



Our volunteers are ready to volunteer!

Our volunteers are back to work and asking for more! Our Texas Master Naturalist Volunteers are dedicated to natural resource conservation work, but as a result of extreme circumstances during the pandemic our members were limited in conducting many of their typical outreach, technical guidance and community stewardship service projects which limited their ability to obtain their required volunteer service hours. When the health and safety restrictions of the pandemic persisted, we thought outside of the box and developed the TMN Virtual Volunteer Fair (VVF) as an opportunity for our partner conservation organizations to present service projects that needed volunteers from a distance or virtually! After two successful TMN VVF events our members are asking for more! This time with the intent to provide virtual service during the hottest months of the year when service in the field becomes less desirable and hits a typical lull until cooler months come around.

The **Virtual Volunteer Fair** will be an opportunity for our partner conservation organizations to present volunteer service projects that need volunteers from a distance or virtually! Join us on **August 31st & September 1st, 2021** from 9:00am – 10:45am each day with a series of 10-minute sessions highlighting projects by a variety of partner conservation agencies and organizations. **August 31st** will showcase projects from across the state, while **September 1st** will focus on projects that can be specifically undertaken by chapter members of the Gulf Coast area and/or the Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion.

Registration is now OPEN to attend our Virtual Volunteer Fair! Register for either of the days or for both days **but registration is day specific** so make sure you sign up for the day you want to attend! You can attend any or all project proposal presentations on either of the days – come and go as you please! TMN volunteers will earn Volunteer Service hours for attending all project proposal sessions – please use the “TMN Virtual Volunteer Service Fair” Statewide Project Opportunity for logging service hours.

[Register to receive a WebEx Link for each Day](#)

If you’ve never used WebEx as a platform at all, the [WebEx 101 Guide](#) linked is a great place to start – plus there are live testing sites on the Cisco WebEx page for any day users want to test their equipment and set up.

Virtual Volunteer Fair – Fall 2021

AGENDA

Tuesday, August 31st

Project this day will showcase projects from across the state and is open to all chapters as the projects aren't ecoregion specific.

- 9:00 AM - 9:10 AM Introduction
- 9:10 AM - 9:20 AM Spanish Translation of Public Outreach Materials - Marcia Haley
- 9:20 AM - 9:30 AM Calculating Conservation Spend and Return on Conservation in Texas - Taylor Keys
- 9:30 AM - 9:40 AM Aquatic Videos and Photos - Melissa (Alderson) Felty
- 9:40 AM - 9:50 AM BREAK
- 9:50 AM - 10:00 AM Texas Master Naturalist Aquatic Photo Submission Contest - Cynthia Sechrest
- 10:00 AM - 10:10 AM Wildlife Camera Photo Review - Rachel Richter
- 10:10 AM - 10:20 AM Surveying for ticks and tick-borne pathogens along the international border area of New Mexico and Texas - Tammi Johnson
- 10:20 AM - 10:30 AM Nature Challenge - Jacey Tosh
- 10:30 AM – 10:40AM Tuesday's Conclusion & Wrap Up

Wednesday, September 1st

Presentations this day will focus on projects that can be specifically undertaken by chapter members of the Gulf Coast area and/or the Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion.

- 9:00 AM - 9:10 AM Introduction
- 9:10 AM - 9:20 AM Katie Prairie Conservancy's Great Grow Out Volunteer - Terry Hendrick
- 9:20 AM - 9:30 AM Writer for Katie Prairie Conservancy's Species of Greatest Conservation Need Newsletter Articles, Terry Hendrick
- 9:30 AM - 9:40 AM Volunteer at Katie Prairie Conservancy's Native Seed Nursery - Terry Hendrick
- 9:40 AM - 9:50 AM BREAK
- 9:50 AM - 10:00 AM Katie Prairie Conservancy Social Media Volunteer - Terry Hendrick
- 10:00 AM - 10:10 AM Katie Prairie Conservancy's "What's New on the Prairie" Volunteer - Terry Hendrick
- 10:10 AM - 10:20 AM Pineywoods & Gulf Coast Prairies & Marshes Ecoregion Paper-based Pollinator Games Designers needed! - Laurie Lomas Gonzales
- 10:20 AM - 10:30 AM Wednesday's Conclusion & Wrap Up

