

# Albert and Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area

*James Rice, Superintendent, and His All-Volunteer Army  
The Seventh Year  
2019*

By Desiree E. D'Orsogna  
Historian

## James Rice, Superintendent, ABKSNA



James remains the first and only Superintendent of ABKSNA. Other than a member of the Armed Services on a funded work-study program, he is ABK's only paid employee. As the following slides illustrate, he could not have accomplished all that was accomplished without the assistance of numerous volunteers: Texas Master Naturalists, other naturalists, and professors and their students from local colleges. Indeed, in 2019 James divided his time from January until June between ABK and Government Canyon State Natural Area, functioning as the latter's interim Superintendent.

Higher up the Texas Parks and Wildlife food chain, by contrast, there was considerable reorganization. The new Division Director, Rodney Franklin, was impressed with ABK's first Three Year Report. Greg Creacy became the new Natural Resources Director. James is optimistic that Creacy and the new regional biologist, Heather Hannusch, will provide guidance on the writing of a Natural Resources Management Plan for ABK. Heather is familiar with survey methodologies and ArcGIS, and she will potentially use our methods as a model for other Parks/SNAs.

The most exciting news in 2019 was the awarding of Planning and Design money for the eventual development of ABK. Bids could be awarded and Planning and Design could potentially begin as early as September FY2020/2021. However, before then, the Public Use Plan will have to be modified and approved. Under the current Plan, the footprints for the campsites, cabins, Headquarters, Visitor Center, and the trailhead at Something Loopy have already been determined. Ward and Tin Cup Canyons have been set aside for research. Actionable data collected by volunteers over the past 7 years will determine the location of trails.

Hopefully James and his volunteer "army" will see all of our hard work come to fruition in the next few years. The passage of Proposition 5, whereby the Parks Division will get 94% of the Sporting Goods Tax lends renewed hope that funding for actual development will be forthcoming.



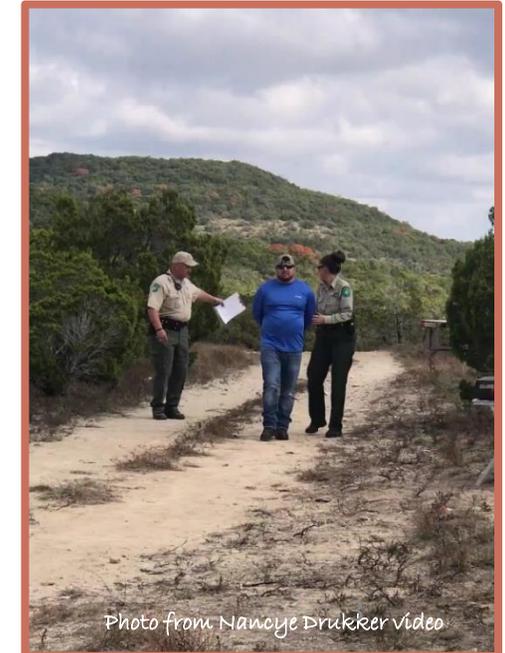
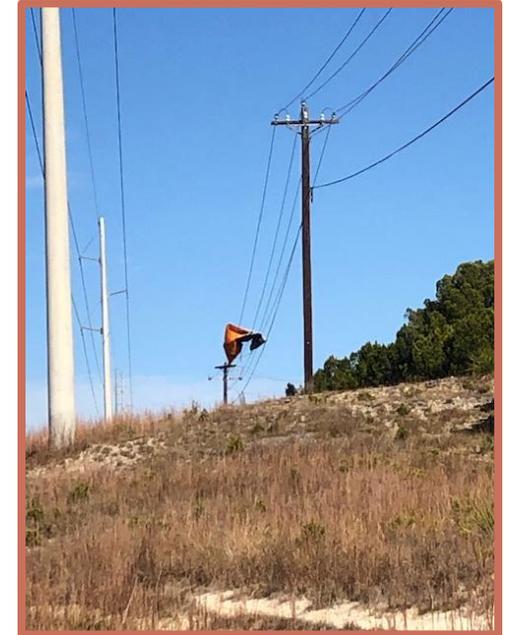
## ABK: Another Year of Firsts



STATE PARKS BI-WEEKLY BULLETS | MONDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2019

### Albert & Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area

On a cloudy, brisk Saturday, October 12th, the TPW Foundation partnered with Spectrum Trail Racing to sponsor the first in a series of annual “We Will Not Be Tamed” races. A total of 42 runners participated: 2 ambitious runners in the 100K individual race; 4 teams of 3 in the 100K relay; and 28 individuals in the 10K race. The purpose of these races is to bring notoriety to areas that are not yet open to the general public. On-site support was provided by ABK-SNA Superintendent James Rice, Government Canyon-SNA David Rice (LE), Government Canyon-SNA Ryan Thorton (Biologist) and ABK’s core of volunteers.

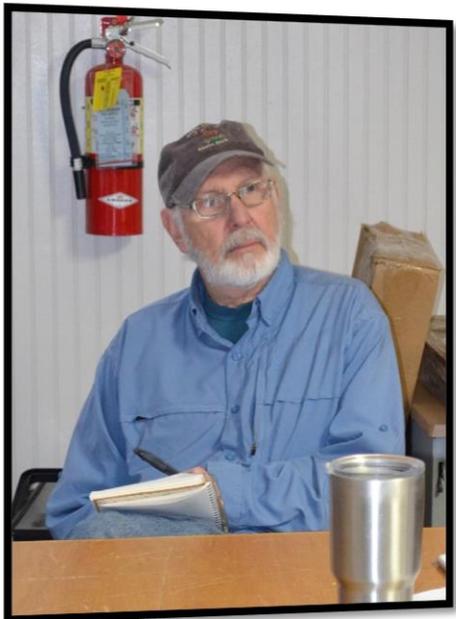


Top left: For the first time in 5 years, GCWA survey training is conducted by Arlyne Martinez, giving Tara Randle a break. Slides 4 & 5  
Center: Des D’Orsogna, ABK Historian, and James Rice, Superintendent, began writing articles for the State Parks Bi-weekly Bullets. This story is about the first Spectrum Trail Race held at ABK. Slides 6 & 7

Right: TPWD Law Enforcement Training using ABK volunteers as the law-breakers evolved into a real emergency when an unstaked tent blew into power lines. Slide # 8

Bottom left: With her time freed– at least temporarily – Tara Randle (front, right) conducted the first field trip at ABK for a group of birders attending the annual Texas Ornithological Society meeting in San Antonio.

