

RIVER LEGACY

RIVER LEGACY FOUNDATION • RIVER LEGACY NATURE CENTER • RIVER LEGACY PARK

Newsletter vol. 28 • Summer 2020


Creating Online Content How Our Nature Center Went Virtual

On the Friday of our Spring Break Activities, the news broke. The state of Texas was implementing a shelter in place order and encouraging local government to handle closures. Within two days, River Legacy Nature Center was closed to the public and we were meeting to discuss the important question... what next?

As the Volunteer Coordinator at River Legacy Nature Center, my job responsibilities, along with many other staff members, shifted until we could open up to the public again. During this time, one of the questions we remained focused on was this: **How do we bring the wonders and adventures of nature to people who are staying at home?** We do it by creating virtual programs.

A key part of our mission is to engage the public in discussions about environmental education through free interactions. We knew that just because we closed our doors to the public, we could not cut off this important education. We pulled together as a staff to begin our journey of moving our programs, which are normally in person, to a virtual experience.

This journey was not easy at first. Luckily, we have a staff who possesses a wealth of knowledge of the environment, and plenty of animals and specimens. However, we quickly found out which of our animals loved the spotlight, and which were a bit more camera shy! All of us, even our animals, needed some time to adjust to being on camera. In our first stages of filming, it felt like we encountered more obstacles than we could count. During Facebook Live videos, rogue leaf blowers would interrupt. While filming public programming, an overhead plane would cause us to yell "cut!" and start the video from the beginning. And of course, when filming with live animals, you can never control their potty breaks. But each one of these obstacles caused us to adapt and become more creative and more innovative.

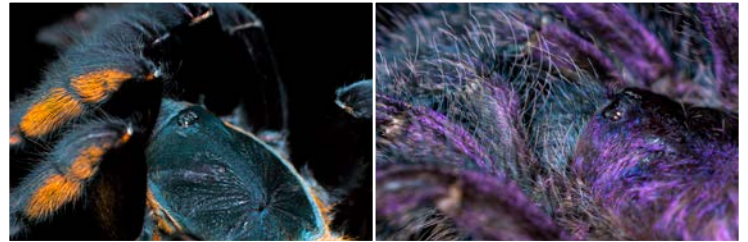
During this process of filming and editing, we all learned so much. Our staff never fails to step out of their comfort zone and is willing to adjust to any situation they are faced with. We are also fortunate enough to have dedicated people who helped make this fantastic feat possible. Board Members, staff, and long-time friends of River Legacy loaned us camera equipment, made appearances in our videos, and helped us create something that brought so much joy in a time of hardship. We love having people visit our Nature Center and experience the wonders that nature has to offer, but we also can't wait to explore new ways to spread our environmental education with you online, as well as in person. 

Breanna Sayers,
Volunteer Coordinator (Videographer and Content Creator)



NEW Traveling Exhibit COMING SOON!

Come See Some of
the World's Largest Spiders!



Did the hair on your neck just stand up? Does the thought of spiders make your skin crawl? Many people feel that way about arachnids. When in fact, the goal of The Art & Science of Arachnids exhibit is to make arachnids **less creepy** and **more interesting**, because they are amazing creatures and who do a lot of helpful things for all of us.

Arachnids are beneficial to the entire ecosystem, including the garden areas around your home. They are able to consume many different types of disease-carrying insects that harm our plants and crops. Without them, the earth would be a less hospitable place for everyone because the biting flies and mosquitoes that live on this planet would be extremely populous.

Many of these creatures get a bad rap from popular science fiction and children's books, like Harry Potter or The Lord of the Rings. However, the organization known as Build 4 Impact, Inc. that creates and manages this traveling arachnid exhibit is hoping to change that.

The exhibit features three themed cubes that hold 100 live arachnids. I haven't lost you yet, right? Good! The Science Cube discusses other arachnids that are not spiders or scorpions, deadly spiders of North America, and arachnids in medicine. The Arts Cube illustrates the connection we, as humans, have with arachnids in film, literature, and music. Various flip panels allow for guest interaction. The Culture Cube highlights arachnid folklore and mythology, arachnid conservation, and arachnids as food.

Some exciting hands-on activities include trying on a Kevlar vest to learn about the different types and properties of silk, weaving your own spider web, a giant model of an orb-weaver spider, and conducting incredible experiments in the Spider Lab.

The Art & Science of Arachnids will be featured in River Legacy Nature Center's Discovery Room from December 1st, 2020 to February 28th, 2021. Admission to Discovery Room includes traveling exhibit.

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Directory

Officers: Larry Fowler, President; Mark Warren, Vice President; Elizabeth Marks, Secretary; Mike Davis, Treasurer.

