

ARLINGTON
CONSERVATION
COUNCIL

POSTOAK

WORKING TO CONSERVE ARLINGTON'S NATURAL RESOURCES

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www.arlingtonconservationcouncil.org

September Meeting

The Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign

Wednesday, September 4, 7 pm
Fielder Museum, 1616 W. Abram St
(corner of Fielder and Abram)



The Beyond Coal campaign's main objective is to replace dirty coal with clean energy by mobilizing grassroots activists in local communities to advocate for the retirement of old and outdated coal plants and to prevent new coal plants from being built.

Our goals include:

- Retiring one-third of the nation's more than 500 coal plants by 2020
- Replacing the majority of retired coal plants with clean energy solutions such as wind, solar, and geothermal
- Keeping coal in the ground in places like Appalachia and Wyoming's Powder River Basin

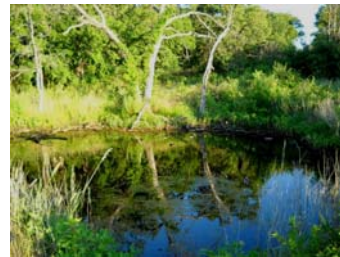
Bits & Pieces

Still Croaking

You'd think this drought would have played havoc with all our amphibians, and surely it must have hurt a lot of them. But here and there, under natural and unnatural debris of all kinds we still see young toads skittering away. Probably almost all are Gulf Coast toads, which seem to survive almost anything.



Today's Inspirational Moment



Nature is not a place to visit.
It is home.

Gary Snider

Hummingbird Food Crisis

In a recent *Star-Telegram* article it was noted that the drought will have a devastating effect on migrating hummingbirds in Texas. Short-term help: get those feeders out and change the nectar (4 parts water to 1 part sugar, no red coloring) every few days. Long-term: This sounds like an even greater need for native plant landscaping everywhere with good drought-resistant nectar plants like flame acanthus.



4 out of 5 Doctors Prefer Good Air

Dallas Morning News, Aug. 28, 2013: "The Dallas County Medical Society is asking the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to force three East Texas coal-fired power plants to cut emissions that it says contribute to higher ozone levels in North Texas." Must be frivolous because the coal guys say that everything's fine; don't worry, be happy.

From the President Danny Kocurek



Clean Air Stat

Clean Air Stat is an organization composed of health care providers and people in the health care field with an interest in clean air, the science behind

health problems associated with air pollution, and advocacy for measures to improve health. With North Texas perennially ranked in the top 10 worst locations for air pollution in the US, there is a lot of work to be done. Clean Air Stat is approaching air pollution purely from a health perspective in an attempt to analyze and quantify the dangers and the benefits of improving air quality and health.

Our first public event will be a presentation at EcoFest in September entitled "The Air We Breathe: What's in it? How does it affect us? What can we do about it?" The talk will be designed for a lay audience and will try to explain the science behind the health effects of air pollution in simple, easy to understand language. It will be given by Robert Wiebe, MD, former Director of Emergency Services at Children's Medical Center of Dallas and Division Chief of

Pediatric Emergency Medicine at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Don't be afraid of his lengthy titles, he is a very laid back and pleasant gentleman.

If you are interested in joining Clean Air Stat or know someone who might be, please contact me. We have a lot of work to do.

EcoFest

EcoFest, the enormously popular sustainability festival, created by the legendary Heather Dowell of the Arlington Parks Department, will be held September 21 from 10:00 am until 6:00 pm. ACC has participated since the first EcoFest; this year we are raising our profile and will host a featured exhibit in the demonstration area. Our exhibit, "Fix It Green," is designed to educate

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THE POST OAK

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New York Avenue Blackland Prairie Park Jan Miller. Photos by Wesley Miller



3rd Saturday Prairie Stewards workday. Temporary change to 4th Saturday in September (due to EcoFest)

