, lunch, binoculars, hiking shoes, camera, field guides, and clothes to fit the weather. Long pants are highly recommended. We will meet to carpool/caravan at 7:30 a.m. in the parking lot just west of Starbucks (look for Becks Prime) in Meyerland Plaza. Starbucks fronts the 4700 block of Beechnut (south side of Beechnut, near the West Loop South). Look for a Silver Honda Civic with lots of bumper stickers. We will be back in Houston about 5 pm. If you would like to come you can sign up at the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site, call 713-664-5962, or email brandtshnfbt@juno.com. In case of trip cancellation you will be notified.

For those who want to meet us at the Preserve at about 10 am the directions are:

- 1) Go east on I-10, cross the Trinity River, and exit to FM 563.
- 2) Turn left (north) onto FM 563 and go about 8 miles to FM 770.
- 3) Turn right onto FM 770 and go until you come to U.S. 90 (in Raywood).
- 4) Turn right (east) onto U.S. 90, go 100 yards, and turn left (north) and continue on FM 770.
- 5) Go on FM 770 about 15 miles to the blinking red light at State Highway (SH) 105/FM 770 in Batson.
- 6) After stopping at the blinking red light, turn right and go about 3 miles and turn left onto FM 770. SH 105 continues straight to Sour Lake.
- 7) Continue on FM 770 until you come to the town of Saratoga (about 5 miles).
- 8) Continue through Saratoga and go about 13 miles where you will dead-end into SH 326.
- 9) Turn left onto SH 326 and go about 3 miles until you come to U.S. 69/287 in Kountze, Texas.
- 10) Turn right onto U.S. 69/287 and go about 3 miles to SH 327.
- 11) Turn left onto SH 327 and go about 3 miles. After you cross Village Creek turn left into the parking lot.

TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

Service

NORTH JETTY BEACH CLEANUP

Saturday in Jan. or Feb., 10:00am-1:00pm
Exact date to be determined.
Check Meetup site for updates.

The Houston Group has adopted this stretch of beach as part of the Texas "Adopt-A-Beach Program". The North Jetty is a popular fishing, crabbing, and birding spot on the Bolivar Peninsula just south of the Audubon Society's Bolivar Flats Sanctuary. Because this site is heavily used, trash and litter have been a problem. Much of the trash, such as discarded fishing line and plastics, are hazards to area wildlife.

From Galveston we will take the ferry to Bolivar, watching for birds and dolphins on the way. It is interesting to visit the jetty in different seasons. In winter there is usually a flock of white pelicans close by. After the clean up, those interested can visit the Bolivar Flats Audubon Sanctuary or Anahuac NWR depending on the route taken back to Houston. We plan to return to Houston by late afternoon.

We may have a rendezvous point for those wishing to carpool from central Houston. For meet up times and complete details, contact Frank Blake, frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896..



North Jetty Beach Cleanup, By Frank Blake

SUCCESSFUL NORTH JETTY OUTING ON OCTOBER 25, 2014

By Frank Blake

We had a successful jetty clean up/ICO outing on Oct. 25, and look what we discovered on the beach!

We discovered the sign (not the kids).

We didn't know about this sign or when this sign may have been put up. We assume it is fairly recent.

Thanks to John Berlinghoff for the photos.

We also enjoyed some beach grown watermelon - can't get more 'local' than that.

This ICO outing was with Sanchez Charter School.



North Jetty Beach Cleanup, By John Berlinghoff



North Jetty Beach Cleanup Sign, By John Berlinghoff

OUTINGS AND TRIP REPORTS

BIG THICKET PRAIRIES REVEAL THEIR TREASURES

By Brandt Mannchen

As we turned onto County Road 2077 and headed the last quarter mile to Marysee Prairie, Jane said, "Brandt it's 9 am; you are right on time." I looked at my watch and said, "Almost on time, my watch says 9:02." And so it began. A fascinating trip to the Big Thicket on October 25.

There were already several cars parked and people waiting. We got out and walked over to the group and said hello. There was Ellen and Chris, Alex, David, Warren, Glen, Dave, Maxine, Tom, Jane, Nicida, and myself. It was an impressive group of eager outdoor enthusiasts. Nicida had her camera and soon became our official trip photographer.

Initially, besides saying hello, Tom and I talked about Marysee Prairie and how it had been saved in the early 1970's, how management had lagged and the prairie had almost been lost to woody plants in the 1980's, and how in 1991 Marysee had been transferred from The Nature Conservancy to the present-day Texas Land Conservancy and for 22 years volunteers, and a few paid staff, had cut, mowed, brush-hogged, burned, herbicided, and learned and educated others about the beauty and rarity of Marysee Prairie.

As we walked along and through the lush, thick, vegetation, I heard Glen say under his breath, if we can just get some early cool weather, the prairie will be ready to burn. I kept an informal list of what was blooming, even at this late date in October as we viewed the only prairie in the Big Thicket that had been protected, restored, and preserved, all 9.25 acres!

