

Nature Notes

Outdoor Nature Club

our charter...

A nonprofit educational

and scientific organiza-

tion established in 1923

to protect and conserve

natural resources by

fostering an interest in

nature study

ONC

Outdoor Nature Club
P.O. Box 270894
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Metallic Nature



by Connie Blakley, photo by Wanda Smith

Beetles come in many shapes, sizes, and colors but most of us have only ever seen black or brown ones. Count yourself among the lucky few if you've seen the lovely metallic turquoise tiger beetle. You may not think of this beetle as lovely but how can you not when it's beautiful metallic coloring almost glows.

Tiger beetles are in their own family (Cicindelidae) and are usually found in exposed areas. Woodland tiger beetles, such as this one, can be found on open sunlit trails. Other than the obvious coloring, distinct identifying features are the bulging eyes and skittish behavior. If you encounter one of these beetles, observe for a few minutes. You'll see it run-stop-run along the trail. If startled, it flies a

short distance then resumes the run-stop-run behavior. This constant movement makes them difficult to photograph.

The larvae of tiger beetles live in cylindrical burrows and capture prey insects that wander over the ground. Adults are fast-moving on the ground and extremely fast on the wing. Their reaction times have been equated to that of common houseflies.

These beetles can usually be found on open forest trails in the spring when overwintering adults emerge to begin breeding. Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary provides the perfect environment. Join us for our next open house on May 4 and you might be lucky enough to find one!

Group Activities — May/June

(All meetings are at Bayland Community Center unless otherwise noted)

March 2009

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				

April 2009

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		

May 2009

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						

June 2009

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				

ONC Contact Information

ONC General Information

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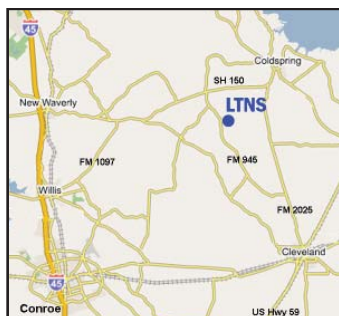
Maps

All meetings are at Bayland Community Center unless otherwise noted.

Bayland Community Center 6400 Bissonnet (at Hillcroft)



Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary 2001 FM 945, Cleveland, TX



Botany/Entomology

MAY 14, 7:30 pm

Texas Mushrooms

A presentation courtesy of Anita Tiller, Mercer Arboretum Botanist, based on the book by Van and Susan Metzler.

Ornithology (OG)

Learning Corner, 6:30 pm

Program, 7:00 pm

MAY 4

See *The Spoonbill* for program details.

OG Field Trips

MAY 30

Kayaking in Galveston Bay. Reservations are required for this trip. To sign up please contact Britt Jones with the Houston Audubon Society at 713-932-1639 or visit the OG website for more details.

ONC Regular Bimonthly Meeting

MAY 14

Birding Tales from the Upper Texas Gulf Coast, by Adam Wood

7:00 pm - Refreshments

7:30 pm - Program

Our speaker this month, Adam Wood, is an avid birder and has served as OG's Field Trip Coordinator since 2005. He has birded the UTGC extensively and will share his experiences as he tells "birding tales" from the Upper Texas Gulf Coast. Please join us!

ONC Planning Meeting

JUNE 11, 7:00 pm

Bayland Community Center

This evening we will be planning programs and field trips for the 2009-2010 season. Please bring your suggestions; if you can't attend please send your ideas to Calvin.

Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary

MAY 2-3, Visitors Weekend

Get away from it all and enjoy a weekend in LTNS.

MAY 2: SPRING FEAST

One of our most popular events at LTNS is our spring potluck. See details on back page.

JUNE 6, Visitors Day & Highway Trash Pickup (8:30 am)

Saturday, June 6, is our quarterly trash pickup along FM 945. Bring gloves, hat, water; pickup takes about an hour, then enjoy hiking the trails at LTNS.

JUNE 20, ONC Field Trip Bluebells at LTNS

Bluebells are plentiful at LTNS this year; we've seen lots of plants and they should all be blooming by end of June. If you've never seen Texas bluebells, you will definitely want to join us for this trip. It will be hot on the meadows so bring plenty of water and a hat.

Meet 9:30 am at LTNS in The Cove for tractor rides to the meadows. Be sure to bring lunch if you want to stay for the whole day.

Other Notes of Interest

(Submit news and articles to editor – see back page for contact info)

Activities at LTNS

Spring Highway Trash Pickup

We had a good turnout in April for our spring highway pickup and were surprised to find less trash than usual.

Thanks to volunteers Thomas & Gina Autry, Calvin & Connie Blakley, Leland Day, Kellene Jarratt, Aaron & Karen Stoley, and Charlie & Wanda Smith for volunteering to pick up the trash. After the hard work, everyone enjoyed hiking the trails and visiting around the campfire.

Debris On Trails

Contrary to last month's report, members hiking the trails found lots of marking tape and debris left behind by the seismic crew that is surveying San Jacinto County. It is disappointing that the crew did not, as promised, do a better job of picking up after themselves.

Nesting Birds

There are numerous bird houses around the sanctuary, mostly on the meadows, and most of them were repaired or replaced earlier this year by Calvin Blakley. Upon investigation in early April, we found one bluebird and two chickadee nests on Cullinan and Big Meadows, and one chickadee nest on Kings Hill. All the nests were in new boxes; hmmm... birds must like brand new construction as well as humans!

ONC Appreciates Your Donations

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

Donations to General Fund

Norman Young

Donations to Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary

David & Iris Poteet

Bill Saulmon

Mystery Photos

There are so many interesting objects in nature it's hard to identify all of them. In this digital age, it's easy to take photos then worry about ID at your leisure. Here are a couple of photos that might pique your interest. Any guesses as to what they are? Answers will appear in next issue.

Mystery Photo #1:

These photos were taken in the studio; the main photo is life size and the inset is a closeup magnified 40X. Hint: it's animal related. [Photos by Calvin Blakley]



Mystery Photo #2:

This photo was taken in the field at closeup range. It is plant related and can always be found in the spring at LTNS if you know where to look. [Photo by Wanda Smith]





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**Spring Feast
Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary
Saturday, May 2**

**Annual Potluck Luncheon
Renew old acquaintances
Enjoy some good eatin'**

**Bring your favorite covered dish
Eating utensils and soft drinks provided by the club**

*Bird walk in the morning (9:30 am)
Scavenger hunt after lunch*

Primitive camping in The Cove (no water—bring your own)
Motels nearby in Coldspring or Cleveland

For questions or more information, please contact Aaron Stoley at 713-781-1372.