My mind is racing with cycles. I am not speaking of the two-wheeled kind but that would make a great Gary Larson cartoon. What I am referring to is the cyclical nature of life.

One year ago, I assumed the position of Executive Director here at Riverside Nature Center. I hit the ground running. The 1st Annual Run for Riverside was to take place in less than 3 weeks and we had a little more than a month to coordinate and produce the Fall Native Plant Sale & Festival. Throw in the Annual Membership Meeting and I think I am safe in saying it was an exciting but busy time.

Late summer became fall with winter and spring progressing along their natural path, bringing us once again to where my story began. Don’t get me wrong, a lot transpired during that time but I will save the full review for this year’s Annual Membership Meeting. I hope you can attend on September 22nd at 5:00pm.

The clock is ticking down for the start of the 2nd Annual Run for Riverside, scheduled for September 10th. If running is not your “thing”, remember by registering for the event you are directly supporting RNC. Not to mention, you will receive a great t-shirt to sport around town, lending even more support to our mission. You could even wear your t-shirt to the Fall Native Plant Sale & Festival on October 1st. RNC’s long collaboration with the Texas Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter on this event should not be viewed as a mere fundraiser but more as a public service to and educational opportunity for our community. With every new native plant in our landscape, our local environment experiences an increase in diversity and viability. Once again, I am thinking of cyclical patterns.

A circular path can sometimes lead to stagnation, think of a vehicle mired in deep mud. But add a fulcrum under the tire or a tow bar to the front and that vehicle is up, out and running along. It is the addition of new forces, new ideas, and collaborative efforts that keep the wheels of RNC running. I am thankful to be just one part of this ever evolving organization.

Until next time....

Becky
SEPTEMBER 2016 RNC Events Calendar

**Monday, September 5th, 2016**
**RNC Visitor Center NEW HOURS of OPERATION**
**Monday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Closed Sundays.**
Opportunity to enjoy what the Riverside Nature offers late afternoons and early evenings this fall.

**Friday, September 9, 2016**
3:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Run for Riverside 5K Registration.
Takes place at the Visitor Center entrance.

**Saturday, September 10th, 2016**
2nd Annual Run for Riverside 5K race begins at 8 a.m.

**Tuesday, September 13th, 2016**
11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
Second Tuesday Brown Bag Lunch
The Brown Bag Lunch & Learn workshops and presentations resume this month. “Drones: A Birds Eye View” with business owner Aaron Yates will introduce and discuss use of drones. Don’t miss this opportunity to see some beautiful photos and learn about the utility of drones.

**Saturday, September 17th, 2016**
8:00 – 9:30 a.m.
Bird Walks & Talks
Meet in front of the Riverside Nature Center to explore birding with your guides Paul & Deloris Sellin.

**Thursday, September 22, 2016**
5:00 p.m.
Annual Member Meeting - The annual meeting for Riverside Nature Center members with the Board of Directors. Election of new officers and directors and annual reports. Takes place in meeting rooms A&B.

**Friday, September 30th, 2016**
4:30 – 6:00 p.m.
RNC Members Pre-Plant Sale - Exclusive preview sale for Riverside Nature Center members takes place in the pavilion. New memberships are welcome and will be processed on site.

**Saturday, October 1st, 2016**
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Riverside Nature Center’s Native Plant Sale and Fall Festival. Free Family Fun. Informative Exhibits & Displays. Kids Activities. Nature Book Sale. “Ask Me!” Open Mini Discussion Forum about many topics from 11:00 a.m. through 1 p.m. is your chance to talk with experts.
Preparations for Saturday, 8:00 a.m., September 10, Riverside Nature Center’s Run for Riverside 5K are speeding up. Runners and walkers are training to be ready for the big race. Local business and organization sponsors are rising to the challenge to outdo each other. Local coworkers are “throwing down the gauntlet” in office settings to duels. (Is there such a thing in races?)

Sara from The Yoga Space is going to prep and warm up participants with some pre-race & cool-down yoga stretches, and “Mr. Clean Band” will be entertaining us as well.

