



Riverside Nature Notes

Dear Members and Friends... by Becky Etzler, Executive Director



Becky Etzler

Time is just flying by this year. It is hard to believe it is already May, but the quickest of glances around the nature center confirms this to be true. The meadow, the butterfly and Carroll Abbott gardens, and everything around and in between are full of color and life. This truly is a glorious time to be outside exploring and enjoying.

Recently, Susan Sander and I had a conversation which directly relates to the description in the previous paragraph. The theme of our discussion centered on words and/or labels and their impact. I could have written, "The grounds are full of color and life." Where this would be correct on a basic level, the term "grounds" does not adequately convey what is present on our property. So, what do we call the physical property? We tossed around several terms: gardens, arboretum, nature trails, habitat, oasis, conservatory, seed bank. Where all of these are partially correct, they still do not truly depict the entirety. A term often used these days that seems to be a pretty good fit is "wildscape." A wildscape is a deliberate landscape plan that provides viable habitat for birds, insects, reptiles and small mammals. Is that not what we have created here? If "wildscape" is to be the adopted term, a few old habits will need to change. For one, Frank Dunlap will now be the chair of the Building & Wildscape committee.

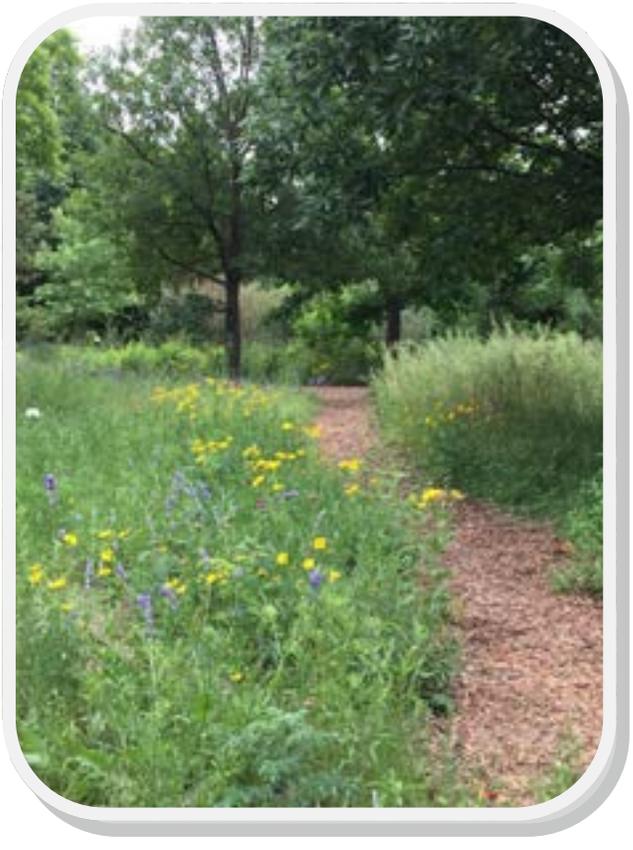
Speaking of changes, the interior renovation of the nature lab is well underway. Our collection of insects, bones, fossils, and nests will have a permanent and organized home. Completion of this project cannot come soon enough. Requests for children's programs keep on coming and it will be nice to utilize the lab as it was intended. This space will play an important role in the expansion of our environmental education program to include the local 2nd graders.

Remember May 4th is the day to GIVE BIG! We are participating in this 24 hour day of giving with a goal of raising \$10,000 for our education program. You can contribute on the 4th by visiting our webpage and clicking on the BigGive link: www.riversidenaturecenter.org. I would like to thank the Kerrville Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas for already donating \$200 to our cause.

I would also like to thank all the volunteers who participated in the Spring Native Plant Sale & Festival. It was a wonderful success, despite the mist and chill. Your time and effort does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. Volunteers are the backbone of Riverside Nature Center and I salute you!!

Please take a few minutes more to read through the rest of the newsletter. There's plenty of interesting and fun news. By the way, I would be interested in hearing your comments and suggestions for a more inclusive and descriptive term for our physical property.

Until next time... *Becky*





RNC.Kerrville@gmail.com

www.riversidenaturecenter.org

830 257-4837

MAY 2017 Riverside Nature Center Upcoming Events/Programs

Riverside Nature Center Children's Activities

Thursday, May 4, 2017

Big Give The more individual donations received the more chance we win awards up to \$5,000 in prizes.

<https://>

www.thebiggivesa.org/organizations/riverside-nature-center



Saturday, May 20, 2017

RNC Bird Walks & Talks 8 - 9:30 a.m.

Meet Paul and Deloris Sellin in front of the Riverside Nature Center to engage in an informative birding experience along the Guadalupe River. Free Activity for All Ages.



