

Texas Master Naturalist Program Offers Training, Seeks Applicants

July 25, 2017

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COLLEGE STATION — Important deadlines are fast approaching for the 17 Texas Master Naturalist chapters conducting training classes this fall for volunteers interested in becoming involved in natural resource and conservation management, the program's assistant state coordinator said.

Mary Pearl Meuth of College Station said the Texas Master Naturalist program, co-sponsored by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, consists of 48 chapters across the state whose mission is to develop a corps of well-informed citizen volunteers to educate their communities about the management of natural resources.

“The main qualification needed to become a certified Texas Master Naturalist is an interest in learning and playing an active part in conservation,” Meuth said. “Volunteers will receive at least 40 hours basic training from educators and specialists from universities, natural resource agencies, nature centers and museums.”

Training topics will include interpretation and management of natural resources, ecological concepts, eco-regions in Texas and natural systems management, she said.

Once trained, volunteers are expected to provide 40 hours of service a year in community education, demonstration and habitat enhancement projects to maintain certification as a Texas Master Naturalist. At least eight hours of advanced training in areas of personal interest are also required.

“Many volunteers devote far more time than the program mandates once they get involved,” she said. “These volunteers are encouraged to develop personal projects connecting to the mission of their particular chapter as well as to the overall statewide program.”

Meuth said most chapters limit enrollment and because several registration deadlines loom by August 1 or shortly thereafter, she urges interested persons to contact their respective chapters as soon as possible.

More information about the Texas Master Naturalist program and upcoming training opportunities is available at: <http://txmn.org>.

For general information or to learn about existing chapters or forming a new chapter, contact Meuth by email at mpmeuth@tamu.edu or phone at 979-845-7294.

Highlights of chapter projects, initiatives and program achievements can also be found on the Texas Master Naturalist Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/TexasMasterNaturalistProgram>.

Those seeking more information about the Texas Master Naturalist program are encouraged to watch the winning submission for the 2015 Texas Master Naturalist annual meeting's Video Contest. The video, submitted by the North Texas Chapter at Dallas, is available at:

<https://youtu.be/bPksINno0Iw>.

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