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

Summer is coming to a close and fall is on the horizon. To be exact, we will experience the autumnal equinox on September 22 at 8:30 am. Here in the Texas Hill Country, fall is a perfect time to hike through Lost Maples under a canopy of color or to do a paddling trip down the Guadalupe River. We are fortunate to have so many outdoor options.

Folks are shaking off the lazy days of summer and so are we. A little stretching, some jumping jacks and ready, set, GO! Our fall kick off event is the 6th Annual Run for Riverside 5K. Runners and walkers can show their support by registering online, choosing a 3.2 mile course, selecting their most convenient day and time between September 7th and 12th, uploading an inspiring photo to our Facebook page and for the true competitors, upload your times to Athlete Guild. No crowds, no fuss, just you and the great outdoors. Let’s not forget, registrants will receive a custom designed gaiter to sport around town.

https://riversidenaturecenter.org/rnc-virtual-run-walk-5k/

Still in need of some muscle loosening? Join the Riverside Town Creek Clean Up team on October 3rd. We will wend our way along the banks of Town Creek picking up and hauling out the trash and unnatural debris. You may register for the team through UGRA’s River Clean Up, just specify October 3 and our team name.

http://www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/river-clean-up

How are those joints feeling now? Get them lubricated while doing some bird watching or plant discovery. Our monthly Bird Walk & Talks and Plant Walk & Talks are great ways to celebrate nature and get a little exercise too.

It's ok to take a breather now and then, so why not grab a comfy seat and a nice beverage (I’m not suggesting any specific kind) and log on to one of our NEd Talks or EduScape Virtual Talk & Tours. You’ll find the topics engaging, educational and entertaining. Wow, the three “e’s”. You can’t get better than that.

All of this and fall has only just begun. Riverside Nature Center is definitely in full stride and we invite you come along for the ride.

Stay well and stay positive.
Riverside Nature Center Upcoming Events & Programs

**1on1 With a Naturalist**

*Will Resume Sept. 18*
Every Friday @ RNC 10am-12pm
Have a nature related question? Need a specimen identified? Just curious?
Hill Country Naturalist, Jim Stanley will be on hand, Fridays from 10-12 to assist you in unlocking some of nature’s mysteries.
Please practice physical distancing and preferably the wearing of a mask.

**Run For Riverside Virtual 5K**
Anytime September 7-12
Show your #KerrvilleStrong support & register to be a part of our Virtual 5K Run/Walk. All registered entrants will be guaranteed an RNC Neck Gaiter!
Visit our website for more information, to register, and to view suggested race routes.

**Eduscape Talk & Virtual Tour**
September 1, 15, 29 1pm-2:30pm
You don’t want to miss these virtual presentations being brought to you by RNC & UGRA. We will cover Roof Reliant Landscaping, Irrigation: Best Management Practices, & Soil Management: Improving Infiltration. At the conclusion you are invited to stay put & enjoy a virtual tour of the property surrounding the UGRA building, which has been aptly named, the EduScape: a landscape with a purpose.
To register or for more information visit our website.
For more info on the EduScape visit: [http://www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/eduscape](http://www.ugra.org/major-initiatives/eduscape)

**Bird Walk & Talk**
September 19th 8am-9:30am
Join Paul & Deloris Sellin on a birding adventure along the Guadalupe River. All ages & experience are welcome!
Meet in the RNC Parking Lot at 8am!
Face coverings required.
Space is Limited! RSVP by email at rnc.kerrville@gmail.com or by calling 830-257-4837.

**Plant Walk & Talk**
September 25th & 26th 8:30am-9:30am
Join Kim Ort, Texas Master Naturalist on a stroll along the Guadalupe River Trail to explore the edible plant community.
Face covering required.
Space is Limited! Please call to RSVP at 830-257-4837 or email rnc.kerrville@gmail.com.

**Members Only**
**Fall Plant Sale**
Pick Up Day October 7th
Due to Covid-19 our Fall Plant Sale has a new format this year. Visit our website for more information. This is a Members Only sale, so now is the perfect time to renew or begin your membership!

Visit [riversidenaturecenter.org](http://riversidenaturecenter.org) for more information!
Retirement is not the end of life as I knew it; the biggest gain has been time to learn what I want to know about for enjoyment without a deadline.

