



CYPRESS MILL *Chronicle*

NEWS FOR THE RESIDENTS OF CYPRESS MILL

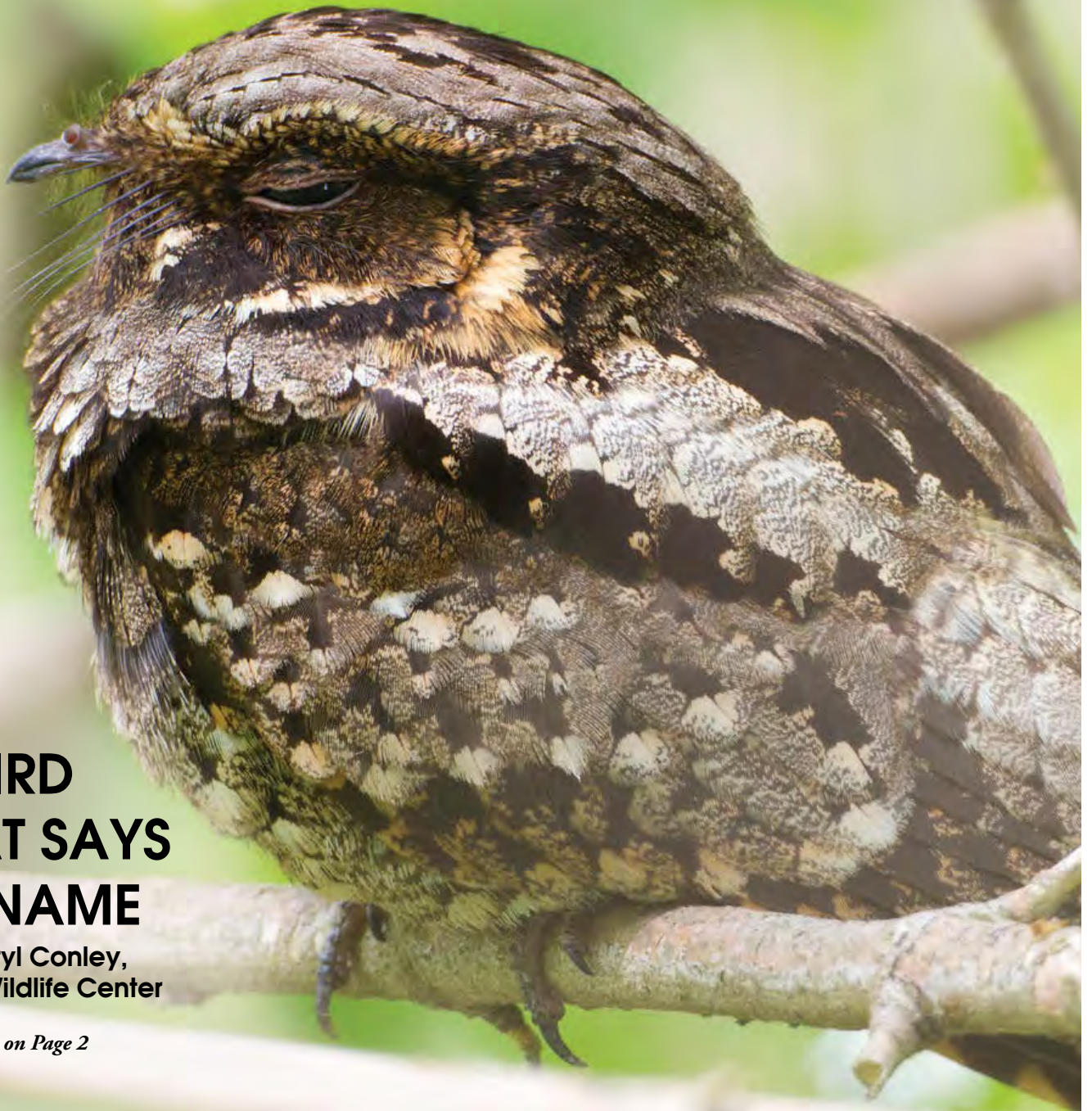
June 2020

Volume 20, Issue 6

A BIRD THAT SAYS ITS NAME

By Cheryl Conley,
TWRC Wildlife Center

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CYPRESS MILL

Important Numbers

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Spillane Middle School.....	281-213-1645
Cy-Fair High School	281-897-4600
Cy-Woods High School.....	281-213-1919
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Centerpoint Emergency Gas Leaks.....	713-659-3552
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AT&T Repair Center	800-246-8464
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<i>Mowing of Pipeline easement; Standing water; Smells or leaks</i>	

