



Friends of Guadalupe River Honey Creek, Inc.

A non-profit organization

Issue #13

3350 Park Rd 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070 830-438-2656

July - September 1997



Volunteer, Ed Günter, teaching chemical water testing and bio-monitoring to students at Honey Creek

Honey Creek Outdoor Classroom by Jerry Urbanoyzk

The 1997 Honey Creek Outdoor Classroom that was held during the month of May was a huge success! Over seven hundred 6th grade students from Arlon Seay Intermediate School and Canyon Intermediate School in Comal I.S.D. attended the program, as well as a number of home-schooled children. The students, teachers and parent chaperones were all surprised at what they encountered here at Honey Creek.

What many thought would be a fun filled play day at the park turned out to be a whole lot more than just that. A bus load of about 50 to 60 students unloaded each morning at about 9:00 at the Rust House. Here the students were quickly placed into four separate groups and then given a pretest. This was the kids first clue that the day would be more than just fun and games! From there the groups were led down the trail toward the Honey Creek Crossing. Along the way, each group stopped at one of four activities: 1.) Watershed discovery and tree measuring, 2.) Compass orienteering, 3.) Nature walk and poetry writing and 4.) Chemical water testing and bio-monitoring. Each activity lasted 50 minutes with a 20 minute lunch break. At the end of the day the students were given an on site post-test which was collected before they got back on the bus and headed for home. The fact that there was an over-all increase of about 30% between the pre- and post-test grades demonstrated that the students did

learn from their activities here! What's even more impressive is that they really enjoyed the hands-on activities and learning out in nature. The focus of the day was on watershed conservation. The four activities were geared toward teaching how the activities of people and the kinds of vegetation in a watershed area affect the amount of rainfall that replenishes our underground water supply, and rain water run-off. The students were given the opportunity to distinguish and compare the vegetation in an upland area to that of a riparian zone along the creek, and were encouraged to make inferences as to the reasons for the differences they observed. For many of the students, the most favored activity was poetry writing. They had time to sit on rocks near the trail overlooking the creek and write down their thoughts about what they could hear, smell, feel, and see in the special environment they were visiting. So often people don't learn to appreciate the beauty of nature because they just don't take the time to notice it. Many of the students expressed a desire to bring their parents back with them to visit again.

This valuable program, presented by Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek Inc., was made possible by a grant from Texas Parks and Wildlife Outreach Program and the Amy McNutt Foundation. We were very fortunate in finding the eighteen wonderful volunteers who led the student activities. They enjoyed the activities and learned as much as the kids did. What a superb job they all did! We plan to expand this program for the coming year to two days per week and run it from

September through November and February through May. This would be a terrific program for area kids as well as inner city kids to be able to experience; they could see first hand that there is more to nature than streets, cars, and buildings. In order to do this we need to build a strong team of committed volunteers who are willing to give one or two days a week during these months to share their love of nature with young minds. We are also seeking donations to help differ program expenses of and busing costs for underprivileged schools. Please contact Guadalupe River State Park Headquarters for further information regarding this program and for volunteer information at 830-438-2656.

Thank you Volunteers

Helgart Suhr
Mac McDonald
Ludmilla Ball
Ed Gunter
Amos Pemberton
Jan Estes
Jim Berry
Elaine Felux
Tom Anderson
Maureen Klevenhagen
Darcy Seiter

Tom Campsey
Carla Homseth
Florence Riedel
Juree Beam
Katie Mitchell
Richard Solis
Allen Perry
Cindy Glick
Jan Wrede
Courtney Walker
Deirdre Hisler



Superintendent's Corner

by Duncan G. Muckelroy

Well, May has come and gone. The good news is that the Honey Creek Outdoor Classroom coordinated with the Comal ISD was a wonderful success. Project Coordinator, Terry Urbanczyk received about 134 complimentary letters from students and teachers. A popular activity at the outreach program was the water testing, particularly the part where the kids got to identify the aquatic organisms. Certainly all of the students left with an appreciation of the Honey Creek experience.

