



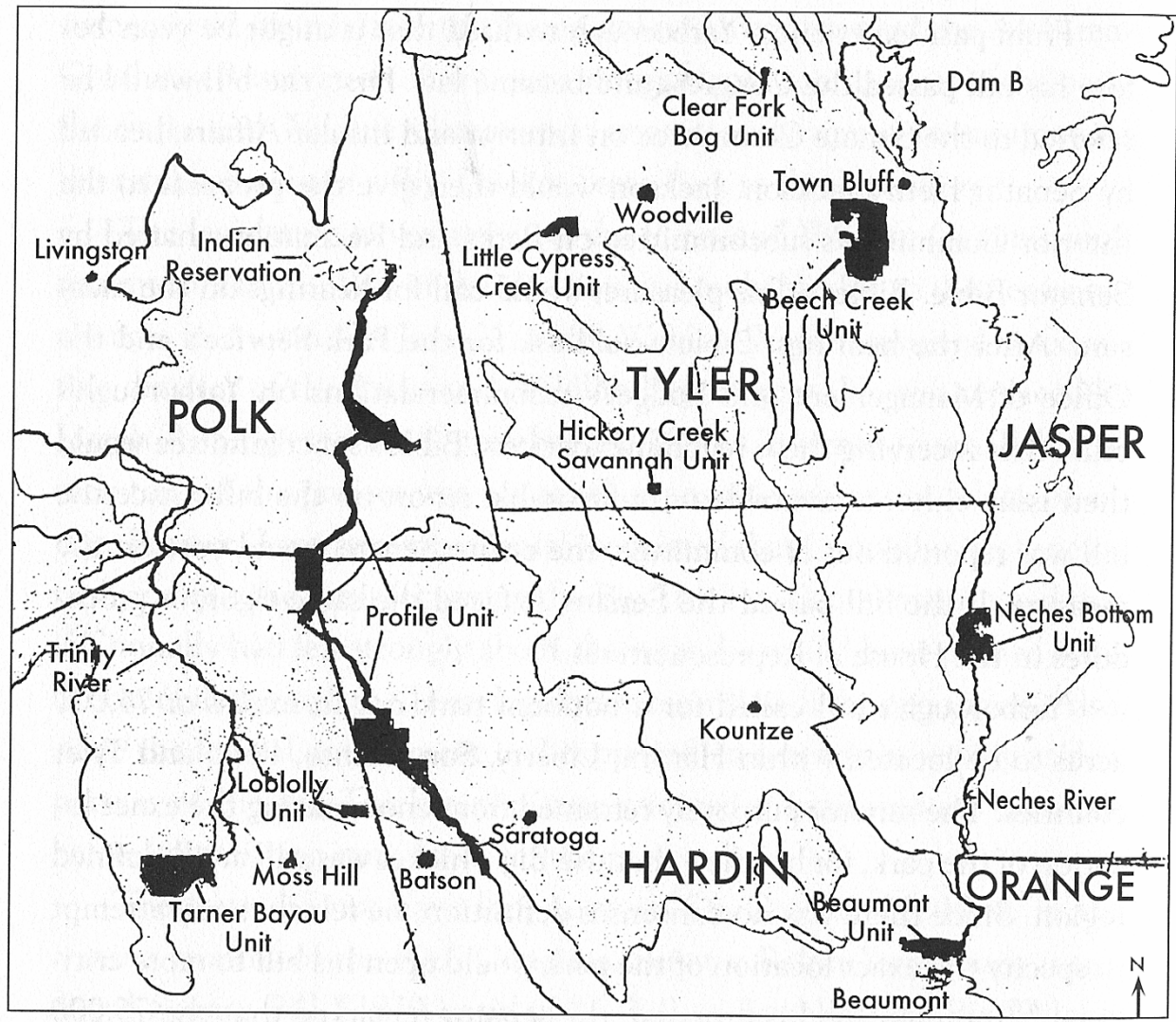
Thicket of Diversity

**Inviting all Citizen Science
Volunteers to a Kickoff Event**

June 16th 2007 9am-4pm

Big Thicket National Preserve

Visitor Center (Hwy 69 & FM 420)



Proposed Big Thicket National Monument

Big Thicket Faces Challenges...

