

our charter ...

OUTDOOR NATURE
CLUB IS A NONPROFIT
EDUCATIONAL AND SCI-
ENTIFIC ORGANIZATION
ESTABLISHED
IN 1923 TO PROTECT
AND CONSERVE OUR
NATURAL RESOURCES
BY FOSTERING AN
INTEREST IN NATURE
STUDY

ONC

Outdoor Nature Club
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A Day in Dewitt County

KA-BOOM! The lightning and thunder woke us at about 4:30 on the morning of our field trip in Dewitt County. Uh-oh ... it was raining cats and dogs so we thought we might be spending the day in our motel room. But the storm finally moved through and we met our leader, Derek Muschalek, and ten other ONC members at the Cuero City Park at eight o'clock. By that time it was barely sprinkling. We headed to Yorktown first because Derek knew there were no flooded roads in that area.

The Yorktown cemetery is a great place to find native wildflowers—many of the seeds are scattered by local enthusiasts. Soil conditions are perfect for pipevine and it grows everywhere, naturally attracting the Pipevine Swallowtail butterfly. Our timing was impeccable and there were Pipevine Swallowtail caterpillars on most of the plants in various instar stages. What a treat! Other plants found in this area were two gaillardia species, coreopsis, green-eyed daisy, violets, milkweed, bull nettle, and many other species I can't remember.

Our next stop was a small city park situated on a creek (more like a river on this day) in downtown Yorktown. By this time the sun had appeared and butterflies were emerging to nectar on the beautiful flowers. Two butterflies new to me were the Border Patch and Dainty



After early morning rains, a field of wildflowers awaited us at a park in Yorktown.

Sulphur. But the highlight of this stop was seeing and hearing a Couch's Kingbird. Wow ... I didn't expect to get a lifer bird on a wildflower trip!

Just before noon, we traveled back to Cuero for a visit to the history museum where the Dewitt County Wildflower Association displays wildflowers throughout the month of April. Although their official opening was on Sunday, Derek has connections and arranged for a special showing for ONC members. Thanks, Derek! If you travel to this area during April, be sure to visit the museum. The wildflowers are beautifully displayed and all are identified, which is a tremendous help to us novices. The Wildflower Association also provides free route maps that are color coded to help you find the best blooming areas.

After lunch, we traveled the backroads around Cuero making several stops and

Group Activities

Botany/Entomology

Tuesday, May 8, 7:30 pm
 Bayland Community Center
 6400 Bissonnet (at Hillcroft)

The Cyperaceae Family and How To Know Them, to be presented by David Rosen, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Dr. Rosen received his B.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Texas A&M University and currently serves as staff specialist in the field of botany covering regional National Wildlife Refuges.

Ornithology

Monday, May 7
 Bayland Community Center
 6400 Bissonnet (at Hillcroft)

Learning Corner: 6:30 pm
 Program: 7:00 pm
 Birding in Southeast Arizona, presented by Adam Wood.

ONC Regular Monthly Meeting

Thursday, May 10,
Refreshments: 7:00 pm
Program: 7:30 pm
 Bayland Community Center
 6400 Bissonnet (at Hillcroft)

East Texas Bats, presented by Diana Foss

There are at least 47 species of bats found in the United States, and 33 of those have been recorded in Texas. Here in Houston, a large colony of Mexican freetail bats have inhabited the Waugh Drive bridge since 1993. The population is estimated at 250,000 during peak population months. Data is currently being gathered by Diana Foss with the help of volunteers from the Texas Master Naturalist Program. At our May meeting, Diana will describe her program and also teach us to identify the more common bat species found in East Texas.

Diana holds a B.S. degree in Wildlife Science from Texas A & M University and has been an Urban Wildlife Biologist with Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. for the past 14 years.

Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary

May 12-13
 Join us for an outing at Little Thicket where you will find wildflowers blooming and birds singing in May. No work planned this weekend, just pure fun!

Primitive camping is available in the Cove or come for the day.

June 2, Saturday
 Summer Hiway Trash Pickup. Due to the heat, we will start early. Meet at the entrance to LTNS at 8:00 am

June 16, Saturday
Meeting Time: 9:00 am
 This will be our annual field trip to LTNS to study wildflowers, the highlight of the trip being the bluebells on Cullinan Meadow. Bring a lunch and other necessities for a spending a summer day in the East Texas wilderness.

ONC Annual Planning Meeting

Thursday, June 14, 7:30 pm
 Bayland Community Center
 6400 Bissonnet (at Hillcroft)

Each year in June, members plan ONC's meetings and field trips for the upcoming season.

This is your club and we try to plan programs and outings of interest to our members, so your input is very important to a successful season. Please bring ideas and help make next season a successful one for ONC.

If for some reason you cannot attend the planning meeting, your input is still important. Please call in or email your suggestions to Calvin Blakley (contact information is in the ONC Yearbook).

May 2007

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Map To Meeting Place



ONC Contact Information

ONC General Information
 Calvin Blakley, 281-358-5407

Botany/Entomology
 Russell Jeffords, 713-504-9215

Ornithology
 Michael Williams, 713-263-1919
 Adam Wood, 713-515-1692

LTNS
 Aaron Stoley, 713-781-1372

Notes of Interest

Dewitt County ... continued from page 1

finding at least 20 more species of flowers. One of my favorite stops was a field of foxgloves in full bloom waving in the breeze (see photo at right). By this time the butterflies were emerging and we saw Pipevine and Tiger Swallowtail, more Border Patch, and Checkered White, Celia's Roadside-Skipper, and Fiery Skipper.

We ended this glorious day with a group dinner at a local restaurant. Many thanks, again, to Derek for taking time from his busy schedule to spend the day with us and share his knowledge. We would have been lost without him.

(Author's note: I'm writing this article while on a trip to visit family and do not have all my notes; ergo, the vague species descriptions. If anyone wants a list of plant and butterfly species from the trip, let me know. —Connie)



ONC Appreciates Your Generous Donations

Donations to ONC are always appreciated and gratefully acknowledged. Memorials and Honor Gifts are contributed to the Sanctuary Fund for Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary. Other gifts fund special projects as designated by the donor. Thanks, everyone for your generosity.

in memory of Helen Wolfer

Leland Day

for General Fund

Mike/Margarita Beathard

for LTNS Sanctuary Fund

Ann Wier & Arthur Jones

Roy Kveton

In memoriam

ONC lost a dear friend and lifelong member when Helen Wolfer passed away in March. Helen was soft spoken but always made her presence known, regularly attending Botany, Ornithology, and ONC meetings until her health curtailed her activities. She will be missed by all her ONC friends.

Answers to last month's Earth Day puzzle

ACROSS:

1. Durable
7. **Reuse**
8. Compost
10. Donate
11. Batteries

DOWN:

2. Bulk
3. Environment
4. House
5. Earth
6. **Recycle**
9. **Reduce**

Remember the 3 Rs:

REUSE
RECYCLE
REDUCE

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Nature Notes is published monthly September thru May

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