

Rio Brazos Master Naturalist Chapter Meeting

September 7, 2017

Camp El Tesoro

Dinner: Began at approximately 6:00

Program: Cynthia Bennett presented a program on C2S2 (Conservation Centers for Species Survival). C2S2 includes approximately 100,000 acres devoted to breeding, study, management, and recovery of endangered species both *in situ* and *ex situ*. Currently 14-member institutions contribute to the program including Fossil Rim Wildlife Center. Because of the large amount of acreage involved, C2S2 can manage more animals. They can focus on “tricky species” such as the cheetah. Currently some species release programs *in situ* are Scimitar Horned Oryx, Whooping Cranes, Red Wolves, Shrikes, and Horned Toads.

Positive factors of C2S2 include stewardship, networking, science, successful new models, and genomics. Some specific current projects are Conservation Centers Coalition, SPA (Source Population Alliance), Native Species Model, and Code Red Emergency Response. Partners include zoos, private land owners, and conservation centers with a goal of establishing a self-sustaining population of animals involved.

One of the model species targeted for the native species program is the Loggerhead Shrike (LS) which has experienced a drastic population decline due to predation, habitat loss, pesticides, vehicle collision, and disease. A “One Plan” approach for the LS recovery has been developed which will involve conservation centers, zoos, citizen scientists, academic institutions, state, provincial, and federal agencies. The plan is multi-faceted and will include captive breeding, release, wild population monitoring, research, habitat, and stewardship. The Shrike Force Initiative was begun in Texas by Rio Brazos Master Naturalists.

Current action items include communication, PR, and Motus towers which monitor the movements of the LS in real time.

Guests/New Members: Mark Bishop was introduced and welcomed.

Special Announcements:

- Friends of the Brazos meeting is scheduled for October 21st at the M&W Ranch and includes fund raising for river cleanup efforts.

- Brazos River Clean-up day is scheduled for September 30th. Robert Walker is lead on this event. Andrea Rios offered to inquire if Camp El Tesoro would be willing to loan canoes for this project.
- Gary shared maps from Journey North (JN) documenting the progression of the fall Monarch migration and sightings of larvae and encouraged everyone to report their sightings to the JN website. The migration has begun!

Business:

- August 2017 minutes were approved.
- Treasurer's report submitted by Henry Bogusch. Beginning balance \$12,951. Total outflows \$712. Ending balance \$12,239.

Committee Reports:

- Training Committee – Maryann Matthews reporting. The final training class for 2017 will be on October 26, 3:00, at Rancho Helios de Brazos.
- Outreach Committee – Billy Teels reporting.
 - During the July bird walk, there was an auditory identification of a Bell's vireo and nest sighting. Upcoming First Saturday bird walk will take place on the first Saturday of October.
 - Homeschool Program – Jake Balmuth reporting. Upcoming sessions for HS group are as follows:

October 6 – Geology and Fossil Dig

November 3 – Art at the ANC

December 1 – How to ID birds

January 5 –Native Pollinators

February 2 – Mammals

March 2 – Soil Study

April 6 – Star Party

May 4 –Native Pollinators continued

- Young Birders – Jake Balmuth reporting. Upcoming events include a bird walk will on September 23rd at ANC and identification of sparrows on November 18.

- Chapter Booth – Dayna Inbody reporting. Sonna Sanders and Kathie Bruce will now be the leads of the RBMN booth.
- Education Committee – Wendy Moore reporting. The group is completing 3 trunks and will present them to the chapter at the November meeting. The committee is developing a program to teach educators how to implement our programs for classes and field trips. Dayna Inbody thanked Teresa Taylor for all her help with the education trunks.
- MN State Report – Valerie Tabor reporting. The conference will continue as planned in Corpus Christi from October 20-22nd. However, some modifications in attendance may exist due to the hurricane devastation. There will be collection bins for non-perishable food items for the hurricane victims at the meeting. Gary encouraged members to also donate for smaller communities such as Rockport which tend to get ignored in the press. Billy Teels will find out more information about Rockport needs. (Note: Billy says contact <http://www.cityofrockport.com/>)

Partners:

- BRIT – Gary and Valerie reporting. BRIT has received the last of the refrigerated trailers of 450K+ specimens from LA-Monroe University. BRIT is now the largest herbarium in Texas and number 7 or 8 in the nation.
- City of Cleburne – No news to report.
- City of Burleson – Maryann Matthews reporting. The Burleson Family Campout is scheduled for September 23rd at the Russell Farm Art Center from 1:00-8:00 PM. Some of the activities will include making pine cone bird feeders and a scavenger hunt.
- Friends of Cleburne State Park – Diane Humphries reporting. A wildflower hike is scheduled at CSP for September 16th. The store is doing well.
- Fossil Rim – No news to report.
- DVSP – Dayna Inbody reporting. Dayna is on the steering committee. A meeting is scheduled for September 9th at 10:00. A Bow Hunting and Archery Expo is scheduled for September 23rd from 10:00-4:00. Our chapter will participate with a booth featuring “tracks across Texas” and “skins and skulls”.
- El Tesoro – Andrea Roiz reporting. Andrea is now camp naturalist teaching outdoor education for the Camp.
- Unimin – Alan Sarver reporting. Unimin site is hosting a “turkey shoot” event on September 30th. Assistance from members is requested especially in leading a nature walk. A cub scout Webeloree is scheduled for November 4th from 10:00-2:00. It will feature two programs, “Into the Woods” and “Into the Rocks”. Assistance is needed.

Newsletter: Billy Teels reporting. December 31st is the deadline for the next newsletter.

Website: Gary thanked Chris Inbody for his exceptional work with the RBMN website including the photo slide show of activities over the past year.

Volunteer Services Committee: Dave Moore reporting. An ANC workday is scheduled for September 30th.

Membership: Wanda Riley reporting. Members are reporting hours.

Open Forum:

- Chris Paulsen contacted Rene Burkes regarding the condition of trees recently. Many deciduous trees are losing leaves and dropping acorns prematurely this fall. Rene attributed this to the greater than average amount of rainfall this year.
- Valerie reminded members to look at volunteer sign-up sheets.
- Teresa Taylor requested help with a science event for fifth graders at the ANC on December 8th. Subject has been tabled for the time.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Sara Paulsen, RBMN secretary