



Tree NOTES

CROSS TIMBERS URBAN FORESTRY COUNCIL ♦ 4200 SOUTH FREEWAY, SUITE 2200 ♦ FORT WORTH ♦ TEXAS ♦ 76115-1499

MISSION: TO PROMOTE PROGRAMS IN THE REGION TO INCREASE INTEREST IN URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY

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ARLINGTON MAYOR, DR. ROBERT CLUCK TALKS ABOUT TREES

Editor's Note: In this issue, we are celebrating the people who make up the 17-county Cross Timbers region, not only who we are, but also what we do. Throughout these pages, you will see evidence of our travels (pp. 4, 11), our creative efforts through story and poem (pp. 7-9), our legacies (pp. 1, 5-6) and the fruits of our labor (pp. 2-3, 10) as we daily work to fulfill our mission "to promote programs in the region to increase interest in urban and community forestry."

In light of this, the CTUFC Board of Directors made the decision at the August 2007 meeting to periodically feature prominent leaders throughout the region whom support urban forestry efforts. Our series begins with Arlington Mayor, Dr. Robert Cluck, who graciously sat down last December and talked to CTUFC member Stacy Baldwin.

What does your city do to promote trees?

"I am devoted to trees in Arlington. We have recently developed a new forestry program called L.E.A.F. (Let's Enhance Arlington's Forest). Through our first call for projects, we planted around 500 trees and have secured an annual contribution of \$30,000.00 to the program through our title sponsor Oncor Electric Delivery.

We also have a tree farm where we grow trees for our City and are working on rolling out a Forestry Camp for youth this summer.

The City is committed to protecting our local wildlife and birds. Arlington's Arbor Day celebration also incorporates the wildlife programs initiated by the City. These programs focus on wildlife that you may see in and around our park system. Arbor Day also has an adventure race component to tie in the recreational activities our excellent park system has to offer. Last year's race had almost 100 participants for the first year and was very well received by the community.

As you can see, trees, our environment and the health of our citizens are high priorities to us as a City."



(interview continued on page 6)



CTUFC

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Southlake Tightens Tree Ordinance

The City of Southlake recently amended its Tree Preservation Ordinance in November of last year. The primary purpose for the amendment was to comply with the National Arbor Day Foundation's requirements regarding the City's responsibility for the administration of public trees and to remain eligible for the Tree City USA certification currently held by the City.

The most crucial amendment requires that the approved tree conservation plan and tree protection details be posted on all construction sites. Additionally, the required tree protection must be installed and inspected prior to the issuance of a building permit or earth disturbance permit.

Contractors and builders pulling permits must now apply for two types of permits, the building permit and a tree inspection permit, on all construction sites where trees are present. The permit applicant must then install all required tree protection on the construction site and call for a tree protection inspection, prior to any construction activity on the site. Once the site has been inspected for the proper tree protection and required signage, the permit can be released and on-site construction may begin.

Other amendments to the City's ordinance also included the addition of pruning standards and the requirement that all proposed plumbing and trenching on construction sites be shown on submitted tree conservation plans.

~ *Article and photos provided courtesy of Keith Martin, Landscape Administrator, City of Southlake*



As of November 2007, the City of Southlake now requires that tree conservation plans and tree protection details be posted on all construction sites.

4-H Forestry Goes Urban

"I pledge, my head to clear thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service, my health to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world."

If you recognize this pledge then you were most likely involved in 4-H. You may have raised chickens, goats or pigs and showed them at the fair or livestock show. Many of you may be surprised to discover that 4-H members also learn public speaking, photography, computer skills, shooting sports, veterinary science, forestry and much more.

The 4-H Forestry program focuses on 6 areas: tree identification, forest evaluation, tree measurement, compass orienteering, and insect and disease identification. Members form competition teams to showcase their skills and earn scholarships.

Eagle Mountain 4-H Leader Kristoffer Rasmussen served as the guest speaker at the CTUFC December meeting and talked in-depth about the 4-H Forestry Program. The Council was quite responsive to and inquisitive about the 4-H Forestry Project. 4-H is designed to give leaders great flexibility for designing and promoting forestry applicable to the club's geographic location. Lots of great ideas for shaping this program to focus on urban forestry were exchanged at the meeting.