This second annual 5K is directed by Valeska Danielak, RNC Board Member, and she is feverishly processing the registration entries. Register NOW! [https://www.athleteguild.com/running/kerrville-tx/2016-run-for-riverside-5k-run-and-walk](https://www.athleteguild.com/running/kerrville-tx/2016-run-for-riverside-5k-run-and-walk) to stake your place in this community event. Registration will also take place at the Visitor Center on Friday, September 9, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Please contact us to volunteer much needed help for this event.

(830)257-4837 RNC.Kerrville@gmail.com

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**Drones; A Bird's Eye View**
Second Tuesday Brown Bag Lunch & Learn,
Tuesday Sept 13, 11:30am - 12:45pm
Riverside Nature Center, 150 Francisco Lemos St

Aaron Yates of Kerrvillephoto.com will speak on the various aerial uses of drones. He specializes in commercial, event, real estate, and sports photography and videography. His work has been published in local, state, and national publications.

Besides the usual curiosities of drone activity, Aaron will expand on the environmental uses of drones for surveying sites of natural disasters and air quality sampling, scenes of hazardous materials spills, firefighting or fire suppression, dangerous rescues, oil & gas pipeline-inspection, safety and rig protection. Also, photogrammetry - surveying, mapping and topography for engineering, construction, mining, etc...precision agriculture - normalized difference vegetation index - measuring vegetation health...delivery of medical supplies to remote villages...disaster management - surveying wildfires, assessing damage, searching for survivors...inspections - power lines, pipelines and difficult to reach infrastructure... wildlife monitoring and poaching prevention.

Aaron will also address Kerrville’s recent flirtation with drone regulation (2016), rules in Kerrville specifically, and should there be a “drone ordinance?”

This is a continued discussion on the RNC’s Featured Exhibit, "What's in Your Yard?" with beautiful photography.
There is no question that the wet month of August will affect what you will see in September. Some of the beautiful year round bunch grasses will have a healthier look and give a polished attractive appearance to the beds at RNC as well as our home landscapes. As expected, most of our summer bloomers went to seed and the area behind the Visitor’s Center that is recognized as the wildflower area was picked clean of seed and for a good reason. That area was cleared, cutting out the soil thick with Bur Clover Seeds, and will soon be covered with organic composted soil, and then replanted and compacted with wildflower seeds. This will hopefully give a healthy start in spring of 2017 of wildflowers we want to see instead of the pesky bur clover. Hopefully this will be the solution to invasive Bur Clover problem in this wildflower area.

Our great photographer, Marilyn Knight, has a collection of photos of the blooms and seeds of plants established at RNC. If you are curious about why one would photograph seeds, take a look at these fascinating seed and bloom photos. Columbine is a treasured bloom as well as Cowpen Daisy. Everyone loves Flame Acanthus which is also a favored nectar plant for butterflies. Indian Blanket and Lemon Horsemint went wild this summer. Many seeds can be gleaned from these seed heads as we always discover when we meet in the nature lab to harvest seed from their collections. Zexmenia is another favorite Hill Country bloomer that thrives in our poor soil and erratic rainfall.

Seeing these pictures of seeds along with the blooms is fascinating to many of us. You may recall seeing other favorites Marilyn photographed such as Rose Pavonia and Yellow Flax in the meadow area. But recognizing the seeds at this time of year would require an expert’s degree in native plants to identify. Study the pictures and challenge yourself. Envisioning the plant in bloom is not hard. Looking at the seed is something else.

Columbine - Aquilegia canadensis
Cowpen Daisy - Verbesina encelioides
Flame Acanthus - Anisacanthus wrightii
Indian Blanket - Gaillardia pulchella
Columbine - Aquilegia canadensis
Cowpen Daisy - Verbesina encelioides
Flame Acanthus - Anisacanthus wrightii
Indian Blanket - Gaillardia pulchella
Lemon Horsemint - Monarda citriodora
Rose Pavonia - Pavonia lasiopetala
Yellow flax - Linum berlandieri
Zexmenia - Wedelia texana
Lemon Horsemint - Monarda citriodora
Rose Pavonia - Pavonia lasiopetala
Yellow flax - Linum berlandieri
Zexmenia - Wedelia texana
In Praise of Vultures!

