

HABITAT HERALD

Wildlife Austin's monthly Newsletter



September 2013



Wildlife Austin

City of Austin
Parks and Recreation
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UPCOMING EVENTS

September 11, 6:30PM, City Hall, Zero Waste Advisory Committee

September 12, 10A-12P, Drought Tolerant Plant Talk
[https://
agriliferegister.tamu.edu/](https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/)

September 12, 7:30-9:30P, Movies in the Park, 422 Guadalupe Street-Rocky
[http://www.austinparks.org/
calendar.html](http://www.austinparks.org/calendar.html)

September 28, 11A-8P, Pecan Street Festival
[www.oldpecanstreetfestival.co
m/](http://www.oldpecanstreetfestival.com/)

September 28, National Public Lands Day
[http://www.austinparks.org/
npld.html](http://www.austinparks.org/npld.html)

Hello Everyone!

I hope you are all enjoying the last days of "summer" here in Central Texas. With the start of a new season, it's time to start planting your leafy greens such as lettuce, collard greens, kale and spinach. Below is one of my favorite recipes for kale chips:

- 1 bunch kale (12 oz after removed from stems)
- 1 tsp olive oil (spray)
- a sprinkle of sea salt or kosher
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly spray two large baking sheets with oil.

Wash and thoroughly dry kale. Remove the leaves from the thick stems and tear into bite sized pieces.

Place on baking sheets, spray with olive oil and sprinkle with salt.

Bake about 10-12 minutes, turning and moving them around as they shrink to make sure they evenly crisp up. Top with Parmesan and serve!

Recipe courtesy of skinnytaste.com

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Would you like to receive the newsletter?

E-mail us at
wildlife@austintexas.gov

Amazing Asters

The summer heat is pounding Central Texas, and our famous fields of bluebonnets are long gone- but other hardy wildflowers remain. Many of the wildflowers you're currently seeing in the Austin area are members of the aster family (also commonly called the daisy or sunflower family.) The aster family includes over 23,000 species, and is found on everywhere on earth except Antarctica and the high arctic. Common Texas members of the Aster family include Indian Blanket/Firewheel, Common Sunflower, members of the genus *Coreopsis*, Fleabane, Mexican Hat, and any number of daisies.

Being a widespread and diverse family, Asters have a rich folklore and history of traditional uses. Dandelions and Chicory, now seen by many as an undesirable roadside weed, were originally cultivated by European settlers- Dandelion as a salad green, and Chicory as a coffee substitute. The ancient Greeks believed that Asters (named after the Greek word for "star") were formed when Virgo cried, and the tears combined with stardust and transformed into Aster flowers on their way to Earth. Ancient Greeks used Aster plants as a burned incense to repel snakes, and as a poultice to treat snakebites. To this day, Asters are seen as a symbol of love, and are used as the 20th anniversary flower.

By Julie Webber

Garden of the Month



This month's garden of the month comes from Tim and Carol Clark of north Austin. Carol has owned the property for over thirty years and said she has really become interested in native gardening in the past decade. Carol has included many unique native plants including the Copper Canyon Daisy, Gregg's Mistflower, Globe Mallow and Morning Glory. She has created a natural hedge using Crossvine and Trumpet vine. Carol says that she first got interested in native gardening about ten years ago when she began xeriscaping part of her yard. Since then she has added many more plants and enjoys gardening for pollinators of all kinds. Gayfeather, Butterfly bush, and Beauty Berry all provide excellent food and shelter for many pollinators. Blackfoot daisy can be seen peaking out of many rocks and crevices in the garden and are a great pop of color in more arid conditions. Thank you to Carol and Tim for providing such a great example of incorporating native plants in to your garden!



Would you like to share your yard with other gardeners? If so please write to wildlife@austintexas.gov for more details!



Schoolyard Habitat Update



This month's School Yard Habitat comes from Carol Kluth of Our Savior Lutheran Church. The garden started in 2008 and is a certified Wildlife Habitat through the National Wildlife Federation. The garden features a wildflower "bed", succulent gardens, vegetable beds and a community garden. The garden also incorporates a lot of unique items such as tires and metal bed frames to create smaller gardens and focal points. The school also uses rain catchment barrels and plans to install 1000 gallon barrels in the future. Mr. Howard Lacey, an active member of the church and a dedicated volunteer, created community gardens for the church and school members to use as a tribute to his wife. The community gardens are a great addition to the campus and allow the students to not only use their skills in the school garden but then take those skills home and encourage their families to use a community garden plot. Carol says that the students have become familiar with native plants and also now love Swiss chard and other vegetables that they once hated to eat. It goes to show you that when you plant and take care of something you learn to appreciate and enjoy the fruits-or vegetables-of your labor. Great job everyone, keep up the great work!

