

Fredericksburg Nature Notes



Newsletter of the Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center

June, 2024 Volume 5 Number 6

<http://fredericksburgnaturecenter.com>

Editor's Musings: **Lonnie Childs**

Dear Friends of the Fredericksburg Nature Center,

On May 21st, FFNC received enthusiastic support from the Fredericksburg City Council via a unanimous vote in support of our Interpretive Center project. This represents the achievement of a huge milestone in our journey towards building a facility and offering expanded education programs. We hope to get our supporters equally excited, so read all about it in this newsletter and consider how you might support us.

On the programming side, are you looking for some summer activities for you children or grandchildren? We will host a Snakes Alive program in July which is always a hit with the kids. And adding to that, we are offering a new Summer Story Time program weekly in an outdoor classroom setting at the Pollinator Garden where kids will enjoy a story followed by a craft activity and a walk in the garden. Our Educational committee volunteers are dedicated to offering more and better programs for our budding preservationists, so please tell them thanks for their hard work.

Our weather seems to think that it is already July, but you can still enjoy FNC with an early morning hike on the trails or a stroll in the Pollinator Garden. Don't hunker down in the house yet for the summer, do some early morning nature bathing to cool off your spirits!

Happy Nature Trails!

Lonnie

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Snakes Alive!

Sponsored By:

Friends of the Fredericksburg Nature Center

Friday, July 19, 2024 - 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.

AgriLife Extension Office

38 Business Court - Fredericksburg

Guest Speaker: Kory Perlichek
Texas Parks & Wildlife

RSVP to: gwaggener@flow-apps.com

Approved for 1.5 hours of TMN Advanced Training Credit

Snakes Alive! What a great SUMMER NATURE SERIES program the Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center has lined up for you.

Kory Perlichek, Veteran Wildlife Biologist of 19 years for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and well-known speaker on snakes, will present a program that is geared towards both adults and children. His talk will focus on snake safety and identification, and YOU GUESSED IT - He is bringing LIVE SNAKES!! AND the audience will be able to handle them (they are non-venomous, of course). Immediately following Kory's presentation, any young person in attendance (or young at heart) will be able to make their own snake to take home.

Hurry up and reserve your spot for this educational and fun summer nature series workshop program by emailing Gracie at gwaggener@flow-apps.com



"Not all classrooms have four walls."

Margaret McMillan

New Summer Programming for our Youth

FREDERICKSBURG
NATURE CENTER

Summer Story Time

Join us for a half hour of fun for littles where we will dive into nature stories, followed by crafts, games, and/or exploring

TUESDAYS 9:45-10:15AM
LOCATED AT THE POLLINATOR GARDEN
● LADY BIRD JOHNSON MUNICIPAL PARK (NEXT TO THE POOL)

Great for kids of all ages

98282.02 ****Meet under the big trees next to Pollinator Garden**

For those of you with children looking for a FREE summer activity, **SUMMER STORY TIME AT FNC** is your opportunity. Nature topics will be featured via stories followed by hands-on activities led by FFNC volunteers. If you have older children in swim lessons and need an activity to occupy their younger siblings, here is a chance for them to have fun while engaging in an educational endeavor. Bring them over to the large shade trees adjacent to the Pollinator Garden next to the swimming pool to learn more about the wonders of Mother Nature! No reservation required. Walk-ins welcome.



"There are no seven wonders of the world in the eyes of a child. There are seven million."

Walt Streightiff

Summer Story Time Starts Up in June



On June 11, our second **Summer Story Time** led by volunteer, **Katie Collins**, treated thirteen children to a story and craft activity in the shade of a natural setting. Following that, the kids took a walk through the Pollinator Garden which offers a chance to experience blooms, butterflies, and bumblebees.

