



# Friends of Guadalupe River Honey Creek, Inc.

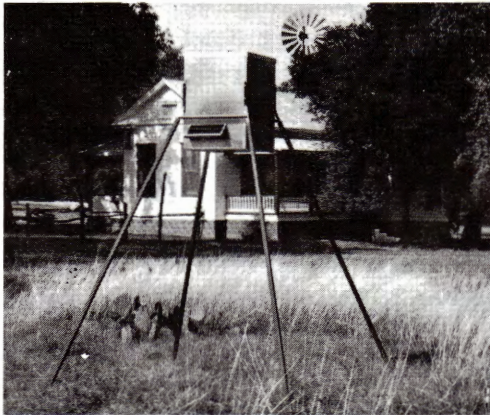
A non-profit organization

Issue #11

3350 Park Rd 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070 ☎ 210-438-2656

January - March 1997

## New for Spring and 1997



**Watchable Wildlife Programs.** The new year promises to begin with many new projects and interpretive programs for "Friends" members and park visitors. Last November, Sweeney Enterprises of Boerne, Texas donated a fully automatic, solar powered scatter feeder to the "Friends" organization. The donation of the feeder was sought by Board member, Charlene Simmons to be the cornerstone of our new Watchable Wildlife evening programs at the Rust House Visitor Center. She reports that "the feeder has now been in operation for two months and the feedings are being timed with our Spring and Summer viewing schedules. The animals are coming, deer, raccoon, opossum, armadillo and squirrels that have not been seen in some time are returning. Turkey tracks were spotted on the Saturday walk after Christmas. This got us all excited about improving our track identification skills. By late Spring we should be ready to watch from the porches of the Rust House. A number of bird feeders have also been put up around the house. Bird watching has greatly improved. The next time you are out for the Honey Creek walk, bring your camera and/or

binoculars ..... Shhhh!!! You never know what is out there!" Charlene is Chair of the Rust House Committee to propose short and long term goals for Watchable Wildlife and other activities on the grounds around the Rust House. To compliment wildlife attracted to the scatter feeder, the committee will develop Wildscape ideals to lure in birds and insects. There is currently a proposal being finalized by a local Boy Scout to build bird feeders, a bat house, and repair and clean bluebird nest boxes throughout the Park this Winter. The April issue of our newsletter will list the viewing schedules for Watchable Wildlife. Again, Thank you Sweeney, this would not be possible without your generosity.



**Earth Day at Guadalupe River State Park is Saturday, April 19th.** This year we are working on all new children's activities, the newley repainted Rust House will be formally dedicated, but our special program this year will be by Last Chance Forever, The Bird of Prey Conservancy. LCF is nationally recognized for its dedication to the rehabilitation and release of injured and orphaned birds of prey back into the wild and its dedication to high quality, educational, entertaining and memorable presentations based on common sense conservation.

**The Education Committee** of the Friends group has developed an education program in coordination with the Comal I.S.D. that will begin this Spring. It is a pilot program involving all of the 6th graders in Comal I.S.D. Students, in groups of 60, will use Honey Creek SNA as a field science lab and participate in various hands-on science based activities focused on developing an awareness and appreciation of watersheds and the Honey Creek riparian zone. Students will measure trees, study ethnobotany and learn how to take various water samples from the creek and take part in other activities as well.

Funding for this program is being sought from various local organizations. In addition, a grant proposal was submitted in December to Texas Parks and Wildlife for \$15,000 in funding from the Community Outreach program. We are excited about this funding opportunity and should know in February if we are selected.

We are now seeking adults interested in volunteering time to help teach the outdoor classes which will run from April through early May. Volunteers will be given orientation and training during February and March so contact us as soon as possible. Anyone interested in donating time and/or money towards this program may contact, me, Terry Urbanczke at 210-438-2656.



