



TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

OCTOBER 24-27

Texas Master Naturalist 2024 Project Fair

The Texas Master Naturalist Program holds this competition in conjunction with our Annual Meeting each year to share and award the premier projects of the TMN Program. Our chapter members continually list this fair as a favorite way to learn about projects other chapters are doing and how they may be able to replicate such projects in their areas. Submissions are limited to one project entry per chapter so think of that one project your chapter would want to tell everyone about through this contest!

Project Fair Format:

Both a **Written Entry Paragraph** and later a **Virtual Presentation** will be required for entry in this year's Project Fair.

Written Entry Paragraph: Chapters entering a submission into the contest will need to provide a short paragraph describing the project by **SEPTEMBER 15th, 2024**. Entries will be made on the TXMN State Website (<https://txmn.tamu.edu/2024-annual-meeting/>)

Virtual Presentation: Our virtual format of the Exemplary Project Fair remains virtual by popular demand! We're asking for Project Fair submissions to be done through a **20-minute presentation** time (up to 15 mins. of presentation + at least 5 mins for Q&A) via WebEx to be hosted during our **October #TMNTuesday speaker session on Tuesday, October 8th, 2024**. These presentations will be delivered to a panel of judges (and any other viewers tuning in) and will be recorded. Presentations should include all the content normally built into a physical Project Fair submission - a storyline, the project details, the methods for the project, and the results. Visuals in the presentation can include pictures, a slide show, true video, interviews/presentations with project members, etc. Additional important pieces to include are listed below. Remember that the last 5-8 minutes of the presentation should allow for questions and answers from the judges. A pre-event tech check will be scheduled for presenters to get comfortable and test their tech and presentation sharing.

When: **Written submissions** must be sent in by **SEPTEMBER 15TH** and then the **virtually delivered presentation** will be scheduled for **Tuesday, October 8th, 2024**. The chapter project representative (or small group of representatives) will need to be available for the presentation

day and questions from judges. Presenters should be prepared to hold the time block of 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on October 8th for their presentation time. Specific presentation times will be scheduled after the September 15th submission deadline closes. The written submissions and recorded virtual presentations will be highlighted and shared on social media, our state TMN website, and the Annual Meeting website prior to the event for all chapters, members, and meeting attendees to view.

Judging: A pre-selected panel of judges will join the set of live 20-minute presentation of the Project Fair on **October 8th** using the judging criteria below. Keep in mind that the judges will come from partnering organizations/agencies and may include TMN leaders and volunteers. Judging will also include open Q&A to be hosted during the last 5 minutes of each of the 20-minute presentations.

Exemplary Projects should be:

*(This is also the criteria by which project fair submissions will be judged.)

- Useful and practical for all chapters—something that is “do-able” and sustainable in any given chapter.
- Representative of a local need of your chapter’s natural resource issues and community.
- Need driven—a project that addresses a pressing naturalist or natural resource need.
- Representative of the goals and mission of the Texas Master Naturalist program.
- Led by the chapter (vs. being led or initiated by a chapter partner).
- Visible—for the chapter and the program practices and principles.
- A lead into a good program marketing story, article, or social media.
- Collaborative of many chapter members’ skills, interests, and expertise.
- Something that provides several impacts: such as a chapter recruitment tool, provides an educational tool or model for other’s behavior and practices, helps people to appreciate, connect, or reconnect with nature or change their attitude and/or behavior towards natural resources through the presentation of sound natural resource information, management, or practices.
- Organized—well planned and well executed.

Project Fair Presentation Content should include:

- Short description of project needs and goals.
- How the project was conducted.
- What did it take to complete the project?
- Contact information.
- Cost, grants received, etc.
- Sponsors for the project, other organizations, partners, and collaborators.
- Hours involved.
- Number of people involved.
- Chapter or conservation impact.
- Pitfalls to avoid if another chapter were to attempt to recreate such a project in their area.
- Lessons learned and what you would do differently.
- Interesting facts about the project.

- Pictures of the project clearly indicate that it is a Texas Master Naturalist Project. TMN members are wearing TMN gear, TMN name tags, clear mention of your TMN chapter and program are all great examples.

Written Entry should include (as a minimum): **Due by SEPTEMBER 15th, 2024**

- Project title
- Full name of chapter (no acronyms)
- Contact information (Name, email and phone) for presenter(s) on October 8th.
- Short Project description including:
 - goals
 - Methods of project implementation
 - Impact of project to the community and/or chapter

Judging & Awards:

Judging Criteria:

- Reflects goals & mission of Texas Master Naturalist program (0-20 pts)
- Represents a local need (0-10 pts)
- Useful & practical (0-15 pts)
- Originated by chapter & involves many chapter members (0-20 pts)
- Has measurable outcomes & multiple impacts (0-15 pts)
- Well organized & executed (0-10 pts)
- Creates visibility for the chapter (0-10 pts)
- Judges discretionary/Bonus points (0-10 pts)

Judges' comments from past Project Fairs:

- Take care to develop your presentation as one for future use with the public—you'll want to be clear and concise on what the project is, its impacts, and the chapter that is conducting it.
- Internal chapter projects are a possible entry – let us know how you are improving, updating, running your chapter, plus how and why!
- Projects that focus on the Be The Change diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion projects kicked off or continued by Chapters are eligible.
- Neatness and creativity count!
- Take care to have correct use of Texas Master Naturalist marketing and ID guidelines.
- New, creative, and unique projects make for an interesting and exciting judges experience.
- Make your presentation impactful, attention grabbing, and illustrative of your project!
- Verbal narratives by the chapter representatives are always enthusiastic, well-prepared, and passionate!
- There is always more to the story than could be represented in the typical display. *And the virtual presentation format may give the option to tell this story!
- Be careful of having too much written information posted and in too small of print to read.

Award Notes:

- Awards will be in the form of monetary project grants based on place level and availability of funds to the winning chapters which are intended to further support the winning projects or new project implementations of the chapters' choice.
- All entries must have submitted a short paragraph (described above about their project) and shared the original presentation file for the entry for posting on the Texas Master Naturalist state website. Projects may also be highlighted in the State TMN Program Annual Report.
- Extensions of projects of the previous year's winning projects are **not** eligible for current year's awards.