

Friday, December 8 7-9pm

St. Luke United Methodist Church

Saturday, December 9 9:30am, 11:30am, or 1:30pm



Cookies & Castles A GINGERBREAD EXTRAVAGANZA



1306 W. Lynn, Austin, Texas

PRESENTED BY THE AUSTIN TRIDELTA ALUMNAE CHAPTER BENEFITTING THE CHILDREN'S BLOOD & CANCER CENTER AT DELL CHILDREN'S



Please join the TriDelta Alumnae of Austin at our second annual Cookies & Castles event which benefits Dell Children's Blood and Cancer Center. The fundraiser will be held at St. Luke United Methodist Church in Clarksville on Friday, December 8 and Saturday, December 9. We will provide unlimited icing and candy to decorate gingerbread men (cookies) and gingerbread houses (castles) and we'll clean up the mess!

Ladies Night Out will be Friday, December 8 from 7-9pm, sans kiddos. Family Decorating will be Saturday, December 9 and starting times at 9:30am, 11:30am, or 1:30pm. Individual houses or tables of four houses will be available on our website: http://www.austin.tridelta.org/cookies--castles.

Sponsorship opportunities, volunteer opportunities, and other questions can be directed to cookiescastlesATX@gmail.com



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CALLING ALL CAREGIVERS!

If you are a caregiver in the Village of Western Oaks area who would be interested in joining a support group where you can socialize with other caregivers in our area, please email villagegazette@peelinc.com and we will put you in touch with each other.



The Pursuit of Happiness LET US HELP YOU FIND YOURS

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	
Fire	
Ambulance	
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	

SCHOOLS

Elementary	
Clayton	
Kiker	
Mills	
Patton	
Middle	
Bailey	
Small	
Gorzycki	
High School	
Austin	
Bowie	

UTILITIES

Water/Wastewater	
City of Austin	512-972-0101
City of Austin (billing)	512-494-9400
Emergency	
Texas State Gas	
Customer Service	1-800-700-2443
Gas related emergency	1-800-959-5325
Pedernales Electric Cooperative	
New service, billing	
Problems	
ATT/SBC Telephone	
New Service	1-800-288-2020
Repair	1-800-246-8464
Billing	
Allied Waste	
Time Warner Cable	
OTHER NUMBERS	
Oak Hill Postal Station	1-800-275-8777
City of Austin	

City of Austin	
Dead Animal Collection	
Abandoned/Disabled Vehicles	512-974-8119
Stop Sign Missing/Damaged	
Street Light Outage (report pole#)	512-505-7617

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Lady Bird

Johnson

Wildflower center



DECEMBER 7-10

Thousands of luminaries and twinkling lights turn the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center into a holiday wonderland during Luminations, an Austin holiday tradition. In addition to the magical lights, there will be free taffy and hot chocolate with admission, a cash bar and plentiful music to make this one of Austin's most memorable holiday traditions.

More details at www.wildflower.org



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DONATIONS NEEDED

Did you know that the Gus Garcia Young Men's Leadership Academy is an all-boys academy in Austin ISD? The academy offers career and technology classes through Project Lead the Way. The school requires uniforms, including a blazer and tie, along with a belt for class every day. 97% of the students at this school live in families that are below the poverty line. One of our neighbors is an 8th grade English Language Arts and Special Education Inclusion teacher at Gus Garcia. She is accepting donations of button up dress shirts, ties, shoes, and belts in virtually any size. If you'd like to coordinate a donation, please email: villagegazette@peelinc.com and we will connect you.







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Free classes for members include indoor cycling, yoga, pilates, water exercise, group exercise and so much more.



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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-guidesouthern-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 to15 days, depending on ambient temperatures. Once the wing muscles have developed, the chrysalis turns clear,

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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 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[™].



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