



**GENERAL MEETINGS: 2nd
Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.**

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. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. Find out how you can volunteer with us.



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. Going west on W. Alabama, turn right at Dunlavy, then left to Marshall, then left to Woodhead.

**GENERAL MEETING APRIL 14, 2016
HOUSTON AUDUBON**

Spring is blooming all over the city and the birds are busy preparing for migration and nesting. Houston Audubon High Island Sanctuaries are open and full of both birders and birds. These sanctuaries along the upper Texas coast are critical stopovers for migrants as they make the journey across the Gulf of Mexico. Purple Martins and Chimney Swifts are also returning to the area. These birds are in steep decline to the north. Houston Audubon monitors both species at a variety of locations around the city. Learn more about the spring birding season, and Houston Audubon, on Thursday, April 14, when the Sierra Club welcomes Mary Anne Weber, Education Director for Houston Audubon.

For those that can't wait, you can learn more birding news on the Houston Audubon website:

www.houstonaudubon.org.

The Sierra Club meeting is free and open to the public.

The meeting is at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, corner of West Alabama and Woodhead.

Main program begins at 7:30 p.m. (Open for a social period before the program at 7:00 p.m.)

**GENERAL MEETING MAY 12, 2016
SOLARIZE HOUSTON**

If you've been curious about solar power options for your home, but are concerned about the initial infrastructure costs, our May 12 Sierra Club meeting is for you! Steve Krebs, from Solarize Houston, will explain a new option Houstonians might consider - a group purchase of solar systems. Group solarizing slashed installation costs by 30% in Portland and reduced upfront costs by \$1,590 per project in New York State. Solarize Houston, a non-profit, will collect consumers and businesses that are interested in installing solar systems and use that scale to negotiate volume discounts from installers in competitive bids. "This is win-win for consumers and installers," says Krebs. "Enrollees are NOT obligated until installation costs are known, the site evaluated and design finalized and they enter into a contract with the selected installer." Solarize Houston receives nothing. "Consumers receive all savings. Houstonians get a free option to see the cost of solar and learn about whether solar works for their site and budget before paying anything." Learn more about Solarize Houston on Thursday May 12.

The Sierra Club meeting is free and open to the public.

The meeting is at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, corner of West Alabama and Woodhead.

Main program begins at 7:30 p.m. (Open for a social period before the program at 7:00 p.m.)

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TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

OUTINGS UPDATES

MEETUP

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

OUTINGS CALENDAR

Also, outings information is available at our website
www.sierraclub.org/texas/houston/outings

OUTINGS NOTICES ON MEETUP

Visit the Houston Sierra Club Meetup for notices of outings and updates to outings.

Join the Sierra Club Outings group on Meetup to get updated information about local outings, meetings, and events.

<http://www.meetup.com/Houston-Sierra-Club-Outings>

View the list of outings and events without joining, or join Meetup to get emails about events coming up, and updates to events. You can let the Outings leader know you are coming, so you can be informed of any last-minute changes or cancellations due to weather.

You can view the Outings in a Calendar format, or as a list. Click "Upcoming Meetups" in the left column. Then click the "Calendar" tab, just under "Welcome!"

You can also post photos from outings and view the photos from others.

The Outings and Events on Meetup are updated all the time, not only every two months like the Bayou Banner.

Bike

BIKE RIDE OUTINGS

Check our Meetup site for dates:

<http://www.meetup.com/Houston-Sierra-Club-Outings>

We periodically schedule bike rides in various parts of town to try out new trails, explore specific neighborhoods, and visit unique Houston sights. We typically limit group size to simplify logistics and provide everyone a safer and better experience. Some planned destinations are the East End, downtown, Buffalo Bayou trails, Heights, etc. Usually the rides are two or so hours long and moderately paced.

OUTINGS LEADER TRAINING

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.

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.

If you have an interest in becoming an outings leader, or want more information, contact Frank Blake, frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896. Each class is approximately 2 hours long, and dates are coordinated with participants.

Service

MARYSEE PRAIRIE WORK DAYS

First Saturday most months fall through spring.

Check Meetup site for possible dates, and for updates.

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.

NORTH JETTY BEACH CLEANUP

Usually Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Check Meetup site for possible dates, and 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.

The ferry crossing to Bolivar is usually a great opportunity to observe dolphins and brown pelicans. It is interesting to visit the jetty in different seasons. To sign up, contact Frank Blake, frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896 (e-mail preferred). Additional details will be emailed to participants.

