



# Friends of Guadalupe River Honey Creek, Inc.

A non-profit organization

Issue #18 3350 Park Rd 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070 ☎ 830-438-2656 Mar - Aug 1999

## Notes From Our President - Ed Gunter

After seeing first hand the power of the Guadalupe River when it decides to leave its banks, I am finally returning to the fold. A special thanks to Joe and all others who kept the Friends group moving over the last few months. It is appreciated!

**One hot item now is MEMBERSHIP!!!** If you haven't renewed, please do it today! Your dues and donations are our primary source of revenue to allow purchases such as the new phones and computers for the park office and base material to repair flood and other trail damage, so we can safely continue the Saturday morning walks and the Outreach program.

**Our next big event is the Outreach program.** Thanks to Penny for so much time and work to ensure we can carry on with this fantastic program this Spring. We're still looking for volunteer guides to help out from about April.

26<sup>th</sup> for 3 weeks. If you can even make a day or two a week, please let us know. Don't worry if you're not an expert in any of the areas we teach. We will have several training sessions before classes start and if you can't make any of them, we can arrange training at your convenience. And frankly a love of the outdoors is more important than an in-depth knowledge of the material. In many ways, the purpose of this program is to shape attitudes and interests, rather than "book-learning."

We're looking at several other excellent programs over the next few months that are mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. **We really need YOUR ideas and help to develop new ideas and programs.** If you have a special idea, interest, or talent, let me know. We will do our best to help implement it.

The weather is getting beautiful!!! Come on out to the Park!! Hope to see you on some beautiful Saturday morning at Honey Creek.

## Volunteer Appeal for 1999 Honey Creek Outdoor Classroom Education Program

May of 1999 will be our third year to offer free of cost a curriculum based hands on outdoor classroom for Comal County 6<sup>th</sup> graders. We have many positions open for volunteers who would like to help with this enjoyable program. It runs April 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, then May 3<sup>rd</sup> through 21<sup>st</sup>, Monday through Friday.

We need volunteers that will facilitate and teach students at each of the activity stations. About 800 6<sup>th</sup> grade children from Comal I.S.D. will attend the program. Volunteers have been trained during April and we can still train you in May for the Spring session. Requirements for volunteers:

1. A love of nature and the outdoors
2. The ability to work with children
3. Be available to volunteer from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. two or more days per week (Monday - Friday), for six weeks beginning at the end of April 1999.

Your help will make it possible to continue offering this program to comal county school children who otherwise would not be able to participate in an outdoor environmental program. This is the only such program in our area and is conveniently offered to the children through the Intermediate schools as part of their school day. It is environmental education that leads to an appreciation and protection through wise and ethical use of our beautiful natural resources like Honey Creek Canyon.

Please contact Penny Solis at (830) 935-4011 for more information.



## News from Churchill H.S.

**Monarch Watch Spring 99** This Spring there is already a nice migration of Butterflies to our area and Guadalupe River State Park. The Churchill ECHO students are doing their best to obtain tags from Texas Parks and Wildlife. We had not received the tags as of April the 10<sup>th</sup>. But hand outs and discussions of the program have been made available and extra walks into honey creek for those who came and could not tag butterflies. The students designed new handouts for visitors to our program with complete information about why we are tagging the Monarchs and how they can contact The Texas Monarch Watch to become involved on an individual basis.



**project.** One continuing program coordinated by Churchill High School has been the Monarch Butterfly tagging program.

Contact Ed Gunter at 830-560-2522 or myself Penny Solis at 830-935-4011 for further information on how to make a weekend at the park more educational and fun for park guests.

## *Membership Renewal's are Due!*

**Memberships for the Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek run renew each January.** If you haven't renewed, this will be *your last newsletter*. We don't want to drop you from our mailing list, so please renew now!!

**Your membership dues are tax deductible** and help us maintain programs such as the Outdoor Classroom for Comal ISD kids, community service projects for students and scouts, Earth Day as well as needed purchases for the Park and staff of Guadalupe River State Park.

**Our next project is likely to be repairs to the foundation of the Rust Visitor Center.** The floors are showing some disturbance and shifting which will need to be corrected as soon as possible.

## Volunteers Needed at Honey Creek State Natural Area

**We are in great need of volunteers** to help us with weekend public programs at Honey Creek State Natural Area and Guadalupe River State Park.