Repairs to the windmill at the Rust House were completed prior to the Earth Day by Spring Branch Repair and Metal Works. The \$1200 cost of the project was paid for by the Friends Organization. The windmill will be used as a means to enhance the interpretive and educational aspects of the Rust House as a former working ranch.

May was a wet month. The park's policy for ensuring the safety of its visitors is to cut off access and egress of the

river anytime the river flow exceeds 1,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). The average flow for the month of May was 1,240 cfs, compared to the normal of 500cfs for this time of the year. This translated into closing the river access for 12 days out of the month. Out of the five weekends in the month, the river was closed for two of them, and park visitors were warned of dangerous conditions for a third. This translated into poor visitation and revenue rates for the month during a time of fiscal problems for the Department.

Speaking of financial woes, the park still has not been able to hire any seasonal staff, and has lost two of its employees temporarily to another park. We have also lost all of our park host, who were a great help to us this spring. In fact, John Johnston and Bill Disney were responsible for inspecting the electricity, repairing the steps, hanging the screen doors and installing the chandeliers in the Rust House. If there are any hard working people willing to volunteer their time as a park host or as part of the weekend, we would greatly appreciate the effort.

Guadalupe River Teaches "Course" In Respect For Mother Nature

Update to Superintendent's notes by Tom Campsey

Well the wet weather we have been talking about just got wetter. In the early morning hours of Sunday, June 22, 1997, up to 18 inches of rain fell in the Upper Guadalupe River's watershed. This resulted in a rise of 60 plus feet at the park. The river was flowing at just under 1000 cubic feet per second as of Saturday, June 21. The river crested at over 125,000 cubic feet per second on Sunday at around 2:00 p.m. During the flood, it was reported that the gauge station at Spring Branch road sustained severe damages. Some estimates of river flow approach the 160,000 cubic feet per second mark, which compares to the 1978 food of the river.

With such a massive amount of water, there is going to be a great deal of damage. The greatest amount of damage occurred at the river bottom, where our natural resource base was severely impacted. The park store and day use restroom were partially submerged in the flood waters, and also sustained a great deal of damage

Despite the devastation, volunteer support of the cleanup and recovery has been overwhelming. Mark McDonald, the outdoor journalist for the Express News, has helped advertise for the clean-up, and has also participated in the clean up. We would also like to thank the Youth Habitat of San Antonio group for all of the time they have put into the clearing of flood debris. Another important couple involved in the clean up is Dale and Anne Kelly. They work as wood sculptors, and plan on using some of the large cypress logs which washed up for their work. Carroll Gosser, our fire wood provider, is also helping clear debris for us.

We would also like to give a warm welcome to the emergency hires, Chris and Curtis Cook, Michael DeKoch, Ed Gunter, Tom Anderson, and Mark McDonald Jr. Most of these people are familiar faces, and we greatly appreciate the extra time which they are putting in.

We also plan on having two volunteer clean up days. The first will be Sunday, June 29, 1997. This clean up will be supervised by the park staff, and sponsored by Honey Creek Store and the Beehive Cafe. The second cleanup date has not been scheduled yet, but will occur after the July 4th weekend. This cleanup will be sponsored by Gary-o's restaurant in Bulverde, who will provide sandwiches for the volunteers. Anyone who would like to help out on dates other than the two set days are encouraged to report to the park on any weekday between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. We would like to extend a great debt of thanks to all of the volunteers.

In conclusion, even though we were hit hard by this natural disaster, we have come out of it all right. Our park store and restroom repair and recovery will cost us quite a bit of money. The damaged trees will take a long time to recover to their majestic state. However, the important thing is that there were no major injuries or deaths. The damaged items can be replaced, and mother nature has her own plan for dealing with this kind of damage.