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.

TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

Service

April Introduction To Artist Boat's Coastal Heritage Preserve Saturday, April 3, 2016, 8:00 a.m.

On Sunday, April 3, 2016, join the Houston Sierra Club and the Houston Chapter of the Native Prairie Association of Texas (HNPAT) for a service outing and introduction to Artist Boat's 548 acre Coastal Heritage Preserve on Galveston Island. Artist Boat is a conservation organization whose mission is to promote awareness and preservation of coastal margins and marine environments via science and arts.

We will get an educational introduction to this fabulous coastal prairie and Galveston Bay preserve and will help restore wildlife habitat via removal of Macartney Rose, treatment of fire ant mounds, and work in the plant nursery.

We will enjoy the sunny and breezy spring "Island" weather as we work. Lunch and water are provided! Bring your daypack, water, hat, field guides, binoculars, cameras, comfortable hiking shoes, and clothes that fit the weather. Long pants are highly recommended. There are great opportunities for nature photography.

We will meet at 8:00 a.m. in the parking lot just west of Starbucks (near Becks Prime) in Meyerland Plaza. Starbucks fronts the 4700 block of Beechnut (south side, near the West Loop South). Look for a silver-gray Honda Civic with bumper stickers. To sign up go to the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site, call Brandt Mannchen at 713-664-5962, or email Brandt at brandtshnft@juno.com. For those who want to meet us at Artist Boat's Coastal Heritage Preserve at 10:00 am the directions are:

1. Go South on Interstate 45, cross Galveston Bay, and enter Galveston Island.
2. Exit right onto the 61 Street feeder road and turn right onto 61st Street.
3. Go south on 61 Street about 1 mile and turn right onto Jones Road.
4. Follow Jones Road as it curves and runs into Stewart Road.
5. Follow Stewart Road about 5.0 miles until you come to Settegast Road. You will first pass 8 Mile, 9 Mile, 10 Mile, and then Pabst Roads before you come to Settegast Road.
6. Turn right onto Settegast Road and just after the road turns left, turn left into a parking lot with a metal gate (13330 Settegast Road, Galveston Texas 77554). The gate has a banner that says, "The Coastal Heritage Preserve". We will meet in the parking lot where there are trash cans and a restroom.

Hike

April is for the Birds in the Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary Saturday, April 30, 2016, 7:30 a.m.

On Saturday, April 30, 2016, join the Sierra Club as we bird in the beautiful Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary (LTNS). Owned by the Outdoor Nature Club, the LTNS has been protected from logging for over 60 years. We will be in "peak" migration season and will look for the many songbirds that migrate through our forests as they head for their nesting homes farther north. We will also enjoy the blooming wildflowers and diverse hardwood and pine forests, spring-fed creeks, and meadows of LTNS.

Bring your daypack, hat, water, snacks, binoculars, hiking shoes, camera, bird field guides and apps, and clothes to fit the weather. Long pants are highly recommended. We will bird until about 1 p.m., and then will go into Cleveland, Texas and enjoy lunch.

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.

You can sign up on the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site, call 713-664-5962, or email Brandt Mannchen at brandtshnft@juno.com and leave your name, phone number, and email. In case of trip cancellation Brandt will contact you. The directions to the LTNS are:

- 1) Go north on U.S. 59 to Cleveland, Texas.
- 2) Get off at the FM 2025 exit and turn left (northwest) on FM 2025.
- 3) Go northwest on FM 2025 about five miles until you come to FM 945.
- 2) Turn left (west) onto FM 945.
- 3) Go approximately 10.2 miles on FM 945. On your right you will pass Butch Arthur Road.
- 4) Continue on FM 945, beyond Butch Arthur Road, another 0.7 miles.
- 5) Turn right onto a grassy two-track road and then turn immediately left and drive 30 yards to a metal gate with 2001 on it. This is the gate to the LTNS.

TRIPS AND LOCAL OUTINGS

Hike

Sierra Club Visits Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge

Saturday, May 7, 2016, 7:30 a.m.

Join the Houston Sierra Club when we visit the Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge (TRNWR). Some of the best bottomland hardwood forests left in Texas are found in the TRNWR. Birds and wildflowers will be in abundance during this end of spring outing. We will hike a 6 mile trail system which has great views of the Trinity River.