Photo from Nancye Drukker video



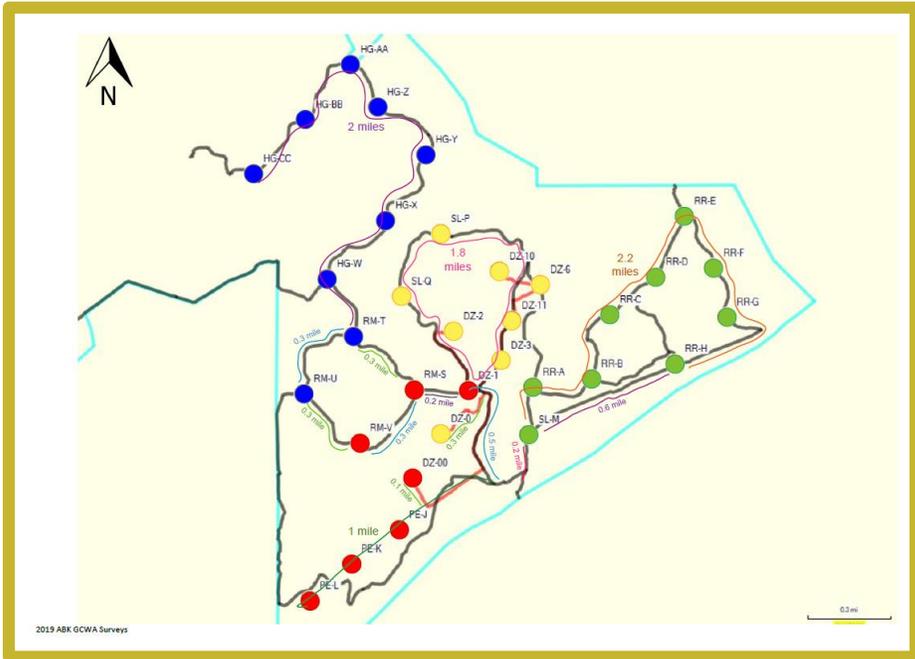
## Golden-Cheeked Warbler Survey Training March 9, 2019

After leading GCWA point and territorial surveys for 5 years, Tara Randle passed the baton to Arlyne Martinez. Using Tara's materials, Arlyne conducted the survey training in the Volunteers' Office.

Participants (clockwise from upper left corner) included: Wendi Leonard, Arlyne Martinez, Nancy Scoggins, Mariana Outlaw, Michael Botkin, Tara Randle, Coco Brennan, and Bill Collins.

Arlyne wrote the final survey report and Tara entered the data on ArcGIS.





- Power Easement
- Something Loopy
- Ridge Runner
- Heavenly

Table 2. Survey Dates (MM/DD/YYYY)

	Power Easement	Something Loopy	Ridge Runner	Heavenly
Survey 1	03/20/2019	03/29/2019	03/22/2019	03/24/2019
Survey 2	03/31/2019	04/05/2019	04/03/2019	04/05/2019
Survey 3	04/27/2019	04/29/2019	04/15/2019	04/21/2019
Survey 4	05/05/2019	05/15/2019	04/28/2019	05/13/2019
Survey 5	05/24/2019*	05/24/2019	N/A**	N/A**

\* Temperatures exceeded 80°F

\*\*Survey not completed due to surveyor availability and/or unfavorable weather conditions

## Golden-Cheeked Warbler Survey

### Arlyne Martinez, Leader

ABK volunteer Arlyne conducted the training session, organized the schedule, and prepared the final report of the GCWA Presence/Absence survey in 2019.

Seventeen complete and 1 incomplete survey took place from March 20<sup>th</sup> through May 24<sup>th</sup> in accordance with the Southern Edwards Plateau-Bexar County Important Bird Area (IBA) protocol.

Male GCWAs were seen or heard at 27 of the 33 survey points; female birds were seen at 2 points; and no fledglings were seen at any points. However, 2 fledglings were seen incidentally on the Heavenly route. Arlyne's detailed report also gives the gps location of all other male and female warblers found incidentally, i.e., between the designated points.



Above: Golden-cheeked Warbler Fledgling.  
Below: Golden-cheeked Warbler Adult Male

photos by Tara Randle



Region 3  
Albert and Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area  
October 12, 2019

On a cloudy, brisk Saturday, October 12, the TPWD Foundation (Jay Kleberg, Chairman), partnered with Spectrum Trail Racing (Jason Brooks, owner) to sponsor the first in a series of annual "We Will Not Be Tamed" races. A total of 42 runners participated: 2 ambitious runners in the 100K individual race; 4 teams of 3 in the 100K relay; and 28 individuals in the 10K race. The purpose of these races is to bring notoriety to properties that are not yet open to the general public. On-site support was provided by ABK-SNA Superintendent James Rice; Government Canyon-SNA David Rice (LE); GC-SNA biologist Ryan Thorton; and ABK's core of volunteers.

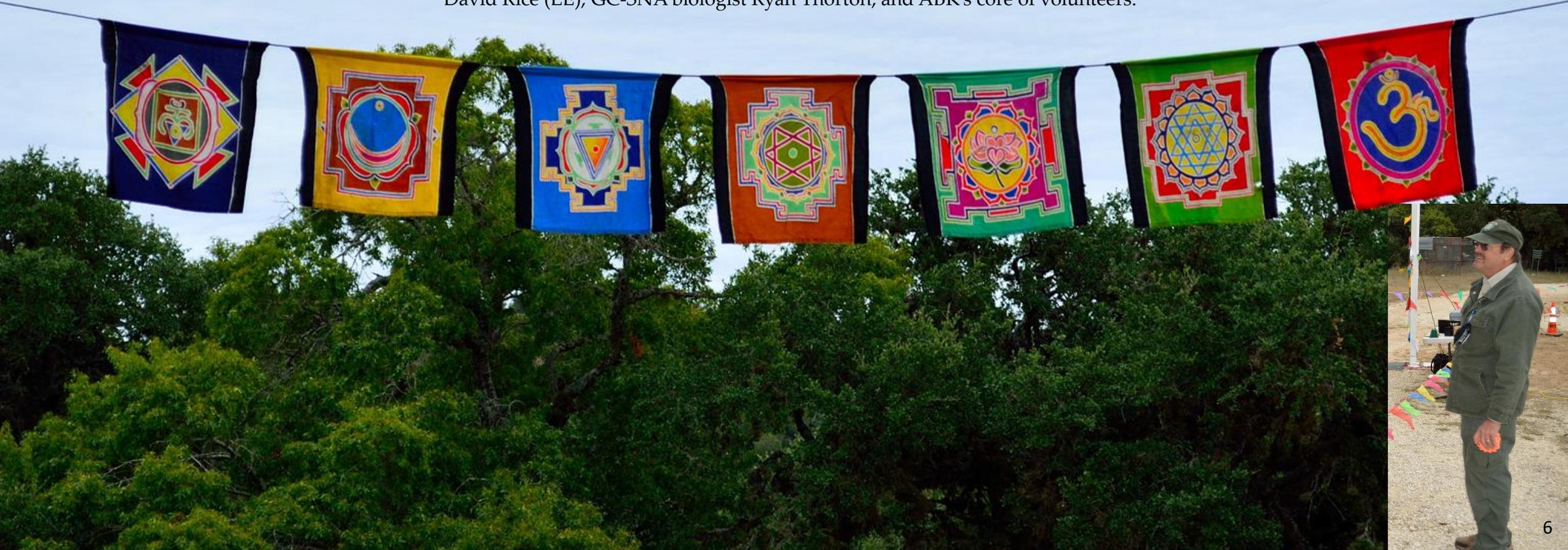




Photo by James Rice



Upper left: ABK's own Marianna Outlaw; Amanda Shannon; Dylan Jones; and Tony Maldonado  
Middle left: Jay Kleberg (TPWD Foundation) and Jason Brooks (Spectrum owner/organizer)

## Spectrum 10K Trail Run Winners

First Place

Second Place

Third Place



Law Enforcement Training  
November 19 and 20, 2019

ABK hosted the TPWD Region's Annual LE Training with volunteers posing as offenders. Nancye Drukker summed up her experience thusly:

"It turned out to be a gorgeous day! Looked up & saw the sky & colors - plus, I was pretending to "video" the jerk mouthing off at us from the other campsite :)

It was so much fun, but honestly a little uncomfortable to be so disrespectful and mouthy to law enforcement!! I got cuffed once, frisked once, thrown out of the park twice & moved to a different site several times. I hope if I see any of them at their parks that they don't recognize me & boot me out!!!

