

Bayou Foliage

Volume 26, Number 8

August 2007

Look Ahead

AUGUST

- 4 Stewardship Saturday
8:30 a.m.
- 9 Volunteer Board
meeting
- 11 HAS Bird Survey,
7 a.m.
- 18 Continuing Education
9:00–11:30 a.m.
- 18 Stewardship Saturday
8:30 a.m.

When you are
finished with
this publication
please recycle it.

Thanks!

From the Rocking Chair

Polly Swerdlin Volunteer Chair



Sue Sutterby, our interim Director, has asked me to contact potential volunteers as they hand in the application forms. At “press time” in mid-July, I have 12 potential new faces. We are optimistic that there will be several more by the September Training.

Speaking of which, we are going to try a modified version of both the “old way” and what has been done in recent years. Please check out page five for a flyer that will be our advertising. We want to attract both weekday and weekend folks, so our Orientation and in-depth classes will be held on Thursdays and Saturdays. The Volunteer Board will be crucial to the training, but we will be asking others to help out.

Here are some of our discussions at our July

Volunteer Board meeting:

- Our August meeting will be held the 9th at Chabukas at 6pm. For real this time. Non-board members are still welcome to join the meeting with concerns. Please let me know ahead of time, so I can reserve the seats.

- Depending on the logistics, we’re planning to have the Village Creek canoe trip in September this year. Ed Adams and Mark Kramer are busy working out the details.

Events Committee has started to meet and will do so each month in preparation for Creepy Crawlers, Fall Festival, and Yuletide. We’re meeting August 8 after the Staff meeting for those who can’t attend weekends and August 11 at 10 am for those who can’t attend weekdays. If you can’t make



either, call or email me your ideas.

We look forward to seeing everyone again in September.

Polly

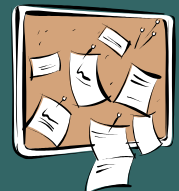
Galileo: “The sun, with all those planets revolving around it and dependent on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the universe to do.”

**Volunteer Training
coming in September!**

See page 5 for details

Help spread the word!

Print page five and
distribute widely.





**Armand Bayou
Nature Center
Volunteer Board
2007**

**Staff
Roster**

Continuing Education

Dragonflies

July 28



9:00–11:30 am

Bob Honig will present a lecture on Dragonflies in the auditorium followed by a field trip to observe these wonderful acrobatic insects in their native habitat

**Continuing Education
is free for
ABNC volunteers**

Blacksmithing on the Farm With Larry Newbern

August 18

9:00–11:30 am



Chair	Polly Swerdlin	281-814-4606	pfollyred@yahoo.com
Vice-Chair	Bob Paxton	281-990-7968	thepaxtons@sbcglocal.net
Treasurer	Eleanor Stanley	713-455-1502	
Secretary	Laura Bradley	281-992-2604	Brad9@flash.net
Stewardship	Ian Kress	281-333-9066	ian.kress@conocophillips.com
Greeters/Interpreters	Jarita Sepulvado	281-479-8795	vanillarita@gmail.com
Admissions	Dottie Evans	281-532-1273	docentmom@aol.com
Weekend Demos	Jane Bingel	281-554-5069	
Weekend Trail	Martha Hood	281-286-6746	mhood85@yahoo.com
Weekday Farm			
Weekday Outdoor Ed	Gaye Batiz	281-538-0592	googiebatiz@aol.com
Outreach			
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Mark Kramer	Ext 15	Sue Sutterby	Ext 11
Christine Mattox	Ext 20	Shauna Trevino	Ext 13
Megan McInnis	Ext 17		

Email addresses are 'firstname'@abnc.org. Example: george@abnc.org

ABNC Volunteer Board Minutes July 12, 2007

Present: Polly Swerdlin, Bob Paxton, Laura Bradley, Eleanor Stanley, Martha Hood, Dottie Evans, Jane Bingel, Gaye Batiz, J. T. Chapman, Mary McCarthy & husband

Old Business

Secretary report - The June minutes were approved.

Caring Report

Susan Brown's (staff accountant) husband died. Joan & Fred Henderson are moving away. Judy and Jerry Schaefer have moved to Utopia, TX. Jack Chandler had leg artery bypass surgery. Charlotte Gogola broke her wrist.

Treasurer report - The June treasury report was approved. We now have \$1687 in the treasury.

Recognition - Tabled till the August meeting.

August's board meeting will be held at Chabukas at 6pm.

It was suggested that September would be a good time for the canoe trip. A 1 day trip will probably have a

higher attendance. Laura Bradley will see about setting this up.