Bring your daypack, hat, water, lunch, binoculars, hiking shoes, camera, field guides, bug repellent, 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.

Contact Brandt Mannchen via the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site, at 713-664-5962, or email him at brandtshnfbt@juno.com and leave your name, address, phone number, and email. In case of trip cancellation Brandt will contact you. For those who want to meet us in Liberty, Texas at 9 a.m. 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 pass the San Jacinto River, 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 9 a.m.

Hike

June Brings Hike in Turkey Creek Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve

Saturday, June 4, 2016, 7:30 a.m.

Join the Houston Sierra Club when we hike part of the Turkey Creek Trail in Big Thicket National Preserve. We will hike about 6 miles, from Gore Store Road to FM 420, and view Village Creek, Turkey Creek, cypress swamps, and upland pine forests.

Bring your daypack, hat, water (at least 3 quarts), lunch, binoculars, hiking shoes, camera, field guides, bug repellent, 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.

Contact Brandt Mannchen at the Houston Sierra Club Outings Meetup site, 713-664-5962, or email him at brandtshnfbt@juno.com. In case of trip cancellation Brandt will contact you. For those who want to meet us at the BTNP Visitor Center at 9:45 a.m. the directions are:

- 1) Go east on I-10 until after you cross the Trinity River (about 40 miles).
- 2) Exit and turn left (north) onto FM 563 and go 8 miles until you reach FM 770.
- 3) Turn right onto FM 770, go north on FM 770 until you get to Highway 90 in Raywood. Turn right onto Highway 90, go 100 yards, and turn left onto FM 770.
- 4) Go 15 miles on FM 770 and stop at the FM 770/State Highway (SH) 105 intersection in Batson (blinking red light).
- 5) Turn right onto SH 105/FM 770, go 6 miles, and then turn left onto FM 770 at its diverging intersection with SH 105.
- 8) Go on FM 770 through Saratoga until you come to FM 1003, turn left onto FM 1003, go 8 miles to the US 69/287 intersection.
- 10) Turn left onto US 69/287, go two miles, turn right onto FM 420. The BTNP visitor center is about 100 yards on your left.

OUTINGS AND TRIP REPORTS

HALCYON WEATHER BRINGS EAST SIDE OF SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL FOREST INTO FOCUS

By Brandt Mannchen

The weather was beautiful as we motored away from Houston. Cloudy but with the sun peeking through periodically with a slight wind to keep the 60 degree chill in the air. Then I saw that fateful road sign: “Freeway Closed in 20 Miles”. How could this happen when we were driving to meet other eager folks at 9 a.m. to do a tour on the East side of Sam Houston National Forest?

It was 15 miles, 10 miles, 6 miles, 4 miles, and then we were in the crawling morass of vehicles. We crept along hoping that the Grand Parkway construction on U.S. 59 would not hold us up too long. Luckily, in about 10 minutes, we were through and our three car caravan reconstituted itself before we got to Cleveland, Texas, turned onto FM 2025 and rolled onto our rendezvous at the convenience store at the intersection of FM 945.

We arrived exactly at 9 a.m. A miracle given the traffic jam we had just gone through. There were about 10 people waiting for us but I knew there were more that were also probably delayed and would be late. Everyone headed to the bathroom, to get a snack, and signed in and waited. Finally, about 30 minutes late all 27 of us got in our cars and headed north on FM 2025. This was a large group that I wanted to introduce to Sam Houston National Forest. We also had old-timers like Dave Wade with the Lone Star Hiking Trail Club and Allen Pape with the Lone Star Hiking Trail Conservancy who joined us for the day.

We first stopped at a roadside pull-off for the federally endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker. This cluster (where the birds live) was made up of large pine trees in an open canopy that had just been burned. We saw a cavity tree and heard about the “family values” behavior that results in young male birds staying with their parents and helping raise chicks for several years. The periodic burning keeps the shrubs and hardwood vegetation down so that tall, old pines are left for the bird to feed on.

We then took off and headed for Big Creek Scenic Area. We pulled into the parking lot and got ready for a short hike. We crossed a small, clear creek, near the beginning of the parking lot and then stood underneath American Beech, Southern Magnolia, White Oak, and other large hardwood trees. We found within a few steps the single leaf of the Southern Crane-fly Orchid and when this leaf was turned over we saw the deep, rich, purple hue that told us it was an orchid and not a neighboring greenbriar.

