

HABITAT HERALD

Wildlife Austin's monthly Newsletter



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Wildlife Austin

City of Austin
Parks and Recreation
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UPCOMING EVENTS

August 3, Deep Eddy Movie Night, "The Avengers", 8:30PM
<http://www.austintexas.gov/departments/deep-eddy-pool>

August 7, Blues on the Green, Zilker Park, 7:30PM-10:00PM
<http://www.kgsr.com/bluesonthegreen/>

August 10, Lady Bird Lake Cleanup 9:00AM-11:00AM
<http://www.keeptaustinbeautiful.org/LBLAugust2013>

August 14th, Free Composting Class Willie Mae Kirk Library 6:00PM-7:00PM
<http://austintexas.gov/composting>

August 14, Movies on the Long Center Lawn "Flash Gordon" 8:00PM
<http://thelongcenter.org/event/sounds-cinema/>

August 21, Movies on the Long Center Lawn, "Jurassic Park", 8:00PM
<http://thelongcenter.org/event/sounds-cinema/>

August 22, Free Composting Class, Millwood Library, 6:00PM-7:00PM
<http://austintexas.gov/composting>

August 24, Bat Fest
<http://www.roadwayevents.com/RoadStar/Events-cat.asp?media1Id=1323>

August 25, Hot Sauce Fest
<http://www.austinchronicle.com/gyrobase/Market/HotSauce>

August 28, Free Composting Class, City Hall 6:30PM-7:30PM

AUGUST 2013



With summer at its peak I hope you have all found some time to get outdoors and enjoy some of the exciting events happening around town. If movies are your thing check out some of the free movies in the park series or the movies at Deep Eddy Pool. If you enjoy live music, learn a thing or two about our world-renowned urban bat colony check out Bat Fest or get some homemade hot sauce at the Hot Sauce Fest.

August is also an exciting month because our registration for the Fall 2013 Habitat Steward Training is open. Please check out page 5 for more information and to register!



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Would you like to receive the newsletter?

E-mail us at
wildlife@austintexas.gov

Last Month's Plant:
Milk weed vine

Garden of the Month



This month's garden of the month comes from Ivey Kaiser, a Habitat Steward that decided to plan her own project in her apartment complex. It's been about nine months since the initial planting and three months since the spring planting. As you can see from before and after photos, the garden has grown quite a bit since it was originally installed in the winter of 2012. Ivey added mulch and Portulaca as a ground cover about two weeks ago and so far everything seems to be doing great. Her hope for the future is to establish a second garden in her complex in the fall. Ivey's garden is a great example of how a small plot of unused land can be transformed in to not only a place for wildlife but also a learning tool for families in the surrounding area. In the past few months new plants have been added and some of Ivey's neighbors have had a chance to learn about gardening first hand. Keep up the great work Ivey!



Would you like to share your yard with other gardeners? If so please write to wildlife@austintexas.gov for more details!



Schoolyard Habitat Update



One of this month's school yard habitats comes from Danna Keyburn at Redeemer Lutheran School. The school started their gardens in 2002 with the help of many dedicated volunteers. The garden has since grown into an outdoor classroom complete with a retention pond, Adopt-A-

Tree program, herb garden, compost, rabbits and hydroponic station. Danna said that the outdoor classroom has not only helped students learn about alternative energy and native plants but it has also allowed them to learn what it takes to maintain a garden as well as harvesting fresh herbs. Dr. Joe Frost of the University of Texas has been integral in creating the gardens as well as studying the developmental effects of play in young children. The gardens within the school are all connected so the over 500 students can roam the grounds, play with the school's rabbits, visit the playground or garden. Thank you so much to Redeemer Lutheran School,



