

Canyon Creek CHRONICLE

NOVEMBER 2017

VOLUME 11 ISSUE 11

Light Up the Holidays with a Day Trip to Johnson City

The twinkliest town in the Hill Country is a perfect destination for a holiday tour of lights with family and friends. Located in the heart of the Hill Country, Johnson City has activities for all ages to enjoy.

During the day, light up your imagination with a visit to the Science Mill, a science museum housed in Johnson City's historic 1880s mill. Run your hands through the 3D topographic sandbox to create colorful rivers, mountains, lakes and dams. Enter the Fractalarium to experience a larger-than-life lighted representation of Romensco broccoli and see how fractals are a marvel of nature. Explore the Silo of McKays, a multidimensional art installation combining art and science with light, sound, rhythm, balance, color and harmony. The Science Mill's 40+ hands-on exhibits (and current 3D movie, Wonders of the Arctic) will engage all ages.

The Science Mill is located at 101 S. Lady Bird Lane in Johnson City, TX and will be open extended hours during the holidays. Find more information at www.sciencemill.org.

Johnson City's annual Lights Spectacular celebration, celebrating its 28th year, runs Friday, Nov. 24 through New Year's Day, starting with the spectacular courthouse lighting ceremony and fireworks.

The whole town glows, from the Blanco County Courthouse to the dazzling display of light-wrapped trees at Pedernales Electric Cooperative's headquarters, to candlelight tours of Lyndon Baines Johnson's boyhood home. Visitors can enjoy the lighting extravaganza



by foot or by horse-drawn carriage, and local retailers and art galleries offer extended hours, food and music on the town square during the Spectacular. The event is free and pet friendly.

For more information about Johnson City and the Lights Spectacular visit the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce website at www.johnsoncitytexas.info.

LET SLEEPING DOGS LIE...BARKING DOGS BE HUSHED!

Canyon Creek has been receiving complaints regarding nuisance dog barking. Dogs bark...this is what they do...this is how they communicate. However, barking dogs encourage other dogs to bark, that might not otherwise do so. Pretty soon there's a cacophony of barking that is not music to your neighbor's ears. Problems arise in a neighborhood when a dog barks incessantly and the constant barking causes a nuisance and inappropriate behavior. If you spend a lot of time away from home working, traveling, etc., you may not realize what the pooches are doing while you're away. In most cases, the 3 main reasons for problem barking are: loneliness/separation anxiety, insufficient training and neglect. If you own a dog please be sure that it does not become a nuisance. Ultimately it is up to the dog owner to accept responsibility and actively pursue a solution to

the nuisance barking. There is plenty of advice on the internet to help with reshaping your dog's nuisance behavior via proper training and obedience classes. And...there are humane devices to stop the barking whether it's your dog or the neighbors.

What to Do If You Have a Problem

If you are on the receiving end of the nuisance barking ask yourself these questions.

1. Am I losing sleep?
2. Is it negatively affecting my health and/or wellbeing?
3. Is it affecting my personal relationships?
4. Can I hear it in my home with or without the windows closed?
5. Does it disrupt the enjoyment of my front and/or back yard?

(Continued on Page 2)

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
Emergencies.....	512-370-8609
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
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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

(Continued from Cover)

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you owe it to yourself and your family to contact the dog owner.

If you have a problem with a neighbor's barking dog(s) and feel comfortable in doing so, you may approach them neighbor to neighbor and say something like: "Your dog has been barking for 2 hours solid and I just wanted to be sure everything is ok". (Dogs have been known to bark incessantly when their owner has been incapacitated and unable to call for help.) It also will help if you can enlist other neighbors that may be "suffering in silence".

If you do not feel comfortable speaking to your neighbor or they are unresponsive, you may contact the HOA manager at Manager@canyoncreek.net

You may view the pet policies for Canyon Creek at the HOA website: <http://www.canyoncreek.net/bark/>

You will find that nuisance barking is a violation of community rules and city ordinance.

Some possible solutions to dog barking:

1. ULTRASONIC bark control devices/collars (humane, non-shock)
2. BARK ENDER – is a company that will anonymously contact your neighbor/dog owner by mail, informing them of the problem, solutions and possible legal consequences. Cost: \$14.95 plus S&H at barkender.com
3. Quit it! Instant Pet Trainer can be found at PetsMart for \$10.99. It is a 4 ounce aerosol can that hisses.



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FREE EDUCATIONAL CAREGIVER SERIES PROVIDED BY ALZHEIMER'S TEXAS

During the months of November and December, Alzheimer's Texas will be holding free seminars for individuals who need guidance to take care of someone suffering from Alzheimer's or related dementia.