After about two hours we finally made our getaway and drove for about 40 minutes to the Hickory Creek Savannah Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve. We parked near a gate and walked in on a pipeline right-of-way. The fall flowers were blooming including Downy Lobelia, Gaura, Gerardia, and many others. Carnivorous sun-dews, tiny, red, deadly, jewels, glistened in the morning light. We saw and talked about the the upland Longleaf Pine-Bluestem forest (or should we call it a savannah) that grew and thrived with frequent fires. The different stages of Longleaf Pine, the grass stage, candelabra stage, and adults, were readily visible in this open, grassy, forest of long-needled pine trees.



Brandt Mannchen in the Big Thicket Prairie, By Nicida Maerefat



Can You Find the Predator Among the Sticks? By Nicida Maerefat

We then took off and in a few minutes were rolling up the road to the Watson Native Rare Plant Preserve. Pauline met and told us about how Geraldine Watson's dream of saving all the rare plants in east Texas and providing them and home so that people could learn about and appreciate them came true. We walked the scenic 10 acres, with Lake Hyatt in the background, on boardwalk and trail, from the top of the slope to the bottom, from seepage area to Longleaf Pine Savannah Wetlands. It was all beautiful and much of it was moist due to seepage of rainwater that flowed through porous sand and was held in place and guided out of the bottom of the slope by hard-pan clay.

By the time we finished our walk it was 1:30 pm and we were famished. We all piled into the cars and headed for Warren, about 3 miles away, and had a delicious lunch of gumbo, shrimp, catfish, and other delicacies. What a way to end the day! We were all fat, full, and happy as we drove back to Houston. Another successful Forest Walk, or should I say Prairie Walk, tucked into our memories. See you outdoors!!!

OUTINGS AND TRIP REPORTS

A FINE FALL DAY ON DOUBLE BAYOU

By Tom Douglas

Our day paddling the East Fork of Double Bayou on October 25 lived up to or surpassed all our expectations. For starters, we gathered at Double Bayou Park, where we were greeted by clear skies, no winds, and a temperature in the low 70s. Even though the group was large, everyone arrived at the pre-arranged meeting place, staged their gear at the put-in site, ran the morning car shuttle, and launched their boats in record time.

Part of the reason for our efficient launch schedule is evident in the video that was generously provided by Jerry Jones, president of Cedar Bayou Friends. That's Rea Inglis (light blue shirt and yellow life jacket) up on the bank, and Joe Coker (yellow shirt and orange kayak) out on the water. See the video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1kUBsaIWQs&feature=youtu.be>



Riding the Tide, By Linda Shead

Then, we headed down the bayou, riding the outgoing tide toward Trinity Bay. Making good time, we paddled through scenic pine forest and in among groves of oak trees, reaching our lunch stop in about an hour.



Baykeeper, By Tom Douglas

During lunch, we discovered just what an interesting group of paddlers this was. Many of them are actively involved in water-related activities: Texas Stream Team, Galveston Baykeeper, Texas Master Naturalist, and riparian workshops, to name but a few. The trip leaders,



Belted Kingfisher, By Linda Shead

Tom Douglas and Linda Shead, recounted stories of life along Double Bayou during years gone by, including how nearly everything had to be transported here by water, since bridges over some of the bayous weren't constructed until well into the twentieth century. Yet more history came to light during a brief stop at the end of Haynes Road, and, later, during a visit to the mouth of Double Bayou, near the community of Oak Island.



A Diverse Group, By Tom Douglas

Backtracking a short way to Job Beason Park, we loaded up our gear and ran the afternoon car shuttle. Several paddlers headed off for Halloween parties and other activities, while others lingered to enjoy locally-caught shrimp at a popular watering hole just downstream from the park. This was definitely a day to remember.



Blue Boats on the Bayou, By Tom Douglas

OUTINGS AND TRIP REPORTS

YOU'RE KIDDING ME: SEVEN EAGLES!!!

By Brandt Mannchen

On November 15, we arrived at the new bookstore at the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge for our Houston Sierra Club Outing. Gordon, Kristin, David, Michael, and Nicida all answered the call. It was cold but invigorating with our gloves and hats pulled on and our coats zipped tight. We were waiting for Courtney and Lynn. We found Courtney but no Lynn. We finally decided to start toward Shoveler Pond. We had barely rounded the first corner when sharp-eyed Michael saw two birds. A Eastern Phoebe and a Vermillion Flycatcher. What a treat!

Then we saw a Great Blue Heron, Northern Harrier, and Double-Crested Cormorant. Not bad for driving 100 yards. We were standing out in the road, cars pulled over to the side, when I saw a car approach us. I thought it would pass us but instead it tucked in behind our caravan. A man jumped out and as I walked toward him he started talking real fast.



Cormorants and Egrets, By Nicida L. Maerefat

I could hardly believe my ears. Eagles down the road dive bombing ducks and geese. Without further ado we wheeled our cars around and went looking for eagles. About a mile down, the marsh opened up on the left-hand side. I did not know if this was the place he referred to but we stopped. I got out of the car and began to look in the distance. I could see there were 1,000's of ducks, geese, and other birds sitting in the marsh.