Susan Sander, RNC naturalist

Celebrate one of nature’s underdogs on September 3rd; it’s International Vulture Awareness Day – who knew? https://www.daysoftheyear.com/days/international-vulture-awareness-day/

- These soaring giants get such a bad rap for their food choice but their unique characteristics and adaptations make them a fun way to talk about birds with kids.

- They are big birds! A turkey vulture has a wing-span of 69” and stands 27” tall. When they are soaring 300’ over head they look like a capital T. Black (headed) vulture are smaller (wingspan is 57”, height 25”). Their white-wing tips seem to flash when they bank around in the air.

- Vultures riding hot air thermals in spirals are called a kettle. A resting group in the trees is called a venue or committee.

- On the other hand, a group of vultures feeding together is called a wake (a rather twisted image). Give the roadside diners plenty of time to hop up to get enough lift or you could become a target (they can knock a person off a motorcycle or crash a windshield). Then there’s their intense stomach acid! http://www.livescience.com/48899-vultures-bacteria-microbiome.html. It breaks down pathogens and bacteria found in decaying animals. And if you think what they eat is vile, it’s worse when it comes back up – a defense when the bird is harassed. OR spooked while feeding; they will eject “payload” in order to get airborne quickly (a friend found this out while driving in her convertible).

- While on the subject of names, to bust a myth, vultures are not buzzards! Buzzard is a European hawk, *Buteo buteo*, which is in the same genus as our red-tailed hawk and the vulture look-alike, zone-tailed hawk.

- Scientists debate over how vultures find their food – sight or smell. They could smell it but the wafting aromas don’t make it up to 300’ feet while in flight. However they manage they are good at it. So much so that scientists in Lima, Peru are using their special adaptations to find garbage dumps. http://www.citylab.com/tech/2016/01/vultures-go-high-tech-to-help-peru-fight-garbage-lima-usaid/427107/

- Black and turkey vultures are year-round birds in Texas but we get more TVs from the north for the winter. They’ve adapted to roosting on power towers which also give them quicker access to roadkill.

- I always check out turkey vultures in case there is a zone-tailed hawk in the mix. They soar with vultures, even look a lot like a TV (hint: ZTH head looks bigger, there’s a white stripe in its tail). This hawk has been immigrating north from Mexico for the past two decades and now nests in Kerr County and is often seen in Kerrville, even at RNC!

As always, a special pre-sale will be held the evening before, **new hours 4:30pm-6pm Friday September 30th at RNC for RNC and HCMN members only.**

**Fall Native Plant Sale & Festival**
**Saturday – October 1, 2016**
**Speakers, Displays, Kid’s Activities & Free Family Fun - 9am-2pm**

Fall is almost here! **Texas Master Naturalists – Hill Country Chapter & RNC** are making plans for a fun day at Riverside Nature Center. **HOURS 9am-2pm**

**Native Tree & Plant Sale**

**Ask ME! 11am - 1pm**

**Open Mini-Forum Discussions**
New this year! Do you have some questions you need answered? Stop in to ask our volunteers and learn more about the following subjects:

- Compost
- Planting Trees Correctly
- Pruning
- Plan for Spring
- Winterize your Garden
- Wildflower Wisdom
- Water Catchment
- What is this plant?