Working together we can all help, as the 4-H motto says, "To Make the Best Better."

If you would like to become involved with 4-H in the Forestry Project or other areas, please contact Kristoffer Rasmussen, verenotscared@aol.com, 817-237-5304.

~ *Submitted by Kristoffer Rasmussen, Eagle Mountain 4-H Leader*



Around The Region!

14th ANNUAL NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS URBAN FORESTRY CONFERENCE

February 8, 2008

Ruthe Jackson Center, Grand Prairie, TX

Register now for the 14th Annual North Central Texas Urban Forestry Conference on February 8th in Grand Prairie.

In addition to a great lineup of speakers, the workshop presents a wonderful opportunity to network with numerous



A large audience gathered to hear Dr. Jason Grabosky speak about structural soils at the 2006 North Central Texas Urban Forestry Conference. Dr. Grabosky will again be the keynote speaker at the upcoming February 2008 Conference. He will be discussing tree root and pavement conflicts.

tree care professionals from around the region. ISA, TNLA, TDA and SAF CEUs will be offered. The \$60 registration fee includes lunch. Visit

www.tbufc.org for more info.

Conference Schedule

7:30—9:00	Registration
9:00—10:30	Root and Pavement Conflicts, Part 1 Dr. Jason Grabosky, Rutgers University
10:30—10:45	Break
10:45—11:45	Urban Pest Management Dr. Mike Merchant, TX AgriLife Extension
11:45—1:00	Awards Luncheon, Raffle and Silent Auction
1:00—2:00	What Killed the Tree: Disease or Environmental Factors? Dr. Kevin Ong, TX AgriLife Extension
2:00—2:15	Break
2:15—3:45	Root and Pavement Conflicts, Part 2 Dr. Jason Grabosky, Rutgers University

Online registration available through PayPal at:
www.tbufc.org/events/workshop/workshop2008.html

Citizen Foresters...

...In Action!

What do Arlington, Weatherford and Fort Worth all have in common besides their easy access from I-20?

All three cities are currently benefiting from the services provided by dedicated Citizen Forester volunteers.

In Arlington, for example, Citizen Foresters will plant and prune native trees this February in the Molly Hollar Wildscape at Veterans Park.

In Fort Worth, two dedicated volunteers have helped keep newly planted trees along Evans Ave. alive by faithfully using sump pumps to drain tree wells that stand in water for long periods of time after rain.

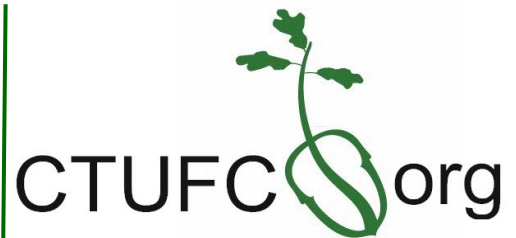
At last count, two volunteers have successfully inventoried the trees in five Weatherford city parks

Recruit someone today, if your city or town doesn't already have the help of these trained volunteers. Your public trees are counting on you!



With the help of trained Citizen Forester volunteers, the cities of Weatherford and Fort Worth are working to complete tree inventories of local parks.

~ Submitted by Melanie Migura, Forester, City of Fort Worth



A Special Thanks To Our Newsletter Contributors...

Stacy Baldwin, Courtney Blevins, Steven Chamblee, Emily Galpin, Keith Martin, Melanie Migura, Joe Moore, National Park Service Historic Photograph Collection, Harold Pitchford, Kristoffer Rasmussen, Tiffany Sherich and Michelle Villafranca

This Issue Of TreeNOTES Isn't Possible Without Them!

Strong Partners Make For Healthy Urban Forests



The unauthorized felling of a tree during Hammurabi's reign (1795-1750 BC) could result in death, according to a presenter at the Partners in Community Forestry National Conference. Apparently, the tree ordinance is not a new concept. Even the ancients were prolific consumers, prolific producers, and bad conservers. There are many recorded losses of trees for the purposes of fortressing, transporting, smelting, weaponizing, sheltering, warming, and cooking.