Looking for More Birds, By Nicida Maerefat

I noticed a large, dark bird fly overhead while higher up V-formations of Snow Geese buzzed by. I said to Michael, "I think that was an immature Bald Eagle." Michael was not convinced although he conceded that it could have been. Then Lynn drove up.

Michael unloaded his spotting scope and we focused on the huge White Pelicans sitting far out in the marsh. Then an eruption of birds went skyward and it was at that time that we noticed large, dark, birds diving and soaring around the

panicked mob of geese and ducks. One, two, three, four, five, six, "Are you kidding me," seven Bald Eagles. The birds were working the ducks and geese, diving and scaring them into the sky so that they could search for hurt, sick, or wounded birds that would not flush. Dinner time for seven hungry eagles. What a sight and a treat for our eyes.

After a while we finally tore ourselves away from the eagles and headed down to East Bay. Michael commented on how many Meadow Larks and Killdeers we flushed. "You don't see these birds much anymore" he said. Their populations, as for most grassland birds, have crashed as humans destroy more and more of their habitat.



Juvenile Swainson's Hawk, By Nicida Maerefat

Down at East Bay we saw a Willet, Back-bellied Plover, White-tailed Kite, Ruddy Turnstone, and a bird that kept us guessing for about 30 minutes. I thought this raptor was an Osprey. However, Michael was not convinced and as we headed back toward Shoveler Pond the bird kept flushing just ahead of our cars. Finally, Michael decided that the hawk was a white phase of the Red-tailed Hawk called "Kriders Red-Tailed Hawk." That was a really good call. We were back on the road to Shoveler Pond when I abruptly braked the car. Within 10 feet of us, sitting on a fence post, was a tan colored hawk. We stared, gaped, and wondered what this was. Gordon snapped a few photos and we drove off to Shoveler Pond. After a lot of cogitating and a review of his checklist Michael said that we had just seen a young Swainson's Hawk that had not decided to migrate to South America. What a great find!

See YOU'RE KIDDING ME: SEVEN EAGLES!!! on Page 16

OUTINGS AND TRIP REPORTS

WHEN IT RAINS, SOMETIMES IT DOES NOT POUR

By Brandt Mannchen

After reconnoitering we hustled to our cars and were off! I needed to get away for awhile and this Houston Sierra Club outing to Hudson Woods in September was just the thing. We headed down south on State Highway 288 and within 50 minutes were entering the entrance to Hudson Woods, shedding the worries, anxieties, and stress from our “Big City” living.

There was Lilibeth, Nicida, Vicki, Julie, Sabina, Robin, Cyndie, Connor, and myself. The clouds looked threatening but the forecaster did not predict rain. However, just as we pulled into the parking area “raindrops started falling on our heads.” The rain was not heavy so we all got out, put on whatever rain gear we had, and headed out.



Hudson Woods Hikers, By Nicida Maerefat.

First, we looked at the dry oxbow, which I tried to convince people really did fill with water, although it had not held any for about 4-5 years. A buck deer flushed out onto a maintenance road and disappeared as quick as he had appeared. Signs of feral hogs were around and eventually we saw at least half a dozen. We began our dance down the trail, dipping and ducking, to avoid spider webs with large orb-weaver spiders attached. Several folks oohed and aahed about their golden beauty and took photos.

I showed off one of my favorite Live Oak trees, about five people with hands outstretched around, and we marveled about the native persimmons that were ripening on small trees. In another month or so, wildlife, raccoon, deer, opossum, squirrel, and many others would be tasting the sweet but astringent, fleshy fruit like a Thanksgiving or Christmas treat.

As we walked through the Columbia Bottomland woods (Live Oak, Hackberry, Water Oak, Pecan, all different kinds of trees) we saw Turk's Cap blooming with red crescent caps waiting for hummingbirds to come and get their fill of honey-like nectar. Meanwhile Giant Swallowtail Butterflies floated through the forest looking for a tasty meal, perhaps on a Frost Weed, Fire-wheel, Trumpet Vine, or morning glory.

Connor, all of seven years old, got excited when we surprised a young bull on the trail. Sometimes fences go down and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, caretakers of Hudson Woods (a part of the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge), has to get the owner to round them up.

Although mosquitoes kept up an insistent buzz, the trip was exhilarating and provided about 2.5 miles of good exercise and companionable discussions. We made it to Oyster Creek and paralleled the water for about one-half mile. Someone shouted about the funny, green, leathery balls we found on the ground (about twice the size of golf balls). We had found a rare, small, Black Walnut grove, always a treat with its pinnate patterned leaves waving above.

We finally hit the Power-line and then road and walked back to the cars. By that time we were all pretty exercised out and looked forward to lunch. So we drove about 20 minutes to downtown Lake Jackson and had a nice lunch with lots of interesting side conversations (Nicida had just returned from Peru!) before I eased everyone out to head for our final destination for the day.

Most people had not been to Sea Center, a combination fish hatchery, aquarium, and wetland operated by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. We were in luck! Within 10 minutes of our arrival we were led by a very able guide into the bowls of the



Brandt Mannchen Out On a Limb in Hudson Woods, By Nicida Maerefat

See WHEN IT RAINS, SOMETIMES IT DOES NOT POUR on Page 14.

