

Riparian Systems: Their Remarkable Roles in Healthy Waterways

Riparian areas are the critical boundary area between waterways and adjacent upland. A healthy riparian system relies on diverse plant species (sedges, grasses, forbs, woody plants and trees) to enhance the stability of stream beds and banks, reduce erosion, improve water quality, and impart important buffering during flood events.

Sky Jones-Lewey will talk about her work in riparian systems at the March 28th meeting of the Master Naturalist Hill Country Chapter. As both the developer of landowner workshops and a participant involved in restoration of riparian systems, Sky is especially knowledgeable about riparian areas and will be sharing some of those lessons and experiences with attendees.

Sky was raised on the banks of the Nueces River. Although her education and professional career took her far away from Texas, she and her family are once again back on the Nueces. Sky has a degree in Environmental Science as well as a BA in Chemistry. Sky is the Director of Resource Protection and Education at the Nueces River Authority (NRA) and is based in Uvalde, TX.

Sky is also the Managing Editor of NRA's outstanding field guide, "Your Remarkable Riparian", which includes descriptions and photographs of more than ninety of the most common and important riparian plant species of the Nueces River Basin and other central Texas streams, including the Guadalupe River water catchment area.

As the incoming President of the Hill Country Alliance, Sky Lewey is featured in this month's issue of Texas Wildlife Magazine. A frequent comment heard from participants after a workshop is, "I'll never look at a creek the same way again."

The monthly meeting of the Master Naturalist is free and open to the public. Please join us on Monday, March 28th 2011 at the Upper Guadalupe River Authority's lecture hall, located at 125 Lehmann Drive in Kerrville, TX. Socializing begins at 6:30, with the program starting at 7 pm. For more information, please call our V.P. of Programs, Bob McKinley [(830)-535-6211 or (713) 503-3914] or email him at bobmac9827@gmail.com



Grasses, brush and trees stabilize this riparian margin of this creek.



Grasses and trees stabilize the riparian margins of this creek.



Grasses stabilizing the bank margin.



Vegetation, live and dead, will slow flood waters and reduce bank erosion.