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Staff: Jill Hill, Executive Director; Jennifer Zamboni, Administrative Assistant/Registrar; Sherrie Ripple, Director of Education; Breanna Sayers, Volunteer Coordinator; Christine Bartkowski, Marketing Coordinator; Shannon Porter, Event/Exhibit Manager; Becky Nussbaum, Director of Development; Dr. Ellen Ravkind, Naturalist Manager; Jorge Garcia, Chad Etheridge, Anne Alderfer, Naturalists; Terry Carver, Ellis Elliott, Cindy Barry, Samantha King, Amy Johnson, Tiffany Dragun, Nature School Teachers; Blake Kuppinger, Linda Dryden, Tiffany Dragun, Robin Swindle, Early Childhood Field Investigation Facilitators; Lisa McCaskey, Assistant; Mary Moreno, Assistant & Venue Coordinator.

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Message from the Executive Director



DISCOVERING River Legacy Nature Center IN A NEW WAY

This spring, COVID-19 challenged us all to overcome a situation we have never dealt with before! We have learned the definition of PPE, how to social distance, the value of having Lysol spray and your favorite toilet paper in every grocery store, and the importance of washing your hands for the full length of "Happy Birthday."

And we have **Zoomed** like there was no tomorrow!

We have also been reminded that there is always *good news* in nature. You can always observe its beauty, mystery and perfect order somewhere, in some way.

Because of you, the 90+ animal ambassadors at River Legacy Nature Center will be fed, cared for and enriched with activities. Your support provides exceptional care for Hayley, our new Virginia opossum who needs specialized care because she was born with a genetic bone disease. **You make this possible! Thank you so much.**

Additional thanks to you for providing the opportunity for 3-year-olds through sixth graders to learn about, explore and appreciate the miracles of nature through River Legacy Virtual Camps this summer. This program did not exist prior to COVID-19 restrictions and precautions. Your support and donations have allowed our naturalists and environmental educators the opportunity to adapt and modify traditional summer classes into hands-on/minds-on Virtual Summer Classes *for the first time ever!* We hope to reach even more children than we would have through in-person only classes.

You make this possible! Thank you so much.

Because of your generosity, River Legacy Foundation is able to produce and distribute STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Art Math) and conservation messages and activities on our website and social media pages. These activities are provided at no cost to the public, thanks to you. Imagine all the parents, grandparents and caregivers who will share eco-learning with their kids this summer by turning to River Legacy Foundation's offerings. This type of free public programming wasn't available before COVID-19 restrictions. **You make this possible! Thank you so much.**

The Nature Center may have temporarily closed due to COVID-19, but top-notch animal care and high quality environmental education are still going strong. We could not do this without you. **You make this possible! Thank you so much.**

We are forever grateful for you!


Sincerely,

Jill Hill
Executive Director



and the winners are...



Voted as Hulafrog Arlington's "Most Loved Place to Go" in 2020, River Legacy Nature Center has made a special mark on Arlington residents. "River Legacy is one of our favorite places to visit in Arlington!" says Monica Ingram. "The Nature Center has so many fun interactive and educational exhibits, displays, and games! We love learning about native wildlife and experiencing nature in such a dynamic setting. From the endless trails, awesome playground, to the Nature Center, this park is amazing! River Legacy never gets old, it is by far my favorite place in Arlington!" As years go on and times change, one thing that will remain the same is the feeling of excitement and exploration that comes with walking through the park and visiting our Nature Center. When you're here at River Legacy, there is always more to discover. 

Redefining Learning in the Era of COVID-19

At the end of our Nature School year and throughout the summer, our need for online education due to COVID-19 certainly redefined the way we present our programs, as well as how and where our students learn. As we navigated this new normal, teachers, parents and students all had to make adjustments. How can we bring the best of our Education Programs to students who can't visit our Nature Center? We made the change from in-person discovery learning to virtual education, because as long as nature is open and available, we have so much to learn!



We ended the Nature School year sending each student weekly lessons via email with topic related art exploration ideas and an included story time. Although we all would have rather met together in person, our parents were so pleased with the idea of us being able to provide quality, engaging virtual education for their children. One parent commented, ***"we share alongside your disappointment, however, greatly appreciate the care and consideration towards the wellbeing of our family."*** We continually communicated not only through emails, but also through our social

media. Many of the parents sent us pictures of their students engaged in the lesson, engrossed in the art experience, and even some singing our great Nature School songs! Another parent said, ***"It's so hard to explain the current situation to a 3-year-old. He has, however been really enjoying all the online learning that is available. I can't wait to show him this video. He's going to love it!"***

In our summer classes, we were able to expand on the specific age appropriate topical videos, fun art explorations, and story times, by adding cool experiments, virtual nature walks on our trails as well as resource kits. River Legacy Park and Nature Center still hold so many learning opportunities, even in an online education.