I'm really grateful I got to be part of an enactment - gave me even more respect and admiration for what they go through. They have to observe, process and analyze so many things all at once - stay safe, diffuse the situation and uphold law.

Glad ABK got to host this!"

Cited for mouthing off to Nancye? And maybe illegal camping (photo by Nancye)



Above: Cited for Illegal Fishing: Tom Harrigan (photo by Tom Riordan)

Below: Cited for Illegal Fishing: Stephen Bishop (photo by Rheda Boardman)

## Analysis of Game Camera Data

“Volunteers analyzed the video by viewing the time lapse video and recording the unique number of wildlife seen during each time block which was entered on the appropriate excel sheet using these: Wildlife codes: D= Doe, B= Buck/Spike, F= Fawn, U = Unknown, H = Hog and O = Other (turkeys, fox, exotic etc.) These excel sheets which are specific to a feeder location are then brought together and a final analysis performed. The main finding we are looking for is the maximum number of specific wildlife seen during a specific 15 minute period across all feeding stations. This number is a good indicator of the total population of specific wildlife that is present on ABKSNA and going to the feeders. A total of 1000 video files encompassing 82 GB were collected and analyzed.” Tom Harrigan

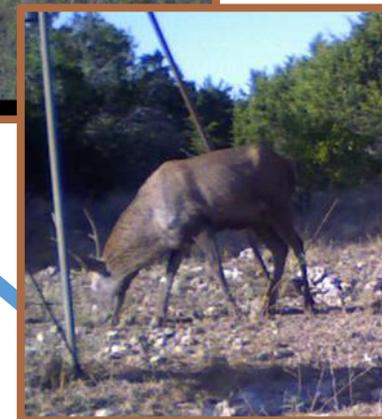
The numbers of White tailed deer are plugged into formula to estimate the overall deer population. These estimates are then used to determine the numbers and gender of deer that may be hunted during the drawn adult and youth hunts.

*Maximum number of deer by type and hogs per 15 min time period in 2019*

	Doe	Buck	Fawn	Unknown	Hog
	16	11	5	4	36

Maximum # individuals counted in one 15 minute period				
Year	2016	2017	2018	2019
Deer	17	16	20	30
Hog	29	14	40	36

Fair Game



Absolute No-Nos!!!



## Hog Management Team

Activities of this team include estimating the number of feral hogs on the property via sightings on game cameras, trapping hogs via a remotely monitored corral trap and snares, and eliminating trapped animals.

In 2019, Team Leader Tom Harrigan and his team (Ernie Bubenik, Stephen Dodwell, Britt Coleman, Tom Riordan, and Tom Denyer) placed the corral trap at 4 locations: Bessie's Pond, Blue Bird Field, Water Hole #3 and Wash Out. A total of 33 hogs were trapped and eliminated. Many more hogs/sounders were observed on the game cameras, however.

The snares were not activated. However, Tom Harrigan is in the process of writing an SOP for a volunteer-run program. Once James' boss signs off on the program, 2-3 volunteers will be allowed to eliminate snared/ trapped hogs.

## Public Hunts

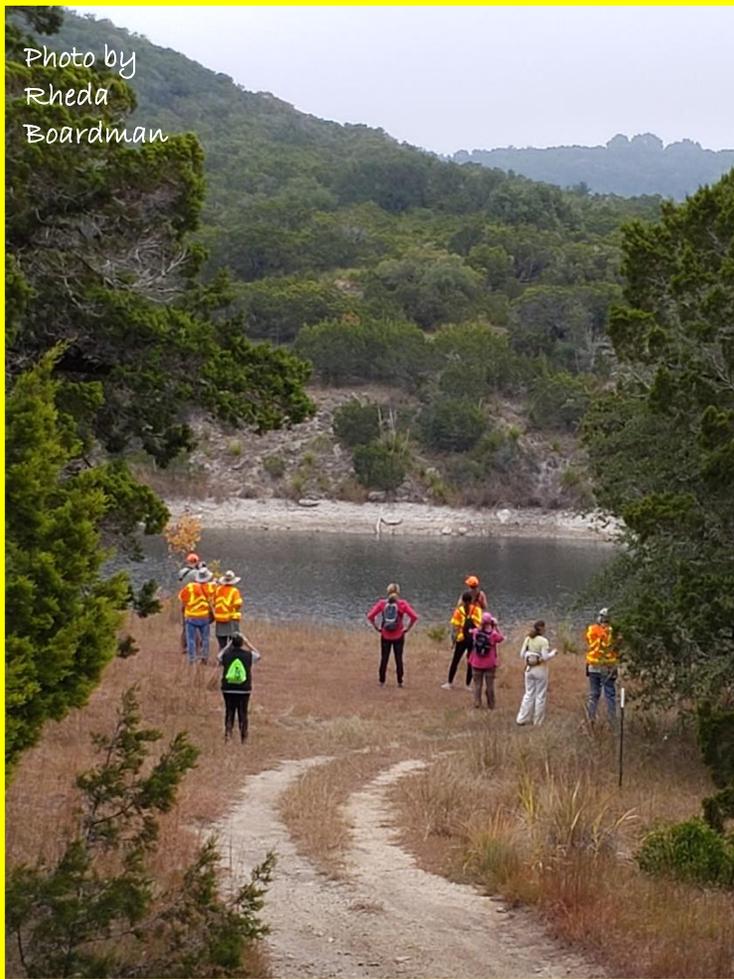
Public Hunts are the culmination of hundreds of hours of hard work by James Rice (Superintendent), Tom Harrigan (Hog Management Team Leader & acting Deer Management Team Leader), and a herd of ABK volunteers. One group of volunteers analyzes hundreds of hours of game camera pictures starting in September; another team fills the 14 automatic feeders and replaces batteries in the cameras, a daunting task considering ABK is spread out over 3,757 acres. During the actual hunts, James, Tom Riordan and other volunteers cook for the adult hunters (the youth groups prepare their own meals). Still other volunteers register the hunters and sometimes provide transportation to the assigned deer blinds.

During the 2019-2020 season there were 2 adult drawn hunts and 2 youth hunts. A total of 7 White-tailed deer including 2 bucks and 5 doe and 4 feral hogs were bagged. The Texas Wildlife Association youth hunters, James Rice, and ABK volunteers Ernie Bubenik, Daniel Tilson, Tom Riordan, and Tom Harrigan are shown in the picture. Tilson is on a Work/Study program.

The complete menu at these hunts is not published; however, word on the trail is that at the December 6-8 adult hunt gumbo was served one night while chicken thighs, coleslaw, and baked potatoes were served the next, reason enough to come out and volunteer!



Photo by  
Rheda  
Boardman



## Monthly Bird Surveys

Tara Randle, Team Leader, conducted the Monthly Bird Surveys for the 7<sup>th</sup> Year. In 2019, she and her team recorded 91 species, including 6 new species (Hooded Merganser, Ruddy Duck, Eastern Wood pewee, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Northern Rough-winged Swallow, Savannah Sparrow).

The total number of species recorded since 2013 is an astounding 152 species!

Tara published the first checklist of all ABK birds seen to date. It is modeled after the checklist used at the Cibolo Nature Center in Boerne, Texas.

Finally, the team boasted another ABK "First" when Tara lead a group of birders from TOS on an ABK field trip May 3<sup>rd</sup>. These birders were attending the annual Texas Ornithological Society meeting in San Antonio.

