

Woodwind Lakes

NEWSLETTER

|

APRIL 2025

Some fabulous events are right around the corner!

WOODWIND LAKES GARAGE SALE

SPRING 2025

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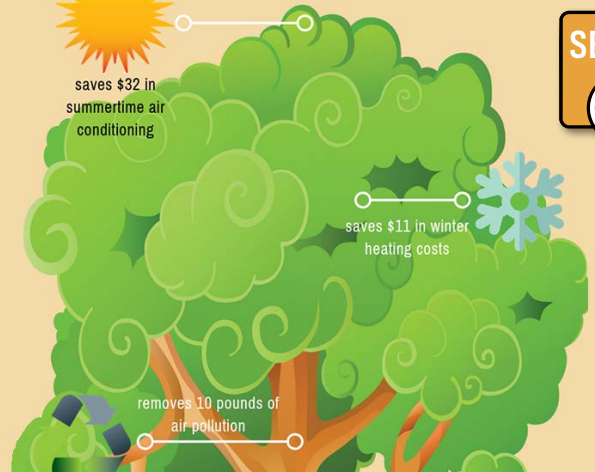
EVERY YEAR, ONE LARGE TREE



saves \$32 in
summertime air
conditioning

SEE PAGE

3



saves \$11 in winter
heating costs

removes 10 pounds of
air pollution

Spring Easter Egg Hunt

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First Ever
Woodwind Lakes

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Music Festival

WOODWIND LAKES GARAGE SALE

SPRING 2025



April 5th from 7am to 2pm



Visit from the Texas Urban Forestry Service

Sustainability in Woodward Lakes

April 11, 2025 | 1:00 pm at the Pavilion

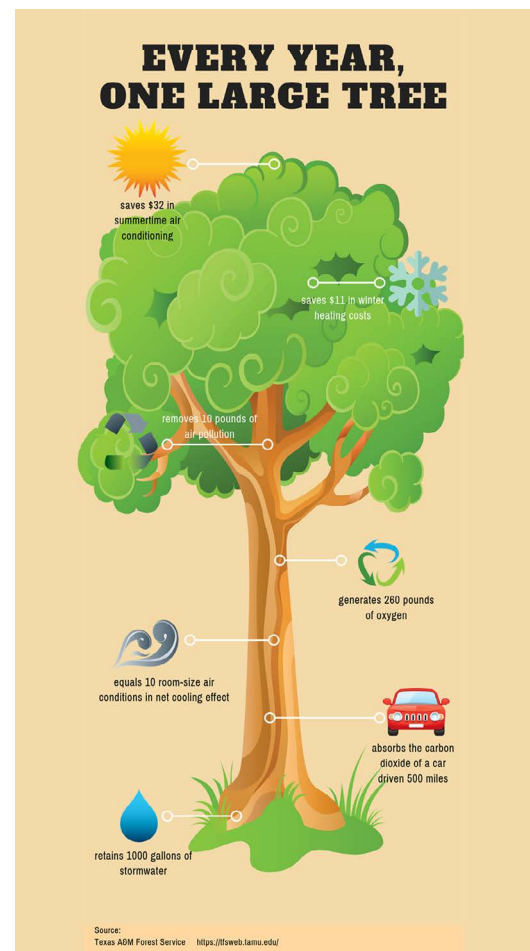
Please join us at the Pavilion on April 11th, 1:00 pm to hear a presentation from Matt Weaver, Regional Urban Forester. He has been with the Texas Forest Service since 2009 and was a Program Manager for the Trees for Houston Organization for 10 years prior to joining the Texas A&M Forest Service. He presents to Homeowners' Associations all over the Houston area and beyond.

Please send questions for Matt to me by email: sue@mspreston.com or call or text 510-717-4820 by April 9th so I can forward the questions to him for his presentation. He will be visiting our neighborhood so he can provide information relevant to us.



TEXAS A&M FOREST SERVICE URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM

Texas A&M Forest Service urban foresters act as facilitators, bringing together interested parties to find solutions to local tree problems. By finding and training local leaders, TFS urban foresters help increase public awareness of the value of urban trees, raise the skill level of local tree workers, set quality standards for tree planting and care and guide communities toward sustainable management of their community forests.



Benefits of trees

Trees provide many economic, social, and environmental benefits that lead to improved well-being and a better quality of life. Above are just a few of the services trees provide to Texans.



*Open to all!
Easter eggs for the kids and
snacks for everyone.*

Saturday, April 12 at 2pm at the Pavilion | 7523 Allegro

Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy an evening of music, food and drink.

First Ever
Woodwind Lakes

Music Festival

Saturday, May 17, 2025
Family Pool Area

9015 Woodwind Lakes Dr. at Ensemble Dr.

Music provided by "THE DUDERINOS" and "THE CUL-DE-SACS",
playing a mix of music from the 70s, 80s and 90s.

Classic Rock: Bob Seger, The Eagles, Queen, Creedence along with Blues and Country.
Food and drink Trucks from Goode Company BBQ. An enjoyable evening for everyone!