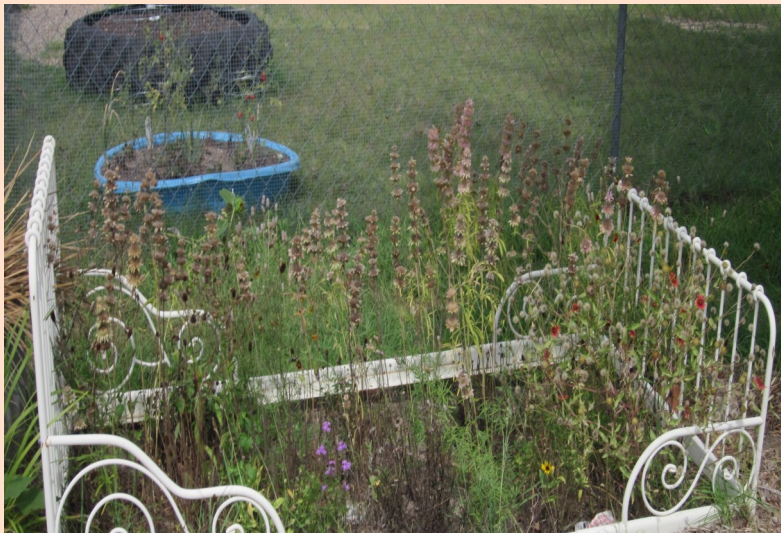




Schoolyard Habitat Update



Community Gardens



Wildflower "Bed"



Mini Succulent Garden



Rainwater Collecting Barrels

Become a Habitat Steward!

Share your passion for wildlife and help to Keep Austin Wild!

The 2013 Wildlife Austin Habitat Stewards' Training registration is open! Become an important part of YOUR city's efforts to Keep Austin Wild! Austin is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country to receive the designation as a Community Wildlife Habitat™ by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). This success has been made possible by people like you, who have made the effort to create native wildscapes at their homes and in public places and to teach and assist others. That's what the Wildlife Austin Habitat Stewards' Training is all about. Becoming a Habitat Steward™ not only means that you make a big difference here in Austin, but that you join the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) nationwide team of volunteers who serve their communities as Habitat Stewards™.

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department and their partner, NWF are offering a specialized training to teach you how to help others create and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, schoolyards, and other private and public areas. This training is engaging, fun and highly informative and you get to meet and interact with local conservation professionals and other similarly interested folks! **Fall 2013 training classes will be every Thursday night and Saturday morning/afternoon in the month of September in locations around Austin.**



You'll Learn About:

- How to Create Wildlife Friendly Habitats
- Native and Invasive Plants
- Landscape Design Principles
- Ways to Support Habitat in the Community
- Beneficial Insects
- Native and Local Wildlife
- Water conservation and riparian restoration

Habitat Stewards Receive:

- 30+ Hours of Intensive, Hands-On Training
- Engaging Field Trips and Habitat Activities
- A Comprehensive Training Manual with Local Resources
- Instruction from Local Conservation Professionals

An important part of becoming a Habitat Steward is giving back. We ask that each Steward commit to 30 hours of volunteer habitat work in the community. The course fee is \$50 and covers the cost of materials. To register please visit <https://www.formstack.com/forms/?1297450-ry9nftdrmD> and make sure to select "Habitat Steward" option at the bottom of the form.

For questions please call 512-978-2606 or e-mail us at wildlife@austintexas.gov for more information.



Save the Date!

National Public Lands Day

National Public Lands Day (NPLD) is the nation's largest, single-day volunteer effort for public lands including parks, trails, and green spaces. NPLD began nationally in 1994 with three sites and 700 volunteers. It proved to be a huge success and became a yearly tradition, typically held on the last Saturday in September. Since the first NPLD, the event has grown by leaps and bounds. Last year in Austin we had 14 park events with more than 435 volunteers!

NPLD projects can include removing invasive plants, building and maintaining trails, planting trees and shrubs, or picking up trash. No matter how you lend a hand for NPLD, you'll be making a difference.