Day 1
Tuesday, August 31st

Spanish Translation of Public Outreach Materials

Project Contact: *Marcia Haley, Twelve Hills Nature Center/North Texas MasterNaturalist
marcieh@gmail.com*

*Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Place-Based Virtual Project
Ecoregion Designation: Blackland Prairie Ecoregion
Chapters Designation: North Texas, Cross Timbers, Elm Fork, Blackland Prairie, Indian Trail*

Volunteers are needed to translate nature education materials, invitations to events and description of nature preserves from English to Spanish. Your work will help inform the Spanish-speaking community about nature opportunities in Dallas and surrounding areas. The time commitment and schedule of work are very flexible, for the most part.

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? Documents translated by volunteers will help our Spanish-speaking community members learn about Twelve Hills Nature Center and other local nature centers and their programs, events and activities. Translated educational materials will provide access to nature information and experiences. *Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed?*

Expertise is needed in written English to Spanish translation.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? As projects arise, volunteers will be contacted and asked if they are interested and have time for the projects. Volunteers will work independently to complete the project. Projects will have varying deadlines. Some may be needed in a month or longer, others in two weeks.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? 2+ hours per month estimated. The time period and hours for project completion will be generally flexible. Some requests may have a deadline.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? As long as a volunteer wants to help!

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? The project is needed to give Spanish-speaking community members more access to nature experiences and education. They will enjoy the health benefits of nature experiences, perhaps pursue a new nature-based interest, including volunteering, and learn about the importance of conserving wild areas. For some, this may cultivate interest in becoming a Texas Master Naturalist and teaching about conservation.

Calculating Conservation Spend and Return on Conservation in Texas

Project Contact: *Taylor Keys, Texan by Nature* taylor@texanbynature.org

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Non-Place-Based Virtual Project
Ecoregion Designation: Statewide
Chapters Designation: Statewide

Texan by Nature (TxN) is a conservation non-profit that exists to advance conservation in Texas. Due to the broad scope of TxN's work, research plays an integral role in calculating conservation impact for both conservation organizations and businesses that operate in Texas. Various research opportunities are available for volunteers. Project Example: Texan by Nature defines Return on Conservation (ROC) as "the total return realized by investing in conservation, encompassing all variables - financial, human, and natural resources." We are working to better understand the current overall investment in conservation in Texas, as well as the associated return on that investment. As Texas' population continues to grow and impact natural resource demand, conservation is integral to ensuring our resources are healthy and available for future generations. This research will identify and gather baseline information/data that quantify the current state of conservation in Texas. It will uncover data gaps and future conservation needs. This information will be an accessible research repository creating a collaborative and cohesive viewpoint, informing our collective call to action and funding pool.

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? Broad knowledge of organizations and businesses conservation and sustainability efforts, how to organize a research project, research skills, etc.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed?

Experience w/google suite and experience doing online research is needed.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? The Texan by Nature team will oversee volunteers throughout this process and provide templates and guidance on execution. This project can be started at any time.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? Hours and project time periods are flexible. For the project example, the total time commitment is TBD at this time, we estimate that it would take 20-30 minutes to research (990s and website) 1 conservation organization and there are 150+ in Texas ~ 75 hours. Although, the research could take longer if the information is difficult to find. We also anticipate having volunteers reach out to organizations via email/phone to collect additional information that cannot be pulled from online. Our goal is to complete this project by December, but would greatly appreciate volunteer support after that date if the project takes

long.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? At least through the fall season.

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? In addition to building off of the project example overview, the expected outcome is to gather data on conservation spend/impact on all conservation organizations operating in Texas. This information will be used to inform all stakeholders in Texas, include the TMN program.

Aquatic Videos and Photos

Project Contact: *Melissa (Alderson) Felty, Texas Parks and Wildlife
ConservationEdu@tpwd.texas.gov*

*Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Non-Place-Based Virtual Project
Ecoregion Designation: Statewide
Chapters Designation: Statewide*

Develop aquatic videos and photos that will be used for demonstration and educational purposes in TPWD Water Education programs.

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? Provide educational videos and photos to guide educators to teach aquatic science and for students/public to learn Texas aquatic wildlife and habitats.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? No

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? Project completion goal: May 2022

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? flexible, 5-20 hours a month

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? A year or less.