- Extensive Boundaries
- Fragmented
- Lack of Funds
- Oil and Gas
- Trapping
- Hunting

- Not Well Known
- Highway Expansion
- Water Development
- Exotic Species
- Insufficient data
- Poaching



<http://www.houstontranstar.org/>



<http://www.texas-ec.org/tcp/101oil.html>

<http://agnews.tamu.edu/dailynews/stories/WFSC/photos/Mar3004b.htm>

... Big Thicket offers many treasures...

- River, Floodplains, sandhills, long leaf pine
- 13 vegetation communities
- 4 of 5 Carnivorous Plants
- Visitors center, trails, picnic areas
- Orchids
- 60 Mammals
- Huge Bird Draw
- Near Houston metroplex
- Diverse heritage



This Also Raises Many Questions...

“How will highway expansion affect animal movements?”

“How prevalent are the exotic species?”

“What other unique plant and animal species are in the park?”

“What are the biological impacts of oil and gas production?”

Long-term Strategies of Big Thicket:

(from: Big Thicket Management Plan)

- Inventory plants, vertebrates, & other biological groups
- Assess aquatic communities
- Monitor water quality
- Assess migratory, resident, and breeding birds
- Update specimen collections & databases
- Record GPS locations trails, structures, corridors, wetlands, cover types, etc...

Biggest Question of All...

**Who can help
with finding
answers when
staff is limited??**

Answer???

!!VOLUNTEERS!!



How can I volunteer?



- attend the BioBlitz Kickoff Event
- sign up with a TWiG team for ATBI
- register for general volunteer training
- be on call for TMN partners- TCWC

What is a BioBlitz or BioQuest?

- booths- demonstrations
 - electron microscopes- Eastfield Community College
 - identification techniques
- presentations by TWiGs
 - results of inventory activities during the previous week
 - reasons to volunteer for our TWiG!
- walks- sampling techniques
- food, kids activities, fun





What is an TWiG?

Taxonomic Working Group

- a scientists work in teams called TWiG's
- national and international experts
- responsible for archiving the data
- these data will be available for studies nationally, internationally and for centuries

Join your favorite TWiG

Taxonomic Group

Lichens

Aquatic Ectotherms

Pseudoscorpions

Tardigrades

Fungi

Vascular Plants

Bryophytes

Slime Molds

Gyrinid Beetles

TWIG Leader(s)

Robert Egan

Michael Barger & Scott Snyder

Richard Clopton & Jerry Cook

Harry Meyer & Juliana Hinton

David Lewis

Stephen Hatch & Dale Kruse

Paul Davidson & Dale Kruse

Steven Stephenson & Jane
Packard

Jerry Cook

An example TWiG?

Slime Mold Taxonomic working group

- Co-leaders: international and local
 - Dr. Steve Stephenson, Univ. Ark.-Fayetteville
 - Dr. Jane Packard, Texas A&M Univ.
- local and regional collaborators
- graduate students



What is an ATBI?

All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory



- a coordinated effort among scientists working in teams called TWiG's
- inventory “all” species
 - “invisible neighbors”
 - showy/special species
 - living library- genes
- educational outreach



Why do an ATBI?

- gee whiz!- science support
 - Hot Spots of biological richness
 - natural wonders make news
 - track effects of climate change
 - amazing discoveries validate social benefits of science
- maintain ecosystem services
 - clean air/water, rainfall “sponge”, flood control
 - its more efficient to keep a system working... than to fix it
 - scientific basis for making decisions about protected areas
- resources for the future “keep all the pieces”
 - genotypes for solutions to problems we cannot imagine now
 - quality of life for future generations
 - discover, learn, share





JOIN US FOR BIOBLITZ 2007

June 16th 9am-4pm

www.thicketofdiversity.org