

# THE GORGE

SHARE THE WONDER



## TOUCASIA

Asymmetrical Rudist bivalve ~  
some of the largest in Glen Rose Formation found on Curly Ledge



## CALCITE CRYSTALS

filling a fracture in limestone of the upper Gorge

Gorge Preservation Society  
Quarterly Newsletter  
2009

### What's Inside?

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- Serve the Organization or Volunteer Outdoors
- State of the Gorge & Ongoing Research
- What Dinosaur Tracks in the Gorge?

# Note from the Chair—Val Schroller

Hot. Hotter. Hottest!

Dry. Dryer. Driest!

Records are breaking like tree branches in an ice storm. We have just completed the 13th hottest July on record. What is now being termed "the worst drought of record" continues and the greatest number of triple digit temperature days in one year is happening this year! And, we're only half way through the year.

The water is still flowing in the Gorge and the visitors are still coming. In the first half of this year over 2000 visitors toured the Gorge. This is just a few people shy of our total number of visitors for all of last year.

The major corporations are still finding reasons to bring groups in for their own educational purposes. ExxonMobil continues to bring their employees in for one day classes. This year we have added Nautilus Geoscience Training Alliance and Anadarko Petroleum to the list of interested corporations. Gorge research continues as well. Make sure and read Dr. Bill Ward's report later in this issue.

We are also gaining more experience in the business of tourism. Our Tours Committee worked long hours to revise the 'tour script' to a more workable volume of information that allows for personalization of delivery by each individual guide while maintaining a consistency and accuracy of the information delivered to our guests.

The Field Survey for the Golden Cheeked Warbler and the Black Capped Vireo within the leased area surrounding and including the Gorge was completed this past June. I don't know about you, but if I were golden cheeked or black capped I'd want to live near the Gorge. Wouldn't you? The information offered in the survey will guide our future construction plans as well as add to the environmental diversity of the Gorge experience.

In May we quietly celebrated the first year anniversary of our Natural Resource Manager. This position was created by GBRA to help us manage the day to day operations of tours and schedules. Thank you Jaynellen for your tireless efforts to make everyone who visits the Gorge feel like this is a very special life experience. Thank you GBRA for your continued support.

So many good things are happening. Don't you want to be a part of the experience? Join us. Become a Board member, a guide, a docent, a volunteer.

We need new people to continue to make the Gorge a truly once in a lifetime experience for all.

The Gorge Rocks!

Valerie Schroller

Chair/Gorge Preservation Society

## Special "Thanks" to the GPS Volunteers!

**Gorge Guides:** Dave Wright, Bill Ward, Cinde Jimenez, Dave Skinner, J.W. Pieper, Jamie Kinscherff, Carolyn, Hyatt, Josie Gonzales, Coco Brennan, Susan Bogle, Allen Bartram, Lyle Baie, Barry Brupbacher, Pete Bryant, Earl Dittman, Kerry O'Neal and George Wilkes.

WELCOME NEW GUIDE: Paul Mebane!

**Gorge Docents:** Grace & Bob Waggener, Susan Sprole, Margaret Speck, Susan Smith, Val Schroller, Lois Ricci, David & Sherry Reel, Sara Norton, Arnold Nestel, Larry Miller, Jaynellen Ladd, Skip Johnson, Julie Howard, Mark Henderson, Dana Green, Bob Gray, Lea Gose, Eva Fromme, Kathy Ferguson, Cathy Downs, Sharon Deeny, Lori Campbell, Sheila Bartram, Richard Barnett, Madonna Ballou, Lea Anzalotta and Jane Davis-Toerner.

**Gorge Trail Workers:** Jamie Kinscherff, Charles Tubbs, Allen & Sheila Bartram, Coco Brennan, Susan Bogle, Pete Bryant, Van Green, Frank Stile, Lois Ricci, Dave Skinner, Mark Henderson and Jaynellen Ladd.

**Gorge Merchandise Sales:** Terry Cappetta

**THE PURPOSE OF THIS FORM IS TO PROVIDE THE GPS MEMBERS WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME & TALENTS TO SERVE THE ORGANIZATION ON THE BOARD, COMMITTEE OR TASK FORCE**

The Gorge Preservation Society (GPS) is looking for members for its Board of Directors. The GPS board meets on a monthly basis, 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 4pm at the Sattler office. The current board is made up of local business owners and professionals, County Commissioner, Master Naturalists, scientists and GBRA employees from across the Hill Country.

This is an opportunity for you to be involved in a grass roots non-profit organization that is on the cutting edge of offering innovative educational tours through the Canyon Lake Gorge.

**GPS MISSION STATEMENT**

The Gorge Preservation Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the enjoyment and conservation of a unique natural phenomenon by encouraging responsible, quality access opportunities through academic partnerships, economic initiatives and citizen involvement.

**SKILLS**

Board Member Responsibilities: Potential board members must demonstrate a willingness and ability to contribute their time and talents. They must understand and be in agreement with the mission of our program and be a person of vision.