Lead by Steve Catoe, Certified PAC Trainer and Certified Validation Worker, these seminars provide complementary caregiver education on topics particular to caring for someone with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia. All sessions will be held at the Alzheimer's Texas office, 3520 Executive Center Drive, Suite 140, Austin, TX, 78731. Following are the dates and topics of each session:

Tuesday, Nov 14th 6:00 – 7:15pm Part I

Introduction to Alzheimer's: ALZ 101

What is Alzheimer's, Diagnosis and treatments, Stages, How to cope

Tuesday, November 21st 2:00 – 4:00pm Part II

Behaviors and Communication

Preserving Dignity and Sexuality, Agitation, Combativeness, Hallucinations, Communication Techniques

Tuesday, November 28th 2:00 – 4:00pm Part III

Activities of Daily Living

Bathing, Eating, Dressing, Toileting, Hydration and Nutrition, Safety, Driving, Activities

Tuesday, December 5th 2:00 – 4:00pm Part IV

Care for the Caregiver

Getting support, Adjustment and Grief, Caregiving Issues, Communicating with Family and Physicians

Registration is required due to limited class size. Please call (512) 241-0420 or email Victoria, vcardenas@txalz.org if you would like to attend.

ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S TEXAS

Alzheimer's Texas is dedicated to eliminating Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research and to enhancing care and support for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders, their families, and caregivers. The organization provides care consultations, 24-hour help line, support groups, respite care, educational and social engagement programs, and professional training. Alzheimer's Texas was founded in 1982 and serves Central Texas. For more information, visit www.txalz.org.



CENTIPEDES

Centipedes have a single pair of antennae on their head and a long, worm-like body. They have one pair of legs per body segment with the first pair of legs modified to function as claws and are used to capture prey. These claws are sometimes called fangs since they are connected to poison glands that can inject venom to subdue captured prey.

Most centipedes found in Texas are relatively small, but the red headed centipede, *Scolopendra heros*, can reach over nine inches when full grown. The bite of larger species of centipedes may cause extreme discomfort and pain.

Centipedes can live from one to six years. They prefer moist, protected habitats such as under stones, rotted logs, leaves or bark. Winter is spent as an adult and eggs are laid in soil during warm months and are covered by a sticky substance.

Centipedes are predaceous with many species feeding on other arthropods, such as insects. Their modified pair of legs, or claws, is directly under the head, allowing prey to be injected with venom.

Most centipedes can only bite with their poison claws located directly under the head resulting in a bee-like sting; however, *Scolopendra* can harm a person with the sharp claws of its many walking legs. Each walking leg is tipped with a sharp claw capable of making tiny cuts in human skin. A poison produced from the attachment point of each leg may be dropped into the wounds resulting in an inflamed and irritated condition. The best rule of thumb is to never handle large centipedes.

With cooler weather, centipedes may move inside homes to avoid extreme temperatures. Tips to prevent centipedes from sharing your home:

- move objects providing harborage away from the structure such as compost piles, firewood and stones
- create a band of gravel, or similar material between the foundation of the home and any landscape beds that touch the structure
- occasionally turn mulch near structures to allow it to dry out
- seal cracks, crevices, and pipe penetrations with sealant that will expand with our temperature extremes
- repair weather stripping around doors and windows as needed
- properly ventilate crawl spaces or areas under the home to allow for air flow through the area
- use perimeter sprays around a building's foundation

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

Providing Habitat for the Monarch Butterfly

Submitted by LaJuan Tucker, City of Austin and Johanna Arendt, Travis County



Over the past few years, Texas has boasted some of the highest growth rates in the country. Central Texas has seen increased development, urbanization, and economic growth. Natural landscapes are quickly being converted to roadways, housing, and retail.

These dramatic shifts in the landscape are having a significant impact on wildlife. Water sources are being paved over or polluted with runoff. Agricultural lands and native grasslands that provide nesting and foraging sites for birds are increasingly replaced with houses and gas stations. Wildlife now must cross roadways and travel longer distances to find food, shelter, and mates.

There are, however, many ways that residents can help wildlife in urban and suburban landscapes. Balconies, parks, greenbelts, school yards, and backyards are just a few of the places that can provide important resources for wildlife.

One species that especially needs our help is the monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). This iconic butterfly is most famous for its long migrations and its beautiful orange and black markings. Unfortunately, research shows that overall monarch numbers are on the decline. Here in Central Texas, we encounter the monarch butterfly during both its northern and southern migrations, which puts us in a unique position to assist with conservation efforts.