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(Continued from Cover Page)

A few years ago, when I took my dog out for her last potty of the night, I heard the most beautiful bird singing. Just a few seconds later, another bird responded with the same beautiful song. I had no idea what species it was but after some research I learned it was a whippoorwill. The whippoorwill actually got its name because of its song—three syllables with emphasis on the first and last syllables.

Whippoorwills are nocturnal. They feed exclusively on insects and start foraging 30 minutes after sunset and continue until it's too dark to see. They continue their foraging at first light and stop just before sunrise. If the moon is bright, they may hunt all night. They have large mouths and can swallow insects up to 2 inches long.

The most interesting fact about the whippoorwill is that they don't build a nest. The female will lay her eggs on the ground and cover with dead leaves or debris. Often times she'll find a spot on the north or northeast side of a shrub or plant so she's shaded during the heat of the day. Mom is responsible for incubating the eggs during the day and both Mom and Dad share the duty at night. Amazingly, whippoorwills time their breeding patterns to coincide with the lunar cycles so that the eggs hatch when there is at least a half moon. It is believed that the extra light helps in caring for her young. Within 24 hours of hatching, the baby birds instinctively move apart. The parents will also push the babies to keep them apart. It is thought that this is done to make it harder for predators to see them. The male stands guard over the nest and will hiss and spread his wings if he thinks there is a predator nearby. Another tactic used to protect the young is he will fake an injury away from the babies to draw attention away from them. While he draws the predator away from the young, the babies scatter and freeze.

At about 8 days, the down-covered babies molt and the female leaves them in the care of the male. If conditions are right, the female will often find a spot nearby and lay 2 more eggs.

TWRC Wildlife Center cares for injured, orphaned and displaced wildlife brought to us by the public. Due to the Corona Virus, we've had to alter our admission procedures. If you find an animal needing help, please call us. We will advise you on how to care for the animal until you can bring it to us: 713.468.8972

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BICYCLE SAFETY

Bicycling certainly has become a popular exercise option (or for some just to get out of the house) during the Covid Virus. Families and individuals were spotted within the neighborhood and on the walking/jogging/riding trails that surround us. Thus, this is a good time to remind everyone of bicycle safety, not just now...but anytime, such as riding for exercise/recreation, to school/work, etc.

EXCERPTS FROM THE USAA EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

Bicycling is fun, good exercise and good for the environment. You and your family can enjoy years of safe bicycle riding when you understand the risks involved and take steps to prevent accidents and injuries. Covid 19 got a lot of people out walking and others pulling their bikes out of the garage to kill the boredom of being cooped up in the house.

5 Keys to Safe Bicycling

1. Wear a bicycle helmet.
2. Be visible.
3. Stay alert.
4. Know and obey traffic laws.
5. Be predictable.

Wear a Bicycle Helmet

You should always wear a bicycle helmet. Do not assume you will be safe from injury just because you are going a short distance or riding on an unpaved surface. Many serious bicycle accidents occur on residential streets or bike paths and do not involve vehicles.