We wandered up the trail and turned right, looked at the trail sign, and turned left and followed the trail toward Big Creek. We stopped and looked at the lower slope at the floodplain of Big Creek and found out that later in the year this area would turn into a thick, rich, green fern-bed. We also smelled the leaves of Cherry Laurel and Red Bay and marveled at their distinctive and pleasant odors. I told everyone when I smelled these plants I drifted up into the air.

We admired Big Creek, a 6-10 foot wide, amber-colored sinuous stream. Watching Big Creek always makes me think of that Bob Dylan song where he sits down and watches “the river flow”. We headed up Pine Trail and watched for harbingers of spring. We found one! The beautiful, variegated tri-leaves of the Trillium, like green and brown camouflage, looked like tattered, tiny umbrellas. An unusual plant to find and usually indicative of a relatively undisturbed forest floor.

When we finished our hike in Big Creek Scenic Area we left some cars behind, carpooled, and took off to our next stop. We bumped along Forest Road 221 kicking up red dust as we drove. To our delight we met a two horse carriage with rubber tires, that was taking a Saturday ride along the road. We slowed down until the carriage passenger waved a red flag to signal we should pass, we slid by, and keep going.

Finally, we turned onto Forest Road 280 and then onto Forest Road



Big Creek Scenic Area Map of trails by Tisha Thurman



Brandt Mannchen explaining about baygalls in Sam Houston National Forest at a seepage creek by Tisha Thurman

See HALCYON WEATHER BRINGS EAST SIDE OF SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL FOREST INTO FOCUS on Page 6.

OUTINGS AND TRIP REPORTS

HALCYON WEATHER BRINGS EAST SIDE OF SAM HOUSTON NATIONAL FOREST INTO FOCUS Continued from Page 5

280D and the road got smaller and smaller until you could reach out and almost touch the nearby vegetation. We parked at a pipeline right-of-way and David talked about the Town Ant colony that was located right next to our cars. These ants had been very busy and large mounds of red soil were piled high. These mounds provided a home for thousands of ants that were out searching for seeds.

We looked at a former oil/gas well pad that was slowly recovering after many years as trees and grasses grew into the opening that once held a monstrous derrick. We talked about how drilling for oil/gas was allowed on our national forests and that the Sierra Club pushed the U.S. Forest Service to ensure that any well, pipeline, road, or other facilities constructed due to such development were done in the environmentally least damaging manner. Then we walked down the pipeline and turned right onto another pipeline.

Almost immediately we started down a steep slope to a tiny stream, about one foot wide. This, I told my fellow adventurers, was a seepage creek that flowed due to water that percolated through the sandy upland soils until it hit a deeper clay layer and then flowed horizontally and seeped out at the bottom of the slope. Here a unique plant community of Sweetbay Magnolia, Gallberry Holly, Black Gum, Red Maple, Southern Magnolia and rare orchids and saprophytic plants, like Nodding Nixie, grew. A giant "Old Southern Magnolia" towered over this area and provided a dark, shaded, canopy. The name of this unique plant community is "baygall" in honor of the Sweetbay Magnolia and Gallberry Holly that grows here.

We retraced our steps, hiked down Forest Road 280D, and turned left onto the Lone Star Hiking Trail. We followed the trail until it dropped into a valley where another, beautiful, clear, seepage creek flowed. We stopped at a bridge and admired the scenery. I encouraged everyone to get involved in the upcoming months as the U.S. Forest Service began its process to rewrite its current land management plan which has not been revised in 20 years. We need to continue the protection of sensitive places like this seepage creek.

We drove back to Big Creek Scenic Area, picked up the cars that we had left behind, and then drove to the Winters Bayou Scenic Area. As we drove we crossed the East Fork of the San Jacinto River and its floodplain, which flows south and empties into Lake Houston.

We arrived at Winters Bayou Scenic Area about 1:30 p.m. and I could tell everyone was getting a bit "restive" because they were hungry and we had not had lunch. I wisely kept my talk to a minimum and we walked past

Southern Magnolia, White Oak, Red Maple, fields of Palmetto, sloughs, and large Loblolly Pines until we got to the Winters Bayou Bridge. We watched the water flow down Winters Bayou for a short time and then hiked back.

We were through with our tour but then drove into Cleveland and had lunch at China One Buffet. There were many stimulating discussions at lunch and we sated ourselves with our late buffet lunch.