Both our Nature School and Summer Camp virtual classes still offer the same great content with nature-loving **discovery and exploration adventures**. The learning location changed, but nature is still happening all around us and we can enjoy it from anywhere!

We are learning and adapting right along with you! Thank you for being on this new journey with us, #TogetherAtHome!

We can't wait to explore more with you at the Nature Center. 🦋

Sherrie Ripple
Director of Education



New Traveling Exhibit *continued from page 1*



Discovery Room Members are invited to join us for a special VIP Preview of the traveling exhibit on Friday, December 4th. To become a member and enjoy these special perks and more, call 817-860-6752 or visit www.riverlegacy.org to download a membership application. 🦋

Thank you to our sponsors for supporting River Legacy Nature Center's very first traveling exhibit
The Nature of Things: Bee-lieve it or Not!
The Secret Lives of Honeybees.



PURDUE EXTENSION

Interested in sponsoring this arachnid exhibit? Visit our website at www.riverlegacy.org or email **Becky Nussbaum Gerro** at becky@riverlegacy.org

The Art and Science of Arachnids is organized and produced by Build 4 Impact, Inc. All rights reserved.

Meet the Newest River Legacy Animal Ambassador!

In February of 2020, we added a new member to our River Legacy family. Hayley, the Virginia opossum was able to have a second chance at life after her mother was tragically hit by a car. Although it wasn't noticed at first, little Hayley and her opossum siblings were still in her mother's pouch, alive! Hayley and the other babies were promptly taken to an experienced rehabber, and with the help of a vet, they were evaluated and cared for.

During one of their vet visits, it was discovered that Hayley and a few of her brothers and sisters suffered from a metabolic bone disease. Because of this metabolic bone disease, Hayley needs extra care and a daily calcium supplement to give her the nutrients she needs to stay happy and healthy. This disease keeps her from being released into the wild, so our Nature Center is her new home!



She spends her days enjoying her daily calcium supplement, receiving dedicated care and attention from our Naturalists, and educating school children and DFW residents of the important role opossums play in our environment. In our educational classes, Hayley helps teach that the

Virginia opossum is the only marsupial that occurs naturally in the United States and Canada. She teaches that opossums are great for the environment because they eat up to 5,000 ticks in a single season. They search our yards and the forest floor at River Legacy to eat and eliminate almost ninety percent of the ticks in the area, which means opossums like Hayley help reduce Lyme disease and other tick-borne diseases. Thanks, Hayley!

The next time you see an opossum, just think about all the incredible benefits they bring to us and how different our lives would be without them! 🦋

FUN-draisers Feature Fun for All Ages!

Over the last 30 years, River Legacy Foundation has had the honor and privilege to work with thousands of DFW area students, teachers, sponsors and community members through our Annual Cardboard Boat Regatta in an effort to create fun and practical hands-on learning opportunities in science and math.

For the first time ever, our beloved April fundraising event at Hurricane Harbor was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many area students, teachers and sponsors were never able to begin the ultimate challenge of building a cardboard boat that does not sink. Long-time community event partner and supporters of River Legacy Foundation, Harris Packaging Corporation, did not let the event cancellation stop them from creating their own virtual version of the Cardboard Boat Regatta! Their staff worked together to create and film their unique boat and race. **Check out the full video of their inspiring story on the Cardboard Boat Regatta page of our website at www.riverlegacy.org.**



With all the uncertainties surrounding the pandemic and concern for our guests, volunteers and sponsors' health and safety, River Legacy's Board of Directors and staff made the decision to postpone our 11th Annual Sporting Clay Shoot May event until Sunday, October 25th.

Don't worry, we are continuing to plan and prepare for our wonderful Fall events. The health and safety of our guests and partners is our top priority. We are closely monitoring the changing COVID-19 situation and will provide vital updates, as needed, connected to the remaining three events for River Legacy Foundation.

Unless any orders are in place by local, state, or federal agencies, or health and safety concerns exist, River Legacy Foundation will plan on welcoming guests and families as usual while implementing all preventive measures to ensure the safety of our attendees and staff.

However, you can rest assured that River Legacy Foundation will do what is right for the health and wellness of our community-at-large. 🦋

**Be Sure to Visit and
Support Our 2019-2020
Event Sponsors:**



UPCOMING FALL EVENTS



**2nd Annual River
Legacy
Fall Festival
October 10 & 11**

**11th Annual
Sporting
Clay Shoot
October 25**



**9th Annual
A Night With Nature
November 6**

For more information on these events, contact Shannon Porter at 817-860-6752, ext. 119 or email her at shannon@riverlegacy.org.

For sponsorship opportunities, contact Becky Nussbaum Gerro at 817-860-6752, ext. 120 or email her at becky@riverlegacy.org.