**You don't have to be an experienced volunteer.** Many of our programs are easy and fun to learn and we will be with you until you are ready to take charge of an activity. We'd love to offer birding walks, flower and plant identification walks. Often we just need someone to be on hand to facilitate an activity while a guest expert shares their knowledge with an interested group.

**Perhaps your class would like to take on a**

## *Honey Creek Canyon Walks*

**Every Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. join us at the Rust House for a beautiful hike along Honey Creek Canyon.** An interpretive guide will talk about the geology and cultural history of the area.

## On the Run!



One of the simplest adaptations for survival is speed. Many **cursorial** (adapted for running) mammals have evolved "speedy" legs which help them either escape predators or catch prey.

When danger threatens, the White-tailed deer's best defense is to flee. Deer are well adapted for running and jumping. They are able to move through dense brush very quickly, taking 30' strides and reaching speeds of up to 40 mph and clearing an 8' fence from a standing start! But it is often quite common that old fences with jumbles of wire can become fatal traps when deer blunder into them while being chased. Whenever possible, old fencing should be removed.

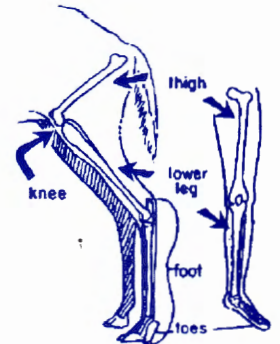
Speed is determined mainly by the length and number of strides. The most universal adaptation for land speed has been to lengthen the legs for longer strides, while keeping the ends light to improve the speed of the stride. Runners like the deer, horses, cats and dogs have long, skinny legs. Most of the runners have gone so far as to run only on their toes and many have even reduced the number of toes present. The horse has carried this to the extreme, with only one toe reaching the ground.

Ask where the knee is on a cow, horse or dog and you'll rarely get the right answer. What most people would call the knee - and a "backward bending" one at that - is actually the animal's ankle. As the diagram shows, the cursorial (ker -SORE-ee-al) life style demands a considerable difference in the structure of what we, as humans, would call a "normal" leg.

Try swinging a baseball bat back and forth rapidly. Now try a yardstick. The yardstick's smaller mass, especially at the far end, makes it easier to swing quickly. You might say that we have baseball bat legs; deer have yardsticks. Most of their muscle mass is near the body; the extremities are mostly bone and sinew. One of the reasons for our more extensive musculature is our extreme flexibility. We can move our arms and hands, legs and feet in all directions, but we must have

many fairly strong muscles in order to do so, and all those muscles make us "clunky". A dog or cat cannot manipulate its limbs as we can. Its joints are less complex and its musculature is reduced, making it faster for its size.

The rather slow moving bears and human are **plantigrade**, having feet with large, flat weight-bearing surfaces from the heel to the toes. Most of the foot is in contact with the ground during walking and even running. (Try running sprints and distances to see just how you do it.) Animals such as the dog and cat are **digitigrade**; they stand and walk on their "fingers and toes" - digits - with their heel permanently raised. The most highly adapted are animals like the horse, deer and antelope, which are **unguligrade**. These animals walk on the very tips of their "fingernails", which are modified into hoofs. They also exhibit a reduction in the number of digits on which they walk; a deer travels on two toes, a horse on only one. Many of the fastest mammals are found among the unguigrades, which must be able to run from large carnivores.



Strangely enough, one of the fastest runners in the world is the Cheetah, even though its limb structure is not as highly adapted as that of the unguigrades on which it feeds. The Cheetah is fast because of its supple backbone. Its backbone, like that of other cats, curves like a spring with one stride and straightens with the next, giving additional thrust to the legs. This springlike bounding provides an incredible burst of speed which far surpasses the speed of its prey. The disadvantage to this method of running is that it consumes great quantities of energy and is possible for only short distances. Dogs, horses and deer lack this alternating spring-like stride; each stride is like the next, but the energy requirement is lower. As one would expect, cats tend to stalk their prey, relying on a surprise dash; dogs try to run their prey down.

## Membership Application

Friends of Guadalupe River/Honey Creek, Inc., Membership Application *Dues are annual and renew each January. Dues paid after June 30th of each year are prorated at half of the full membership fees.* Make check payable to: Friends of GR/HC, Inc., 3350 Park Rd. 31, Spring Branch, TX 78070.  \$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 Supporting  \$100.00 Sustaining  \$500.00  
 Corporate  \$1,000.00 Life

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**Date**      **Name**       Renewal     New Membership

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**Street, City, State & Zip**

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**Phone: home, Optional: e-mail, work, fax**

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