April 2022 CCCA Insider

Comal County Conservation Alliance <comalccalliance@gmail.com> Tue, Apr 5, 2022 at 4:48 PM

Conservation Insider

April 2022

Welcome Friends, Partners and Volunteers.

April showers bring May flowers. Let's hope that's the case. But, we still need the rain to fill up the aquifers and lakes. I think we would all prefer to sing "Rain, Rain go away".

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CCCA NEWS

Let's Help our partner Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance (GEAA) win $100,000 through the Ancira Gives Back giveaway

San Antonio's Ancira Auto Group is driving $300,000 back into its local community by donating $100,000 each to three local organization nominated and selected by the people of San Antonio and South Texas area. Help GEAA win the category for "small organizations" (1-9).

Here's how to nominate GEAA:

Every day between now and April 24, go to https://anciragivesback.com/ and select "Greater Edwards Aquifer Alliance" as your nomination. Only the top five nominated charities in each category will move on to the voting round. You can nominate every day so let's help GEAA get into the voting round!

Another Fun and Successful 'Lunch & Learn' Event!

Nine new CCCA volunteers enjoyed a catered lunch last week, along with some interesting history and background on CCCA, and a chance to get hands-on training with our interactive demonstrations - how recharge of our karst aquifer recharge works, and how nonpoint source pollution is something we can ALL help prevent. Join us in June for our next Lunch & Learn event, and be part of the solution!

For registration info about the June 20 Lunch & Learn event, send your name and email address through the 'Contact Us' page at: https://www.comalconservation.org/donatecontact.html

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Remember to look for us at these events:

Folkfest - A Celebration of Early Texans
Saturday-Sunday, April 9th & 10th, at Heritage Village, New Braunfels

New Braunfels Folkfest is an annual Family Heritage Festival sponsored by the Heritage Society of New Braunfels, one of CCCA's Partners. This favorite community event features living history re-enactments, pioneer craft demonstrations, free furniture museum tours, children's activities,
musical entertainment and delicious food. Stop by CCCA's booth and say 'Hi!'

Folkfest — Heritage Society of New Braunfels: https://texashandmadefurniture.com/folkfest

Headwaters at the Comal - 4th Annual Earth Day Celebration
Saturday, April 23, 10 AM to 2 PM

Join us to celebrate Earth Day at the Headwaters at the Comal. This FREE family event is a way for the entire community to enjoy and celebrate our local natural resources. Explore the native prairie restoration, stroll along the spring run and see where the Comal River begins, participate in hands-on activities and scavenger hunts, and enjoy some time connecting with Nature. Shop for native plants home-grown by members of CCCA partner - the New Braunfels Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas. Visit our CCCA table and learn more about how our aquifer recharges and why we need to protect it.

Headwaters at the Comal River in New Braunfels Texas: https://headwatersatthecomal.com/

Visit CCCA at the New Braunfels Farmers Market
Saturday April 23 from 9 AM to 1 PM

Please stop in at the New Braunfels Farmers Market on Saturday, April 23, and visit with CCCA volunteers at our booth! We'll demonstrate how karst rock allows recharge of our aquifers, and share news about what's being done for conservation in Comal County,

what still needs to be done, and what you can do to help. Please come by and say "Hi". Bring your family too. We'll
have a special nature make-and-take activity for the kids and a free "KEEP COMAL WILD" sticker for your car or truck so you can show your support for conservation in Comal County. Located at 148 S. Casteel Ave. in New Braunfels.

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LOCAL NEWS

New Braunfels Joins National Challenge for Water Conservation

New Braunfels Mayor Rusty Brockman is joining other mayors from across the country in the National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation...

New Braunfels Mayor Rusty Brockman is joining other mayors from across the country in the National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation, which asks residents to make a long-term commitment to reduce pollution and manage water resources more wisely. In return, residents can win $3,000 toward their Home Utility Payments, water saving fixtures, and hundreds of other prizes. Plus, one lucky charity from a winning city will receive a 2022 Toyota Highlander Hybrid. The National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation is presented by the Wyland Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting, protecting, and preserving the world's ocean, waterways, and marine life.

"The New Braunfels community has been blessed with abundant water resources for as long as there have been people living here. As stewards of the natural resources we enjoy each day, water plays a most significant role in the success and preservation of life as we know it here, from drinking water to water recreation," said New Braunfels Mayor Rusty Brockman. "As Mayor, I challenge all citizens of New Braunfels and Comal County to participate. Water conservation is so important as we grow and plan for our future. By following conservation measures and taking the pledge to protect the quality of our water, we all are laying a firm foundation for a sustainable future here in our community."