Volunteers are a major part of the success of all of our events, and we are grateful for their contributions of skill and time. To learn more about volunteering, contact Breanna Sayers at 817-860-6752, ext. 109 or email her at breanna@riverlegacy.org.

Visit www.riverlegacy.org for news, updates and new activities planned for each of our Fall events.

Jerry & Becky McCullough | Republic Services | Green's Produce | Prince Lebanese Grill | Andy and Linda Broadus | Al & Laura DiStefano | Lee & Leslie Friedman | Kendall & Tim Lake | Jill Rorschach | Division Brewing | Blackwell's Personal Touch | Arlington Rotary Club | Deep Eddy Vodka | Nothing Bundt Cakes North Collins | Van Country | Green Oaks North Pet Hospital | QuikTrip | David Atnip | Texas Health Resources | Alphagraphics | Teddy Bear Mobile Fort Worth | HOPS HR | Dick Moise | Seebeck & Associates | Serenity Scents Aroma Synergy | AFLAC

Leaving a Legacy Today... and For Generations to Come.



Tommy Crumpton is a long-time River Legacy volunteer who was introduced to the Nature Center over twenty years ago.



There are many people involved with River Legacy Nature Center who are essential to our mission. One of our most precious resources here at the Nature Center are the volunteers. Our daily operations would not be possible without volunteers. Fundraising and community events could not be successful without volunteers. Even our animal ambassadors rely on volunteers to clean and feed them daily. So, who are some of these dedicated volunteers, and how has their role as a volunteer changed since COVID-19?

"Like most Dads, I have blamed a lot of things on my kids over the years. Occasionally they actually deserved the blame..." Says Tommy. "Our older son, Trey, became a volunteer at the Nature Center not long after it opened. He was always doing things there, and one day he told us, 'They need me to help with 'a thing' this weekend.' That was the first year of After Dark in the Park (now the River Legacy Fall Festival). The next year, my other son, Tim, my wife Carol and I attended the event as a family while Trey volunteered again. By the third year, at Trey's suggestion, I found myself volunteering in concessions cooking hot dogs and serving nachos... And so began a very rewarding relationship of supporting the mission of the River Legacy Foundation and giving back to the organization that has given so much to my children, and now my grandchildren."

"In 2004, Trey, who by then was in college, but still volunteering when he was home, told me they needed someone to help set up the 'Grounds' for After Dark in the Park. That has become my favorite event to be a part of. In addition to my involvement, Carol is a regular volunteer at the Nature Center. Now that Trey and Tim are married and have families, it is very rewarding to see how they and our daughters-in-law continue to actively volunteer."

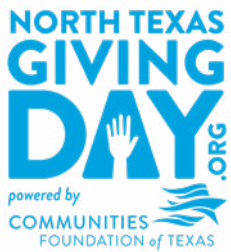
Tommy and his family are an incredible example of how River Legacy Foundation travels through generations. When asking Tommy why it was important to volunteer before COVID-19, he said, "There have always been many opportunities for an individual to volunteer to worthy causes. Without volunteerism, many very important non-profits simply could not survive. When I consider volunteering, I look at the goals and mission of the organization to see if I can agree with them. With River Legacy, these things are consistent with my values, so I give them a portion of my time. Now that I am retired, I have a lot more of that available!"

Unfortunately, once COVID-19 hit, River Legacy had to close our doors to keep our staff and our guests safe. But that did not deter Tommy's willingness to safely volunteer with us, but in a new way! He has been involved in our virtual committee meetings for the event he loves dearly, River Legacy Fall Festival. "While the Pandemic has certainly brought face-to-face activity at the Nature Center to a halt, they are still providing virtual alternative programming and are planning for future events even now. They are not shut down – just currently closed to the public."

Of course, Tommy was right. River Legacy's staff has been busier than ever during this time. Creating online content for our guests and planning for future events to be safe and fun. Again, Tommy said it best, "Once the Pandemic is behind us (and it will be) and no longer rules our everyday lives, River Legacy will once again be needing volunteers for education, special community-based activities, and fundraising events. As this happens, and the public's excitement of hands-on nature education is revived, there will be a need for additional manpower. The COVID-19 crisis has given many of us an opportunity to stop and rethink our values and what is truly important to us. This may be a time to investigate what River Legacy's needs are, and see if your gifts, talents, interests, and life experiences could be helpful as they re-open. Sometimes it is a specific need, but most often it is simply someone being willing to cook hot dogs and serve nachos..."

Thank you, Tommy, for your years of hard work and dedicated spirit to the mission of River Legacy Nature Center. 🦋

North Texas Giving Day is Thursday, September 17, 2020



Save The Date!
9.17.20



This year, North Texas Giving Day is Thursday, September 17. The Communities Foundation of Texas is working on exciting new plans to celebrate the work of nonprofits in North Texas. Although they have not announced these new plans to the public yet, we cannot wait to share them with you as soon as we know!