And so I’ve become immersed in a wide variety of books on birds in a quest to understand my winged neighbors better. It’s a challenge: give me a plant and I can “catalog” it into family or the last time I saw it blooming decades ago along a back road. But moving colors defy lodging in my brain and I can’t remember songs.

Nonetheless, birds have taken hold of my imagination due to the last few exhibits at RNC, particularly the moment when I read that “birds are the result of the miniaturization of dinosaurs,” WOW!

The marvelous diversity of sizes, colors, songs and behaviors grabs my attention. And being me, for the past year plus, I’ve been sending bird props north to Nora and Judah, my young grand-niece and grand-nephew, in hopes of sparking an interest in birds.

It was thrilling to arrive mid-June and find that Nora (age 5) and Judah (15 months) had been watching birds at their feeder. They quickly showed me the robin on her nest above a window. The window-cling bird chart was already in the clutches of Judah’s tiny hands. The Audubon plush song birds were promptly pulled out to show me.

My childhood memories of birds include robin, cardinal, goldfinches and red-winged blackbird. Yet I don’t remember anyone pointing out the birds or if we even fed them. So I doubt I was as enthralled as little Judah watching a Planet Earth program on birds which prompted a happy dance with squeals of glee! It didn’t matter if they were gannets diving into the ocean or flamingos on parade he would run to the TV full of excited babble and dance in place, run back to his Nana, then back to the screen, his mouth in a perfect “ohhhhhhh!” Joy is the only word to describe it.
Each trip to Nana’s house starts with Judah gesturing to be picked up for a walk around to revisit the fish mounts on the wall, then each and every “bird” in the house. Obviously, the grandparents have pointed out the loons, eagle and duck each time that forms a reconnection (or a mastery of who’s who). Even his mom said Judah’s first word was “burd”. He’s becoming aware that they have names, so I can hear loon, duck, and an odd sounding “eagle”. When challenged to “find___” he points to its perch up on a shelf. Then it’s the basket of plush animals, going past the bunnies, fuzzy red thing, badger, and fish toys until he comes to the Audubon birds handing them over so an adult can squeeze the songs out. He carries them around, looks at them, brings you the one you ask for, or returns it to its spot. He knows bird things.

I’ve been doing little tests about his interests particularly with videos: cute little bunnies hopping around don’t elicit much response but put on a bird video (any kind of bird) and he will watch intently and with the excited “ohhhh”. If sister switches to babies or other animals, he gives me a pleading look for “burd-burd”?

The kids had been watching the robin’s nest since May, checking the progress every day. Nora even read to the mom as she sat on the nest. If Judah heard the mom calling he’d run over to watch her fly in to feed. Luckily, we were all present for the fledgling launch and Judah was just as excited as I was. Robin” was among his first words.

While I’m learning details that I find wondrous, he’s learning the sheer wonder first. To see his face light up is magical. It doesn’t matter if it’s a photograph (or partial imagine), a video, a drawing in a field guide, or the real bird, he “sees” them as bird. It’s totally fascinating to watch a child put the parts of the world together and connect the dots.

The other day I gave him a new book: The Little Book of Backyard Bird Songs – a hard board book with buttons to push for the bird’s call. He’s getting the hang of connecting the page picture with the button picture, crawling into his bouncy chair with binky and book. Over the past 6 weeks he has become more focused, and I totally enjoy being one of his guides as he discovers birds. What can be better than that!
Riverside Nature Center & UGRA present: EduScape Virtual Talk & Tour

The UGRA EduScape is an award winning demonstration garden that contains numerous examples of water conservation & stormwater detention practices that you can incorporate into your own landscaping. The EduScape Talk & Tour will feature online presentations by leading experts, followed by a virtual tour of the EduScape.

September 1st * 1:00pm-2:30pm *
Roof Reliant Landscaping presented by Billy Kniften

As a water resource specialist and recognized expert on rainwater harvesting, Billy will discuss landscaping alternatives and ways to keep the rain that falls on your place available for the plants, birds and butterflies.

September 15th * 1:00pm-2:30pm *
Irrigation: Best Management Practices presented by Travis Pilughaupt

Travis, Owner of Beyond Irrigation and Licensed Landscape Irrigator, will share what is essential for an irrigation system to preserve water supplies and protect water quality.

