



Spring is just around the corner and many homeowners are preparing to give their lawns a facelift and makeover.

Are you ready to take your lawn from bare to beautiful? If so, why not do it the **Texas SmartScape** way? One of the best solutions to a beautiful lawn is to add native Texas plants that will survive the long, hot, and dry Texas Summer. Not only are these plants drought tolerant, they are also low maintenance, requiring less water and fertilizers. Many local nurseries sell native plants. A great resource to learn about native and adaptive plants is the Texas SmartScape website. On the website, there is a plant database where you can search plants by color, type, or height. The search will give a brief description and picture of the plant and also tell you what types of wildlife it attracts. *For more information on native Texas plants, visit www.txsmartscape.com*

Spring is also the time of year when many homeowners apply fertilizers to their lawns to help their grass grow. Did you know that different fertilizers have different nutrients to promote different growth? **Caution!** Do not apply any fertilizer until you know what nutrients your lawn needs. The best way to determine what your lawn needs is to conduct a soil test. The results of the soil test will tell you the levels of nitrogen and phosphorous in the soil. This information will help you select a more appropriate fertilizer for your lawn. If your soil already contains high levels of phosphorous, choosing and using a fertilizer that also contains high levels of phosphorous can damage your lawn. *For more information on soil testing, visit <http://soiltesting.tamu.edu/>*

The most important thing to know before applying any chemical to your lawn is to **read the label and follow the directions**. Some fertilizers need to be watered in; some do not.

Other important tips regarding proper application include:

- Never apply chemicals to your lawn on a windy day. The wind will carry your fertilizer to your neighbor's yard or in the nearest storm drain inlet.
- Only apply the manufacturer's recommended amount of any chemical. Any additional fertilizer added to the lawn will get washed away into the storm drainage system during the next rain event.

Taking your lawn from bare to beautiful the Texas SmartScape way will yield you the following benefits:

- Water conservation
- Lower cost on your water bill
- Beautification of your home and local environment
- Attraction of native wildlife
- Reduction of stormwater pollution



My Connection with the Trinity River: The Ben Jones Story

Ben Jones is the Director of Education for the Trinity River Audubon Center, the flagship Center for Audubon's education and conservation initiatives in Texas. The state program of the National Audubon Society, is working to restore over 3 million acres of grasslands, oversee 13,000 acres of critical coastal habitat, and educate 50,000 students annually.



Ben Jones

What is your connection to the Trinity River? The Trinity River flows through my veins; for all North Texans it's life-sustaining as our source of drinking water. As director of education for the Trinity River Audubon Center and Audubon Texas, I work with a team dedicated everyday to promoting awareness and wise stewardship of our river and the other ecosystems of our amazing natural home.

What do you think of when you hear someone say, "the Trinity River?"

I think of my home and a treasure that needs protecting and care. I think of a wildlife corridor essential to the birds and other animals that share our home. I think of six-foot alligator gar rolling on the surface; turtles sunning along the shore; Great Egrets and Little Blue Herons wading along its banks; and the eagles, hawks, and falcons I've watched soar over it. I think of a delicate and complex ecosystem that deserves our careful attention.

In your experience, what are people's reactions to spending part of their day on the Trinity River?

People are excited and amazed. Over and over I hear, "I had no idea this was here."

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This is a treasure!" Your perspective on the city is unique and fresh when viewing it from the river corridor. You pass under old railroad trestles, major highways, and along areas once used by Native Americans. You also get up-close and personal with the consequences of our actions in the city. When students ask, "Where does the litter come from?" We get to explain how the urban water cycle works and what conservation actions they can take to help make our community healthier for people and animals. Sometimes our guests are surprised to learn that in Dallas, we all live in the Trinity River Watershed and thus all the water in our area, and everything in it, drains to the Trinity and eventually the sea. Our Trinity River is like a highway to the ocean.

How have you seen the Trinity River change during your time on it?

I've been focused on the Trinity for four years. Even in this short time, I've seen incredible improvements in accessibility with hike/bike trails, the Trinity River Audubon Center, parks and the beautiful new Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge opening soon. Of course, I'd like to see even more positive changes manifest in the future as a result of Audubon's conservation planning and action. Every year we involve twenty thousand school children in conservation education and actions focused on water conservation, water quality improvement, and litter pollution control. Over time, I'm confident we'll see those efforts result in a noticeably healthier Trinity River for everyone to enjoy.

How do you think the Audubon Center has changed people's ideas of the Trinity River and the Great Trinity River Forest?