NATIONAL FORESTS AND GRASSLANDS HELP PROTECT LONGLEAF PINE IN EAST TEXAS

By Brandt Mannchen

Recently, the National Forests and Grasslands in Texas (NFGT, the U.S. Forest Service in Texas), participated with other groups in efforts to protect the rare Longleaf Pine forest ecosystem in East Texas. Historically, Longleaf Pine stretched from the Atlantic seaboard to East Texas on about 70 million acres. Today about 2 to 3 million acres, much of it degraded, of Longleaf Pine forest ecosystem remains.

The first project consisted of the purchase of a conservation easement (the development rights) from Crown Pine Timber LP, for \$2.2 million on 4,785 acres in the Longleaf Ridge area near the Sabine and Angelina National Forests in Jasper, Texas. The Nature Conservancy and Texas A&M (Texas Forest Service) were collaborators on this project. The landscape where the conservation easement was purchased, via the federal Forest Legacy Program, contains not only Longleaf Pine trees but also spring-fed creeks, Catahoula rock outcrops, and bogs which have rare native orchids and pitcher plants.

The second project consists of a request by the U.S. Forest Service for funds from the U.S. Land and Water Conservation fund for fiscal year 2016 to acquire 4,510 acres of Neches River and Longleaf Pine forest ecosystems. These lands, if acquired, will provide ecological landscape connectivity, consolidate land holdings for more efficient management, and provide habitat for federally protected species like the Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Louisiana Pine Snake, and Louisiana Black Bear. The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club submitted a letter to the U.S. Forest Service in support of this proposed acquisition on September 15, 2014.

Keep your fingers crossed. With these acquisitions we are more assured of the continued presence and evolution of the Longleaf Pine and beautiful Neches River bottomland hardwood forests.



Pines in the Big Thicket, By Nicida Maerefat

WHEN IT RAINS, SOMETIMES IT DOES NOT POUR

Continued from Page 13

fish hatchery and found out more than we ever knew about saltwater fish and conservation of their habitat and populations. It was learning that was fun!

Then we spent some lazy time looking at all the Gulf of Mexico fish in the multiple aquariums (I like the biggest one with the Nurse Shark in it) and the touching pool where crabs, fish, and snails attempted to escape from our hands and the touch of our fingers.

Finally, to finish off the day, we strolled on the boardwalk to view the brackish and freshwater marshes that had been created to educate us about the importance of our wetlands and estuaries. A lone Rosette Spoonbill perched with its back to us as if to say, "I have seen plenty of you today!"

It was relaxing and I felt as if a ton of stress had been lifted from my shoulders. Finally, we all drove back to Houston happy, tired, and refreshed after our visit to Nature and Lake Jackson. I hope we get back soon. I hope you do too!



Brandt Mannchen and Connor in Hudson Woods, By Nicida Maerefat.

EAST TEXAS WILDERNESS CELEBRATES WILDERNESS ACT'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY

By Brandt Mannchen

October 30, 2014, was the 30th Anniversary of the designation of wilderness in our National Forests and Grasslands in Texas (NFGT). This is a historic occasion that we all should celebrate and enjoy. Too often we forget how difficult it was to get wilderness designated by the U.S. Congress in East Texas.

First, what is wilderness and why is it important? According to the Wilderness Act signed by President Lyndon Johnson on September 3, 1964 (50 years ago), "A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is ... an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled (uncontrolled and un-manipulated) by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain ... undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions ... generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation ...".

Wilderness is a place where humans do not call the shots. Nature calls the shots! We are one member in a community of life in wilderness. Humans enter wilderness with humility and not on our terms but on the terms that Nature sets. We have the opportunity in wilderness to reclaim our spirituality and connection to the other living things and non-living parts of Nature (the landscape, rivers, hills, etc.).

In 1972, responding to a message by President Richard Nixon to identify areas in the Eastern United States that had wilderness potential, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service – FS) began to inventory possible areas that would meet the provisions of the 1964 Wilderness Act. The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, working with a short timeframe, inventoried and recommended eight areas in the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation I (RARE I). The eight areas included Four Notch, Winters Bayou, Big Thicket Scenic Area (now called Big Creek Scenic Area), Caney Creek North, Caney Creek South, and Little Lake Creek in Sam Houston National Forest (NF); Big Slough in Davy Crockett NF; and Patroon Bayou in Sabine NF.

In 1977 a RARE II process was begun nationwide by the FS to respond to the requirements of the Eastern Wilderness Act of 1975 and due to pressure from conservationists and others because the FS had overlooked many millions of acres of potential wilderness in RARE I. Sixteen areas were identified in East Texas including Turkey Hill, Boggy Creek, Bounds Peninsula, Jordan Creek, and Graham Creek in Angelina NF; Harmon Creek, Four Notch, Big Woods, Big Creek, Winters Bayou, and Little Lake Creek in Sam Houston NF; Big Slough and Alabama Creek in Davy Crockett NF; and Chambers Ferry, Indian Mounds, and the Stark Tract in Sabine NF.

