

# Grand Lakes HOA Wildlife Committee

## 2018 Accomplishments and Possible 2019 Activities

- Muscovy duck population control
  - Removal continues but we have made good progress.
  - Will be a continuing issue due to high reproduction rate, but the smaller the population the less control necessary.
- Butterfly and Hummingbird Garden
  - Working with Girl Scouts.
  - Would like to add at least one other garden.
- Lake Management
  - Three year recovery program.



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- **Management of Muscovy Duck Population**

Muscovy ducks are year-round breeders, and populations can increase dramatically in a short time. A hen can lay as many as 24 eggs in a single clutch and can breed three to four times each year. Muscovy ducks are considered an invasive species. An owner may raise them for food production only (not for hunting). Similarly, if the ducks have no owner, the ducks, their eggs and nests may be removed. Release of Muscovy ducks to the wild is prohibited.

Domestic Mallards nest only once per year with an average of 12 eggs. We plan to introduce domestic mallards once the Muscovy population is controlled.



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Ducks are captured in live traps by licensed wildlife companies and taken to three local duck farms. They are raised by the farmer for food and their eggs, much as you would raise chickens.

Here is a video of some of the ducklings removed this year.



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- **Butterfly & Hummingbird Garden**

- Designed by Uma Gopinath (Gopi)
- Managed by Susan Gray

- Near Alexander Elementary
- Plans to improve the garden by adding a bench, signage, pathway, border, etc. were delayed due to Hurricane Harvey. Several of our committee members' homes flooded, and other committee members helped other residents clean up their house, etc.
- Discussed sponsorship for some of the improvements with two local merchants.
- Local Girl Scout Troup working on Silver Award. Girls have researched plants that are best to attract butterflies and are also native to this area of Texas, and have selected Mexican Honeysuckle, Native Milkweed, Pentas, and Katie Ruellia and will purchase and plant these in the spring.
  - They will create a webpage explaining the plants, how to plant them, and why they attract butterflies and include pictures and botanical information.

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- **Lake Management -**

In conjunction with the HOA Board and the Lake Management company, six lakes were selected, 1 – 2 lakes per phase, and efforts will be focused on those lakes, instead of all 27 lakes. These 6 lakes will be designated as Largemouth Bass fishing lakes.

In Year One each lake will be stocked with forage fish and habitat structure added (habitat structure installation complete, stocking to take place this spring).

In Year Two the previously stocked forage fish will have matured and spawning structures will be introduced to promote natural spawning. Largemouth Bass will be stocked.



Habitat Structure



Spawning Structure

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## Lake Management (continued)

By the third year the fish will have reproduced and reached advanced sizes. Deeper water structure will be added to protect the larger fish.



The long-term goal is to create an environment that will mimic nature and allow the fishery to become more sustainable with reduced management and investment.