

THE BULLETIN

Belterra Community News

August 2015 Volume 9, Issue 8

News for the Residents of Belterra

WELCOME TO BELTERRA HOA NEWS

*A Newsletter
for the Belterra
Community*

The Bulletin is a monthly newsletter mailed to all Belterra residents. Each newsletter will be filled with valuable information about the community, local area activities, school information, and more.

If you are involved with a school group, play group, scouts, sports team, social group, etc., and would like to submit an article for the newsletter, you can do so online at www.PEELinc.com. Personal news (announcements, accolades/honors/celebrations, etc.) are also welcome as long as they are from area residents.

GO GREEN! Subscribe via Peelinc.com to have an email sent to you with a link to a PDF of the newsletter, or have an email sent to you instead of having a newsletter mailed to you!



TAWNY CRAZY ANTS

The Tawny crazy ant, formerly known as the Raspberry crazy ant, was originally found in Harris County in 2002. It is currently confirmed in 27 Texas counties.

Tawny crazy ants have a cyclical population level throughout the year with populations peaking in late summer, decreasing in the fall and then beginning to build again in the spring. Tawny crazy ants are capable of biting, but do NOT sting like fire ants. They are mostly nuisance pests, but can reach extraordinary population levels (in the millions) and can become a problem when getting into electrical equipment. Tawny crazy ants do not have nests or mounds like fire ants; they tend to nest under things- rocks, landscape timbers, flowerpots, etc.

For more information on this particular ant species go to <http://urbanentomology.tamu.edu/ants/raspberry.html>

Treatment Options

Removing harborage areas- fallen limbs, rocks, leaf litter, etc. These ants will nest under pretty much anything on the ground, so you may want

to remove anything that is not necessary.

Alter moisture conditions (crazy ants prefer moist, humid conditions)- reduce watering, repair any leaks, improve drainage

Eliminate honeydew producers from area. Crazy ants tend honeydew producers such as aphids, whiteflies, hoppers, mealybugs and scale insects.

Use pesticide sprays to treat infested areas- under rocks, along landscape edging, etc. Pesticide sprays can also be used to create a barrier around the outside of the home. Piles of dead ants may build up in treated areas, so they must be removed to keep the barrier maintained.

Hire a pest management professional (PMP). PMPs have access to pesticides that are unavailable to homeowners and they also have experience dealing with pest problems regularly.

For more information or help with identification, contact Wizzie Brown, Texas AgriLife Extension Service Program Specialist at 512.854.9600. Check out my blog at www.urban-ipm.blogspot.com

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IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY911
Ambulance / Fire.....911

SCHOOLS

Dripping Springs ISD 512-858-3000
Dripping Springs Elementary..... 512-858-3700
Walnut Springs Elementary 512-858-3800
Rooster Springs Elementary..... 512-465-6200
Dripping Springs Middle School..... 512-858-3400
Dripping Springs High School..... 512-858-3100

UTILITIES

Water – WCID # 1 & 2..... 512-246-0498
Trash – Texas Disposal..... 512-246-0498
Gas – Texas Community Propane..... 512-272-5503
Electricity – Pedernales Electric 512-858-5611

OTHER

Oak Hill Post Office 512-892-2794
Animal Control..... 512-393-7896

NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc. 512-263-9181
Article Submissionsbelterra@peelinc.com
Advertising..... advertising@peelinc.com

NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE

PET PLACE

DIY TREATS FOR OUR FELINE FRIENDS

TUNA CATNIP KITTY TREATS

(Makes about 2 dozen)

1 (5 oz.) can tuna, no salt added packed in water, drained
1 cup oat flour* 1 large egg
1 heaping Tablespoon dried catnip 1 Tbsp olive oil

- Place a rack in the upper third of the oven and preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and set aside.
- In the bowl of a food processor fitted with a blade attachment, combine all ingredients. Blend until mixture is smooth. It will be thick, but pliable and not terribly sticky.
- Roll dough into half teaspoon balls and place on prepared cookie sheet. Use a skewer to press an X-shape into each cookie ball.
- Bake cookies 10 to 12 minutes, until they are dried on top and slightly browned. Allow to cool completely.
- Place treats in an airtight container and store in refrigerator for up to seven days.

