

Canyon Creek CHRONICLE

AUGUST 2015

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 8

THE CANYON CREEK CHRONICLE

*A Newsletter
for the Canyon Creek
Community*

The Canyon Creek Chronicle is a monthly newsletter mailed to all Canyon Creek 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!



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!

Time To Slow Down!

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

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency.....	512-974-5556
Hudson Bend Fire and EMS	

SCHOOLS

Canyon Creek Elementary.....	512-428-2800
Grisham Middle School.....	512-428-2650
Westwood High School	512-464-4000

UTILITIES

Pedernales Electric.....	512-219-2602
Texas Gas Service	
Custom Service.....	1-800-700-2443
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Call Before You Dig.....	512-472-2822
AT&T	
New Service.....	1-800-464-7928
Repair.....	1-800-246-8464
Billing.....	1-800-858-7928
Time Warner Cable	
Customer Service.....	512-485-5555
Repairs.....	512-485-5080

OTHER NUMBERS

Balcones Postal Office	512-331-9802
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NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc.	512-263-9181
Article Submissions	canyoncreek@peelinc.com
Advertising.....	advertising@PEELinc.com

ADVERTISING INFO

Please support the businesses that advertise in the Canyon Chronicle. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all Canyon Creek residents to receive the monthly newsletter at no charge. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales office at 512-263-9181 or advertising@peelinc.com. The advertising deadline is the 9th of each month for the following month's newsletter.

DON'T WANT TO WAIT FOR THE MAIL?

View the current issue of *The Canyon Chronicle* on the 1st day of each month at www.peelinc.com

Love Your Dog, Leash Your Dog

We love dogs—we really do. That's why the association is committed to enforcing the county leash law on association property. According to the U.S. Humane Society, an unleashed dog has an average life span of less than four years? Allowing your dog to run free threatens your dog's health and welfare and the happiness it brings to you.

We also love our community. That's another reason the association is committed to enforcing the county leash law—so all residents may enjoy our community.

Another great way you can help everyone enjoy our community is by picking up your dog's poop.



Keep the Fun in Summer

At Neighbors, we know that sun and fun can turn into sunburn and injury if you're not careful. Slipping by the pool, overshooting the slide, canoeing without sunscreen, or an unexpected wasp sting can sour any good day. Luckily, Neighbors is there to treat you 24/7 with little to no wait time. Our Board Certified physicians will get you back to enjoying summer fun.

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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
Teach a student about American values and traditions
Change the course of a student's life
Increase cultural awareness in your community*

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.



30+ Years Connecting People & Cultures

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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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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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

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