September 29th * 1:00pm-2:30pm *
Soil Management: Improving Infiltration presented by Dr. Becky Bowling

Join Dr. Bowling, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Specialist for Urban Water, in a discussion of how soil with good infiltration can utilize and store plant available water and reduce water runoff.

Talks & Tours are FREE to all!
Registration Required: riversidenaturecenter.org or (830) 257-4837.
You will receive a link to the webinar via email.

Fall Native Plant Sale
MEMBERS ONLY

If you are not yet a member of Riverside Nature Center or Native Plant Society of Texas now is the perfect time to join or renew!
Membership details can be found at riversidenaturecenter.org or npstot.org.

Members of Riverside Nature Center, Texas Master Naturalist-Hill Country Chapter, & the Native Plant Society of Texas-Kerrville Chapter are invited to participate in the sale.

Plants will be pre-ordered through the Riverside Nature Center website, riversidenaturecenter.org.

Orders will be ready for drive-thru pick up & payment (cash or check only) at the Youth Event Center Show Barn.

All proceeds will mutually benefit RNC, NPSOT, HCMN.

Members will receive an email notice with further details.
For more information, to view a list of available plants, dates, or to place an order visit riversidenaturecenter.org.

Riverside Nature Center, Native Plant Society of Texas-Kerrville Chapter, & Texas Master Naturalist- Hill Country Chapter invite you to...

1on1 with a Naturalist
Every Friday 10am-12pm @ Riverside Nature Center

Jim Stanley, naturalist, author, and columnist will be available to meet one-on-one to answer questions, discuss various topics, or listen to ideas about nature.

During this current health crisis, we ask you to be mindful of those around you by practicing safe distancing & wearing a mask when possible.
What You May See

By Martha Miesch

Check out the grounds to see if you can spot these purple bloomers now at the Nature Center:

Narrow-leaf Gayfeather

Narrow-leaf Gayfeather is blooming in the Carroll Abbott garden. This is a perennial with stiff upright unbranched stems. They are 1-3 ft. tall and grow in wide-spreading clumps. The tufted, purple flowers are densely congested in a long spike on the upper part of the stem. The leaves are narrow and crowded, becoming progressively smaller upward.

Purple Coneflower

The Purple Coneflower is found in most of the Hill Country and has been heavily grazed in some prairie areas. Fencing cuts out that problem at the Nature Center! It is a popular perennial with long-lasting, lavender flowers. Flowers occur singly atop the stems and have domed, purplish-brown, spiny centers and drooping, lavender rays. It can grow 2-5 feet tall.
**Western Ironweed** can be up to 5 ft. tall and the branched upper part has purple flower heads. The stems occur singly or in clumps, and are stout and hairy. Wide clusters of vibrant, red-violet flowers form at the ends of short branches near the top of the plant. Because the flowers are all of the disk variety, the 6 in. wide flower cluster has a fuzzy appearance. Long, lance-shaped leaves line the stems. The bloom period can be June through September even lasting until frost.
UGRA Streamside Landowner Webinar

Streamside Landowner Webinar
Understanding and Managing Riparian Areas

Tuesday, September 29, 2020
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Webinar via Zoom

This webinar is the third installment in a series designed to share practices and skills with streamside landowners to help you enhance and protect your property and the river. However, since we are having a virtual meeting, we invite anyone interested in learning more about riparian area management to join. Attendance at Part I or II is not a prerequisite to attend the webinar - everyone is welcome!

Topics will include:

- Review of riparian function, stewardship, and management
- Update and lessons learned from riparian plantings at YMCA Roberts Ranch
- Learn about planting techniques, establishing grow zones, and other stewardship practices
- Discuss your questions, challenges, and successes

Register today by clicking HERE or calling UGRA at (830) 896-5445.

Brought to you by the Upper Guadalupe River Authority, Hill Country Alliance, Plateau Land & Wildlife Management, and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Register today by clicking: https://forms.gle/1Ao4LT7BByW7LBHD7
If you would like to renew your membership or become a member of the Riverside Nature Center please visit https://riversidenaturecenter.org/about-rnc/become-a-member/

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http://riversidenaturecenter.org/index/about-rnc/donate/general-donation-form/

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 advance the stewardship of our natural environment. 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.

Riverside Nature Center
150 Francisco Lemos St.
Kerrville, Texas 78028
(830)257-4837
www.riversidenaturecenter.org

RNC OFFICERS
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