Save the Date for NPLD 2013

Save the Date: **September 28**. This year marks the 20th anniversary of NPLD. Join, APF and the Texas Conservation Corp for a day of service.

<http://www.austinparks.org/npld.html>



Surviving the Summer Sun: Preventing Heat Illness

By Jake Schmider

Summer is now in full swing. The Parks are crowded. Barton Springs is busy. It seems like just about everyone is out enjoying the steamy Austin summer. These next few months are filled with fun outdoor activities, but we all need to remember to be careful and do what we can to prevent heat illness.

Heat illness can be any number of issues relating to too much sun exposure. I am going to be discussing sunburn, heat exhaustion and deadly, heat stroke. Let's start this discussion with sunburn.

Sunburn is over exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation that results in a radiation burn of the skin. The best ways to prevent sunburn is to wear protective sunscreen and reapply every three hours. You should also keep skin covered and stay well hydrated with lots of water. Most everyone has become burned before, it is usually a result of forgetfulness. Sunscreen application should be part of our daily routine.

Seems like too often we out doing yard work or exercising too long and start to not feel so good, that can quickly lead to heat exhaustion. Heat exhaustion is accompanied with heavy sweating, pale clammy skin, nausea and/or vomiting, fatigue, weakness, dizziness, fainting, headaches, muscle cramps, rapid pulse and low blood pressure. If you or someone you are with starts showing some or any of these symptoms get them somewhere cool and out of the sun. Resting them in cool water, such as Barton Springs Pool will help cool them quickly. An air conditioned car or building will work too. Make sure to drink plenty of water and electrolyte rich drinks. Do not chug your drink, taking sips will be more effective and prevent hurting your stomach. If there is any vomiting call for medical help right away. Prevention of heat exhaustion is easy; stay hydrated, wear lightweight, loose clothing and avoid alcohol and caffeine. If heat exhaustion is ignored it can quickly lead to heat stroke.

Heat stroke has many of the same signs and symptoms as heat exhaustion, but it will become worse. They will have a headache, become drowsy, increased body temperature, rapid pulse, stop sweating but with hot red dry skin, have trouble breathing, behave strangely, become confused/disorientated, easily irritated, collapse suddenly, have a seizure or go into shock. If any of these symptoms occur call for an ambulance and if possible, move the person somewhere cool, such as an air conditioned car or a cold body of water. Apply ice packs to the neck, abdomen, armpits, and groin area. The idea is to get their temperature down as fast as possible, they are literally cooking. An elevated body temperature can result in brain damage or even death. The steps to preventing heat stroke are easy, just like heat exhaustion; dress light, drink lots of water/electrolytes and stay away from alcohol and caffeine.

So my take away message is this: Go outside, go outside often, have fun, but do not forget the sun can be deadly, but with a few easy steps it will be nothing but fun. Stay Hydrated, dress appropriately and limit alcohol and caffeine while in the heat!

FREE LECTURES & TRIPS

Monthly Bird Survey September 2014, 2013 at 7:00 am and 4:00pm

Starting in 1999, the monthly Bird Survey has taken place at 7am and 4pm on the 2nd Saturday of the month. We meet at Hornsby Bend in the Center for Environmental Research at 7am for the morning survey [Coffee and donuts at 6:30am] and 4pm for the afternoon survey. All levels of birders are welcome - the survey is a great way to improve your skills since we form teams matching experienced and novice birders.

Birding Fieldtrip September 21, 2013 from 7:30am to 11am

Interested in birds? Join other birders at Hornsby Bend at 7:30am for a fieldtrip around the center. You are guaranteed to see at least 50 species. For more information contact Kevin Anderson at coordinator@hornsbybend.org or call 512-972-1960.

Ecological Literacy Days September 28, 2013 from 9 am to 1 pm

Combining volunteer work with learning about local ecology, the Ecological Literacy Day at Hornsby Bend begins with several hours of outdoor work and ends with at least an hour of learning about local ecology. Wear boots and work clothing, and be sure to bring your binoculars. For more information contact Kevin Anderson at coordinator@hornsbybend.org or 512-972-1960

If you have suggestions on what you would like to see in the newsletter please contact wildlife@austintexas.gov, we'd love to hear from you!
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on Facebook and look for the
Wildlife Austin posts!



The City of Austin is proud to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require assistance for participation in our programs or use of our facilities, please call (512) 974-6700.