Finally it was time to go home. I was tired but felt my spirits uplifted. You can never go wrong taking a stroll through Sam Houston National Forest.

NOTE: More wonderful photos of this trip are on the Meetup pages. On Meetup, click Photos, then this trip. <http://www.meetup.com/Houston-Sierra-Club-Outings/photos>



Harvester ants have big cities, too, by Gary Stephenson



Recovering oil/gas well pad by Gary Stephenson

OUTINGS AND TRIP REPORTS

“CENTENNIAL FOREST” LONGLEAF PINE PLANTING A BIG SUCCESS!

By Brandt Mannchen

On March 12, 2016, the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club, Houston Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas (NPSOT), Houston Chapter of the Native Prairies Association of Texas, and many other participants helped the National Park Service (NPS) celebrate its 100th birthday by planting 9,000 Longleaf Pine seedlings in the Big Sandy Unit of Big Thicket National Preserve (BTNP).

Twenty plus Houston Sierrans showed up and along with other participants happily wielded dibbles (to make the holes) and toled ruck sacks filled with Longleaf Pine seedlings (to fill the holes) as we became “planting angels” and helped restore a Longleaf Pine forest in BTNP. A total of 100,000 Longleaf Pine seedlings will eventually be planted in the 300 acre restoration area. The Rose Verbena provided us with a showy pink celebration of Spring while we planted.

As we found out after planting, when the NPS took us for a short tour of a forest next door, where Longleaf Pine trees over 135 years old live, this 300 acres will be the future “Centennial Forest” in 100 years. As Ken Hyde, Chief of Resource Management for BTNP says, this is where “New Growth” meets “Old Growth”!

Why plant Longleaf Pine trees? The Longleaf Pine forest, from Virginia to Texas, originally covered from 60 to 90 million acres. Today only about 3 million acres (most of which is heavily degraded) of Longleaf Pine forest is left. BTNP has about 15,000 to 20,000 acres of potential Longleaf Pine forest habitat. The NPS will restore and will maintain this area so that rare species like the Texas Trailing Phlox and Louisiana Pine Snake and vanishing savannahs with prairie grasses and wildflowers will flourish. On our hike we saw Texas Trailing Phlox blooming and enjoyed the open and tall Longleaf Pine forest.

Early in the day, before we got to the planting site, things did not look good. By the time we got to Liberty we could see it had rained. As we drove north on State Highway 146, our cars were drenched! I was worried we would be rained out. But we persevered and when we arrived Ken Hyde was delighted to see us. He feared that no one would show on a morning when rain showers and severe weather forecasts were the norm.

I cannot thank Sierra Club and NPSOT members enough. A big “hello and bless you” to Lesley, Jane, J.R., Yong, Kristin, Gus, Elizabeth, Bruce, Sukanya, Vickie, David B., Cherry, Vic, Ana-Maria, Peter, Lynn, Regina, Ellen, Chris, Soyi, Samson, David W., and Song. If I missed anyone, shame on me! What a great and diverse group of volunteers. Each of you makes the Sierra Club what it is and our Earth a better place.



Ellen Strupp demonstrating the planting of Longleaf Pine seedling.

“IT’S THE END OF AN ERA”

By Brandt Mannchen

On February 9, 2016, Lorraine G. Bonney died in Chase, British Columbia, Canada, at the age of 93. Lorraine, along with her husband Orrin, was an original founder of the Lone Star Chapter and the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club. The Lone Star Chapter's highest award is named the “Orrin Bonney Award”. It could just as well have been named the “Lorraine Bonney Award”. Initially, in 1965, when the Lone Star Chapter was founded, there were no regional groups. Many of the original founders and volunteers of the Lone Star Chapter lived in the Houston Area like Brom Wilkin and Emil Kindshey. Lorraine and Orrin lived in Houston but also had a homestead in Conroe, Texas (“Happy Oaks”) that was forested, wild, and filled with wildlife.

Lorraine and Orrin were a team, partners. They argued like “cats and dogs” but were united in their love for each other, the wild country, and the need for a Sierra Club in Texas and elsewhere to protect and advocate for wilderness and wildlands.

Lorraine was born in the City of Edmonton in Alberta, Canada. She and Orrin met in Canada, and as the story goes, when Orrin, an attorney, saved Lorraine from severe injury or death in a fall while he was teaching a course in technical mountain climbing, in gratitude, as Lorraine said, she agreed to marry him. This was in the mid-1950's. They not only shared a love for mountains and mountain climbing but also wilderness and wildlands and had a summer home in Kelly, Wyoming, in the shadow of the Grand Tetons, which they willed to Grand Teton National Park after their deaths.