We invite you and your child or grandchild out to FNC where we hope to mint the land stewards of tomorrow who will preserve our natural resources. It all starts with a

Photos by Gracie Waggener





OUR MISSION STATEMENT: *“To enhance, protect and interpret the natural ecosystems of the Texas hill country while providing educational and quality of life opportunities for members of the community and visitors.”*

FFNC Volunteers at Work



Recent visitors to FNC might have noticed a distinct lean to our Entrance Kiosk as one leg had begun to rot and slowly sink towards China. A crew of **Gordon Downey, Billy Guin, Ken Dexter, Lonnie Childs, and Tom Hynes** created a sled-like structure to move the kiosk about 5 feet and fasten it to newly installed pipe uprights for a more secure connection with Mother Earth. No more cocking your head to one side to read the kiosk content!

Gordon Downey, Billy Guin, Ken Dexter



Fun Tuesdays at FNC

Typical tasks involve **gardening skills** and **trail maintenance**, but no experience is necessary. Use it as a learning opportunity. Work in whatever area you choose for as long as you choose. We work some and have a lot of fun outside in the beauty of nature. It's good exercise for the body and great therapy for the soul. If you would like to join us at the park, we would love to have you!

Work sessions are typically scheduled for Tuesdays at 8:30am. We shorten our work period in summer to avoid heat exhaustion!

Contact Gracie Waggener at gwaggener@flow-apps.com to receive a weekly email notification about scheduled work tasks for the coming week.



“...remember it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.” (and illegal!)

Atticus Finch, *To Kill a Mockingbird*

Our Texas State Bird is not the Friendly Type!



The scientific name of the **Northern Mockingbird** is *Mimus polyglottos* in recognition of its ability to mimic other sounds & accumulate up to 200 songs in a lifetime. Males & specifically unmated males ceaselessly sing all day long in to the night & even offer a unique spring & fall repertoire. In the 19th C. they were sold & kept in cages as songbirds.

Our Texas state motto is **Friendship**, but that criteria was not applied when choosing our state bird. Northern Mockingbirds are aggressive year round & will forcefully protect their territory against other males, bird species, cats, dogs, & occasionally the unwitting human.



Are you talking to me?!



Many thanks to Dot Maginot who has graciously offered the use of her beautiful photos for the last couple of years. She captured wonderful sequences of bird behavior, snakes, insects, and of course gorgeous wildflowers. Dot is taking a break from her photographic work at FNC, and we thank her heartily for sharing her work with us.

Photos by Dot Maginot

Two Prickly Residents



Texas Prickly Pear

Opuntia engelmannii
var. *lindheimeri*

Our most common "pear" is a pollen factory that attracts binging insects. The ethereal blooms almost make you forget about those prickly spines.