In 1979 the RARE II process was completed and the FS recommended three areas as possible wilderness: Turkey Hill, Big Slough, and Little Lake Creek (about 10,200 acres total). Three other areas, Chambers Ferry, Graham Creek (now called Upland Island), and Four Notch (about 18,000 acres), were recommended for Further Planning for possible future wilderness.

Because the FS recommendations were so disappointing, the Sierra Club and others pushed for a bill that would designate 62,000 acres of wilderness in the NFGT. This bill was introduced by Texas Congressman Bob Eckhardt. However this bill did not pass. In 1983 Texas Congressman John Bryant introduced a wilderness bill that would have designated ten wilderness areas.

In 1983 the FS conducted a workshop to re-evaluate the sixteen RARE II areas. The result of the workshop was that twelve areas would be considered for wilderness including Graham Creek (Upland Island), Big Slough, Indian Mounds, Jordan Creek, Turkey Hill, Chambers Ferry, Little Lake Creek, Four Notch, Alabama Creek, Big Creek, Stark Tract, and Winters Bayou, and four areas would be dropped from consideration.

As a result congressional action was renewed and a bill was introduced that would designate five areas as wilderness: Big Slough (3,639 acres), Upland Island (13,331 acres), Turkey Hill (5,473 acres), Little Lake Creek (3,855 acres), and Indian Mounds (12,369 acres). On October 30, 1984 the U.S. Congress passed a bill that created these five wilderness areas and President Reagan signed the bill into law soon thereafter. Due to boundary adjustments there are 38,667 acres of wilderness. These 38,667 acres are 6.06% of the NFGT. From the time the Wilderness Act passed in 1964, it took 20 years for conservationists and others to get wilderness approved by the U.S. Congress for the NFGT.

We all should celebrate and visit Big Slough, Upland Island, Turkey Hill, Little Lake Creek, and Indian Mounds Wilderness Areas. The Houston Sierra Club will visit Little Lake Creek Wilderness Area on December 6, 2014. You can also plan your own trip! Go to the NFGT website (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/texas/home>) and order maps for the particular wilderness areas that you want to visit. Also, order a forest map so you know how to get around the forest where the wilderness is. The forest map will show you the roads and highlight where the wilderness is in the forest.

Be prepared and go! Bring your lunch, water, day pack, hiking shoes, camera, field guides, binoculars, and clothes to fit the weather and enjoy the wilderness for a day or more. Go to the wilderness and hear its glad tidings. You will be glad you did!

YOU'RE KIDDING ME: SEVEN EAGLES!!!

Continued from Page 15

Finally, we took the road to Shoveler Pond and during and after we got there we saw Black-necked Stilts, Pied-billed Grebes, Black-bellied Whistling Ducks, Blue-winged Teal, Gadwalls, Mallards, Ruddy Dicks, Pintails, Coots, and Common Moorhens. But the best find was a group of Fulvous Whistling Ducks that swam and hung out with the Black-bellied Whistling Ducks.

We were almost through when a flock of birds in the distance caught our attention. I thought they were cormorants or some other common birds but Michael said look again. I scoped our the flock and found about 40 pink buttons in the air: Rosette Spoonbills! That made my day.

I could go on a long time about how we had a great, late, lunch of Mexican food in Anahuac or how we wandered on a boardwalk through a Cypress Swamp to view Lake Anahuac and a calling Red-bellied Woodpecker at the Visitor Center for Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge. But I would just be bragging.

You can't beat Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge, or any of our other wonderful coastal national wildlife refuges. That is why I am going back. Do yourself a favor and head on down. You won't be disappointed.

JOIN OUR NEXT OUTINGS

See the Outings pages in this issue, pages 4 through 9, and look at the Meetup page at <http://www.meetup.com/Houston-Sierra-Club-Outings>

Join us on our next outings. You won't be disappointed!



Brandt Mannchen and Group Enjoying the Big Thicket Prairie Outing, By Nicida Maerefat

GALVESTON BAY AREA SIERRA CLUB HOUSTON

GENERAL MEETINGS: 3RD WEDNESDAYS

Clear Lake Park - 5002 NASA Parkway
Bay Area Community Center (Blue Roof)

December 17, 2014

January 21, 2015

6:30 -9:00 PM

CLEAR LAKE AREA MONTHLY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2014

The December meeting is our Holiday Party. For further information, contact Grace Martinez at gracemartinez7@earthlink.net

CLEAR LAKE WALKERS

Every Saturday morning at 7:30, rain or shine

Some Bay Area Sierra Club members and friends meet weekly for a three-mile walk, conversation and breakfast. Much of the walk is along the water and we often see a variety of shore birds.

Where: Nassau Bay, meeting in the Dollar Store parking lot across from the Post Office.

Contact: Betty Armstrong at 281-333-5693.