Lorraine was also an accomplished writer and wrote or co-wrote with Orrin many books including “The Grand Controversy” (about who first climbed the Grand Teton), “The Big Thicket Guidebook” (which literally took 40 years to complete and anyone who wants to explore the Big Thicket should not be without), “Battle Drums and Geysers” (about the first army expedition to Yellowstone), “The Teton Range and Gros Ventre Range”, “Bonney's Guide to Jackson's Hole and Grand Teton National Park”, “Yellowstone Park and the Absaroka Range”, and other books.

When Orrin died in the late 1970's Lorraine did not stop exploring. Lorraine rode a bicycle across East Africa, climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, and conducted trail work at Lake Baikal in Russian Siberia.

I best remember her when she gave a presentation in the early 1990's to the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club about her trip to Antarctica where she hired on as a driver of a snow machine which shuttled scientists back and forth across that frozen continent. As she finished reading each page of the presentation she dropped them on the floor from the podium. I raced to pick each page up and Lorraine kidded me in front of the standing room only crowd as I did so.

Lorraine was principled to the point of pigheadedness. If she believed in something and thought her position was right, not God, the mountains, or the Sierra Club could sway her. I remember vividly at a Lone Star Chapter meeting in 1978, with Orrin ill and by her side, how she told off the Chapter Executive Committee based on her perception of its weakness with regard to clear cutting and wilderness in the National Forests of Texas.

Lorraine's friendship with Big Thicket doyens Maxine Johnston and Geraldine Watson was firm and long. When these three strong women got together there was no telling what would happen in addition to laughter and high spirits. Lorraine unfortunately, was under-recognized in the Sierra Club and the wider conservation community for her efforts to stop clear cutting and protect wild forests and wilderness.

It is without a doubt a “sad day” that Lorraine no longer is with us. She is the last of the Lone Star Chapter's founders to depart. As longtime Sierra Club forest activist Tom Maddux said, “It's the End of an Era”. Long live Lorraine Bonney's name and her cause!



Lorraine Bonney with Tom Maddux at her property near Conroe, Texas in November 2011, by Frank Blake

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOUSTON GIVE 5% EAT AND SHOP TO SUPPORT HOUSTON ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS! SATURDAY, APRIL 23

Houston Sierra Club is joining several other local environmental organizations for the 2016 Houston Give 5% fundraising event. In this program area businesses sign up and pledge to donate 5% of their revenue on a specified date, or a minimum of \$150, to support the participating beneficiary organizations. The date this year will be Saturday, April 23, the day after Earth Day.

Participating businesses will be promoted at the Houston Give 5 website and beneficiary group websites, and in various promotional materials and publicity efforts. The beneficiary groups this year in addition to the Houston Sierra Club, are Air Alliance Houston, Houston Tomorrow, San Jacinto River Coalition, and Texas Campaign for the Environment Fund.

For further details visit the Houston Give 5 website at <http://www.houstongive5.com/>

If you have a business or service and are interested in participating, or if you would like to invite a business that you know to get involved, please contact Frank Blake at frankblake@juno.com or 713-528-2896, or Lorraine Gibson at raineygib@aol.com or 281-384-4104.

FOTOFEST 2016 BIENNIAL: CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES, LOOKING AT THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET

The FotoFest 2016 Biennial is a major photography event that addresses climate change and natural resource issues as principal themes. FotoFest features a number of exhibits and events at multiple locations, running from March 12 - April 24.

For complete event listings, visit:
<http://2016biennial.fotofest.org/>

The CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES photo exhibition is on view at Silver Street Studios, The Silos at Sawyer Yards, Spring Street Studios, and Williams Tower Gallery.

Featured projects address the anthropocene – climate change; industrialization and urbanization; biodiversity; water; the use of natural and human resources; human migration; global capital, commerce and consumption; energy production; and waste. Note: the photos that would probably be of MOST interest to Sierrans are on display at the Spring Street Studio exhibition.

For further details on the photography exhibits:

<http://2016biennial.fotofest.org/exhibitions/changing-circumstances.aspx#.Vt8bLdlrJkg>

HOUSTON GROUP POLITICAL COMMITTEE

The Houston Sierra Club's Political Committee is now organizing for the 2016 elections.

