



TRAVIS AUDUBON

Listen. Look. And Learn.

The intent of this letter is to introduce you to Travis Audubon Society (TAS), the organization that owns and manages the wildlife preserve adjacent to your property. It is the hope that this letter will answer questions you may have and provide contact information if questions regarding the sanctuary should arise in the future.

[A Brief History of Baker Sanctuary](#)

By the 1950's, members of TAS recognized that Central Texas native habitat was disappearing quickly as land was cleared for ranching, housing developments, and flooding of wooded canyons by the construction of dams. After a lengthy search for a suitable location for a wildlife sanctuary, TAS purchased the original 94 acres in 1966. In 1972, Chell Baker (a former Texas Ranger), who owned land adjacent to the original sanctuary, deeded his 562 acres to TAS. The current boundaries of the 715-acre sanctuary were realized with a fifty acre donation in 1987 and the purchase of an additional nine acres in 2007.

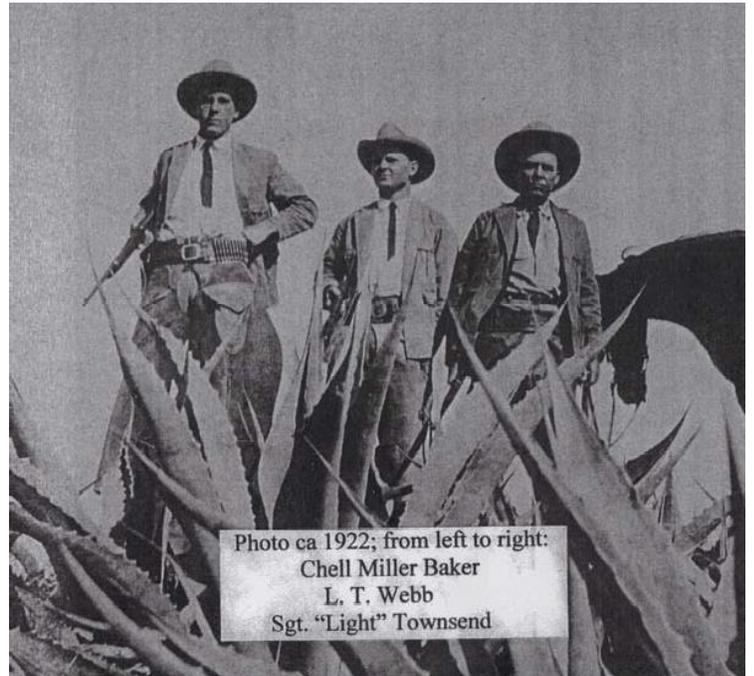


Photo ca 1922; from left to right:
Chell Miller Baker
L. T. Webb
Sgt. "Light" Townsend

[BCP and Golden-cheeked Warblers](#)

Baker Sanctuary is a partner in the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve (BCP) system, a network of over 30,000 acres in western Travis County set aside for the protection and management of several endangered species, including the Golden-cheeked Warbler (GCWA). This striking yellow, black, and white wood warbler nests in 33 counties in central Texas and nowhere else in the world. From March to July, GCWAs breed in the mature Ashe Juniper (cedar) - oak woodlands which constitute their prime habitat. Provisioned with a nourishing diet of caterpillars and spiders, GCWAs typically raise an average of one clutch of four young each breeding season. By August, they migrate to the mountainous regions of southern Mexico and Central America where they spend the winter. Baker Sanctuary is home to approximately 50 pairs of this rare, endangered Neotropical migrant.



[Access to Baker Sanctuary](#)

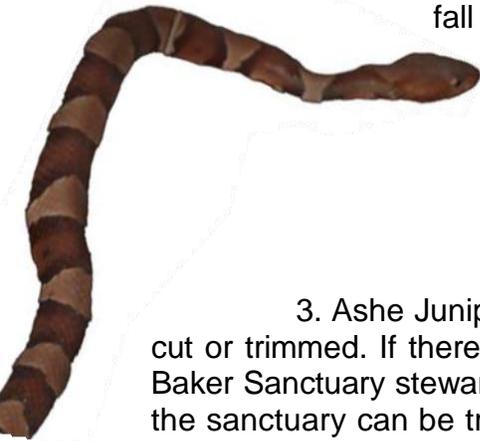
Access is restricted to TAS members unless permission has been granted by the current steward. The sanctuary with its eight miles of hiking trails is open to members from sunrise to sunset roughly nine months of the year. TAS is always happy to welcome new members to the organization- more details can be found at www.travisaudubon.org. Main access to the sanctuary is via the trailhead and parking lot located at 12221 Lime Creek Road.



[Living Near a Wildlife Preserve](#)

TAS makes every effort to respect your property and to be a good neighbor. You can do likewise:

1. Please do not trespass. There is an eight-foot deer fence along the entire eastern boundary of the preserve which clearly marks the property line. Trespassing can be dangerous in that we have three species of venomous snakes, the terrain can be surprisingly steep and treacherous, hunters are harvesting deer during the fall and winter, and large feral hogs or dogs could be encountered.



2. Please do not dump anything over the fence onto the sanctuary, especially yard waste or soil from potted plants. Invasive seeds, insects, fungi, and possibly disease could be spread, damaging the native vegetation and the wildlife which depends on it.

3. Ashe Juniper (cedar) or any other vegetation on TAS property should not be cut or trimmed. If there is a concern with trees next to your property, please contact the Baker Sanctuary steward to resolve the issue. Branches which hang over the fence from the sanctuary can be trimmed at the fence line but not on TAS property (past the fence line) unless approved by the steward. Likewise the eight foot deer fence is TAS property and should not be cut or modified in any way, alterations will be reported to the authorities.

4. Since the Ashe Juniper/Oak woodland is a fire adapted ecosystem, wildfire will always be a concern. The risk can be minimized by not shooting fireworks into the preserve, using discretion when grilling outside, and especially by avoiding open pit fires; just a few sparks in the wrong place could be enough to start a wildfire in certain conditions.

[Contact Information](#)

Christopher Murray is the current steward for Baker Sanctuary and can be reached at 512-219-8425 or christophermurrA@hotmail.com.

Please contact Chris if you have any questions or concerns regarding the sanctuary or if you would like permission to explore the trails (if you are not currently a TAS member).