

HABITAT HERALD

Wildlife Austin's monthly Newsletter



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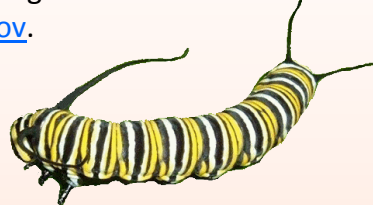
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April 2013

Spring is officially here in Austin, and with it comes some changes. Wildlife Austin Park Ranger Erin Cord is starting a new job with Travis County, and the program will be taken over by Park Ranger Lauren Rowe. Please direct anything Wildlife Austin-related to wildlife@austintexas.gov.



There are lots of exciting events in April this year including the 2nd Austin Earth Day Festival at the Browning-Mueller hanger. If you went to the festival last year you know it was fun and VERY well-attended. This year the organizers are going bigger and even better. There will be great speakers including Austin Mayor Lee Leffingwell (one of the forces behind the creation of Wildlife Austin) and Austin's Chief Officer of Sustainability Lucia Athens. They are both going to talk about "Austin Progress Toward Becoming a Sustainable City." There will also be presentations about Austin's new bag ordinance, composting, making your own rain barrel, reducing your carbon footprint and more!

The festival will also feature some fun and educational kids activities, tons of fabulous local food trailers, live music, and exhibitors from local businesses, nonprofits, government organizations, and community groups. To learn more about the event visit the website:

earthdayaustin.com/



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Notes from Erin

This is an abridged version of our normal newsletter this month. Since I am leaving I have been spending most of my time trying to ensure a smooth transition for Wildlife Austin. The newsletter should be back to it's old self next month.

I am sad to leave Wildlife Austin, but I know the program will be in good hands with the Park Rangers. It has been wonderful working with all of the Habitat Stewards and dedicated volunteers. I have learned so much from all of you. Thank you for all of your hard work!



April 20th - West Bouldin Creek Greenbelt Workday
www.keeapaustinbeautiful.org/node/2026

April 20th - Ecology Action Back to the Land Work Days
www.ecology-action.org/montopolis-wetland-restoration

April 26th thru 29th - Balcones Songbird Nature Festival
www.friendsofbalcones.org/festival

April 27th - Wild Basin Workday
www.keeapaustinbeautiful.org/node/2106

April 27th - Ecological Literacy Day at Hornsby Bend
www.keeapaustinbeautiful.org/node/2108

April 27th & 28th - Heart O' Texas Orchid Society Show and Sale
www.hotos.org/events.html

April 29th - Migration Monday! in Northwest Austin
travisaudubon.org/get-outdoors/field-trips/migration-monday-in-northwest-austin-2

Sunday April 28th:

The Balcones Songbird Festival Presents:

Fledgling Fest!



Fun for the whole family!

Noon-5pm at the Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge

www.friendsofbalcones.org/bsffamily

Hacking the Hackberry bias: In defense of the Trash Tree

By Ana Gonzales - COA Urban Forestry

Chances are you've probably heard someone say "Hackberries are trash trees." We've heard that phrase many times in our program. It's true that Hackberries have relatively soft wood that's prone to breaking and this makes them less than ideal for certain uses. However, Hackberries provide great services to our urban ecosystem.

Did You Know?

- There many species of birds, including Cardinals, Robins, Mockingbirds, Purple Martins, and several of our migratory visitors like Cedar Waxwings who eat and depend on Hackberry fruits.
- Hackberry fruit is also a favorite among many of our urban mammals such as the gray fox and the ring-tailed cat.
- The larvae of six species of moth and butterfly depend on the two common species of Hackberry that are present in Austin - including the American Snout Butterfly.
- Hackberries help stabilize stream banks and riparian areas and are often the first to establish an area.
- They're fast growers, quickly providing shade and habitat for wildlife.
- Mature Hackberries provide a sheltered environment for newly established longer-lived tree species that begin life beneath their limbs that would likely not be able to survive because of exposer to direct sunlight.
- The fruit of the Hackberry tree is edible! You can make delicious Hackberry Jam following [this easy recipe](#).

All of these qualities make Hackberries an invaluable species for ecological restoration of highly sensitive areas like our streams and support a diverse and healthy ecosystem in our urban forest. So, next time you see a Hackberry, you may want to say thanks....



American Snout Butterfly
(*Libytheana carinenta*)

austintexas.gov/departments/urban-forestry
Visit the Urban Forestry website and check out their monthly newsletter!



TAMU Forest Service

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Big Day in the Park 2013 at Commons Ford

Mark your calendar for **Sunday, April 7, 2013** for the Commons Ford Big Day in the Park and join us for plenty of birding and nature walks including activities for families and children. While attendance and all activities are free, the Big Day in the Park will raise funds to continue the Commons Ford Prairie Restoration Project and tax-free donations of any amount are encouraged. We are very excited about the results from the first year's planting, but must continue efforts to further remove invasives and replant natives to insure long-term success. Come see the beginning of a beautiful native prairie.

commonsfordpro.blogspot.com/p/big-day-in-park-2013.html

Would YOU like to receive the the Wildlife Austin newsletter electronically?

E-mail us at wildlife@austintexas.gov



The 56th Annual Zilker Garden Festival

Saturday April 6th & Sunday April 7th

10am to 5pm



For over 50 years, the annual Zilker Garden Festival has been a one-stop, garden shopping destination when spring arrives in Austin and Central Texas. A family-friendly event, the garden festival offers something for everyone –

- The annual **Flower Show** in the Garden Center, featuring judged designs and an array of horticultural specimens. This year's theme is "Remember Our Beginnings"
- Live music from the **Soundstage in the Rose Garden** – with a variety of musical offerings both afternoons
- **Gardening Talks** under the big, white tent next to the Garden Center – where novice and seasoned gardeners will enjoy talks from local gardening experts
- The always fun and interactive **Kids' Corner** in the Rose Garden – where kids can build a birdhouse, have their faces painted, make dinosaur masks and butterfly wings
- Enjoy tasty food offerings at the Food Court in the Oak Grove on the Escarpment Trail

www.zilker garden.org



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on Facebook and look for the Wildlife Austin posts!



The City of Austin is proud to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require assistance for participation in our programs or use of our facilities, please call (512) 974-6700.