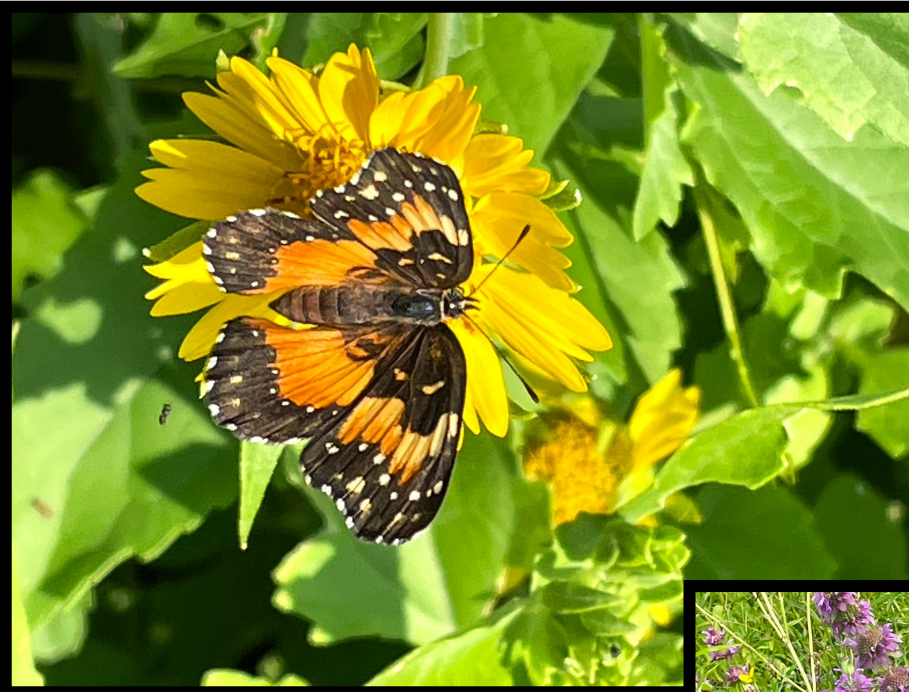
Bigroot or Twist-spine Prickly Pear

Opuntia macrorhiza

A less visible species because it grows in low clumps of 10" height & 3' width amongst grass. What a bloom!



Despite the Heat, Blooms Persist



**Left: Bordered Patch
(*Chlosyne lacinia*) on Cowpen Daisy
(*Verbesina encelioides*)**

**Below: Lemon Beebalm
(*Monarda citriodora*) punctuated
by Yarrow (white) & a lone Texas
Star Daisy (yellow)**

**Below Left: Green Lily or Texas
Feathershank (*Schoenocaulon tex-
anum*)**

Photos by Lonnie Childs





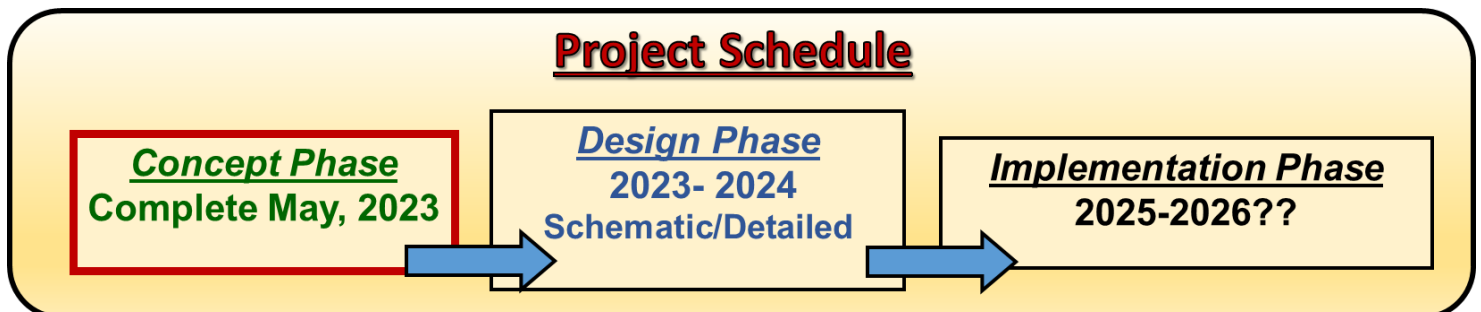
Project Mission: *To provide enhanced environmental learning programming for our youth and citizens in a new community education facility.*

City Council Approves FNC Interpretive Center!

On May 21st, the Fredericksburg City Council unanimously approved a development agreement with the **Friends of Fredericksburg Nature Center (FFNC)** to construct an Interpretive Center facility at Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park. The agreement allows FFNC to move forward with construction and landscaping of the surrounding area funded by donations and grants to be solicited by FFNC. Upon completion of construction, FFNC will turn the building over to the City for ownership, ongoing maintenance, and staffing (Director and Educational Programmer).

FFNC has been steadily moving forward with this project for almost two years from its inception. Initial actions including forming an Advisory Committee consisting of now 21 community members, visiting area nature centers to gather ideas, and soliciting input from community stakeholders. Subsequently, we developed a scope statement encapsulating a set of features to be incorporated into the facility along with educational programming that we would implement. **Our project themes focus on Community, Education, and Nature.** FFNC in conjunction with City staff will provide more extensive programming for our youth with a goal of creating our land stewards of tomorrow dedicated to preserving our natural resources.