(Photos by Ken Butler except as noted).



Golden-cheeked  
Warbler



Eastern  
Phoebe



Wood Ducks by Tara Randle



Blue-winged  
Teal



Redhead



Photo by Rheda Boardman



## Butterfly Surveys Team Rheda Boardman, Leader

This very active and dedicated team performed 11 surveys in 2019, discovered 4 new species (see pictures), and raised the total ABK Lepidoptera species count (excluding moths) to 86. Tara Randle, Ken Butler, and Rheda continued taking fabulous photographs of their beautiful winged quarry which sometimes extended to dragonflies (see next slide/page). Assisting these survey regulars were team members Gary Fest, Ernest Bubenik, Jerry Morrissey, Wendi Leonard, Karen Dodwell, Randy Fuentes, Cecilia Fuentes, Nancye Drukker, Rachael Thomas, and Lorraine Polyp. Butterflies (clockwise): Red spotted purple, Desert checkered skipper, Mournful duskywing, Desert checkered skipper, Marine blue.



Another Class of Winged Creatures

Photos by Ken Butler



**Roseate  
Skimmer**



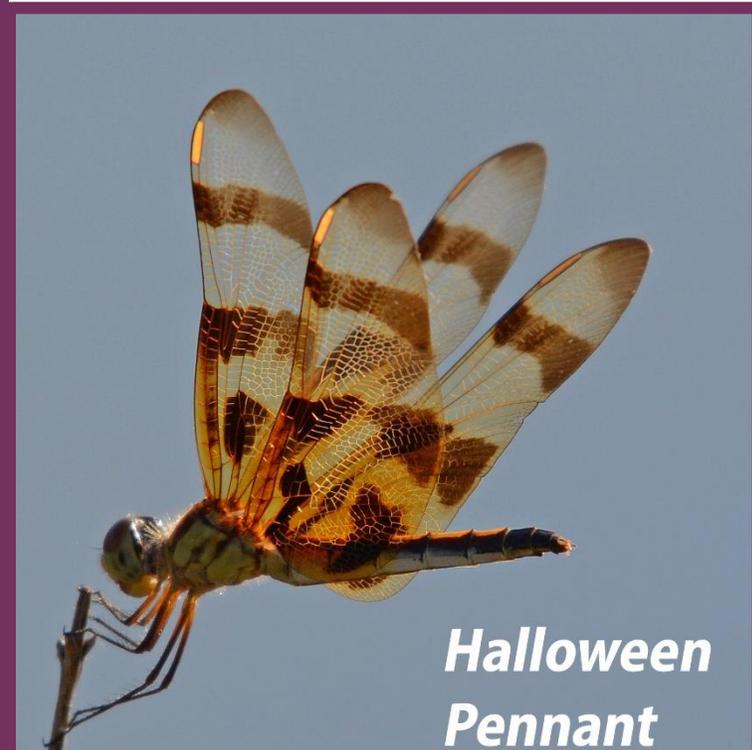
**Flame  
Skimmer**



**Blue  
Dasher**



**Black  
Saddlebaas**



**Halloween  
Pennant**



**Eastern  
Pondhawk  
(female)**



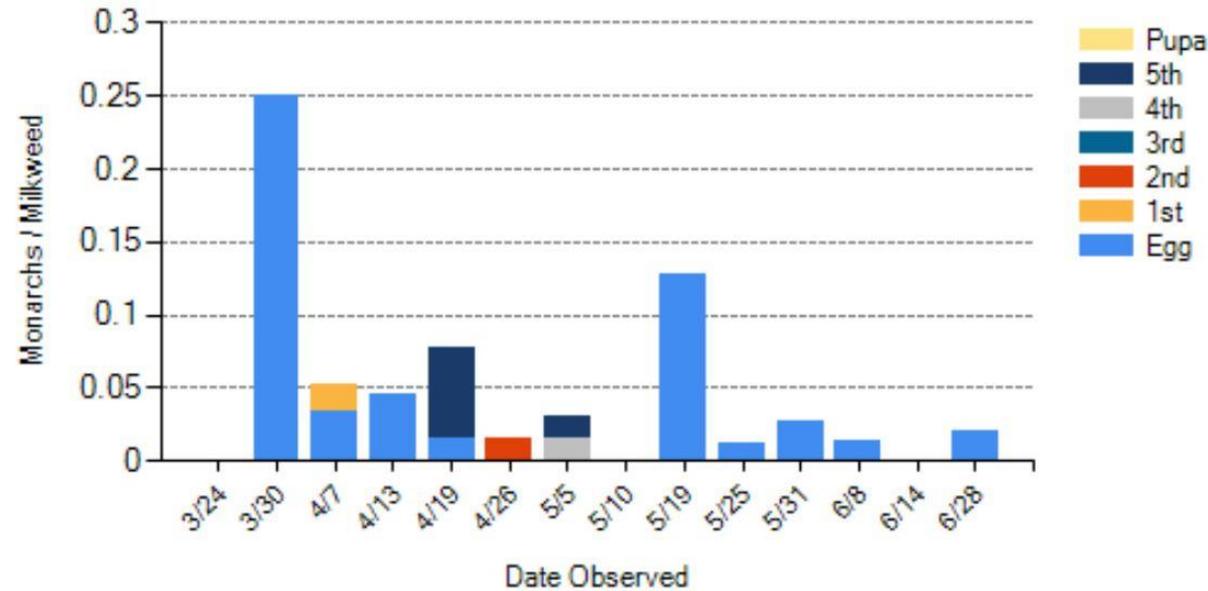
**Twelve-spotted  
Skimmer  
(female)**



**Widow  
Skimmer  
(male)**

## 2019 MLMP Monarch Density for Albert & Bessie Kronkosky State Natural Area

Total avg. sample size = 61 plants/week



# of sites monitored = 1

© Monarch Larva Monitoring Project

## Monarch Larva Monitoring Program Linda Plevak, Team Leader

Linda and Antonio Martinez continued to monitor the Highway 46 field in 2019 which was initially monitored by Tom Riordan, Rheda Boardman, and Tara Randle. When the Bessie's Pond site was added, Cecilia Fuentes joined Rheda in monitoring that site.

A member of the MLMP Honor Roll along with other ABK volunteers including Rheda and Donna Taylor, Linda sent her 2019 data to the MLMP website, found at

<https://monarchjointventure.org/mlmp/mlmp-monitoring/mlmp-activity-datasheets>

The Monarch Larva Monitoring Project (MLMP) is a citizen science project involving volunteers from across the United States and Canada in monarch research. The MLMP is a way for monarch and nature enthusiasts to contribute basic knowledge about monarch population dynamics.

By Night...



New species of moth for ABK:  
*Homosetia argentinotella*



Aquatic moth, *Petrophila cappsii*  
Photos by Delmar Cain

## Moth Surveys Team

Whether seen by day or by night, moths are fascinating and beautiful creatures! Team Leader Delmar Cain and his side-kick Tom Riordan continued surveys at Bessie's Pond in 2019... Delmar was featured in the July 2019 issue of *Texas Parks and Wildlife* in an article entitled, "Like a Moth to a Flame." He assisted Smithsonian research entomologists as they examined rocks for aquatic moth larvae. The article states that there are a daunting 11,930 moth species in North America north of Mexico, 4,672 in Texas alone... The striking Black Witch Moth – *Ascalapha odorata* – appeared unexpectedly at the ABK Superintendent's residence one hot July afternoon (moth pictured below).



