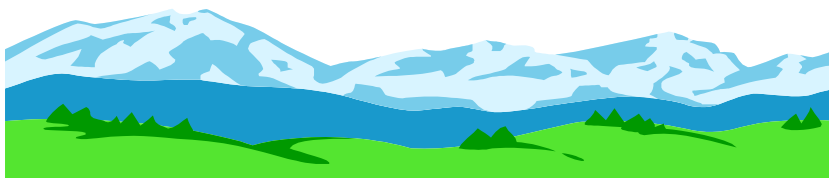


## FOOTPRINTS



## NEWSLETTER



### MEETING & PROGRAM

**Wed, May 3, 2017 – 7:00 – 8:30 P.M.**  
Spring Creek Greenway Nature Center  
1300 Riley Fuzzel Road Spring, Texas 77386

**Program:** “Harvesting the past to feed the present and preserve the future”  
Mark “Merriwether” Vorderbruggen, Ph.D. The talk will then be about useful edible & medicinal plants likely to be found along the trail. ~ Helen

### NEXT DAY HIKE

**Saturday May 6th, at 9am**  
Lone Star Hiking Trail (Stubble Field/Conroe)  
Sam Houston National Forest  
Hike Leader: Don Macken  
(Details on page 7)

### NEXT CAMPOUT

**May 12 - 14, 2017**  
Tyler State Park  
Trip Leader: Richard Guyot  
(Details on page 7)

### DUES

Contact: Gerry Anderson - 713-419-4730  
3873 Enchanted Timbers Lane, Spring TX 77386.  
\$25/person - checks payable to *The Woodlands Hiking Club*



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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/110716198984682/>

### ***A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT***

**By Rene Champagne**

Well, it is almost a week since our trip to Lake Georgetown, and I am still feeling it, a little anyway. Our camping trip for April was at Cedar Breaks Park or Lake Georgetown, and our backpacking trip was around Lake Georgetown. The campers and the backpackers cohabited at the club campsites on Saturday night. This is our second two-trip where we have coordinated two activities that involve one of our monthly camping trips.

April is one of the most wonderful months of the year for camping and hiking. The temperatures are comfortable, if a bit variable as we experienced firsthand over the weekend at Lake Georgetown. The highlight of April hiking is the flowers though.

On our backpacking trek around Lake Georgetown we saw dozens of types of flowering plants, ranging from entire fields of yellow flowers to blossoming Prickly Pear to lovely blossoms on Horse-Criplee cactus. The world is alive with a great many beautiful colors. It is also worth mentioning for the foodies that the Prickly Pears are shooting up fresh new green pads. If you go to the grocery store, those pads are sold as food. They are called Nopales. So, if you can find a nice place where picking the pads is permitted, they are supposed to be good eating. Please note that the rules at most State Parks and National Parks prohibit foraging and collecting of plants, animals, and artifacts.

I would like to thank Gerry Anderson and Helen Haese for leading the trip to Cedar Breaks. I welcome Gerry to the ranks of Trip Leaders for The Woodlands Hiking Club. This was Gerry's first time as Trip Leader. Helen's contribution is notable because she was a first time Trip Leader last year, and now she is mentoring new Trip Leaders. ~ *Continued page 2*

~ *Presidents message continued.*

While I am doing a shout out for Trip Leaders, I would like to thank all of our trip and event leaders for our 2016 / 2017 season, including Chris Hooks, Rene & Jenny Champagne, Ed Bartholet and Dennis Bilyeu, Al and Cheryl Dykes and Ozzy, Janet Canton, Mollie and Dennis Altom, and once more for good luck, Gerry Anderson and Helen Haese. As long as I am mentioning leaders, I would also like to thank Don Macken and Mike Downs for all of their hard work putting together our Day Hikes every month. Researching, selecting and scouting out the trails in advance takes a lot of time and dedication. Then actually leading the hikes takes even more dedication as somewhere between 15 and 25 people are relying on the Day Hike leader to be there, on time (actually early), and ready to hike, every month. So, once again, thanks to Don and Mike for being there for the club, every month!

