

ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

POSTOAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES
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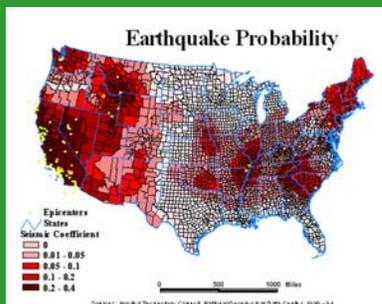
www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org

September Meeting

Yes, the Earth Shakes
in Arlington, Too

Ken Morgan, PhD
Department of Geology
Director, Energy Institute
Texas Christian University

Wednesday, September 9, 7:00 pm
Fielder Museum
1616 W. Abram St
(corner of Fielder and Abram)



Remember to bring
something for the raffle

Bits & Pieces

Time for Slime

Nature's wonders never cease to amaze: Consider the lowly dog-vomit slime mold (above). Not exactly a plant or an animal, a big Dallas specimen inspired fears of alien invasion in 1973. However, some species are attractive, and one has found the shortest path to food in a maze.



Today's Inspirational Moment



The animals of the planet are in desperate peril...Without free animal life I believe we will lose the spiritual equivalent of oxygen.

Alice Walker

Is It Raining Yet?

Couch's spadefoot toads lead particularly dull lives, almost always beneath our prairies. They spend their lives underground and dormant, emerging briefly during periods of heavy rain when they come up to breed. If we get a heavy rain in September, wander around in the New York Avenue Prairie at night, and maybe you'll see — and hear — Couch's spadefoot.



More Light, Less Heat



From the BBC: A European Union ban on the manufacture and import of 100-watt and frosted incandescent light bulbs, in use since the 19th century, has come into force. They are being phased out to encourage the switch to more energy-efficient fluorescent or halogen lamps, which use up to 80% less electricity.

From the President John Darling



The other day a very nice person laughingly accused me of cynicism, and I dismissed the allegation with a few well-chosen mocking

remarks and went about my business. But later I wondered if being a naive tree hugger doesn't automatically set you up for a long series of disappointments that can fester into a cynical streak.



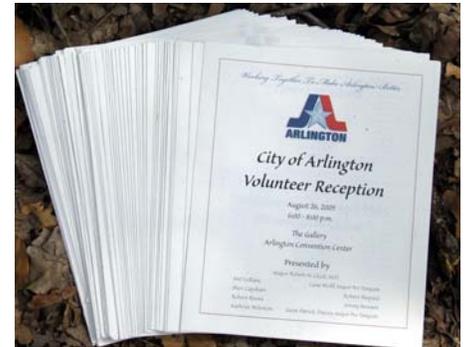
Am I really cynical? I looked it up. Here's part of the definition: *doubting or contemptuous of human nature or the motives, goodness, or sincerity of others.*

Okay, I'll go along with "doubting," but the things I see almost every day make me think it's environmental realism, not cynicism.

Just look below at a couple of examples of possible insincerity from last week: *Left*, a dumpster partly filled with compostable greenery and cardboard at an institution that claims to be "going green." That dumpster sits next to one brightly labeled for cardboard and paper. *Right*, rerun of last year: I picked up programs for recycling at a city function when it was clear that they were going to be thrown away. The difference is that the city now has a green team of staffers who sincerely seem to want to change its wasteful practices, but they can't be everywhere.

Can you talk me out of cynicism? She Who Must Be Obeyed has just removed my last nasty paragraph and instructed me to ask you about your positive experiences. I want to believe that each individual action adds up to something big, so maybe you can tell me about changes you've made or things you've noticed that give you hope for our environment.

Send me a story, or just think constructive thoughts while I consider the possibility of self-improvement.



THE POST OAK

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Use the handy application form on the back page.

Thanks A.C.C. for working to conserve Arlington's natural resources.



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Ecofest Arlington

Sponsored by: Walmart*



Founders Plaza & Levitt Pavilion

101 W Abram Street; Downtown Arlington

2 – 11 pm ● September 19

The goal of Ecofest Arlington 2009 is to build a sense of community, stimulate environmental awareness and promote stewardship.

- Do It Yourself Demonstrations
- Environmental Classes
- Children’s Activities & Games
- Vendors featuring Green Products
- Documentary “Garbage! The Revolution Starts at Home”
- Live Music featuring a concert by Patrice Pike, “Texas Hall of Fame” singer

For more information on Ecofest Arlington call 817-277-0434 or to view an event schedule visit www.naturallyfun.org.



Wildscape Update **John Dycus**



Five years out, look out — there may be no water in this part of the country for irrigating landscapes. Observers make the prediction, citing increasing residential and industry

demand, gas drilling needs and shifting rainfall patterns caused by climate change as some of the reasons why.

What can we do to minimize the impact? Using plants native to the region, accustomed to the temperature and amount of precipitation, is the first and most obvious step. The Fort Worth-Dallas area is said to use more water per capita than anywhere in the United States, mostly due to our large, non-native St. Augustine lawns. Native buffalo grass or native groundcovers look just as good (some would say better) and require much less water.

Another great way to save up to 50 percent of your landscape water is to convert from sprinklers to drip irrigation. Tarrant County extension agent Steve Chaney will demonstrate how to install the new, efficient drip systems at the next mini-class for wildscape volunteers Sept. 12.