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? High quality demonstration and educational aquatic videos and photos produced for implementation into TPWD Water Education programs.

Texas Master Naturalist Aquatic Photo Submission Contest

Project Contact: *Cynthia Sechrest, TMN Volunteer - Capital Area Chapter on behalf of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Aquatic Plant program* chrysanthesechrest@gmail.com

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Non-Place-Based Virtual Project
Ecoregion Designation: Statewide
Chapters Designation: Statewide

Texas Master Naturalists (TMN) Volunteers are asked to submit photos of aquatic plants as defined as an obligate wetland species, meaning they almost always occur in wetlands. No training is needed and the time commitment to the project is up to the volunteer. Photos of aquatic plants can be submitted via Google Forms or iNaturalist. The photos submitted will be used for (1) educational materials including but not limited to online courses, programs, social media, AquaPlant website and factsheets and (2) understanding the distributions of Texas aquatic plants to enhance program delivery in various regions of the state. The project runs through September 30, 2021.

The TMN Chapter with the highest number of species will receive a set of field guides that includes both volumes of Wetland Plants of Texas. The top three individuals with the highest number of species will receive a 5 x 7 canvas print of one of their submitted photos of their choosing.

Distanced Service Project - Non Place-based:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? A volunteer could hope to gain a deeper understanding of aquatic plant identification and help with contribution of photographs of wetland species to the AquaPlant and iNaturalist database for use for various scientific projects and outreach.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed?

No, there is no additional training needed

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? Volunteers should contribute to the project as often as possible. Volunteers are encouraged to take trips to aquatic systems to take photos of multiple species at once.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? Hours are flexible and can be as many hours as the volunteer wants to contribute. The "bioblitz" ends in iNaturalist on September 30, 2021. Summaries of contributions will be given in October.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? Project ends September 30, 2021.

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? The project is needed to develop outreach materials for the Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Aquatic Vegetation Program. Species distributions will also enhance

program delivery in various regions of the state. Additionally, this will contribute to the iNaturalist need of high quality aquatic plant photos to help with aquatic plant identification in the future.

Wildlife Camera Photo Review

Project Contact: Rachel Richter, Texas Parks and Wildlife rachel.richter@tpwd.texas.gov

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Non-Place-Based Virtual Project
Ecoregion Designation: Statewide
Chapters Designation: Statewide

Assistance is needed with reviewing photos captured by remote sensing cameras placed primarily in Fort Worth. This project is part of the Urban Wildlife Information Network (UWIN). Developed by the Lincoln Park Zoo's Urban Wildlife Institute, UWIN is the world's largest urban wildlife study and the goal is to learn more about the species that live in our cities. Participating communities place camera traps along the urban to rural gradient. The cameras are set in January, April, July, and October and are left out for four weeks. Thousands of images are captured each sampling season. Volunteers will be assigned groups of photos to review and will identify the species captured. Training will be provided. A reliable computer, access to high-speed internet, and skill in identifying mammals are recommended.

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? Volunteers will contribute to an international wildlife research project and help improve our understanding of urban wildlife.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? Skill in identifying mammals & computer use is recommended.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project?

Yes, there is an additional training that I will set up for those who choose to participate in my project.

If yes, how many hours of AT would need to be completed before being able to carry out the service of the project? 0.5-1 hour

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? Volunteers can review photos on their own time, preferably within a month of receiving their assignment.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? The hours are flexible and the time commitment will vary. The bulk of photo review will occur in August, November, February, and May.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? As long as a volunteer wants to help!

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? This project is needed to improve our understanding of urban wildlife. The uniform study design allows scientists to make comparisons between cities that previously were not possible. Do coyotes in Austin behave similarly to coyotes in Phoenix? How do landscape-level differences influence wildlife's response to urbanization? What impact does the amount of impervious cover have on species richness?

The answers to these questions can improve our management practices.

