

The Ranch Report

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 5

MAY 2019

Congratulations Birdie Stabeno & Addison Schievelbein



Birdie Stabeno, daughter of Kevin and Michelle Stabeno.

Graduate of McNeil High School 2019. Birdie also attended Cedar Valley Middle School and Patsy Sommer Elementary.

Attending Texas Tech University in the fall to study Theatre and Communications



Addison Schievelbein

Resident of Granite Shoals in Avery Ranch

Vista Ridge High School 2019

Addison will be attending University of Mary Hardin-Baylor in the Fall.

RANCH REPORT

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

EMERGENCY	911
Fire.....	911
Ambulance.....	911
Sheriff – Non-Emergency	512-943-1300

SCHOOLS

ROUND ROCK ISD

Patsy Sommer Elementary	704-0600
.....	16200 Avery Ranch Blvd.
Elsa England Elementary School	704-1200
.....	8801 Pearson Ranch Road
Cedar Valley Middle School.....	428-2300
.....	8139 Racine Trail
Pearson Ranch Middle School.....	704-1500
.....	8901 Pearson Ranch Road
McNeil High School.....	464-6300
.....	5720 McNeil Dr.

LEANDER ISD

Rutledge Elementary.....	570-6500
.....	11501 Staked Plains Dr.
Stiles Middle School	570-0000
.....	3250 Barley Rd.
Vista Ridge High School.....	570-1800
.....	200 S. Vista Ridge Dr.

UTILITIES

City of Austin Water	512-494-9400
Perdarnales 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
Solid Waste Servies.....	512-494-9400

NEWSLETTER INFO

NEWS

Articles..... AveryRanch@peelinc.com

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Sherry Salkhordeh O.D.

Mosquitoes



Mosquitoes can not only be irritating by biting, but they also are able to transmit various diseases to humans and animals. They are known to transmit heartworm in dogs and cats, and they can spread encephalitis (including West Nile Virus), Chikungunya, Zika, dengue, yellow fever, malaria and filariasis among humans.

Most female mosquitoes require a blood meal for egg production whereas males feed on nectar and do not bite. Eggs are laid on the surface of water or in dry locations that can be flooded by water. Eggs laid in dry locations can remain dormant under for several months. Eggs hatch into larvae, or wigglers. Mosquito larvae live in water and feed on organic debris or microscopic plants and animals. Larvae molt into pupae which are non-feeding. Mosquito pupae spend the majority of their time at the surface of the water, only moving when disturbed.

Many things can help to reduce mosquito problems around the home. Since three of the four life stages of mosquitoes are in or near water, it is best to eliminate all sources of standing water. Containers such as watering cans, buckets and bottles can turn into mosquito breeding grounds. Water should be drained from birdbaths, gutters, flowerpots and pet dishes at least once a week. Children's wading pools should be emptied of water at least once a week and stored so they cannot collect water when not in use. Tree holes should be filled in with sand or mortar, or drained after each rain. Leaky faucets and pipes located outside should be repaired.

Areas that cannot be drained, such as ponds or large rain collection systems, can be stocked with fish that eat mosquito larvae. Dunks can also be used in these areas. Dunks are a small, donut-shaped product that contains *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *israeliensis*. The donut disrupts the life cycle of the mosquito and is non-toxic to humans, amphibians and fish.

Avoiding outdoor activities during peak mosquito hours is the best method to avoid being bitten. When outside, wear loose-fitting, light colored clothing with long sleeves & long pants. Repellants containing active ingredients such as DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), para-

methane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone can be effective to keep mosquitoes from biting when evening activities cannot be rescheduled.

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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NATURE WATCH

DISTINCTLY DIFFERENT MILKWEEDS

by Jim and Lynne Weber

Much ado has been made of the more common and widespread milkweed species, but there are a handful of milkweed vines that are less common but more distinct, and just as useful as native host plants for Monarchs and related butterflies.



