

HABITAT HERALD

Wildlife Austin's monthly Newsletter



VOL 2 . ISSUE 3



May 2013

First of all I'd like to say hello to all of our readers out there. As Erin mentioned last month, I will temporarily be stepping in to run the Wildlife Austin Program until we hire someone permanently. Erin has done an amazing job with the program and so I would like to continue offering the same services and resources to you all. The newsletter may be of a slightly different format but I hope you will all bear with me while I get into the swing of things.

I would also like to send a special congratulations to our newest class of Habitat Stewards. We had a total of 16 graduates this semester complete the month long training. They are now certified through The National Wildlife Federation and will be volunteer leaders in their own communities. I am so excited and proud to have them added to our ever-growing group of Habitat Stewards.

Finally I would like to wish you all a Happy Cinco de Mayo. I hope that you all can find some time to relax and enjoy your friends and family. Please check out the Fiestas Patrias-Cinco de Mayo event found in this newsletter as well as the many training and lecture opportunities.

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Quiz of the Month

Who Am I?



Wildlife Austin

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UPCOMING EVENTS

**Saturday, May 4,
9:00am to 12:00pm-**
**Blunn Creek Nature
Preserve service outing
(Sierra Club)-** [http://
www.meetup.com/Austin-
Sierra-Club-Outings/
events/113441402/](http://www.meetup.com/Austin-Sierra-Club-Outings/events/113441402/)

**Saturday, May 4
9:00am to Sunday, May
5 9:00pm-Fiestas Patri-
as-Cinco de Mayo Festi-
val-**www.austintexas.gov

**Saturday, May 11,
8:30am-
4:30pm:Invasive Plant
Monitoring Class-**[http://
www.austintexas.gov/
event/volunteer-training-
invasive-plant-species-
monitoring-0?width=80%
25&height=80%
25&iframe=true](http://www.austintexas.gov/event/volunteer-training-invasive-plant-species-monitoring-0?width=80%25&height=80%25&iframe=true)

**Sunday, May 12,
7:15am-11:30am-** Bal-
cones Canyonlands Bird
Walk (Travis Audubon/
Friends of Balcones Can-
yonlands NWR)- [http://
friendsofbalcones.org/
calendar?
even-
tid=663381&EventView
Mode=EventDetails](http://friendsofbalcones.org/calendar?even-tid=663381&EventViewMode=EventDetails)

Saturday, May 18
8:30am-4:30pm-
Invasive Species Monitoring Class: <http://www.austintexas.gov/event/volunteer-training-invasive-plant-species-monitoring-1?width=80%25&height=80%25&iframe=true?width=80%25&height=80%25&iframe=true>

Sunday, May 19,
9:00am-1:00pm- **Native Plant Walk at Doe-skin Ranch (Friends of Balcones Canyonlands NWR/Native Earthscapes)-** <http://friendsofbalcones.org/calendar?even-tId=663396&EventViewMode=EventDetails>

Thursday, May 30,
4:00pm to 5:00pm-
Watershed Walk at Tarrytown Park (Watershed Protection Dept.)- <http://www.austintexas.gov/event/watershed-walk-tarrytown-park?width=80%25&height=80%25&iframe=true>

Austin Resource Recovery Free Composting Classes:
Tuesday, May 7,
6:00pm, Spicewood Springs Library:
Wednesday, May 15,
6:00pm, SFC Farmer's Market at the Triangle:
Thursday, May 16,
6:00pm, Manchaca Road Library
Saturday, May 25,
9:30am, SFC Farmer's Market Downtown-
Wednesday, May 29,
6:30pm, City Hall

Protecting Your Pets and Wildlife

By Julie Webber

As spring turns to summer here in Austin, breeding season for many species of local wildlife is well underway. Fledgling birds and other young animals face many challenges on their road to adulthood, and are often more prone to predation than adult wildlife. We can help them mature safely by making sure our pets do not become those predators. Keeping your pets indoors is safer for both your pet, and for wildlife.



Did you know?...