The idea that green infrastructure is important to quality of life is also not a new concept. The same presenter hinted that the decline of Rome may very well have been hastened by deforestation. Maybe, just maybe, the tide is turning just a little – even if it has taken the fear of climate change to alert even large corporations to the already well-researched benefits of trees, including our urban forests. Perhaps, according to other presenters, we can ride that tide to advantage of our urban forests.

Thanks to registration fee scholarships from the Alliance for Community Trees (ACT) in partnership with the Home Depot Foundation and the Cross Timbers Urban Forestry Council (CTUFC), I was able to attend the ACT Annual Meeting, National NeighborWoods Academy, and the Partners in Community Forestry National Conference in Baltimore this past November.

I learned a lot! With many speakers on many topics, three ideas especially stood out: greening our communities is the healthy choice for all aspects of the environment including the human element; educating how to plant and care for trees is critical to making sure the “right tree is planted in the right place in the right way”; and partnerships in and beyond “borders” are and will be critical to getting the word out that urban forests critically affect our communities economically, environmentally, and socially.

Cross Timber Urban Forestry Council Board Member, Emily Galpin, received national recognition in November from the Washington, DC-based Alliance for Community Trees (ACT), a nonprofit urban forestry organization.

Galpin received the organization's NeighborWoods Academy Scholarship donated by the Home Depot foundation, the leader in investing in nonprofit organizations that are in the business of building better communities through urban forestry.

Galpin also received a scholarship from CTUFC for the registration fee for the Partners in Community Forestry National Conference held in Baltimore.

Humans and trees have a long history. Most, though not all, people appreciate trees for reasons which include intangibles such as quality of life, symbolism, history, personal connection, and inherent love.

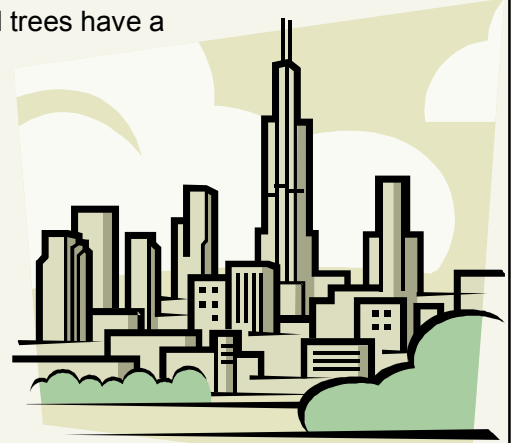
There really are some people who don't like trees: trees are too tall, too messy, too boring, too in the way, too much a part of the natural world, too unsafe. There has been and continues to be research on the social impact of landscapes. Such studies include the effects of green landscaping on ADHD symptoms and self-discipline for girls as well as inner city issues of crime, domestic violence, and the development of stronger neighborhoods.

Two websites to check out for more information are the Landscape and Human Health Laboratory at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign – www.lhhl.uiuc.edu - and Human Dimensions of Urban Forestry and Urban Green, University of Washington - www.cfr.washington.edu/research.envmind.

A community forest is not an amenity; it is a public health concern. According to statistics presented, 50% of the world's population lives in an urban environment. In the United States, it is 75%; in Europe, 80%. The urbanization of the globe represents a profound change in cultural perceptions about the natural environment which have profound social impacts.

Cities develop new microclimates and play pivotal roles in the challenge of global climate change. A number of communities including New York City, Baltimore, Denver and Indianapolis, presented their tree planting campaigns. These campaigns take a great deal of planning and support from the top political leader to the individual citizen.

They also take a great deal of education. Planting a million trees without information on future care can produce a lot of dead trees. We need to create a deep sense of stewardship with a strong management component as well as an understanding that the green infrastructure,



(continued on page 6)

How One Man's Gold Made A Tree Famous

Originally from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Charles Turner was born on March 15, 1822. He was the son of Judge Robert Turner and Nancy Hames. Charles' dad was the first Judge of Shelby County, Texas, and also one of the men appointed by General Sam Houston to select a place for the Capitol.