Surveying for Ticks and Tick-borne Pathogens Along the International Border Area of New Mexico and Texas

Project Contact: *Tammi Johnson, Texas A&M AgriLife Research, Department of Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management
Tammi.Johnson@ag.tamu.edu*

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Place-Based Virtual Project

Ecoregion Designation: South Texas Plains, Edwards Plateau, Trans-Pecos, And Chihuahuan Desert

Chapters Designation: Rio Grande Valley, South Texas Border, Tierra Grande, Trans Pecos, Lower Pecos Borderlands Chapter

Globally, emerging infectious diseases represent a persistent threat to humans and vector-borne diseases, transmitted by blood-feeding arthropods, account for a disproportionate number of reported emerging infectious diseases in humans. Most vector-borne diseases are transmitted either by mosquito or tick vectors; in the United States, tick-borne diseases account for >75% of vector-borne diseases. The mission of the Western Gulf Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Diseases is to enhance the capacity to anticipate, prevent, and control vector-borne diseases (VBD). Our team is comprised of recognized experts in vector-borne diseases, vector biology and control, epidemiology, and ecology, and is boosted by strong partnerships with state and local public health organizations. The Texas/Mexico border stretches over 1200 miles from the Gulf of Mexico to El Paso and includes diverse geographic and ecological regions. Ecological biomes along the border in Texas range from near sub-tropical to desert. Ecoregions include the south Texas plains, Edwards plateau, trans-Pecos, and Chihuahuan desert with highly variable landscapes including thorn shrublands, escarpments, mountain and desert. The region includes major metropolitan cities separated by sparsely populated areas with ethnic and culturally diverse populations and with diverse enterprises and activities. The movement of commerce and of humans, companion animals, livestock and wildlife across the border is constant yet dynamic. Further, this area includes the central bird flyway which is a migratory route that cross this region and is known to provide transcontinental transport for ticks. Expansion of exotic game and invasive feral swine has added host diversity and interaction with native wildlife in border areas that support expanding tick distributions.

Opportunities for tick-host-habitat-environment interactions in the border regions resulting in introduction and emergence of pathogens posing risks to human populations and enterprises is significant and warrants constant surveillance.

For this project, we are seeking the help of volunteers from the Texas Master Naturalists in the collection of ticks. As Master Naturalists, we know that you are often on the landscape performing various volunteer activities and we would like to take this opportunity to help you help us. We are requesting the passive/opportunistic collection of ticks found on person as well as on companion animals. All ticks will be sent to a central location for identification and pathogen testing. All collection materials will be provided as well as pre-addressed, pre-paid mailers. Further, if there is interest, we would be happy to train volunteers to actively sample the landscape for ticks using dragging and/or flagging and would additionally provide those materials.

Distanced Service Project - Non Place-based:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? Assist the Western Gulf Center of Excellence for Vector-Borne Diseases is to enhance the capacity to anticipate, prevent, and control vector-borne diseases (VBD) and TMN volunteers can help collect needed data that will support this mission.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? Process of tick collection will be discussed.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? We are requesting the passive/opportunistic collection of ticks found on persons as well as on companion animals. All ticks will be sent to a central location for identification and pathogen testing. All collection materials will be provided.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? Flexible time commitment.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? A year or less.

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? Globally, emerging infectious diseases represent a persistent threat to humans and vector-borne diseases, transmitted by blood-feeding arthropods, account for a disproportionate number of reported emerging infectious diseases in humans. Data collected by volunteers will help to enhance the capacity to anticipate, prevent, and control vector-borne diseases (VBD).

Nature Challenge

Project Contact: *Jacey Tosh, Texas A&M Forest Service* jacey.tosh@tfs.tamu.edu

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Non Place-Based Virtual Project
Ecoregion Designation: Statewide
Chapters Designation: Statewide

Nature Challenge is an interactive web platform that serves as a community for all things “outdoors” where nature-related organizations can come together and easily promote their services, opportunities, and activities all in one place. This tool is the result of a shared vision between Texas A&M Forest Service, Texas Children in Nature Network, Texan by Nature as well as a rapidly growing community of environmental service providers that creating a more sustainable world begins with bringing nature back into the everyday lives of the people. The site contains an interactive map and directories that people of all ages can use to find exciting, new ways to get connected with nature, have some fun, and make a difference at the same time. Texas A&M Forest Service is seeking volunteers to help propose and develop new challenges across the state, enhancing the representation of both the diversity of the Texas landscape as well as the diversity of the populations we serve. Volunteers may also be asked to evaluate existing challenges as well as the site itself to provide feedback on ease of use, design, and overall function.