Editor's note: The Clear Lake Walkers have been active for 21 years. 🌍

BIKE TRAILS COMMITTEE

A bike trails committee was started to explore enhanced hike and bike trail connectivity in the Bay Area. The three folks doing this are Debra Goode, Richard Lee, and Doug Peterson. They are brainstorming and investigating breaks in existing trails and systems where it is hazardous to travel by bike, and identifying some of the variables for implementation, other interested parties, local government, sources of funding, etc. Contact Debra Goode at 281-280-9944 if you are interested in participating. 🌍

NOTICE

Galveston Bay Area Sierra Club Houston (acronym GBASCH) is part of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club (also called the Houston Sierra Club — acronym HSC). HSC is so large - over 100 miles in diameter - that It is useful to provide local organization of activities for members in outlying areas. GBASCH does that by planning activities and holding general meetings in the Galveston Bay area. These are open to all HSC members. 🌍

RECYCLING

GREENSPOT DROPOFF FOR E-WASTE

By Frank Blake

The Houston area now has expanded e-waste recycling options. There are currently over thirty (30) free drop off sites at various storage facilities throughout the city that participate in the GREENspot DROPOff Program. For GREENspot locations, just do an online search for Dropoff Houston, or visit <http://dropoff.houstontx.gov>.

Electronics often have hazardous components, and with the mounting volume of disposable e-waste, it is important to keep those materials out of the waste stream and out of the environment.

Here are some examples of everyday items that can be recycled with GREENspot: televisions, fax machines, computer monitors, DVD Players, laptops, VCR / Beta, keyboards, cables and cords, printers, radios, computer mice, stereo components, hard drives, tape and zip drives.

Residents dropping off e-waste at a GREENspot affiliated storage location site will be directed where to place the material. Once enough material is accumulated, CompuCycle, a certified e-waste recycler, will go by and pick up the material and take it to their facility for processing.

About GREENspot:

GREENspot's mission is to divert electronic waste from landfills, provide a free recycling location within 5 miles of every American, give back to the community through their GREEN2 program and to educate the general public on the dangers of e-waste.

RECYCLING SPOTLIGHT ON... NORTHWEST SOMMERMEYER NEIGHBORHOOD RECYCLING CENTER



In the northwest, the Sommermeyer Neighborhood Recycling Center accepts stoves, refrigerators, and tires, in addition to the usual aluminum, paper, glass, and cardboard. It's at 14400 Sommermeyer, Houston, TX. For a map of locations in Houston, see www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling_map.html

RECYCLING RESOURCES

CITY OF HOUSTON RECYCLING

The City of Houston has several drop off sites (some are specialized for certain items), and provides curbside recycling in many neighborhoods. Principal drop off locations are the Westpark Consumer Recycling Center at 5900 Westpark, and the self-serve site at 3602 Center Street in the Heights. For other locations and a complete list of recyclable items, consult the City's recycling web page, phone the City's 311 hotline with recycling questions, or connect to

www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling.html

BELLAIRE RECYCLING COMMITTEE

This group has a useful website, with a variety of information on recycling activities in the Houston area. Committee phone line is 713-662-8173. bellairerecycles.org/index.html.

Huntsville

The City of Huntsville's recycling facility — north of town on the I-45 access road — takes cardboard, paper, tin and aluminum cans, glass, used oil, plastics, and has a warehouse for reusable donated construction materials (doors, windows, tile, wood etc). One employee is available Monday-Friday to help you unload; it is self-service on Saturday. The web site is http://www.huntsvilletx.gov/residents/trash_and_recycling/recycling.asp.

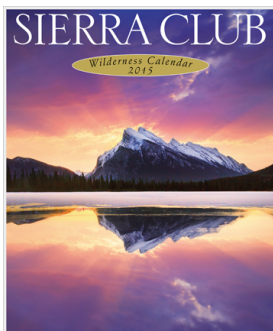
Pearland Recycling Center

5800 Magnolia Road in Pearland, Texas, 77584, 281-489-2795. Takes most recyclable wastes: PC's, TV's, plastics, bottles, cans, paper, etc.

More available at <http://www.h-gac.com/>, especially at <http://www.h-gac.com/community/waste/resources/>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

2015 SIERRA CLUB CALENDARS

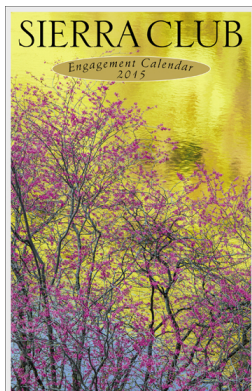


Wilderness Wall Calendar

Best seller for over 34 years.
All the grandeur of the North American wilderness.

Engagement Calendar

Most popular nature calendar ever published.
Stunning images of flora and fauna.
Week-by-week format with 57 full-color photographs.



Available at the monthly General Meeting sales table. If you are interested in volunteering for calendar consignment sales, or need information about the calendars, contact Lorraine Gibson at 281-384-4104 or raineygib@aol.com.

The station with much for Sierrans:

Explorations, Tuesdays, 5:00 AM
Eco-Ology, Wednesdays, 3:00 PM
Democracy Now (with Amy Goodman),
7:00 AM and 5:00 PM, weekdays.
Progressive Forum (with Wally James)
Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 PM

Of course there is news:
BBC News, 6:00-7:00 AM and 8:00-9:00 AM
KPFT local news, weekdays, 4:00-5:30 PM
Bird Note, 9:58 AM... at the end of
Open Journal, 9:00-10:00 AM

And lots of music, especially on the weekends.