## Superintendent's Corner

-- by Tom Campsey, Park Interpreter

The ringing in of the 1997 new year has brought some changes for Guadalupe River SP and Honey Creek SNA. As of January 1, the park's entry fee was increased from \$3.00 to \$4.00 per person. However, this did not seem to have a huge impact on the visitor satisfaction with the park. We had a larger crowd on New Years day than we have had in months.

The start of the year also means the start of the public deer hunt schedule for the park. This year we have allotted spaces for 222 hunters. In December, there was a youth deer and exotic game hunt in Honey Creek SNA. In that hunt, two spike bucks, two does, and one aoudad sheep were successfully taken by the hunters. There was also an exotic game hunt in Honey Creek, however no animals were taken.

As for the January deer hunt, 165 antlerless deer permits have been issued, along with 17 either sex permits. The number of permits issued each year are based on recommendations by the regional wildlife biologist to keep the deer population stable. Although the current deer population density in the park area is ideal for the Hill Country, the disproportionate ratio of five does for every buck makes the population highly unstable.

### The Board Members of Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek, Inc. Directors and Officers

Richard Solis	President
Joe Vanecek	Vice-President
Jeanne Manry	Treasurer
Leon Manry	Parliamentarian
Charlene Simmons	Secretary
Betty Baker	Director
Dan Baker	Director
Linda Sutton	Director
Henry Wagner	Director
Janet Wagner	Director
Courtney Walker	Director

### Guadalupe River SP

Duncan Muckelroy	Park Manager
Deirdre Hisler	Volunteer Liaison

### Associate Directors

Chuck Janzow	Allen Perry
Patti Martin	Wayne Rahe
Lois Newton	Ken Sutton

## Notes from the President

Park Manager, Duncan Muckelroy, Volunteer Liaison, Deirdre Hisler, and myself, Richard Solis have been a part of a TPWD Task Team to formulate long term goals for improved public access and uses of both Honey Creek SNA and GRSP. We are part of a larger six member team that must finalize and submit its recommendations by February 2, 1997. As in any process, all possibilities have to be considered and balanced. And, although final recommendations won't be formalized by the Task Team until February, it would appear that horse enthusiasts and mountain bikers will no longer pursue opportunities within Honey Creek SNA and instead will continue to be developed for educational and scientific research uses. Our recommendations will be reviewed and we will know the final decision by the Public Lands Director this Spring.

As we begin the 1997 year, the "Friends" organization has two new officers, Charlene Simmons will be our Recording Secretary. Please join me in welcoming Charlene to her new responsibilities. And I look forward to finishing out the 1996-1997 year as President. We have many new programs and activities to offer this Spring, an exciting Earth Day program by Birds of Prey, the dedication of the newly repainted Rust House, Spring Monarch Butterfly surveys and Watchable Wildlife, an expanded Science Camp and new evening slide and talk programs by Park Interpreter, Tom Campsey. Please refer to our Spring calendar for dates and program listings later this year.

As we begin the new year it is also a good time to reflect on the goals that brought the "Friends" organization together. We came together to work in partnership with GRSP to manage the natural and cultural resources of these two parks to the highest of professional standards. We have a wonderful opportunity here to instill appreciation of nature and principles of conservation in our youth through educational programs. Although, as an organization, we hit a little rough spot this past Fall and nearly lost our focus, our strong dedication to our goals brought us together and allowed us to prevail. We have accomplished much in 1996 and the "Friends" organization in support of and in cooperation with GRSP look forward to the years ahead.



## GPS Mapping of Honey Creek SNA

A project that Richard Solis has been wanting to tackle for a number of years has been the mapping of Honey Creek SNA. As a GPS/GIS surveyor he has the most current equipment technology has to offer, just not enough time or energy. Last summer PerriAngela Wickham joined us on a Saturday walk and through conversation, Richard learned that she is a Graduate student at SWTSU working on her Masters degree in Cartography/GIS. This made her the perfect person to help with the mapping. For the past few months Perri has not only been willing to spending her spare time collecting GPS data in Honey Creek SNA, but crawling through dense cedar brakes and scrambling over rocky slopes to map the existing trail systems, old ranch roads, locations of karst features, and man-made features such as rock walls, houses, etc. All this while Richard "slaves" away in the office compiling the data into a map.

