

MID-COAST CHAPTER, TEXAS MASTER NATURALIST MINUTES, May, 2023, GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The Mid-Coast Chapter's General Meeting was held at 10:00 am on Saturday, May 13, 2023, at the Recreation Hall at Goose Island State Park located at 202 S. Palmetto St., Rockport, TX 78382.

Program

At 10:00 am, Sam Wolfe of Manomet presented an Advanced Training program on Shorebird Research & Identification. Sara Rock from Goose Island State Park followed with a presentation of Shorebirds of Goose Island State Park. Approved AT is 1.25 hour.

Business Meeting

The business meeting was called to order at 11:30 am by President Bob Cunningham. Minutes were recorded by Secretary Ele Chew. Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm for 2 hours VS plus travel.

Attendance

Forty-One members in good standing and 2 visitors were in attendance.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

Minutes from the last General membership meeting on February 11, 2023 were previously notified to membership and published on the website on February 24, 2023. Ray Kirkwood moved to approve the minutes and Wilfred Korth seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report by Julie Hejducek

The Treasurer's Report as of April 30, 2023, was presented.

The Chapter will be running in a net loss until the plant sale. All budget items are within budget. A 2023 budget item of \$750 was added at the April meeting after consideration and approval as previously mentioned in the April minutes. Members discussed, voted on and approved this additional budget item at the May meeting. The budget item will include the monthly storage rental, insurance, a lock and shelving.

Interim Treasurer Julie Hejducek was added as a signer to the chapter's Prosperity Bank account signature card on May 1, 2023. On May 2, the signature card was updated with names of signers President Bob Cunningham and Vice President Bill Burge. Additionally, Secretary Ele Chew verified her identity at the bank since she is the secretary and the April minutes were drafted with her name. "Bill Pay" was added on May 8th, and activated May 9th. A test of \$1 will be conducted before use. New business: A new Chapter debit card will be requested from Prosperity Bank with Treasurer's name. The old card has Charla's name on it and will be deactivated. The new card will take 10 days to receive.

Revisions to P&P and COH regarding Treasurer duties and financial policies and practices are being worked and finalized in order to comply with state standards. Steve Marwitz moved to

approve the Treasurer's Report and Laura Andersen seconded. The motion carried.

A budget amendment proposing to increase the Vice President Budget by \$750.00 was put forth to the general membership. After discussion, Ray Kirkwood moved to approve the amendment and Laura Andersen seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Bank Statement Balance 04/30/2023	\$41,487.96
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Profit/Loss Statement 04/30/2023

Total Income 2023 YTD	\$1,260.27
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Total Expenses 2023 YTD	\$4,446.22
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Net Loss 2023 YTD	\$-3,743.05
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Board of Director Reports:

- [President's Report](#)
- [Vice-President's Report](#)
- [Treasurer's Report](#)
- [Membership Report](#)
- [Initial Training Report](#)
- [Advanced Training Director](#)
- [Projects Director Report](#)
 - [Plant Sale Report](#)
- [Communications Report](#)
- Past President Claire Barnhart – No Report
- [Class Representative Report Class of 2022](#)
- Chapter Advisor – No Report

Old Business

- A new Technology Director position will be proposed to the Board at its meeting on July 8th. A description of the position will be in the upcoming draft of the Chapter Operating Handbook, also to be addressed at that Board Meeting.
- New procedures for chapter-funded projects will also be included in the revised COH and will be discussed by the Board at that time.

New Business

- Revisions of Mid-Coast TMN Policies & Procedures
The Mid-Coast TMN "Policies & Procedures Manual" is being revised to comply with the new Chapter Management & Operational Protocol and the new Chapter Operating Handbook documents issued last year by TMN and effective as of January 1, 2023. The current draft will be available to the general membership for viewing and comment before it is presented to the Board on July 8th. Kris Kirkwood circulated a copy of the Table of Contents at the meeting. After the documents have been approved by the Board at its meeting, they will be presented to the general membership in August for final approval, then submitted to TMN.
- Allan Berger distributed 2023 Ecosystem Health Report Cards published by HARTE Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies of Texas A&M University Corpus Christi. [Digital copies of the reports are available.](#)

- Captain Whitney Curry of Aransas Pass, Texas is the [2023 winner of the Texas Excellence Environmental Award](#). She and her husband Captain Bryan have taught marine science to many through the Texas Floating Classroom and Traveling Bag Touch Tank. Texas Floating Classroom is a new partner of the Chapter.