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? A volunteer would serve as both an ambassador as well as a Nature Challenge creator, developing relationships with new natural resource and education organizations, generating new challenging ideas, and working to provide nature engagement opportunities to a diverse range of users.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? No expertise required, but knowledge of computer use is a plus.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? Volunteers will work closely with the primary Nature Challenge administrators and become familiar with the site's functionality and potential.

Volunteers will then either propose new challenges themselves (in some cases needing to develop challenge resources,) or may choose to communicate with natural resource partners and help others develop challenges. For example, for a nature center that is not currently active on the site, a volunteer may reach out to that organization and see they would like to represent their organization on the map and provide a challenge for their area.

Volunteers may also coordinate with other organizations to promote Nature Challenge to the general public, getting this tool in front of as many people as possible.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? This program has no specific deadlines or requirements, there are no limits to the number of hours a volunteer can obtain. This project is inherently flexible, as most of the work can be done virtually or on whatever schedule the volunteer

chooses.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? As long as a volunteer wants to help!
Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? To the public, Nature Challenge is a fun place to find new and novel ways to engage with nature, furthering both public participation in the outdoors as well as natural resource appreciation and conservation. To the challenge providers, Nature Challenge is a data-gathering tool, allowing environmental service organizations to get a better sense of what opportunities exist across the state, what programs are offered, and what kinds of audiences are currently engaged. This tool will be invaluable to informing more accurate program gap assessments across the state as well as tailoring content to the specific landscape-level issues in each region. After the pilot phase, this tool also expands beyond Texas, providing nature engagement opportunities to the rest of the United States and beyond.

Day 2 Wednesday, September 1st

KPC's Great Grow Out Volunteer

Project Contact: Terry Hendrick, Katy Prairie Conservancy thendrick@katyprairie.org

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Non Place-Based Distanced Project

Ecoregion Designation: Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion

Chapters Designation: Gulf Coast, Coastal Prairie, Gideon Lindeum, Lower Trinity Basin, Cradle of Texas Chapter

The Katy Prairie Conservancy's Great Grow Out program is designed to empower volunteers to grow native plants in the comfort of their own homes, as part of a civic or neighborhood group, or as part of scouting. Volunteer growers are given packets of locally collected prairie seeds and asked to grow these plants in pots. Plants are then returned to KPC and staff nurture the plants until they are ready to be planted. Seed packing parties, seed collecting field trips, and nursery volunteer days are also an important part of this program. This program helps KPC grow over 10,000 plants annually for use in the Prairie Builder Schools + Parks program, in KPC restoration sites, and to support other restoration efforts in the region. Don't forget to keep a few for your garden! See our year-round flyer at katyprairie.org/ggo.

Distanced Service Project - Non Place-based:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? By volunteering with the Great Grow Out program from the comfort of their own home, volunteers can gain experience growing plants before dropping them off to be used in prairie restoration projects.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? No experience or training necessary.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? To participate in the Great Grow Out, volunteers will first be asked to complete the form at katyprairie.org/ggo and seeds will be mailed to you.

When you're ready to return your seedlings for use in a restoration project, email Lan Shen at lshen@katyprairie.org or give KPC a call at 713-523-6135. It's really that easy!

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? The Great Grow Out program was designed to be as flexible and easy as possible, so this project's time commitment is very minimal. Basic upkeep/watering of the seedlings may take a couple of hours each week but can be worked around your existing schedule.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? At least through the fall season.

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? The Katy Prairie Conservancy's restoration projects are always in need of new plant growth to support prairie restoration, and the seedlings grown through the Great Grow Out program are a critical source of these plants! In combination with seedlings from the Native Seed Nursery, plants from the Great Grow Out enable KPC to restore native prairie habitats and maintain existing prairies that need regular maintenance.

As a Texas Master Naturalist, your knowledge of native plants and their importance to our

region's biodiversity and prairie habitats is always welcome! We couldn't accomplish this work without the support of dedicated volunteers, and we hope you'll consider joining us!