Learn more on November 8, when LaJuan Tucker will be giving a presentation about backyard wildlife at Concordia University. Join us at 6:30pm in Room C270 for a fun, informative program.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Provide monarch habitat essentials: food, water, shelter, and a place to raise their young in parks, yards and open spaces.

Provide native milkweed, the “host plant” for the monarch larvae:

Antelope horn (*Asclepias asperula*)

Green milkweed (*Asclepias viridis*)

Texas milkweed (*Asclepias texana*)

Find more at https://www.wildflower.org/collections/collection.php?collection=centex_milkweed

Plant native, butterfly-friendly flowers that provide nectar sources for adult butterflies: <http://xerces.org/monarch-nectar-plant-guide-southern-plains/>

Supervise pets and children when outdoors to ensure they do not harm wildlife visitors.

Control imported fire ant populations in your yard. Fire ants are predators of monarch eggs and caterpillars.

Use pesticides sparingly or avoid using them altogether. These harmful chemicals are thought to have a negative effect on both milkweed and the butterflies themselves.

THE MONARCH'S LIFE CYCLE

The monarch butterfly's journey is well documented in NOVA's *Journey of the Butterflies*. This petite insect, weighing no more than 0.75 grams, starts off as a tiny egg on a milkweed plant. Milkweed is the monarch's “host” plant -- they lay eggs only on that type of plant. Once the eggs hatch, monarch caterpillars begin to eat the milkweed and sequester the cardenolides found there. Cardenolides are poisonous to most vertebrates, making the monarch repugnant to predators. The bright orange and black coloration the butterfly has after metamorphosis advertises to predators their poisonous nature.

While the adult monarch is brightly colored, the caterpillar blends in by taking on the colors of its host plant, with beautiful bands of green, yellow, white, and black. In this larval stage, monarchs molt several times as they grow. After its final growth phase, the caterpillar begins its preparation for pupation. Most monarchs will stay in pupation from 9 to 15 days, depending on ambient temperatures. Once the wing muscles have developed, the chrysalis turns clear, exposing the coloration for which the butterfly is famed.

After emerging from the chrysalis, the monarch fuses its proboscis, which it will use to suck nectar from flowers, and waits for its wings to dry. If the monarch is located in North America, it will soon begin a journey of around 3,000 miles to overwintering locations in California, Mexico and other southwestern states. How the monarch butterfly makes such a tremendous journey is still a mystery. Some believe that earth's magnetic fields assist the monarch in navigation. Others believe that the angle of the sun during different seasons gives them clues. Once they arrive at their overwintering grounds, the monarchs wait for the weather to warm up again before the next generation makes the journey back north.

Although a single generation will make the 3,000-mile flight south, the journey back northward is made by four successive generations. Central Texas is in the bottle neck of the monarch's flight path. Both northbound and southbound monarchs fly through Texas on their way in and out of Mexico. Because of our location in the monarch's flight path, local residents have a unique opportunity to help the monarch on their spectacular journey.

As the Central Texas population continues to grow, so can our responsibility to make sure urban and suburban places serve not only as economic growth centers, but also as havens for wildlife such as the monarch butterfly.

References: Oberhauser Karen S. and Michelle J Solensky ed.

The Monarch Butterfly: Biology and Conservation. New

York: Cornell University Press. 2004. Print

About the author: LaJuan Tucker is the Program Coordinator for the City of Austin's Wildlife Austin Program. This program advocates for the creation and conservation of public spaces as critical sources of wildlife habitat and opportunities to connect the community back to nature. LaJuan also administers the Mayor's Monarch Pledge for the City of Austin, is a Habitat Steward Host™ and a Landscape for Life Trainer™.

CANYON CHRONICLE

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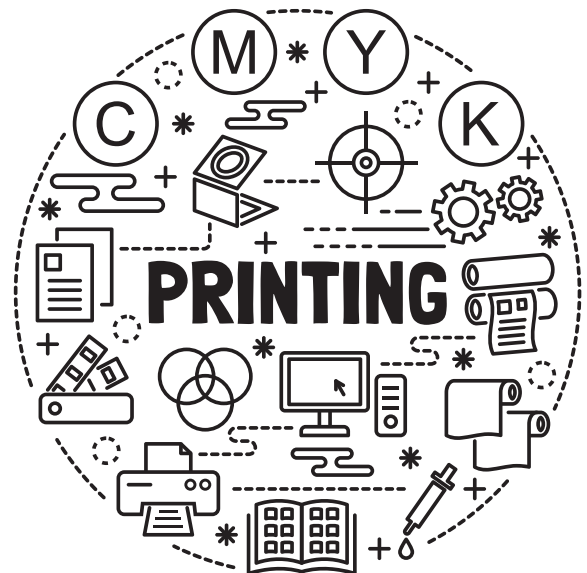
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NATURE WATCH