The annual mayor's challenge, happening April 1st through April 30th, is a non-profit national community service campaign that encourages leaders to inspire their residents to make a series of simple pledges to use water more efficiently, reduce pollution, and save energy. The program was started ten years ago by a handful of mayors who were looking for alternative ways to engage their residents more deeply about the water challenges faced in the U.S.
Continue reading at: www.mywaterpledge.com

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SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, May 10th, 2022 from 6:00 to 7:30 PM

CCCA's MAY COMMUNITY PROGRAM

WHO: Elizabeth McGreevy, "The Cedar Lady"

WHEN: Tuesday, May 10th, 2022, 6:00 – 7:30 PM

WHAT: Community Program on "Mountain Cedars: Wanted Dead and Alive!"

LOCATION: Landa Haus, 360 Aquatic Circle, Landa Park, New Braunfels, TX

NOTE: Free to public. This is our first in-person program in two years. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

EVENT INFO: Who likes Mountain Cedar? Whether you love it or you hate it, this program is for you! Our May "in-person" Community Program will showcase the expert on Ashe Juniper, Elizabeth McGreevy, also known as "The Cedar Lady." Elizabeth is a sixth-generation Texan, and has been featured on talk radio, television and in magazines. When you hear that someone could write the book on a topic, she has! Wanted! Mountain Cedars: Dead and Alive is her fascinating contribution to really understanding the benefits of keeping your mountain cedars. Come and find out why mountain cedars are key to restoring soils and protecting ground waters. Join us at the beautiful Landa Haus for this informative and interactive event.

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CCCA April SPOTLIGHT

Bird Migration

This month our focus is on Bird Migration. What a great time to get outdoors and breath in some Nature! Listen for the sound of Sandhill Cranes migrating overhead, and the mating calls of our local nesters. We start off with Frank's column and continue with some articles you'll find on our website that delve more deeply into the birds we may see here in Comal County as they pass through Texas on their Spring migration.

WE HAVE BEEN VISITED, TWICE !

Written by Frank Dietz for the Herald-Zeitung, April 2, 2022

Our decision to pursue the "third trimester" of our lives settling into the surrounds of an oak motte on a small slice of a legacy family ranch in the Gruene/New Braunfels area has proven to be a journey of surprises and adventures. Many unanticipated opportunities and challenges have come our way as we settled into our "contemporary" barn of modest, serviceable size for this chapter. The avian gifts keep on giving! We had lived in major flyways primarily along the mighty Mississippi and its tributaries to see, hear and enjoy the seasonal migrations that were quite regular. There were other surprises from time to time like arctic owls one year.

In our sixteen-plus year perch among wildlife and pasture life, a surprise for me has been the rich and amazing variety of avian dwellers and sojourners. Some 332 species have been observed in Comal County! Oh, what a delight it has been to note the varieties of song, call, plumage and behaviors. Even the roadrunner has seemed to want to play hide and seek along an occasional walk. The equally interesting but less welcome extended presence of a rogue tom turkey contributed in his visit many photos and stories.

By far the most impressive visits have been two occasions when our yard and pasture beyond filled with robins. They seemed hungry, did a great job of aerating the soil as they found satisfying morsels. Their desire for water, particularly in an extended stay following our deep freeze in 2021, led to our placing buckets and a few other receptacles for extra water. Their continuous visits for dips and sips were part of an impressive social

organization as they lined up awaiting a turn. At night the grand limbs in the trees surrounding us were convenient perches, or, a new replacement group came in for a next round. Interesting, too, was how resident and other visiting birds went about their own pursuits with no signs of belligerency. In this historic time of human cruelty and land snatching, perhaps our avian friends could offer some lessons! This year, the robins returned to their more regular flyways, or, so it seems with no sightings. Both visits were memorable!
Continue reading at: https://www.comalconservation.org/bird-migration.html

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LIGHTS OUT TEXAS

Lights Out Texas is a campaign of education, awareness, and action that focuses on turning out lights at night during the spring and fall migrations to help protect the billions of migratory birds that fly over Texas annually.

Lights Out Texas is a collaborative effort. Texan by Nature and Audubon Texas lead Lights Out Texas efforts across the state in collaboration with all of the organizations listed below. Texas A&M University (Biodiversity Research and Teaching Collections) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (Texas Nature Trackers) provide centralized leadership for volunteer research efforts. The Cornell Lab of Ornithology provides technical guidance and mapping/alerts through BirdCast.