Notes from the President by *Richard Solis*

As this fiscal year comes to a close for The Friends group we can look back on some fine accomplishments. The Rust House was painted and repaired, then the windmill and water trough. Charlene Simmons secured the donation of an automatic deer feeder, built bird feeders, and hung humminbird feeders and has given new life to the old ranch home. We successfully competed for a generous grant from TPWD to sponsor The Honey Creek Outdoor Classroom in May for Comal I.S.D. 6th graders and it was everything we had hoped it would be. Even this erie weather cooperated, giving us cool and dry days. The February Volksmarch was a fun event with some really great people. We have a lot of positive momemum going and foresee the 1997-98 year to be even better. We look forward to elections and new officers at the annual meeting August 9th and hope to see all of you there.

Honey Creek Canyon

was spared damage from the record rainfall that so ravaged Guadalupe RSP. The Guadalupe River crest of 60 feet, filled the canyon nearly full and rivaled the 1978 flood levels. However, the back wash was gentle and left little noticeable damage to banks or delicate vegetation. The little foot bridge built years ago by Boerne High School students was peacefully floated about 100 feet to the base of the large Gum Bumelia tree along our hiking trail. Its' footing, a cedar log, came to rest precisely under the bridge, although the two are not attached.

Rain storms over the Honey Creek watershed of June 6th actually left greater damage. At the crossing, lightning struck a large cypress and blew out a 30 foot long slice of its' trunk. Two days later another storm sent six or more feet down Honey Creek, slumping a bank, uprooting a Texas Ash and removing the great sycamore log bridge we have enjoyed since the last flood of 1987. June was definitely a month we will be talking about for a long time.

Penny Solis

Operation Kidfish Success

by *Tom Campsey*



May 11th was the perfect day for a fishing trip. The sun was out, and the air was dry, and the fish were biting. We had about 15 kids with their parents lined up along the bank of the river with bamboo fishing poles and worms in hand. I was hoping

that some of the bass might be biting, so I prepared the poles with a hook that was a little too big for the

sunfish and bluegills that kept stealing the young anglers' bait. After about half an hour of no one catching a fish, one of the kids hooked one. Then there was another, and another. The kids had discovered the honey holes along the river, and also found out the secret to setting the hook at the right time. The sheer thrill of seeing their little faces light up when they saw what they had caught made the whole thing worth while.

I hope to make the kidfish program a regular program in the future. I am currently trying to obtain fishing poles through donations, as well as other tackle. I have also requested literature on several similar programs which have proven to be successful. If you have any questions, comments, or old fishing equipment sitting around gathering dust, please contact me at the park headquarters (830) 438-2656.

Annual Meeting will be August 9

Please join us from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for lunch and a fun get together to meet your Board of Directors and fellow "Friends". We will meet at the Rust Visitor Center at Guadalupe River State Park. Remember to bring your lawn chair. Elections will also be held for expiring terms of Directors. Members must be present to vote.

Jelly Cooking Program to Air on PBS

Last fall, Kristen Berg, of TPWD Media Services filmed our Jelly Cooking Program for airing on the PBS television series, "Texas Parks & Wildlife". We had a lot of fun working with Kristen and her program tape is sure to excite a lot of interest in the classes this year. The TV program date has not been set as of yet, so check your Parks & Wildlife Magazine for local programming schedules, it should be aired during the August to October time frame. If you were planning to join in on one of our Jelly classes this year, please check the dates in the calendar on page 6 and make your reservations now!

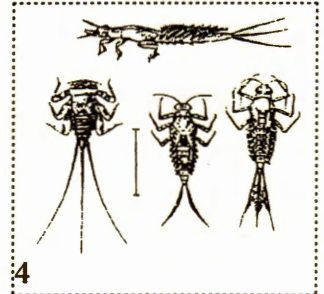
Texas Watch Report by *Tom Anderson*



In the last issue I explained about benthic macroinvertebrates and divided them into six groups according to their food gathering techniques. I promised to give examples of these in the next newsletter. So here goes. Many of these organisms may look like real killers, but keep in mind they are quite small. Don't let the pictures keep you from enjoying a dip in the Guadalupe. (Water level permitting)