We also know that everyone has so many charities to choose from and we are so grateful that you choose River Legacy Foundation.

We really appreciate your support for River Legacy Foundation. Please tell us why you support River Legacy Foundation. **Email us what you love about River Legacy Foundation, your stories, and your pictures to becky@riverlegacy.org** and we will share them with others this fall as we celebrate the good that your generosity brings to our community. **Thank you!**

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP:

1. GET UP AND GIVE ON SEPTEMBER 17!

Your gift matters! On September 17, if you donate to River Legacy Foundation on NorthTexasGivingDay.org between 6 a.m. and midnight, your dollars will be stretched with bonus funds and prizes raised by Communities Foundation of Texas! Not available on September 17? No worries! Make your gift early between September 1 and September 16!

2. SPREAD THE WORD!

Spread the word to your friends and loved ones about River Legacy Foundation and North Texas Giving Day! Don't forget to tag **@riverlegacy** on Facebook and **@livingsciencecenter** on Instagram and **#NTxGivingDay** if you're posting online! Encourage your friends and family to get up and give as well! Communities Foundation of Texas is even offering a prize for the social media post that's shared the most!

3. FOLLOW US!

Follow our social media **@riverlegacy** on Facebook and **@livingsciencecenter** on Instagram and **facebook.com/NorthTexasGivingDay** to stay up to date on North Texas Giving Day! For more information on North Texas Giving Day, visit **NorthTexasGivingDay.org**!

A Big Texas-Sized THANKS to Y'all!

NORTH TEXAS GIVING TUESDAY NOW




We cannot thank you enough for stepping up (or is that Two-Stepping?) to support River Legacy Foundation on North Texas Giving Tuesday Now! May 5, 2020, was a national **emergency fundraiser** to help nonprofits, just like us, survive and continue their work during the COVID-19 Crisis.

River Legacy Board of Directors set the bar high with a \$6,000 Matching Grant Challenge. **You** danced right over that goal. You met and exceeded that challenge by donating \$6,225! **Thank you so much!**

Your generous gifts - doubled by our Board of Directors - empowered River Legacy Staff to provide online virtual content and activities on social media and our website - free to our community. Please enjoy and share on-line learning. **www.riverlegacy.org/online-learning**.

Because of you, River Legacy was able to finish the school year strong for Nature School classes, Home School Clubs and After School Clubs - even though classes and clubs could not meet in person at the Nature Center. Your gifts provided **virtual** Field Investigations for Arlington Independent School District students whose field trips to River Legacy were canceled due to COVID-19 restrictions and precautions. Your generosity encouraged our staff while we learned and created new ways to help people **fall in love** with **nature!**

Your support of River Legacy Foundation made a difference in our community and the world. During a time of social distancing and quarantine, **you** helped **connect** so many people to **nature!** Thank you for partnering with us. 

Compass Points: Guiding Youth Into Nature



It is one of the most ancient, basic, amazing, and useful tools that has ever been invented. The compass. I have a fascination with this simple magnetized needle that can guide me wherever I wish to go. Give me a compass and a good map and I can exercise that primal urge to reach a distant goal with accuracy and a positive outcome. I can go somewhere I've never been, find new things along the way, explore unknown areas, and still get safely back to where I began. It is a great adventure each and every time.


When I was growing up, I was always outside and exploring nature. Today in this age of ever increasing technology, endless video games, twenty-four hour television, and computers that can virtually create anything, our youth are sadly lacking in the physical exploration of nature. At River Legacy Nature Center, we are constantly trying to change this. We are always reaching out to our youth and trying to get them to explore our natural world. We are, in a way, their compass. We can guide them where they want to go. We can point them in the correct direction. We take them out and help them

reach that distant goal. Whether that goal is something as grand as a summer camp canoe journey to unknown places, a hike to distant ridges, a nature scavenger hunt, a bird watching trip to discover owls, an animal track discovery, or something as simple and calming as sitting under a tree and listening to their surroundings, we can show them how to get there. If our youth have the desire to get out into nature, they have both means and opportunity. River Legacy Nature Center is the map. River Legacy Nature Center staff and volunteers are the compass. We are very fortunate to have one of the best staffs in the business and absolutely some of the best volunteers anywhere, who are always ready, willing, and able to find that bearing, that compass point, of the distant goal of our youth and show them the path to obtain it. I truly hope that our future is not one where nature goes unobserved and forgotten. If we can help young people stay interested, focused, and involved, then their need for nature will mature along with them.

