



## April 2017 Newsletter

Welcome to the Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas (FSANA) e-newsletter! We share natural areas news, the Friends' efforts, and opportunities to get involved in volunteering or educational programs at San Antonio's natural areas parks. Going forward, we aim to bring you this newsletter quarterly in 2017, at minimum. Please check our website, [www.fosana.org](http://www.fosana.org), for periodic updates.

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### Natural Areas Stewardship Update

A few weeks ago staff and volunteers at Friedrich Wilderness Park were treated to a prolonged visit by a polyphemus moth (*Antheraea polyphemus*; Cramer). A large and stunningly beautiful moth, its common name is inspired by the giant Cyclops of Greek mythology who had a single eye in the middle of his forehead. The polyphemus moth has large eyespots (not true eyes) in the middle of its hindwings. By the way, the polyphemus moth is a member of the family Saturniidae, so named because the eyespots of some members of the family contain concentric rings reminiscent of the planet Saturn (Powell, 2003).

Another striking feature of the polyphemus moth is its antennae; they are "quadripectinate (comb-like on four sides), with those of males being larger than those of females" (see [this website](#) packed with delightfully detailed text and photos related to the polyphemus moth).



Photo courtesy of Tona Cantu.

### Volunteering Opportunities

By volunteering with the City of San Antonio's Natural Areas, you can help preserve and protect local natural ecosystems. In April we will work at various City of San Antonio Natural Areas in the northwest part of San Antonio. Because of limited parking at some of our April work sites, you must make a reservation for each work day by e-mailing Jayne Neal at [jayne.neal@sanantonio.gov](mailto:jayne.neal@sanantonio.gov). Jayne will confirm your reservation and

give you directions to the specific site and the designated parking area. Work sites will not typically have access to water or restrooms.

- April 6, 13, 20, 27, 2017, 8:00 – 11:30 am, Location to be determined. To reserve a spot, you must contact Jayne Neal, e-mail above.

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## Help Us Make History - the Big Give

We need your help! Have you enjoyed the facilities and trails at Friedrich Wilderness Park, Crownridge Canyon Natural Area, or Eisenhower Park? Or perhaps you know a child who has learned about our local plants and animals by participating in one of the Natural Areas many educational programs. If so, you probably understand the importance of preserving our natural ecosystem. We are excited to announce that the Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas (FSANA) is participating in San Antonio's day of giving, the Big Give. The goals of the Big Give are to unite our community through shared interests and to help nonprofit organizations connect to the larger community.

Please join our campaign and help us reach our goal of \$20,000 and 1,000 donors! We also encourage you to tell your friends and family members about our important mission of preserving Natural Areas and providing nature-based educational opportunities in San Antonio.

Ready, set, get ready to give! On May 4th, starting at 12:00 midnight, visit [the Big Give SA](#) and make a donation to Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas and/or to any of the other great participating nonprofit organizations. You will have 24 hours to make your donation. If you have any questions, please contact us at [friendsofsanaturalareas@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofsanaturalareas@gmail.com). Thank you in advance for your generosity to our organization!

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## Birdwatching in the Natural Areas

Staff and patrons report hearing and/or seeing the following birds at Crownridge Canyon Natural Area and/or Friedrich Park: Golden-cheeked warbler, Black and white warbler, Audubon's oriole, Spotted towhee, White-eyed vireo, Hutton's vireo, Blue-gray gnatcatcher, Hermit thrush, Black-bellied whistling duck, and Rufous-crowned sparrow.

To have the best chance at observing birds, get out early, bring binoculars, be quiet, and, of course, be patient. Many birders use [eBird](#) for the latest information on species being observed. Natural Areas staff reminds all to follow the rules of ethical birding. The federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Endangered Species Act specifically prohibit the taking or killing of migratory and endangered birds, respectively.

The word "take" includes harassing and pursuing, and, when applied to birds, is interpreted to include such activities as "pishing," playing owl calls, and playing any recording (including "apps") for the purpose of eliciting a response from a migratory and/or endangered bird.

The Natural Areas appreciates the educational value of apps, tapes, and other audible recordings; however, the staff reminds you that if you choose to play audible recordings, please use headphones, earbuds, or other personal listening devices so that only you (and not the birds) hear the calls. When a bird responds to a humanly generated call, the bird is diverted away from its usual activities. This means the bird is responding to a person, rather than attending to its own needs of feeding, nesting, raising young, defending a territory, etc. Remember that how you bird can affect the very species you came to enjoy.

As stated in the American Birding Association Principles of Birding Ethics, "In any conflict of interest between birds and birders, the welfare of the birds and their environment comes first."

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## Who are the FSANA Board of Directors?

The Board of Directors of the Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas is a volunteer governing body that meets in support of FSANA's mission. The Board's recent accomplishments include:

- Providing bus reimbursements allowing Title 1 schools to visit Friedrich Wilderness Park;
- Providing funds for Second Saturday educational programs on topics such as bees, geology, reptiles, native plants, and birds;

Partnering with Texas Parks & Wildlife to obtain a grant for the construction of new trails at Friedrich Wilderness Park;

- Obtaining a Partners for Fish and Wildlife grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for habitat restoration;
- Participating in the Monarch festival at the Pearl Brewery; and
- Ensuring that development in proximity to the Natural Areas is in compliance with city ordinances related to zoning, preservation of trees, water conservation, lighting, and noise pollution.

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## Upcoming Natural Areas Events

- **First Sundays: Tai Chi in the Natural Areas**
  - 9-10 a.m. | Sundays, April 2, May 7, June 4 | Friedrich Wilderness Park
  - Take a break from your busy week and center yourself with Tai Chi classes at Friedrich Wilderness Park. Each class provides an introduction to the practice of Tai Chi for physical and personal development. Wear comfortable, loose clothing and walking shoes
  - RSVP by calling (210) 207-3782 or [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov)
- **Every Day is Earth Day!** (all ages)
  - 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Saturday, April 8 | Eisenhower Park
  - Join the Parks & Recreation Department for this special presentation by the Solid Waste Department on the importance of recycling. Children will enjoy an interactive presentation, create a recycled work of art, and enjoy a family-friendly hike.
  - RSVP required by calling (210) 207-3782 or [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov)
- **Wildflower Walk**
  - 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | Saturday, May 6 | Friedrich Wilderness Park
  - Take a walk with botanist Bill Carr of Acme Botanical and enjoy the sights and sounds of the park while learning about wildflowers of the Texas Hill Country.
  - RSVP required by calling (210) 207-3782 or [nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov](mailto:nicole.mcleod@sanantonio.gov)

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***Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas is dedicated to promoting stewardship of San Antonio's Natural Areas, and to the understanding and appreciation of nature through educational and scientific programs.***

*For the latest updates and more activities, please see the calendar on the FSANA website.*

**[Friends of San Antonio Natural Areas Website](#)**

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