For over three years now, we've shined a spotlight of positive attention on Dallas, an amazing natural home. Everyday our guests learn about the Great Trinity Forest as the largest, urban, hardwood, bottomland forest in North America. Less than 10 minutes from downtown Dallas they observe the deer, beaver, river otter, and bobcat that call our Trinity River and Forest home. They-spot huge Pileated Woodpeckers fly through the forest and beautiful Wood Ducks glide

This is a continuation in a series of articles that features local Dallasites and their connection to the Trinity River. If you or someone you know wants to be considered as an interview subject in this series, contact us at 214.948.4022 or email stormwater@dallascityhall.com.

through the ponds. They count Painted Buntings and other bird species and submit their findings as citizen scientists. They help restore prairie and remove invasive plants to create healthy habitat. They learn what they can do to help make our community healthier and better for people and wildlife alike. Our guest leave the Trinity River Audubon Center more knowledgeable about our river, prairie, and forest and more empowered to take positive action on behalf of birds, other wildlife, and the people who call Dallas home.

What do you want people to know about the Trinity River?

When we turn on our faucets for a drink of water or shower or wash clothes, we use water from the Trinity. It's essential to life in Dallas, provides drinking water to all of North Texans and over 11 million people statewide, about half our state's population. Water, like all our natural resources is **finite**. As our city continues to grow and in this season of drought, we must use our water wisely and conserve wherever we can. When we all work together and do our part, we can make a huge difference on behalf of our community now and for the benefit of generations to come.

It looks like you have spent a lot of time around the Trinity River, what have you learned about the river?

Being focused on birds, I've studied the Trinity as a wildlife corridor and have learned how essential it is as a rest and refueling site for birds in the central flyway. With 98.5 percent of all migratory birds in the U.S. recorded in Texas, you can imagine how essential a healthy Trinity River corridor is to birds across the hemisphere. The Trinity River is essential to birds and it is essential to me, not only as my source of water, but as a source of inspiration to get outside and never stop exploring. I dream of leading a headwaters-to-Trinity Bay paddling expedition one day, where we'd paddle our way across the state through forest and prairie, through farmland and small towns ending up in the company of bottle-nosed dolphins and a beautiful sunrise over Galveston. Do I have any takers?

Tips & Drops

Upcoming Events

March

- 1-31** 11th Annual March Texas SmartScape Month
<http://www.nctcog.org/envir/SEEclean/txsmartscape/index.asp>
- 2-4** Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge Opening Celebrations
www.mhbbridgecelebration.com
- 2-4** Dallas Home and Garden Show at Dallas Market Hall
www.texashomeandgarden.com
- 3 - 4/8** Dallas Blooms at Dallas Arboretum
www.dallasarboretum.org/DallasBlooms/index.htm
- 9-11** Great BIG Texas Home Show at Dallas Cowboys Stadium
www.greatbigtexas homeshow.com
- 21-25** Dallas Auto Show at Dallas Convention Center
www.dallasautoshow.com
- 22** Annual Water Day
www.worldwaterday.org
- 24** Water-Wise Landscape Seminars at TX AgriLife Extension Center
<http://savedallaswater.com/wwsl/>
- 28** Stormwater Construction Workshop at City of Dallas Eco Park Auditorium
www.wheredoesitgo.com



The City of Dallas holds a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit which allows the City of Dallas to discharge from its storm drainage system directly into the Waters of the United States in accordance with the requirements set forth in the permit.

The MS4 Permit is issued by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. (TCEQ)

The City's NEW MS4 permit is No. WQ0004396000. To learn more about the NEW City of Dallas MS4 permit, go to www.wheredoesitgo.com. Email questions or comments to stormwater@dallascityhall.com

ASK ME, TRINITY TRUDY



What should I do if I see someone in my neighborhood putting something into the storm drain inlet?



The only thing that is allowed to enter into the storm drain is **uncontaminated** stormwater.

The City of Dallas Code states that a person commits an offense if he discharges or causes to be discharged into the stormwater drainage system, waters of the United States, or state water a pollutant or substance that causes or contributes in causing the city to violate a water quality standard, the city's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, or any state-issued discharge permit for discharges from the city's storm water drainage system.

If you see a person committing a stormwater offense, **call 3-1-1**, which is a non-emergency hotline that citizens can call to report City ordinance violations.

When you call 3-1-1, an operator will request information regarding the violation such as the nature and location of the violation. They may also ask if you would like to be contacted after the investigation.

After all pertinent information has been collected; the operator will direct the report to the proper City department. A representative from that department will be sent out to investigate the reported information.

If a violation of an ordinance is confirmed, the department representative will attempt to locate the responsible party to inform him of the violation. Depending on the severity of the violation, the representative may issue a citation to the responsible party.

3-1-1 is not only for reporting City ordinance violations. Citizens can also call 3-1-1 to request City services such as roll carts, tree removal, or street repair.

3-1-1 is your call to City Hall. 3-1-1 provides access to City Services 7 days a week from 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. for routine calls and 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for urgent requests such as street leaks, burst pipes, sewer issues, sick, confined or injured animals, animal bites, traffic signal outages, downed signal light poles, street spillages, and downed trees.

For your convenience, you can also fill out a service request form online at www.dallascityhall.com

For more information regarding the City of Dallas Stormwater Codes, go to www.dallascityhall.com. Go to Quick References and click on City Code. You can find stormwater codes in Volume 1, Chapter 19-Health & Sanitation, Article IX-Stormwater Drainage System, Section 19-118.