New Business

Events

- Creepy Crawlers is October 26-27. Attendance will be limited to 300 people each night. The time has been expanded to 3 hours from 6-9 pm.
- Fall Festival is November 10-11. Vendors have been invited. There will not be a volunteer dinner due to the amount of work it involves versus the amount of people who attend.
- December 2 is Yuletide.

Vice Chair Report -

Speakers for Meetings

The September speaker will be Woody Woodrow of Texas Parks and Wildlife, topic to be determined. October is tentatively scheduled to be "Alternatives to Pesticides" by Charlotte Wells.

Continuing Education.

August 18, 9-11:30 will be a black-

smithing class by Larry Newburn.

July 28 Bob Honig will present a dragonfly course.

Prairie Schooner is August 24, September 31, and October 19.

Staff Report

No report

Area Reports -

Admissions - Dottie - A couple of the days still need improvement.

Greeters/Interpreters - Jarita - No report.

Weekend Demos - Jane Bingel - the computer problem impacting other areas is not impacting weekend demos.

Weekend Trails - Martha - There is real low response for trail leaders.

Weekday Outdoor Ed/Farm - Gaye. - There is nothing scheduled till this fall.

Outreach - no report

Facilities - J. T. - The petition in the bison enclosure has been completed.

Stewardship - Ian - no report.

Foliage - Mary Alice and Mary - There is a computer glitch that is changing the dates on some of the schedules as they are appearing in the Foliage. Send Mary a copy of how the schedules are supposed to look so there will be a second eye looking over the schedules.

Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance		\$1643.50
Expenditures:		
	0	
Total Expenditures	0	
Income:		
Recycling—Feb & March	\$23.83	
April & May	\$19.38	
Total Income	\$43.21	
Current Balance		\$1686.71

Speakers for Volunteer Meetings:

September 13, 7 pm—Alligators of Brazos Bend State Park with Dennis Jones

October 11, 7 pm—Birds Do It Too with Jane Bock

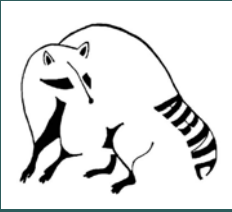
November 8, 7 pm—Alternatives to Pesticides with Charlotte Wells

December 13, 7 pm—Christmas Party

Have a great summer.
Remember...no meetings in June, July
and August. See you in September!



Volunteer Job Descriptions



This job's for you!

Each month a description of a volunteer position will be highlighted. The following information is from the Volunteer Manual.

WEEKDAY TEACHER

PURPOSE: Teach weekday children's classes offered in the current Eco-Adventures Brochure.

CONTACT: Staff – Director of Education
Volunteer – Weekday Outdoor Education Coordinator

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Arrive at ABNC in time to be set up and ready to begin when children arrive.
2. Gather materials and equipment needed for class. Sign out all lab equipment and animals. Return them after class.
3. Be at parking lot 15 minutes before buses are scheduled to arrive.
4. Give participants a chance to ask questions.
5. Work with classroom teacher to maintain discipline.
6. Ensure safety of group.
7. Refrain from using ethnic comments or sexist remarks.
8. Maintain professional attitude and conduct. Refrain from eating, drinking, chewing gum or smoking while on duty.
9. Know location of First Aid Kit and Fire Extinguisher.

10. Promptly report accident or injury to a staff member and fill out accident form.
11. Log hours in volunteer logbook in a prompt, up-to-date fashion.
12. Notify volunteer coordinator ASAP if you are unable to do your assigned job.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES:

1. ABNC staff and volunteers
2. Volunteer training
3. Volunteer manual
4. Field guides
5. Eco-Adventures curriculum outline

QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Enjoy working with children.
2. Be knowledgeable in the subject matter.
3. Be aware of basic ecological concepts.
4. Be knowledgeable of ABNC regulations.
5. Be knowledgeable of the curriculum goals of ABNC.

TRAINING:

1. Attend orientation.
2. Complete appropriate volunteer training.
3. Watch, listen to, and help an experienced volunteer at least once.

ARMAND BAYOU

Armand Bayou begins as a small, freshwater stream fed by run-off from its watershed in southeast Harris County. The waters of Armand Bayou meander some 13-river miles to Clear Lake, a back bay of Galveston Bay. As the bayou nears Clear Lake, it is increasingly influenced by tides and fresh water mixes with saltier water from the

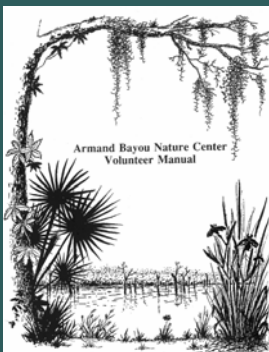
bay to form a **brackish water estuary**. The bayou has a sluggish appearance because its below-sea-level channel allows water to flow slowly in both directions depending on the tide and more importantly, on the wind direction. The partially submerged trees seen throughout the bayou indicate **subsi-**
dence of the banks due

to the pumping of ground water for drinking and industry.