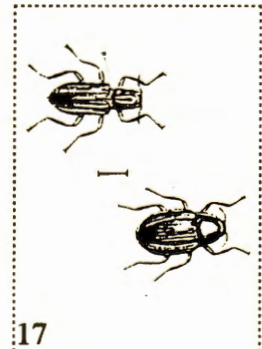
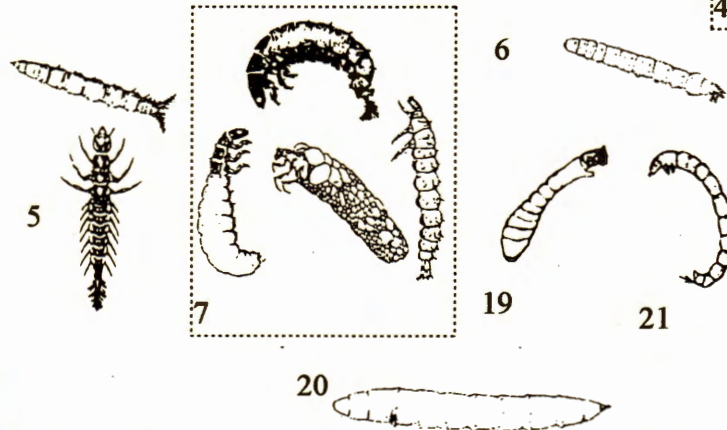
Scrapers- # 16 Water Penny (Named after our own Penny - Just Kidding)

- 4 Mayfly Larva
- 23 Gilled Snail
- 25 Planarian
- 30 Left Handed/Pouch Snail



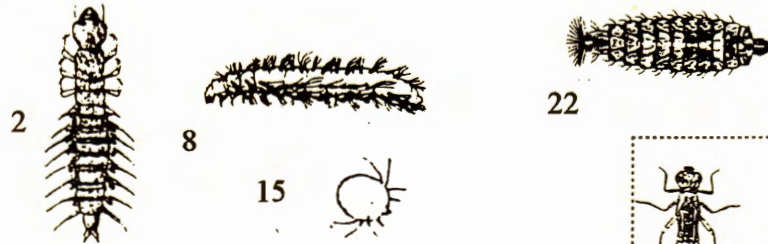
Collectors- #4 Mayfly Larva

- 3 Snipe Fly
- 5 Alderfly
- 6 Crane Fly
- 7 Caddisfly Larva
- 17 Riffle Beetle
- 19 Black Fly
- 20 Deer Fly
- 21 Midge
- 22 Soldier Fly
- 28 Biting Midge
- 31 Segmented Worm



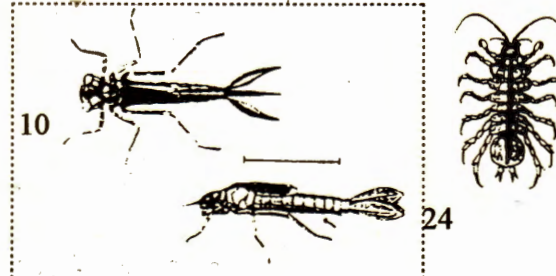
Predators- # 1 Stonefly Larva

- 2 Dobsonfly Larva
- 3 Snipe Fly Larva
- 8 Aquatic Month
- 9 Dragonfly Larva
- 10 Damselfly
- 15 Water Mites
- 29 Crayfish



