

Native Plant Society of Fredericksburg : Press Release

Noted Author of *The Behavior of Texas Birds* to Address Native Plant Society January 31st

The Fredericksburg Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas will conduct its first meeting and program of the new year next Tuesday night, January 31st at 7:00pm in the Fellowship Hall of the Fredericksburg United Methodist Church, 1800 North Llano St.

The guest speaker for the program will be Kent Rylander, who will explain some principles of animal behavior and illustrate how they can be applied to interpreting bird behaviors in the field. Most of the species he will discuss are found locally. His one-hour talk will be accompanied by color slides of the birds that he discusses.

Kent grew up on a farm near Denton, where he and his brother spent their spare time observing and identifying birds, wildflowers, butterflies, and other plants and animals in the area. He majored in biology at the University of North Texas in Denton. After serving two years in the Army he entered Tulane University in New Orleans, where he completed his doctorate in zoology in 1965. He joined the faculty at Texas Tech the same year and taught at Tech until he retired 38 years later.

Two years before retiring, he and his wife, Laura Ronstadt, moved to a farm near Junction where he taught at Tech's newly established Fredericksburg and Marble Falls campuses. The Rylanders now live in Fredericksburg. Currently he teaches a three-week ornithology class at Tech's Junction Campus each May, and participates in research projects at the Llano River Field Station located on the Junction Campus.

Kent was the founding editor of the *Bulletin of Texas Ornithological Society*. His book, *The Behavior of Texas Birds* (University of Texas Press, 2002), describes the behaviors of more than 400 species of Texas birds, including feeding, flying, courtship, parental care, social interactions, and song.

In 2001, he was a Teaching and Research Fulbright Scholar at the University of the Americas in Cholula, Mexico. He served as president of the Fredericksburg Chapter of the Native Plant Society of Texas in 2006-2007.

The public is welcome and students are encouraged to attend. There is no admission fee. More information on the program and the organization is available from Ward Miller at 830.990.6901.