More info coming soon!

Notes from the neighborhood

BLOOD DRIVE RESULTS

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center and area patients
thank you for your blood drive.

Your blood drive results are as follows:

Woodwind Lakes Women's Club

Drive Date: 02/24/2025

Donors: 11

Total Units: 13

If you have any questions regarding your recent blood drive,
please contact your Donor Recruitment Coordinator.

MUD 261 UPDATE

MUD 261's contractor (Stuckey)
will be conducting targeted
drainage work around both
Lakes 1 and 2.

This drainage work will clear
drainage areas of debris and
ensure positive flow towards
inlet pipes to the two lakes.

SNAKES IN THE HOOD

Just a heads up about snakes that may be in our neighborhood. The HOA Board has had several reports from residents about seeing snakes due to the recent storm, hot weather and the numerous places for them to hide with all of the brush that remains to be picked up.

Many snakes are non-venomous but please be careful and keep your distance if you spot a snake. For more information on snake types and colors, please visit Texas Parks & Wildlife at:

<https://tpwd.texas.gov/education/hunter-education/online-course/preparation-and-survival/snakes>

Common snake identification guide for the Houston area:

<https://www.inaturalist.org/guides/4005>



Snakes serve a valuable function in the environment. Please do not kill a snake – even a venomous one. Snakes do not prey on humans and they will not chase you, in fact they usually retreat or escape if given the opportunity. The danger comes when they are either surprised or cornered. The majority of bites result from people taking unnecessary or foolish risks with venomous snakes.

THE WOMEN'S CLUB

Scruples Boutique

LEARN HOW TO ACCESSORIZE


Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 10:00 am

At the home of Elizabeth Blanchard | 7811 Adagio Avenue

For more information or to RSVP contact Ann Tatum:

anntatum9203@gmail.com

Hope we see you there!



Our anger and annoyance
are more detrimental to us
than the things themselves
which anger or annoy us.

Marcus Aurelius

Masked attic invaders

Cheryl Conley, Lake Creek Preserve Board of Directors

Social media is a haven for those seeking advice and commiseration on a number of topics. I feel compelled to revisit a topic that comes up frequently during wildlife “baby season”—the topic of raccoons taking up residence in attics. It happens with alarming frequency during this time of new life in the natural world. **There are effective non-lethal strategies to remove raccoons from your home** allowing both you and the animals to thrive in our shared environment.

These opportunistic rascals with the masked faces are everywhere. They’re highly intelligent with amazing problem-solving skills and thrive in cities. Although nocturnal, you might see one during the day. Don’t automatically jump to the conclusion that they must have rabies. Most likely, they are pregnant or nursing moms foraging for food.

Like any good mom, pregnant raccoons seek out den sites that offer protection from predators and the elements. Acceptable sites are tree cavities, underground burrows dug by other animals, rock crevices, brush piles,

fallen trees and even sheds, garages and attics. Why do they choose human dwellings to give birth? Because they can. Raccoons can enter your attic or other structures through ventilation openings on the outside of your house. Any warping or tears in house siding is another easy way. Structural problems in things like trim boards and dormer junctions can provide easy access as well. In early spring you should check your buildings for any damages or structural issues. Get them repaired now—birthing season is upon us.

If you find you have an unwanted guest, your first reaction may be to call an exterminator. For several hundred dollars, they’ll set a trap to catch the mom. What do they do with her and what about the babies? That’s the million-dollar question. There are some ethical companies out there who will do their best to save the mom and babies but there are also many unethical ones whose only goal is to take your money with no regard for the lives of the animals. Rather than spend your hard-earned money

on an exterminator, let me share a method to strongly encourage Mom to move out and take her kits with her.

The most effective way to evict your raccoon mama is to make it unpleasant for her to stay. You must “attack” her three senses—sight, sound and smell. Since raccoons are nocturnal, they don’t like lights. If you know how she’s getting in, put a light at the entry point or in the attic where she’s living. If you use the entry point, be sure you don’t block it or she won’t be able to leave. Leave the light on 24 hours a day. Now place a radio in the attic tuned to talk radio

What do they do with the mom and what about the babies? That’s the million-dollar question.