Young Charles arrived in Texas in 1839. One year later, through his residence in San Augustine County, the teenager met the requirements of the land grant and was listed in "1840 Citizens of Texas, Volume 1, Land Grants," by Gifford White. Since he was a single man at the time, the amount of land he received was 320 acres.

Although he did not settle in the area until later, Turner first came to Fort Worth in either 1848 or 1849. On June 6, 1849, according to records copied from The Caron Withers Snyder Collection, Charles was one of five soldiers sent out from Johnson's Station to locate a site for a fort. The location of present day Fort Worth was selected.

Charles became known as a trader and, with his son-in-law, had general merchandise stores along a train route which ran from Bremond to Kosse, Texas.

According to the Famous Trees of Texas website maintained by the Texas Forest Service, when the Civil War broke out, Charles opposed the secession of Texas from the Union. Once the state voted to secede, however, he stood with the majority decision, going so far as to organize a company of young men, the Tarrant County Hussars, at his own expense.

When the Confederacy demanded that its citizens exchange their gold for Confederate notes, however, Turner disobeyed the direct order, and with the help of a trusted slave, buried what was believed to be thousands of dollars worth of gold under an oak tree growing near the area where he had established the family home.

During Reconstruction, the gold provided critical financial aid to Fort Worth. Not only did

Turner Oak a Bicentennial Tree because it was documented to be alive at the time of the signing of the US Constitution in 1787.

Directions to the Turner Oak:

Listed as one of the Famous Trees of Texas by the Texas Forest Service, the Turner Oak grows inside the Greenwood Cemetery, 3100 White Settlement Road, Fort Worth, TX. The tree is located just inside the entrance where the four horses are, about 200 yards from the gate in the middle of a round median. A bronze marker set in granite has been placed near the tree by the Daughters of the American Revolution.



Sources:

The TEXGenWeb Project.

www.rootsweb.com/%7Etxgenweb/index.htm which contains a write up (www.rootsweb.com/~txtarran/citizens/c_turner.htm) on Charles Turner that has been copied from the Caron Withers Snyder Collection, from the Collection of Josephine Harvelia Turner Hirshfield Ryan Genealogical Papers.

Famous Trees of Texas, Texas Forest Service, famoustreesoftexas.tamu.edu/default.aspx

~ Article and photos submitted by Melanie Migura, Forester, City of Fort Worth



the once buried treasure serve as a stabilizing influence on the city's economy, it was also used to pay off debt owned to Northern creditors.

Turner died on October 31, 1873, at the age of 51, and is buried in Fort Worth, Texas. The tree became known as the Turner Oak. The International Society of Arboriculture has since designated the

Strong Partners...(continued from page 4)

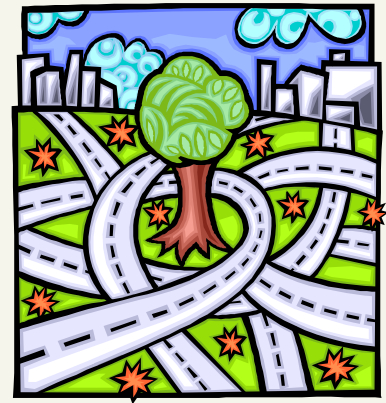
including watersheds, cross our man-made boundaries. Perhaps we need to reposition how we present “bioutility” benefits.

Stewardship must be embedded into what may have been the most critical topic and one that must incorporate all the messages: the importance of partnerships. The ACT Annual Meeting and the National Conference brought together many national partners: Home Depot Foundation, Arbor Day Foundation, International Society of Arboriculture, USDA Forest Service, National Association of State Foresters, American Planning Association, National Conference of Home Builders, Keep America Beautiful, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the Center for Watershed Protection, the Center for Park Excellence, the Trust for Public Land, and the Chicago Climate Exchange.

While all these partners are not necessarily directly involved in urban forestry, they do recognize its importance and the impact their organizations can make. Wouldn't it be great to have the same thing happen here locally? Somewhere in the 17-county area that CTUFC represents, there are landscape architects, designers, planners, developers, engineers, architects, community tree advocates, public health professionals, other urban foresters, more city arborists/foresters, local beautification organizations, nonprofit organizations, park and recreation professionals, and utility operators who want to ensure the sustaining of our urban forests. Think of what could happen if these individuals, representatives of their respective organizations joined together with CTUFC!