Awards

Adjournment

Ray Kirkwood moved to adjourn the meeting and Barb Threatt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted, Ele Chew
Mid-Coast Chapter Secretary

President's Report by Bob Cunningham

TMN Annual Meeting

Texas Master Naturalist 2023 Annual Meeting will be held Thursday, October 12th through Sunday, October 15th in McAllen, Texas. Registration will open the first week of August. On Saturday, October 14th, there will be an all day off-conference location for the annular solar eclipse. The deadline for presenter proposal is May 31st. Hotel bookings are open. Check the TMN website for details.

Board of Directors Meeting – July 8th – Vision & Succession planning / P&P-COH revisions

Leadership transition and succession will be discussed. The positions of Training Class director, Historian, Hospitality chair and Scrapbook organizer are open and volunteers are sought from the membership. The position of President will be open for the Chapter election in November. Linda Shirey is stepping down as Advanced Training director after several years in that position; the Chapter thanks her for dedication, and the Board will act on interim appointment of Debbie Kucera for the remainder of the year.

P&P – COH revisions

As noted under New Business, the Board will also address and vote on revisions to the current P&P Manual to merge the details of this Chapter's current practices and procedures into the COH framework issued by TMN. All the current Directors have provided valuable input, and the extraordinary work of Kris Kirkwood to coordinate all revisions is deeply appreciated.

Vice President's Report by Bill Burge and Brigid Berger

OWL Hybrid Meeting Equipment

Mid-Coast Chapter has acquired the OWL Hybrid Meeting Equipment with accompanying 47" monitor, and laptop. It is available for the chapter's use and is suitable in smaller meeting venues; however, internet service is necessary. It will be used at the July Board of Director Meeting. Climate-controlled storage is required for the hybrid equipment as well as for important chapter documents and electronic files, educational outreach, and Initial Training supplies. The Board of Directors approved the amendment to increase the Vice President Budget to \$750.00 at the April 2023 Board of Directors meeting to provide for additional expenses of climate-controlled storage, lock, shelving, and insurance. The storage unit at AgriLife will still be maintained for non-climate and non-security sensitive items.

Meeting Locations

Appreciation was extended to Brigid Berger for organizing the May General Meeting at Goose Island State Park. The location of the August General Meeting is to be determined. Future location suggestions are the Bay Education Center in Rockport, Texas, Goliad State Park in Goliad, Texas, and Victoria Master Gardener's facilities in Victoria, Texas.