- Outdoor pet and feral housecats kill hundreds of millions of birds, plus billions of small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians every year in the United States.
- Well-fed outdoor cats still hunt. Cat feeding stations do not prevent wildlife predations.
- Research involving surveys of cat owners, analysis of fecal samples, and "KittyCam" camera monitoring data has shown that while some outdoor cats do not hunt at all, most cat owners underestimate the number of animals killed by their outdoor cats.
- Cats do not need to go outdoors to be happy- providing proper stimulation and play indoors can keep your cat active and healthy while satisfying its instinct to hunt.
- Many people believe that allowing cats to hunt outdoors is an excellent way to control pest rodent species. In reality, outdoor cat colonies are associated with higher proportions of exotic invasive house mice and lower proportions of native rodent species than areas without outdoor cats.
- While exact numbers are unknown, estimates ranging from thousands to millions of outdoor cats are hit by cars every year.
- Outdoor cats are prone to dangerous interactions with wildlife and with other outdoor pets or feral domestic animals. This can lead to injury and transmission of potentially fatal diseases like feline leukemia, feline immunodeficiency disorder, and rabies to your pet.
- Most research on wildlife-pet interactions has focused on cats, but dogs can also be problematic for wildlife. Keep your dog safe from coyotes and cars (and keep wildlife safe from your dog!) by not allowing your dog to roam outdoors at home, and by respecting on-leash areas on public property.

For more information on keeping your pets and wildlife happy and healthy:

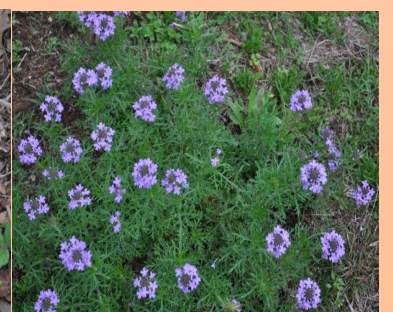
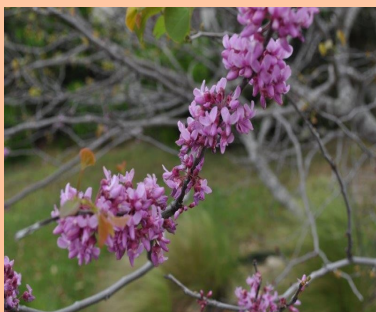
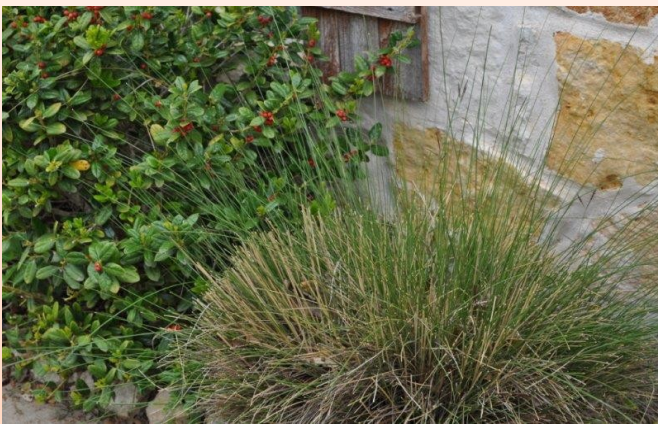
The American Bird Conservancy's "Cats Indoors" campaign: www.abcbirds.org/cats
Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine's Indoor Pet Initiative: <http://indoorpet.osu.edu/index.cfm>

Julie Webber is a City of Austin Park Ranger

Garden of the Month



This month's garden comes from one of our new Habitat Steward Graduates, Susanne Dubois, of Leander, Texas. Her garden features many unique solutions to providing shelter for wildlife as well as water and places to raise young. Susanne also incorporates many native plants, including Eastern Redbud, Texas Bluebonnet, Texas Lantana, and Yaupon. She also used the stump of an invasive tree species to create a birdbath stand. Susanne's garden is a great example of thinking outside the box when trying to incorporate all the habitat elements in your yard. Thank you Susanne for some great ideas!