This Spring Perri will begin the Geographic Information System (GIS). This information will then be available as a basis for accurate environmental studies and archeological surveys, and more, within the HCSNA. Perri is a grant administrator at The University of Texas of Austin. Her experience again was invaluable in December helping to prepare the recent grant proposal to TPWD for our Spring Science camp.

### Texas Wanderers Walk Set for February 15th and 16th

Honey Creek SNA will be the location of a fun family event in February. A trail walk will be sponsored by The Texas Wanderers, the "Friends", and Guadalupe River SP. Two 11Km loops will follow old ranch roads and trails. The trails will be over caliche, dirt, rocky and uneven terrain so bring your walking stick and wear good walking shoes. **Anyone** may join the Wanderers on this event and take advantage of an opportunity to see areas and scenery of Honey Creek SNA usually inaccessible to the public. **Each trail** covers a different region of the natural area. The Yellow trail loops downward above the canyon while the Orange trail takes you to the higher elevations of Honey Creek and beautiful views of the Guadalupe River valley and Twin Sisters. So, plan on joining us on the walk. **The fee is \$3.00 per person** each day with children under 12 free. Pets are welcome but must be leashed at all times for their safety. **You may begin** the walk anytime between 7:30 a.m. and noon. **Everyone** must carry a validated start card. And **everyone** must be out by 3:30 p.m. There will be water available at the start/finish and check points. Restroom facilities will be portable toilets. We are

trying to have a caterer on hand for breakfast tacos, but **plan to bring a lunch/snack and water along with you.** Smoking will be permitted *only* in designated areas at the start/finish. **Entry** to Honey Creek SNA will be from Spring Branch Rd. Exit from Highway 281 onto Highway 46 west. Turn right on Spring Branch Road and **watch for the AVA (American Volkspport Association) signs.** Turn left at the entrance onto an unimproved dirt road and continue 1.7 miles to the Start Point.

**We are in need of as many volunteers** to assist with the event as will be willing to come out. Volunteers will be stationed at check points and/or patrol sections of the trails to assist walkers and answer questions about the history and geology of HCSNA. Information packets are being prepared for volunteers, but call 210-935-4730 (Richard Solis) or the Park at 210-438-2656 to let us know you want to help.





**Many thanks to Boerne High School Environmental Classes.** In preparation for Spring programs and activities at the Rust House, about a dozen Boerne High School students have been coming to the park on monthly visits to clean up and clear brush. Their teacher, Chuck Janzow, has been encouraging his environmental science classes to work on various projects at Honey Creek SNA for about 15 years now. Over the years, students have built a small foot bridge we cross each weekend on our Saturday hikes, improved trails, and repaired fencing. Most recently, a visit to the Rust House will reveal about 12 years of grime and dirt lifted off the house's floors and walls as well as a new graveled entrance to control mud and more room for programs and activities nearby thanks to these hard working youths! Other volunteers and cub scout troops have

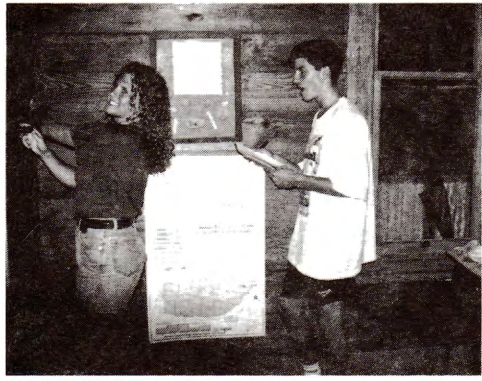
pitched in on our scheduled work days and helped spread mulch around heavy traffic areas. We will continue to have work days the second Saturday of each month through April in preparation of Earth Day. Hope to see you!