Saturday, May 20, 2017

Medicine Bluff Home Tour & Observation of Great Blue Heron rookery

10:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

Rick & Stephanie Ertel share their off-grid home that sits on 56 acres above Johnson Creek near Mountain Home, and a great blue heron rookery. Tours are limited to 20 people and reservations are required. Tickets are \$10 per person, \$15 for a couple, and must be purchased in advance at Riverside Nature Center.



(Much more info on Page 3)





Riverside Nature Center

presents

MEDICINE BLUFF HOME TOUR

and

Observation of Blue Heron Rookery on Johnson Creek



SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2017

10:00 A.M.-11:00 A.M.

1:00 P.M.-2:00 P.M.

Tickets: \$10 per person; \$15 per couple

**Tour sizes are limited & tickets must be purchased by
5:00 p.m. Friday May 19th from Riverside Nature Center.**

Guests are welcome to car pool from Riverside Nature Center

*You are invited to tour this
property with Rick & Stephanie Ertel,
whose off-grid home features:*

- *Passive solar power system*
- *Rainwater catchment water supply*
- *Heat and energy for cooking from wood stoves*
- *Sustainable materials and finishes:*

ICF walls

Reclaimed wood ceilings

Ashe juniper pillars

American Clay plaster wall finishes

Construction was completed in November, 2008 and has served as the Ertels' residence since March 2009.

Architect: Steve Lochte, Lochte Architectural Group, San Francisco, CA

Builder: David Fransik, Sierra Homes, Fredericksburg, TX

For more information, come to or call Riverside Nature Center (830)257-4837

The contemporary-styled Ertel home is situated on 56 acres of land, off Highway 27, 10 miles west of Ingram. It is rated LEED Platinum by the U.S. Green Building Council and was recognized with a Gold Award for the custom/hot climate category in the National Association of Homebuilders Energy Value Home competition in 2010.



**PLANTING
SEEDS for the
FUTURE -**

**BIG GIVE 2017
and
RIVERSIDE NATURE
CENTER**

On Thursday May 4th
Riverside Nature Center
joins in the Big Give
2017 with over 600
other agencies in our
region. It is a great
opportunity to support
efforts to Give Big and
make a difference.



This year we are planting the seeds for the future, literally and figuratively.

Our executive director designed our web page to state the objective and challenge, stating:

**Please help us to take the issue of economy out of the equation and
focus on the issue of ecology!**

<https://www.thebiggivesa.org/organizations/riverside-nature-center>

Your BigGive donation will allow us to expand our educational programming to include all the area 2nd Graders, just as we already do for our KISD 4th Graders. Our plan is to develop a full day of hands-on environmental activities designed for the 7-year-old mind. Local teachers are on board, the issue lies in the funding.

Transportation is expensive and field trips are limited. Unless Riverside Nature Center can offer a “sweet deal” the program has little chance of becoming a reality.

Riverside Nature Center is so much more than a outdoor destination. It is an arboretum. It is a native garden. It is a wildlife sanctuary. It is a dynamic ecosystem. It is a community resource and a classroom for environmental education. Increasing public awareness of our environment and natural resources is our heart and motivation.

The more individual donations received, the more opportunity Riverside Nature Center has to win up to \$5,000 in awards.

**Mark your calendar, set your alarm and visit the link above to donate on
Thursday, May 4th 2017. Together, we can make a difference.**

"Taking a closer look" - what some of our photographer friends are finding in the RNC garden. Such photos help RNC catalog what is living in the heart of downtown Kerrville. These three photographers are regular wanderers. Thanks for sharing.

RNC is a unique urban wildlife oasis. Come and see what you can find. We'd love it if you would share your pics with us (email them to Susan Sander, naturalist@riversidenaturecenter.org)



*Dale Bargmann's photo of crow poison at RNC with tiny ant. Dale regularly wanders RNC capturing our wild inhabitants. Crow Poison or False Garlic (*Nothoscordum bivalve*)*



Yellow-crowned night heron brings in nesting material. The herons have a rookery in the middle of Tranquility Island.

By Tony Navarrette



Bush katydid nymph. *Scudderia* Photo by Ashley Tubbs



**THANK YOU,
DONORS**

March 23 to April 25, 2017
(Does not include renewals)

Jim & Priscilla Stanley
Clara Horton
Verna Benham
James Carpenter

**Native Plant Society of
Texas, Kerrville Chapter**
**Celeste Hammon &
Larry Smithers**
Sonny Payne



New Members
3/23/17 thru 4/25/17

Mary Bosteg
Sam & Elaine Dreeban
Vaundina Green
Pamela Goolsby

Carolyn Pavlovsky
Tom & Elaine Spray
Francoise Wilson



What you may see this month at RNC - May 2017
By Martha Miesch *Photos by Marilyn Knight*



Standing Wine cup --*Callirhoe pedata*
 (Malvaceae)

Every time you think you know and recognize a blooming plant you can count on new information stirring up the pot.