Expectations of Board of Directors members: It is expected that each board member attends meetings and other board functions; serves on at least one committee; is a spokesperson and an advocate for our organization; uses their professional skills and expertise in the service of our program; becomes involved in our organization's programs & financial situation and makes responsible decisions on the organization's behalf.

GPS Directors will be working closely with our sister organizations, Guadalupe-Blanco River Authority (GBRA) and US Army Corp of Engineers (COE). The COE owns the land and GBRA leases 64 acres of the Canyon Lake Gorge. While working together, we can find direction and solutions more effectively than individually.

We must strive to work in partnership with others and treat partners with respect!

**CODE OF ETHICS**

The Gorge Preservation Society operates the Canyon Lake Gorge in trust on behalf of society. Members of the Board of Directors of the GPS are the ethical guardians charged with the responsibility and protection of that resource.

It is a general principle of this Board to uphold the public trust in all that we do.

Board of Directors shall:

Uphold the highest standards of organizational integrity expected in service to the public.

Represent the interests of all people served by this organization without favor to any special interests and to avoid any private activity or pursuit of a personal interest that might conflict with the public interest.

Focus service on the Board of Directors toward the mission and goals of the GPS rather than any personal goals or personal advantage.

Be accountable for my actions and decisions - always willing to justify and then take responsibility for consequences that flow from them.

Approach Board issues with an open mind, positive attitude and firm effort to make the best decisions for everyone involved. Respect and support the decisions of the Board.

**SERVING ON COMMITTEES**

You do not have to serve on the board to serve on a committee. If you have talents and could serve on any of these committees, let us know. Financial, Fundraising, Land Management, Membership, Nominating, Outreach & Education, Publicity, Scientific Research and Tours Committees.

Serve your community! The Gorge Preservation Society needs citizens who are willing to give time in the service of their community. Please tell us how and where you would like to serve.

**Gorge Preservation Society**  
2075 FM 2673, Suite D  
Canyon Lake, TX 78133  
Email: [jladd@gbra.org](mailto:jladd@gbra.org)  
Fax: 830-964-5425  
Questions call: 830-964-5424

# Volunteer Outdoors



Photo by Vince Monte

## *Volunteer for Outdoor Gorge*

Ordinary citizens. Extraordinary natural resources. Volunteers pull together to promote the enjoyment and conservation of a unique natural phenomenon by encouraging responsible, quality access opportunities through academic partnerships, economic initiatives and citizen involvement. Get involved by guiding educational tours through the Canyon Lake Gorge, trail building & maintenance.

*Gorge Volunteer Impact—Jan. 2007—June 2009*

46 projects

73 volunteers

4 miles of trails built

\$115,470.00 in donated volunteer labor cost

*Thank you, Volunteers for Outdoor Gorge!*



**FIESTA**

SUNDAY  
SEPTEMBER  
27TH  
4PM-7PM

**YOU'RE INVITED!  
OUR VALUED VOLUNTEERS  
TO THE ANNUAL  
GORGE VOLUNTEER  
APPRECIATION FIESTA DINNER**

RSVP  
jladd@gbra.org  
830-964-5424

# State of the Gorge

Last quarter we went from spring to summer much sooner than expected. The serious heat and lack of rain have brought noticeable changes to the gorge. The waterfall at the pit has quit flowing and the wetlands below the waterfalls is drying up. The cattails may die back in this area. We did notice that the whirlpool at the karst feature is draining well again.

With valuable help from our volunteers we were able to shovel and power wash the sediments from the limestone across from twin falls. This effort exposed lots of fractures and fossils that haven't been seen for years. We also went on the offensive against the chinese tallow trees that have become so invasive. I bet we took out several dozen. Dealing with the invasives will be an ongoing challenge... job security for our trail crew.

Our new security signs are in place reminding potential trespassers that the gorge is off limits. Jaynellen has been working on an emergency plan and we recently installed signs designating the extraction points. This will be beneficial to our emergency responders as well as anyone needing their services in the gorge. Thanks Jaynellen for all your hard work on this project.

In April I held a plant class and had a great turnout. We learned a little about plant biology and then went through the gorge to identify plant species. In only three hours we counted over ninety species. Mother nature is taking over. At the bottom of the gorge, on the north side above the rim we have established a plant trail that has surprising diversity and lots of shade. While there I noticed a place with a nice overlook of the gorge. Jaynellen and I agreed that this might be a good spot for a deck. So now there is a footpath from the classroom to the overlook and continuing to the plant trail. We have taken bids on the deck and may be able to get that done next quarter. So despite the oppressive heat, progress continues and the gorge looks - well-gorgeous.

Jamie Kinscherff



## Gorge Volunteer Trail Workers

Left to right: Mark Henderson, Van Green, Pete Bryant, Jamie Kinscherff, Allen & Sheila Bartram, Coco Brennan, Lois Ricci and Susan Bogle.