You can see the program schedule at

www.kpft.org

RSS and ATOM web feeds, and
PODCASTS are available.

Revised March 31, 2014

CREDITS

Some photos in the Bayou Banner are public domain photos provided by the National Park Service, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, or Wikipedia. All photos are used by permission, and the photographer is given credit, where known.

THE BAYOU BANNER (PRINTED EDITION) HAS ENDED

The Bayou Banner has ended printing and distribution by conventional mail. The issue of June-July, 2014, was the last issue for which paper copies were mailed to members.

A PDF copy of the newsletter, letter-sized, suitable for printing yourself, is available at the website of the Houston Sierra Club

<http://lonestar.sierraclub.org/news/>

Also, outings, trips, and other activities are posted on our Meetup site

meetup.com/Houston-Sierra-Club-Outings

and we have a facebook page for discussion of environmental issues

facebook.com/HSCenvironment

The primary reason for abandoning mailed paper copies was the cost. For the last few months the cost of printing, addressing, and mailing paper copies to about half of our members (the others get it on the Internet) was over \$1,000 per issue. Since the Houston Sierra Club gets nothing (that's "zero") from dues paid to the National Sierra Club, all funds supporting local operations must be raised by local activities (outings, trips, the yard sale, the auction, etc.), but the amount these activities bring in has fallen in recent years, so it seemed best to cut expenses such as mailing paper copies of the Bayou Banner.

If you do not receive email notices of the availability of the *Bayou Banner* online, you should sign up on the Email Alert/Announcement List (see page 20).

Some activities shown on the Announcements pages are not managed by the Houston Sierra Club.



The ant seen on these pages is the fictitious *Sieromeymex houstonensis*, drawn for and named after the Houston Sierra Club by world-famous biologist E. O. Wilson.

BAYOU BANNER

Newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club

Volume 38, Number 12

December 2014-January 2015

houston.sierraclub.org • [facebook.com/HSCenvironment](https://www.facebook.com/HSCenvironment) • www.meetup.com/Houston-Sierra-Club-Outings

The Bayou Banner is the newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club. It is published 6 times a year by the Houston Sierra Club.

Circulation is 5,000 copies: about 2,500 are mailed, and 2,500 are delivered electronically to members; some are distributed through other outlets.

EDITOR: Carol Woronow

Email: BayouBanner@gmail.com Website: <http://houston.sierraclub.org>

Opinions stated are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Houston Sierra Club.

Copyright © 2014, Houston Sierra Club. All rights reserved.

Reprinting in whole or part is expressly forbidden, except by written permission of the publisher.

The Sierra Club — Houston Group • P.O. Box 3021 • Houston, TX 77253-3021

VOLUNTEER NEWS AND NOTES

MONTHLY MEETINGS

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING

Second Thursday monthly in Pecore Hall of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1805 West Alabama. Enter parking lot from Woodhead. The meeting opens at 7:00 p.m., and the program starts at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

Before 7:00 p.m., left turns are not allowed at Woodhead. If you are going west on W. Alabama, turn right at Dunlavy, then left to Marshall, then left to Woodhead.

CONSERVATION

Second Tuesday monthly, 7:00 p.m. Meet in the H-E-B food court at West Alabama and Dunlavy. Contact Evelyn Merz, 713-644-8228, elmerz @ hal-pc.org. Come early (6:30) and grab a bite to eat.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Fourth Thursday monthly, 7:00 p.m.
Contact Frank Blake frankblake @ junio.com.

INNER CITY OUTINGS (ICO)

Meeting times and place to be determined. Please contact Lorraine Gibson at 281-384-4104 or raineygib@aol.com for more information.

OUTINGS:

Usually the third Monday of the month, 7:00 p.m., at the Whole Foods store on Bellaire near Wesleyan. Help us plan regional day outings, weekend trips, and air/bus trips to exciting outdoor destinations across the country. Please call to confirm meeting date. Frank Blake, 713-528-2896, frankblake@ junio.com.

WANTED - YOUR STORIES

Have a story about a great outing?

Want to promote an environmental issue close to your heart?

Did you take some spectacular photographs during your hike last month?

Have you discovered a great place to recycle your trash or treasures?

Send your stories, photos, and links to local issues to the Bayou Banner editor at HSCBanner@gmail.com.

JOIN THE SIERRA CLUB

Just go to our web site
<http://Houston.sierraclub.org/>
and click on
Join or Give/Membership Benefits

For a limited time:

Only \$15
Get a FREE rucksack
See it online

Part of your payment
comes back to support the
Houston Sierra Club

RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP

The Houston Sierra Club gets a small part of your membership renewal fee (the rest of it is used by the National Sierra Club and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club). The amount passed to the Houston Sierra Club is more if you use a credit card and renew online through our website than if you mail a check.

EXCOM ELECTIONS IN DECEMBER

Although paper copies of the Bayou Banner will no longer be mailed bimonthly to members, club bylaws require ballots to be mailed by December. Therefore, a paper version of the December-January issue of the Bayou Banner will be mailed to members.