Every Texan can participate in protecting our feathered friends by simply turning off their lights at night…Taking action now is vital because every spring and fall, between a third and a quarter of all birds migrating at night through the United States travel through Texas."
– Former First Lady and Texan by Nature Founder, Laura Bush (Read the full op-ed…)

Continue Reading at: https://www.comalconservation.org/bird-migration.html#lights-out

And you can tune into a video about Lights Out at https://youtu.be/_FEzCj5npiI

CATCH THE BIRD MIGRATION IN LANDA PARK
City of New Braunfels - Parks and Wildlife Department

Whether you're a devoted birder or a casual observer, Landa Park is a great destination for bird watching. This scenic park provides nesting and feeding habitat for a large variety of bird species, both seasonally and year-round. The park's 51 acres of green space include the Comal Springs, plants and groves of trees that support a great variety of birds, from yellow crowned night herons to red- shouldered hawks.
"We are fortunate to live in an area that is part of several migratory flyways, where there are abundant numbers of coastal and shore birds, seasonal visitors from the south and west and many woodland species. Landa Park is a choice destination for any bird lover."
— Dan Tharp

Continue reading at: https://www.comalconservation.org/bird-migration.html#bird-guide

Or Download File: landaparkbirdguide_online.pdf

THE MOST POPULAR BIRDING AREAS IN COMAL COUNTY, TX *WaxwingEco Tourism* analyzed all of the Ebird data from 2015 and determined which birding hotspots in Comal County, TX had the most bird sightings.

Watch Birds Here:

Guadalupe River State Park (HOTE 077)
Landa Park (HOTE 069)
Canyon Lake--Dam & Nature Trail below dam (HOTE 073)
Cypress Bend Park - New Braunfels
Bracken Bat Cave area
Honey Creek State Natural Area
New Braunfels - Faust St. Bridge area
Canyon Lake--Cranes Mill Park
Natural Bridge Caverns area (Comal Co.)
Warbler Woods Bird Sanctuary - Cibolo
Canyon Lake--Overlook Park/SE Nature trails
Natural Bridges Wildlife Ranch (Comal Co.)

Read more at: https://www.comalconservation.org/bird-migration.html#comal-birding

MIGRATION AND THE MIGRATORY BIRDS OF TEXAS: WHO ARE THEY AND WHERE ARE THEY GOING?
By Clifford E. Shackelford, Edward R. Rozenburg, W. Chuck Hunter and Mark W. Lockwood
May 2011

Why is There an Interest in Migratory Birds in Texas?
Of the 338 species that are listed as Nearctic-Neotropical migrants in North America (north of Mexico), 333 of them (or 98.5%) have been recorded in Texas. This means that of the 615 species of birds documented in Texas, 54% of them are Nearctic-Neotropical migratory birds. Texas is important to these migrants and these migrants are important to Texas.

What Exactly is a Nearctic-Neotropical Migrant?
These species are collectively known by a host of other names. The species that comprise this group basically breed in temperate latitudes (i.e., U.S. and Canada), but leave for the winter for tropical latitudes farther south (i.e., Central and South America). Their migratory habits are part of their lives and heritage.

Continue reading at: https://www.comalconservation.org/bird-migration.html#texas-migration

or download the File https://tpwd.texas.gov/publications/pwdpubs/media/pwd_bk_w7000_0511.pdf

HUMMINGBIRD MIGRATION: TRACK THE WORLD'STINIEST BIRD PASSING OVER THE LONE STAR STATE
Last updated: February 8, 2022
Photos courtesy of : K. Draper

If you ever wanted to spot a hummer, Texas is among the best destinations to make your wish come true. The state hosts around 18 different species, with the dominant ruby-throated (Archilochus colubris), black-chinned (Archilochus alexandri), Anna's (Calypte anna), and rufous (Selasphorus rufus) hummingbirds. Some species breed here, whereas others winter or stay all year round. Anyway, the chances of encountering one of these entertaining little creatures is enhanced during spring and fall hummingbird migrations, which roughly peak in March to May and August to October.

Some of the most promising spots to check out include Highland Lakes west of Austin and Hill Country in Central Texas, north-west of San Antonio. The most avid birdwatchers are welcome to Big Bend National Park and Padre Island National Seashore to chase all-

year residents. However, you can also catch a glimpse of a hummer elsewhere across the state, including large metropolises such as Houston.

Ruby-throated hummingbirds are the most remarkable in Texas. A wee bird weighing some 0.1 oz (3 g) can travel for 1,500 mi (2,400 km) from its breeding grounds reaching southern areas of Canada to winter homes in Mexico and Central America.

Continue learning at :https://www.comalconservation.org/bird-migration.html#hummingbirds

Remember, there is much more information about water, land and wildlife on our website!

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CCCA is on AmazonSmile – AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. AmazonSmile is available at smile.amazon.com and on phone apps. When you shop with AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same low prices, huge selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. You can choose from over one million organizations to support – we hope you'll choose CCCA and help Keep Comal Wild !

Stay safe, stay healthy, enjoy nature! See you soon.

Comal County Conservation Alliance

https://www.comalconservation.org/

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