Inspect Your Bicycle

- Lift the bicycle by its seat and spin the rear wheel. It should spin freely without wobbling, slowing quickly, or touching the brake pads.
- Apply the rear brake smoothly to stop the wheel. The brake pads should touch the wheel rim evenly. When released, the brake should spring back into place.
- Lift your bicycle by the handlebars, and spin the front wheel. It should spin freely without bobbling or touching the brake pads.
- Apply the front brake smoothly to stop the wheel. The brake pads should touch the wheel rim evenly. When released, the brake should spring back into place.
- Inspect brake pads. Replace them if they become worn or cracked. They should be at equal distances from the wheel rim.
- Check the spokes on both wheels. Replace broken spokes before riding.
- Check the tire tread. There should be no worn patches.
- Make sure tires are properly inflated.
- Check your handlebars. Stand in front of your bicycle holding the wheel tightly between your knees and try to move the handlebars back and forth or up and down. They should not move.

- Lift the frame near the handlebars and turn the front wheel back and forth. It should swivel freely.
- Make sure brake levers are secure.
- Apply the brakes and try to move the bicycle forward or backward.
- Make sure the ends of the handlebars are protected.
- Make sure the seat is secure and does not move from side to side.
- Clean reflectors and headlight. Make sure they are securely attached.
- Lubricate the chain if needed.
- Take your bicycle for an annual tuneup and safety check to ensure it remains in good condition.

On the Road

When riding your bicycle on public streets, you are required by law to follow the same rules as any other vehicle driver. You also have the same rights as drivers of other vehicles.

Be Predictable

- Use hand signals to communicate your intentions to other vehicle drivers and bicyclists.

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(Continued from Page 3)

- Communicate verbally (ex: “passing on your left”).
- Ride in straight line and avoid sudden swerves.

Teach Children Bicycle Safety

Is your child ready to ride? According to The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), most children are not ready to ride a two-wheeled bicycle until 5 or 6 years of age. Along with physical skills, your child must demonstrate the mental readiness and self-control for understanding and obeying safety rules.

Set Clear Rules

Children – and all bicycle riders – should always wear a bicycle helmet when riding. In addition, you should set age-appropriate limits on when, where, and how children may ride. Be prepared to take away children’s riding privileges if they do not follow these rules.

Be A Good Example

Practice what you teach about bicycle safety. Be diligent about wearing a bicycle helmet, stopping at stop signs and following other important safety rules. Your children will learn more from your example than from your words. Ultimately you should be able to practice bicycle safety while having fun!



Albion Hurricanes FC

Did you miss tryouts? No problem, AHFC has multiple campuses in and around Houston. The club invites all interested players from the ages of 7 to 18, to contact the Campus Director about team placement. We ask that all interested players pre-register before coming out to the fields. Please follow the link below for the Campus Director's email and phone number.

[HTTPS://WWW.ALBIONHURRICANES.ORG/AFHCSTAFF](https://www.albionhurricanes.org/afhcstaff)

AHFC offers JHSL (a recreational program for 5 - 10 year olds) at our Cy Fair and Central locations and offers additional training at Katy Friday Night Academy and New Territory Thursday Night Academy. All information regarding all of the programs and camps can be found at albionhurricanes.org.



Asian Giant Hornets



Paper wasps on paper nest.



Cicada killer wasp on redbud.

What headline can draw people away from thoughts of the current state of the world and Coronavirus? That would be MURDER HORNETS! I cannot think of a more sensationalized headline, so kudos to whomever came up with that attention grabber. This headline is popping up everywhere from social media outlets, television, newspapers, and others. Quite frankly, it makes me cringe each time I see it. Asian giant hornets (AGH) are *Vespa mandarinia* NOT "murder" hornets. If you want to use a common name instead of the scientific name, then call them by the correct common name of Asian giant hornet.

Asian giant hornets are large, around 2 inches in length, with an orangish head, brown antennae (the base of the antennae are yellow-orange), brown to black eyes and ocelli (simple, dot-like eyes located between the compound eyes). Their thorax is dark brown with greyish wings and the abdomen has alternating bands of brownish-black and yellow-orange.

Asian giant hornets are capable of inflicting a painful sting. Please note that while the sting can lead to death in some cases, it is not what typically happens. People are also capable of receiving painful stings from insects already here in Texas such as honey bees, paper wasps, yellowjackets, or even fire ants and some can die from being stung. Death by insect sting usually depends upon the number of stings and how your body chemistry reacts to venom injected by the insect. Asian giant hornets are capable of killing other insects, including honey bees and other pollinators, but they are not doing this to be vicious or killing for sport. The hornets use insects they kill as food for their larvae....just like other wasps that we have here in Texas.