Recently, due to an unforeseen pandemic, we have been thrust into uncharted waters as we try to figure out how to continue actively teaching the people, both youth and adults, who have come to depend on us to help them explore and learn about the outdoors. We have been forced to make some drastic changes in the ways we guide our intrepid wanderers. As naturalists our exploration into the world of virtual outdoor teaching has pushed us into areas where we may not be nearly as comfortable as we are leading a nature hike or

Naturalist Corner:

presenting an animal exploration, but we are all following our own personal compass points, adapting, and meeting the challenge head on. We may not be able to speak one on one with folks and we may not be able to provide that visceral thrill of discovering something outside for the first time, but we are forging ahead and making the best of a bad situation until a time, hopefully in the near future, where we can once again get everyone together outdoors.

Gandhi once said, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." By becoming a compass point and guiding our youth into nature, I believe that the dedicated folks at River Legacy Nature Center are enabling those who follow us to be the means by which we create the change we want to see. 

Chad Etheridge
River Legacy Naturalist



Safety for All While Enjoying the Outdoors


The COVID-19 global pandemic kept us inside our homes and we are all yearning to get back outside. As our state reopens, it is a great time to head outdoors and enjoy nature! River Legacy Park is a gem full of many different types of plants and animals. Appreciating them is a cornerstone of enjoying our park. Visitors have reported lots of recent observations of beautiful wildflowers and animal activity. This is likely due to the fact that there has been relatively little disturbance and human activity in our park for the past few months. In addition, summer is typically an active season for many species of amphibians and snakes. Many summer migratory birds are making their way through our park. Insects abound and propagate, and mammals take advantage of longer and warmer days to be out and about.



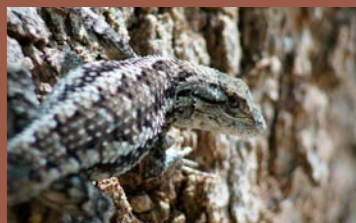
As we venture back out from our homes and start enjoying the outdoors, it is a good time to be reminded about giving animals the space that they need. If you happen to encounter an animal while taking a stroll or hiking, please keep your distance from the animal and do not approach or disturb. You can enjoy them while taking pictures or videos. In fact, we

encourage you to do this from a safe distance so that you can later go back and enjoy the sights of River Legacy Park on your device!

With summer in full swing, many small insects are swarming. Mosquitoes love human interaction, even if we don't! This can be reduced by wearing insect repellent or wearing long-sleeve shirts and long pants.

By following these recommendations, you can enjoy our park and the animals in it for a safe and rewarding experience. As the state reopens and more people venture outside, we encourage you to come to River Legacy Park. Remember, take only pictures and videos and leave only footprints, so you can enjoy being surrounded by nature. 

Jorge Garcia
River Legacy Naturalist





Baylor Scott & White Orthopedic and Spine Hospital – Arlington Celebrates Ongoing, Active Partnership with River Legacy Nature Center

Back for a fifth year, Baylor Scott & White Orthopedic and Spine Hospital - Arlington is proud to continue as one of River Legacy Nature Center's Annual Partners.

Baylor Scott & White Arlington has generously supported River Legacy's community festivals and events by volunteering, providing guests with goody bags and other valuable health information. "As life and activities return to normal in North Texas, our team looks forward to the fun of participating in River Legacy's wonderful, family-oriented events," said Allan Beck, CEO of Baylor Scott & White Arlington. "I think we have as good a time as the children and families. We can't wait to get back."

In past years, the "Bone Crusher" team from Baylor Scott & White Arlington won second place in the Cardboard Boat Regatta. The hospital also stepped up to provide t-shirts and boat supplies that helped a team from Carter Junior High School compete in grand style.

Baylor Scott & White Arlington teams have also entered River Legacy's Sporting Clay Shoot Tournament and hosted an exhibit booth to share giveaways and health information with attendees. And every October, Baylor Arlington employees volunteer for River Legacy's Fall Festival.

"Our environmental education and recreation initiatives wouldn't be possible without Baylor Scott & White Arlington's ongoing support," said Jill Hill, River Legacy Foundation Executive Director. "We are beyond grateful. The hospital's generosity is more than a donation – it's a true partnership towards a shared goal of inspiring Arlington's next generation of environmental stewards."

"We are delighted to continue this partnership with River Legacy Nature Center to promote science education here in our backyard," said Beck. "River Legacy is a fantastic resource for education, conservation and recreation. It's great to celebrate another meaningful year with them."

Baylor Scott & White Arlington's extensive community involvement reflects its commitment to the Arlington/Mansfield area. In addition to its River Legacy Nature Center partnership, its support programs include the Levitt Pavilion, The LOT Mansfield, Salvation Army, Boys & Girls Club of Arlington, Arlington Urban Ministries and YoungLife.

continued on next page



SA-SO Supports River Legacy and the Community with Their Products

75,000 face shields later, Arlington Texas manufacturer of signs and cable tags is thankful they listened to customers.