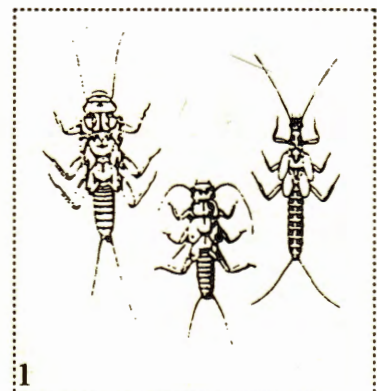
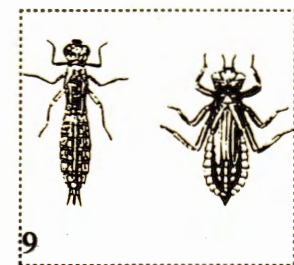
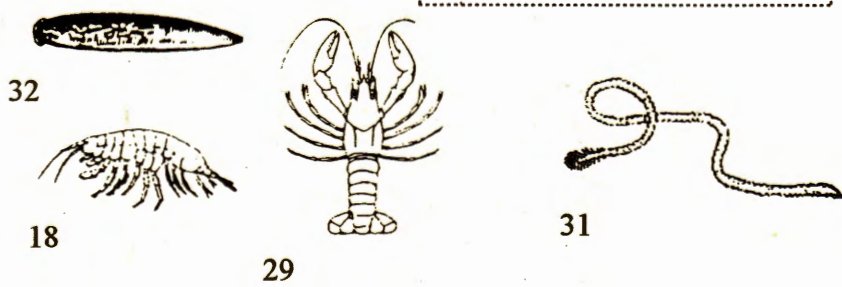
Shredders- # 1 Stonefly Larva

- 7 Caddisfly Larva
- 18 Scuds
- 24 Sowbug



Parasites- # 32 Leech

Piercers- # 7 Caddisfly Larva



Windmill Happenings

by Charlene Simmons

Great things are in the planning for the fall of 1997. With our wonderful windmill plumbing again we are planning a demonstration deer-resistant herb garden irrigated by the windmill. Also in the works is a display on how a mill pumps underground. Tom Anderson and his students of Churchill High School have taken on this part of the project.

The Texas Monarch Watch

by Penny Solis

This spring, we joined in on a nationally sponsored research program to collect data for study on a most unusual butterfly, the Monarch Butterfly. Our job would be to catch and tag as many Monarchs as possible as they began the Spring migration northward from their winter vacation in Mexico. I wrote the program up for publication in our newsletter and Passport Journal and gathered up supplies, butterfly nets, a model of a Monarch, instructions, tags and glue. *GLUE?!* "Would the glue hurt the butterfly?", "Won't the paper tag make the butterfly too heavy on one side?", "Will holding them mess up their scales?" "No, Don't worry", I say, and somehow the volunteers were reassured that I knew what I was talking about.

The first tagging day was Saturday, March 29. A perfect weather day for Monarchs to fly and nectar - not so bad for volunteers either. This year's Spring migration had brought large numbers of Monarch's through central Texas. After a brief orientation of how to catch and tag a Monarch, the hunt was afoot. Within minutes, volunteer Lelia Vaughn netted the first and most spectacular catch of the month. Dashing after a fine butterfly, Lelia raised her net, but the clever Monarch thwarted her pursuit by passing high over cactus and stones. Lelia would have to choose whether to look up to see the butterfly or down to avoid an accident. But Lelia raced fearlessly through these frightening obstacles which made me cringe and cover my eyes and netted the butterfly with a forehand that would have been any tennis player's envy. The butterfly was then tagged and released to go on its way and now everyone was fired up for the chase. During April many new Lelia's stepped up to the net.



Publicity distributed for the tagging program by Parks and Wildlife attracted the attention of Texas Country Reporter and other media. The rainy, cold weather of April prevented filming by Texas Country Reporter. However, it cooperated for John Pronk of Dallas WFAA-TV 8. John was able to produce a really nice three minute segment of members Carla and Kyle Hornseth, Ed Gunter, and myself tagging Monarch butterflies for the Texas Monarch Watch. The segment was picked up and aired nationally by news programs. I had a call from a friend in Wichita, Kansas who saw us on the local evening news.

But how did we do with statistics? We were able to catch and tag 51 adult Monarchs. Member Ed Gunter had the most individual catches at 12 each.

Kyle Hornseth and his Bulverde Elementary class, Aaron Smith of Canyon Lake and myself raised another 43 Monarch caterpillars for

tagging (tip: it's a lot easier to catch a caterpillar). All the information has been sent into The University of Lawrence, Kansas. The information will be compiled and if any of our butterflies are recovered we will receive the information in the next Monarch Watch Newsletter.

Join us this fall as we sprint after the great-great-grandchildren of our Monarchs on their way South to winter over in Mexico. Better wear your PF Flyers!

