



Texas Master Naturalist

2021 Annual Meeting

October 21st-24th

Put it on your calendar now as we prepare for our 22nd Texas Master Naturalist Program Annual Meeting, an event to gather, learn and celebrate another year of the Texas Master Naturalist Program. We're preparing this year's meeting as a HYBRID Event – both online and in-person at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport Marriott. The event will be held the weekend of Thursday October 21st through Sunday the 24th 2021 with plenty of activities throughout the event! Join us for a long weekend of greenspace adventures in the hideaways of our largest urban area in Texas.

This year's Annual Meeting will be hosted near the center of the Dallas–Fort Worth urban metroplex. Ecologically, the host site part of the Blackland Prairie and Oakwoods and Prairies ecoregions and is just south of Grapevine Lake, within easy drive of numerous greenways and a short jog to the Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area and Nature Preserve. Centered within the metroplex providing easy access to these numerous naturalist sites, the Annual Meeting is looking forward to showcasing the hidden gems of these sister cities and their surrounding TMN chapters.

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Hybrid Event!

We are planning to host this year's Annual Meeting in a hybrid format. Participants will be able to register to attend the event as either an 'in person' attendee or a 'virtual' attendee. Certain aspects of the event will be made available for each audience type. For example, we are planning field sessions to be hosted for in-person attendees. Virtual attendees will be able to participate in the majority of advanced training sessions as available for streaming. All virtual aspects of the meeting will be available for 'in person' attendees. As the event agenda is developed, the part of the conference included in each registration type will be updated and shared via our website.

COVID Contingency

As a result of the uncertainty surrounding the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Texas Master Naturalist Program will continue monitoring federal and state health and safety guidelines. We are committed to creating a valuable and engaging educational and networking experience, while also keeping the safety of our membership and speakers at the center of our event planning. Any decision that may change the final format of the Annual Meeting will be shared immediately and travel/registration considerations will be made alongside these updates.

The Texas Master Naturalist Program maintains its responsibility to protect the health and wellbeing of its members, conference attendees and the general population while still serving its mission to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas.

Call for Proposals!

As a workshop presenter at the Annual Meeting, you will have the opportunity to inform and train TMN members from across the state on various natural resource topics providing more in-depth information than their initial core training and curriculum. You are also encouraged to make this an opportunity to enlist and train our program volunteers to assist you, your program, and your work as part of their annual volunteer service commitment.

Advanced Training Sessions Requirements

The Texas Master Naturalist Program welcomes your proposals as contributions to our agenda! Individuals wishing to present are invited to submit their proposal on the Texas Master Naturalist Annual Meeting website: <http://txmn.org/2021-annual-meeting/>.

Advanced Training (AT) Sessions include training on a specific skill, technique, or process and may involve one or more instructors. Sessions are intended to emphasize learning through participation, discussion, and hands-on interactive presentations on natural resource topics that model good interpretive methods. AT Sessions should aim to provide participants with new skills to apply in their area of service or in the topic area you are teaching. These could include presentations introducing a natural resource topic or program to solicit the interest of TMN volunteers or to present resources and partnerships that may assist chapters in their communities.

We are planning a HYBRID virtual and in-person Annual Meeting as health and safety considerations allow. The meeting will consist of sessions offered for a limited capacity in-person audience AND via a web conferencing platform. Sessions are currently scheduled to begin each day of the conference at 9am and end at 5pm with final arrangements and schedule to be shared mid-summer. Sessions will be offered concurrently with one, two, three and four hour blocks, built-in breaks and potentially themed days (dependent on final submissions received). Presenters will be given the option to present live or virtually based on their presentation material, length of their session and personal preference. Our hope is to pair each presenter with two support volunteers – one virtual tech aid and one local aid – for pre-conference preparations and during conference assistance. The virtual technical aid will manage the virtual web conference platform, audio connections/issues and will provide the speaker with an opportunity to run through their virtual presentation to test equipment. The local aid volunteer will be ready to assist the speaker with an audience warm-up, introduce the speaker, watch the chat room and engage the audience in chat if needed and depending on final presentation location.