**A report from Tom Anderson the Texas Watch**

**Water Quality Volunteer.** I will give a quarterly report of the water testing that I do at Honey Creek at the crossing. The things that I will report are chemical tests involving air temperature, water temperature, conductivity (hardness), pH, dissolved oxygen. The form that I send to Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission also contains the depth at which I make the test, the clarity of the water, color of the water, odor of the water, and any other characteristics that would affect the water quality. We are fortunate to have a pristine area and I will try to make sure it remains in that condition.

I also will do a benthic test quarterly. This involves taking a sample of the macro invertebrates in the creek and using a formula that is available through the Lower Colorado River Authority Biomonitoring Program

to be able to further attest to the water quality of Honey Creek. Certain macro invertebrates are able to survive different levels of water quality.



I am also doing this as a teaching tool. I teach environmental science at Churchill High School in the North East Independent School District in San Antonio, Texas. One of my classes is involved with doing research. Two of the students are working with Deirdre Hisler on making a display for the Rust House. In the next newsletter I will let Lisa and Aaron explain what they have done and what they will do before the end of the school year. In addition

Bethany is developing a Wildscape in the area from the parking lot to the entrance to the state park store. Her mentor is Joan Nitschke and she also has some exciting plans for that area. The following are the results of the chemical tests for Honey Creek

**Water Quality at Honey Creek Crossing**

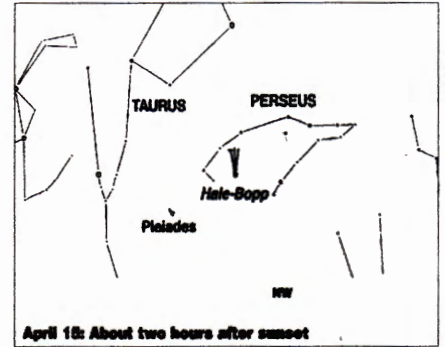
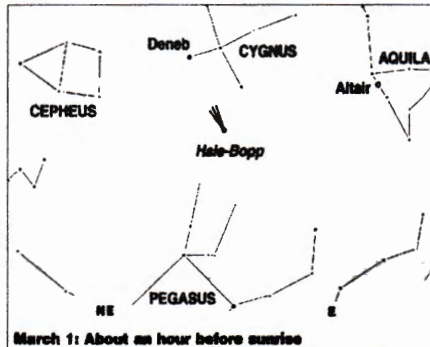
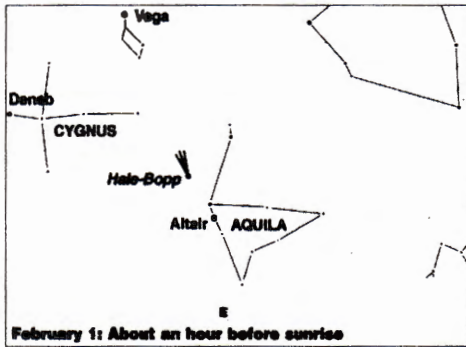
Date	Air Temperature	Water Temperature	Conductivity	pH	Dissolved Oxygen
6/1/96	24	22	590	7.3	6.75
7/6/96	25	22	570	7.4	7.2
8/3/96	28	23.5	570	7.0	6.6
9/6/96	21.5	21.5	560	7.2	5.3
10/5/96	19	20	610	7.4	6.0
11/2/96	12	18	620	7.1	6.85
12/7/96	12	17	630	7.4	7.2

# Stargazing in the Park

## Sky Almanac through March

No equipment needed for stargazing and everyone can do it! Lay back in a comfortable lawn chair or throw a blanket on the ground under a clear night sky. Meteors can be seen any clear evening.

