

Austin Water – Center for Environmental Research



Austin Water – The University of Texas – Texas A&M University
A Partnership for Urban Ecology and Sustainability: Community, Ecology, Research
located at the Hornsby Bend Biosolids Management Plant



[Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

2210 South FM 973, Austin, Texas 78725

CER Events December 2022

Dec 3

Saturday 8:00 am | Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership - River Monitoring Trip

The Travis County Colorado River Monitoring trip is a day on the river monitoring birds, bugs, fish, and more to help the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership to learn more about the ecology of the river.

- Meet at the CER parking lot at 8:00AM
- You **MUST** provide your own boat.
- Contact Claude Morris at cgmorris70@gmail.com to participate
- More about the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership at the [CER website](#).
- Check out the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership Facebook Page for updates and photos from the river monitoring trips www.facebook.com/austinbastroprivercorridor

Dec 6

Tuesday 12:30- 2pm | CER Lunchtime Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson

Norman Hackerman Building (NHB) 100 E 24th St, Austin TX, 78712 Room 1.720

- **The Anthropocene: Gaia and the Science of Nature**

The Anthropocene Epoch is an unofficial unit of geologic time, used to describe the most recent period in Earth's history when human activity started to have a significant impact on the planet's climate and ecosystems with the starting point being anywhere from the beginning of agriculture to the Industrial Revolution, or the Great Acceleration of the 1950s. In the early 1800s, Humboldt noted that "The wants and restless activity of large communities of men gradually despoil the face of the Earth...Through the destruction of forests, through the distribution of water (irrigation and drainage), and through the production of great masses of steam and gas at the industrial centers," thus recognizing climate change as the Industrial Revolution unfolded. Furthermore, Humboldt insisted that it was the duty of scientists "to examine the changeable elements of nature to understand human impacts". Humboldt's fundamental scientific insight was the need for science to study the Earth as a whole system of life "to recognize unity in the vast diversity of phenomena, and by the exercise of thought and the combination of observations, to discern the constancy of phenomena in the midst of apparent changes". Today, the Gaia hypothesis comes closest to establishing a unifying theory for Humboldtian science. It proposes that living organisms interact with their inorganic surroundings on Earth to form a synergistic and self-regulating, complex system that helps to maintain and perpetuate the conditions for life on the planet. The hypothesis was formulated by the chemist James Lovelock and co-developed with the microbiologist Lynn Margulis in the 1970s. Lovelock named the idea after Gaia, the primordial goddess who personified the Earth in Greek mythology. The originality of the Gaia hypothesis relies on the assessment that such homeostatic balance is actively pursued with the goal of keeping the optimal conditions for life, even when terrestrial or external events menace them. And so, we end this year of exploring Humboldt's life and influence, by examining a possible scientific theory which might fulfill Humboldt's vision for a Science of Nature that explains how - "The general equilibrium, which reigns amongst disturbances and apparent turmoil, is the result of infinite number of mechanical forces and chemical attractions balancing each other out".

Dec 7

Wednesday 10am-12pm | Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership Bimonthly Meeting

Open to anyone interested in the Colorado River – a stakeholder partnership about the past, present and future of the river corridor between Austin and Smithville.

- **Presentations:** City of Austin and Texas Parks and Wildlife - Updates on Colorado River biological monitoring
 - Dr. Brent Bellinger, City of Austin Watershed Protection Department – [Lake Austin and Lady Bird Lake monitoring](#)

- Sarah Robertson, Texas Parks and Wildlife Inland Fisheries Division – Inland Fisheries current activities in the Lower Colorado River Basin, including Blue Sucker monitoring, Guadalupe Bass restoration, American Eel Research, and River Access initiatives. [More info here.](#)

Dec 8 **Thursday 12-1:00 pm** | CER Lunchtime Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson
PARC Senior Activity Center Lamar+29th St at 2874 Shoal Crest Ave, South Room

- **The Anthropocene: Gaia and the Science of Nature**

Dec 10 **Saturday 7am-11am** | Hornsby Bend Bird Observatory Program Monthly Bird Survey

- Meet at the Center for Environmental Research
The HBBO Bird Survey is open to all levels of birder interested in intensive monitoring, although this is not a field trip. In the morning, we have teams covering different areas of the Hornsby Bend facility, and they count numbers of all birds seen. It is 4 hours of hiking and counting, but lots of fun along the way. We meet again around 11am to tally up the species. More information about the CER HBBO program at www.hornsbybend.org

Dec 13 **Tuesday 12pm-1:00pm** | CER Lunchtime Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson
Center for Environmental Research – Hornsby Bend

- **The Anthropocene: Gaia and the Science of Nature**

Dec 17 **Saturday Sunrise to 6pm** | Austin Christmas Bird Count (replaces the Monthly Birding Fieldtrip)
Center for Environmental Research – Hornsby Bend

- The Christmas Bird Count is the longest running citizen science wildlife census in the world. Administered by the National Audubon Society, the data collected by CBC participants for over a century is among the largest resources informing ornithologists and conservation biologists about how the birds of the Americas are faring over time. Participants follow specified routes through a designated 15-mile diameter circle, counting every bird they see or hear all day.
- The Austin CBC circle is centered at McKinney Falls State Park in southeast Austin and covers a wide variety of both mixed urban and rural habitats. The Hornsby Bend section of the CBC meets at the CER to cover the area around our site. **If you are interested or would like to participate in this year's Austin CBC at Hornsby Bend please contact Vincent O'Brien** filmtank@hotmail.com

Dec 31 **Ecological Literacy Volunteer Day – CANCELED FOR THE HOLIDAY**

For more information about these events contact - kevin.anderson@austintexas.gov