The deadline for submissions is **Sunday May 31st**. A notice of receipt will be automatically generated and sent by e-mail. If you do not receive notification of receipt within 10 days or have any questions about proposal submission, please contact Mary Pearl Meuth, (mpmeuth@tamu.edu). Proposals received after the deadline and before registration opening may be considered if space is available.

Hybrid Presentation Options

With the Hybrid format of this year's event, our presenters will have the option of either hosting their session in-person at the conference site or virtually from a distance. Please note our [COVID Contingency](#) statement on our website.

Both in-person and virtual sessions will be scheduled for single or multiple hour time blocks and we encourage presenters offering the longer three and four hour (or more) sessions to host these from the on-site, in-person presentation location.

Presenter can host the following as either a VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON presenter:

One Hour - 45 minutes for presentation, 15 minutes for Q&A.

Two Hour - 90 minutes for presentation, 15 minutes for Q&A, 15 minutes break to include at your discretion

Presenter must present IN PERSON ONLY:

Three Hour - 60 minutes for presentation, 15 minutes for mid-session break, 60 minutes for presentation, 30 minutes for Q&A, 15-minute transition break

Four Hour - 90 minutes for presentation, 15 minutes for mid-session break, 90 minutes for presentation, 30 minutes for Q&A, 15-minute transition break

Field Sessions –

Please note - field sessions are being set up externally and will be added into the conference agenda. Please email Mary Pearl (mpmeuth@tamu.edu) if you are interested in submitting a field session.

Proposal Themes

All training workshops relevant to the Texas Master Naturalist mission will be considered. Presentations will be generally categorized with the following theme areas to help build session tracks in the final agenda:

Abiotic Environment (Geology, Weather, etc.)

Chapter Management & Solutions

Chapter Project Highlight

Community Science

Conservation Initiatives

Ecological Concepts/Regions

Fauna-General

Interpretation/Communication

Partnership Highlight, Volunteer Project

Recruiting

Plants/Flora

Social Media

Texas Water Resources

Other

Examples of previous years' TMN Annual Meeting agendas with workshop and session titles and descriptions can be found on the TMN Annual Meeting archives website, <http://txmn.org/past-meetings/>.

Information Required in the Proposal System:

- **Presentation Title** (make it catchy!) *Note: the title you provide in your proposal will be the title displayed on the Full Agenda—double check for any errors before you submit!
- **Presentation Abstract** – A short description (3-5 sentences or ~100 words) describing the session, what TMN volunteers will learn, what they will need to wear or bring with them. (This information will be used directly in our Full Agenda)
- **Presentation Theme** – see above
- **Duration** – Length of time (in hours) requested for presentation
- **Presentation Location** – Will you be hosting your session in person or virtually?
- **Presentation Environment** – Indoor classroom/ Outdoors
- **Maximum Preferred Class Size** – 12 - 60 or more; needed to gauge room requirements
- **Technology Needs** for presentation and participants where applicable

Proposal Evaluation and Notice of Decision

All training proposals will be considered and evaluated on timeliness of the subject, importance of the training to a broad range of TMN volunteers and their further contribution to our program's mission. Applicants will be notified whether their proposals are able to be accepted or not.

All presenters will also need to register for the conference once registration is open – www.txmn.org/2021-annual-meeting .

About the Texas Master Naturalist Program

The Texas Master Naturalist Volunteer program is sponsored statewide by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service. The program has the mission *to develop a corps of well-informed volunteers to provide education, outreach, and service dedicated to the beneficial management of natural resources and natural areas within their communities for the State of Texas*. The program currently supports 15,000+ volunteers in 48 local chapters across the state. TMN volunteers typically provide over 400,000 hours of service annually. For more information visit our statewide website at: <https://txmn.tamu.edu/>

Any additional questions about the Texas Master Naturalist 22nd Annual Meeting or the Program in general can be directed to Michelle Haggerty (mmhaggerty@tamu.edu) or Mary Pearl Meuth (mpmeuth@tamu.edu).