

Writing a Wide Land: A Conference on Texas Nature Writing
April 11, 2008
EESAT Building, University of North Texas

On April 11, 2008 Writing a Wide Landscape: A Texas Nature Writing Conference will bring together for the second time major writers, editors, and interested groups from the region. This literary symposium is designed to reach out across multiple fields of study: creative writers, journalists, scientists, and those studying community outreach and/or environmental policy. It will also include workshops which highlight positive environmental change and work that has been done recently in writing and outreach across disciplines in order to engage the largest audience in communities. This conference will focus on the potential and possibilities of this intersection of ideas and how it may benefit Texas, its environment, and its citizens as well.

See the conference website at: <http://www.efec.unt.edu/David%20Taylor>

Registration for this event is free; however, all those attending must register with Jenna Ledford. Please send her your name, address, phone number, email, and status (student or non-student) at:

jdl0126@unt.edu

When you arrive you will need to pick up a ticket and conference materials from the registration booth.

For general information about the conference, please contact Dr. David Taylor at:

jdtaylor@unt.edu

***Information on Parking, Lodging, and Local Restaurants is below.**

Schedule:

Friday April 11, 2008

8-12 Registration, Environmental Education, Science, and Technology Building, UNT

8:30 Opening Remarks: President Gretchen Bataille, UNT
David Taylor, English Department, UNT
Community School, Poetry Reading

9-9:45 Gary Clark: "What It Takes to Write a Weekly Nature Column"

10-10:45 Susan Hanson: "Haunted by Waters: Dreams and Chimeras of the Deep."

11:00-11:45 Keith Bowden:

12-1:30 Lunch (on your own; maps will be provided)

1:30-2:15 Joe Nick Patoski: "Writing Texas Water: A Brief History of Writing about a Very Elusive Subject When the Wells Are Running Dry." 2008 Writing WaterWays Lecture (Irene Klaver, Director of Philosophy of Water Project, Introduction)

2:30-3:15 Break-out Workshops:

Susan Hanson, nature writing
Joe Nick Patoski, environmental journalism
Keith Bowden, environmental journalism
Gary Clark, natural history
Bob Pyle, nature writing

3:30-4:15 Editorial Panel Discussion:

Shannon Davies, Texas A&M Press
Karen DeVinney, UNT Press
Barbara Brannon, TTU Press
Bill Bishel, UT Press

Dinner Break

6:00-7:00 Keynote Speaker: Robert Michael Pyle: "Writing as if the World Matters."

7:30-8:30 Booksigning for Robert Michael Pyle
EESAT Lobby

Support for this year's conference comes from:

Office of the Provost, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, Department of English, Department of Biology, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Philosophy of Water Project, Institute of Applied Sciences, Team Engineering, Inc., Elm Fork Chapter of the Texas Master Naturalists, Texas A&M University Press Consortium, Texas Tech University Press, University of Texas Press, Elm Fork Environmental Education Center, and the Environmental Speaker Series.

Featured speakers this year will include:

Keynote Speaker:

ROBERT MICHAEL PYLE (see Bob's current project at: http://www.xerces.org/Butterfly_Conservation/butterflyathon.html#entry3) was born on July 19, 1947 in Denver and raised in nearby Aurora, Colorado. His B.S. in Nature Perception and Protection (1969) and M.S. in Nature Interpretation (1973) from the University of Washington were followed in 1976 by a Ph.D. from Yale University's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. In 1971, during a Fulbright Fellowship at the Monks Wood Experimental Station in England, Pyle founded the Xerces Society for invertebrate conservation, and later chaired its Monarch Project.

Bob has worked as an assistant curator at Yale's Peabody Museum, as a butterfly conservation consultant for Papua New Guinea, Northwest Land Steward for The Nature Conservancy, and guest professor or writer at Portland State, University of Alaska, Evergreen State, and Lewis & Clark College, Utah State University, and the University of Montana, where he served as the Kittridge Distinguished Visiting Writer. He has lectured for scientific, literary, and general audiences in many cities and countries, taught numerous field courses and creative writing seminars, been on the faculties of Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory and the Port Townsend, Pacific Northwest, Sitka, and Desert writing conferences, and appeared on NPR's E-Town. He received a 1997 Distinguished Service Award from the Society for Conservation Biology.

In 1979, Pyle moved from Portland, Oregon to the rural community of Gray's River, on a tributary of the Lower Columbia in far southwest Washington. It was a deliberate migration, in the Thoreauvian sense, toward the requisite setting for confronting life's bare essentials and to see what effect that may have on the creative act of writing. As Michael Pearson has commented: "For a man trained in natural history, science, and conservation much more than in literature, the transformation from scientist into full-time writer was a daring step into terra incognita, a metamorphosis reminiscent of the butterflies he studies."

As a professional writer, Pyle has published hundreds of papers, essays, stories, and poems, in many journals. His fourteen books include *The Thunder Tree*, *Wintergreen* (winner of the 1987 John Burroughs Medal for Distinguished Nature Writing), *Where Bigfoot Walks: Crossing the Dark Divide* (1995), the subject of a Guggenheim Fellowship; and *Chasing Monarchs: Migrating with the Butterflies of Passage*, as well as the Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Butterflies, *Handbook for Butterfly Watchers*, *The Butterflies of Cascadia*, and *Walking the High Ridge: Life as Field Trip* (in the Milkweed Credo Series). His latest book *Sky Time in Gray's River: Living for Keeps in a Forgotten Place*, won the 2007 National Outdoor Book Award for Natural History Literature. A novel, *Magdalena Mountain*, is forthcoming. Pyle lives in the Lower Columbia Watershed with botanist and artist Thea Linnaea Pyle.