Writer for KPC's Species of Greatest Conservation Need Newsletter Articles

Project Contact: Terry Hendrick, *Katy Prairie Conservancy* thendrick@katyprairie.org

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Place-Based Virtual Project

Ecoregion Designation: Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion

Chapters Designation: Gulf Coast, Coastal Prairie, Gideon Linsecum, Lower Trinity Basin, Cradle of Texas Chapter

Do you want to raise awareness of wildlife species in need of conservation in Texas? The Katy Prairie Conservancy seeks a volunteer to write articles in our monthly newsletter highlighting species on Texas's Species of Greatest Conservation Need list! Each article will cover one species and include educational information about its importance in our environment, interesting or little-known facts, and what individuals can do to support the species's conservation.

With the volunteer effort of a Texas Master Naturalist, these monthly articles are intended to raise the profile of these Species of Greatest Conservation need to encourage public support of wildlife conservation.

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? This volunteer opportunity is likely to strengthen a volunteer's research and writing skills as they prepare engaging articles for the Katy Prairie Conservancy's newsletter.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed?

No.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? To compliment the length and formatting of our newsletter, we ask that the volunteer prepare a 3-4 paragraph article for each species. These articles should be submitted via email as a Microsoft Word document in the third week of each month to allow time for KPC staff to prepare the newsletter's content in a timely manner.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? The total time commitment can be highly flexible depending on the volunteer's writing style and time needs, but one can generally expect to spend 3-4 hours a month to prepare a thorough newsletter article. The articles can be written month-to-month or can be submitted in larger batches or all at once. KPC is interested in 12 articles to use throughout the calendar year.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? As long as a volunteer wants to help!

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? KPC's newsletter audience is highly involved in land conservation and wildlife habitat restoration, but many are unaware of specific species that are in need of

conservation. With these informational articles, our community of supporters will be better equipped to advocate for these species and their conservation needs. Educating the public on the need for conservation is undoubtedly a core pillar of the Texas Master Naturalist program, and this volunteer opportunity does just that. Ultimately, our hope is that these articles will translate into greater levels of public support and legislative advocacy on behalf of the Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Texas.

Volunteer at KPC's Native Seed Nursery

Project Contact: Terry Hendrick, Katy Prairie Conservancy thendrick@katyprairie.org

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Place-Based Distanced Project
Ecoregion Designation: Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion
Chapters Designation: Gulf Coast, Coastal Prairie, Gideon Lindeum, Lower Trinity Basin, Cradle of Texas Chapter

The Katy Prairie Conservancy invites Texas Master Naturalists to volunteer at the Coastal Prairie Native Seed Nursery at KPC's Indiangrass Preserve in Waller, TX. Volunteers help plant and grow native plants that are used in restoration projects on the Katy Prairie Preserve. Volunteers may also help combat invasive species, plant native plants, and participate in restoring prairie habitats.

Where: KPC Indiangrass Preserve - 31975 Hebert Road, Waller, TX 77484. When: Tuesdays and Fridays | 9 am - 1 pm

Who: All are welcomed to participate - no experience necessary.

Physical Requirements: Bending, kneeling, or sitting on the ground; some light lifting. What to wear: Closed-toed shoes, tall socks, long pants, long-sleeved shirt, hat.

What to bring: Reusable water bottle, gardening gloves (or we have pairs to borrow). All other tools are provided.

Distanced Service Project - Place-based:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? By working at the Native Seed Nursery, a volunteer can gain a unique perspective of land conservation as they foster seedlings for use on prairie preserves. We welcome new and experienced volunteers to help out at the nursery!

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed?

No.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No, there is no additional training needed!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? Volunteers come to KPC's Indiangrass Preserve in Waller, TX on Tuesdays and Friday from 9 AM to 1 PM to volunteer at the nursery. Activities can differ week-to-week, but you can generally expect to help maintain young plant growth.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? You are able to volunteer as much or as little as you can! With two four-hour volunteer days during the week, a volunteer could spend as much as eight hours a week at the Native Seed Nursery, although that is not an expectation.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? As long as a volunteer wants to help!

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? KPC's prairie restoration projects are made possible through the countless hours of volunteer time that are donated at the Native Seed Nursery. With the help of Texas Master Naturalist volunteers, our nursery will be able to support more seedlings that will

eventually be planted on the Katy Prairie preserve.

By supporting land conservation and habitat restoration with your volunteer hours at the Native Seed Nursery, you will be ensuring that new growth can continue to flourish on the Katy Prairie.