The aforementioned presenter wistfully indicated (jokingly, of course) that perhaps it was too bad that the Hammurabi tree code was no longer used. However, we are reminded that we need to continue to “think outside the bark” and city limits should not be limiting. We do all live downstream. My thanks again to CTUFC, ACT, and the Home Depot Foundation for the conference opportunity.

~ Article written by Emily Galpin, CTUFC Director



Interview With Arlington's Mayor Cluck (continued from front cover)

Does Arlington have a tree inventory?

“Yes we do. We have new GIS inventory equipment to integrate into the City's ArcMap software program. Right now we are updating our median tree inventory and then we will move on to the inventory of trees at our municipal buildings. Once those tasks are completed we will begin the huge task of inventorying park trees.”

What is your favorite tree and why?

“My favorite tree would have to be old oak trees. They live a long time and are ancient. Sometimes when I'm around those old trees I like to imagine all the things that tree has experienced, the history that has taken place under their branches.”

What is your favorite memory of a tree?

“Growing up, when I was around 7 or 8 years old, we built a tree house and I used to love to play in that tree house. I would spend almost all summer up there reading and playing. I have the fondest memories from that tree.”

What is the legacy you would like to leave behind (as it relates to trees)?

“I would like to leave a deeply forested community made up of hundreds of thousands of trees and a City that is environmentally conscience. In my term as Mayor I would like to have a big impact on reducing heat islands within the City.”

If you were a tree, what tree would you be?

“I would like to be an old oak tree. Not that I want to be old, but those old oak trees have been around through hundreds of years, and that would be nice to have so many memories.”

~ Interview and photo submitted by Stacy Baldwin, Urban Forestry and Land Manager, City of Arlington

A World Without Trees

I once had a dream
About a world without trees.

There were no green things
As far as I could see.

It was time to start my day;
My Mom told me to get up.

I ate my pancake sadly
Because there was no maple syrup.

I sat on plastic furniture
Because there was no wood.

I played on my plastic piano,
But it wasn't very good.

It really hurt my lungs to breathe.
There were no trees to clean the air.

I looked out of my window,
There was erosion *everywhere!*

I went out in my yard one day
Just to pass the time.
There were no leaves to jump in,
Nor big, tall trees to climb.

There were no sounds
Of singing birds,
Or little chipmunks
To be heard.

No soft, sweet fragrance
Filled the air
From blossoming trees
Which should've been there.

I found no shady place
To read my book;
No weeping willows
By a shady brook.

I came in thirsty and hungry,
But Mom said with a sigh,
"I'm sorry, there's no lemonade,
And I can't make apple pie."

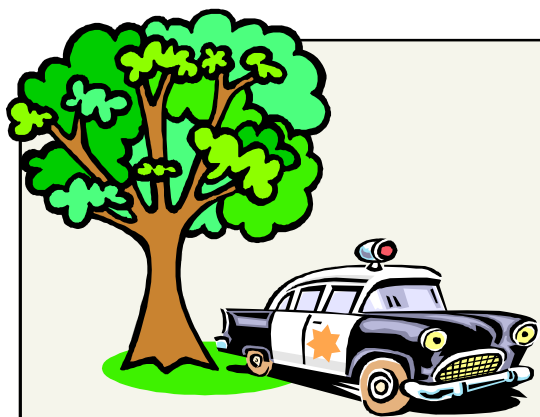
There was no wood for the fireplace,
No nuts for little squirrels,
No paper for me to write on,
No tree houses for little girls.

I woke up from my horrible dream
To the sound of humming bees.
How very thankful I was when I saw
This beautiful world filled with trees!

~ Poem written by Tiffany Scherich as a 4th grader from Silver Lake Elementary, Grapevine, Texas, in February 1996. Submitted by Joe Moore, City of Grapevine and reprinted with the author's permission.