After the spectacular performance of Comet Hyakutake last spring, many skywatchers are hoping for a similar showing from Comet Hale-Bopp this year. It will become visible by early February and will grow brighter and climb higher into the predawn sky through March. Look in the eastern sky a couple hours before sunrise in February and early March. Hale-Bopp will reach its peak brilliance in late March and early April as it passes closest to Earth on March 23 and then the Sun on April 1. Look for Hale-Bopp in the western sky a couple hours after sunset in mid to late April.



### January

**7th** - Venus stands near the waning crescent Moon just before dawn, very low in the southeast. Venus will look like an intensely bright star below and to the right of the Moon.

**12th** - Venus and Mercury stand side by side just before dawn, very low in the southeast. Mercury is just above and to the left of Venus, but Venus far outshines Mercury. Start looking for the pair about one hour before sunrise.

**13th** - The Moon passes just north of Saturn, which looks like a bright golden star. They stand high in the south-southeast at sunset, and set around 11 p.m.

**23rd** - Full Moon of January, called the Old Moon or Moon After Yule. Mercury is at greatest western elongation, so it appears farthest "above" the Sun in the predawn sky. It rises about 90 minutes before the Sun, and looks like a fairly bright star, very low in the southeast.

**27th** - Tonight the Moon will appear just west of Mars, which looks like a bright red star. Tomorrow night, the Moon will stand east of Mars. Mars rises about 10 p.m.

### February

**5th** - Venus and Jupiter, the second and third brightest objects in our night sky, stand less than one degree apart just before sunrise with a thin crescent moon above. They are very low in the southeast. Look about 20 minutes before sunrise.

**6th** - Venus, Jupiter, Mercury, and the Moon huddle near each other at dawn. Mercury is higher than the other two planets, but not as bright.

**10th** - The crescent Moon passes just north of Saturn. They stand high in the west-southwest at sunset, and set around 9 p.m.

**22nd** - Full Moon, called the Snow Moon, Hunger Moon, or Wolf Moon.

### March

**20th** The vernal equinox occurs at 7:55 a.m. CST. The equinox marks the moment when the Sun crosses the celestial equator from south to north. It's the beginning of spring in the northern hemisphere and autumn in the southern hemisphere.

**22nd** - Mars stands below and to the left of the almost full Moon, low in the east at sunset. The two keep company throughout the night, soaring high overhead and setting just before sunrise.

**23rd** - A partial lunar eclipse will be visible. The Moon will enter the dark inner portion of Earth's shadow at 8:57 p.m. and exit at 12:31 a.m. CST March 24. At the eclipse's peak, Earth's shadow will cover 92.4 percent of the Moon's diameter. Full Moon of March, called the Crow Moon, Lenten Moon, or Sap Moon.

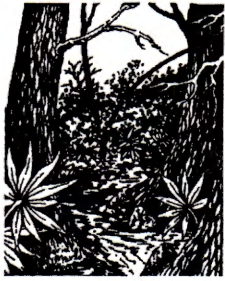
### April

**3rd** Jupiter is a very bright "star" to the right of the waning crescent Moon as they stand side by side in the early morning sky. They rise around 3 a.m.

**5th** - For the next few days Mercury is at greatest eastern elongation, so it stands farthest from the Sun in the evening sky. It looks like a moderately bright star, and is low in the west as darkness falls.

**6th** - Daylight Saving Time begins at 2 a.m.

*Information for this article is from the January/February 1997 issue of StarDate Magazine published monthly by McDonald Observatory.*



# Friends of Guadalupe River Honey Creek, Inc.

*A non-profit organization*  
Park Rd 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070 ☎ 210-438-2656

## Membership Application

**Annual Membership Dues and categories:**

- \$5.00 Classroom: students or youth organizations ages up to 18.
- \$5.00 Student: Age 13 to 18
- \$8.00 Individual: Adult over 18
- \$12.00 Family
- \$50.00 Sustaining
- \$100.00 Contributing
- \$500.00 Corporate
- \$1,000.00 Life

*Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek, Inc. is a tax exempt, non-profit organization. All donations greatly appreciated and tax deductible.*

**Make check payable to: Friends of GR/HC, Inc., 3350 Park Rd. 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070**

Renewal      New Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Application**                      **Name**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Address**

\_\_\_\_\_ **City, State & Zip**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Phone: home**      **Optional: email**                      **fax**                      **work**

I would like to donate \$ \_\_\_\_\_ beyond dues in support of educational programs at the park.