Native switch grass near the retention

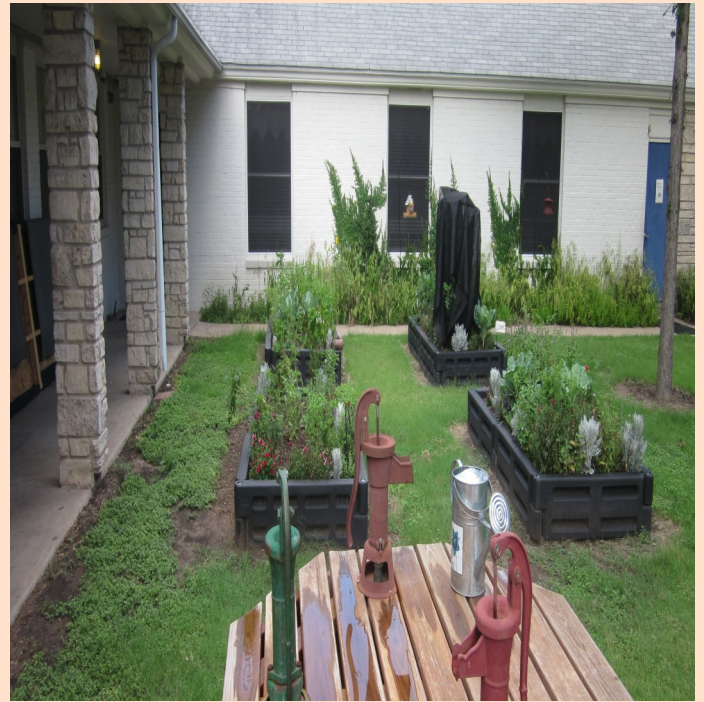
you're all doing a fantastic job of creating a model for other schools in Austin. Keep up the great work! If you would like to read more about Dr. Frost's research please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/features/2007/playgrounds/index.html> .



Schoolyard Habitat Update



Compost Bin



Herb Gardens and Water Pump Feature



Danna Keyburn

If you would like to help donate your time or items to this school please contact Danna Keyburn at dkeyburn@redeemer.net or 512-576-1703.