*Note: It's easy to make your own oat flour. Simply grind old-fashioned oats in a spice grinder (or a super clean coffee grinder) until it is transformed into a light powder.

CHEWY CAT TREATS

(Makes about 50 small treats)

1 (4 oz.) jar of chicken and brown rice baby food (or something meaty, can use wet cat food)

1 large egg 2 teaspoons olive oil
2 Tablespoon water ¼ cup parsley, coarsely chopped
1 cup brown rice flour ½ cup cooked white (or brown) rice

1. Prepare same as #1 above (Tuna Catnip Kitty Treats).
 2. In a medium bowl, whisk together egg, baby food (or wet cat food), parsley, olive oil and water. Add brown rice flour and cooked rice. Stir to incorporate. Mixture will be thick but spreadable.
- Spread mixture onto prepared baking sheet, creating a rectangle that is about 1/3 inch thick. Bake for 12 to 15 minutes.
 - Remove from the oven. Let rest until cool enough to handle, then slice the soft dough into bite-size pieces. Return pieces to the oven to bake for 8 more mins.
 - Remove from the oven. Allow to cool completely. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.





Back To School

School starts in August, so now is the time for drivers to pay closer attention to the school zones in the neighborhood. We want to remind you that the speed limit in a school zone is 20mph and traffic fines double!

Other changes to be aware of include;

- Children behaving unpredictably
- School Bus Stops
- Crossing Guards – please obey the guards! Remember, they are there for the safety of you and your children
- New areas of traffic congestion
- Be prepared for delays
- Use of cell phones in schools zones is prohibited!

Please give yourself extra time in the mornings and mid-afternoons and remember if you are traveling in a school zone to slow down.

Time To Slow Down!

NEXT SERVICE IS DUE

WHAT

Summer System Maintenance Tune-up
\$125.00 for 2 Annual System checks
 add \$50.00 for each additional system

WHY

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WHEN

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TRAVELING TARANTULAS

NATUREWATCH

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Relatively common throughout Texas, the Tarantula (*Aphonopelma* sp.) is Texas' heaviest and largest spider. Typically, the head and legs are dark brown, and the abdomen is brownish-black. Coloration varies between individuals as well as between the 14 different species found in Texas. Identification of individual species is difficult, however, and is often performed only on mature males under a microscope.

Tarantulas are typically found in grasslands and semi-open areas, and use burrows, natural cavities under stones or fallen logs, spaces under loose tree bark, and even old rodent holes as shelters. They are also capable of digging their own burrows, and often line them with webbing, placing a few strands across the front to help detect passing prey. Laying several hundred eggs in a hammock-like web constructed inside the burrow, females will guard them until they hatch. Females have lived in captivity for over 25 years, while males rarely live over two or three months after reaching maturity.

Like many animals, tarantulas molt their exoskeletons several times as they grow. The skin on the hard upper shell and abdomen splits, and the tarantula begins the process of squeezing through the opening. Most of the time, tarantulas molt while positioned on their backs, twitching, stretching, and kicking until the entire exoskeleton has been cast off. After they have wriggled free of their old skin, this discarded exoskeleton is a perfect replica of the spider, minus its head and fangs.

Other insects such as crickets, beetles, grasshoppers, cicadas, and caterpillars form the basic diet of the tarantula. They inject their prey with a poison when they bite, which liquefies the prey's insides, making it easier to ingest. While they can climb, they are usually restricted to the ground, where the majority of their prey is found. The hairiness and large size of tarantulas often evokes concern, but the bites of Texas species are not serious to humans. Tarantulas maneuver quickly to face whatever disturbs them, often raising up on their hind legs and stretching out their front legs in a threatening posture. They have also been observed rapidly brushing the top of their abdomen with their hind legs to dislodge hairs that can be used to irritate the attacker's eyes or skin.