As an example of small business rapid innovation, SA-SO Signs and Safety, and sister company ACP International, pivoted production to make face shields during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions and precautions.

ACP/SA-SO is an essential infrastructure company that manufactures signs, decals, and tags for energy and telecommunications companies. In the first days of the COVID-19 shutdown, the company decided to roll out a procedure to manufacture emergency/COVID orders in one day.

"We thought we'd be making instructional signs, social distancing floor signs and the like. And we did. But immediately, we got two requests for face shields," said company president Joe Nussbaum. "That was a lot different from what we normally do, but the fact that two people called about it really got us thinking."

ACP/SA-SO fabricates a variety of plastics, so the clear shield was something they could do. The hard part, according to Nussbaum, was making a shield that fit comfortably around people's heads. A look around the factory at employees who were wearing baseball-caps inspired a bolt of creativity. "If we could make shields that fit on baseball caps, we solve our biggest problem and could be in production right away," said Nussbaum.

The need for speed was critical from the start. The idea was conceptualized on a Thursday evening. Friday was spent building a prototype and refining it. At the end of the day, Nussbaum demonstrated the new product in a YouTube video. "By Monday, we had several orders. I wouldn't exactly call it viral, but it was exciting. We sell pretty boring products, and it was a lot of fun to see the interest."

Since then, the company has developed a face shield that fits on hard hats, and a stand alone medical-style shield. The company has made over 75,000 shields.

As an essential manufacturer, ACP/SA-SO is grateful to be able to continue working, but with the face shields, CEO Becky Nussbaum Gerro saw an unexpected benefit, "The ACP/SA-SO team is motivated to be able to contribute to the fight to flatten the curve. I am so proud of each person at ACP/SA-SO. Safety is our business. We are glad that we listened to our customers' requests and that we can continue to help keep people safe during this trying time."

SA-SO is a proud Annual Partner of River Legacy Foundation. They are happy to provide face shields, signs and floor graphics to help the Nature Center and other businesses reopen safely. Visit www.SA-SO.com to learn more.



Viridian, A Natural Partner with River Legacy Foundation!

Teeming with wildlife, Viridian boasts a 2,000-acre master plan that includes five major lakes, 500 acres of open space and an additional 500 acres of lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands. Located adjacent to River Legacy Park in Arlington, Viridian is approximately 20 minutes from downtown Dallas and from downtown Fort Worth.

"Viridian and River Legacy Foundation are a 'natural partnership' because preserving nature is central to Viridian's development," said Robert Kembel. Viridian is the only community in Texas to meet Audubon Gold Signature Standards, being named a Certified Gold Signature Sanctuary.

Viridian has been an avid supporter and partner of River Legacy Foundation for the past seven years and has been a natural fit for the organization. Viridian's environmental initiatives and commitment to nature allow River Legacy and Viridian the opportunity to share their common message with the community.

With miles of nature trails connecting to River Legacy Park and the Nature Center, Viridian is unlike anywhere else in the metroplex.

Viridian's master plan includes 500 acres of open space nature reserve, ensures parks and open areas are within 700 feet of homes and that 50 percent of the community will remain wetlands, lakes and open space.

Also planned is a retail component that will bring shopping, dining and entertainment to the area.

The Viridian Sailing Center, opened in 2016, offers a variety of sailboats, paddle boards and kayaks for sailing center annual passholders. The Viridian Sailing Center is also open to the public offering Paddlesport and Annual passes.

The Lakeview Event & Conference Center is a premier event facility with stunning lake views and everything needed for spectacular events, from corporate gatherings to not-to-be-forgotten weddings.

Learn more about Viridian, projects, amenities and community at www.viridiandfw.com.

Rare Case of Songbird Poaching Discovered at River Legacy

An avid birder spotted something unusual. A trap apparatus was semi-hidden in a less-traveled area of River Legacy. Inside was a brilliant blue bird he recognized instantly: an Indigo bunting. This illegal songbird trapping is usually associated with south Texas and Florida, not our north-central Texas location. This is because there are only two desirable species in this area that appeal to black markets. These two species are evidently worth the risk of hefty fines and six months imprisonment for a few lawbreakers.

A park visitor stopped me to ask what had happened and why all these people, some in uniform, had appeared. He'd seen the cage hanging in the tree, but had no idea of the significance and had paid little attention. This was something you might see in a large, popular, public park, right? But he was wrong. He was aghast to learn what it was and now knows to pay attention and how to report if he sees again.

So, what happened? A captured, caged male bird was placed in an area already scouted to have the same species. Male birds are very territorial during nesting season. Any nearby male that visits the caged rival will land



on a wooden perch (a separate smaller cage), which moves downward, spilling him into the catch trap. Seed is glued to the perch for more enticement. This specific setup also included an iPhone 11 in the bait trap. Through a simple hack, the trapper can use the phone for remote visual checks and promptly come collect his new prize. The setup was rustic, simplistic and cunning.