Fiestas Patrias- Cinco de Mayo



Nacho Party Cheesecake

Prep: 25 min. Bake: 70 min. + chilling

Ingredients

1-3/4 cups crushed nacho tortilla chips
1/3 cup butter, melted
3 packages (8 ounces *each*) cream cheese
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 envelope taco seasoning
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 eggs, lightly beaten
1-1/2 cups finely chopped cooked chicken breasts
1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded Mexican cheese blend
1/3 cup finely chopped green onions
1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
Whole kernel corn, cubed avocado, chopped tomato and sliced ripe olives
Salsa, optional
Assorted crackers *or* additional nacho tortilla chips, optional

Directions

Combine crushed tortilla chips and butter; press onto the bottom of a greased 9-in. springform pan.

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese, mayonnaise, taco seasoning and flour until smooth. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Stir in the chicken, cheese blend and onions. Pour over crust. Place pan on a baking sheet.

Bake at 325° for 60-70 minutes or until center is almost set. Gently spread sour cream over the top; bake 10 minutes longer or until set.

Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.

Just before serving, remove sides of pan. Garnish with corn, avocado, tomato and olives. Serve with salsa and crackers.

Originally published as Nacho Party Cheesecake in [Taste of Home](#) December/January 2009, p43

Fiestas Patrias of Austin 8th Annual Cinco de Mayo Fiesta Fiesta Gardens

May 4, 2013

10:00A Car Show

11:00A Doors Open

11:15A Tiarra Girls

12:00P International High School Dance Team

12:15P UprizZing

1:00P Palacios Brothers

2:30P Ballet Folklorico de Mari Cruz

3:00P Sunny Saucedo y Todo Eso Angel Gonzalez y Grupo Vimana

4:30P Yay Castillo y Grupo Rumores

6:00P Conjunto Baraja de Oro

6:45P Cinco de Mayo Program

7:15P Conjunto Baraja de Oro

8:00P Da Krazy

9:45P Gary Hobbs

May 5, 2013

12:00P Doors Open

1:00P University of Texas Conjunto

1:35P Conjunto de Violins de Lake Travis High

2:45P Henry Zimmerle

4:30P Los dos Gilbertos

6:00P Johnny Degollado y Su Conjunto

7:00P Joel Guzman y Sarah Fox

8:30P Los Fantasmas del Valle

VOLUNTEER TRAINING INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES MONITORING

Saturday, June 8, 2013 - 8:30am - 4:30pm

The City of Austin and the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center's Invaders of Texas Program have partnered to train local volunteers on invasive plant species identification and monitoring. Volunteers will work with city staff to develop a base map of where invasive plant species are located on City lands, and that information will be used to prioritize sites for treatment or removal of invasive plant species.

This is the first of four workshops to be held during the spring and summer of 2013. The goal is to train 180 "citizen scientists" who are willing to dedicate at least 20 hours of service during the summer monitoring season.

Date: Saturday, June 8, 2013

Time: 8:30am - 4:30pm

Location: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, 4801 La Crosse Ave Austin, TX 78739

Cost: *FREE* but volunteers should be willing to dedicate at least 20 hours of service

REGISTER: http://texasinvasives.org/invaders/workshop_results.php

More Info on Invasive Plants: <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/austin-invasive-plants-management>

Location:

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center
4801 La Crosse Ave
Austin, TX 78739

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

E-mail us at wildlife@austintexas.gov

FREE LECTURES

Lunchtime Lecture Series:

May 8- Dr. Kevin Anderson from Austin Water Utility will give a talk on "River Process: the Fluvial System and River Hydrology." At 12:00PM at the Dougherty Arts Center, bring a lunch and learn! (Also offered on May 15 at 12:00PM at City Hall).

Science Under the Stars:

May 9th-Christina Andruk will present a lecture on "Plants on Fire" at the Brackenridge Field Laboratory at 7:30pm.

Ecological Literacy Volunteer Days:

May 25 from 9:00AM-1:00PM. There will be some volunteer work at Hornsby Bend followed by a lecture from a guest speaker. Please bring a lunch.

"Like"

[Austin Parks and Recreation-Parks in Nature](#)

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.