

# 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  
2210 South FM 973, Austin, Texas 78725  
Website: <http://www.austintexas.gov/cer>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/austinwatercer>



## CER Events November 2022

Nov 1

**Tuesday 1230pm to 2pm at University of Texas**

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

- **Center for Environmental Research Lunchtime Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson**
- 2022 Lunchtime Lectures – Alexander von Humboldt: Culture, Science, and the Geography of Nature
- **November CER Lunchtime Lecture – The Earth Managers: New Sciences of Environmental Change**
- In the early 19th century, Alexander von Humboldt viewed himself as a geographer who was trying to understand how Nature works. He wrote that nature is not a state or place but a process and that we live on an “unquiet” planet where stability is not found. However, for Humboldt, nature has a dynamic harmony which allows life to survive and thrive amidst instability and change, and, although humans are part of nature, we are the disturbing agent upsetting the harmony or balance of nature. After Humboldt, new sciences were created to study the dynamic complexity of how Nature works. A key question of the new science “ecology” was how “ecosystems” persist over time on a dynamic planet – was change or permanence, dynamics, or stability, more fundamental? Ecology emerged in the 20th century and embraced a view of nature as stable and balanced, as long as humans did not disturb and degrade it. In the 1940s the American ecologist Aldo Leopold grounded his “land ethic” in the idea of stability - “A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.” The belief in stability and balance continued to be emphasized by the American ecologist Eugene Odum, who’s textbook would influence generations of students from the 1950s onward. However, by the 1970s, the mathematical models of ecology revealed that change and instability was more fundamental than stability and balance, and, today, the “new ecology” has focused on change and disequilibrium in its explanation of how Nature works and has explained persistence over time in terms of “resilience” of ecosystem functionality. In parallel, environmental science emerged as a multidisciplinary science of earth systems that integrates physical, biological, and information sciences to the study of the environment and the solution of environmental problems. This new science was spurred in part by the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson’s, *Silent Spring*, which explained the unintended consequences of pesticide use and put scientists in the position of understanding and helping to be Earth managers to mitigate these consequences. And, like new ecology, environmental or earth science views disequilibrium, disruption, and change as fundamental to how Nature works. Now in the 21st century, these young sciences are re-engaging Humboldt’s idea of nature and, they echo Humboldt by insisting that humans must be included as part of nature, both disruptors and managers of our dynamic planet. Join us for the November CER Lunchtime Lecture as we examine the history of these new sciences of environmental change and the role of humans as earth managers.

- Nov 5**      **Saturday 8am meet at the Center for Environmental Research**
- **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
  - A river trip to monitor birds and vegetation along the river and you MUST provide your own boat.
  - Contact Claude Morris at [cgmorris70@gmail.com](mailto:cgmorris70@gmail.com) to participate
  - More about the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership at the CER website Research, Programs, Partnerships page <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/research-projects-partnerships-and-programs>
  - Check out the Austin-Bastrop River Corridor Partnership Facebook Page for updates and photos from the river monitoring trips [www.facebook.com/austinbastroprivercorridor](http://www.facebook.com/austinbastroprivercorridor)
- Nov 8**      **Tuesday NOON to 1pm at the Center for Environmental Research – Hornsby Bend**
- **Center for Environmental Research Luncheon Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson**
  - 2022 Luncheon Lectures – Alexander von Humboldt: Culture, Science, and the Geography of Nature
  - **November CER Luncheon Lecture – The Earth Managers: New Sciences of Environmental Change**
- Nov 10**      **Thursday NOON to 1pm at PARD Senior Activity Center  
Lamar+29<sup>th</sup> St at 2874 Shoal Crest Ave, South Room**
- **Center for Environmental Research Luncheon Lecture by Kevin M. Anderson**
  - 2022 Luncheon Lectures – Alexander von Humboldt: Culture, Science, and the Geography of Nature
  - **November CER Luncheon Lecture – The Earth Managers: New Sciences of Environmental Change**
- Nov 12**      **Saturday 7am-11am meet at the Center for Environmental Research**
- **Hornsby Bend Bird Observatory Program Monthly Bird Survey**
  - 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](http://www.hornsbybend.org)
- Nov 19**      **Saturday 8am – 130pm at the Center for Environmental Research**
- **Fall Migration Celebration** with the Travis Audubon Society
  - Celebrate fall migration with Travis Audubon at Hornsby Bend! This fun get-together is free and open to the public. See some cool birds, snack on some amazing baked goods, and purchase that pair of binoculars you've had your eye on. There will be two bird walks - a special limited registration walk for young birders and one for everyone else!
  - 8am -10am - Young Birders Walk - Registration is limited to 20 people, so register today! Loaner binoculars will be available. Register at [www.travisaudubon.org](http://www.travisaudubon.org)
  - 8am – 10am - General Public Birding Walk - Discover the birds of Hornsby Bend with skilled birders from Travis Audubon. Birders of all levels are welcome to join! We'd like to know how many people to expect for the bird walk, so please register at [www.travisaudubon.org](http://www.travisaudubon.org)
  - 10 AM – 1:30 PM: Binocs and Bake Sale - Need to do some holiday shopping for the birder in your life, or just want to treat yourself? Our friends from Land Sea & Sky will be onsite with optics of all kinds for you to try and purchase. Customers will receive 5% off optics, and 5% of the day's proceeds will benefit Travis Audubon. We will also be hosting a bake sale, so snack on a cookie or muffin as you browse.
  - Bring binoculars and some water if the weather is warm. More information at [www.travisaudubon.org](http://www.travisaudubon.org)

**Nov 26**

**Saturday 9am – Noon at the Center for Environmental Research**

- **Ecological Literacy Volunteer Day** – Help maintain Hornsby Bend! Did you know that all the Hornsby Bend trails, habitat gardens, and kiosks were built and are maintained by volunteers? If you enjoy birding or walking along the Colorado River here, please join us in maintaining these amenities and supporting public access at Hornsby Bend.
  - Wear work clothes [long pants], hat for shade, and sturdy shoes; bring water and binoculars if interested in birds.

**For more information about these events contact - [kevin.anderson@austintexas.gov](mailto:kevin.anderson@austintexas.gov)**