Pearl Milkvine

A fairly robust, twining vine 6 to 12 feet long growing in dry, light shade in thickets on rocky hillsides and woodland edges, Pearl Milkvine (*Matelea reticulata*) is best known for its heart-shaped leaves and flat, greenish-white flowers $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch across with pearly, iridescent centers. Also called Green Milkweed Vine, Net Vine Milkvine, and Netted Milkvine, its curious flowers have tiny white veins forming an intricate pattern on the surface of the petals, adding

to their unusual look. In fact, *reticulata* refers to this pattern, which means 'resembling a net or network'. It blooms from April to July, especially in full sun, giving way to fairly large, interesting prickly follicles filled with seeds attached to silky threads. This native species is a host plant to Monarch butterflies.



Plateau Milkvine

Often mistaken for Pearl Milkvine is Plateau Milkvine (*Matelea edwardensis*), endemic only to the Edwards Plateau of Central Texas. This uncommon vine shares the same twining habit of Pearl Milkvine, but its leaves, while similar, generally have a somewhat wavy edge, and its flowers are bell-shaped instead of flat. Additionally, its greenish-white flowers do not have a pearl

(Continued on Page 6)

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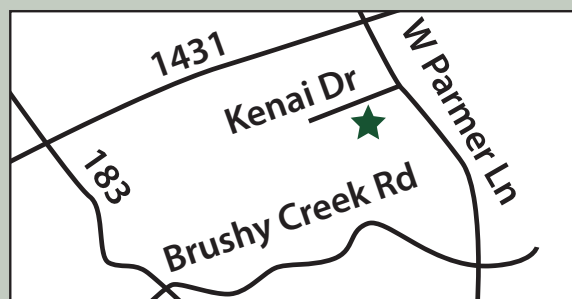


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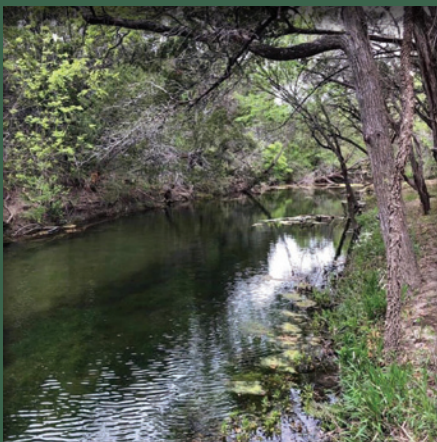


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RANCH REPORT

(Nature Watch - Continued from Page 4)

center, and its petals are not solely reticulate-patterned, having parallel veins in their lower halves and centers, and reticulate or networked veins only on the edges or margins. Blooming in April and May, this species can be found on gravelly soils in open woodlands, often climbing on other plants, and it is a native host plant for Queen butterflies.



Talayote

Usually found in the chalky soils of pastures and open ground, Purple Milkvine (*Matelea biflora*) has low-growing stems that radiate along the ground from a woody rootstock, and along with its opposite, triangular leaves, are covered with long, spreading hairs. From March to June, pairs of star-shaped, five-petaled, dark purple-brown flowers rise from the base of the leaves, which gives this plant its other common name of Star Milkvine. While its trailing stems can grow up to 2 feet long, it inhabits grassy areas

and as such is often hidden and overlooked, except by Queen and Soldier butterflies that use it as their native host plant.

Named for a small town in Chihuahua, Mexico, Talayote (*Cynanchum racemosum*) or Milkweed Vine is a climber that grows to 15 to 20 feet in full sun to part shade, and is a native host plant for both Queen and Soldier butterflies. Talayote produces clusters of small cream and green flowers that are held above and among the heart-shaped leaves, blooming in the hotter months from summer into fall, and attracting a host of other small but beneficial pollinators. Growing only in Central, South, and West Texas in the United States, this vine produces plump, smooth follicles 3 inches long, filled with silk-topped seeds, often remaining on the vine well into winter.

Take the time to seek out and appreciate these lesser known members of the Milkweed family, as they are beautifully and distinctly different!

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 (published by Texas A&M University Press), and our blog at naturewatchaustin.blogspot.com.



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