Armand Bayou's natural channel, vegetated banks and shallow water habitat, provides excellent nursery ground for many species of marine fish and invertebrates. The sluggish water traps nutrients and provides for a double food

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From the ABNC Volunteer Manual





Do you enjoy learning about nature?
Do you like birds and wildflowers?
Do you love the outdoors and getting dirty?



Attend **Armand Bayou Nature Center's** Volunteer Training Sessions!



✂ Thursdays or Saturdays in September 2007 ✂

September 6th or 8th / 10 - 3pm (bring a lunch!)

Orientation - Required attendance for second week classes

September 13th / 10 - 3pm (bring a lunch!)

Weekday field trip demos (ie: Insects, Reptiles, Butter, Rope)

September 15th / 10 - 3pm (bring a lunch!)

Weekend programs (ie: Stewardship, Owl Prowl, Guided Hikes)

- Get to know the **ABNC staff** and it's **200 Volunteers**
- Take a **Pontoon Boat Tour** through **Armand Bayou** while learning about it's **History and Ecology**
- Learn to handle **Reptiles and Spiders**
- Take a **Hike** through our **Forest and Prairie**
- Learn to identify **Prairie Grasses and Wildflowers**
- Explore the 1895 **Hanson House** and surrounding **Farm**



Please wear **comfortable walking shoes** and **appropriate clothing** for the weather! Bring a **bag lunch** (water and soda machines are available at the Nature Center)!

For more info/directions, call **ABNC**: 281-474-2551

VILLAGE CREEK OVERNIGHT VOLUNTEER CANOE TRIP

WHEN: September 29th - 30th

WHERE: Village Creek

COST: \$25

Max. Participants 15

Join us for a weekend of volunteer fun in one of east Texas' most beautiful settings. We'll float for 8 miles through the Texas Nature Conservancy Sandylands Sanctuary in the Big Thicket region and camp on one of the many sandbars along the creek.. Village Creek flows at a slow steady pace making the paddling easy for beginners as well experienced



paddlers. After camp is set up there'll be plenty of time for swimming, fishing, bird watching and relaxing. Wilderness chef

Ed Adams will cook all meals for the trip. ABNC can provide tent space and sleeping bags for those who need it. Plan to bring a sack lunch for Saturday, which we'll eat creek side before we shove off. We'll meet in the ABNC parking lot at 7am Saturday morning and return to ABNC Sunday evening.

ABNC will provide canoes, tents and meals. Provided meals include Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast. All you need to bring is a 'bon voyage sack lunch. Call the admissions desk to reserve your space.

WaterSmart Landscaping Program and Urban Harvest to Present

Habitat Highways Training Series





Where have all the flowers gone? And the song birds, butterflies, and frogs? Increased pressure from urbanization has created habitat fragmentation: when all that is left for wildlife are disconnected, widely spaced "islands" of habitat that make it difficult or even impossible for wildlife to migrate to find food, shelter or water.

Habitat Highways: The Training will create wildlife habitat advocates whose goal will be to create habitat landscapes as a way to shorten the distances, "connect-the-dots", between restored and existing habitats. As a project-focused group, participants will learn wildlife habitat basics, habitat landscape design and implementation, WaterSmart irrigation and rainwater harvesting for wildlife habitats, and eco-system specific landscape construction. Led by Mark Bowen of Urban Harvest and Chris LaChance of the WaterSmart Program, the classes will be held on four Tuesdays—September 11th and 25th and October 9th and 23rd. Cost will be \$55, including materials, and location is the Houston Heights Woman's Club building, 1846 Harvard Street, Houston, 77008. General knowledge of basic gardening skills is required.

Participants must attend all four sessions. Once classes are completed, trainees will be ready to initiate projects of their own in their community as well as be part of a volunteer force that supports projects sponsored by WaterSmart and Urban Harvest.

Help us give wildlife uninterrupted travel along habitat corridors with the Habitat Highways initiative. For more information, contact Chris LaChance at 281-218-0721 or c-lachance@tamu.edu.