Schoolyard Habitat Update

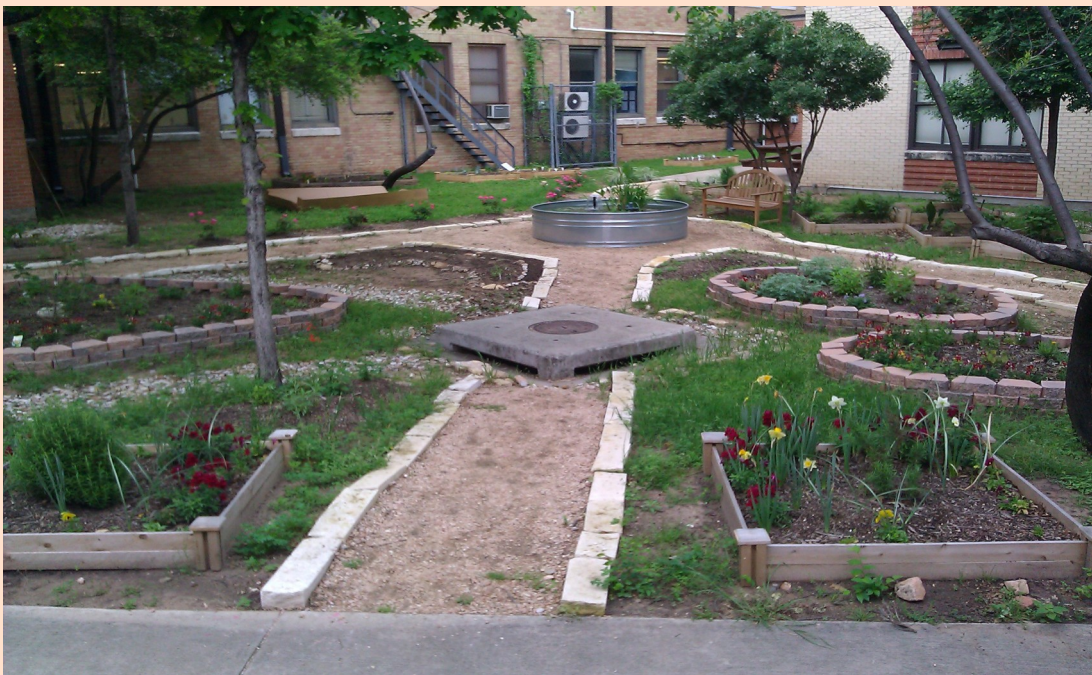


Zavala Elementary School Schoolyard Habitat

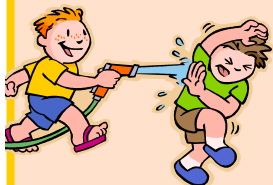
When you visit Zavala Elementary School, you find their schoolyard habitat and vegetable gardens at the heart of the school. Classes are constantly walking through the garden on their way to class or reading stories about nature. Students tend vegetable gardens and mark off the butterflies that have been spotted in the garden on a large chart. Zavala partnered with the National Wildlife Federation in 2011 to install their schoolyard habitat in an empty and misused courtyard. "The very first day I was on campus, I looked out the window and saw potential here. I knew that someday we would have a garden here" said Sean Fox, Principal of Zavala Elementary School. He went on to discuss ways that the garden has improved the schoolyard by saying "We haven't had one instance of graffiti or littering since installing the habitat in this area." With an interest in STEM education, Zavala has embraced the schoolyard habitat as an educational tool as well as campus improvement.



Before



After



Schoolyard Habitat Update



Donations Needed!

Campuses are looking for donations of the following materials for spring and summer workdays:

- Compost and/or soil
- Native seeds, plants, shrubs and trees
- Tools
- 4 inch pots
- Limestone blocks
- Cedar logs
- Decomposed Granite
- Bird Feeders and/or bird seed

Schoolyard Habitat Success Depends on Volunteers Like You!

Contact Anne Muller AISD Outdoor Learning Specialist amuller@austinisd.org or 841-5070 an up to date list of work days and volunteer opportunities

Become a Habitat Steward!

Share your passion for wildlife and help to Keep Austin Wild!

The 2013 Wildlife Austin Habitat Stewards' Training registration is open! Become an important part of YOUR city's efforts to Keep Austin Wild! Austin is one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country to receive the designation as a Community Wildlife Habitat™ by the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). This success has been made possible by people like you, who have made the effort to create native wildscapes at their homes and in public places and to teach and assist others. That's what the Wildlife Austin Habitat Stewards' Training is all about. Becoming a Habitat Steward™ not only means that you make a big difference here in Austin, but that you join the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) nationwide team of volunteers who serve their communities as Habitat Stewards™.

The City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department and their partner, NWF are offering a specialized training to teach you how to help others create and restore wildlife habitat in backyards, schoolyards, and other private and public areas. This training is engaging, fun and highly informative and you get to meet and interact with local conservation professionals and other similarly interested folks! **Fall 2013 training classes will be every Thursday night and Saturday morning/afternoon in the month of September in locations around Austin.**

You'll Learn About:



- How to Create Wildlife Friendly Habitats
- Native and Invasive Plants
- Landscape Design Principles
- Ways to Support Habitat in the Community
- Beneficial Insects
- Native and Local Wildlife
- Water conservation and riparian restoration

Habitat Stewards Receive:

30+ Hours of Intensive, Hands-On Training
Engaging Field Trips and Habitat Activities
A Comprehensive Training Manual with Local Resources
Instruction from Local Conservation Professionals

An important part of becoming a Habitat Steward is giving back. We ask that each Steward commit to 30 hours of volunteer habitat work in the community. The course fee is \$50 and covers the cost of materials. To

register please visit <https://www.formstack.com/forms/?1297450-ry9nftdrmD> and make sure to select "Habitat Steward" option at the bottom of the form.