A THISTLE EPISTLE

by Jim and Lynne Weber



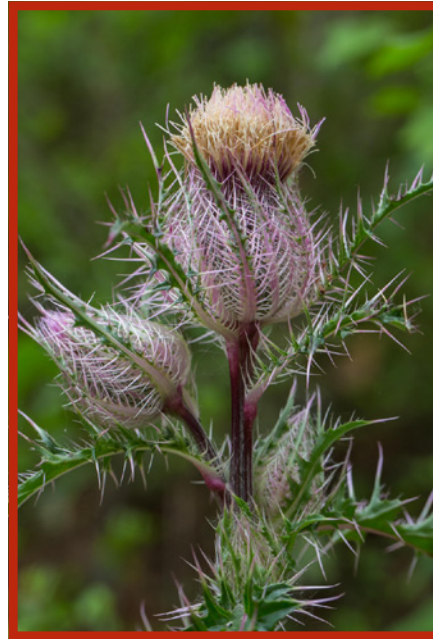
A Mexican Yellow butterfly nectaring on a Texas Thistle.

As one of the most wrongly maligned and misunderstood group of wildflowers, native thistles have never been truly embraced, not even by wildscape gardeners or habitat restoration practitioners. While these plants play a significant role in our ecosystems, they have been a direct casualty of habitat loss, first by plow-based agriculture and followed by the continual development of roads and cities. Further, recent invasions of non-native, exotic thistle species and the inability to discern them from the superficially similar native species, have contributed to their unjustified reputation and ongoing demise.

Native thistles are a beautiful and important group of plants, with subtle blue-green foliage, fascinating stem and leaf architecture, and long-lasting pastel blooms that nourish many species of insects and birds. The nectar they produce is utilized by many species of bees, wasps, butterflies, moths, flies, beetles, spiders, katydids, and hummingbirds, which demonstrates the wide diversity of animals supported by native thistle flowers. In late summer and early fall, they are an essential nectar source for migrating Monarch butterflies. Their persistent seed heads provide the favorite food of goldfinches (both Lesser and American) and other songbirds such as the Carolina Chickadee, and the silky fluff attached to mature seeds is used to line their nests in the spring.

While there are many plants with spines that are erroneously called 'thistles', true thistles belong to the genus *Cirsium*. Of the 62 native species in North America, the most important species in our area are the Texas Thistle (*Cirsium texanum*) and the Yellow Thistle (*Cirsium horridulum*). The Texas Thistle, also called Southern Thistle or Gray Woolly Twintip, is an upright, unbranched or sparingly branched plant, 2 to 6.5 feet tall, with

grayish-green foliage that is spiny and woolly-white below. Violet-pink to deep lavender-rose composite flower heads top the stems from April to August, and are surrounded by bracts that bear a silvery strip down the middle. Texas Thistle is also the larval host plant for the Painted Lady and Mylitta Crescent butterflies. Yellow Thistle, as perhaps foreshadowed by its scientific name, has a host of other, undeserved common names such as Horrid Thistle and Terrible Thistle. It has a branching, densely hairy stem rising from a 2 foot wide basal rosette, 1 to



The blooms of the Yellow Thistle are surrounded by a whorl of spiny bracts.

5.5 feet tall, with long grayish-green spiny leaves and several large flower heads. Blooming May to August, these composite flower heads are up to 3 inches wide, surrounded by a whorl of spiny, hairy, leaf like bracts, and are frequently red-purple, pink, or white instead of the namesake yellow. In the first year of growth this plant remains a low-lying rosette, and 'bolts' in the spring of the following year to reach its full height. Yellow Thistle is an excellent attractant for Sphinx moths and is the larval host plant for the Little Metalmark and Painted Lady butterflies.

It's time to bring back our native thistles, so this fall consider planting them in your wildscape. These species have evolved with our native pollinators in our natural habitats over thousands of years. As a result, they benefit us by helping to sustain a healthy ecoweb, protecting our water quality, sequestering carbon in our soils, and adding a sublime beauty and structure to our landscapes. And that's our epistle to the thistle!

Send your nature-related questions to naturewatch@austin.rr.com and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, check out our books, *Nature Watch Austin* and *Nature Watch Big Bend* (both published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.



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