



NATURE NOTES

Dedicated to the Enjoyment and Conservation of the Natural Beauty of Sun City Texas at Georgetown
VOLUME 23 Issue 2 January 2020

Tuesday, February 18, 2:30 p.m., SCB Oak Wilt in Williamson County

We have Oak Wilt infestation to both the west and east of Sun City. Presented by Texas A&M Forest Service

Tuesday, March 17, 2:30 p.m., SCB The Bamberger Ranch (Selah), History and Current Activities

Presented by Colleen Gardner

MEMBERSHIP DUES: \$12 for 2020

Dues include our monthly programs and all Special Interest Group programs and activities.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Nature Club activities are posted on the Nature Club website calendar. E-mails are sent to Club members only.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

SIG Chair: Steve Kelly



REPTILE ID, RELOCATION & MAPPING

FREE service, call:

- Steve Kelley 512-639-0539
- Jim Christiansen 512-868-3504
- John Leek 713-825-0145
- Joe Plunkett 774-226-0810
- City of Georgetown Animal Control 512-930-3592



We encourage residents to leave harmless, beneficial reptiles in their landscapes, but call us so we can identify and map all reptiles.

ASTRONOMY SIG

Watch for Special Viewing announcements.

Mon., **February 24**, 7:00 p.m. CC Florence Room. Topic is TBD

Mon., **March 23**, 7:00 p.m. CC Florence Room. Topic is TBD.

SIG Chairs: Richard Wagoner & David Lingo



BIRDING SIG

Tues., **February 4**, 2:00 p.m., CC G'Town / Florence. Join Karen McBride to present, "Jaguar Spotting: Gardens of the Amazon and the Patanal".



No **March** Meeting

BIRD WALKS

Thurs. **February 6**, Wed, **February 19**, Thurs, **March 5**, & Wed, **March 18**. All walks 8:00 a.m., meet at LHPP parking lot near the lake. Any changes will be emailed.

SIG Chairs: Ed Rozenburg & Martin Byhower

BUTTERFLY/MOTH SIG

Tues., **March 3**, 2:30 p.m., CC Georgetown/Florence, Topic TBA.



BUTTERFLY WALKS

SIG Chair: Ed Rozenburg

ENVIRONMENTAL SIG

Fri., **February 28**, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., ACA, Topic "Finding Hope and Building Resilience in Facing the Overwhelming Problems in Nature/the Environment."

Fri., **March 27**, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., ACA, Topic "The Effects of Eight Billion People on our Planet, and What can be Done to Make a Difference"

SIG Chair: Pamela Tanner



GEOLOGY SIG

Tues., **February 25**, CC G'Town/Florence, 4:00 p.m. Bonnie Crail presents, "My Tour of the San Andreas Fault with Dr. Lucy Jones."

Tues., **March 24**, CC G'Town/Florence, 4:00 p.m. Paul Ohlenbusch presents, "The Caves of Sun City Revisited"



SIG Chair: Paul Swetland

NATIVE PLANTS SIG

Mon., **February 17**, 9:00 a.m. Meet at the Retreat Amenity Center Parking Lot to explore the flora in the Hidden Ravine Nature Area.

Mon., **March 23**, 9:00 a.m. Meet at the intersection of Sun City Blvd and Texas Drive (near the Dog Park) to explore the flora along the Mockingbird Trail



SIG Chair: Larry Fowler

"In winter, the stars seem to have rekindled their fires, the moon achieves a fuller triumph, and the heavens wear a look of a more exalted simplicity. Summer is more wooing and seductive, more versatile and human, appeals to the affections and the sentiments, and fosters inquiry and the art impulse."

— John Burroughs

"The problem with winter sports is that - follow me closely here - they generally take place in winter."

— Dave Barry

"Every winter has its spring."

— H. Tuttle

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

How much water does it take to produce food?

Many years ago, I read an article in a magazine about how much water it takes to produce different foods. I did not keep that article but have remained fascinated with the topic.

Searching the internet (which you can also do) I found many sites, sometimes with differing, sometimes contradictory figures. The following is from one of many sites:

Beef 1,847 gal. per pound *	Pork 718 gal. per pound	Chicken 518 gal. per pound
Six ounce steak 674 gal.	Three ounce ham 135 gal.	One egg 52 gal.
Rice 299 gal. per pound	Pasta 222 gal. per pound	Oats 290 gal. per pound
Almonds 190 gal per pound	Broccoli & cauliflower 34 gal.	Asparagus 258 gal. per pound
Olive oil 1,729 gal. per pound	Corn oil 309 gal. per pound	Sunflower oil 814 gal./pound
Tomato 26 gal. per pound	Cucumbers 42 gal. per pound	Lettuce 28 gal. per pound
Oranges 67 gal. per pound	Peaches 109 gal. per pound	Apples 100 gal. per pound
Watermelon 50 gal. per pound	Grapes 100 gal. per pound	Bananas 100 gal. per pound
12 fluid ounces of beer, 28 gal	5 fluid ounces of wine 34 gal.	17 ounce soda 46 gal.
A cup of tea 108 gallons	A cup of coffee 1,056 gallons	

Some foods can be produced with only natural rain. Others require irrigation. The numbers are especially high for meat and animal products like dairy and eggs because animal feed typically comes from either irrigated or rain-fed grains or rain-fed forage (like grass). Animals that are factory farm- or feedlot-raised (which the majority of livestock in this country are) consume feed that is primarily composed of corn and soy, both of which rely on high amounts of irrigation. *(Global figures for the water intensity of beef vary so significantly that an average isn't particularly informative.)

How much of the food shown above is wasted?

In 2010, Americans wasted about 23 percent of every pound of beef, which accounted for 400 gallons of water that, quite literally, went down the drain. In general,

fruit, vegetables and dairy account for the most consumer waste through spoilage. Also, in 2010, consumers wasted 25 percent of every pound of apples, which ultimately translated to 25 gallons of wasted water.

American consumers want perfect looking products, so farmers and ranchers do not send all of their product to market. That was the source of mini carrots, when one farmer found a way to shave off parts of deformed looking carrots. Grocery Stores often throw away outdated meat and produce.

How much water is fresh and potable?

According to one source, 0.7%. Water truly is a precious resource, necessary for life.

So, what are my conclusions?

I am not saying don't eat meat. Be realistic in what you buy; don't buy food you will discard. At times prepare smaller portions. Shift more of your food consumption to products requiring less water to grow. Share meals with your partner when at restaurants.

Bill Blodgett

Watch a massive bald eagle take off from Boston street.

[Takeoff Link](#)

The bald eagle is the [second largest raptor](#) in North America. The massive bird of prey captured in the video above weighs in the larger end of the scale.

The slow-motion footage was captured by Matt Karolian, the general manager of Boston.com. He noticed the bald eagle on a street in Melrose, a city within the Greater Boston metropolitan area.

Stunned onlookers watched as the bird feasted on something in the road, not far from the Wyoming Hill stop of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority commuter train, according to [Boston.com](#).

As it takes off, you can see the bird's incredible wingspan as it heads toward a line of cars and over some power lines.

No wonder these majestic raptors were chosen to be America's national bird!

Article by Ben Bolton, [Mother Nature Network](#)