ABNC Volunteer Duty Roster

	9:30 Trails	2:00 Trails	Greeters	Farm Interpretation	Farm Demos	Natural History
DATE	Martha Hood 281-286-6746	Martha Hood 281-286-6746	Jarita Sepulvado 281-479-8795	Jarita Sepulvado 281-479-8795	Jane Bingel 281-554-5069	Jane Bingel 281-554-5069
8/4	Liz Van Orstrand	Cancelled	OPEN	OPEN	Jane Bingel	Mary Barton Birds
8/5		Cancelled	Ken Russell	Polly Swerdlin	OPEN	Eleanor Stanley Reptiles
8/11	Beatriz & Sebastian Diaz	Cancelled	OPEN	Jane Bingel	Mary Garrett Butter	Ed Adams Adaptations
8/12		Cancelled	Martha Hood	Eleanor Stanley	Paula Thorsen Cheese	OPEN
8/18	Polly Swerdlin	Cancelled	OPEN	Paula Thorsen	Susan Hesley Corn Husk Dolls	Polly Swerdlin Adaptations
8/19		Cancelled	OPEN	OPEN	Helen Harger Cheese	Marie & Odie Asscherick Butterfly Garden
8/25	Stan Krauhs	Cancelled	OPEN	Joyce Sens	Frank Sims Rope	Jack Chandler Reptiles
8/26		Cancelled	OPEN	OPEN	Ray Parker Rope	OPEN

If you have to cancel, please do your best to find your own replacement. If you can cover for any open slots, please call the coordinator for that event. When you arrive at ABNC for your duty, please check in at the front desk.

(Continued from page 4) Armand Bayou

chain driven by both **phytoplankton** (microscopic algae) and **detritus** (decaying plant material). Throughout the year, water level and color fluctuate from green in the summer to brown in spring and fall, while winter's nutrient-poor conditions cause the bayou to be clear and cold. Hurricane storm surges or flash floods can swell the bayou over its banks, mixing the nutritious silt and sediment particles into the otherwise thick, clay soil. Thousands of years of this activity have created a soil type suitable for forest growth. In winter, fronts push all the water down into the channels revealing expansive mud flats.

Despite these widely changing conditions, animals in the estuary adapt and survive. The young of many fish species migrate into the bayou in spring and grow through the summer months by feeding on the rich sources of worms, crabs, clams, and shrimp found on

the bayou's productive mud and sand bottom. Year-round residents of the bayou like the sheepshead minnow, gulf killifish and sailfin molly live among the marsh grasses and shallows feeding on mosquito larvae and small crustaceans called amphipods. They, in turn, are fed upon by the larger, commercially important species like flounder, speckled trout, and redfish. Nearly forty species of fish and invertebrates make their homes in Armand Bayou. The most visible to casual onlookers are the striped mullet that will often leave the water to leap several feet into the air. This behavior may be an escape response from predators such as the alligator gar. Gars can be seen laying on or rolling near the water's surface. These two species comprise most of the biomass of fish, especially in the summer. Learning the inhabitants of the bayou is a fun and challenging hobby for many nature center volunteers. Special training sessions are given specifically for that purpose.

(Continued on page 8)



Armand Bayou Nature Center Volunteers

P.O. Box 58828
Houston, TX 77258
Phone: 281-474-2551
Fax: 281-474-2552
www.abnc.org

Reconnecting People With Nature

We're on the Web!
www.abncvols.org

(Continued from page 7)

Armand Bayou is a scenic, productive and fragile environment. Real estate development in this area has led to excessive nutrient loading of Armand Bayou causing algal blooms, which can lead to low dissolved oxygen levels. Small amounts of pesticides and industrial run-off can be accumulated over long times in fish, shellfish, and birds. Like many other Texas estuaries, Armand Bayou faces the detrimental effects of coastal development.

**At the iGive Mall, you can shop online in almost 700 stores including:
Petco, Petsmart, Lands' End, Barnes & Noble, Dell, HP, Expedia and JCPenney.**

All of the iGive Mall vendors have agreed to donate a portion of the iGive member's purchase to the member's selected organization (in this case, ABNC).

Membership in iGive is free and every purchase you make generates a donation to Armand Bayou Nature Center.

Here is how it works:

1. Go to <http://www.iGive.com/ABNC>.
2. This link takes you to a page where you will see "Join Here to Support Armand Bayou Nature Center".
3. Enter your email address in the field below and submit. Complete the member information fields and submit. Now you are ready to shop.
4. Shop online at any of the almost 700 stores in the iGive Mall.
5. Armand Bayou Nature Center will receive a donation of 1% – 26% of each purchase.