Treasurer's Report by Julie Hejducek

CATEGORY	2023 BUDGET EXPLANATION	2023 BUDGET	2023 ACTUALS	Over / (Under)
INCOME				
Dues	Annual dues (\$13/person average x 100 paying members)	1,300.00	964.93	(335.07)
Donations	Sam sung (\$40/mo), Amazon Smile, other	600.00	55.91	(544.09)
Initial Training Fees	Initial training (20 FOR 2024 class)	3,000.00		(3,000.00)
Plant sale	Hummerbird	12,000.00		(12,000.00)
Book Sales	Book Sales	250.00	239.40	(10.60)
Badge Replacement		50.00		(50.00)
TOTAL INCOME		\$17,200.00	\$1,260.24	(15,939.76)
EXPENSES				
Administrative				
VP Expenses	Supplies & other expenses incurred by VP, hotspot plan \$600	800.00		(800.00)
VP Expenses for Meetings - Capital Expense	laptop case \$25, laptop \$280, monitor \$250, Owl case \$90, Owl Zoom Equip \$1200	2,150.00	1,928.12	(221.88)
Storage	A/C Storage Unit, Insurance, Incidentals (Shelving, Locks)	750.00		(750.00)
Secretary's Supplies	Paper, ink, postage, other supplies	100.00		(100.00)
Treasurer's Supplies	Paper, ink, postage, checks, Treas laptop IT Maint - \$200	300.00	199.99	(100.01)
Treasurer - Capital Expense	Mouse \$50	50.00		(50.00)
Historian and scrapbook	Toner, Paper, Scrapbook pages, Storage, etc.	100.00		(100.00)
Project Director Expenses	Future Proposed Projects	1,400.00		(1,400.00)
Membership	Plaques (2 cases @ \$139.75 ea) - \$280 name badges - \$19.20=\$260 malina awards @ \$4.50 ea - \$200 \$70.	750.00		(750.00)
Communications - Website & IT	Wufoo online data support \$350, Zoom license \$150	950.00	165.00	(785.00)
Communications - Newsletter/Gen Marketing	MSPub fee 9x12=\$108, Const Contact 10x12=\$120 Boosted FB ads 10x12=\$120	348.00	44.05	(303.95)
Communications - Outreach	Monthly outreach event supplies 10x\$100 + \$50 misc expense	1,050.00	358.35	(691.65)
Communications - Outreach - Capital Expense	Outreach table skulls, pelts, etc - \$1784 Geocaching, other gadgets/gizmos \$119	1,903.00	1,750.71	(152.29)
PO Box Rental	Post Office box rental - Fulton	200.00		(200.00)
Discretionary	Honariums, TMN annual silent auction contrib., etc	350.00		(350.00)
Total Administrative		\$11,201.00	\$4,446.22	(6,754.78)
Advanced Training				
Advanced Training	Instructor/speaker fees	250.00		(250.00)
Training - Initial				
Boat / Touch Tank Fees	RV Katy for Bay and Barrier Island Ecology	800.00		(800.00)
Books - Purchased	12 Statewide Curriculum (TAMU Press), 20 My Brush Country Backyard	920.00		(920.00)
Instructor Fees	Honoraria or expense reimbursements (2 X \$250 assumed)	500.00		(500.00)
Venue	Fees	75.00		(75.00)
Contingency Fund	Other expenses (15% contingency)	470.00		(470.00)
Supplies & expenses	Note pads, printing, binders, badges, etc.	845.00		(845.00)
Masks	Masks and hand sanitizers	-		-
IT Fees - Withdraw/refund		-		-
Total Initial Training		\$3,610.00	\$0.00	(3,610.00)
Plant Sale				
HummerBird Fee	For outside space	105.00	\$105.00	-
Plants	Plants purchased	5,000.00		(5,000.00)
Sales Tax	Tax for sales other than 2 "free days". Total taxable amount	150.00	\$452.10	302.10
POS Supplies	paper labels/ink \$100, hotspot access fee \$60, barcode font license \$120	280.00		(280.00)
Supplies & Misc expenses	Misc needed for sale	300.00		(300.00)
Equipment Upgrades - Capital Expense	cartwheels - 220, trays - 300	520.00		(520.00)
Total Plant Sale		\$ 6,355.00	\$ 557.10	(5,797.90)
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$21,416.00	\$5,003.32	-\$16,412.68
TOTAL NET INCOME		-\$4,216.00	-\$3,743.08	472.92
NET PLANT SALE INCOME		\$5,645.00	-\$557.10	(6,202.10)
CAPITAL EXPENSE		\$4,623.00	\$3,678.83	(944.17)

Membership Report by Dee Mahaffey

April 2023 Hourskeeper Report

Chapter Service & Training in April 2023

Volunteer Hours	Advanced Training	# Members Reporting	# Different Opportunities	Value at \$23 per hour
1,251.00	105.25	69	29	\$31,193.75