Another Day in the Life of the Tree Police



It was another typical sultry, mid-summer morning. I was headed to the office and another day of phone calls with questions ranging from a citizen wanting to know if a Siberian Elm can grow in Siberia, then why can't it grow here, to a fisherman wanting to know when the next trout release on the Trinity River was scheduled. The same old routine. I grabbed a cup of yesterday's coffee and a day-old doughnut and headed to the microwave. Before I could set the time, the phone rang. It was Mr. Brown. Apparently Mr. Brown had taken an unfamiliar route to the drugstore that morning and had almost broadsided another vehicle because he couldn't see a stop sign. It seems that the stop sign was covered by limbs and leaves from a nearby tree. He then launched into a twenty minute discussion on Mrs. Brown's allergies and that the cottonwoods around town were only making it worse and that's the reason he was on his way to the drugstore to pick up a prescription and if the streets weren't in such bad condition he wouldn't have had to take this route in the first place. I calmed Mr. Brown down and told him we were on our way. I took one bite of the doughnut and washed it down with cold java. I hollered to Branch Detective, Hack O'Berry, "Let's go, Hack. We've got a possible code violation on the East side of town." Hack grabbed a handful of tickets and we headed out the door.

Maybe it was the heat or the heavy workload we were under, but I didn't notice we were entering a school zone. Luckily, I had enough presence of mind to slow down. Then it happened. A small child stepped from behind a low-growing limb directly into the path of our oncoming vehicle. I slammed on the brakes, swerved and narrowly missed the youngster. I screamed at Hack, "Didn't you see that, man! I

almost hit that kid because of a low hanging limb obstructing the sidewalk. Come on, Hack, wake up! Get with the program! Write a ticket for that hazard!"

I shouldn't have been so hard on Detective O'Berry. He had been up all night clearing a residential street of broken limbs. A delivery truck full of brew, on its way to a fraternity party made a wrong turn and knocked down several limbs that were growing below the fourteen foot height restriction above the street. Fortunately, Hack was able to clear the street before any emergency vehicles had to use this route. I promised myself I would apologize to him later.

"As I reached for the knob, the door opened and there she was, a willowy blond with eyes greener than the newly formed leaves of a Southern Magnolia. You could have knocked me over with a pine bough!"

At last, we arrived at the location of Mr. Brown's reported offense and discovered a Bradford Pear growing directly in front of a stop sign and in the open space easement, an obvious violation of code 33-6. I grabbed a door hanger, noted the violation and walked slowly to the front door. As I reached for the knob, the door opened and there she was, a willowy blond with eyes greener than the newly formed leaves of a Southern Magnolia. You could

have knocked me over with a pine bough! It was Twiggly Pistache, a former protégé of mine who had given up the long hours and hard work of the forestry office to work as a landscape consultant for an exclusive developer on the city's North side.

"Twiggly," I stammered, "long time no see." I could tell by the look in her eyes that she knew why I was there. That look sure didn't make it any easier when I had to explain the violation. "Twiggly, of all the people, you should know better than to do something like this."

(continued on page 9)





Another Day in the Life of the Tree Police

(cont'd. from page 8)

"Look," she said with an air of arrogance, "I know you tree dicks can't cover the whole town. I just figured you wouldn't catch me. I guess I was wrong."

"Dead wrong. We'll have a crew out tomorrow to remove the tree," I replied.

Now her whole demeanor suddenly changed. Maybe she remembered those early days as tree cadets, planting trees all over the city, always taking care to select sites that didn't interfere with utilities or traffic control devices. Those were the days when the urban forest was young and healthy. Now it was old and in decline. To make matters worse, the limited staff was reduced to taking care of emergency situations only. Quite possibly, that's why she chose to leave when she did.

It was then she took my hand and softly said, "I'm sorry H.P., I'll have my yard crew remove it today. Come inside and I'll fix you something cool to drink. I've got some lovely driftwood sculptures I picked up in Mexico that I'd like to show you."

I was contemplating the offer when the squawking voice of the dispatcher came on the mobile unit with a call about a tree covering a street light. I thought about how rough I'd been on Detective Hack O'Berry this morning and knew I couldn't send him out on this call alone.

I turned to Twiggy and forced out an abrupt, "Sorry. I'll have to take a rain check. Maybe some other time."