We have a really great club. It takes a both participants and leaders to make for a successful activity. It is always pleasing to see club members make the transition from participating in club activities to leading them. ~ *Rene*



**LAST DAY HIKE**  
**LONE STAR HIKING TRAIL TH#6 TO STUBBLEFIELD CAMPGROUND**  
**SAM HOUSTON NF - April 8, 2017**

We had a really great turnout for our Day Hike from LSHT Trailhead #6 to Stubblefield Campground. All told we had a total of 25 hikers. 24 of us met at Trailhead #6. One hiker ended up going to Stubblefield Campground and joining us for our return hike. We had 3 completely new members joining us for the hike. 10 of the hikers on this trip are new to the club this year, having started with us in the last 3 or 4 months. It was a really great day for a walk in the woods.

This was our second hike in this general area of the Lone Star Hiking Trail. In March we hiked from TH#6 heading west. That hike took us over Caney Creek and featured a combination of boggy lands as we approached Caney Creek and higher and drier terrain on the west side of the creek. Our hike from TH#6 to Stubblefield took us northeast at first and pretty much bounced off of Lake Conroe. We then proceed generally northwest before reconnecting with Lake Conroe and then following it for a couple of miles. The good news for people without good hiking boots is that everyone's feet stayed dry this time.

The trail took us very close to some really nice camping spots on Lake Conroe. I marked them on my GPS in case we ever decide to spend an overnight in this section, or in case our backpacking group decides to do this stretch. We crossed a bridge over a little stream. The sun shone through the tree canopy at a perfect angle defining a clearing that we admired for several minutes. Anyone interested in seeing the GPS track of our hike can access our map at <https://goo.gl/XSoCyB>.

Since it was early April, there were flowers everywhere. The most notable flower of this hike was a tall thin plant with striking red cylindrical petals jutting out in all directions. I took advantage of the "Plant Identification Group" in Facebook to learn that these were Coral Beans, also known as Cherokee Beans.



Coral or Cherokee Beans



It is worth mentioning that there are bulletin boards at every major trailhead on the Lone Star Hiking Trail. I would guess that 90% (or more) of hikers ignore them. That is unfortunate because they have some really useful information on them. For example, there is always a laminated sign that describes trail blazes/markings. Everyone notices the metal rectangles on some of the trees as they hike.

For the most part, they ignore them because the trail is obvious most of the time. But "most of the time" is a tricky phrase because occasionally a trail appears to go in one direction, when in actuality it turns off in a different direction. The informed hiker knows which way to go by looking for the trail blazes, and knowing what they mean, e.g. sharp right turn or sharp left turn. So, next time you hit the trail, check out the bulletin board and read some of the stuff on there. Of course, the reason I mention this is that one of our newest hikers ended up in front of our group and went straight when they should have been making a very sharp right turn. It was a very reasonable mistake for a new person, and the hikers figured it out in a few minutes.

The club hiked a wee bit less than 4 miles to Stubblefield Campground where everyone settled in for an early lunch. A few hikers who only planned to do 4 miles took an Uber back to TH#6. Actually, our Day Hike Leader Don Macken had planned for this and had his car up there, so he drove them back. We also picked up a new club hiker who had a difficult time finding TH#6, and she hiked back with us. The club did a total of 7.8 miles on the round trip, and kept up a pace of a bit more than 2.1 mph.

It was a lovely day on the trail. The weather was very nice with pleasant temperatures and mostly blue skies. As mentioned we had an excellent turnout and met a few new club members. All things considered, a fine time was had by all.

~ Rene Champagne ~ *Roving Reporter*



Group photo prior to hike. We had a total of 25 hikers.