Are you are interested in helping with:

- Being a host at evening programs at the park Ampitheater during the summer
- Leading volunteer work crews
- Leading selected weekend activities
- Leading hikes for school children into Honey Creek SNA during weekdays
- Brainstorming on new program ideals

As a member, what types of programs are you interested in participating in? What time of the year or weekend day is easiest for the whole family to come out to the Park?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 1997 Winter and Spring Activities at Guadalupe River S.P. & Honey Creek SNA

**Readme!** All programs begin at the Rust House Visitor Center on the trail head of Honey Creek SNA, *unless otherwise noted below*. Activity fees for Saturday hikes into Honey Creek is \$2 per adult or \$5 per family (members of "Friends" are free). Other program fees/reservations as noted. If you are not a Conservation Passport Holder (TCP), please be aware that park entrance fees are extra. Park phone # is 210-438-2656.

**January 18, 25 Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** Meet at Rust Visitor Center. Join us for a leisurely two mile hike along Honey Creek Canyon with interpretation of the environmental and cultural history of the Edwards Plateau and the Texas hill country. Lead by Penny Solis

**February 1 - Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** (See Jan 18th for details).

**Feb 8th - Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** (See Jan 18th for details).

**February 15th - Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** (See Jan 18th for details).

**February 15th and 16th - Texas Wanderers** will hold a two day 11 K walks on the east side of Honey Creek SNA. Although this is a Texas



Wanderers event anyone may join the walkers and see areas and scenery of Honey Creek SNA inaccessible by our regular hikes. There

will be two walking loops following old ranch roads which are rocky and primitive and not suitable for strollers, wagons or wheel chairs. Bring your walking stick! The daily fee will be \$3.00 per person and will start at the Weidner Ranch House complex off Spring Branch Road. You may start anytime between 7:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. You must be out by 3:30 p.m. each day.

**February 22- Two concurrent activities this morning. 9 - 11 a.m. Both activities start at the Rust Visitor center at the Honey Creek trail head.**

**1.Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** (See Jan 4th for details).

**2.Primitive Cooking Techniques. 9 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.** Reservations required, activity fee is \$10.00 per person. A fun program to learn about the foods available to native peoples and how they were prepared. We'll try our hand at cooking sotol hearts, planked fish, Acorn and cactus seed pinole, nopalitos and whatever else we can catch! facilitator is Walt Schumann.

**March 1st - Two activities this morning. Both activities start at the Rust Visitor center at the Honey Creek trail head.**

**1.Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** (See Jan 18th for details).

**2.Outdoor Dutch Oven Cookin'. 12 - 3 p.m.**

Reservations required, \$25 per person. Members of Friends Of GR/HC, \$15 per person. Pot Wrangler, Charlene Simmons will teach the basics of using the Dutch oven on a campfire. Plus tin turtle ideals. Participants will eat the prepared meal!!



**March 8, 15, 22. Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** (See Jan 18th for details).

**March 22. Ice Age to the Alamo.** Slide and lecture program on archeology of Central Texas by Herb Uecker, Archeologist. 7-8 p.m. at the Amphitheater by Park Store.

**March 29th - Two concurrent activities this morning. Both start at the Rust Visitor center at the Honey Creek trail head.**

**1.Honey Creek Canyon Walk. 9 - 11 a.m.** (See Jan 18th for

details).

**2.Monarch Watch and Tagging. 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.** You can participate in a nationwide scientific program tracing migration patterns of the Monarch butterfly as they begin their spring migration north.



