

Outdoor  
Nature Club

# Nature Notes

December '06  
volume 58 • number 4

## our charter ...

Outdoor Nature Club  
was established in  
1923 as a nonprofit  
organization with the  
purpose of protecting  
and conserving our  
natural resources by  
fostering an interest  
in nature study

**ONC**

Outdoor Nature Club  
P.O. Box 270894  
Houston TX 77277-0894

## our websites ...

OutdoorNatureClub.org  
OrnithologyGroup.org



## New Trail Signs

Thanks to ONC members Thomas & Gina Autry, we have beautiful new trail signs at the entrance to Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary.

When Thomas & Gina started camping at LTNS a few years back, he noticed the trail signs were getting a little ragged and offered to have new signs made. Thomas remembered the landmark signs from his childhood when he would come to LTNS with his grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. Ike Sheffield. At that time Mr. Sheffield was ONC's president. Thomas still has a picture taken by Johnny Fay Barnette of himself holding a snake in front of the signs. So they hold special meaning for him.

Through his printing business, Thomas learned that an associate, Mr. Robert Bailey of Marietta, Georgia, enjoyed woodworking and he agreed

to make our signs. Thomas paid for the wood and costs of shipping the finished signs to Texas.

Thomas then faced the task of painting all the signs. Through Gina's contacts at Lowe's home improvement store in Livingston she was able to get Lowe's to donate the paint and brushes. Our thanks go to Sam Longoria, a manager in training at Lowe's, for this generous donation.

The grayscale image here does not do justice to these beautiful signs, so be sure to check out the color photo on our website; or better yet, join us for the next campout at LTNS in January and see them in person.

Thanks Thomas, Gina, Robert and Sam for your joint efforts. Our members will enjoy this landmark for many years.

# Group Activities

## Botany • Entomology

Tuesday, December 12

Bayland Community Center, 7:30 pm

*Texas Wildflowers*, presented by ONC member Kellene Jarratt. The group will be asked to identify flowers from photos.

## Ornithology (OG)

Monday, December 4

Bayland Community Center

Learning Corner: 6:30 pm

Program: 7:00 pm

*The State of Texas State Parks*, presented by George Bristol

## OG FIELD TRIPS

No field trips this month. Please join our annual Christmas Bird Count.

## HOUSTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

Saturday, December 16

Our count circle centers near Baytown and encompasses several different habitat types. Bring your binocs, bring your lunch, and plan to stay all day.

To sign up for a team, contact count compiler David Sarkozi via email (david@sarkozi.net) or via phone at 713-412-4409.

## ONC Regular Meeting

No meeting in December

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

*Join us in January when Winnie Burkett of Houston Audubon Society will discuss Wind Farms and their effect on migratory birds.*

Thursday, January 11, 7:30 pm

Bayland Community Center

Details in next month's issue

## ONC Board Meeting

Thursday, December 14

Bayland Community Center

Time: 7:30 pm

## Upcoming in January

January 6

Botany: Twelfth Night Party

January 8

OG Meeting: Nesting Birds of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

January 11

ONC Meeting: Wind Farms

January 20

OG Field Trip to Brazos Bend SP

January 20

LTNS Visitors Day & Highway Cleanup

## LTNS Visitors Weekend

No activities are planned at LTNS during December due to holidays and the numerous Christmas Bird Counts held in our area. We encourage you to participate in a CBC. A schedule of CBCs in our area can be found at Houston Audubon Society's web page: [www.houstonaudubon.org](http://www.houstonaudubon.org).

January 20

## LTNS Visitor Day and Highway Cleanup

Please mark your calendars and join us at LTNS in January for quarterly cleanup of our adopted highway.

It only takes about an hour then we can enjoy a brisk walk in the woods.

SEE YOU THERE!

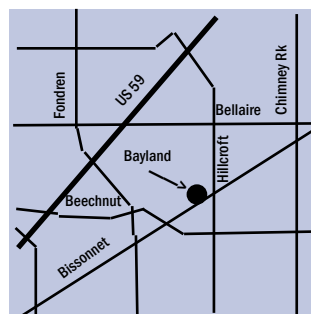
## December 2006

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

## Map to LTNS



## Map to Bayland



## Contact Persons

**ONC General Information**  
Calvin Blakley, 281-358-5407

**Botany/Entomology**  
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**Ornithology**  
Michael Williams, 713-263-1919  
Adam Wood, 713-515-1692

**Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary**  
Aaron Stoley, 713-781-1372

# Conservation Corner

Folks, now that there are over 300 million of us, it is really time to consider “low-impact living”, in other words, “conservation”. The argument that any small actions we may take will not have an impact is illegitimized by two observations: 1) tomorrow will be here tomorrow no matter what we do today, so we might as well conserve, and 2) Bill Gates didn’t come by his billions by selling only a few disks for a billion each; he did it by selling millions of disks for just a few cents or dollars of profit per disk.