**Fun, Free Kid’s Activities 10am - 1pm**
Craft projects in the Nature Lab to take home, Face painting & yard games!

**Nature Book Sale**

**Informative Exhibits & Displays**
Ask the Plant Expert
Riverside Nature Center Association
Texas Master Naturalist - Hill Country Chapter
Native Plant Society of Texas – Kerrville Chapter
Hill Country Master Gardeners
Monarch Watch
Garden at the Ridge
UGRA – Water Quality & Conservation

**Free Fun Kids Activities**
Craft projects in Nature Lab to take home, Face Painting & Yard Games! 10am - 1pm
Paletas, Popcorn & Drinks Available

Check Web Site for Details

For Detailed Information: 830-257-4837
www.riversidenaturecenter.org
150 Francisco Lemos Street • Kerrville, Texas 78028

If you want to volunteer for this event please contact the office.
Call of the Wild
by Susan Sander, RNC naturalist

Get ready – start looking up! It’s time for the migration shuffle.

It may feel like summer to us but for wildlife, particularly birds, it’s time to get ready for that long journey to wintering grounds. And Texas is a great place to be to see the action with the Hill Country in the Central flyway.

According to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s website [http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/birding/migration/](http://tpwd.texas.gov/huntwild/wild/birding/migration/) “Of the 338 species that are listed as Nearctic-Neotropical migrants in North America (north of Mexico), 333 of them (or 98.5%) have been recorded in Texas. This means that of the 615 species of birds documented in Texas, 54% of them are Nearctic-Neotropical migratory birds.” [That means we are a birding hot-spot.]

Some of our summer breeding species start moving south as early as July. Reports are coming in of itinerant sightings of the northerners. Dale Bargmann photographed a *yellow warbler* at RNC’s Riverscape on 8/19. A broad-tailed hummingbird was seen in Ingram. Expect the unexpected and you just might see something rare in your yard.

**Chimney swifts** are also gathering— these chittering birds are found flying around at twilight. Several years ago I counted 600+ dropping into a chimney just off Earl Garrett. Join the count for Swift Night Out (weekend of Sept.9-11) [http://www.chimneyswifts.org/page245.html](http://www.chimneyswifts.org/page245.html)

Get your garden ready for **monarch migration**. Dead-head perennial favorites have lots of flowers, particularly members of the aster family: thoroughwort, frostweed, mist-flowers, late blooming sunflower species. They won’t be laying eggs but they will need to build up their lipids for the rest of their journey to the mountains in Mexico where they will overwinter before doing the return trip to Texas. Hence, Texas is vital to their survival. Check out these sites for data on the migration. Kerrville is at 30 degree latitude with an expected peak migration coming through last week of September- mid October. [http://www.monarchwatch.org/tagmig/fallmap.htm](http://www.monarchwatch.org/tagmig/fallmap.htm) & [http://www.monarchwatch.org/tagmig/peak.html](http://www.monarchwatch.org/tagmig/peak.html)
The Beat the Heat fundraiser was a success! We really enjoyed everyone gathering together for tacos and pastries. The mimosas were a hit, thanks to our bartenders Paul Devine and James Noe.

Ladies preplanned a group to walk the river trail to the event, and many members spent time catching up with each other.

Thanks to Mi Mesa’s Tacos for the breakfast tacos and to Hippie Chicks for the tasty danishes.

The funds raised have totaled $2,419. We are virtually halfway to matching the grants we received!

Thanks to all who made the event prosperous with your generous donations and support.
**THANK YOU**

*Donors: June 24 - July 25*  
*(Does not include renewals)*

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<th>John Taylor, JAT Construction</th>
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<td>Lisa A. &amp; Chuck Williams</td>
<td>Marguerite &amp; James Belec</td>
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<td>Douglas Towing &amp; Roadside Service</td>
<td>Marv Adamson</td>
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<td>Barbara Oates</td>
<td>Pamela Simpson, Simpson Ranches &amp; Land</td>
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**MEMBERS JOINING**  
*July 26 - August 24*  
Janice Zitelman

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The final summer Thursday Nature Night was a family affair for Tara Bushnoe of UGRA and husband Nate Smith of TPWD as they talked about “What's in the River?”

Their children, Judson and Cecilia (Cee Cee) are unfazed by the size of the alligator gar head, yet the other participants were impressed.

The Guadalupe River is home to the much smaller spotted gar.

Thank you, Tara & Nate! Watch our calendars, as we are inviting them back for our RNC Nature Nights often!
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.