Workday: Saturday, September 28 9:00 am – noon

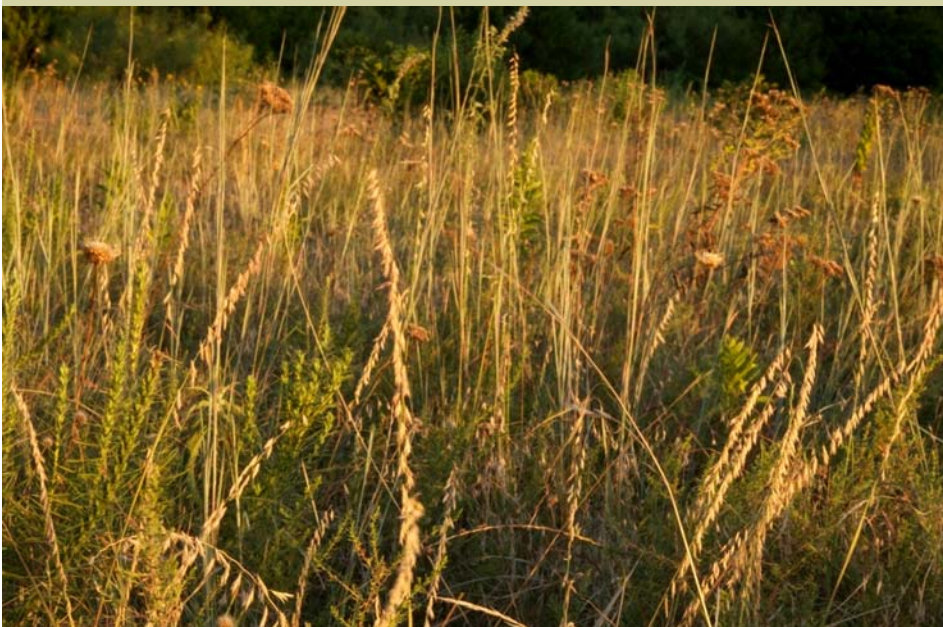
New activities! We'll still be bashing trees and small brush, but also collecting seed and monitoring wildlife. Beginning this new season at NYABP, monitoring of the prairie will be documented, including periodic photo-point surveys to monitor plant life on the prairie and listings of animal life encountered. We can start with birds, mammals and reptiles, but your eyes, ears and expertise are needed!

Bring your handsaws or loppers and gloves and wear thick-soled boots/shoes and long pants. Highly recommended: sun protection, bug spray and water (please bring your own container but refills will be available).

Let's meet for lunch after: It's a great opportunity to refuel and to brainstorm on prairie restoration. RSVP to prairie@acctexas.org is appreciated in case of weather but not required.



Location: New York Avenue Blackland Prairie, about 1 mile south of IH-20 in Arlington. From IH-20 take Collins exit and drive east on service road to NY



Ave. Drive past the preserve; make a U-turn and park on the south side by the fence.

CALENDAR

Southwest Nature Preserve

Location: just south of I-20 on Bowman Springs Road

Dedication Saturday, October 19, 2013

Plan now to attend. Several activities are being planned in addition to the dedication.

SWNP is a beautiful and significant area representing the eastern cross timbers ecosystem. It's not just rare; there's lots more that makes SWNP and the cross timbers special. For more information, see:

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/habitats/cross_timbers/ecoregions/cross_timbers.phtml

or

<http://www.uark.edu/misc/xtimber/>

Or pick up a copy of Richard Francaviglia's excellent book: *The Cast Iron Forest: A Natural and Cultural History of the North American Cross Timbers*.



Bowman Springs Road Project

The Bowman Springs Road project is scheduled to begin on September 19, 2013. The road work (widening from 2 lanes to 5) plus significant grade leveling will negatively affect SWNP. Widening will move the right-of-way 30 to 40 feet into the preserve, and retaining walls will be installed along part of the western boundary. Plans are being made to salvage significant plant material that will be otherwise lost. If you're interested in participating, contact prairie@acctx.org.

Climate Reality Project Training Jo Ann Duman



You Can Help the Climate Reality Project Spread the Word To Reverse Global Warming

Thirty-six Texans attended three days of training in Chicago, Illinois, July 31 through August 3 to become Climate Leaders to spread the word about climate change. Most had not met before being assigned to the same seating section in the crowd of 1,500 trainees from all 50 states in the US and 90 other countries, the largest group to receive certification to date by The Climate Reality Project founded by Al Gore.

Three weeks earlier, 1,000 trainees from 69 countries attended a session in Istanbul, Turkey.

Texas cities providing the most folks in Chicago, not surprisingly, were Dallas, Austin and Houston. A father-daughter duo from Southlake, Jin and Alice Liu, are likely the ones who live closest to Arlington, while a retired high school science teacher from El Paso probably lives farthest away. I was happy to find a second person to make the drive with me from Texarkana, Professor Delores McCright who teaches biology at Texarkana College. The new Texas Climate Leaders are networking to offer presentations with the latest information on climate change to community groups, school students, faith communities, businesses, non-profit organizations, and local governments.

The aim of the presentations is to be positive and focus on solutions. The impact of human industrial activities on the atmosphere is the most critical situation facing our planet, yet there is time to reverse global warming if we will act now.

The first day's training covered communications and connecting with people of all backgrounds. The second

day, Al Gore presented the keynote training that covered the science and history of climate change. Gore received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 for his work to educate people around the world on the science and human impacts of climate change. In 2006 the movie about his work, "An Inconvenient Truth," won an Oscar for best documentary. Gore was supported on stage by Michael McCracken, PhD, chief scientist of the Climate Institute, Washington, DC, and Henry Pollack, PhD, emeritus geophysics professor, University of Michigan. On the final day sessions were held on the health impacts of climate change, the efforts of faith communities, and the bottom line economic opportunity for businesses, non-profits and local governments from energy efficiency.