Gary Adams, Theresa Butler,  
Anne Adams and Ernie Bubenik  
surveying Camping Field post burn.  
Photos by Charlene Moore



## Plant Surveys Team Anne Adams, Leader

For the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, Anne and her team performed transect surveys of plant species growing in the old agricultural fields. Regarding Bluebird Field, Anne reported on the forbs population growth post burn, noting, *"There is a remarkable difference in the growth on the northwest/west side vs. the south/southeast side. Plants on the west are large and blooming even though they had been browsed. There was evidence of heavy grazing on the switchgrass and little bluestem as well, and plenty of signs of waterbuck around there. Sprouts on the east were fewer and much smaller. I think the difference is probably moisture."* Forbs/wildflowers are integral to prairie restoration and pollinator propagation.

Another project post burn was the dispersal of the milkweed seed balls made by ABK volunteers last year. Antelope horn milkweed are host plants for Monarch butterfly larva on the butterfly's journey northward in the spring. An active Monarch Larva Monitoring Program at ABK is headed by Linda Plevak.

Anne's other contribution in 2019 was surveying the plants at Headquarters. Seventy one species were identified. Anne and husband/ABK Volunteer, Gary Adams, relocated in July 2019. Their hard work has been greatly appreciated, and they will both be sorely missed.

Geology Workshop  
January 25, 2019

Team Leader, Kathy Ward, conducted her annual Workshop for the first time in the Volunteers' Office. It was followed by an optional Geology Walk in the field.

ABKSNA Geological Field Work,  
12-03-18



In December 2018 the Geology Team was joined by Matthew Allen, a working geologist who started measuring outcrops from the lowest elevation on Bessie's Creek. His report on that field work was displayed at the 2019 workshop.

ABKSNA Cretaceous Formations

Ft Terrett Member (Edwards)

Nodular limestone with black spots (fecal pellets)

*Ceratostreon texanum* (*Exogyra texana*) oyster

*Loriola rosana*, sea urchin

*Monopleura* bed, rudist

Massive limestone

*Porocystis*, green algae ball

*Orbitulina*, one celled organism

Upper Glenrose

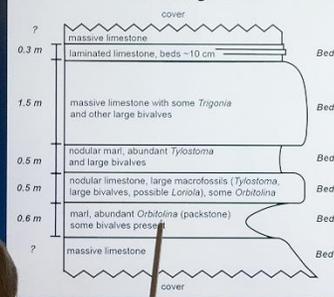
Corbula Bed Divides - not on ABK

Lower Glenrose



Locality  
120318-B

120318-B Stratigraphic Column and  
Weathering Profile





## Participants

**Ernie Bubenik, Tom Denyer, Wendi Leonard, Jana Baxter, Tara Randle, Karen Dodwell, Stephen Dodwell, Cheyenne Love, Veronica Hawk, Vivian Fink, Tom Harrigan, Kathy Ward, Carla Brady, Matt, and Desi D'Orsogna (photographer).**



## Archeology Team

The most noteworthy activity occurred in late October/early November when Team Leader Stephen Bishop and the TPWD survey team (Robin Barnes, Archeological Services Lead, and Karl Kibler, Consulting Geoarcheologist) studied trenches dug in proposed development sites and Doobie Field. In trenches dug by the backhoe at Doobie, old Pleistocene deposits 13,000 to 1.2 million years old were discovered. Also in Doobie field, more superficial 6,000 year old alluvial deposits potentially contained buried artefacts from the pre-historic period. Finally, at Pipe Creek, fire cracked rock and wood charcoal from the historic period circa 1750 were discovered.

Earlier in the year, Stephen attended a geology walk with Kathy and Ann Schneider across the Bluebird field where lithic scatter was exposed in the burned areas. At the north end where the campground is proposed additional flakes were popping up as a result of the burn followed by eroding rains.

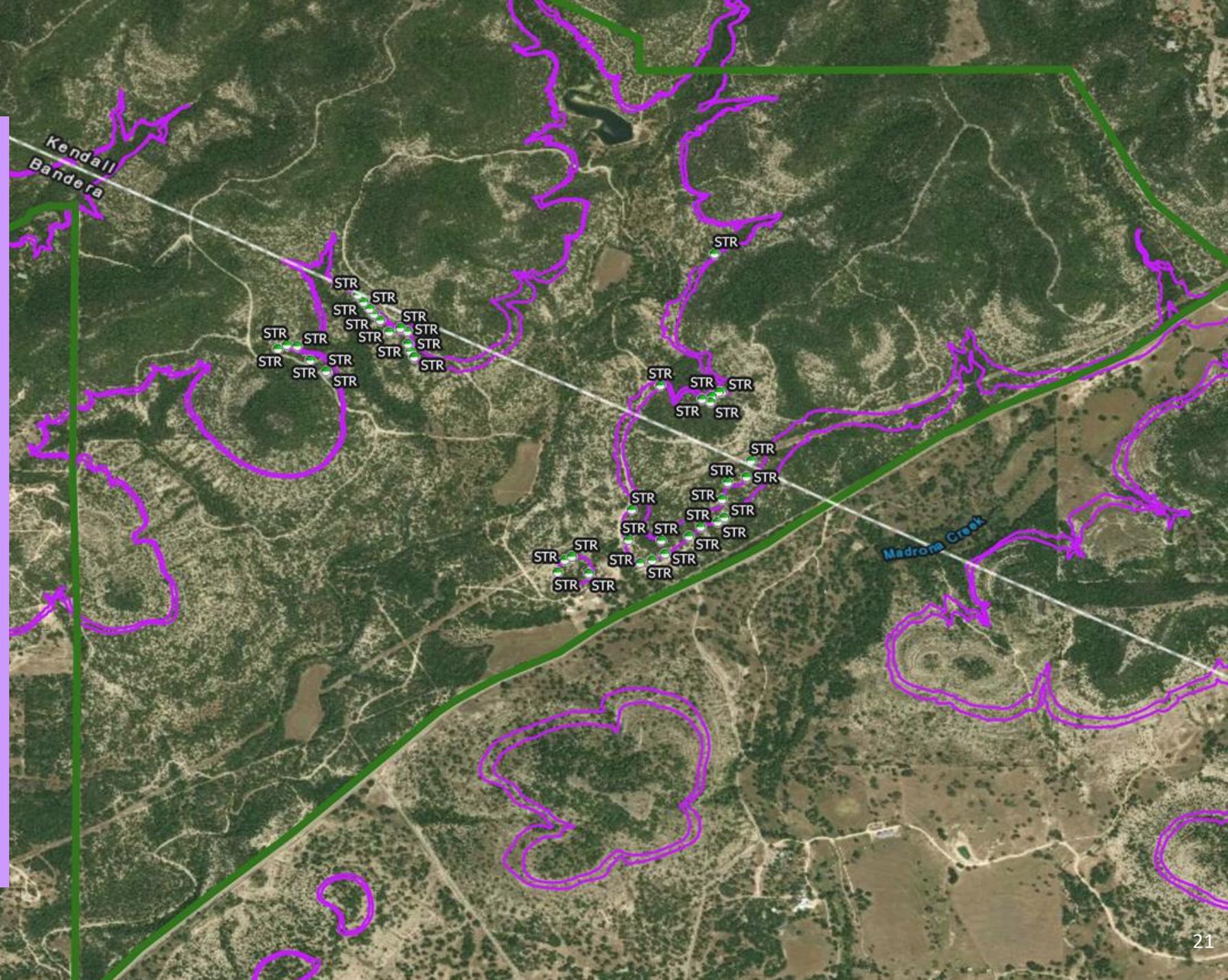


## The Geology Team Keeps Rockin' Along

In 2019, Kathy Ward, Team Leader, Ann Schneider, and various other members of the Geology Team traced Stromatolyte beds for the first time. These beds consist of cyanobacteria or blue-green algae fossils that occur consistently between 1640-1645 feet. Stephen Bishop, Archeology Team Leader, has been mapping the outcrops by overlaying contour and aerial maps. Among other sites, Stromatolytes were found on West Something Loopy, on the eastern side of Round the Mountain, and near the water storage tank.