We're excited that Master Gardener fund-raising events have done so well, including \$276 for the wildscape, which will pay for drip irrigation supplies. Even better for the wildscape is the growing number of volunteers who are Master Gardeners. The Tarrant County MG

program has introduced a number of enthusiasts in tune with the wildscape mission, and several have committed their MG hours to the wildscape. These folks are greatly appreciated as they further the ever-expanding outreach efforts.

The MGs and a local church recently brought by a group of full-of-vim-and-vigor British exchange students who wouldn't hear of leaving on schedule because the job they came to do was not complete. In spite of fire ants, 100-degree heat and scary bugs (cicadas), they stayed to finish their assigned tasks enthusiastically. Can we clone this attitude?

Note the fresh elements at the fall plant sale Saturday, Sept 26, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm at the Randol Mill greenhouse. Landscape designer Lucy Harrell will have a table with information available and offering her expert advice. Arlington Water Department conservation coordinator Dustan Compton and storm water education specialist Brigette Gibson will illustrate the effects of storm-water runoff using their enviroscape display. The Arlington Parks and Recreation Department forestry division will offer information on tree care, and John Snowden, owner of Bluestem Nursery, will be on hand for native grass questions.

As usual, volunteers will be milling around to help with your purchases and native plant info. Come, have fun, and buy the place out.



Native Plant Sale

At Randol Mill Park Greenhouse
Benefitting The Wildscape

Sat. Sep. 26, 2009
10:00 - 2:00

Organically grown —
Most from **local** seed & cuttings-
For plants better adapted to our
local climate and rainfall.



Prices:
Quarts — \$4
Gallons - \$7
Trees - \$15 & up

Check www.thewildscape.org
For plant list

Big Start for Julia Burgen Sustainability Series

At the August meeting Stephen Smith showed us how to live with gas well profits: He presented a generous check to ACC, becoming the first sponsor of something we hope will be very worthwhile. His donation has been placed in a fund devoted to the Julia Burgen Sustainability Series. We plan for this program to include speakers of special importance, workshops of interest to environmental professionals and the public, and other activities as the opportunities arise.

Stephen and Jean Marie Smith are longtime ACC members whose involvement has taken many forms, everything from board positions to cleaning up after vandals, and Stephen has lately expanded his efforts to work with Downwinders at Risk.

In the coming months we expect to benefit from his gift and look forward to more special donations.



Stephen Smith, left, presents a check to ACC President John Darling.

Thanks to Our August Speaker



Bob Ressler, Arlington Environmental Engineer, gave us a great presentation on water quality in our streams. Bob covered such topics as sampling and testing, and we gained an understanding of the complexities involved in sampling of the great variety of streams in our city.

One big point: a sample tells us about a point in time; an hour or a day later, the water quality might be completely different. Thanks, Bob, for a comprehensive and animated talk.

Mini-class Forced to Meet at Restaurant

Believe it or not, rain drove wildscape volunteers at the August workday into Mijo's Restaurant for the mini-class. Extension Agent Laura Miller instructed those hardy souls on native perennials between Tex-Mex bites. Somehow everyone got through it, and several of the participants learned about native perennials. Others emerged with salsa on their shirts.



Tough on Trees



Looks like those guys at the misbegotten Pecan Streen apartments just had to plant a certain number of trees after knocking down a bunch and didn't have enough room. So they stuffed about 27 trees into a too-small space, planted a lot of them too deep, and now quite a few are already dead. This spot was a dense, messy tangle of small trees and brush once full of animals. Progress.

MARROWBONE SPRING

Who would guess
 But for the silent metal sign
 How much has happened here?
 A shallow swale
 Strewn with rocks and sticks,
 Trashed with waste
 From parking lots nearby,
 On wet days muddy,
 Hard as brick on dry.
 Famous once
 For sandstone-filtered waters,
 Magnet for thirsty animals, thirsty folk,
 It saw life ebb and flow
 For eons on this baking prairie.
 Then came the Texians,
 Sam Houston, soldiers
 At a military post,
 Plantations set in dusty fields,
 Slave cabins, sorrows, joys,
 Church picnics, brawling boys.
 A scattered town, Comanche raids,
 Rumbling coaches bound for Abilene,
 Cotton far as eye could see.
 But all these memories are gone,
 Consumed by urban wilderness,
 Mile after concrete mile;
 Rains sealed from the aquifer,
 This sweet oasis shrank
 To an anomaly,
 Unrecognizable.
 What's here now?
 Not even ghosts.

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Arlington Conservation Council Membership Application

Memberships are good for one year, renewable each January. Your dues go directly to our public education efforts.

Membership Information

Name _____
 Address _____
 Telephone _____
 E-mail _____

Please circle membership category.

First-year member \$10.00
 Individual \$15.00
 Family \$25.00 New member
 Supporting \$40.00
 Sponsor \$100.00 Renewing member
 Lifetime individual \$250.00
 Other \$ _____

How did you hear about us? _____

Make checks payable to Arlington Conservation Council. Mail to ACC, Box 216, Arlington, TX 76004-0216. Contributions and dues are not tax-deductible. *I want to save trees; send my newsletter to my email address.*

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Don't Forget!

Wednesday September 9
 7:00 pm

Ken Morgan, PhD
*Yes, the Earth Shakes in
 Arlington, Too*

Be sure to visit us at
arlingtonconservationcouncil.org

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