As I walked back to the truck I tried to talk myself out of leaving. "What's one more hazard," I mused, "I deserve a little time off." But then I thought about why I had joined the force. It wasn't to feel sorry for myself. It was to protect the forest from the public and the public from the forest. Who knows, maybe someday even I'd have kids, and those kids would walk to school just like that child this morning... Suddenly, everything was clear again. I shook Hack awake and sped off to the next call.

~ Reprint of a story written by Harold Pitchford, former City Forester and current Assistant Director for the City of Fort Worth Parks and Community Services Department. Names have been changed to protect the innocent.



See Your Company's Name In Lights!

All CTUFC memberships at the **SPONSOR LEVEL** receive a quarter page ad in each issue of TreeNOTES

Send In Your Membership Form Today!
(printed on the outside back cover)

Join the Ranks of Citizen Forester!

- Become skilled at planting, pruning, and maintaining your trees
- Gain knowledge about managing trees in urban settings
- Get involved and help your community take care of its trees

Classes forming now!

Dates: 6 Wednesdays in 2008:

Jan 30, Feb 20, Mar 19,
Apr 16, Apr 30, May 21

Times: 9 a.m. — 4 p.m.

Location: Forth Worth, Specific sites TBA



**For more information,
Call 817-871-5739**

Turn Your Property Into A Winter Wonderland

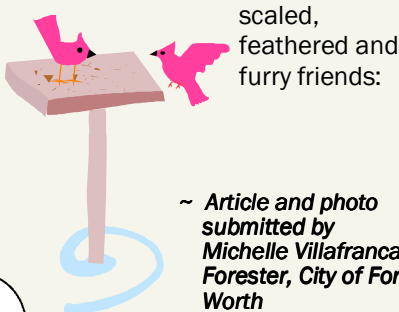


What do you do in the winter for food and shelter? Does your lifestyle and routine also change in winter? If so, you have something in common with our Cross Timbers resident and migratory wildlife.

In the winter, food and shelter sources are scarce for our local critters. Berries, seeds, foliage, nectar, pollen, and insects have mostly disappeared for the cold season. With most of the foliage missing, there are fewer places to seek shelter from predators and inclement weather.

What can you do to make life easier for winter wildlife? Most wildlife is not attracted to a well-manicured lawn. In fact, wildlife such as amphibians, reptiles, small mammals, and migrating songbirds are less likely to visit manicured and chemical-laden yards.

Here are some suggestions for providing winter habitat for our



~ Article and photo submitted by Michelle Villafranca, Forester, City of Fort Worth

Food

- Let wildflowers and grasses seed out and leave them standing over the winter to provide a seed source for foraging
- What you consider a “weed” may be the most important food source for some of our wildlife
- Put bird feeders out
- Provide water sources

Shelter

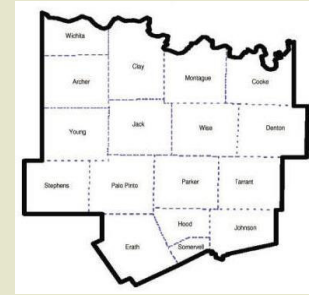
- Create brush piles to provide shelter
- Maintain native understory which provides vertical habitat structure
- Plant a tree (deciduous or evergreen). An evergreen tree such as Eastern Red Cedar (ERC) is a great winter habitat component. The female ERC provides “berries” (actually cones) and the evergreen growth provides dense shelter for birds and small mammals.
- Provide some open areas, some wooded areas, water and nesting areas
- Try to reduce the impact of the much loved, non-native, stealthy predator...the housecat. Clip nails, put bells on its collar, and keep the cat indoors some of the time.
- Allow a few dead trees to remain standing - these provide nesting for a variety of birds and small mammals
- Reduce or eliminate the use of chemicals on your property

Native trees, understory and herbaceous cover plants provide the optimal food and shelter for our wildlife.

To learn more about backyard habitats, visit these two websites:

- <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/backyard/> and
- <http://www.nwf.org/backyard/>

What's going on in your neck of the woods?