The Team also traced an Orbitulina bed near Pipe Creek, and they discovered ripple marks about 10 feet off the Chisholm Trail. Above the Stromatolyte layer Stephen and the Team noted a layer of bivalves known as Tapes.

When Kathy wasn't leading Geology Walks she was busy entering 3-6 years' worth of Ann Schneider's fossil and geology data on ArcGIS. So far all of her own data and about 50% of Ann's has been entered.



Nestwatch Team  
Ann Dietert, Leader

Although there were only 21 nests this year as compared to 25 last year, there were 109 fledglings compared to 96. Of the 109, 63 fledglings were baby Bewick's wrens. The 4 common species represented were: Bewick wrens, Ash-throated flycatchers, Titmouse and Eastern bluebirds. Only one clutch failed as opposed to 5 last year. There were only 2 Bluebird nests compared to 3 the year before. Ann wishes to acknowledge her dedicated teammates, Dale Bransford and Penny Bryant.



Tara Randle

Entomology Team  
Ray Dunton, Leader

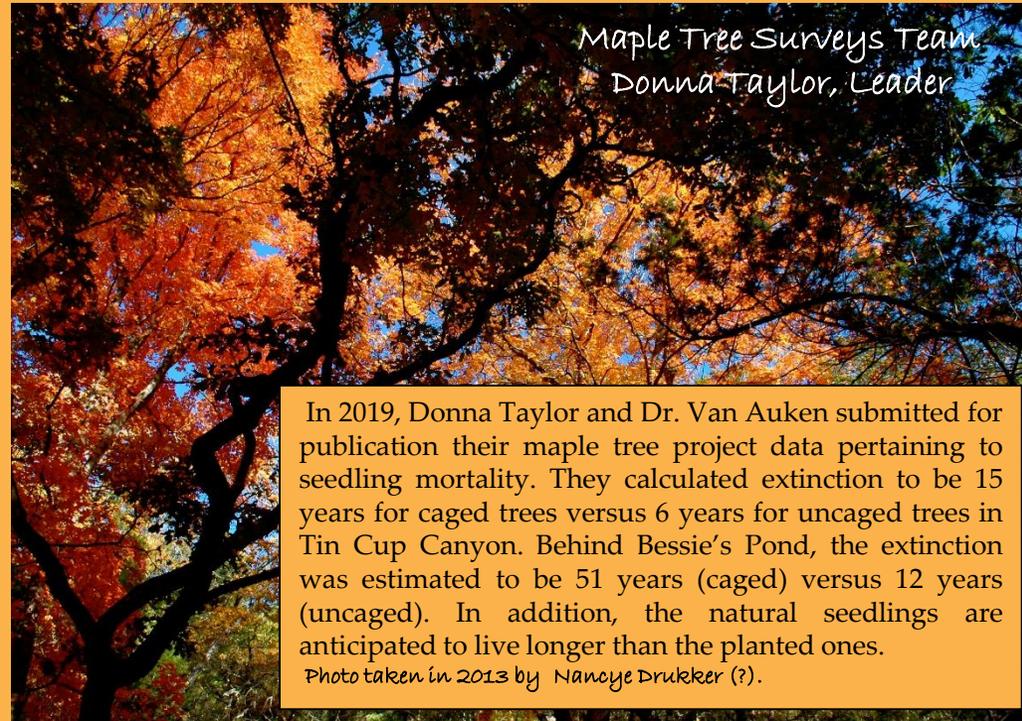
In 2019 Ray Dunton and Claire Mitchell finished pinning all the ABK bee specimens which represent 94 species to date, including 2 species on the SGCN list. The collection is currently warehoused at Sam Houston State University. Assisting Ray in the procurement of specimens was Projects Coordinator, Tom Riordan. Photo by Tara Randle.



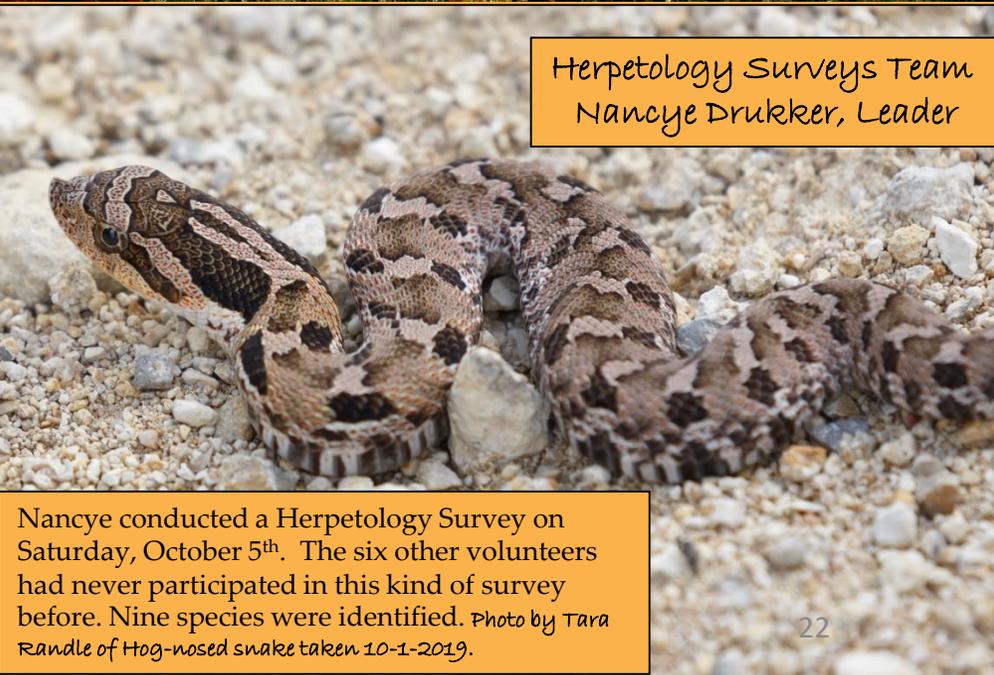
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Maple Tree Surveys Team  
Donna Taylor, Leader

In 2019, Donna Taylor and Dr. Van Auken submitted for publication their maple tree project data pertaining to seedling mortality. They calculated extinction to be 15 years for caged trees versus 6 years for uncaged trees in Tin Cup Canyon. Behind Bessie's Pond, the extinction was estimated to be 51 years (caged) versus 12 years (uncaged). In addition, the natural seedlings are anticipated to live longer than the planted ones. Photo taken in 2013 by Nancye Drukker (?).