Our observations will help expand what is known about the Monarch's Texas migration. If you cannot come to the scheduled event, it is still possible to help by counting flybys. Survey forms and instructions are available in park headquarters.

**April 5th - Two concurrent activities this morning. Both start at the Rust Visitor center at the Honey Creek trail head.**

**Ethnobotany Walk. 9- 11 a.m.** Interpretive hike to learn about cultural and historical uses of native plants for food, fiber, medicine. Easy one mile hike along Honey Creek Canyon. Lead by Penny Solis.

**Monarch Watch and Tagging. 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.** See March 29th for details.

**Watch for our new, exciting programs in the works for 1997!**



Park Interpreter, Tom Campsey will begin a new series of weekend programs in March and April. Tom will tell tall tales around evening campfires, host slide shows like "Yes! It does snow in Texas!", teach a *Kids' Wilderness Survival Course* and interpret for us at a *Watchable Wildlife* viewing programs.

**Earth Day is April 19 1997**

**Something to Sneeze at . . .** From December to February each year, thousands of Texans get choked up over an act of procreation. Winter is the season for Ashe juniper to reproduce. In the process, these trees cause an allergic reaction Texans call cedar fever.



True cedar, like the Biblical cedar of Lebanon, belongs to the genus *Cedrus*. True cedars have woody cones and are members of the pine family. Junipers belong to the genus *Juniperus*. They have fleshy cones (you have probably always believed them to be little blue "berries") and are members of the cypress family. However, many junipers with fragrant wood have been called cedars. Ashe juniper, *Juniperus ashei*, was named in honor of American botanist William Willard Ashe and also is known as mountain cedar and rock cedar.

The source of the allergy known as cedar fever is juniper pollen, which "male" juniper trees must produce to fertilize juniper seeds. But relying on wind to transport pollen to a "female" tree is a chancy business. The odds of a particular pollen's grain landing on the right spot on another tree just a few yards away are incredibly small.

But multiply that incredibly small chance by an incredibly large number of pollen grains, and successful reproduction is insured. So juniper trees guarantee a new generation of juniper seedlings by being extravagant with their pollen, to the dismay of allergy victims. It is also interesting to note that last season's berry-like cones are often still present on the junipers. This leads many people to mistakenly believe the male and female trees are two different species of juniper. During the winter, the male trees take on yellowish to orange highlights. Step up closer, if you dare, to one of these trees and you will see that the color results from the maturing pollen cones at the tips of every leaf.

Few allergy-causing trees are as prolific. In the dead of winter, allergy researchers as far away as Minneapolis have found Texas juniper pollen drifting into their measuring devices. Ragweed-allergy sufferers start to wheeze at a few hundred particles per cubic meter (ppcm). But the cedar-pollen count in the Texas hill country frequently soars into the five figures; readings of 50,000 ppcm are common.

Cedar fever is particularly pesky because it hits in repeated, powerful "spikes" and usually erupts just after the first freeze. The allergy is triggered when windy weather or a stiff breeze prompts the trees' tiny cones to open, releasing the yellowish pollen inside. When junipers let loose, the ascending pollen is sometimes so thick that newcomers have been known to call local fire departments, thinking they are seeing smoke rising from the trees.

For many, allergist can relieve the symptoms with nasal sprays, antihistamines or shots that deliver small doses of the dreaded pollen to build up immunity. Those with harder cases turn to shots of cortisone. Meanwhile, each winter, a cold, yellow-gray cloud of juniper pollen will rise by the ton over central and western Texas just as surely as the sun will rise in the east each morning. It is an awesome spectacle of individual juniper trees taking their chances and playing their part in the serious game of species survival. It is nothing to sneeze at.

Article from Austin-American Statesman, December 11, 1996 and Texas Parks and Wildlife Magazine, written by John Williams, issue and year unknown. Illustration from Native & Naturalized Woody Plants of Austin & the Hill Country by Brother Daniel Lynch.

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**Spring Branch, TX 78070**