Service & Training 2023 Year-to-Date Total

Volunteer Hours	Advanced Training	# Members Reporting	# Different Opportunities	Value at \$23 per hour
5,097.00	709.50	91	45	\$133,549.50

Cumulative—Chapter Inception in 2000 to Present

Volunteer Hours	Advanced Training	All-time # Members Reporting	# Different Opportunities	Value at \$23 per hour
231,664.75	24,238.25	326	72	\$5,885,769.00

As of May 4, the Mid-Coast Chapter has a total of 111 members eligible to report hours, including 17 members-in-training. After members who had not paid dues were notified by U.S. mail that their membership was suspended, two members notified the chapter that they were officially resigning and two members responded by paying dues.

Class of 2022—Congratulations to **Mary Ann Carr** and **Rhett Parker** on completing their initial certifications! Ten of the 12 remaining members of the class have completed initial certification.

Class of 2023—In addition to Initial Training reports, 2023 Members-in-Training have reported 482.75 VS hours and 145 AT hours. When the class graduates on June 3, at least 2 members will be certified Texas Master Naturalists.

Recertification 2023—**19** members have recertified for 2023, earning the Texas Ecoregions pin. This number is 20% of the eligible membership. See page 2 for the full list.

Milestone Awards Earned during 2023

(Bold names new since last month's report)

- *Bronze 250-Hour Milestone Pin*—Laura Andersen, Linda Swickheimer, Debbie Minns
- *Silver 500-Hour Milestone Pin*—D'Ann Williams
- *Gold 1000-Hour Milestone Pin*—
- *Polished Silver 2500-Hour Milestone Pin*—Janet Price

2023 Recertifications (TX Ecoregions pin)

(Members in bold certified since last month's report

*1st to recertify, †1st in Class of 2023 to recertify)

Laura Andersen*

Donna Bailey

Claire Bamhart

Brigid Berger*

Bill Burge

Bob Cunningham

Debra Dahms-Nelson*

Cynthia Hanifen

Patrick Hartigan

Charla Ingalls

Ray Kirkwood*

Wilfred Korth

Janet McCrea

Robyn Savage

Sally Scroggs*

Linda Shirey

Greg Simmons*

Liz Smith

Janie von Dohlen

Initial Training Directors Report by Greg Simmons & Sally Scroggs

- Spring training program began January 28 with Orientation.
- 8 of 10 training sessions are completed. Bay and Barrier Island Ecology is next on the schedule. We are utilizing R/V Katy as a new field activity. We will provide a future update.
- Class size remains at 17.
- Thanks to our training ambassadors who are assisting in organizing and coordinating various training sessions, including Debbie Griffith with Archeology, the Stapletons with Mid-coast Ecology at ANWR, the Kirkwoods with Upland Ecology at Welder, Dee Mahaffey with Interpreting Nature at Lake Texana Park, the Bergers with Coastal Prairie and Wetland Ecology at Powderhorn WMA, Bill Burge and Liz Smith with Riparian Ecology at Fennessey, and Claire Barnhart and Wilfred Korth with Native Plants at Barnhart Ranch. There are opportunities for additional involvement in the training program if anyone is interested.
- 2023 is an exceptional class that will produce some strong future volunteers. All 17 MITs are hopefully on track to complete their 40 hours of required training. Many have started contributing significant volunteer hours. Several are on track to be Certified if not Double Certified by graduation.
- We are pleased to announce that Amy Nowlin has been elected as 2023 Class Representative.
- Graduation is scheduled for June 3 at Barnhart Ranch. We are planning for a membership potluck so save the date.
- It is time for someone to step up as the new 2024 Initial Training Director(s) with fresh new ideas. We are happy to work with whomever to help organize the 2024 training program and to help ensure a smooth transition.

Advanced Training Director by Linda Shirey & Debbie Kucera

There were 69 new ATs approved this year.