Herpetology Surveys Team  
Nancye Drukker, Leader



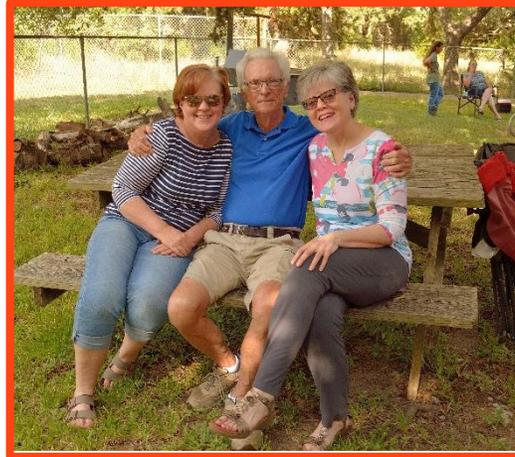
Nancye conducted a Herpetology Survey on Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup>. The six other volunteers had never participated in this kind of survey before. Nine species were identified. Photo by Tara Randle of Hog-nosed snake taken 10-1-2019.

## Fence Repair, a Costly Project...

In November, the Friends Group formed a Fence Repair Committee which eventually evolved into a Team lead by Stephen Dodwell (see picture). Volunteer Charlie Cane walked all 17 miles of ABK's perimeter fence, taking over 700 pictures of holes in it, the data subsequently managed by Tom Harrigan.

The photos submitted by Tom illustrate the repair of just one large defect by Dodwell, Rebecca Laird, and Ernie Bubenik on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

Because repair of the fence and water gaps could cost upwards of a quarter million dollars, the Friends Group will be seeking a grant from the Kronkosky Foundation.

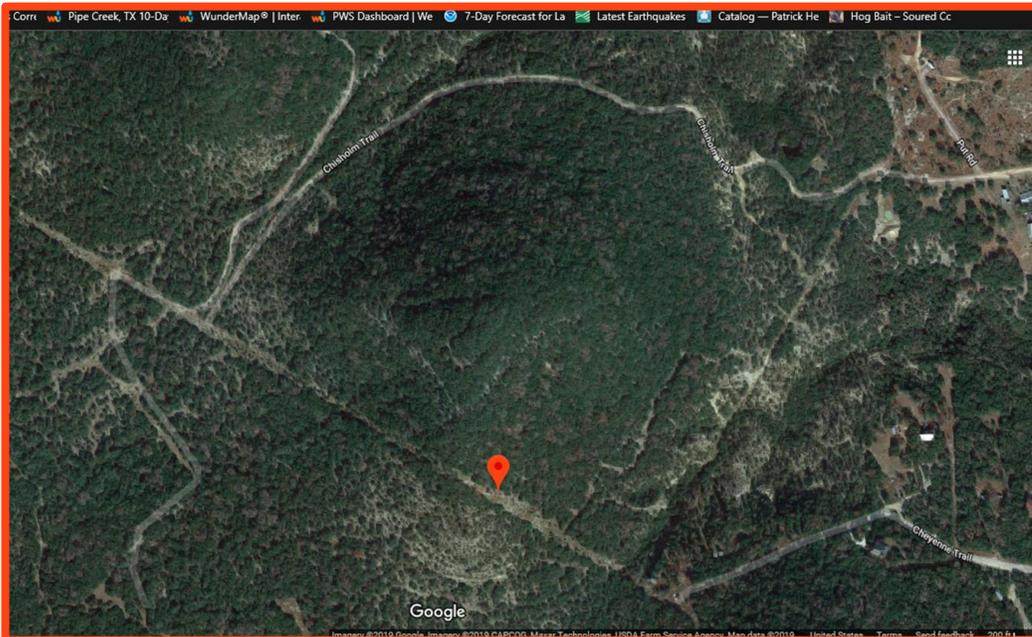


Carla Brady and The Dodwells

## ...Friends Group to the Rescue!

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, Molly Dupnick and Shantel Wilkins from the Kronkosky Foundation were given a tour of ABK. Participants included James Rice, Tom Denyer, Nancye Drukker, Karen Dodwell and Carla Brady. James and Tom drove the VIPs to Red Bluff Creek and Bessies' Pond. Lunch was courtesy of the Friends Group representatives. After lunch, Tom and Nancye drove the women to Ward and Tin Cup Canyons.

The Foundation members guided Friends Group officers as to how to fulfill a "wish list" which includes money for fence repair and more UTVs. Karen Dodwell subsequently drafted a Letter of Inquiry/Interest to the Kronkosky Foundation and will send it as soon as bids for the fence repair are procured.



Fence defect repair, before and after.

Photo by Tom Harrigan



## Service Projects: Removal of Undesirable Plant Species



Malta Star Thistle Pull: the Sequel

On April 18<sup>th</sup> the annual Thistle Pull was attended by 12 ABK volunteers. Thirty bags of the unwanted invasive plants were eliminated around Headquarters, making a huge impact according to James. Last year, by comparison, 18 bags were pulled. Kudos go to volunteer Melba Jacobson who started the event. When Anne Adams did her plant surveys at HQ on May 9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>, there were still a few Malta Star Thistle plants along with 11 other non-native species. Before the first spring mowing, Anne catalogued a total of 71 species of plants, giving James leverage to postpone next year's mowing!



BSA Troop Non-Native Plant Removal

Richard Heilbrun wrote: "Ten girls spent 1 hour searching the 46 Field for Woolly Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*). They removed probably 8-10 plants. One scout caught her first fish at the Pond and learned how to clean and cook it and said "Best thing I've ever eaten." Tom was really helpful and checked on us throughout the weekend. Thanks again for the opportunity. We had a great time..."



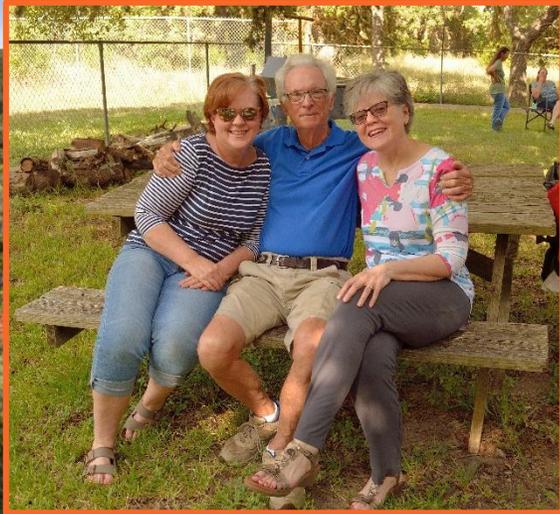
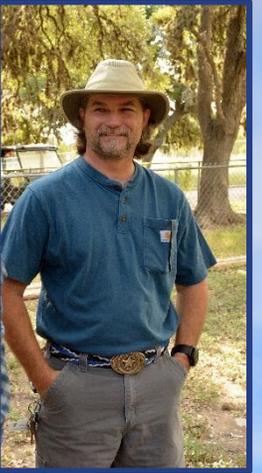
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Fall



Muster





Hello Volunteers!

You are invited to the Annual ABKSNA Volunteer Christmas Party on Sunday, December 15 at 3:00 p.m. at James' residence at ABK.

We hope that you will plan to attend the party this year. If you are a new volunteer this is your opportunity to meet everyone and see where your help might be needed. If you are an active volunteer, please come out to meet the newer volunteers.