*For more info regarding the City of Dallas Water Conservation Ordinance, visit http://www.greendallas.net/pdfs/h20Conservation_Ordinance.pdf
If you have a stormwater question for Trinity Trudy, email her at stormwater@dallascityhall.com. Look for her responses in future issues of "Inside the Inlet."*

JUST FOR KIDS . . . BIG and small

Complete the Cryptogram

Cryptograms are word puzzles where each letter of a sentence or phrase has been replaced by a number. The result looks like a bunch of silliness, but it is actually just a code. The solution lies in substituting the correct letter in place of the number. One of the best ways to get started to look for the most common number in the phrase, this will most likely be the letter "E".

Here is a hint: Where does Stormwater go?

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
16	8	23				11			13	19		14	4	20	18	7	1		17	6	21	9	15	24	26

_____ **T** _____ **G O** _____ **W T T** _____ **O W , O**
 25 17 11 20 10 12 9 25 17 3 17 3 10 22 2 20 9 12 20
K _____ **P** _____ **T** _____ **C** _____ **N !**
 19 10 10 18 25 17 8 2 10 5 4

Answer : IT GOES WITH THE FLOW, SO KEEP IT CLEAN!

Volunteer Spotlight

Happy Birthday SARAH!

“It’s my birthday and I do what I want to” is how most people approach their birthday celebration, but not Sarah Harvey.

For Sarah’s birthday, she chose not to make it all about HER, but to spend her birthday doing an environmental service for the City of Dallas.

Sarah and a group of her friends decided that they would spend the afternoon of her birthday marking storm drains inlets in the City of Dallas.

When asked why she chose to spend her birthday this way, Sarah replied, “For my 28th birthday, I decided to organize a group of friends to do volunteer work for our community. When I began researching possibilities, drain marking was one of the interesting opportunities I discovered and thought it would be a great option for my group of friends.”

Sarah also stated that she cares about preventing stormwater pollution in Dallas because she loves doing things outdoors in Dallas, including things like kayaking in the lakes and exploring the lakes and rivers with her dog, Penelope. She also is very concerned with the well-being of native wildlife. For three years, she has volunteered with DFW Wildlife Coalition (www.dfwwildlife.org). When she started reading about the dangers of stormwater pollution to both lakes and all the wildlife living in them, she immediately knew helping prevent the pollution by promoting public education and awareness through storm drain marking was a wonderful cause.



Sarah Harvey

Sarah and four of her friends marked storm drains in the Lakewood area. She initially chose this Dallas location because her best friend’s family lives there and she wanted to mark storm drains in a place close to family. Over the next few weeks, Sarah kept the drain marking kit in her car and as she had the opportunity, she marked storm drains in a few other areas around Downtown Dallas. Her church is in Downtown Dallas and she spends time with friends and family in the Deep Ellum area. She wanted to mark areas that had the need and also areas that she would be around again in the future. This way she has even more opportunities to talk to people about the cause when she is in these areas.

In Sarah’s closing comments, she states, “I think it’s wonderful what the Dallas Stormwater Management group does by allowing volunteers to help with such a worthy cause. We have to take care of our world, and unfortunately not everyone is aware of the ramifications of polluting! It’s not just trash that collects in our streets - when it gets into the stormwater, it has a much larger impact as it’s flushed into our local waterways. I want your readers to know how good it feels and how worthy it is to know you are making a difference by helping to educate the public on the extreme dangers of polluting, especially in (but certainly not limited to) our local waterways.”

Stormwater Management extends a big THANK YOU to Sarah Harvey and her friends for their participation in spreading our stormwater pollution prevention message.

The Storm Drain Marking volunteer program is a very enjoyable and rewarding program. Volunteers select an area of the City of Dallas where they would like to mark the storm drains and the Stormwater Management Outreach Team provides the training and the supplies.

To inquire about marking storm drain inlets in your neighborhood, contact a Stormwater Management Outreach team member at 214.948.4022 or email us at stormwater@dallascityhall.com.



Fact:

Seven types of commonly used herbicides and pesticides washed down our storm drains can be found in the Trinity River.

Lawn chemicals and pesticides can pollute the storm drainage system, including area creeks, lakes, and the Trinity River, potentially harming plants and aquatic wildlife.

Did you know that washing chemicals in the street or storm drain could cost you up to \$2000?

Tips:

Don't apply yard chemical when it is very windy or about to rain.

Try using natural and organic alternatives.

Follow the instructions for the chemicals including organic alternative.



For more information visit us at www.wheredoesitgo.com

FYI Readers:

Stormwater Management is here to serve and meet the needs of our valued readers. For additional information regarding the following:

- General stormwater information
- Construction and Industrial workshops
- Presentations about stormwater pollution prevention or permitting requirements

Contact us at:

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