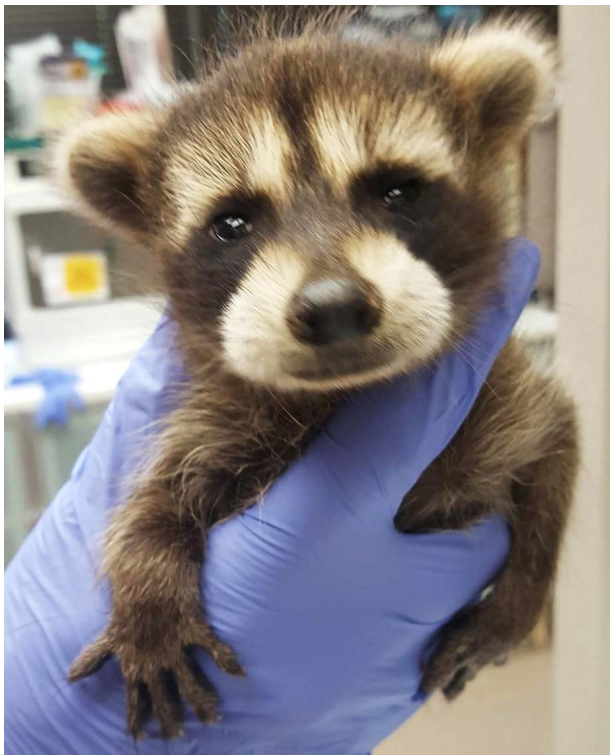
and play it loudly. Raccoons don’t like the sound of the human voice. The third step is smell. There are commercial repellants you can buy from Amazon or a big box store. One of them is called Repels-All. Better yet, purchase fox or coyote urine at Academy or from Amazon and soak several rags with it. Put the rags in a plastic tub with no lid and then place it in the attic. If animal urine grosses you out, you can try peppermint oil or vinegar. By doing these three things, she will move her babies out of your attic to a more suitable location. She may move out immediately or it may take a few days. Be patient.

Don’t try to trap her! When a mom is separated from her babies, she will severely injure herself trying to get to them. I’ve personally witnessed a mama raccoon, driven by maternal instinct, suffer self-inflicted limb trauma attempting to escape the cage.

If you’re willing to wait, mama will leave on her own when her kits are about 8 to 10 weeks old. This is an option that won’t cost you anything but a little patience.

The most important thing in this whole process is to repair any holes or damaged areas on your house, garage or shed once the family moves out. If you don’t find the entry point and repair it, you’ll be going through this again.

Remember to be kind and humane. Our responsibility is to learn how to coexist peacefully with the wildlife we share our planet with. We need to change our mindset from viewing them as threats to recognizing their value and to find solutions to conflicts that benefit both humans and wildlife.



Baby raccoon left orphaned after mother was trapped and removed from an attic by exterminator.

Smooth operators

Cheryl Conley, Lake Creek Preserve
Board of Directors

Both lizards and snakes freak me out. But what about a lizard that looks and acts like a snake? Wow! I didn't even know there was such a thing. But, yes indeed, there is. It's called a skink.*

Skinks are lizards that resemble snakes and there are eight species that are native to Texas: the five-lined, the four-lined, the ground skink, the coal skink, broad-headed, many-lined, Great Plains skink and southern prairie skink.

The one we are likely to see

The most common skink found in our area is the five-lined species. First, let me assure you they are non-venomous and harmless. They can grow to about 8.5 inches and have a red head with a blue tail. Like the name implies, they have five white or yellowish stripes running along the body. As the skink ages, the stripes may fade away. They have tiny legs and very smooth, glass-like scales that make them look like snakes. This species prefers to be near a permanent water source and enjoy basking in the sun.

How the mother cares for them

The mating season begins in May. The female will lay between 15 and 18 eggs between mid-May and July. She seeks out a small cavity beneath rotting logs,

stumps, boards, loose bark or even an empty rodent burrow. She prefers her nest to be in places where soil has a high moisture content. The eggs are very delicate and can be damaged very easily. It seems the moms know this and demonstrate high levels of care. Brooding positions vary depending on the moisture content of the soil. She may lay beside, over or in a coil over the eggs. Body contact with the eggs increases when moisture levels are low because the eggs then need more protection. If the humidity is too low, the females may urinate in the nest to maintain the moisture level. Fluctuations in temperature determine the incubation period which ranges between 24 and 55 days. The hatchlings leave the nest after a day or two and Mom duties are over. The babies reach sexual maturity within two to three years and they can live up to six years.

Unique protection from predators

Five-lined skinks have a unique way of protecting themselves from predators like moles, skunks, raccoons, snakes and opossums. They can disconnect their entire tail or a small segment of it. It is believed that the blue color of the tail and the fact it continues to twitch after detaching attracts the predator while the skink runs for shelter. If the skink is grabbed by the body, it will bite.

Five-lined skinks eat mostly insects, including crickets, grasshoppers, beetles, caterpillars, spiders, earthworms, snails, slugs, isopods, amphibians, smaller lizards and newborn mice.

Like my mom used to say, "You're never too old to learn." So true. Having never seen a skink or even heard of them, I learned something new. How about you?



Five-Lined Skink



Four-Lined Skink



Ground Skink



Coal Skink



Broad-Headed Skink



Many-Lined Skink



Great Plains Skink



Southern Prairie Skink

*The word skink comes from classical Greek *skinkos* and Latin *scincus*, names that referred to various specific lizards.

April Yard of the Month winners

SECTION 1



9211 CYMBAL COURT

SECTION 2



7610 ROLLING ROCK STREET

SECTION 3



8703 GOLDEN CHORD CIRCLE

SECTION 4



9338 RHYTHM LANE

Congratulations!