So what do our tomorrows look like? The legislators and bureaucrats installed by the recent elections have a lot on their platters. They will focus only on those issues that GRAB their attention. And letters, emails, and petition signatures GRAB their focus. It does only a minimal amount of good for me as Conservation V-P to write a letter saying I represent such and such a number of people because it is only one letter from one person. However, many letters from many different people show that each one took the time to write. I have heard it said that to an elected official, each constituent heard from represents 14 or 15 votes.

While the Texas state government has been busy fast tracking coal fired power plants and bidding on the supposedly cleaner experimental “FutureGen” coal plant, the Canadians have been providing incentives and technical support for a distributed solar power system. Home owners and businesses will be able to sell excess power back to the commercial grid at premium prices, and thereby more quickly recoup their investment costs.

Pennsylvania, dependent on coal for 60 percent of its energy needs, is a leader in moving away from non-renewable sources and cleaning up the environment. Their laws now require their power plants to generate 18 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2020. They are a leader among eastern states in wind energy production. They also recycle with 24 landfill methane projects which provide fuel for power plants.

In addition, Pennsylvania is building plants to turn millions of tons of coal mine waste into diesel fuel thus providing power, and cleaning up the environment at the same time.

Obviously, Pennsylvania, a traditionally “dirty energy state,” is looking ahead while Texas still believes that immediate necessity overrides planning for tomorrow. Guess what? Tomorrow the argument will be the same.

So let’s contact our elected representatives and let them know we want planning and action directed toward a cleaner environment. You can view the address information for the politicians at <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/> Just type in your street address and zip code and links to Texas U.S. Senators websites will be displayed, as well as contact information for your U.S. House Representative, Texas State Senator, Texas State Representative, and Texas State Board of Education Member.

Two websites which make it easy to sign petitions and support causes for a better tomorrow are: <http://www.care2.com> which has links to causes from Abolish the Death Penalty to Zoo Reform. The

second site, about to go defunct because its creators and maintainers have moved on, is <http://www.earthhouston.net> It also has links to petitions, actions, and groups. Outdoor Nature Club is a listed link on this site. Anyone with the skills and interest in keeping this site up and running should contact the owners ASAP.

Well, I’ve covered a lot of ground. But I hope I have reinvigorated you to continue the effort to promote “low-impact living” and conservation, both by your personal behavior, and by your efforts to influence those in positions to establish policy. Low voter turnout should make the job easier. Just remind the newly elected that they hold office only by a plurality of the minority not by majority of registered voters.

John McCrevey, **ONC Conservation V-P**, can be contacted at **ONC, P. O. Box 270894, Houston, TX 77277-0894** or [onc\\_consrv@outdoornatureclub.org](mailto:onc_consrv@outdoornatureclub.org)

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## New Publicity Chair

Lincoln Foreman has generously volunteered to serve as **ONC’s Publicity Chair**. In this capacity, he will be mailing news releases and meeting notices to local newspapers.

If you have contact information for a local community newspaper in your area, please forward the information to Lincoln so he can add them to our distribution list.

Lincoln Foreman, **ONC Publicity Chair**, can be contacted at **ONC, P. O. Box 270894, Houston, TX 77277-0894** or [onc\\_publicity@outdoornatureclub.org](mailto:onc_publicity@outdoornatureclub.org)

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### **Nature Notes**

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Read Nature Notes in COLOR at  
[www.OutdoorNatureClub.org](http://www.OutdoorNatureClub.org)

## **Donations ... Honor Gifts ... Memorials**

*Donations are always appreciated and gratefully acknowledged. Memorials and Honor Gifts are contributed to the Permanent Endowment Sanctuary Fund for Little Thicket Nature Sanctuary. Other gifts go to special projects designated by donors. Thanks, everyone, for your generosity.*

#### **Memorials for Ron Bookout**

*Calvin & Connie Blakley*

#### **Memorials for Dorothy Parmesan**

*Charles & Priscilla Bauer*

*thank you*

## **Leave a Legacy**

Please consider including ONC in your will or estate plan. By so doing, you can help ensure that our sanctuary will be protected for future generations.

## **Time to Renew Your ONC-Membership**

It's time once again to renew your membership in ONC. Enclosed you find a renewal envelope on which you can indicate address or phone changes. If nothing's changed, simple affix a return address sticker, check your membership type, enclose a check, and mail ...simple!

We appreciate your membership, so won't you take a few moments now to renew. Thanks for your continued support.