

# HABITAT HERALD

Wildlife Austin's monthly Newsletter



## Wildlife Austin

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Parks and Recreation  
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## UPCOMING EVENTS:

### Thursday November 6

BACKYARD BASICS: BACKYARD CHICKENS

Cost:\$10 (\$15 late and onsite)

Register

Online: <https://agriliferegiste>

Travis County AgriLife Extension Office

1600b Smith Road

Austin, TX 78721

By phone: 979-845-2604

### Saturday November 8

The 4th Annual Children & Family Nature's Workshop

10:00am - 2:00pm

George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center

1165 Angelina Street

Austin, TX 78702

1-512-974-4926

### Saturday November 8

NWF Habitat Talk - Birds in the Winter Garden

AISD Science and Health Resource Center - Discovery Hill

Outdoor Learning Center

305 N. Bluff Drive

Austin, TX 78745

## November 2014

Hello



In this edition of the Habitat Herald we have an update from National Public Lands Day volunteer event. Wildlife Austin and Park Rangers were in attendance to thank volunteers for their service to our parks. In our Living in a WUI section we take a look at pollinators and our Neighborhood pollinator garden challenge. We also have an update from our Habitat Steward class that wrapped up on Sept. 25. We also have our school yard update.

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## Would you like to receive the newsletter?

E-mail us at

[wildlife@austintexas.gov](mailto:wildlife@austintexas.gov)



# National Public Lands Day

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## Monarch Appreciation Day

Thank you to all who came out to volunteer during National Public Lands Day (NPLD). Wildlife Austin and the Park Ranger Unit met with many volunteers who were already serving our public lands through a variety of volunteer led projects. Texas Conservation Corps, Austin Parks Foundation, REI, Compost Peddlers, Tree Folks and City of Austin Parks and Recreation's Wildlife Austin/Park Rangers attended the celebration held at the Rosewood Park Pavilion. National Public Lands Day is a great way to promote public land projects that interest you the most and a great way to network with like minded people in the conservation field.



Monarch appreciation day, which was held on September 13th was a great success. Wildlife Austin's own, Meredith Gray, discussed the Neighborhood Pollinator Challenge. Even though we received much needed rain, many visitors showed their support for the Native Plant Society's plant sale. As part of Monarch appreciation day, visitors were able to safely interact with Monarchs and learn from experts conservation efforts that make a difference in Monarch populations. As part of the event, Austin Bike Zoo displayed this interactive monarch bike.





## Fall 2014 Habitat Steward Class

September marked the close of our Habitat Steward Training sessions for the 2014 year. Wildlife Austin will host another session of Habitat Steward Training in the fall of 2015. Nine dedicated volunteers successfully completed the classes.

During the Saturday September 6th Habitat Steward class field trip Dr. Kevin Anderson Coordinator for the Center Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend. Dr. Anderson taught stewards to think about “Ecology from the Ground Up” challenging stewards to think about ecology holistically. In the morning Stewards were led on a guided bird hike by Park Ranger Julie Webber.

Cathy Nordstrom with San Souci Landscapes, discussed design principles with Habitat Stewards and common pit falls with designing landscapes for wildlife habitat. Nordstrom taught stewards to think about the landscape from a both an outdoor and indoor perspective and to incorporate vertical layering to provide habitat for and continuity to a design.



Following Nordstrom’s design lecture Jane Tillman—a Habitat Steward Host, Travis Audubon member and Master Naturalist —discussed cultivating backyard landscapes for birds. On September 11th the Habitat Stewards met Anne Muller, AISD Outdoor Learning Specialist, who educated our stewards on the possibilities of School Yard Habitats. Class attendees visited Discovery Hill Outdoor Education Center and Demonstration Habitat to learn about the endless possibilities of outdoor education present in Wildlife Habitat. Discovery Hill is currently used by various AISD school to incorporate the outdoors into classroom curriculum. Anne Muller showed habitat steward various school locations and volunteer activities available to habitat stewards within the green schools context.



Andrea Delong Amaya, Senior Program Coordinator for the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center and College of Natural Sciences, also visited with Habitat Steward at Discovery Hill Outdoor Learning Center. Amaya discussed plant placement and selection within a design and challenged stewards to think of a habitat for all seasons. She provided stewards with a suggested plant list and explored creative ways to incorporate water into a habitat landscape design. Demaya's vast knowledge of local plant ecology greatly contributed to the Habitat Steward class and gave Habitat Stewards a list of resources for reference when planning a wildlife habitat.



Habitat Stewards began their volunteer service with a trip to the Austin Groups for the Elderly (AGE) Wildlife Habitat, where they met with seasoned Habitat Steward Sue Anderson. Sue led volunteers on a tour of the grounds and explained the transition of the property from a traditional Bermuda grass landscape to a lush wildlife habitat. During her lecture Sue explained to Habitat Stewards practice considerations during the planning phase of wildlife habitat design. By considering aspects such as: water availability, plant size, turf encroachment, soil supplement and pruning suggestion.





# School Yard Habitat Update

Blackshear Bridge is a small community-based non-profit that rose from the roots of School Garden Mentoring at Blackshear Elementary Fine Arts Academy and from awareness of the challenges and calls for a response to important contextual problems: gentrification in this rapidly growing urban neighborhood, food insecurity in the low income population, and impacts of climate change in this drought-prone region.

In light of those problems, Blackshear Bridge builds partnerships to create sustainable campuses and communities at Blackshear Elementary Fine Arts Academy, at Huston-Tillotson University the historically black university across the street -- Austin's oldest institution of higher education, in the surrounding neighborhood of Blackshear-Prospect Hill and in the wider African American Cultural Heritage District.



Blackshear Bridge goals for 2014-2015 set our attention on:

- Expanding outdoors education at the elementary school
- Raising awareness of sustainability by establishing an Eco-Code at Blackshear
- Supporting the development of the Schoolyard Improvement Project
- Addressing questions of weekend food security
- Exploring sustainability education opportunities through historic preservation, wildlife habitat installation and maintenance, and watershed protection in the African American Cultural Heritage District.





# School Yard Habitat Update

In all of our activities we build community and demonstrate the following Values:

- We enjoy educating and learning together.
- We maintain diversity.
- We care for each other & the environment.
- We build community unity.
- We create stability & prosperity.



There are many ways you can volunteer. Or, you could make a financial contribution to this work.



For more information or to get involved with Blackshear Bridge, please view our website <http://blackshearbridge.org>, like us on Facebook, and contact Sustainability Coordinator Donna Hoffman, 512-299-5776, [donnaleehoffman@gmail.com](mailto:donnaleehoffman@gmail.com).

**Schoolyard Habitat Success Depends on Volunteers Like You!**  
**For upcoming volunteer opportunities, please contact:**

Anne Muller AISD Outdoor Learning Specialist [amuller@austinisd.org](mailto:amuller@austinisd.org) or 841-5070