In August, 2023, FFNC engaged **Brandon Weinheimer of SKT Architects** as our project architect and **Dunaway** as the landscape architect and subsequently began **Conceptual/Schematic Design** which is nearing completion. The outcome of this phase includes a site plan depicting the building location with landscaping, a building layout, and a visual rendering. The next phase will be **Detailed Design** which will create detailed drawings in preparation for construction. FFNC has also hired **Guido Construction** as our general contractor, and **Scott Clarke of Clarke Design** as our exhibits designer/fabricator/installer.



Project Themes = *Community, Education, and Nature*

FFNC is currently working on organizing our fundraising campaign to support construction of the facility. The initiation of construction will be contingent upon raising the necessary funds, while construction is projected to require approximately one year.



“Community, Education and Nature”

City Council Approves FNC Interpretive Center! (continued)

1. **Meeting Space** - Multi-use, flexible w/ AV capability
2. Educational programming space - **indoor classroom/outdoor pavilion**
3. **Exhibit space** – interior & exterior
4. **Green building features**
5. **Office space**
6. **Ecotourism center**
7. **Catering kitchen**
8. Exterior seating area – **covered porches**
9. **Children’s “natural” playground area**
10. **Pollinator/Native Plant Gardens**
11. **Storage space** for educational programming materials
12. **Bathrooms**

Facility Features

Existing:

- **Adult Workshops**
- **Guided Hikes**
- **Story Walks for children**
- **Summer Story Time for children (new)**

Future:

- **Pre-school programs**
- **Field Day at FNC for schools**
- **Summer day camps & programs for youth**
- **Alliance organizations providing additional programming**

Educational Programs



Vision: To create a community of land stewards preserving our natural resources into the future

City Council Approves FNC Interpretive Center! (continued)

Approval by the City Council for our important community project heightened our excitement and increased commitment on our part to carry this project forward to completion. The facility features along with professional staffing will accelerate our capability to deliver a broader array of high quality environmental learning programs for youth and adults. While our out of town visitors will be welcome to enjoy our facilities and programming, our focus is to give back to the community by providing a community education center.

How can you help FFNC successfully complete this important community project?

- Volunteer to participate on one of our committees
- Donate to the Bill Lindemann Capital Fund
- Tell your friends about it

For more information about how to support this project, contact Lonnie Childs at lonniechilds@utexas.edu or call 512 413-1357.

Look for more information in the coming months as we organize our fundraising campaign.





"...nothing has intrigued me more in the world than orchids."
Charles Darwin

Orchids are Creative at Attracting Pollinators

Nature's News of the Weird

Check out these Monkey Face Orchids

Read all about it. Right Click [HERE](#) & Open Link



Pollinator Garden by Lonnie Childs

What's this Bill?

Bird Drawings & Photos

by Bill Lindemann

In addition to founding FNC & FFNC, Bill was a geologist, birder, botanist, odontologist, writer, photographer, woodcarver, and artist. This feature showcase some of Bill's photos & attendant drawings. Enjoy!



Orchard Oriole

Icterus spurius

They inhabit river edges & woodland margins feeding on nectar, pollen, & insects. Their sweet whistling songs are interspersed with harsh churrs and chatters and can be easily heard due to their volume. Not as showy as their other Oriole cousins, nonetheless, they are handsome birds with their rusty colored breasts.



"We still do not know one thousandth of one percent of what nature has revealed to us."

Albert Einstein



Rose Rose *Pavonia lasiopetala*

Photo by Lonnie Childs

Support FNC in 2024!

Please consider becoming a Member of FFNC.

Our operations are funded by membership fees & donations.

Donate to the Bill Lindemann Capital Fund which will fund our future Interpretive Center project.

Go to <https://fredericksburgnaturecenter.com/>

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Thanks to our supporters and the City of Fredericksburg
for your continued support of the
Friends of the Fredericksburg Nature Center!

A 501(c)(3) corporation

Go to <http://fredericksburgNaturecenter.com/membership> for more information

Comments, questions, or future newsletter submissions can be sent to
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