# ONGOING RESEARCH

The structural geology group of Southwest Research Institute continues its comprehensive multi-year study of the faulting and fracturing associated with the Hidden Valley Fault, part of the Balcones Fault System. Fractures and faults are major controls on hydrologic systems within limestone's and dolostones. Currently, Ron McGinnis is leading a SwRI team in establishing a hydrologic baseline at the Gorge with the aim of creating an initial groundwater-flow model.

The general pattern of groundwater flow in the vicinity of the Gorge can be determined from water level of Canyon Lake, data from nearby water wells, springs and seeps in the Gorge, and surface water in the Gorge. All these data were used to construct a groundwater elevation contour map that will be used to analyze the influence of the fault and the sedimentary layers on groundwater flow patterns.

Probes capable of measuring water depth, temperature, and conductivity were deployed at five locations in the Gorge. These data plus abundant measurements of chemical and physical properties of Gorge springs and pond water and of Lake and well water are providing insight on the influence of Canyon Lake on local groundwater flow. Microbial and chemical analyses of the groundwater may provide data to develop future research related to movement of organic and inorganic contaminants in carbonate aquifers.

Cyanobacteria, moss, grass, forbs, and travertine are rapidly covering certain strategic outcrops in the Gorge. Ron McGinnis, SwRI geologist, organized a group of SwRI volunteers and friends to power-wash some Gorge outcrops which have particular scientific and educational value. It was an all-day and tiring job, but the results were spectacular. Board member Jamie Kinscherff diligently represented the GPS in this worthwhile effort.

The dinosaur and arthropod tracks in the Gorge are slowly weathering away. To have some permanent record of the tracks, replicas of the tracks are being made. Everett Deschner of the Heritage Museum of the Texas Hill Country led a group of GPS and HMTHC volunteers in making silicone molds of some of the best tracks. Deschner and Steve Foster of the HMTHC and Jaynellen Ladd, Jamie Kinscherff, and Bill Ward of GPS spent a hot and labor-intensive day on the spillway making molds of both theropod and sauropod dinosaur tracks. Plaster of Paris casts are being made from the molds. GPS members Richard Barnett, Susan Bogle, and Bill Ward joined HMTHC members E. Deschner, F. Deschner, G. Daniel, and S. Foster in the first two rounds of casting. All volunteers are welcome for the third session.

Dr. Bill Ward



**PLEUROCOELUS—Sauropod**

Long-neck/tail, small head, herbivorous

**ACROCANTHOSAURUS**

Tall-spined lizard, carnivore

Dinosaur tracks in the Gorge!



## GPS Board Members 2009

### Executive Directors

Chair Val Schroller  
Secretary John Guenzel  
Treasurer Susan Bogle

### Directors

Bill Ward  
Donna Eccleston  
Jamie Kinscherff  
Van Green  
J.W. Pieper  
Josie Gonzales  
Tommie Streeter-Rhoad  
Jaynellen Ladd

THE GORGE ROCKS!  
JOIN THE PRESERVATION

157 MEMBERS

#### 2009 2nd Qtr. Tours

49 Public Tours  
13 Education Tours  
15 Group Tours  
3 Corporate Tours  
2 Boy Scout Troops  
1260 Guest in the Gorge!

GORGE PRESERVATION  
SOCIETY

2075 FM 2673, SUITE D  
CANYON LAKE, TEXAS  
78133  
830-964-5424

CANYONGORGE.ORG



Getting Recertified  
ALL GORGE

GUIDES AND DOCENTS  
**CPR & FIRST AID CLASS RECERTIFICATION!**  
SIGN UP NOW, RSVP: [jladd@gbra.org](mailto:jladd@gbra.org)

**FIRST AID CLASS**  
November 20th, Friday at Noon-2pm  
(No more than 20 people)

**CPR CLASS**  
November 20th, Friday at 2:00-4:00pm  
(No more than 20 people)

*Welcome new guide—Paul Mebane!*

*Mark your calendar—GPS Guide/Docent 3rd quarter  
meeting on Tuesday, October 20th, 2009 at 6pm,  
Dinner provided at the Sattler office.*

*We want to “Thank” all of the wonderful volunteers and members of the  
Society for your interest and participation in the Canyon Lake Gorge!*

*“I always wondered why somebody didn’t do something about that.  
Then I realized I was somebody” —Lily Tomlin*

*visit [www.canyongorge.org](http://www.canyongorge.org)*

**A HUGE APPRECIATION TO ALL THE GPS MEMBERS!**

*Have you renewed your GPS membership for 2009?*

*Thank you for reading and we hope you enjoyed our newsletter.*

*May rain fall soon,  
Natural Resource Specialist*

The Gorge Preservation Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the enjoyment and conservation of a unique natural phenomenon by encouraging responsible, quality access opportunities through academic partnerships, economic initiatives and citizen involvement.

*In Partnership:*



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**



**GBRA**  
GUADALUPE-BLANCO RIVER AUTHORITY



**GORGE**  
Preservation Society