Other Speakers:

Bill Bishel has been since 1999 a sponsoring editor at the University of Texas Press. He acquires books in natural history, ornithology, environmental studies, Texas history, gardening, and cooking. He has a Ph.D. in history from Indiana University, where he specialized in U.S.-Latin American relations. Over the course of twenty-five years he has held a number of editorial positions, including stints with the Organization of American Historians, the Texas State Historical Association, and the Center for Archaeological Research at the University of Texas at San Antonio. For five years he was the book review editor of the *American Historical Review*, one of the most prestigious academic history journals in the world.

Barbara Brannon is marketing manager for Texas Tech University Press, which primarily publishes nonfiction books related to the history and culture of Texas and the West and other scholarly subjects. She has taught and lectured widely on the history and practice of book publishing and is the author of *The Ferries of North Carolina: Traveling the State's Nautical Highways* (2007).

Gary Clark writes the weekly column “Nature” in the *Houston Chronicle* and writes feature articles in a variety of state and national magazines. His writing has been published in such magazines as *Texas Highways*, *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, and *Texas Wildlife*, and *Women in the Outdoors*. Gary wrote the text for the book, *Texas Wildlife Portfolio* (Farcountry Press, 2004) and *Gulf Coast Impressions* (Farcountry Press, 2007). He has won seven writing awards, and he is the recipient of the 2004 Excellence in Media Award from the Houston Audubon Society. Gary also co-leads nature and nature-photography tours with his wife, professional photographer Kathy Adams Clark.

Shannon Davies is the Louise Lindsey Merrick Editor for the Natural Environment for Texas A&M University Press.

Karen DeVinney has been managing editor at the University of North Texas Press since January 2000. Because UNT Press is a small operation, she is able as managing editor to do a little bit of everything, being involved directly in every aspect of the business except marketing and financial planning. She edits or supervises the editing of every book UNT publishes and acquires several books each season, including David Taylor's anthology, *Pride of Place*. Before working at UNT Press, she taught English composition and literature classes in area colleges and universities.

Susan Hanson is the author of *Icons of Loss and Grace: Moments from the Natural World*, and a co-editor of *What Wildness Is This: Women Write about the Southwest*. Her work has been anthologized in *Getting Over the Color Green; To Everything on Earth: New Writing on Fate, Community, and Nature* (forthcoming from Texas Tech UP); and *Let There Be Night: Testimony on Behalf of the Dark* (forthcoming from the University of Nevada Press). It has also appeared in such publications as *Northern Lights*, *EarthSpirit*, *ISLE (Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment)*, *Southwestern Literature*, and *Texas Parks & Wildlife*. A long-time member of the English faculty at Texas State University, Susan also worked for nearly 20 as a journalist and 12 as an Episcopal lay campus chaplain. She and her husband live in San Marcos, Texas, and have a grown daughter.

Keith Bowden, author of *The Tecate Journals: Seventy Days on the Rio Grande*, has taught English at Laredo Community College since 1990. When he's not teaching, he rafts and canoes rivers all over North America, including more than forty trips on the Rio Grande. Keith has lived in such diverse places as Canada and Chile. *The Tecate Journals* has been praised by *Texas Monthly*, *Dallas Morning News*, *San Diego Union-Tribune*, *Austin American-Statesman* and other major publications. He recently appeared on C-Span's Book TV.

Joe Nick Patoski is the author and co-author *Texas Mountains* and *Texas Coast*, both published by University of Texas Press. A former staff writer for *Texas Monthly* magazine for 18 years, his byline appeared in the *Texas Observer*, *No Depression*, *People magazine*, *Texas Parks & Wildlife Magazine*, *Field & Stream*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, among many publications.

David Taylor teaches in the English Department at the University of North Texas in Denton. He has published poetry and creative non-fiction essays in such journals as *ISLE*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *Environmental History*, and *Mountain Gazette*. His latest publications are *Praying Up the Sun* (Pecan Grove Press, 2008) and *Pride of Place: A Contemporary Anthology of Texas Nature Writing* (UNT Press, 2006). He was selected as a featured speaker for the 2006 Texas Book Festival.

Map of Denton:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?address=&city=Denton&state=TX&zipcode=76201&country=US&geodiff=1>

Parking:

Free parking is available at Fouts Field. Please see the following link for a map:

<http://www.unt.edu/parking/maps.html>

A bus dedicated to this conference will make two schedule stops at Fouts Field at 7:45 AM and 8:15 AM and take attendees to the EESAT Building.

Evening return trips will be at 7:30 PM and 8:00 PM.

Lodging :

Conference rates are available at:

Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites, Denton
1434 Centre Place Dr.
Denton, TX 76205
Phone Number: (940) 383-4100

Coffee, Tea and Water:

Coffee, tea and water are provided in the lobby coffee shop from 7:45 AM to 2:30 PM if you have a registration badge. You must have a badge to get free beverages.

Lunch and Dinner:

Multiple lunch and dinner venues are within walking distance of the conference. Maps will be provided in the conference packet to all those attending.