For a few weeks late in the summer or early fall, one of the most spectacular spider events occurs in Texas. Not well understood,

this phenomenon is often called a migration, but it may be related more to mating rather than seasonally motivated movement. Males actively wander to seek out females, and can travel 50 miles in search of a mate. Populations seem to follow a boom and bust cycle, depending on weather patterns and the availability of food, but a good year can be a sight to behold if summer rains have been plentiful. While the males are out searching, females wait in their burrows for

a suitor to appear. Larger and more robust, the female does not always accept any male that comes along, and will kill and eat males that are deemed unsuitable.

As formidable as they may seem, tarantulas are not without their own enemies. In fact, in late spring and early summer they are routinely hunted by female Tarantula Hawks as food for their larvae. Belonging to a group of spider wasps in the genera *Pepis* and *Hemipepsis*, tarantula hawks are large, 2-inch long wasps with iridescent blue-black bodies and bright, rust-colored wings. This vivid color combination is a form of

aposematism or warning coloration, a type of advertising signal to both predator and prey that these species are potentially harmful. These wasps have the ability to deliver a powerful sting, and their long legs have hooked claws for grappling their victims.

Flying low over the ground, the female tarantula hawk will find a tarantula and sting it, which paralyzes the spider but does not kill it. She then drags the inert tarantula into her burrow or transports it to a specially prepared nest, where she lays a single egg on the spider's abdomen, then seals the opening to the burrow as she leaves. When the wasp larva hatches, it creates a small hole and enters the spider's abdomen, where it feeds voraciously, avoiding vital organs to keep the spider alive as long as possible. After several weeks the spider dies, the larva pupates, and then it emerges from the spider's abdomen to continue its lifecycle.

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. Check out our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com if you enjoy reading these articles!



Tarantula



Tarantula Hawk

Welcoming the World to our Town

Throughout the month of August, neighbors in our area will be welcoming a new member into their families. They have chosen to open their hearts and their homes to an International Exchange Student. These courageous, dedicated and talented high school students leave their countries and their homes to fulfill one of their lifelong dreams of spending a year as an American teenager.

Bring the World Home

- Share a new language and culture with your family
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- Make a Difference

If your family enjoys exploring new cultures and nurturing youth, please contact us to request more information about

this amazing opportunity to share your life with a special young person and to learn how you can make a difference. The application process for the 2016/2017 school year will start in October – it is recommended to start now as available schools spots fill up early.

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Ayusa is a non-profit organization founded in 1981 to promote global learning and leadership through foreign exchange, study abroad, and leadership programs for high school students from the U.S. and around the world.

For more information about hosting a high school foreign exchange student, please contact your local representative Vicki Odom at 832.455.7881 or vodom@ayusa.org or Ayusa at 1.888.552.9872 or by visiting the website at www.ayusa.org.



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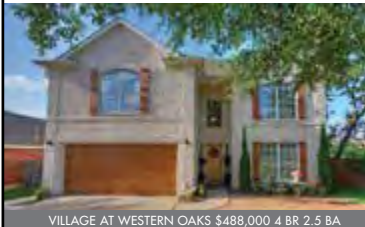
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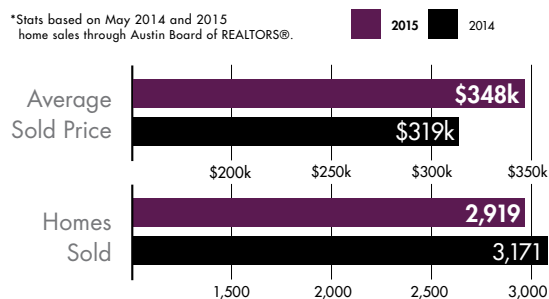


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SOUTHWEST AUSTIN MARKET UPDATE

*Stats based on May 2014 and 2015
home sales through Austin Board of REALTORS®.



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6
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Days

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