Projects Director Report (other than Plant Sale) by Ray Kirkwood

- Monarch Butterflies/Monarch Butterfly Habitat—Seek local entities to incorporate milkweed into landscape. Request member to collect seeds from milkweeds and nectar (pollinator) plants.
- Monarch Butterfly Survey—Monitor Monarch butterfly population movements, host and pollinator plant usage, mortality factors, and other data in the 8-county chapter region.
- Monitoring will restart in the fall. [Contact Patrick Hartigan](#) for complete details.
- Procedure for initiating new projects will be addressed at the July Board of Directors Meeting.
 - o Volunteer Committee to determine goals and strategic plans for project.
 - o Submit the Volunteer Service request form: <https://midcoasttmn.wufoo.com/forms/mctmn-request-for-volunteer-service-approval/>
 - o Allocate funding for new projects.
 - o Implement Action Report Protocol. These reports would entail the following:
 - What did I do?
 - What did I do right? What did I do wrong?
 - How to carry out the project better?

Example Project: Create volunteer locations in Goliad, Victoria and other counties in the Mid-Coast area chapter that offer gardening, bird watching, hiking/biking, kayaking and history facilities similar to [Aransas Pathways](#) in Rockport, Texas.

Plant Sale Report by Debbie Minns

We have a team! All the positions are filled on the Plant Sale Planning Committee. We met on April 27, 2023. Members and consultants include: Liz Smith, Charla Ingalls, Julie Hejducek, Cindy Hielscher, Janet James, D'Ann Williams, Cathy Koenig, Patrick Hartigan, Bill Burge, Gary James and Tracy Bennett. We discussed our successes from last year, primarily the upgrade to square inventory/sales which gave us

excellent accuracy and data recording. Some tweaks were suggested for this year. Three areas of change were discussed for this year.

- 1) **Volunteer and Pre-order Registration:** Survey Monkey is being considered for a more efficient registration process. Notifications and reminders can be sent through this program. As for preorders, electronic ordering can save time between the deadline for orders and the order from the vendor, which could better ensure that customers get the plants they want.
- 2) A **Milkweed education** initiative. Displays, volunteers with Milkweed expertise, and maybe even an incentive for purchasing and planting multiples of milkweed are planned.
- 3) **Logistics:** Additional crates will be added for more efficient transportation of plants throughout the sale. A special volunteer will be in place for the sole purpose of instructing the high-school volunteers.

On April 19, I went to Formosa Research to visit with Curtis Short and check the status of propagation of the seeds we had sent him. It seems that he will be providing large numbers of a few species rather than a few of a lot as I had hoped. This means that our member propagation is going to be as important as ever.

Immediate needs include: Propagation. Contact Liz Smith

Debbie Minns will be working on updating all plant sale resource documents on our website.

Communications Director Report by D'Ann Williams

Administration:

- The chapter will start using Sign-Up Genius online platform for our events. It is the same platform the Rockport-Fulton Chamber and Rockport Art Center use for events that require volunteers to help out on multiple days. Our chapter will use it as a test run for upcoming June Graduation potluck.

Publicity/Social Media:

- Facebook Page for the Chapter. Please join the page if you have not done so.
- Facebook Group page keeps getting spammed for some reason.
- Need to get Board meetings added, etc.
- Send your events and photos of you doing your great works to the communications email and we will get them posted.

Newsletter – Bobbie Lee:

- Next edition is coming out this month.
- Please email your great works and photos to Bobbie Lee! Outreach – D'Ann Williams, etc.:
- Will be doing another reprint of the Chapter Brochure with general chapter information on the back and space for notes of places to go to that we talk about with the visitor.

Outreach:

- Interpretation Team led a field trip for 31 Karnes City HS NHS Students at UTMSI/ARK/South Jetties for Sea Turtle Engagement
 - o Next year, they want to do the floating classroom in Rockport, TX.
 - o Would like to invite NHS groups from all 8 counties to engage with our chapter next school year.
- Donna Bailey did Earth Day engagement in Calhoun County

Historian/Scrapbook – Janet Cunningham:

- Janet is looking for someone to take over this role. See below for job description.