Marilyn Knight sent me some new pictures of wine cup with different leaves so now I know there is more than one specie of wine cup and so will you if you look at her pictures. The flowers look almost the same, but have distinctively different leaves. The standing wine cup, or *Callirhoe digitata*, is the one I think of and it is an erect plant 1-3 ft. tall with leaves deeply incised into 5-7 lobes that are reddish-purple, dark purple, or white. Its bloom period is March to May so you will see it this month.

Another specie of wine cup is the *Callirhoe involucrata* which is a sprawling plant 6-12 in. tall with trailing stems up to 18 in. long and found in grassy areas The leaves have 5-7 lobes but distinctively different.

Marilyn states that she has found four different species of wine cups at RNC. Take Marilyn's pictures to the different areas you see wine cups blooming and dare yourselves to find the species she photographed. The secret to identification is the leaves.

More RNC flowers on next page



Marilyn found four different Wine Cups at RNC



Standing Wine Cup --*Callirhoe pedata* (Malvaceae)



Wine Cup --*Callirhoe involucrate*
 (Malvaceae)



What you may see this month at RNC - May 2017
By Martha Miesch *Photos by Marilyn Knight*



Engelmann Daisy --*Engelmannia peristenia* (Asteraceae)



Texas snowbell --*Styrax texanum* (Styracaceae)



RNC has acquired a new prize blooming scrub that shows its pretty white blooms April-May and is aptly named Sycamore Leaf Snowbell. It is a struggling native that likes to grow in the shade near the top of steep places along a creek or drainage. Its saplings are tasty to deer so survival is sensitive. In the fall the leaves turn yellow. You can find a small new Snowbell near the fig tree with a large flat rock on the ground next to it making it easy to spot. With the grounds behind the Visitor's Center fenced, its survival is more secure. If you look carefully toward the back of the Carroll Abbott garden you can find another small specimen planted by Shannon Smith after some Turk's cap was removed near the Rusty Blackhaw.

April 2017 Native Plant Sale and Festival



The sale is open!



Happy Customers



Glory Community Garden was represented



View of the Plant Shed



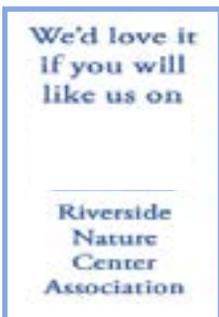
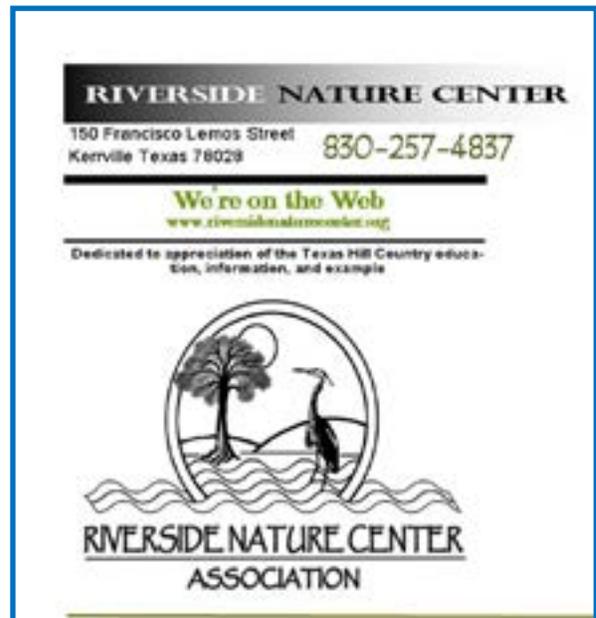
Keep the Guadalupe Clean



What is a Riverside Nature Center?

Located at the confluence of the Guadalupe River and Town Creek in the Hill Country town of Kerrville —2010 population, 22,347— Riverside Nature Center is a 501[c][3] nonprofit organization, owned by its members and primarily operated by volunteers.

Our mission is to foster greater public awareness and appreciation of the Texas Hill Country's natural resources through education, information, and by example. We provide quality educational experiences for the community's children, adults and families; and we serve as a resource center for the community on native plants and nature related information.



RNC OFFICERS:

Peter Lewis - President
Rick Ertel - Past President
Barbara Oates - Vice President
Judy Ferguson - Secretary
Kris Bobbitt - Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS:

Tara Bushnoe
Valeska Danielak
Frank Dunlap
Wynn Kilgore
Malcolm Matthews
Liz Ross
Peggy Thompson