**LAST WEEKEND OUTING**  
**LAKE GEORGETOWN**  
**April 21 - 23, 2017**

Friday around noon, campers started to arrive. The sites the club had reserved were awesome with spectacular views overlooking Lake Georgetown. The weather was perfect with temps getting up to around 85 degrees that day. We had a small issue with strong winds coming off the lake so it took a little longer than usual to get tents set up as campers wrestled with the wind. Several members got a 6 mile hike in on Friday. They also encountered a coral snake along the pathway. The snake seemed more frightened than the hikers and quickly made its way into the bushes and disappeared.

We started happy hour around 5 p.m. with lots of appetizers. Campers started gathering wood for a fire. The theme of Friday night's potluck dinner was "Mediterranean Night". Most people brought Steak, Pork Chops or Salmon. A "special thanks" to all those who helped out with the meal. We set up dinner at Dennis, Mollie, Ed and Robin's sites. We got a nice camp fire going after dinner so everyone could sit and chat as temps started to get really chilly!!!!

Saturday morning a storm blew in about 5am with lots of wind and rain. Thankfully it did not last very long. By sunrise the park came alive with campers making breakfast and drinking lots of hot coffee and tea.

As you know Lake Georgetown has one of the longest hiking trails in the Hill Country. The Goodwater Trail winds around most of the lake for 26 miles. At 9am we started our hike at Cedar Brakes Park Trailhead. I got a headcount of 15 hikers. The start of the trail is well maintained with crushed stone but soon turns rocky as you approach the lakeshore. There are some beautiful vistas of the lake along the way. At the 2.5 mile marker on the trail is Crockett springs also known as Crockett Gardens. Here a small spring feeds a small waterfall and the rocky terrain changes to grasslands. We stopped to take photos and take a short break. After the falls some hikers decided to return to the campground the rest of the group continued along the trail. We found a really nice spot for lunch with large rocks to sit on. Dewberries were everywhere along the trail, most people threw caution to the wind and ate every dewberry they could get their hands on. Wildflowers were also in bloom so people were taking photos so they could identify the wild flowers on Google when they got back home. We did a little over 6 miles on our hike.

Our reservation at the Texas Longhorn Steakhouse in Georgetown was at 6pm. The Backpackers joined us for dinner so we numbered around 25 people. They got us seated fairly quickly for such a large group.

On Sunday some of our group decided to join the backpackers on their last hike today from Cedar Brake Park to Tejas Camp. We were lucky to get in another 11 miles today. What a great weekend we are so lucky to have such a great group of people and to have all these wonderful parks in the state of Texas. ~ *Helen*



Group hike Saturday



Campfire visiting





**LAST BACKPACKING OUTING**  
**LAKE GEORGETOWN - 28 MILE GOODWATER LOOP**  
**April 21 - 23, 2017**

We have ended our Backpacking activities for the 2016/-2017 season on a high note with our backpacking trek around Lake Georgetown the weekend of April 21, 2017. We have been building up to this activity since our first backpacking trip in May 2016. We started out with a more difficult than expected trip on the Lone Star Hiking Trail last Spring, with our long and muddy slog and one night stand. We followed up with our hike at Lake Houston Wilderness Park, again a single night layover with a moderate hike in and a much longer hike out. We upped the ante at Pedernales Falls State Park with a three day, two night trip. Our trek last weekend around Lake Georgetown topped them all with a total of 28 miles of hiking in a three day, two night trip.

Lake Georgetown is formed by a dam on the San Gabriel River. A 28 mile trail, the Goodwater Loop, allows you to hike around the lake. There are multiple parks around the lake, providing several options to do a backpacking loop hike. Cedar Breaks Park is "Mile 0" of the Goodwater Loop. Tejas Park is at mile 11. Russell Park is around mile 17, and Jim Hogg Park is somewhere around mile 20. There are a couple of primitive campgrounds, but you cannot park at them. You have to park at Cedar Breaks or Tejas Park and hike in.