For questions please call 512-978-2606 or e-mail us at wildlife@austintexas.gov for more information.



Living in a WUI Without All the Hooey

For many of us, the benefits of living in a WUI far out way the drawbacks. This isn't to say that we don't have our fair share of challenges when living near a wildland. One of these challenges is the issue of fending off wildlife that feed on our native landscapes. Deer are always a hot topic of discussion when talking about wildland urban interface areas. Like all wildlife, deer do not notice man-made boundaries and they have a very varied palate when it comes to vegetation. Their preferences may change due to drought conditions or availability. Although very few plants are truly "deer proof" there are many plants that are found to be less palatable to our four-legged neighbors. Below is a list of a few Texas natives that you may want to try and incorporate in your yard. Good luck and happy planting!

Datura wrightii (Sacred thorn-apple)

Ratibida columnifera (Mexican hat)

Dalea greggii (Gregg dalea)

Sedum nuttallianum (Yellow stonecrop)

Polanisia dodencandra trachysperma (Clammyweed)

Chrysactinia mexicana (Damianita)

Capsicum annuum (Chile pequin)

Wedelia texana (Zexmenia)

Asclepias tuberosa (Butterflyweed)

Melampodium leucanthum (Blackfoot daisy)

Malvaviscus arboreus var. drummondii (Turk's cap or turkscap)

Lantana urticoides (Texas lantana) .



This list as well as more information on wildlife-resistant plants can be found at wildflower.org



**Roots of Your Community.
Become an Urban Forest Steward!**

The City of Austin Urban Forestry program and TreeFolks present the Urban Forest Steward series of workshops focused on building and protecting the urban canopy of Central Texas.

Drought, invasive species and habitat degradation constantly take a toll on Austin’s parks and natural areas. The Texas Forest Service estimates that Texas has lost up to 10 percent of its trees. The goal of the Urban Forest Steward series is to equip a cadre of citizens to help us gain ground in rebuilding our urban forest through education and volunteer leadership.

The topics to be covered are extensive and intend to give volunteers the tools to educate, train, and lead other volunteers in planting and maintaining our urban forest. Topics include Stewardship, Arboriculture, Urban Planning & Design, Volunteer Leadership, and Sustainability.

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2013 SERIES NOW OPEN
Class dates for 2013 are August 10 & 24, and September 14 & 28 from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm at the AWU Center for

Environmental Research at Hornsby Bend. Registration for the 4-class series is \$130 (TreeFolks membership included) or \$100 for current members.

Please visit <http://www.treefolks.org/ufs/> for more information.

FREE LECTURES & TRIPS

Monthly Bird Survey August 10, 2013 at 7:00 am and 4:00pm

Starting in 1999, the monthly Bird Survey has taken place at 7am and 4pm on the 2nd Saturday of the month. We meet at Hornsby Bend in the Center for Environmental Research at 7am for the morning survey [Coffee and donuts at 6:30am] and 4pm for the afternoon survey. All levels of birders are welcome - the survey is a great way to improve your skills since we form teams matching experienced and novice birders.

Birding Fieldtrip August 17, 2013 at 7:30am to 11am

Interested in birds? Join other birders at Hornsby Bend at 7:30am for a fieldtrip around the center. You are guaranteed to see at least 50 species. For more information contact Kevin Anderson at coordinator@hornsbybend.org or call 512-972-1960.

Ecological Literacy Days August 24, 2013 from 9 am - 1 pm

Combining volunteer work with learning about local ecology, the Ecological Literacy Day at Hornsby Bend begins with several hours of outdoor work and ends with at least an hour of learning about local ecology. Wear boots and work clothing, and be sure to bring your binoculars. For more information contact Kevin Anderson at coordinator@hornsbybend.org or 512-972-1960



**If you have suggestions on what you would like to see in the newsletter please contact wildlife@austintexas.gov, we’d love to hear from you!
“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.