There are two specific birds in our area that hold high monetary value for trappers. The Indigo bunting and Painted bunting. They are small, about the size of a canary with melodic, sweet singing voices. Both species hang out in the same habitat. Shrubby, open fields on forest edges where seeds and insects are available. They are brilliantly colored and breathtaking. The iridescent colors are an optical trick; light diffraction through their feathers. It's the reason why most casual observers don't notice them, they appear dark and drab at distance.

All native North American birds are protected from harm through the century-old Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. South Florida is such a large hotbed of illegal songbird trapping that the state recently passed legislation specifically targeting bird trap possession. A raid that netted over 500 songbirds in an individual's backyard prompted the new law. There is some activity in south Texas too. The illegal bird trade brings an element of exotica that some collectors find irresistible and will pay hundreds of dollars for, simply for owning a rarity. Private Facebook groups exchange information for buying/selling and even sponsor song competitions.

Habitat loss and land-use change are the biggest threat to bird populations. Songbird numbers have declined by one-third since 1964. Our diminished bunting population does not need another stressor. The caged Indigo had no access to water and we weren't sure how long he had been placed and left. He appeared lively and strong. I have since learned some long term captive bait birds have atrophied wing muscles and must be rehabilitated to fly again. The Game Wardens photographed the scene and took possession of the trap and cell phone for evidence. The best part was watching the Game warden release the tiny bird. He flew strongly and freely—as a bird should.


The investigation is ongoing. 

Anne Alderfer
Master Naturalist & Part-time River Legacy Staff

Baylor Scott & White

continued from page 8

This is also a momentous time for Baylor Scott & White Arlington back home at the hospital. The State of Texas has lifted COVID-19 restrictions on elective surgeries. If you or a loved one needs surgery to help alleviate pain this year, now is the time to get scheduled. The hospital has been upgrading its systems for years, well in advance of current conditions. You'll find it ready to serve with state-of-the-art multi-stage air filtration, UV disinfectant lighting and frequent daily cleaning procedures to maintain a safe environment for your visit.

Baylor Scott & White Orthopedic and Spine Hospital - Arlington is a unique, industry-leading specialty hospital focused on comprehensive outpatient and inpatient treatment of orthopedic and spine disorders. It's the only hospital in Dallas-Fort Worth that's focused strictly on providing orthopedic and spine care. The boutique-style facility offers 10 operating rooms, a full-service ER, complete diagnostic imaging capabilities, and a Pain Management Center. Visit www.bswarlington.com for a full list of physicians, services and to schedule an appointment. 

If you see any type of birdcage/trap at River Legacy, report to the naturalist staff and/or directly to Texas Game Wardens through their Operation Game Thief hotline. Only Game Wardens have the authority to enforce federal and state wildlife protection laws. Urban areas are no exception.

For more information visit www.tpwd.texas.gov/warden/connect/ogt

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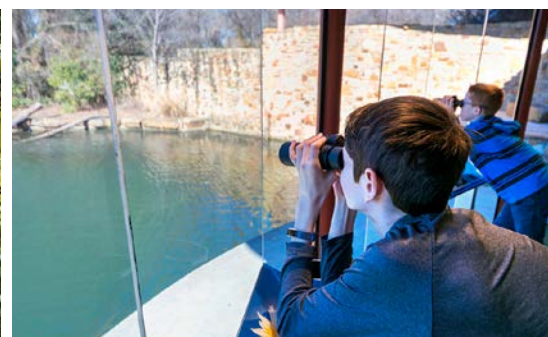
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River Legacy Nature Center NOW offering Virtual Wildlife Outreach Programs



River Legacy Nature Center is now bringing wildlife education to classrooms not only in DFW, but also throughout the nation! Due to the ongoing pandemic causing the Nature Center to temporarily close, the center is now offering Wildlife Zoom and pre-recorded programs that take place in schools, scout groups, civic organizations and libraries virtually.

Education is a cornerstone of our mission. We are extremely excited to offer this opportunity to teachers, students and families during these difficult and uncertain times. The interactive sessions allow students to have an open dialogue with one of our qualified naturalists and meet our Animal Ambassadors, creating a unique learning experience.

Programs are customized based on individual needs ranging from more formal programs to casual discussion with students about wildlife and their amazing adaptations. Members of the River Legacy Naturalist team are qualified experts at providing positive interactions with students and families to foster an understanding and appreciation for the important relationship between humans, animals and the environment.



For more information about our NEW Virtual Wildlife Outreach Programs, along with our in-person, visit www.riverlegacy.org or contact Shannon Porter at 817-860-6752, ext. 119 or shannon@riverlegacy.org.