KPC's Social Media Volunteer

Project Contact: Terry Hendrick, Katy Prairie Conservancy thendrick@katyprairie.org

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Place-Based Virtual Project
Ecoregion Designation: Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion
Chapters Designation: Gulf Coast, Coastal Prairie, Gideon Lindeum, Lower Trinity Basin, Cradle of Texas Chapter

The Katy Prairie Conservancy seeks a virtual volunteer to compile research and photographs for a weekly social media post called "Wildlife Wednesday." This recurring post highlights iconic prairie flora and fauna with engaging and witty captions and has become a popular element of KPC's social media.

Volunteers will be asked to write captions under 280 characters that highlight little-known facts and use trivia, funny one-liners, or engaging questions. Photos can be provided by KPC staff if unable to be found by the volunteer. This project is a wonderful opportunity to help KPC engage its online community with educational social media content, and you may even learn a bit yourself!

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? A volunteer in this role can expect to improve their research skills as they compile information on various species for the social media posts. They might also gain valuable experience in strategic communication techniques as they learn what KPC's online audience engages with most frequently.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? Knowledge of prairie flora and fauna and experience with computer research will be helpful but not essential. No formal training necessary.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? No!

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? The volunteer may conduct their research and prepare the social media content as they prefer, but we ask that 4 complete posts be submitted via email in a Microsoft Word document on a monthly basis. The document will be formatted by KPC and sent to the volunteer to simplify the exchange of content.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? KPC is looking for 52 Wildlife Wednesday posts to be completed (1 year's worth) by the volunteer. Time period/commitment are very flexible and can be based around your existing schedule as this project is entirely remote. It is likely that each post will take between 1 and 2 hours to complete, but this time can be managed however you prefer.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? As long as a volunteer wants to help!

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? As a nonprofit land trust, the Katy Prairie Conservancy works to save large pieces of the Katy Prairie by purchasing land, reaching conservation agreements with private landowners, and accepting land donations. In order to successfully save these lands from

permanent development, KPC is striving to increase its regional presence through engaging and innovative outreach efforts.

With a small full-time staff, volunteers are critical to the continuation of KPC's conservation programs both in-person and online. With your help as a volunteer, these educational Wildlife Wednesday posts will reach new and diverse audiences with the importance of land conservation to the countless wildlife species that depend on these prairie habitats.

KPC's "What's New on the Prairie" Volunteer

Project Contact: *Terry Hendrick, Katy Prairie Conservancy* [hendrick@katyprairie.org](mailto:tendrick@katyprairie.org)

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Place-Based Distanced Project
Ecoregion Designation: Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion
Chapters Designation: Gulf Coast, Coastal Prairie, Gideon Linsecum, Lower Trinity Basin, Cradle of Texas Chapter

The Katy Prairie Conservancy is seeking a Texas Master Naturalist volunteer to assist its "What's New on the Prairie" project, a monthly review of wildlife on KPC's Indiangrass Preserve - 31975 Hebert Road, Waller, TX 77484. This volunteer will make weekly visits to the Ann Hamilton Trail on KPC's Indiangrass Preserve to photograph and document the biodiversity of the trail on a weekly basis. We are interested in knowing what is blooming, which grasses are growing, what birds are in the area, and what insects they spot so that our conservation team is well-informed about the prairie's state on a routine basis.

Distanced Service Project - Place-based:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? This volunteer project will allow volunteers to further develop their wildlife identification skills as they walk KPC's trail on a weekly basis. They will also gain experience with technical writing to communicate their observations in a concise manner.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? This volunteer project will require a good understanding of prairie flora/fauna in order to accurately document specific species at the Indiangrass Preserve.

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? Will be based on the volunteers existing knowledge of common flora and fauna on the Katy Prairie.

If yes, how many hours of AT would need to be completed before being able to carry out the service of the project? 1 to 2

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? The volunteer would visit the Ann Hamilton Trail on Tuesday or Friday from 9 AM to 1 PM each week to walk the trail and document their observations. If desired, the volunteer could come as early as 8 AM to increase the likelihood of certain wildlife sightings. After their walk is complete, the volunteer will be asked to write up their notes and upload their photographs in a Google document to be shared with KPC staff.

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? The trail walk and thorough documentation will likely require 2-3 hours a week. Ideally, the same volunteer would assist with this project through the rest of the 2021 to maintain as much continuity in documentation as possible.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? At least through the fall season.