The Friends of ABKSNA group is providing smoked turkey and ham for the meal. Please plan to bring a side dish that goes well with turkey and ham. AND, please RSVP to Desi with what dish you are bringing. She is going to coordinate the meal so we have a large variety of side dishes. **Contact Desi at [des.dorsogna@gmail.com](mailto:des.dorsogna@gmail.com) and let her know what dish you plan to bring.**

James will be making his famous homemade ice cream for the party. Our Christmas flavor will be cherry chocolate chunk!!! You do not want to miss his ice cream!

The party will be rain or shine, and if the weather is good bring your lawn chair to sit out in James' great backyard. If the weather is cold or wet we will party inside the house. Bring your own drinks and BYOB. We are pretty sure the Christmas carolers will be cranking it up again as they typically do.

The Friends group will have a tip jar at the party to help cover the cost of the meat and will also have donation forms available and donation receipts. Donations to the non-profit Friends group are tax deductible. We really appreciate your donations and we are saving funds so that we can provide some wonderful and big "extras" to the development of ABK.

So, plan to come out and meet your fellow volunteers and enjoy a fantastic holiday meal! If you can not come for the meal please feel free to drop by to say hello!

Carla, James, and Tom



Nobody Does Christmas like ABK Volunteers!

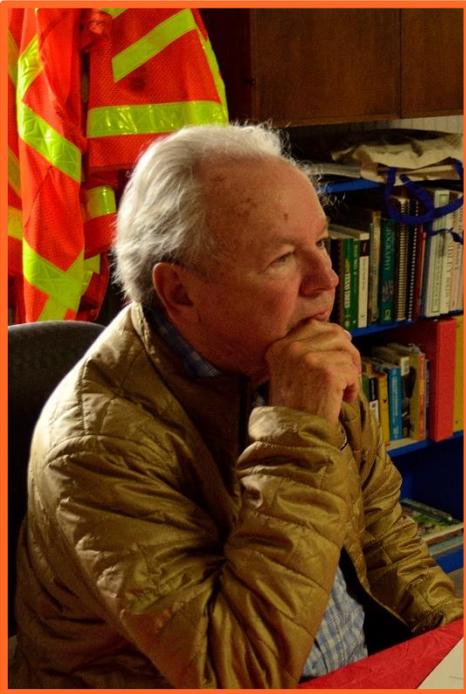


Host James Rice



Hostess Laura Rice





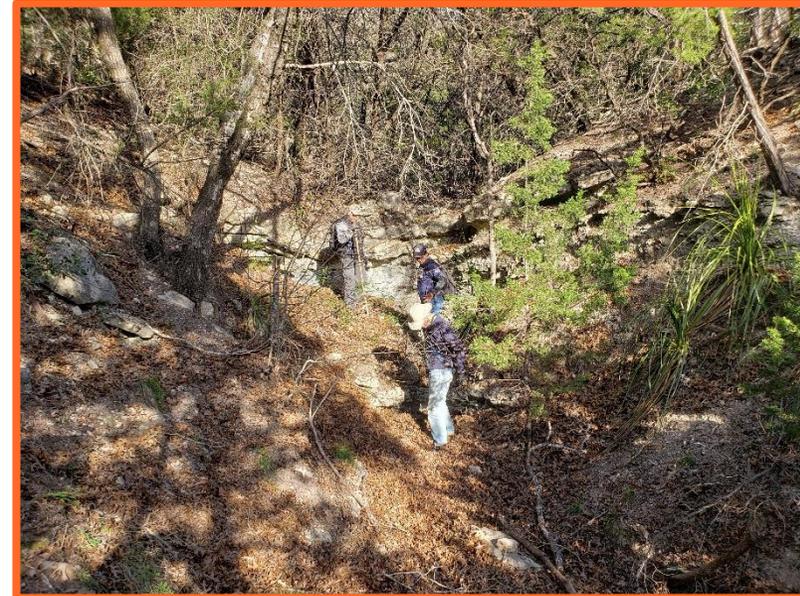
## *ABK Volunteer Outreach and Featuring Tom Denyer*

Tom Denyer, or "T2," is best known for his active participation on the grueling Streams and Canyons Team surveys since the Team's inception. He has written a new protocol which Team Leader Randy Randle will implement on Survey 1, 2, 3 in order to standardize and facilitate data-gathering in the field. In April, Tom enlisted Nancye Drukker's assistance in performing a detailed plant survey of UNR 195, a drainage area near Chisholm/Chirping Frog trails with a productive stream. Tom, Nancye and participants Ernie Bubenik and Kathy Ward identified 58 species of plants.

Tom agreed to sit on the Board of the ABKSNA Friends Group, becoming its Vice President. Passionate about preserving the pristine headwaters of Bessie's Creek, Tom persuaded the Board to fund a 2 day riparian survey and workshop by the noted Steve Nelle. The area that will be studied starts below the dam on Bessie's Pond and extends almost to Doobie Field and is in the Development Zone. In the past, Tom has attempted to contact landowners or trustees of properties adjacent to ABK containing these headwaters. He is actively involved in the Headwaters Alliance, a group of 40 landowners working on spring and stream protection.

Tom's outreach extends beyond the border of ABK to places like Sandy Creek and Big Bend National Park. Whether educating Team Leaders about alternative insect repellants to DEET or discussing things he learned from Andy Sansom at the Linde Lecture series, Tom shares his knowledge.

Tom was instrumental in getting members of the Kronkosky Foundation out to ABK for a VIP tour for the first time since ABK was donated to TPWD by the Foundation. The Foundation has provided grants for computers and other equipment to further the study of natural and cultural resources.



Survey of drainages UNR 199 and UNR 201 in March



## There is Nothing Constant but Change Itself

Reflections by ABK Historian  
Desiree E. D'Orsogna

As 2020 (that's right: **2020**) comes to a close, I am finally putting the finishing touches on the **2019** annual report. In late 2019, retirement from a 38 year career in medicine; personal health issues; home renovation; and preparation for a long overdue birding trip to Belize consumed the time normally devoted to reporting on the activities of James Rice and his All Volunteer Army.

Although James remained Superintendent in 2019, the Friends Group and ABK's Team Leaders underwent shuffling of members. With respect to the former, Carla Brady remained President of the Friends Group and Cay Russ remained Treasurer. They were joined by Carla's sister, Karen Dodwell, and by Tom Denyer. Several Team Leaders resigned. A debt of gratitude is owed to Anne Adams (Plant Surveys Team) and to Craig Childs (Hog Management Team). Anne's duties were assumed by 3 volunteers: Jerry Morrissey, Gary Fest, and Nancye Drukker. Tom Harrigan assumed Craig's duties as well as duties as interim Leader for Deer Management, maintaining all automatic feeders and game cameras (while still performing monthly safety checks in/around Headquarters and generating reports for James).

The World would soon change forever. Brewing in late 2019 was the SARS CoV 2 pandemic. The final indoor Team Leader's meeting was held in March 2020 before nationwide lockdown began. The next meeting would not take place until June, and it would occur outdoors with James and the Team Leaders wearing masks and "social distancing."

As **2021** rapidly approaches, volunteers can look forward to positive changes at our beloved ABKSNA. With Planning and Design money in hand as well as 7 years' worth of baseline data on the natural and cultural resources, James can move forward with the development process. The promise of vaccines to combat the deadly COVID 19 pandemic gives hope that we "senior" volunteers might soon be able to return to our "on-site" as opposed to "remote" volunteerism. This volunteer/retiree in particular misses the face-to-face, in-person interaction with Region 3 folks that office at ABK; with James Rice, the Superintendent; and with the numerous volunteers and advisors alongside with I've enjoyed working.

*Stay safe Everyone! See you in 2021*