We do not currently have Asian giant hornets in Texas. If you think you have these wasps, then please send samples or images to me for identification as Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are identifying any items of concern for our clientele.

Some insects that may be confused with AGH to the untrained eye:

Paper wasps are reddish brown in color & sometimes have yellow markings on their bodies and are ½-1 inches in length. Paper wasps make paper-like nests out of chewed wood fiber that have open cells and hang from a single stalk.

Paper wasps on paper nest.

Yellowjackets are yellow & black in color and are ½ in length. Bald-faced hornets are a type of yellowjacket. These wasps also make a paper-like nest, but it is enclosed with a single opening.

Cicada killer wasps have a reddish head and thorax with an abdomen that alternates with yellow and black markings. These wasps reach 1 ½ inches in length. Cicada killers burrow into the ground, so you may see holes left behind from their digging.

Cicada killer wasp on redbud.

FACTS about Asian giant hornets in North America

1. A colony was found late last year (September 2019) in Nanaimo, British Columbia on Vancouver Island. The colony was located and destroyed.

2. A sighting and dead specimen was found in Washington state in December 2019 in Blaine, WA.

This was the first reported sighting of the Asian giant hornet in the U.S.

3. It is currently unknown how the hornets entered the U.S. and genetic testing leads to the conclusion that the hornets found in BC & WA are two separate introductions.

4. Agencies are currently monitoring & trapping with lures to discover any queens or workers. They are talking about attaching radio tracking devices to captured wasps to track them back to their nest.

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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CYPRESS/TOMBALL DEMOCRATS

June Speaker: Mike Collier, 2018 Candidate for Texas Lt. Governor

The Cypress-Tomball Democrats will hold its next virtual monthly meeting Tuesday, June 16, 2020. There is a meet and greet at 6:45 p.m. The general meeting begins at 7:00 p.m.

Mike Collier graduated from Georgetown High School. He earned a bachelor's degree and M.B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin. Collier's career experience includes working as an employee at Exxon, auditor with PriceWaterhouseCoopers, and founder and chief financial officer with a Texas oil company.

Mr. Collier is passionate about investing properly in public education; closing the big-corporate property tax loophole to make property taxes fair again; closing the healthcare coverage gap; protecting Texans with preexisting conditions; criminal justice reform; sensible gun laws; ending gerrymandering; and bringing compassion back to public policy.

All are welcome to attend and to join this growing club, which meets on the third Tuesday of every month.

For more information & access to the ZOOM Virtual meeting, contact Undrai Fizer at cytomdemocrats@gmail.com, or visit the club's Facebook page.

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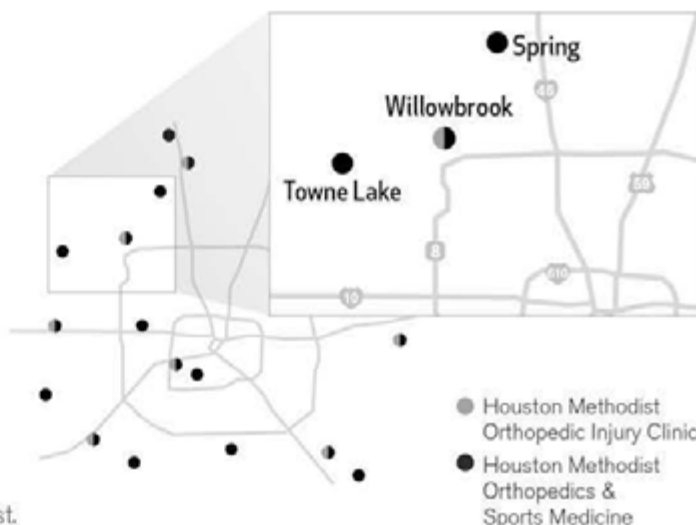
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