TREENOTES wants to hear from you!

e-mail your comments, suggestions and newsletter articles to: melanie.migura@fortworthgov.org

The Cross Timbers: A Natural Wonder



The Cross Timbers: A Natural Wonder traveling exhibit is available at no cost to municipalities, schools, libraries, town halls and other venues to educate citizens about the importance of the Cross Timbers ecosystem.

For more information or to schedule the exhibit for your area, contact Emily Galpin at: galpin@charter.net

got empties?

Recycle your old cell phones and used print cartridges by donating them to the CTUFC

For more information, call: Melinda Adams, 817-871-5705





diversions and excursions...

Wawona Tunnel Tree

I'll never forget my child-like enthusiasm when I finally drove into Yosemite National Park. I stopped at the gate, paid my fee, and eagerly asked directions to the tree with the giant hole in it. "Can you still drive through it?" (I was driving a Toyota Tercel, so I figured I was *In Like Flint*.)

She broke my heart when she said, "Oh, I'm sorry. The Wawona Tunnel Tree fell in a storm back in 1968." Bummer.

Well, my spirits recovered quickly due to the incredible sights, sounds, smells, and magic that is Yosemite, and soon I was laughing out loud while winding down the little road past huge specimens of Ponderosa and Lodgepole Pine, Douglasfir, and all that is great and grand. The trees were so large that I wondered how I would ever notice a Giant Sequoia among them. Onward I went, like a tiny bug coursing his way through a medieval forest, when suddenly, it appeared over a slight ridgeline deep in the woods. The trunk was insanely huge and I began to hear strange buzz-humming noises (not unlike the sound made by a Star Wars lightsabre upon activation).



Steven Chamblee stands to the left (near the top of the tunnel cut) of the Wawona Tunnel Tree in the late 1980s.

I tried to keep the car on the road (even at 15mph, I was about to wreck from gawking), but finally just pulled over and got out to see it. As I walked up toward the ridge, I discovered that I was actually looking at the trunk about eighty feet into the air, as it grew from a spot *way down there* over the ridge. Thank God no one was around to witness my laughing dancefest which culminated in a sudden slammed door feeling of total reverence. I tip-toed back to my car, trying not to make even the slightest sound with my steps, lest I disrupt the purity of Nature's Sanctuary.

The lightsabre sounds continued as I drove along slowly until my eyes almost fell out of my head. THERE IT WAS! A hundred feet up the road is THE Wawona Tunnel Tree! Was the Park Ranger out of her mind?!? There it is! Right freakin' there! As I got closer, I realized the tree had indeed fallen... well, sort of. Here in this mystical world of giants, where everything real is somehow not so as well, I stood before the famous tree I had idolized since youth and basked in the glow of her glory. It didn't matter that she didn't look exactly the way I had seen in the photos; she was beautiful to me and fulfilled all of my expectations. I walked and then drove back and forth through her many times, took a few photos and hugged her, quietly communing of all of the other souls who had "worshipped" at her feet over the centuries.

The plain truth is that the Wawona Tunnel Tree did indeed fall during the winter of '68-'69. What the Park Ranger didn't mention is that the stump remained and is itself intact... and about fifty feet tall!

~ Tree story submitted by Steven L. Chamblee, Chief Horticulturist, Chandor Gardens, City of Weatherford

Editor's Note: Located in the Mariposa Grove of Yosemite National Park, the Wawona Tunnel Tree stood over 225 feet tall and was tunneled in 1881 as a tourist attraction. This now fallen giant was estimated to be 2100-2300 years old when it fell during the winter due to snow, wet soil, and the tunnel. Judging from current website photos, the tree is still present in the park but now rests fully on its side. Tunneling practices have stopped in order to preserve the existing trees.

Almost two decades have passed since Steven Chamblee made this fantastic road trip to Yosemite National Park. One thing is for sure. While hair and clothing styles have come and gone and come again, our love affair with the giant sequoia trees remains the same. If you've never seen them, and even if you have, consider planning a trip to either Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Park and/or Yosemite National Park.

E-mail your submissions for future "diversions and excursions..." to Melanie.Migura@fortworthgov.org



The Wawona Tunnel Tree as photographed around the year 1929. Photographer: Henry G. Peabody. Photo courtesy of National Park Service Historic Photograph Collection.

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