

Texas Master Gardeners of Blanco County

Next Meeting: April 12, 2011

Where: First United Methodist Church, Johnson City

Time: 7:00pm

Program: Blanco-Pedernales Groundwater Conservation District

with

Ron Fieseler

Refreshments/Coordinator: Donna Sulzemeier

This promises to be an informative evening, since the Texas Legislature is currently dealing with rights of landowners to groundwater vs. regulation. Ron Fieseler is the General Manager of the area Groundwater Conservation District.



March Meeting

Brian and Shirley Loflin presented an excellent program about Texas cactus varieties to 34 members, interns, and guests. Brian is a biologist who has always been interested in photography, and Shirley describes herself as a homegrown naturalist. Together they have produced another beautiful book, after having traveled over 18,000 miles across Texas. Shirley finds the specimens and Brian photographs them.

Left- **Brian and Shirley with Carol Schlachter**

Brian started with facts about cacti as succulent vascular plants with all the regular plant parts. **An interesting fact is that cactus can be found in every color except blue.** He then illustrated the various shapes cacti can take. In all there are 20 plus genera of cacti in Texas with 150 or more species. Texas is prolific in cacti because we have six of the 20 vegetative zones in the US, eight floristic regions, and have a change of over 5000 feet in altitude across the state. **An interesting fact here is that one kind of cactus is found *only* on Comptroller Susan Combs ranch.**



Brian calls cacti the “Glory of Texas.”

Brian then discussed grass, the ultimate survivor that covers one-fourth of the land mass of earth. There are 600 species of grass in Texas; 289, in the Hill Country. Buffalo grass is one of the smallest on earth and Elephant grass (the giant reed) is the tallest. We have both in Texas *(and I have both on my six acres!)* Brian reminded us that the big four in Texas are Big Bluestem, Little Blue Stem, Yellow Indian grass, and Switchgrass. **An interesting fact is that Canyon Muhley was first found here on Miller Creek by the botanist Lindheimer. Another is that the giant reed is still used to make reeds for woodwind instruments.** *(I apologize for my fluid and inconsistent use of the words cactus and cacti.)*

Brian emphasized that the use of native grasses instead of commercial turf grasses will cut water and fertilizer cost as they require no care. He recommends Seedsources.com, the site for Native American Seed in Junction. **And he told how to use gutter sections to collect seeds on the roadside.**



The Loflins' next book will be available this spring: ***Texas Wildflower Vistas and Texas Treasurers.*** Many of us already own ***Grasses of the Texas Hill Country*** and purchased ***Texas Cacti*** at the meeting. Both are available as Texas A & M Nature Guides.

Shirley chats with Betty Mucha and Linda Vincent as they make purchases of

Wildflower Day, April 16, in Johnson City

By now you will have received numerous emails about Wildflower Day, which is on after all! Please contact one of the following volunteers to sign up to work, to tell what you will be able to sell, etc.:

Joan M.-868-7239

D'Anne W.-830-392-0613

Mary Joyce-868-0969

Cindy S.-830-822-1773

Contact them directly, please, now that we know who is in charge, because if you send things to me, I may get them out that day or I may not get back to the computer for two days. *(For other information that needs to be sent out, always feel free to send it to me to be forwarded to the group, but it may not be same day service. We will be receiving yearbooks with phone and email contacts very shortly—Mary)*

SO—Start your seeds or cuttings as this is our big fundraiser, followed by Market Day in Blanco May 21.

Program Addendum:At the MG meeting on April 12 Linda Vincent will give a short talk on the best methods for collecting and storing wildflower seeds. The wildflower seeds we collect this spring and summer will be used in fall plantings. Some seeds may even be rolled into seedballs for dispersal. If you have never made seedballs, you are in for a special, messy time. *(You might want to dress appropriately if you are naturally sloppy like I am—Mary).*

Program Plans for the Rest of the Year

Chelita has done it again! Look at what's coming up:

April 12, 7 pm— Ron Fieseler of Blanco-Pedernales GCD-- Johnson City FUMC

May 10, 2 pm—Field trip to home of Romelia and Harris Greenwood

June 14, 7 pm—tba

July 12, 2 pm—Susan Evans on making Hypertufa Troughs and Containers, location tba

August 9, 7 pm—Blanco County Rodeo preparation

Sept. 13, 2 pm—Tricia Timmons with propagating session, location tba

Oct. 11, 7 pm—tba

Nov. 8, 2 pm— Patricia Michael on Permaculture Designing--Blanco First Baptist Church--

Dec. 13, 7 pm—Holiday Party—Peggy Welch's

Chelita has asked that the persons who sign up to provide refreshments also act as meeting coordinators. They will have these responsibilities:

Contact speaker and confirm any audio-visual or other needs

Get key and open facility if needed

Set up room (table and chairs)

Write a thank-you note to the speaker

With that in mind, here are some contacts coordinators will need:

Ron Fieseler,

manager@blancocountygroundwater.org

830-868-9196 or 830-708-5020

P.O. Box 1516

Johnson City, TX 78636

Speaker Contact Info

susrevans@txwinet.com

(512) 291-4300 (voice),

Patricia@PatriciaMichaelDesign.com

<http://www.patriciamichaeldesign.com>

Reminder:

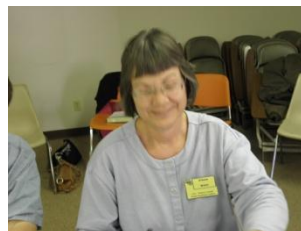
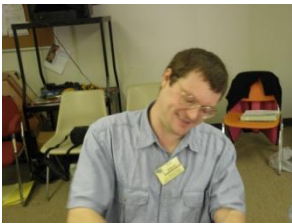
We have no one signed up to coordinate or bring refreshments for meetings from May to Dec. Please call Diana and sign up or make plans to sign up at the April meeting. Someone needs to offer to help Donna April 12.

Projects Are Perking

You have also received items about various projects that the interns will be working with. Be sure to sign up to help or direct. Share your expertise or learn something new.

If you have not paid your dues, please send a check for \$15 to
Joan Marasek
P O Box 44
Johnson City TX 78636

New Quiz!!! Name that intern: Ha! No names this time for hints:



State convention is just around the corner—Check and see if you can still register. The workshops, tours, and seminars look great and the exhibit will be awesome. And you will be with such a fun group!!!

Feb. Quiz Answers:

- 1. What percent of bugs are “bad?” **5%**
- 2. What is the date for planting tomatoes in Blanco County? **Mid March to April 1**
- 3. How many cubic feet of soil equals one yard? **27**
- 4. Should you incorporate mulch into the soil? **No**
- 5. What is the website for ALL questions about gardening? <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu>

*See you in Johnson City at 7:00 Tuesday, April 12, at the Methodist Church to learn what we need to know about groundwater conservation. Then four days later, see you in JC at the Wildflower Day. (Maybe it will be a *Wild* Flower Celebration!!)*

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