



NATURE NOTES

Dedicated to the Enjoyment and Conservation of the Natural Beauty of Sun City Texas at Georgetown

VOLUME 24

Issue 10

October 2022

Tuesday, October 11, 2:30 p.m., SCB

The Gault Site

Presented by D. Clark Wernecke

Tuesday, November 8, 2:30 p.m., SCB

Growing/Sustaining Sun City's Healthy Forest

Presented by Alison Baylis, Texas A&M Forest Service

MEMBERS ONLY SPECIAL EVENT!

Deep in the Heart

Ticket sales open October 3, see Club Calendar

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendars now and save the date.

December 5 – Nature Club Holiday Party

More information coming as we approach the date!

MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$6 for 2022

Dues include our monthly programs and all Special Interest Group programs and activities.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Nature Club activities are posted on the [Nature Club](http://www.sctexas.org) website calendar. E-mails are sent to Club members only.

REPTILES & MAMMALS

REPTILE ID, RELOCATION & MAPPING

FREE service, call:

- Jim Christiansen 512-868-3504
- Steve Kelley 512-639-0539
- John Leek 713-825-0145
- Joe Plunkett 774-226-0810
- City of Georgetown Animal Control 512-930-3592

We encourage residents to leave harmless, beneficial reptiles in their landscapes, but call us so we can identify and map all reptiles.

ASTRONOMY SIG

Mon., **October 24**, 7:00 p.m., CCF, Program *TBA*
Programs resume January, 2023.

Check the Calendar for up-to-date info and watch for Special Viewing announcements.

SIG Chair: Richard Wagoner



BIRDING SIG

No SIG meeting in **October**

Tues., **November 1**, 2:30 p.m., ACA – “Waterfowl”

presented by Ed Rozenburg



BIRD WALKS

Bird walks: Thurs., **October 6**, Thurs., **November 3** and Wed., **November 16**.

*All walks 8:00 a.m., meet at LHPP parking lot near the lake.
Any changes will be emailed.*

SIG Chairs: Ed Rozenburg & Martin Byhower

BUTTERFLY/MOTH SIG

Tues., **October 4**, 2:30 p.m., ACA – Program *TBA*.

No SIG Meeting in **November**.



BUTTERFLY WALKS

Butterfly walks Wed., **October 26** and Wed., **November 20**, 10:00 a.m. Meet at the Tranquility trailhead off Lone Star.

SIG Chair: Ed Rozenburg

GEOLOGY SIG

Tues., **October 25**, 4:00 p.m., ACA. “Clay— It Isn’t Just Dirt” by Karl Schiller

Tues., **November 22**, 4:00 p.m., ACA. “Minerals that Rocked the World: Corundum-Sapphire and Ruby” by Jim Tobin

SIG Chair: Paul Swetland



Living With Wildlife SIG

Thurs., **October 27**, 11:00 a.m., ACA, “Wildlife and Disease Transmission” Presented by Dr. Sarah Hamer

Fri., **November 18**, 1:00 p.m., ACA, “Workshop, Capturing Wildlife in Motion” Presented by Randy Dykstra

SIG Chair: Nancy Wagoner

NATIVE PLANTS SIG

Thurs. **October 6**, Mon. **October 10**, Thurs. **November 3**, and Mon. **November 7**. All plant walks start at 8:00 at the Rocky Hollow Trail Head Parking Lot.

SIG Chair: Pat Garren



Nature Brought Me Here – *Martin Byhower*

There were several reasons why my wife and I relocated to Sun City, but Nature was foremost among them. The beauty of Legacy Park combined with the centuries-old trees on my Del Webb property were a big lure. Moving here, I felt like a kid in a candy store! Trees! Birds! Butterflies! Dragonflies! Wildflowers! For heaven's sake – a Ringtail in my backyard!

And I think many people move here for similar reasons. Sun City is located in a biodiversity hotspot. There are numerous habitats in three separate biological regions that all converge around us. In just seven years of living here I've seen 331 bird species just in Williamson County, and over 100 in my backyard!

We are right in the middle of the Central Flyway for bird migration. We are in the middle of perhaps the most important regions in terms of monarch butterfly migration. When I came here I saw dozens of new dragonflies and butterflies and, of course, I'm totally obsessed with all the native plants. And with preserving all of these things!

Georgetown is the fastest growing city in the nation, and Sun City reflects that. Just in the short time I've lived here there are more strip malls than trees on Williams Drive. Our remaining wildlife areas are so precious!

When Del Webb designed the original community, densities were low and wild greenbelts connected undeveloped areas throughout the community. Dr. James Christiansen has determined that theoretically it would be possible for a critter to walk from Sun City to the Gulf of Mexico without ever having to cross a road or obstruction!

I lead the bimonthly birdwalks for the Nature Club, and the reason we always walk along the Berry Creek Trail from the Legacy Pond is because it is arguably the best area of its size for bird diversity in Williamson County! It may not mean much to a non-birder, but the fact that I saw a Cerulean Warbler one day and the next day a McGillivray's Warbler, all in the pecan grove at Legacy Park, is pretty remarkable! And as of this article, we haven't even hit peak warbler migration yet!

So in addition to celebrating nature, let's all fight to keep it! Learn all you can about conservation efforts.* Come on the field trips offered by the Nature Club, most of which are along easy trails right here*. Join one or more conservation organizations. Loss of habitat is the biggest threat to nature, so let's all work to preserve what we have as well as restore and enhance areas that have been degraded by past activity. And let's learn all we can about inviting Nature to our yard using native Texas plants. Native trees and plants are the base of all of our food webs and they're the reason why Nature is still here at all!

*Some free citizen science informational resource apps I recommend are Merlin and iNaturalist.

* Conservation organizations I like to support include the Center for Biological Diversity, the National Audubon Society, and the Nature Conservancy

Also, on my website, I have a gallery of all the likely birds you would see in Sun City. And on iNaturalist I created a field guide that shows all the butterflies you are likely to see here.



Eryngo



Halloween Pennant



Pipevine Swallowtail nectaring on a Pride of Barbados