The committee will assess local State House races and provide recommendations to the Lone Star Chapter's Political Committee.

The Houston Group will also assess candidates for local U.S. Congressional seats, again to provide input to the Chapter Political Committee.

If Sierra Club decides to endorse any candidates, the political committee will consider assisting selected candidates with volunteer efforts and a possible financial contribution.

Harris County races and candidates will also be reviewed for possible endorsements and support.

If you have an interest in assisting the Houston Group Political Committee and/or supporting endorsed campaigns, please contact the Committee Co-chairs Doug Peterson at dougpeterson@earthlink.net or 281-782-2721, or Jim Williams at ezz@pdq.net or 713-252-8640.

TOUR HOUSES WITH EDIBLE GARDENS, APRIL 9 AND 10

On April 9, and April 10, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. the Rice Design Alliance will offer "Nourish" a tour of six houses with edible gardens. The tour includes the architecture of each house and focuses on the edible gardens.

Ticket start at \$35, which includes an eMembership, a year of digital communications and publications. Current Rice Design Alliance members can purchase two tickets at \$25 each, and students with ID can purchase tickets for \$15.

For more information, visit their Facebook event page at facebook.com/events/751372824996909/ or the Rice Design Alliance page at ricedesignalliance.org/

The Rice Design Alliance web page includes the addresses of the six houses on the tour, with photos of their gardens.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLEAR LAKE/BAY AREA MEETING

The Sierra Club organization meeting in Clear Lake, and then on a hiatus, is rebooting!

A first meeting was held Wednesday, March 18 at the same location as in the past.

For the next meeting of the Bay Area Sierra Club, contact Linda King. Location is the Bay Area Community Center in Clear Lake Park (across NASA Parkway from Clear Lake) at 5002 NASA Parkway, Seabrook. Visitors are always welcome! Contact Linda King at 281-467-3624 or LindaAWKing@att.net for more information.

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. 🌍

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.

RECYCLING RESOURCES

CITY OF HOUSTON RECYCLING

The City of Houston has several dropoff sites (some are specialized for certain items), and provides curbside recycling in many neighborhoods. Principal dropoff 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 <http://www.houstontx.gov/solidwaste/recycling/>

For Houston e-waste recycling options at GREENspot locations, just do an online search for Dropoff Houston, or visit <http://dropoff.houstontx.gov>.

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/>

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

BAYOU BANNER

Newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club

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.

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://www.sierraclub.org/texas/houston/newsletters>

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.

If you have questions about the current Bayou Banner, contact the editor at HSCBanner@gmail.com.

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.

The Bayou Banner is the newsletter of the Houston Regional Group of the Sierra Club. It is published 6 times a year, in odd-numbered months. See the Group's web site for the latest information (<http://www.sierraclub.org/texas/houston>). Current circulation is online at <http://www.sierraclub.org/texas/houston/newsletters>, except for a printed December/January issue for the elections of Executive Committee members.

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

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.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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

INSPIRING CONNECTIONS OUTDOORS (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@juno.com.

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.

HOUSTON REGIONAL GROUP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Art Browning (Chair)	art.browning@gmail.com
Jim Williams (Vice Chair)	ezz@pdq.net
(Alternate Lone Star Chapter Delegate)	
Lorraine Gibson (Treasurer)	raineygib@aol.com
Elizabeth Spike (Secretary)	elizabeth.spike@comcast.net
Melanie Oldham	oldham_melanie@yahoo.com
(Lone Star Chapter Delegate)	
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REGIONAL GROUP LEADERSHIP

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Air Quality	Melanie Oldham	oldham_melanie@yahoo.com
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 713-523-2294
Hospitality	Carol Lee	Lorraine Gibson
Inspiring Connections Outdoors	raineygib@aol.com	281-384-4104
Lone Star Chapter Delegate		
Art Browning	art.browning@gmail.com	
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Outings	Frank Blake	frankblake@juno.com
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	Jim Williams	ezz@pdq.net
Programs	Joe Lengfellner	thatsjoesmail@yahoo.com
Webmaster	houston.webmaster@lonestar.sierraclub.org	

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



JOIN THE SIERRA CLUB

Just go to our web site
<http://www.sierraclub.org/texas/houston>
and click on
Join/Renew/Give

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

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.