We ended up with an almost optimal trip, partly as a result of good planning, and partly as a result of luck. The "luck" was that we could not get campsites at Tejas Park for the Friday night of our trip. That forced us to adjust our original routing and plan. So, our final trip plan was to start at Tejas Park on Friday at about noon. We would hike about 6 miles to Russell Park on the northern shore of Lake Georgetown and camp there Friday night. Next we would complete our hike of the north shore of Lake Georgetown on Saturday and join the club at Cedar Breaks Park on Saturday night, totaling about 10 miles. Sunday morning we would hike most of the southern shore of Lake Georgetown and finish our trip once again at Tejas Park on Sunday afternoon, backpacking about 11 miles. That sequencing would give us a good break-in day on Friday, a nice strenuous Saturday, and a slightly more strenuous day on Sunday.

Six of us met right on time at Tejas Park on Friday, April 21, including Robert, Dolores, Oscar, Jenny, Rene and Al. We had a couple of add-ons. My nephew Taran and his 3 year old son joined us. They were doing a day hike with us, a few miles in, and a few miles back out. The weather was wonderful, partly cloudy, if a bit warm. The wildflowers were blooming everywhere, making for a lovely backpacking hike. Our hike was mostly flat, with some significant elevation gain as we approached Russell Park. We set up camp, then we headed out to the beach and cooled off in the lake. We ate dinner and after some social time packed it in for the night. Kari joined us late in the evening, bringing our count up to 7.

Saturday morning we rose bright and early. It had rained lightly overnight, so we packed up some damp tents, and pushed off for the next leg of our hike. The day was mostly overcast but with no rain. The temperatures were again comfortable and a bit cooler than Friday. The hiking was much more rocky along a series of bluffs and hills overlooking Lake Georgetown. We made good time, enjoying the company, the scenery, and occasional views of the lake. We got to Cedar Breaks to find the sites very breezy, and the sky clearing. We set up our tents and staked and guyed them well to stand up to the winds at the site. The good news is our damp tents dried out very quickly! The we headed into Georgetown with the rest of the club where we had an unusually exciting dinner. The food was good, and a medical emergency (not a club member this time) made for the excitement.

Sunday morning was clear and cold. The rest of the cold front had blown in overnight, dropping the temperatures to a low at sunrise of 48 degrees. A hot cup of coffee prepared using our Jetboil and powdered coffee mix was very welcome, as was a hot bowl of oatmeal also prepared using water from our Jetboil. We embarked earlier than usual at about 8 to 8:30 and started out our final leg wearing light jackets and with the legs on our convertible pants. Those layers came off quickly as the temperature rose. Most of us did that final leg without our backpacks on. Some of the backpackers had to come back to Cedar Breaks anyway, and a couple of us had to drive them back. So, the slackers (including me) stowed our backpacks in vehicles and headed off between 25 and 40 lbs lighter. Kari and Oscar did that final leg with full packs as they were not coming back to Cedar Breaks.

All in all seven of us hiked the full 28 miles of the San Gabriel River Trail / Goodwater Loop around Lake Georgetown. It was another progressive learning experience. We are developing our backpacking and hiking skills. We are learning about our equipment. And we are having loads of fun. REI and other sporting goods stores will be getting more business as a result of some of those equipment lessons. ~ *Backpacking continued next page*

~ *Backpacking continued*

A few final notes. In addition to the profusion of wildflowers, there were low bushes of dewberries everywhere. Everytime we came to a patch, you could see our club members bent over picking berries and munching on them. I had a painful encounter with a "woolly bully? caterpillar". It was a rather harmless looking black furry thing. I was opening my backpack and my hand brushed lightly against it and lit up like a dozen bee stings. Several members of the club are now converts to the "Backpacking Chair" contingent. After our muddy slog last May a few of us bought small backpacking chairs. We are getting more converts every trip! ~ *Rene*