Among the things I learned were the widespread understanding and concern about climate change by both the people and governments of all countries around the world except for the United States, the United Kingdom (Great Britain), and Canada. In those three countries, plus Australia, millions of dollars have been spent by fossil fuel companies on climate change denial campaigns to confuse the public and stymie legislation. Australia recently instituted carbon controls with the successful effort led by that country's firefighters who recognized from the continent-wide wildfires of recent years that, indeed, the climate has changed with impacts they could no longer ignore.

Texans do not have a reputation for being environmentalists. One of the



climate trainees from Houston sat next to a trainee from "back East," he said, at lunch one day, and she told him, "I can't believe someone from Texas would come to this." He told her not all Texans own oil wells and we're not all climate deniers. After my return, when I told my son we were seated by state, he said, "So you and Delores were probably the only two from Texas." Yet as I have talked this month with even conservatives, I find more people are observing the drought and extreme weather events and thinking for themselves that they are ready to believe that global warming has happened. What they want to know is if there is anything we can do about it.

The Climate Reality Project took steps to reduce and offset the carbon impacts of such a large conference. They chose the McCormick Place convention center which recycles. I was so impressed with their recycling bins that I took photos, and so did others when they saw me do so. It was the first time I saw a collection bin labeled "Compost" for collecting food waste next to typical "Recycle" and "Landfill" bins, and I liked the clever openings on a blue recycling bin so cans and bottles were automatically sorted from paper.

ACC members have long supported efforts to protect the environment, conserve energy and water, and understand the importance of science for guiding our actions. Please refer friends and organizations that can host a climate presentation for their members to www.climatereality.org. At the bottom of the page under "Take Action," click "Request a presentation." Or, email me at climate@cableone.net.

Public Meeting: Johnson Creek Watershed Study

The City of Arlington has undertaken a comprehensive watershed study for the Johnson Creek watershed in order to formulate flood management projects, assess channel erosion risk, and update the FEMA flood maps to reflect current flood risk conditions. At the end of this process the city will be able to better understand flood risks in the Johnson Creek watershed and identify steps to minimize damage due to flooding and erosion.

The city is holding an open house in order to provide further information about this study, address any concerns you may have, and gather additional information about areas that may be experiencing flooding or erosion throughout the Johnson Creek Watershed.

Open House

Tuesday, September 10
3:00 pm – 7:00 pm
Bob Duncan Center – Garden Room
2800 S. Center Street

Please come at your convenience. We appreciate your input and cooperation as this important data is gathered to guide the city in understanding current flood risks and managing creeks and stormwater systems in the future. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact me at your convenience.
Mandy Clark, P.E., C.F.M.
Stormwater Engineering Operations Manager
817-459-6592
mandy.clark@arlingtontx.gov

President continued from page 2

homeowners about the money-saving benefits of simple home repairs that save energy and water. Through a series of unique exhibits that allow visitors to watch and practice the actual repairs and updates, we hope to make everyone feel comfortable performing the tasks at home. With a few hours work when they get home, our visitors will be able to save hundreds of dollars a year on energy and water bills.

In addition to the displays, the City of Arlington’s shower head exchange booth will be incorporated into our exhibit. ACC will be raffling off a cordless electric lawnmower to one of our lucky visitors. This is a huge undertaking for ACC but we hope all this will get the word out about how wonderful ACC is as well as educating folks on important sustainability steps they can take at home.

We are still looking for volunteers for various tasks both the day of the event and before, so please contact me if you have interest and time.

See you there.

Thanks to Our Last Speaker

At our August meeting, Josephine Keeney (ably assisted by husband Frank) showed a packed room how they transformed their traditional suburban landscape into an oasis of native plants.

The result, despite a code enforcement setback, contains all the expected environmental virtues and a huge bonus — striking visual appeal from the remarkable diversity of plants.



Widened Bowman Springs Road Will Harm SW Nature Preserve



Widening is set to start on September 19. This piece of progress will destroy 30 to 40 feet of the western edge of the preserve. In spots the loss won’t mean much, but we will lose a large number of irreplaceable oaks. Too much low-level irony for a “preserve.”



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 _____

First-year member \$10.00

Individual \$15.00

Family \$25.00

Supporting \$40.00

Sponsor \$100.00

Lifetime individual \$250.00

Other \$ _____

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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. Note: If you cannot pay, please let any board member know. The only available newsletter format is electronic, and it can be obtained via email and the Web site.

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Don't Forget!

Wednesday, September 4
7:00 pm

The Sierra Club's
Beyond Coal Campaign