Webmaster – Ray Kirkwood:

- I have received notification from StudioSR that their rates are increasing somewhat. The heart of their notification is; they've added to their technology, servers and storage and need to raise rates for the first time in 15+ years.
- For our Chapter:
 - o The major increase for our web will be in the technical help that we occasionally ask for. That rate is going up from \$100 per hour to \$150 per hour. I do not think that this will significantly affect our budget.
 - o The hosting fee will not change.

Historian (Archivist) Kris Kirkwood: No report

Class Representative Report by Laura Andersen

Eleven members out of 14 of class 2022 have certified with over 1200 hours of service in various venues. Four members have already recertified for 2023.

This was the first class to do online evaluations of our initial training sessions. This method allowed our chapter to analyze the effectiveness of our initial training sessions to see what has been well received and what we can do to improve the delivery of all the information to our new TMN class members.

Laura Andersen has made it possible to obtain Mid-Coast TMN logos on our personal apparel and products with an approved vendor here in Rockport. Now, she is helping chapter members in our other counties to locate vendors to be approved near them at various locations. Please contact Laura if you want to get a vendor to be a local source in your county.

Amy Nowlin will officially become the class representative at the July Board of Directors Meeting with Laura as a consultant.

May Meeting Attendance

Members present: Carla (Rinche) Belaire, Allan Berger, Brigid Berger, Bill Burge, Barbara (Mathis) Carr, Mary Carr, Ele Chew, Laura Clark, David Clark, Denise Crane, Rusty Crane, Bob Cunningham, Steve Ferguson, Bob Friedrichs, Kate Geer-Miller, Judy Goodner, Ken Goodner, Debbie Griffith, Cindy Hanifen, Patrick Hartigan, Julie Hejducek, Mike Hejducek, Kris Kirkwood, Ray Kirkwood, Debbie Kucera, Steve Marwitz, Janet McCrea, Jeremy Miller, Debbie Minns, Diane Pletcher, Janet Price, Sally Scroggs, Gregg Simmons, Phil Stapleton, Rebecca Stapleton, Linda Swickheimer, Barbara Threatt, Gary Ward, D'Ann Williams, Vickie Wilson. Guest: Linda Boxberger and Charlie Belaire

Awards:

Initial Certification enamel dragonfly & plaque—Mary Ann Carr, Rhett Parker, Janie Waghorne. Not present to receive awards: Sally Crofutt, Larry Green, Frank Hayes. Tracy Bennett

Milestone Awards—

250-hour bronze dragonfly: Laura Andersen, Linda Swickheimer, Debbie Minns, Janet McCrea, Vickie Wilson. Not present: Carla Haskett

Polished Silver 2500-Hour Milestone Pin—Janet Price

Recertification Pins

2021 Side-Oats—not present: Donna Fiarkoski, Carla Haskett

2022 Lightning Whelk—Rachel Cheyne, Greg Nelson, Phil Stapleton, Rebecca Stapleton, Vickie Wilson. Not present to receive awards: Karen Barton, Karen Benson, Rebecca Bootzin, Laura Clark, Monica Clark, Maureen Crocker, Donna Fiarkoski, Carla Haskett

2023 TX Ecoregions—Laura Andersen, Donna Bailey, Claire Barnhart, Brigid Berger, Bill Burge, Bob Cunningham, Debra Dahms-Nelson, Cynthia Hanifen, Patrick Hartigan, Julie Hejducek, Mike Hejducek, Kris Kirkwood, Ray Kirkwood, Wilfred Korth, Steve Marwitz, Janet McCrea. Not present: Charla Ingalls, Robyn Savage, Sally Scroggs, Greg Simmons, Liz Smith, Janie von Dohlen

Service against All Odds through Grit and Distance pin—Bob Friedrichs, Debbie Kucera, Vicki Wilson. Not present: Karen Benson, James Coquat, Claudia Dorn, Donna Fiarkoski, Kim Gaddy, Mark Gaddy, Carla Haskett, Larry Henneke, Melanie Konarik, Robyn Savage, Neli Spurrell.