That issue will have ballots for election of members of the Executive Committee of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club. Candidates can be suggested by any member of the club.

If you did not receive a paper ballot, you can use the ballot on page 2 of this issue.

Remember to write your membership number on the ballot.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED TO HELP WITH THE HSC WEBSITE

We need a couple of people to assist the webmaster with posting material to the Houston Group website. This normally requires a few hours per month. For more information, contact the webmaster at

houston.webmaster@lonestar.sierraclub.org.

The Bayou Banner is the newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club. It has been published 6 times a year, in odd-numbered months, but that is changing. See the Group's web site for the latest information (<http://houston.sierraclub.org>). Current circulation is 5500 issues sent to members and distributed through various outlets.

CURRENT EDITOR: Carol Woronow.

SUBMISSIONS: The deadline to submit articles is the 15th day of the month before the date of the issue in which the articles are to run (for example, articles for the September/November issue must be submitted by August 15) — but articles and information is welcome at any time. The online Bayou Banner will be posted on the first day of the month (for example September 1).

All submissions must have the author's name, and contact information even though it will not be printed. All photos must identify the source and have proof of permission to use (or link to the policy of royalty-free photos). Articles may be edited for clarity, accuracy, and space considerations. Opinions stated are those of the author and not necessarily that of the Houston Sierra Club.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Telephone 415-977-5633 or send address changes to Sierra Club Membership, PO Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322, or via email to address.changes@sierraclub.org.

Include both old and new addresses and allow 6 weeks for delivery of the first issue. Please DO NOT CONTACT THE EDITOR FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

VOLUNTEER NEWS AND NOTES

HOUSTON SIERRA CLUB EMAIL ALERT/ANNOUNCEMENT LIST

Subscribe to the Houston Sierra Club's email alert list to get timely alerts on Houston area conservation issues, and occasional announcements of interest to Houston Sierra Club members. Whenever you want to drop from the list it is easy to unsubscribe yourself—those instructions are included at the bottom of each message sent out on the list.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Send FROM the email address to which you want to direct the messages.

Subscribe by sending TO:

LISTSERV@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG

Subject: [this line may be left blank]

Message Body:

SUBSCRIBE LONESTAR-HOUSTON-

ANNOUNCE FirstName LastName

(Insert YOUR name in place of "FirstName LastName")

That's it. You will receive confirmation messages from the listserve. Thanks for your interest.

If you need assistance in locating the instructions or in signing up for the email list, please contact Frank Blake at frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896.

Since the Houston Group will not be mailing out the *Bayou Banner* on a regular basis, one option for getting information on Club activities is this Houston Group EMAIL ALERT LIST.

Note: There is the possibility that we may produce some sort of periodic newsletter in the future that could be mailed out to those members specifically interested in subscribing.

The December-January issue may be mailed because of the Executive Committee ballots.

HOUSTON REGIONAL GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Art Browning (Chair) (Lone Star Chapter Delegate)	art.browning@gmail.com
Jim Williams (Vice Chair)	ezz@pdq.net
Lorraine Gibson (Treasurer)	raineygib@aol.com
Page Williams (Secretary)	page.williams@gmail.com
George Batten	BayouBanner@gmail.com
Frank Blake	frankblake@juno.com
Grace Martinez (GBASCH Director)	gracemartinez7@earthlink.net
Evelyn Merz (Conservation Committee Chair)	elmerz@hal-pc.org
Jen Powis (Alternate Lone Star Chapter Delegate)	jenniferpowis@yahoo.com

REGIONAL GROUP LEADERSHIP

Banner Editor	Carol Woronow	HSCBanner@gmail.com
Beach Cleanup	Frank Blake	frankblake@juno.com
Conservation	Evelyn Merz	elmerz@hal-pc.org 713-644-8228
Conservation Subcommittees		
Air Quality	Brandt Mannchen	brandtshnfbt@juno.com 713-664-5962
Coastal Issues	Page Williams	page.williams@gmail.com
Energy and Global Warming	Jim Williams	ezz@pdq.net
Forestry and Big Thicket	Brandt Mannchen	brandtshnfbt@juno.com 713-664-5962
Recycling	Frank Blake	frankblake@juno.com
Watershed	Evelyn Merz	elmerz@hal-pc.org 713-644-8228
Hospitality	Carol Lee	713-523-2294
Inner City Outings	Lorraine Gibson	raineygib@aol.com 281-384-4104
Lone Star Chapter Delegate		
Art Browning		art.browning@gmail.com
Membership	John Berlinghoff	johnb@hal-pc.org
Outings	Frank Blake	frankblake@juno.com
Political	Doug Peterson	dougpeterson@earthlink.net
Programs	Joe Lengfellner	thatsjoesmail@yahoo.com
Webmaster	houston.webmaster@lonestar.sierraclub.org	
Galveston Bay Area Sierra Club Houston	Grace Martinez	gracemartinez7@earthlink.net

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

1. Explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth.
2. Practice and promote responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources.
3. Educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment.
4. Use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