To join the Texas Monarch Watch and receive your own tagging kit and bi-yearly newsletters send \$10 to The Texas Monarch Watch, c/o TPWD, 4200 Smith School Rd, Austin, TX 78744. Or visit their web site at monarch.bio.ukans.edu80. The Texas Monarch Watch hotline is manned by Dr. Bill Calvert at 1-800-468-9719.

1997 Summer Activities at Guadalupe River S.P. & Honey Creek SNA

Readme! Activity fees for Saturday hikes into Honey Creek Canyon are \$2 per person (members of "Friends" are free). Other program fees/reservations as noted. If you are not a TCP pass holder, be aware that park entrance fees are extra. Park phone # is 830-438-2656 for additional information, reservations for special programs and directions.

Volunteers needed to host programs and activities! Please contact Penny Solis at 830-935-4730 or join us on any Saturday morning hike into Honey Creek Canyon for more information.

July 12th: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. 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. Meet at Rust House.

July 19th: Ethnobotany Walk. 9 - 11:00 a.m. Hike along beautiful Honey Creek Canyon and learn about plants and their uses for food, medicines, dyes and fibers. Meet at Rust House.

July 20th: Photo and Artist Event 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Photograph and/or paint along the trails of Honey Creek Canyon at your own pace. Reservations required, fee \$10. 830-438-2656.

July 26th: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. (See July 12th for details)

August 2nd: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. (See July 12th for details)

August 9th: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. (See July 12th)

August 9th: Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek, Inc., membership annual meeting and elections. 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Come enjoy a lunch and meet new "Friends" at the Rust House. Members must be present to vote

August 16th: Children's Aquatic Adventure. 9 - 11:00 a.m. Easy walk to Honey Creek to seine for fish and insects and learn about water resources. Wear shoes for walking over rocky ground and shoes for rocky creek bottoms. Meet at Rust House.

August 23rd (Morning Program): Ethnobotany Walk. 9 - 11:00 a.m. (See July 19th for details)

August 23rd (Afternoon Program): Plant Identification Workshop. Learn how to recognize native hill country shrubs and trees with an easy plant key. Workshop includes lessons and book. Reservations required, fee \$7 per person, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.. Meet at Rust House. 830-438-2656.

August 30th: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. (See July 12th)

September 6th: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. (See July 12th for details)

September 13th: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. (See July 12th for details)

September 20th (Morning Program): Children's Aquatic Adventure. 9 - 11:00 a.m. Easy walk to Honey Creek to seine for fish and insects and learn about water resources. Wear shoes for walking over rocky ground and shoes for rocky creek bottoms. Meet at Rust House.

September 20th (Afternoon Program): Plant Identification Workshop. Learn how to recognize native hill country shrubs and trees with an easy plant key. Workshop includes lessons and book. Reservations required, fee \$7 per person, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m. Meet at Rust House. 830-438-2656.

September 27th: Honey Creek Canyon Walk 9 - 11 a.m. (See July 12th for details)

Fall Activities!!

Fall brings Mustang Grape and Prickly Pear Fruit Jelly cooking classes. Make your reservations now as these programs fill quickly.

Native Plant Cooking. Mustang Grape Jelly. October 11, 12, and 18, 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. **Cactus Fruit Jelly,** October 19, 25, 26, 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Participants will learn how to make jelly from scratch. Fruit and all supplies are provided. Reservations required, fee \$25, payable in advance (Friends members, \$15). Call 830-438-2656.

Utensiless Cooking over a campfire. October 11, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Have you ever forgotten your pots and pans? Join Bill and Beverly Brummel for a fun cooking demo using clever ways to cook with what nature provides. Please make reservations, fee \$1.00 per person, call 830-438-2656

Dutch Oven Cookin', Nov 1st, 12 - 3 p.m. Pot Wrangler, Charlene Simmons will teach the basics of using the Dutch oven on a campfire. Plus tin turtle ideals. Participants will enjoy the prepared meal!! Reservations required, \$25 per person. ("Friends" members, \$15) call 830-438-2656.