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## Lake Georgetown (Goodwater Loop Trail)





**NEXT DAY HIKE  
LONE STAR HIKING TRAIL  
STUBBLEFIELD/ CONROE SECTION - SAM HOUSTON  
NATIONAL FOREST  
Miles 20 to 23, Hike Length 6.0 to 6.6 miles.  
Saturday May 6, 2017 at 9AM**

**Meet at:** (See Directions to Trailhead below)  
Please try to arrive around 15 to 30 minutes or so before to get signed in ... thanks )

**Location:** Near Stubblefield Lake, about 14 miles west of New Waverly. See directions below for more detail.

**Directions:** From The Woodlands, north to New Waverly and take FM 1375 exit. Turn left on FM 1375 and go about 9.7 miles to Stubblefield Lake turnoff on right side (sign here on right side which says Stubblefield Campground and Multi-Use Trailhead (\* Important – this is not same turnoff as for the day hikes in March and April). From turnoff go right for about 3 miles, passing by Stubblefield Campground and instead going straight ahead and over road bridge and going ANOTHER 200 YARDS PAST END OF BRIDGE TO PARKING LOT ON LEFT SIDE (parking lot sits back off the road).

**Details:** NOTE: ALTHOUGH THE TRAILS ARE WELL MAINTAINED WE MAY BE CROSSING SEVERAL GULLIES, ENCOUNTERING TREE ROOTS, ETC. THESE CONDITIONS ARE TYPICAL FOR THE TRAILS IN THE NATIONAL FOREST. THEREFORE BOOTS WITH GOOD ANKLE SUPPORT ARE RECOMMENDED. IF YOU HAVE HIKING STICKS SUGGEST BRINGING THEM. FOR THIS PARTICULAR HIKE THERE ARE RESTROOM FACILITIES AT THE STUBBLE FIELD LAKE CAMPGROUND ABOUT 1/4 MILE AWAY FROM OUR STARTING OFF PLACE AT THE PARKING LOT.

We will hike the LSHT from mile 20.0 (parking lot) in northeasterly direction to mile 23.0 ( near FM 1374) of the LSHT and return which will total 6 miles. If hikers want to hike farther then upon returning to parking lot they can back track to mile 19.7, ( which is across Stubblefield Lake Campground ) and return which would add another .6 miles to the hike. Mile 19.7 is where we hiked to and had lunch on our recent April hike. Hikers do not need to go the entire 6.0 or 6.6 miles and instead hike as far as they wish and return to the parking lot. Bring at least two bottles of water each (recommend 3), snacks/lunch, sun screen and bug spray. We will have lunch along the way, possibly near the turnaround point at mile 23.0. We should be finished around 1 pm or so. Hope to see many of you there. ~ *Don Macken 281-355-1628*

**NEXT WEEKEND OUTING**

**TYLER STATE PARK**

789 Park Road 16, Tyler Texas 75706-9141 - (903) 597-5338  
Latitude: 32.482180/Longitude: -95.283396  
May 12 - 14, 2017

**Trip Leader: Richard Guyot - 619-971-4414**

**Directions:** 198 Miles from The Woodlands  
Proceed north on I45 from Woodlands Pkwy for approx. 101 miles. Take exit 178 for US-79 toward Buffalo approx. 0.4 miles. Turn right onto US-79 N/W Commerce St approx. 35.6 miles.  
Turn left onto TX-155, N/N Link St approx. 37.1 miles. Exit on the left onto TX-49 loop approx. 15.9 miles. Take the E I-20 ramp approx. 8.5 miles. Take exit 562 toward Farm to Market Rd 14/ Hawkins/Tyler approx. 0.4 miles. Turn left onto State Park Hwy approx. 2.1 miles. Turn left onto Park Rd 16 approx. 1.1 miles.  
Tyler State Park

**Details:** The first to arrive picks & pays for our 4 club sites previously reserved by Gerry Anderson for Saturday night. Our club pays for Friday night when they are first reserved and a \$5 fee will be collected from all campers at the state park to be reimbursed to our club. We split the costs for sites for Saturday night and the first arrival that has paid for our sites will be reimbursed at that time.