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? This "What's New on the Prairie" volunteer project is needed in order to

properly document the KatyPrairie's biodiversity around the Ann Hamilton Trail on KPC's Indiangrass Preserve. With this information made available by a dedicated volunteer, our full-time conservation team will have an accurate pulse on the prairie's health on a weekly basis. Accurate and regular documentation are critical to successful land management and prairie restoration projects, and this volunteer opportunity will ensure that the Katy Prairie Conservancy is able to continue maintaining the lands it works so hard to protect. As a Texas Master Naturalist, your expertise is an incredibly helpful resource as we work to steward these prairie lands for generations to come.

Paper-based Pollinator Games Designers Needed!

Project Contact: *Laurie Lomas Gonzales, Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge*
Laurie_Lomas_Gonzales@fws.gov

Virtual Volunteer Fair Designation: Place-Based Virtual Project

Ecoregion Designation: Pineywoods and Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes Ecoregion

Chapters Designation: Gulf Coast, Coastal Prairie, Lower Trinity Basin, Cradle of Texas, Pineywoods Lakes, Sabine Neches, Cypress Basin, East Texas, Red River and Longleaf Ridge Chapter

Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge is starting an environmental education program and would like to use the power of play and repetition to help kids "see" their local diversity and "remember" the causes of various sources of disruptions that are causing pollinator decline. These games will be a part of a curriculum that will involve green STEM curriculum indoors and outdoors. These games would be available for use by other educational programs run by Master Naturalists as well as other educational entities. Finally, these games could also be shared and used with other Master Naturalists chapters for their very own members to play and learn!

Three games are being targeted for creation: bingo, seek-a-boo (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLx4kfEdux0>), and memory. The games would be designed electronically so they could be sent to a printer for professional printing. Research for photos for these games would also be done electronically using iNaturalist and other various websites where cutting and copying of a high quality photo is permissible. The same photos should be used for the three different games (Bingo, Seek-a-boo, and memory).

Eight categories of native flowers/pollinators have been selected to be featured: native flowers, bees, wasps, birds, flies, butterflies, moths, and beetles. This will result in 9 bingo, 9 seek, and 9 memory games.

Game cards will also have "end of life cycle" cards where players immediately lose if they "encounter" one of the stressors, such as pollution, insecticides, urbanization, drought, invasive species, etc.

Virtual Service Project:

What could a volunteer hope to build/gain from helping your project? Volunteers will have a chance to appreciate diversity through photography. They will learn more about local pollinators, their life histories, and stressors. They may also have a new perspective of how to engage in environmental education with children and adults through play.

Beyond the standard Texas Master Naturalist training, is there any specific expertise or experience needed? Making the volunteer uses a non-copyrighted photo and making sure the plant/pollinator is native to Harris, Chambers, and/or Liberty County

Is there any additional training you'd want the volunteers to complete before they assist your project? Yes, there is an additional training that I will set up for those who choose to participate in my project.

If yes, how many hours of AT would need to be completed before being able to carry out the service of the project? 2

What are your expectations of how and when the service would be carried out? As soon as they are ready to begin. The sooner the better :)

What is the potential total time commitment (i.e # of hours/week or per month)? Are hours flexible? Is the time period flexible? This is flexible. I image this project could easily earn someone 40 hours of volunteer service, if they chose. However, some volunteers may find they have expertise in one aspect or another and will be able to find their niche. The hours are flexible, but the sooner the project is completed the better as the school program begins in September.

How long do you anticipate the project lasting? As long as a volunteer wants to help!

Why is this project needed, what are the expected outcomes? How is it linked to the mission of the TMN Program? Trinity River National Wildlife Refuge is starting an environmental education program and would like to use the power of play and repetition to help kids "see" their local diversity and "remember" the causes of various sources of disruptions that are causing pollinator decline. These games will be a part of a curriculum that will involve green STEM curriculum indoors and outdoors. These games would be available for use by other educational programs run by Master Naturalists as well as other educational entities. Finally, these games could also be shared and used with other Master Naturalists chapters for their very own members to play and learn!

This project is linked to the TMN Program mission as it will be an active, fun way to engage with students and adults in learning about native pollinator diversity and their challenges. It can be used indoor and outdoors and will be a versatile activity appropriate for all ages.