At the park you can rent boats, fish, swim in the lake, hike, mountain bike, bird watch and plenty of other things to do. They also loan out fishing rods, reels, and tackle boxes. The weather will be in the low 80's with full on sunshine. I have never been to the park and looking forward to the weekend.

**Friday Evening Meal:** (Pot luck) Anything you want to share.

**Saturday Hike:** Many trails in the park, moderately easy with some uphill sections. Hike will start at 9am. Hiking trail (TBD).

**Saturday Evening Meal:** Meat, salad, bread, and a dessert. **Can someone bring their barbecue?**

There will be a sign-up sheet at the meeting. If you can't make the meeting and still want to go, call, or e-mail me and let me know. ~ Richard  
[glacier656@gmail.com](mailto:glacier656@gmail.com)



# The Woodlands Hiking Club

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS - 2017 & SPRING 2018

## 2017

MAY 6	(DAY HIKE) LONE STAR HIKING TRAIL: STUBBLEFIELD/CONROE SECT. TRIP LEADER: DON MACKEN
MAY 12 - 14	(CAMPOUT & HIKE) TYLER STATE PARK: TRIP LEADERS: RICHARD GUYOT
JUNE 4 - 11	ZION & BRYCE CANYON NATIONAL PARK: TRIP LEADERS: MOLLIE A. & JENNY C. (TRIP IS FULL)
SEPT 15 - 17	GALVESTON ISLAND STATE PARK: TRIP LEADERS: TBD
OCT 13 - 15	GARNER STATE PARK: TRIP LEADERS: TBD
OCT 15 - 19	SEMINOLE CANYON STATE PARK & HISTORIC SITE: TRIP LEADER: TBD
NOV 10 - 12	BRAZOS BEND STATE PARK: TRIP LEADERS: TBD

## 2018

JAN 19 - 21	BASTROP STATE PARK: TRIP LEADERS: TBD
FEB 16 - 18	STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE PARK: TRIP LEADERS: TBD
MAR 9 - 11	LOST MAPLES STATE NATURAL AREA: TRIP LEADER: MOLLIE ALTOM
MAR 11 - 16	DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK: TRIP LEADER: MOLLIE ALTOM

**NOTE:** Trip leader(s) are needed for our fall camping trips. Please contact Dennis or Ed to volunteer.

## OFFICER'S AND BOARD

Position	Name	Contact #	E-Mail Address
President	Rene Champagne	832-592-7897	<a href="mailto:rjchampagne@gmail.com">rjchampagne@gmail.com</a>
Vice President	Janet Canton	832-752-1206	<a href="mailto:janetcanton@hotmail.com">janetcanton@hotmail.com</a>
Secretary/Treasurer	Gerry Anderson	713-419-4730	<a href="mailto:gerryjanderson@gmail.com">gerryjanderson@gmail.com</a>
Trails & Outings	Ed Bartholet Dennis Bilyeu	936-756-5507 281-221-7391	<a href="mailto:bec@consolidated.net">bec@consolidated.net</a> <a href="mailto:bikernerd@libertybrew.com">bikernerd@libertybrew.com</a>
Day Hike Coordinator	Don Macken Mike Downs	281-355-1628 713-204-7587	<a href="mailto:mackendonr@aol.com">mackendonr@aol.com</a> <a href="mailto:mdowns911@yahoo.com">mdowns911@yahoo.com</a>
Backpacking Chairman Executive Officer	Dave Krolow Robert Heins	832-423-4710 713-503-5804	<a href="mailto:dkrolow62@gmail.com">dkrolow62@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:rcheins@yahoo.com">rcheins@yahoo.com</a>
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